

in the nature of unoccupied lands for the reception of European colonies. If Great Britain had any pretext to claim the Territory of Oregon as a part of her possessions on the lakes, of her existing colonies, it would be otherwise. But she does not. She distinctly puts her claim to Oregon on the ground that it is unoccupied territory, just like Virginia or Massachusetts before she colonized them; and that, as unoccupied savage territory, she may now colonize the Columbia river;—not that it is part of a colony now possessed by her, but country in which she has the right at this day to found a new colony.

"Great Britain considered the whole of the unoccupied parts of America as being open to her future settlements, as heretofore. They included within these parts, as well that portion of the northwest coast lying between the 42d and 51st degrees of latitude, as any other parts. The principle of colonization on that coast, or elsewhere, on any portions of those continents not yet occupied, Great Britain was not prepared to relinquish."—*Mr. Rush's letter, August 12, 1824.*

This pretension the committee deem to be inadmissible, and prejudicial to the rights, the security, and the peace of the United States.

There is a class of reasons applicable to this point, which is every day acquiring more and more force. It is the situation of the Indians in the interior of the continent. It has at all times been the policy of Great Britain—a policy little in keeping with her ostentation of humanity in regard to the black race—to keep the red men under subsidy to her, so as to have them always ready to bring into the field against the United States. At the epoch of the Revolution, we proposed that the Indians should be suffered to remain neutral; but England refused. She has kept them under arms, or in a semi-hostile state, against us, more or less constantly, from that day to this. Our commissioners at Ghent proposed an agreement for the perpetual neutrality of the Indians; but England again refused it. The perseverance of Great Britain in this policy has been deplorably injurious to us; and its effects are written with the scalping-knife and the brand of the Indian, in letters of blood and fire, in the history of the southern and western States. And this, the unholy policy of Great Britain in regard to the Indians, has done more than any and every other cause united, to waste, degrade, and barbarize them, so as to render them a curse alike to us and to themselves. By the acquisition of Florida, the influence of the British over the Indians of the United States was shut out from the south; but it still operates unchecked, and is fostered and kept alive, by regular Government subsidies in the northwest; and is exerted without any counteraction among the Indians of the remote west, and will continue to be exerted, in all respects to our loss and injury, until the Hudson's Bay Company is expelled from the territory of Oregon, and it is possessed in full and undisputed sovereignty by the United States.

In conclusion of this branch of their instructions, it only remains for the committee to advert to certain particular facts in the present political relations of the territory of Oregon, confirmatory of, and connected with, the general considerations they have suggested.

Great Britain had very much distinguished herself at an early period, by voyages of discovery in the seas to the northeast of this continent. Thus it happened that she acquired territorial rights on the shores of Hudson's bay, which at the congress of Utrecht were formally acknowledged by France, as before stated. The extent of this territory was not then, nor until long afterwards, definitively settled. Meanwhile, among the corrupt monopolies of the reign of Charles II, was the grant of a charter to the