

APPENDIX.

The following Report of a Committee of Congress in 1843, is thought very valuable as illustrating the title of the United States to Oregon Territory.

REPORT.

The Committee on Military Affairs, to which was referred so much of the President's message as relates to the establishment of a chain of military posts from Council Bluffs to the Pacific Ocean, submits the following report:

The Secretary of War, in his report accompanying the President's message, speaking of the "territory which extends from the Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico," has the following remark: "It is in immediate contact with numerous wild and warlike Indians, who are capable of bringing into the field a number of warriors estimated at from twenty to thirty thousand. From the intercourse which subsists between them and the traders, and emissaries of foreign nations, they may be rendered as formidable as any description of force that could be brought against us. To secure a proper influence over them in peace, and to counteract and control their dispositions in war—to secure our own territory, and to protect our traders, it is indispensable that a chain of posts should be established, extending from the Council Bluffs to the mouth of the Columbia, so as to command the avenues by which the Indians pass from the north to the south, and at the same time to maintain a communication with the territories belonging to us on the Pacific." In allusion to the same subject, the President, in his message, says: "I recommend particularly to your consideration, that portion of the Secretary's report which proposes the establishment of a chain of military posts from Council Bluffs to some point on the Pacific Ocean within our limits. The benefit thereby destined to accrue to our citizens engaged in the fur trade over that wilderness region, added to the importance of cultivating friendly relations with savage tribes inhabiting it, and at the same time of giving protection to our frontier settlements, and of establishing the means of safe intercourse between the American settlements at the mouth of the Columbia River and those on this side of the Rocky Mountains, would seem to suggest the importance of carrying into effect the recommendations upon this head, with as little delay as may be practicable."

Thus invoked by these high authorities, whose especial and responsible duty it is carefully to have weighed all the circumstances which may justify this recommendation, and all the consequences to which it may lead, the Committee on Military Affairs has given to this subject the anxious consideration its importance demands.

Mr. Monroe, in his last annual message, referring to this subject, uses the following language:

"In looking to the interests which the United States have on the Pacific ocean, and on the western coast of this Continent, the propriety of establishing a military post at the mouth of the Columbia river, or at some other point in that quarter, within our acknowledged limits, is submitted to the consideration of Congress. Our commerce and fishing on that sea and along the coast have much increased and are increasing. It is thought that a military post to which our ships of war might resort, would afford protection to every interest, and have a tendency to conciliate the tribes of the Northwest, with whom our trade is extensive. It is thought, also, that, by