

personal impunity, if I may so speak of a government, is very near akin to that faith which has been ingloriously immortalized as *punica fides*—Judas-like, it salutes with a kiss that it may the more completely deceive and betray.

Again: I am in favor of the notice, because I believe that the giving of it now holds out the only plausible means of preventing a war between the two countries. The postponement of the notice from 1827 to this time has increased and multiplied the difficulties with which the controversy was originally surrounded. And it is difficult to see what else could have been anticipated. For the interests of Great Britain have been and are now daily increasing in extent and permanency, making all the while stronger and stronger appeals to her pride and avarice to maintain them. At first, she had but the moving tent and the temporary stockade. Now, she has the permanent dwelling and the bristling fortifications. At first, she had but the roaming hunter, as wild and unsettled as the game he pursued. Now, she has the fixed agriculturist and the settled farmer. Now, she has there a scattered population. In a few years this population will be doubled, adding constantly and daily to the difficulties of a satisfactory and peaceable adjustment. Never was the application of that holy injunction, to "agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him," more appropriate and pressing than it is in relation to this present controversy. Let us profit by it. The notice is all-important as leading irresistibly to a settlement of this matter in some way.

There is still another consideration influencing my mind in favor of the notice, growing out of the history of this Oregon question. In 1818 this question was brought up for negotiation and compromise; and so intimately connected with the peace of the two countries was it then regarded, that its agitation was attended with the most injurious effects upon the commerce, upon the credit, and indeed upon all the various pursuits and interests of our people. In 1827, its agitation was again attended with the same disastrous results. Now, again, for the third time, has it been brought up for renewed discussion in the year 1846; and if we are to credit those who profess to understand such matters, it has again exhibited its galvanic effect upon all the best interests of the country. Postpone it now, and some eight or ten years from this time, if not sooner, it must again come up with all its usual concomitants of panics and depressions. Is it not the part of wisdom to put an end to such a state of things? Do we not owe it to ourselves, and to those who come after us, to arrest this political earthquake, which at intervals has given a shock to all that is valuable in society?

Mr. Chairman, as something has been said about leaders in this matter, and as the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. Adams] has been held up before the country as the leader of those who are in favor of the notice, I will beg the indulgence of the committee whilst I make a few remarks in relation to that matter. I will take occasion to say, that in giving my vote for the notice, I shall follow the lead of no man—the lead neither of the illustrious gentleman from Massachusetts, nor yet of the honorable member from Virginia, [Mr. Bayly.] I know no lead, and I shall follow no lead but that of my constituents. Whithersoever they direct in a matter of so much importance to their peace, thither I go cheerfully and promptly. But, sir, if the gentleman from Massachusetts happens to coincide with

me in opinion upon this or any other subject, I shall most certainly not change my views on that account merely. To do so, would be to put my political principles entirely in his keeping, to be controlled and directed as he might think proper. He would only have to affect to be on one side, in order to drive me into that very position into which, above all others, he would most desire to place me. Again: I would ask with what propriety can it be said that the honorable member from Massachusetts is the leader of all those who are in favor of the notice? I had thought that the democratic party was the leader in this matter. I had thought that their delegates in convention had declared our title to the whole of Oregon. I thought it formed a part of the declaration with which we entered the political struggle of 1844, in which we were opposed and resisted by the gentleman from Massachusetts, and by those who usually act with him. And now, after the gentleman, with all his might and main, resisted the election of the only candidate that was publicly pledged to the maintenance of our rights in Oregon, he is to be held up as 'the leader of all those who advocate the notice. It will not do. Gentlemen will fail in their object. They ought to know, and do know, that the democratic party have adopted their principles, not from a spirit of opposition to others, but because of their connexion with the prosperity and glory of our common country. By such an intimation, the honorable gentleman depreciate the moral influence of the political principles by which they have, for some time past, professed to have been governed.

But some gentlemen who have preceded me in the debate, declare that before we proceed to adopt measures which may possibly lead to war, we ought fully to be satisfied, not only of our rights, but that those rights are of sufficient value and importance to justify a resort to that dreadful alternative. This will lead me to trouble the committee with a few reflections upon the value of Oregon; and in this connexion I will consider it with respect to its agricultural, its manufacturing, and commercial capacities. And, first, as respects its agricultural advantages. And here I am willing to confess that at first blush, and as appears from the very imperfect accounts from the portions of that territory which have been yet explored, the prospects are not so encouraging, so far as agriculture is concerned, as is to be found in other portions of the habitable globe. It has not, for instance, the smoothness of the valley of the Mississippi, nor yet perhaps its fertility. But that the parts of it already explored do hold out very considerable inducements to the agriculturist, and that a more thorough examination may yet lead to the discovery of other and still larger tracts suited to the same desirable purposes, is far from being without the range of human probability. Of late, every year is rewarding the toil of the hardy pioneer with the discovery of some new valley vieing in richness of scenery—in fertility of soil—beauty of location, and salubrity of climate, with any spots of equal extent in the world. The valley of the Umpqua, of the Willamette, and of the Walla Walla have, from time to time, burst upon the gaze of the hardy adventurer, and rewarded, from time to time, his daring and toilsome wanderings. But, sir, when we remember that, until within a few years past, this whole country has been looked to with an eye single to the furnishing of furs; and when it is further remembered that those portions of any country