

proportion of those, too, who sustained it—yet the political prize was too valuable to be rejected; the acquisition of so large and fertile a country was too important. The Texan banner was unfurled during the late political canvass, and it was borne on in triumph. Let this House refuse to give the notice—let the Oregon banner be unfurled—let the fiat go forth—the watch-words be emblazoned upon that banner, “*the whole of Oregon, or none,*” and then the result in my opinion can be easily foreseen. With the strong argument in favor of our title to the whole, with the prospect of adding a free and extensive territory, important for our future commerce, no power could resist the onward march. Under that banner a great political victory would certainly be won; and then England must abandon her claim, must yield the whole of the territory, or we must fight. If gentlemen suppose that by delay in giving the notice we shall obtain the whole of Oregon without a contest, I think they are certainly mistaken. They can get it, if the present time for action is neglected, only by a successful termination of a contest—successful either in the negotiation of terms of peace, or by driving England by force from her occupation of the country. If we could roll back the tide of events, if we could blot out all that has transpired in the last few years relative to both Texas and Oregon, then indeed delay in giving a notice might be wisdom and prudence. If we could wave a magic wand over the land, and at once hush to silence and repose all the elements of party strife, and remove all the temptations of successful party triumph, and if England would remain quiet and allow large bodies of American emigrants to move noiselessly forward to the settlement of the whole country, then indeed delay would inevitably bring with it the wished for result. But this cannot be, and we must act upon the existing state of things. We should give this notice, because the title of England has been strengthened rather than weakened by past delay. For nearly thirty years we have been negotiating with her. Twenty-four years ago she passed a general law establishing courts, exercising a civil and criminal jurisdiction, not only over the whole of the territory, but also over all the inhabitants, whether subjects of Great Britain or citizens of the United States. When the Hudson’s Bay Company, in 1838, asked for a renewal of their charter, they alleged that they were settling the country for England. Suppose, now, we submit this question to arbitration. England might well say that she had for nearly a quarter of a century exercised exclusive civil and criminal jurisdiction over the whole country and over all the inhabitants; that the act passed by Parliament was a public one, known to all; that it was also known that the Hudson’s Bay Company was settling the country, and yet the United States had acquiesced in all these movements; she had neither given the notice to terminate the convention, nor had she remonstrated against the exercise of jurisdiction over the American citizens who had settled in Oregon; and it might be argued before a commission or arbitration that such an acquiescence for so long a time should be taken as an admission of the superior title of England to a greater part if not to the whole of the territory.

Again; there is another reason for giving this notice now, which is based on the character of the recent news from England. The gentleman from Virginia who preceded me, (Mr. BAYLY,) said we should delay and give time for settlement, that we might “agree with our adversary.” Now, I would add, “agree with thine adversary *quickly*, while thou art in the way with him.” I have read carefully the articles which have recently appear-