

SPEECH

The Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union having under consideration a resolution reported by the Committee on Foreign Affairs, entitled "A resolution of notice to Great Britain to annul and abrogate the convention between Great Britain and the United States of August 6th, 1827, relative to the country on the northwest coast of America, westward of the Stony mountains, commonly called Oregon"—

Mr. DELANO, of Ohio, having obtained the floor, addressed the committee as follows:

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have not sought, nor obtained, the floor with the hope of saying any thing new upon the subject now before the committee; nor am I vain enough to believe that it will be in my power to express what I wish to say, in such a manner as to deserve or obtain the attention of its members. I have, therefore, no objections to make against the hour rule. It will afford me time to say more than I desire, and probably more than I ought. I consider it a labor-saving, as it certainly is a *time-saving*, invention.

It is probable, sir, that in the vote which I shall shortly give upon this subject, I may differ with many persons, in whose judgment I have great confidence, for whose opinions I entertain a deep respect, and with whom it is my pride and pleasure, generally, to act. I cannot consent to make this separation, be it right or wrong, without briefly giving my constituents the reasons which induce it. This being done, I shall be satisfied to leave it for them to decide whether I have, or not, a good reason for "the hope that is within me."

What, Mr. Chairman, is the precise question before us? It is this: Shall we give Great Britain notice of our intention to terminate, (at the expiration of twelve months after such notice has been given,) the 3d article of the convention of 1818, which was renewed in 1827, and by which the country west of the Stony mountains, called Oregon, with its harbours, bays, creeks, and navigable rivers, was declared free and open to the subjects of both nations, without prejudice to the rights of either.

It will be seen at a glance, that this question rises above all party considerations, as it does above all local and individual interests. It is national—not sectional. This Union, from east to west, from north to south, from centre to circumference, is every where interested in its decision. With these views in regard to it, I have given the question the best examination in my power, and by the results of this examination I shall be governed in my vote.

I am of opinion, sir, that many foreign considerations not germane to the subject have been introduced into this debate. I will not pause here to refer to these, but will state at once what I consider the true criteria for deciding whether this notice had better be given, or omitted.

First, then, as it appears to me, the nature and validity of our title to the Oregon country should influence our action; and, secondly, the effects of giving, or failing to give the notice, as well upon the country, generally, as upon our rights to the territory in controversy, ought carefully to be considered and estimated.

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