

with the manufactures of England in other regions of the globe. The tariff part of the message is more than a salvo to the Oregon part. Whilst the Oregon part of the message makes John Bull frown, the free trade part of it drives that frown from his brow; and he delightedly exults in contemplating the commercial and manufacturing prosperity which will enure to him, when, by the policy of the President, the manufacturing interests of this country shall be broken down, and the country thereby stored to a commercial dependance on England, like that which existed when these States were her colonies. The British Government, then, will make no war with the United States about Oregon, whilst our Government offers her, as an equivalent for her claims in that territory, commercial advantages far more valuable to her than the undisputed possession of the whole of Oregon. Give England satisfactory assurance that the policy recommended by the President will be the permanent policy of this nation, and she will, to secure such a result, give us the whole of Oregon; and I am sure that she would not cede us the Canadas also. For what purpose does she maintain her colonial system, at a vast expense, other than to promote her commercial and manufacturing interests. Guaranty to her these interests, and she would gladly release herself of the expense of governing and defending those colonies. Has our minister in London been instructed to urge these considerations upon the British Government, to dispose that Government to liberal concessions with respect to the Oregon controversy? Has he been instructed to negotiate a commercial treaty with that Government, which would like to know. I desire to see those instructions. There will be no war about Oregon, unless, by some act of extreme folly, this Government shall place the question in such an attitude that England cannot make the concessions demanded by our Government, without sacrificing her honor, without losing her high position among the nations.

Gentlemen affect extreme sensitiveness about the honor of the country, as involved in this controversy with England. They assume that "our title to the whole of Oregon is clear and unquestionable," and declare that any adjustment of our controversy with England, which shall give to her any portion of that territory, will be a dishonorable purchase of peace. Can they see no dishonor in adapting the legislation of their country, on questions affecting the interests of our own people and country, to the interests of England? Are they willing to purchase peace, in a controversy about a comparatively valueless territory, by sacrificing, as a peace offering, that wise system of policy which was founded by the fathers of this republic—by surrendering that policy which has made our country grow, and prosper, and flourish, as no nation ever before grew, and prospered, and flourished?

But, Mr. Chairman, the clock admonishes me that the hour to which I am limited by a rule of the House is rapidly passing away, and that I must hasten to some other considerations which I desire briefly to present to this committee. Is the title of the United States to the whole of the Oregon territory, or any part of it, a perfect title—a "clear and unquestionable" title? I am not a lawyer, and am not competent, therefore, to enter into those nice distinctions and technicalities, those refinements of logic and argument which have been very properly introduced in this debate by gentlemen learned in the law, to determine the doubtful questions of fact and of law involved in that title. I know only the law with which I am familiar (and I am not sure that I am even master of that law), the law of common sense. I have looked into the facts of the case, I have listened to the arguments, and, as far as I have been able, have made myself acquainted with the principles of public law applicable to the controversy; and it appears to me, that on every point of the controversy there is a plausible conflict between the claims of England and the United States; and if all the facts which either nation contends for, as the basis of their respective claims, be admitted as true, yet, when you apply the admitted principles of public law to the claim of either nation, no principle of that law can be found which will determine either nation to have a perfect title to the whole or any part of Oregon; and it is my deliberate opinion, formed after the most careful examination of the subject, that, if the Emperor of China had the power now to make a settlement