

SPEECH.

On the resolution giving the twelve months' notice for the termination of the joint occupancy of the Oregon territory.

Mr. YELL obtained the floor and addressed the committee as follows:

Mr. Y. said he had not the vanity to suppose he could convince any gentleman of the committee what course they ought to pursue upon this great question. He was satisfied what ought to be his own. He presumed the opinions of every gentleman of the House were differently made up. His own had been for some time. In fact, it was so when the question first came up. His mind had never varied for a moment, and happily for him, his constituents always knew where to find him.

He was much gratified that he had for once an opportunity, at least on one single question, to agree with his whig friends. This was no political question, but one involving our national interest and honor. He rejoiced that gentlemen belonging to each of the great political parties of the country had come out, in the most decisive manner, in favor of the proposed notice, and were willing to adopt the course which he considered the only proper and safe one—not that he had a confidence that their course was correct because he agreed with them. No doubt, on a great national question like this, they would each decide for themselves, without any regard to what might be the opinion, either of the whole House, or of any particular member of it.

Nor was he at all uneasy in finding himself on this occasion in company with the venerable gentleman from Massachusetts, over the way, [Mr. ADAMS.] His constituents would not suspect him of a political sin on that account. We sometimes find ourselves with strange bed-fellows; and on questions of politics, it would be "*prima facie*" evidence that he was wrong to be found voting with him; but he was ready at any time to take the opinion of that gentleman on a great national question, as soon as any man's in the Union. Other gentlemen had a right to think as they pleased. His party attachments and his political integrity were not to be suspected. Many good democrats were opposed to this notice. Many decided whigs zealously supported it. He sincerely hoped that this question would prove a great American platform, on which all could find room to stand; he certainly was not inclined to drive from it all who did not exactly agree with him.

It was a question on which the purest democrats might honorably differ from each other, nor was the democracy as intolerant as may be supposed; they did not draw a line on 49° or 54° 40', and say to their fellow-democrats, come up to this, or calculate on being read out of your political church. If that was supposed to be the game, though he was a democrat "dyed in the wool," he greatly feared that upon some questions he would stand in danger of being read out himself.

In going into an examination of our title to Oregon, (which was the only question he meant at this time to investigate,) he intended to ascertain whether Oregon "*was ours*;" and when that was settled, he would agree to no compromise, either with whig or democrat with England or any other power. If our title was good he would have every foot of it, or a fight.

Mr. Y. said he came from a land of peace, and he represented a moral and religious people; but they would never be found compromising the interests of their country, or sacrificing her honor to avoid a war.

We are charged with being associated with the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. ADAMS] as our leader, and his former course is reviewed on this question. As to that venerable gentleman, he required no defence from him. He was on the latest stage of life, and would be soon gone from among us, in the common course of events; he had no longer any objects of earthly ambition, other than the upright and conscientious discharge of his duty, and he is fully competent to defend himself.

The gentleman from South Carolina [Mr. WOODWARD] had said, how was it in 1818, that he [Mr. ADAMS] was for letting this question remain in abeyance, and yet now was as eager for having it settled? Why did he not still continue his former system of "*masterly inactivity*?"

It seemed, then, that the gentleman from South Carolina was on the same side with the gentleman from Massachusetts. In 1827, he continued the same "*inactivity*" he had advocated in 1818. The gentleman, however, only went with the venerable gentleman from Massachusetts as long as that gentleman would go with him: as soon as he came over to the American side of the question, the gentleman