

former case, no grant of any land, or title to, or interest in it, but merely "the sole and exclusive privilege of trading with the Indians for the full period of 21 years," and a bond was also required of a similar character to insure the enforcing of the laws against persons in the employ of the company.

We have heard this company denounced in no measured terms, and especially have we heard of the extension of British power in Oregon—of her armies, her numerous fortifications—of the encroachments of that overgrown corporation, and the permanent settlements in the territory.

These are very strange declarations in view of well known facts. I am informed that there is not a single British soldier under the British Government in Oregon. She has erected no fortifications; and although in the grants to the Hudson's Bay Company she reserved the right to establish colonies, she has not done so. The Hudson's Bay Company are not the owners of a single acre of land, but have merely a "license" or "grant" to trade with the Indians. That company have formed various settlements, and fortified them for their protection against the Indians, and armed the persons in their employment; but there is no well founded complaint of any ill-treatment by the company, or any of its agents, of American citizens; but the testimony is uniform of their kindness to shipwrecked American seamen, and others, in want and distress. That they have availed themselves of their position in securing to themselves, like other trading companies, as far as possible, the exclusive trade of the Indian tribes, is undoubtedly true; but they have been guilty of no violence towards our own citizens. The very memorial of our own citizens in Oregon, presented by the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations at the commencement of the session, has the following language: "We, the citizens of the United States, have no cause to complain either of exactions or of oppression at the hands of the subjects of Great Britain; on the contrary, it is but just to say, that their conduct towards us has been most friendly, liberal, and philanthropic." How different has been the language used on this floor!

But there is one fact, which is stated by the gentleman from Indiana, (Mr. OWEN,) that the company, or some of its agents, paid to one of our citizens eight hundred dollars to remove from the north to the south side of the Columbia! This is really a very serious affair, a most dangerous encroachment on our rights in Oregon! But it will be a most expensive mode of retaining possession of the country north of the Columbia. They will have frequent opportunities to repeat the same offer, and doubtless with similar success. Our people would consider this bounty for settling Oregon quite equal to any offered by our own Government, and the emigrants to that country would, at this rate, be so numerous, that we should need the railroad to the Pacific which my honorable friend from Alabama (Mr. HILLIARD) considers so very feasible a project. And this, Mr. Chairman, is the whole foundation of the—what shall I call it?—uproar in this House on the subject of the encroachments and wrongs committed by the Hudson's Bay Company and the Government of Great Britain. It reminds me of Partridge, in Tom Jones, whose little pig got into the enclosure of his neighbor. His neighbor sued him, and he was charged with having entered with a drove of swine, and broken down the fences, and trampled down the grass, and destroyed the crops, and other grievous wrongs and injuries were charged; so that Partridge declared that the lawyers made such a noise about his little pig, they would have thought him the greatest hog dealer in all the country.