

fairs in relation to the notice? With great deference to their matured and, perhaps, better opinion, I must say that I think not. To determine this question, it will be necessary to ascertain, as far as possible, the probable consequences of either course, as we may give, or refuse to give, the notice for the termination of the convention of joint occupancy.

Let us, then, Mr. Chairman, examine this question calmly and dispassionately. Let us view this subject under none of the hallucinations of national pride; let us approach it in no boastful or braggart spirit, and with no disposition to use it as the mere means of flattering national vanity. Let us come to it in that higher spirit which conscious strength should inspire—with the feelings of those who are too well satisfied of our title to the respect of the world, and of our ability to hold our own, to believe that it can either be necessary or dignified to deal in extravagant pretension or exaggerated assertion. If there be such a spirit of inquiry in this body to which I may address myself, I would ask, what are to be the consequences if we give the notice? If the notice be given, the best result which can possibly flow from it will be an adjustment of the difficulty by treaty, upon the basis of a boundary on the 49th parallel of latitude. Under existing circumstances, we can expect no better treaty, and it is manifest that we will take nothing worse. It is absurd to suppose that Great Britain will offer to give us more than we have agreed to take. If this matter be amicably adjusted, it is evident, under the existing state of the negotiations, that we get nothing beyond the 49th parallel. Now, Mr. Chairman, such an adjustment, in my opinion, would be far better than the doubtful chances of a war under the circumstances which at present surround us. But I should certainly prefer the whole country up to 54° 40', if there be means compatible with the peace and honor of the nation, as I think there are, by which we should probably obtain the whole territory. But how do those gentlemen stand who support this resolution as a peaceful measure, and yet maintain that we can take nothing less than our whole claim on Oregon. If the measure be peaceful, is it not manifest that, by adopting it, they essentially abandon the whole country north of the 49th parallel? If they adopt it as the means of obtaining the whole country, they can only do so upon the supposition that it is to lead to war, and that thus we shall obtain the whole. I shall presently endeavor to ascertain what would be the probable consequences under that conjuncture of circumstances. But here I must pause to say, that I do not mean to disparage or disapprove the proposition made by the administration to settle the question amicably upon the basis of a boundary along the 49th parallel. Under the circumstances, and from the course of previous negotiations, the President could have done no less than to have made such an offer. It was due to public opinion at home and abroad, it was due to our national character, and the great interests of humanity; that he should manifest a desire to do much for an honorable peace. The terms which he offered would have been considered by each party to the dispute as falling short of the full measure of their just claims, but in the more impartial, but, perhaps, less informed opinion of the residue of the civilized world, they would have been regarded as fair, equitable, and honorable to both countries. He would have done much, too, for the country in thus securing, by peaceful and honorable means, an advanced post for our population up to the 49th

parallel. He would have acquired, as far as I have been able to inform myself, much the most valuable portion of the country, both for commercial and agricultural purposes. I know that the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs has expressed a different opinion. But with great deference and respect for that opinion, I must be allowed to declare my dissent from it. The opposite opinion expressed by Mr. Greenhow, to whose enlightened researches the country is so much indebted, seems to me to be sustained upon better grounds. The harbor of Port Discovery, of which Vancouver speaks in terms so high, and the harbors on Admiralty inlet, are said to be admirably adapted to the uses of commerce.

As I am informed, they are better not only in natural capacity, but from position, than those higher up on the coast. Of the superior agricultural advantages of the portion of the territory below the 49th parallel, I presume there can be no doubt, and I think they are very generally admitted. The President might well suppose that he would effect much in securing the peaceful progress of our infant settlement in Oregon up to the 49th parallel; and this being done, he might safely leave it to time and American enterprise to do the rest. But, Mr. Chairman, let me return to the inquiry into the probable consequences of giving this notice. I have said that the best possible result would be an adjustment on the basis of a boundary along the 49th parallel; but I have seen nothing as yet to convince me that it was the most probable result. If the minister from Great Britain refused to consider this proposition, when made in the course of an amicable and courteous correspondence, is it very probable that she will be more inclined to accept it when we give the notice, under circumstances which imply that she must either agree to our proposition, or go to war for the whole country? If the British minister represented the real views of his government, is it probable that with their dispositions that government will be the more inclined to accept our offer on account of the threat which it may suppose to be implied by our giving the notice? If she really designs to go to war, rather than compromise upon the terms which we proposed, is there anything unreasonable in supposing that she might think the present time and circumstances as favorable as any likely to occur for striking the blow? If she really attaches the importance to her whole claim on Oregon, which many seem to imagine, and regards a war for it as inevitable, will she not think that the sooner she strikes the blow the better for her? Or if, on the other hand, she is anxious to settle the question amicably, and desires nothing more than terms which may be regarded as honorable by her own people and by the world, will this spirit be conciliated by our giving the notice, and by the circumstances under which it will be given? To sum up the whole, is it not manifest, on the one hand, that if this step should lead to war, we give to Great Britain, instead of reserving it to ourselves, the advantage of choosing her own time for it? If, on the other hand, this be designed as a peace measure, is it not more likely to defeat, than to encourage a renewal of negotiations in a sensitive and high spirited people? Such seems to me to be its probable tendencies; and unless Great Britain should think this disputed territory to be of little value to her, however important it might be to us, and unless she entertains a strong desire for peace, I can see no other result to flow from this notice so

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