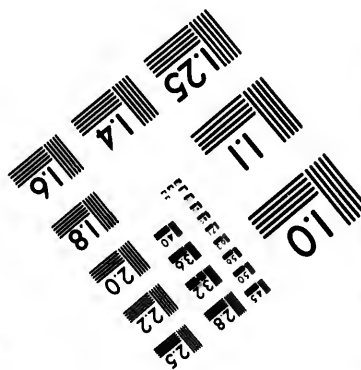
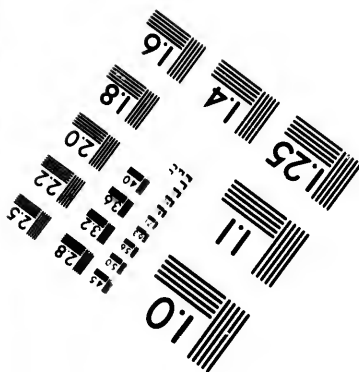
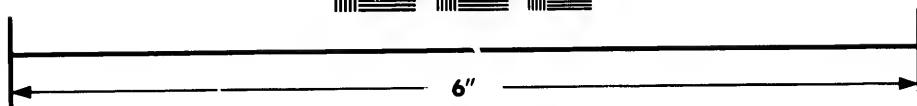
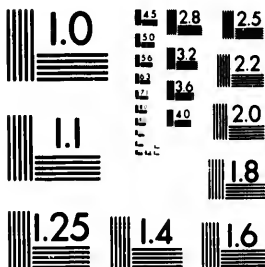


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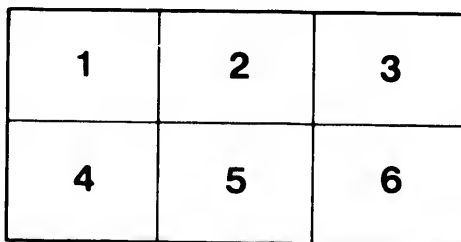
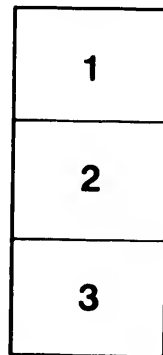
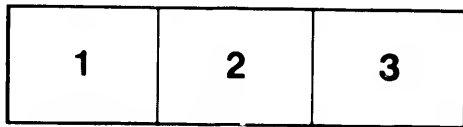
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# SPEECH

OF

## HON. WILLIAM ALLEN, OF OHIO,

DELIVERED

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES, FEBRUARY 10 AND 11, 1846.

*On our relations with England—being the opening Speech pending the Oregon Notice.*

---

The Joint Resolution for giving the notice to terminate the convention between the United States and Great Britain, relative to the Oregon territory, being under consideration—

Mr. ALLEN said :

Mr. PRESIDENT: It is now sixty-nine years since these States declared themselves to be "absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown," and to be "free and independent States." It is now sixty-three years since Great Britain, by a solemn treaty, acknowledged these States "to be free, sovereign, and independent States." And yet, sir, at this very hour, over a square of eight hundred miles of our soil, British law still prevails—British tribunals are in session—British judgments are rendered—British executions are enforced—British penalties are inflicted. Throughout the last twenty-eight years our Government has sought, by unintermitted efforts of argument and negotiation, by almost humiliating concessions, to induce Great Britain peaceably to withdraw her law from our soil—to withdraw her baseless pretensions to our territory, and thus to remove this great cause of impending difficulties. These efforts have all ended in the communication of the fact, by the President, to Congress, at the opening of our session, that "all attempts at compromise having failed, it becomes the duty of Congress to consider what measures it may be proper to adopt, for the security and protection of our citizens, now inhabiting, or who may hereafter inhabit Oregon, and for the maintenance of our just title to that territory."

