

There, Sir, would be the tug of generous and manly war; and there, perchance, powerful as the great empire State is, the services of the descendants of those men, whose blood was poured upon every field where her revolutionary banners were unfurled, might not be entirely disdained; but, alas! they will have other, and sadder, and more dangerous duties to perform. For this war measure seems to be pressed on by a combination, one element of which avows its purpose to bring upon the South, afflictions and perils, which nothing but the phrenzy of abolitionary fanaticism could contemplate without agony. For us, beyond the ordinary incidents of civilized war, horrors to which we are supposed to be peculiarly liable, are reserved.

Whilst we are to meet the brunt of the conflict, and to bear in immense disproportion the expenses that attend it; to fight for the country, and to meet and drive back its invaders from our long line of defenceless shores; presenting a complication of difficulties, distresses, and dangers, that might not only command the sympathies of strangers, but plead for the mercies of God, what fraternal greetings have we from one portion of our own country? It is just at this moment that the fiend-form, of ferocious fanaticism, steals upon the scene—with prayers and piety hanging upon its tongue, but the fires of hell burning in its heart—and beckons a dark, and, as it thinks, a terrible enemy upon our rear. The dagger and the torch, the conflagrations and the murders, of insurrectionary strife, are threatened to our homes. Is there to be no peace for us? Are all the horrors to which I have alluded to be perpetually attempted to be forced upon us, by men who cry “peace, peace, when there is no peace?” Is there no period of repose? Can no question of peace or of war be discussed in this house, that we are not still to be struck at? Is ours to be the fate of Prometheus, chained forever to a rock, which we cannot escape, and gnawed at by, not this eagle, but this insatiate vulture of abolitionism?

Cannot “potent, grave, and reverend seigneurs” learn to understand our position and our character, and be taught that we will not and cannot submit forever to this obstinate, this insolent interference with our own private affairs; that there is a point at which patience ceases to be a virtue; that the crisis may at last be forced upon us; and that, if they be right in supposing us too weak to protect ourselves, (of which we have no fears,) then, that they should credit us with the strength and courage to sustain a struggle, in which, if we did not succeed in preserving ourselves, we could not fail to pull down the pillars of our common temple in ruin upon our heads; and in consigning to an early and inglorious grave our great experiment—with all the sublime recollections that gather round its history, and all the brilliant anticipations that brighten in its future—if it could be pursued in a spirit of concession, and patriotism, and submission, to the principles of the Constitution?

As to the merits of this Oregon question—I mean, as to the character of our title—I find no occasion to go into it at all. It seems that we all agree in one thing, and that is, that our title is a better one than the English title; that, if it be not one which can bear the test of judicial scrutiny, still it is a better one on all grounds, than that of England. What I mean, is in reference only to the comparative strength of the two titles—English and American. My own opinion is, that either title is far from being a clear one. But I speak to the point, as between England and the United States; and,