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He had said that he earnestly desired to see this matter settled by negotiation, and in a peaceful manner ; to bring about this great end, he was willing to do any thing not inconsistent with the honor and the rights of the nation. He would not stand about particular words in the framing of a resolution, but would assent to any thing that might properly aid the Executive in effecting a settlement of the existing difficulty. He was fully prepared to do all that might be thought wise and prudent to bring about that end.

He confessed that, when this question was first presented to him, his impression was unfavorable to notice in any form, nor had his opinion even yet entirely changed. He had supposed that the question could not be in a better posture for compromise than as it then stood. That being his opinion, he had thought that giving this notice and putting an end to the convention of joint occupation, would but disturb the negotiation then in progress. But if he could be satisfied that the notice would not produce this result ; that the President would, after notice given, continue the negotiation and bring it, if possible, to an honorable adjustment, he would go for the resolution with all his heart. If the President desired this measure to enable him to settle the question, Mr. M. would say to him, take the notice and use it fairly for that purpose. He would give it as an instrument of defence, and not of aggression. He would give it to the Executive just as he would give to his friend a deadly weapon to be used by him in self-defence or in the protection of his just rights, but for no other purpose. If, after the exercise of this confidence in his integrity and sincerity of purpose, the President should, after all, make use of it to plunge the nation into war ; if he should employ it only to disturb and impede negotiation and compromise, and throw the country on the hazards of the battle-field, on his own head would rest all the responsibility.

Having come to this conclusion, Mr. M. was willing to vote for the notice, provided it was accompanied with the declaration of the purpose for which alone he was willing to give it.

It was admitted on all sides that we had important territorial rights on the northwest coast. These rights must be defended, and would be. There was no man, he was sure, to be found in that Senate who was unwilling to defend our rights there, in the manner in which they ought to be defended, to the utmost extent.

But the question was, what those rights were—their nature and extent. And here was the point where gentlemen differed. This was the great point in the controversy. They were inchoate rights not yet perfected by being reduced to possession. The object was, by negotiation or otherwise, to reduce these rights, now only inchoate, to actual possession ; to extend the jurisdiction of our laws over the country, to make it our own territory, and to define and establish its boundaries. The question was as to the extent of our rights, and as to the mode in which we should maintain them.

In ascertaining the extent of our rights in Oregon, it was not so much a question of title, compelling those who would discuss it to go into a detailed statement of both the American and the English title, as put forth by the two nations, as it was a question of partition of a country now held in joint occupancy. Both nations claimed to be in possession there. They both claimed a vast uninhabited region of territory, not belonging exclusively to either nation ; which was under no territorial government ; which was uninhabited, in some degree undiscovered, and still to be settled by civilized nations. As to what portion of this country belonged to the United States, he considered had been well settled. Its extent had been limited, and our title to it asser-