Thus, is this matter turned over by the Executive to Congress. It is now here—it is in our hands. We cannot, therefore, if we would, evade the responsibility of action. If we adopt the measures recommended by the President, we shall secure the territory, and may hold forth to the world an indisputable title in vindication of our acts. If we refuse to adopt them, we shall have deeply perjured our rights, and incurred the world's suspicion of having refused to act, because we dared not. For, sir, when all the arguments urged for delay are duly considered, they will be found to resolve themselves into the single question, Whether this Government has the nerve, the energy of purpose, to enforce its rights against Great Britain? As to the fact of our title, it is now too late to treat that, as an open question. The business before us is, the business of action. The time for the discussion of the title is past, when we have begun to advance towards the possession of the object. Upon the question of title, as a government, and as a nation, we stand committed before the world. We have, to all mankind, proclaimed our title.

To this position, we stand committed, by a series of State papers, stretching through the fourth of a century. We stand committed, by a solemn treaty with Russia, of the seventeenth of April, eighteen hundred and twenty-four, by which we assumed exclusive ownership, over the whole territory in question. We stand committed, by a vote of this body, at a former session, upon the passage of a bill which

carried our title up to 54° 40'. We stand committed, by the vote of the House of Representatives, at the very last session, upon the passage of a bill asserting our title up to the same point. We stand committed, by the voice of the nation, expressed in the election of the present Chief Magistrate, upon the issue made and proclaimed by the Baltimore Convention. We stand committed, by the declaration of the President, made from the eastern portico of the Capitol, with the oath of office fresh upon his lips. We stand committed, by his Annual Message, at the opening of our present session. We stand committed, by a vote of three to one, and one over, in the House of Representatives, within the last twenty-four hours. By all these acts, in all these forms, have we proclaimed the deep-seated conviction of every American mind, as to the strict justice of our claim, and the absolute frivolity of the pretensions of England. Thus, do we stand in the presence of all nations, asserting an indisputable right to a contiguous territory. And now, sir, it remains to be seen, whether this Government possesses the force of will—the firmness of resolution—to maintain that claim. This is really, the great, the only question before us. It is the energy of our institutions—it is their inherent power of rising up to a great emergency, that we are about to put to the test. Should our councils be found too timid, our system too languid, to offer efficient resistance to foreign aggression, to what danger may not this fatal secret expose us? It is in this view, that our controversy with England becomes so vitally important. It is in this view, therefore, that I shall proceed to consider it, in connexion with the relations which the two political systems of Europe and America, bear to each other.

Sir, the great fact, which gives character to the politics of this age, is the conspiracy of five monarchs, who, by their coalition with each other, have concentrated in their hands alone, the power of giving law to the whole of Europe; whilst, by their arms and intrigues, they are now exerting an influence over the rest of the world, which threatens to bring all its parts in subjection to them. Politically, and as independent sovereignties, all the ancient subdivisions of Europe—all the secondary States, which formerly balanced each other, and by their union, checked the ambition of the greater Powers—have ceased to exist. From the confederated thrones of England, France, Austria, Russia, and Prussia, the mandate now goes forth which regulates the whole European system.

This, sir, is a new thing in the world. The present century has brought it about. The attempt, and the failure, of a single monarch to establish universal dominion, is a spectacle often witnessed before. But the coalition of five thrones to effect that object—the conspiracy of five powerful monarchs, to enforce, by their united arms, not only despotism upon their own subjects, but colonial vassalage upon the rest of mankind, is an experiment hitherto untried. It is an experiment, however, which recent and current events show to be, not less formidable than new, to the world. So far as Europe is concerned, the experiment is already successful. The dominion of the five master-monarchs is there undisturbed, either by vassal princes or suffering subjects. Two millions of bayonets enforce passive obedience to their will, over the whole of that continent, whilst another million, is extending their sway over the other quarters of the globe.

It was the French Revolution, the offspring of our own, that first aroused the European masses, from the silent torpor of centuries. It was in France, that the human mind first began to realize its own debasement, under a social organization which had so long treated nations, as the mere property of kings. That powerful agent, called public opinion, began there to embody itself, and to apply its mighty energies to the work of political reform. Monarchs and princes throughout the continent, taking the alarm, conspired together, and immediately armed to crush, in its

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beginning, this new-born power, which seemed likely to become the master-element, in a new organization.

