

have been the subject of disparaging, disapproving, sometimes contumelious remarks, in one or the other of the Houses of Congress. Now, with all my indisposition to revive past transactions and make them the subjects of debate here, and satisfied, and indeed highly gratified with the approbation so very generally expressed by the country, at the time and ever since, I suppose that it could hardly have been expected, nevertheless, by any body, that I should sit here from day to day, through the debate, and through the session, hearing statements, entirely erroneous as to matters of fact, and deductions from these supposed facts quite as erroneous, all tending to produce unfavorable impressions respecting the treaty, and the correspondence, and every body who had a hand in it—I say, it could hardly have been expected by any body that I should sit here and hear all this, and keep my peace. The country knows that I am here. It knows what I have heard, again and again, from day to day; and if statements of fact, wholly incorrect, are made here, in my hearing, and in my presence, without reply or answer from me, why, shall we not hear in all the contests of party and elections hereafter, that this is a fact, and that is a fact, because it has been stated where and when an answer could be given, and no answer was given? It is my purpose, therefore, to give an answer here, and now, to whatever has been alleged against the treaty, or the correspondence.

Mr. President, in the negotiation of 1842, and in the correspondence, I acted as Secretary of State under the direction, of course, of the President of the United States. But, sir, in matters of high importance, I shrink not from the responsibility of any thing I have ever done under any man's direction. Wherever my name stands I am ready to answer it, and to defend that with which it is connected. I am here to-day to take upon myself—without disrespect to the Chief Magistrate under whose direction I acted—and for the purposes of this discussion, the whole responsibility of every thing that has my name connected with it, in the negotiation and correspondence. Sir, the treaty of Washington was not entered into to settle any—or altogether for the purpose of settling any—new, arising questions. The matters embraced in that treaty, and in the correspondence accompanying it, had been interesting subjects in our foreign relations for fifty years—unsettled for fifty years—agitating and annoying the councils of the country, and threatening to disturb its peace for fifty years. And my first duty, then, in entering upon such remarks as I think the occasion calls for in regard to one and all of these topics, will be, to treat the subjects in the first place, historically—to show when each arose—what has been its progress in the diplomatic history of the country; and especially to show in what posture each of those important subjects stood at the time when William Henry Harrison acceded to the office of President of the United States. This is my purpose. I do not intend to enter upon any crimination of gentlemen who have filled important situations in the executive government in the earlier, or in the more recent, history of the country. But I intend to show, in the progress of this discussion, the actual position in which things were left in regard to