

'States, from Hudson's Bay on one side, to the Pacific and Russian settlements on the other; and have a very large number of employees, who traverse this immense region in every direction, having posts or stations all over the same: indeed, they have spread a complete network throughout the length and breadth of the country. As they have the fur trade entirely in their own hands, they husband their resources, and only bring out an average quantity of furs each year; and when they become scarce at any one post, they remove from there, so as to give the beaver and other furs time to resuscitate. The company consists of eighty members, or shares; eight of the stockholders reside in England, and the others in the Oregon country. Each chief agent, and agents of each individual post, are shareholders. The fur trade is entirely monopolized by this company; but not content with this, they are turning their attention to every other branch of business. For instance, they have taken possession of almost every eligible spot in Oregon where there is a water power, or a good site for factories; they have selected out the finest sites for farms; they have erected mills—both saw and flour mills—with a view of supplying the Sandwich Islands with lumber and flour, and the Russians at the north with flour and butter from their farms; they are in fact grasping at everything. They are now about establishing a post at the islands, as also in California; and a Mr. Simpson has been sent to both these places to effect this object, their instruction being to monopolize the entire trade of both places for the sale of English goods, lumber, flour, butter, &c.; and unless our Government insist on our just rights, and drive them out of the Columbia, they will certainly succeed in driving all the American commerce from both the islands and California, as they have already done from the northwest coast. Their resources are immense, and their ambition unbounded. But, would they confine themselves to the region north of the United States, we should have less reason to complain, notwithstanding they are using our just means—means that properly belong to the people of the United States—to annihilate our trade in the Pacific, while, upon the land, they are cutting the best timber, and improving the best soil in Oregon, besides having arrogated to themselves the almost exclusive occupation of the Columbia river. Nor does this selfish grasping at all satisfy them; for they annually send a large party through the acknowledged territory of the United States to California, to trap beaver and kill sea-otter."

Captain Spaulding, in the same journal, after giving numerous instances of the barbarity and cruelty of the trappers of the Hudson Bay Company towards the Indians, and the inhuman and cold-blooded murder committed by them, says:

"Since then, as would naturally be expected, they (the Indians) had been at enmity with the whites. That these irresponsible servants and agents of this monopolizing British company should be suffered thus to murder, destroy, and rob these Indians, and enrich themselves, through the neglect of our Government, whose duty it is to protect these poor, defenceless, weak, and wretched beings, is what no man, as it seems to

me, who has the blood of an American coursing in his veins, can or ought tamely to submit to. Is it not high time that our Government, after so long a delay, should arouse itself to the protection of its own interests in Oregon? For, if it sleep but a little longer, that valuable territory is certainly lost to us forever. Give the English only the north part of the Columbia river—let them plant ten guns upon Cape Disappointment, and all the navies in the world could not take the command of the river from them. The cape and Tongue point are two perfect 'Gibraltars' on the Columbia; and the Hudson Bay Company have already taken possession of the latter, as they have also of every other eligible spot on the Columbia."

Captain Spaulding says it is the prevailing opinion in Oregon, that the grasping ambition of England will not stop short of the acquisition of California, with a view of possessing themselves of the bay and harbor of San Francisco, the finest on the whole coast of the Pacific for a naval depot, being accessible at all times for ships of any draught of water. In speaking of the colony from the United States settled on the Willamette river ninety miles above its mouth, he says:

"It is the finest grazing and wheat country in Oregon. At present (1841) it consists of about seventy families, who raise considerable grain, and have about three thousand head of cattle. The mission last year raised one thousand bushels of wheat, and made butter, cheese, &c., enough for their own use. They have five hundred head of cattle and two hundred horses; and last year they sowed four hundred bushels of wheat, one hundred and twenty bushels of peas, and planted a large quantity of potatoes and vegetables of all descriptions."

"The extent of the country comprising the Willamette valley, is about three hundred miles long and two hundred broad, interspersed with ravines of wood, generally in sufficient quantities for fuel and fencing. The land, in its natural state, is usually ready for the plow, and is producing from twenty-five to forty bushels of wheat to the acre; and the climate is so mild, that the cattle subsist in the fields without fodder or shelter of any kind being prepared or provided for them through the winter. Salmon can be taken at the Willamette falls (which, however, the British have taken possession of, and compelled our people to build their mills at the falls above) with little trouble, from May to September, in almost any quantity. I have no hesitation in saying that ten thousand barrels might be taken per annum. Probably no place in the world offers greater inducements to emigrants. Provisions might readily be procured to support one thousand emigrants at any time."

I think, Mr. Chairman, that I have clearly shown that the honorable gentleman from Virginia was in error, in believing that Great Britain valued this country only for its furs, and that the territory is of immense value for agriculture alone. Of its commercial advantages, which have been so fully set forth by gentlemen who have preceded me in this debate, I will only say, that the most sanguine friends of Oregon have not overrated these advantages, and time will prove my prediction correct.