There and then it was, that the strife began between liberty and privilege—between the people and the kings; and the French nation, as being the first in Europe to speak aloud in behalf of freedom, was therefore, the first assailed, by the confederated ministers of despotism. In justification of their efforts to place, by force, a king over France against the will of the nation, the allied monarchs openly proclaimed the principle, that no people whatever, had the right even to impose restraints upon their sovereign, much less to displace him, however essential to the public happiness such restraints might be. This terrible dogma, the basis of that system which has now given to the five sovereigns of England, France, Austria, Russia, and Prussia, the dictatorship of Europe, was first announced by the then Emperor of Germany and the King of Prussia, in 1792, and repeated, in his manifesto, by the Duke of Brunswick, who, as the leader of their armies, in the invasion of France, threatened, in the name of his masters, death to all Frenchmen, who should adhere to the government of their own choice, in preference to that of a monarch sought to be placed over them, by a foreign enemy. It was to enforce this doctrine on the one hand, and to resist it on the other, that the armed masses of Europe were, for twenty-three years, arrayed against each other, upon the fields of a thousand battles. The result is known.

In that mightiest of struggles, the kings triumphed over their subjects. But the hopes of the vanquished and the fears of the victors, survived the triumph. Those hopes of future success still entertained by the masses, and still threatening to uproot the thrones of the whole swarm of secondary princes, ultimately drove those princes to seek their individual safety against popular outbreaks, under the protection of the five confederated monarchs, by the total surrender of their political independence. This concentration of the whole sovereignty of Europe in five associated crowns—an aggregation of power which now menaces the freedom of the world, and the independence of all nations—was accomplished by the alliance signed at Chaumont, that subsequently signed at London, the treaties of Paris, the negotiations at the Congress of Vienna, and by the several succeeding alliances and compacts; the whole embraced between the years 1813 and 1823. Thus has been consolidated a system, founded upon the brute power of the sword, against the social rights of men. By this system, the perpetuity of hereditary power—of thrones—of orders of nobility—of political abuses—of the wrongs of government—of all the sufferings of the people throughout Europe, have been guaranteed by five monarchs, who stand pledged to each other, and ready to enforce passive obedience, with two millions of bayonets. By this system it is, that these sovereigns have constituted themselves the sole legislators of Europe; have, for all purposes of State, parcelled out among themselves, its whole surface and population; have sought to entail everlasting bondage upon the masses; and have secured themselves against the ambition of each other, by the adjustment of all jurisdictional and territorial disputes. Thus, having taken every precaution against danger from popular movements, as well as against the ambition of each other at home, they are now seeking to extend their system from Europe to the ends of the earth—to make their edicts stand for the law of nations, and to regulate the intercommunications, between all the communities of the world. Under this scheme of universal dominion, what a spectacle does the world, at this moment, present! With the professions of peace and of religion upon their lips, these holy allies are, at this very hour, waging the most cruel and the most causeless wars of spoliation and despotism, against the remotest, the oldest, the youngest, the most numerous, the most defenceless, the most harmless portions of mankind.

With this state of things before us—with England and Russia reducing old Asia to



their sway—France overrunning Africa—England and France united to reduce South America—England seeking to stretch her empire over our own soil of Oregon—France and England seizing upon every island in every ocean—with a family alliance between the throne of France and the only throne in South America—with France and England but lately united in intrigue to prevent Texas from entering our Union—with the official announcement, by the chief Minister of France, of his wish to apply the European principle of the balance of power to the independent governments of America,—with this state of things before us, where, I ask, if the United States shall falter, where has the world another friend left, strong enough to secure it against the universal dominion of these conspirator-kings?

And how, sir, stands the case with the two Americas? This great continent (for I shall speak of them as one continent) embraces one-third of the habitable portion of the globe. The whole of it, from Cape Horn to the Arctic Circle, was, within eighty years past, and the most of it, within thirty, subject, as colonies, to European monarchs. With the exception of the present British dependencies on our north, the whole of these numerous colonies, in both Americas, successfully revolted, and, excepting Brazil, on the eastern side of South America, established for themselves their independence as nations, and *Republican forms of government, founded upon the sovereignty of the people, and excluding the principle of hereditary power.* These colonies having become thus independent, though feeble Republican States, and justly fearful that the very form of their government would be, of itself, a sufficient reason for the monarchs of Europe to combine against them, formed among themselves, in both Americas, such confederations, as their geographical proximity permitted. From this, has resulted the great political fact, so important to be kept in mind, that here, upon this continent, are to be found the only Republican institutions, based upon the sovereignty of the people, and excluding hereditary power, that exist in the world. These governments, some fifteen or eighteen in number, compose the popular system of the two Americas, and cover the whole of their habitable surface, except Brazil in the south, and the colonies of England on the north. Yet in all this system, there is but a single member—the United States—which possesses the power of successful self-defence, against foreign aggression.

