

continent, descending by the great branches of the Columbia, *debonche* upon the western seaboard. Thus do the geographical positions, topography of the country, the climate, the concentration there of the various elements of maritime development unite to exalt the *significant* value of this northern half of Oregon. The contest for the possession of this territory by the two great commercial rivals of the age is again the struggle for the "golden fleece," commenced in Argonautic times, transferred in our day from the Bosphorus, and Euxine, to that belt of territory which links together the valley of the Mississippi and the Pacific ocean—the western world with the golden orient.—To the nautical people, whose flag floats over maritime Oregon, and wings its way thence over every wave in innumerable ships—must *calient*, agricultural California and Mexico, pay the Colombian tribute which pours from a rural people, into the lap of commerce. Why then disintegrate this budding corner of our vineyard? Have we nursed it so long only to throw its ripening fruit to our domineering step-mother! But the peace of the nation it is alleged, is in danger! How? Does the tame surrender of Vancouver's Island, which commands the Columbia, of Washington Island and the intermediate coasts which envelope Vancouver itself—of the controlling keys to Western America to England! Does the planting of the Lion in the very Thermopylae of our empire to choke our path and stop short our destiny?—How? Is it by such degrading acts of concession, that we are to release the republic from jeopardy and insure permanent peace? No sir; on the contrary, such sickly submission—such degrading concessions will provoke war—will be likely to plunge us into the jaws of defeat, and set over us an arbitrary, jealous and rapacious rival—for such is the character of Great Britain. Such are some of the prodigious advantages which this debated capitulation at 49° surrender to our rival, and such the contingent if not the probable catastrophe in which it would leave *our* republic and *our* people.

But it is not by thus establishing a rival power in impregnable control of our western seaboard—by throwing away from our people the infinite markets of the Pacific and its infinite commerce, that the series of disasters is closed—these follies will generate new dangers which must follow them. Great Britain already owns eight provinces upon this continent, containing 2,800,000 square miles. The area of the United States, including Texas and all Oregon, does not exceed 2,318,000 square miles, 482,000 square miles less than the present British territory upon this continent! The provinces of New Brunswick and the two Canadas, coterminous with the territory of the United States, envelope us from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the northwestern lakes, and thence onward, in part by the 49th parallel, to the Rocky Mountains. Through this extent of country, Great

Britain has pushed cordons of posts, fortified in strength and equipped for defensive or aggressive measures—over the residue is planted the systematic military corporation of the Hudson's Bay, whose trading positions, located with faultless judgment, dot the whole with military stations, seal it from the rest of mankind, and draw from it immense revenues by the stringent discipline and admirable economy and silence of their operations. Such is our present geographical relation upon the North and West. The dangers which impend over us upon this immense front have been demonstrated in the events of the last war. Is it not a fatal blunder thus to weaken ourselves and strengthen and embolden our enemy? In that war—without ship-canals to admit her war-steamer into our inland seas—England destroyed Oswego, burned Buffalo—by her savage allies reduced Chicago—and by Brock, conquered all of Michigan. What will she be apt to do *now*, efficiently established in every position held by her at that time, and reinforced by the possession of Northern Oregon, whence to co-operate in the most compact strength with the hostile measures of the Canadas? Recently Great Britain has resisted, as far as possible, the annexation of Texas: and why? Because closely allied with a minor republic, wedged between the United States and Mexico, she grasped at an overland communication between her West Indian and Oregon possessions, and beheld us thus hooped in north, south, east, and west, by the unbroken circle of her own and her subsidized subjects! Thus have I aimed briefly to sketch the geographical view of this question, and attract attention to its very serious importance. But a flood of brilliant, solid, and animating developments are evolved by taking a commercial view. To elucidate this, allow me incidentally to sketch the strides—the bloody footprints—of British acquisition! Over the whole expanse of the Atlantic, we find her established in imperial ascendancy—she has New Foundland, Nova Scotia, Bermudas, the Bahamas—the islands which freckle the Gulf of Mexico are hers—she occupies Honduras and the Mosquito shore in Central America. By these possessions she covers the whole Atlantic front of North America, absorbs half of all its commerce, intimidates its people, and awaits the moment for any aggressive swoop upon their territories—she has Trinidad, Guiana, and the Falkland islands upon the coast of South America. The western coast of Africa is dotted with her posts.—she has St. Helena and the Cape of Good Hope,—she is now conquering the republics of the La Plata, and poised herself to plunge upon Brazil! The Mediterranean is bridled and controlled by Gibraltar, Malta, and the Ionian Islands,—her own island masks North Europe, the Baltic, and the upper Atlantic. In the Indian Ocean she is just as potentially posted, and wields supreme sway. The Mauritius, the