All the other members united, could oppose no efficient resistance to the ambition of the allied sovereigns. Those monarchs calmly looked on, and beheld with pleasure, the dismemberment of the old Spanish monarchy, by the revolt of Mexico and South America, because, they desired to participate in the rich trade of those regions, and hoped that the confusion and feebleness of untried popular institutions, would enable them in future, to appropriate those vast countries as colonies, to themselves.

That hope, two of these Powers are now openly seeking to realize—a hope which menaces the whole popular system upon this continent, and which no power on earth can defeat, but the Government of this Union, the natural and the rightful guardian, because it is the parent-power, of the system. If, therefore, this Government shall allow itself to be intimidated into the surrender of Oregon, to Great Britain—if it shall allow itself to be thus belted about, still more closely, by the iron arm of the British empire—if it shall allow that monarchy to extend and consolidate its kingly institutions still more upon our borders—if it shall exhibit these signs of apparent weakness, will not such an exhibition be the signal of invitation to the allied sovereigns, to strike down the Republican governments of the South, one by one, until we ourselves shall be compelled, at last, to arm, when all the rest are lost, to defend our own independence and freedom? Yes, sir, it is upon the power of this nation—it is upon the readiness of those who administer its government to give full scope to the mighty energies of this great people, upon the first threat of danger, that the fate of

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these Republics depends. Can any man doubt it? Can any man behold what France, England and Russia are about in the world—behold what the two former are, at this very moment, doing upon this continent—can any man see these things, and yet doubt that, but for the formidable power of the United States, these monarchs would overrun the two Americas, and obliterate free institutions forever?

With these facts before us, does it become us, as the representatives of a free and gallant people—does it comport with the interest and honor, with the safety of this Government—does it become our glorious position as the first Republic on earth, and the safeguard of all others, to cringe, and quail, and cower to Great Britain, as often as she chooses to set up a claim, without right, to our soil, and to shake her trident in our face?

The answer to this question, sir, is the point, and the only one, involved in the matter before us. For most certain it is, that as a free and independent nation, we shall cease to exist, when we cease to be formidable to our enemies. The power which alone can secure us against aggression, and, with us, the whole popular system, is the belief of the world that we are ready for war, and have the means to wage it with success, whenever the rights or honor of the nation require it to be waged. If, instead of a willingness to stand forth in a great emergency, we show a disposition to truckle and falter before the threats of others, the last obstruction will be removed to the ambition of confederated kings. For, it is not the decrepitude of Asia, nor the barbarism of Africa, nor the feebleness of Mexican, of Central, or of South America; nor is it the disjointed power of the islands scattered through the world, that can limit the dominion of these kings. It is the United States—it is the great Democracy of the North, which holds that ambition at bay, that would otherwise encircle the world, with its arms and its chains.

Shall I be asked, what has all this to do with Oregon?—with the question before us? Shall I be asked, "Are you in favor of war?" These are idle questions, which it requires no wisdom to put, and but little to answer. Every Senator knows that our title is, in truth and in justice, clear and perfect, to the territory in question. Every Senator knows that Great Britain cannot offer even the decent apology of a mistake, for having advanced pretensions to its ownership. Every Senator knows that more than the fourth of a century has been wasted, in unavailing efforts, to induce the withdrawal of those pretensions. Every Senator knows, that we have no way left, but to extend our laws over the territory, or surrender it to Great Britain. Shall we extend them? If we do, and she arm to resist their execution, we must meet that resistance, also, by arms. The question of war is, therefore, with her, not with us, to decide. If we refuse to extend our laws, but one reason has been, can be given—the fear of England. If, then, this fear prevails, how stand we in the judgment of the world? What will be the effect of this disclosure of the inefficiency of our Government, for the defence of its own soil? What will be the effect, when it shall be seen that this Republic—the only one which has been thought sufficiently strong to guaranty the safety of its neighboring and kindred Governments against European monarchs—what will be the effect, when even we are found willing, for the sake of peace, to allow Great Britain to extend her system of monarchy, not only upon this continent, but over a part of our own soil? If we do this, will these sovereigns longer hesitate in their designs? Will they not, on the contrary, take courage from our apparent want of it? Will they not advance in their purpose of universal dominion? Will they not reduce the Southern Republics of the continent, and force us, at last, to fight in their defence, as an indispensable preliminary, to the final defence of ourselves? These, sir, are my views of the moral involved in this controversy.

And now, sir, I shall proceed to look briefly into the motives by which Great Britain has ever regulated her conduct towards the United States. This I deem necessary, in order to understand the secret springs of the pending difficulty.

Sir, it is in the social nature of her empire, that these motives, are to be found. They have originated, not in the whims of this statesman or of that. They are the product of no arbitrary theory, of one party, or of the other. They spring from those vital laws of her social being, which prescribe her legislation, which overbear all statesmen and all parties alike, and bring all into subjection to an overruling political necessity.

The insular position of the parent-centre of that Government, first gave a maritime direction to all her interests. Those interests required and sought colonies, and by planting them the world over, converted an insular kingdom into an extended colonial empire, based upon commerce, and upheld by the frail security of commercial credit. To plant colonies, it became necessary for her to obtain territory at remote points, often pre-occupied by others. She *purchased* no such territory. To purchase, required the consent of others—a thing not always attainable. She, therefore, simplified her mode of acquisition, by reducing it to a system which had but one principle in it, and required but one will to execute it. That principle was, to start causes of quarrel, to raise questions about navigation or commerce, to set up claims to rivers or territory, and to enforce her pretensions, however unjust, by the terror of her arms against the timid, and by the use of them against the brave. When successful in one claim, no matter how, she has instantly started another. Thus, everywhere, has it been her policy to create and keep open causes of quarrel with distant nations, that she might ever have ready some pretext for seizing upon the territory of others, as often as the spread of her commerce required new colonies. With us, her policy has been, in principle, the same, though more complicated in form.

Our strength, and the danger with which it menaces her adjoining possessions in the event of war, has imparted more circumspection to her aggressions. In dealing with us, therefore, she has mixed up with her system of terror, all the subsidiary elements of diplomatic duplicity. Time, space, and persons, are taken into her calculations. She raises her questions of dispute at different periods; she lays her claims of territory at different points; she employs cunning and finesse to postpone their settlement to the auspicious hour, when terror can best promote her purposes, and then, by negotiation, adjusting but one question at a time, she starts others in its stead, and holds them in readiness for the future, when another auspicious hour shall arrive. In a word, her policy, as it regards us, has ever been, to start new questions of dispute when adjusting old ones; to threaten war in every instance as a consequence of our refusal to yield; and at the same time, declaiming about the horrors of a war between two such nations, profess her deep solicitude for the maintenance of the peace and harmony of the world. The success of this policy has illustrated alike, the forecast of her ambition and the triumph of her duplicity. Most profoundly has she estimated every local circumstance peculiar to our condition—every accident to which the miscellaneous interests of our country, its changing legislation, or the personal character of its public functionaries, might give rise. These things she has watched with an unbroken gaze. Never has she let the hour pass unimproved, when she saw, in the condition of our affairs, or the character of our public men, the prospect of pressing an old claim with success, or of starting a new one, with profit. But, sir, the gravity of the matter before us, justice to the two nations whose interests are involved, require that I should reduce these generalities to a form more exact and specific. I proceed, therefore, to well-known facts, disclosed by past and cor-

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roborated by current events. I allude not to the numberless aggressions committed by England against us—aggressions beginning before the treaty of peace of 1733 was dry—aggressions extending to, and resulting in the late war. I say nothing of the manifold outrages committed upon our commerce—nothing of the impressment of our seamen—of her studied delay in delivering certain posts and islands, as by that treaty she was bound—of her protracted refusal to execute the boundary, as well as the commercial provisions of that treaty—of her constant efforts to traduce the character and outrage the flag of our country, in all parts of the world. I say nothing of her horrible practice, during the late war, of bribing the pitiless Indian to butcher our women and children of the West, whilst asleep, at night, in their cabins. I say nothing of her having, within a few years past, despatched an armed force, at midnight, to invade our shores—to board an American steamer moored to our soil—to cut it from its moorings—to murder a part of its crew—to leave others for the murder of the flames—to put the torch to the boat, and then to send her, freighted with the dead bodies of our countrymen, headlong over the cataract of Niagara;—of these things I speak not. No, I shall begin with the treaty signed at Ghent on the 24th of December, 1814.

And now, sir, mark, as I proceed, the exact conformity of the facts, to the policy I have ascribed to Great Britain.

That treaty, terminated the late war. Upon its face, it professed to consolidate peace between the two countries, by providing for the adjustment of outstanding difficulties. From the acknowledgment of our Independence, questions of boundary and territorial rights had been in discussion; and, as it seems to have been the leading object of the negotiations at Ghent, to adjust those questions, three-fourths of the treaty, were devoted to that purpose. The *first* of these questions related to the right to certain islands in the bays of Passamaquoddy and Fundy; the *second*, to that part of the line of boundary, from the point where the forty-fifth degree of north latitude strikes the river Iroquois, to the water communications between the lakes Huron and Superior; the *third*, to that part of the line from the point I have last named, to the northwestern point of the Lake-of-the-Woods.

Now, sir, I desire that this fact should be kept constantly in mind, that these *three* were, *with one exception*, the *only* questions of territorial right or boundary which had ever been started, *down to the meeting* of the negotiators at Ghent. I say, with *one exception*, and that was the question of boundary upon the line *between the Lake-of-the-Woods and the Rocky Mountains*. Let it be remembered, too, that this *old* question was left *unsettled, unprovided for*, by the treaty of Ghent; and that to this old question, thus carefully excluded by the *British* negotiators, *they* there, in that very negotiation, added a *new* one, also a question of boundary. Yes; by them, pending that negotiation, a new claim was, for the first time, set forth to a hitherto, undisputed part of our territory—to a part of the now sovereign State of Maine. And, sir, in order that this new pretension might take an enduring form, and stand recorded for future dispute, the British negotiators contrived to assign it a place upon the face of the treaty. Thus, in that very negotiation—a negotiation intended to terminate existing war, and professing to remove all causes of war in future—the British negotiators studiously *held back* one *old*, and as studiously *put forward* one *new* question of boundary, upon the very same line, of which the other questions formed a part.

You will observe, sir, that in this connexion, I have called not the name of Oregon. No, this question, though it embraced the western end of the very same line, (that between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean,) was *then*, unheard of—unheard of, either *before* or *during* the negotiation at Ghent. So far from having

even hinted the existence of such a claim, the British negotiators did not so much as name the country, westward of the mountains. And why was this? Because, by the rule of England's policy, the occasion was still ahead, when she might hope to put forth this claim with better prospect of success. But of this hereafter. For the present, I must return to the negotiations at Ghent, that we may see in what manner the *old* question was excluded, and the *new*, put forward. And first, as to the *old* one—that of the line between the Lake-of-the-Woods and the mountains. From the peace of 1783, that line had been disputed. Three times previously to the treaty of Ghent, had it been the subject of formal negotiation—in 1794, in 1803, and in 1807. In the last of these efforts, the negotiators on *both* sides had *agreed* upon the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude, as the line of boundary, but no convention to that effect, was then concluded. That question being, therefore, open, when the negotiators convened at Ghent, the American, proposed to the British, its final adjustment with the other questions of boundary. And further, in order that no cause might be found for excluding it, they proposed it *in the identical form*, upon which the negotiators on *both* sides, had *agreed*, in 1807. But no. The British negotiators, having determined that it should be kept out for future use, met the proposition by proposing to add a condition, which they knew the American negotiators could not, as they did not, accept. This condition was, that the subjects of England should have, through the United States to the Mississippi, the free right of way, and the free navigation of that river.

Such were the devices by which the adjustment of the *old* question was then evaded—that of the line between the Lake-of-the-Woods and the mountains.

And now, sir, let it be seen by what other device, the *new* question was then got up—that of the line, forming the boundary of Maine. Let it be seen by what devices it was set down in the treaty of Ghent for that future negotiation, by which that State has since been dismembered, and the mountain chain which, before, we held, as a military barrier against England, given to her, as a military barrier, against us.

These, then, were the facts: When the negotiations *commenced*, the British negotiators proposed to the American, that the United States should cede to Great Britain that part of the present State of Maine which formed an angle between the two British provinces of New Brunswick and Canada, in order to straighten the communications between those provinces. This they proposed should be done, by a revision of the old, and hitherto undisputed boundary, as fixed by the treaty of 1783. By the very terms of this proposition of cession, the British negotiators acknowledged the right of the United States to the territory, which they sought then, to acquire. This territory had ever been included within our organized limits; Great Britain had never, *up to that moment*, dropped a hint impeaching our title or suggesting any pretension, upon her part, to an inch of that territory. Never had she even hinted the existence of any doubt or uncertainty, as to the old boundary in that region. Nor did her negotiators *then*, at the *commencement* of the negotiations, drop such a hint. But when the American negotiators treated this proposition for a cession of the territory, as an effort of the British Government to dismember the United States, stated their own want of authority to make such cession, and declared that they would never, therefore, subscribe a stipulation to that effect: when this was done, the British negotiators, seeing that all prospect of obtaining the territory *by cession*, was at an end, instantly changed their position, and then, for the first time, *claimed* the territory for Great Britain, as a matter of *right*—as a thing to which she had *always* had a *title*. Then for the first time, did they set up the shameless pretension, that the true line of boundary was *not*, where it had ever been known and recognised to be, but that it ran *through* that territory, so as to throw to Great Britain, as a matter of right, the identical angle which, but a few weeks before, they had asked our negotiators

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cede, as a thing belonging to the United States, and desired by Great Britain. Under these circumstances it was, that our negotiators (I speak not of the wisdom of their conduct in this particular) so far yielded us to allow an article to be inserted in the treaty, providing for the re-survey of the line. Thus, was this *new* question of boundary started at Ghent, by the British negotiators, and together with the *old* question, of which I have spoken, kept in reserve by them, for the future use of their Government in treating with ours.

Here, then, it is to be remembered, that at the *conclusion* of the treaty of Ghent, *two* questions of boundary *remained* to be settled; one an old one, the other a new one; the first, that from the Lake-of-the-Woods to the Rocky Mountains; the second, that through the territory of Maine.

And now, sir, I come to the next negotiation in the order of time, that which ended in the convention of 20th of October, 1818. This, too, had the adjustment of boundaries for its object. And what was the result? With a steadiness of purpose which system alone can give, Great Britain again pursued, and again obtained, the desired end. *Two* questions of boundary remained unadjusted, when the negotiations *were* opened—the *old* one, and the *new* one, of which I have spoken. Were both of them settled? No, sir, no. Faithful to herself—faithful to the unbending principles of her system, Great Britain found means to adjust the *old* one only, and to hold the *new* one still in *reserve*, for the future. In that convention, the line from the Lake-of-the-Woods to the mountains, was fixed; the other, through Maine, was left to a more auspicious hour. But was this all? By no means. That would have been but half the fruit of her policy. Too wise to adjust *both* questions at once, she was too wise also, to adjust even one, without being ready with *another* to take its place. *Then* it was, therefore, that her claim to *Oregon* was first brought forth—then it was that, as at Ghent, she had caused her *then new* claim on the line of Maine to be set down on the face of the treaty, for after arrangement, so here again, she caused this *yet newer* claim to *Oregon*, to be fixed upon the face of the convention, likewise, for after adjustment. *Two* questions, therefore, remained to be settled when the convention was signed—the *new* one, of the Maine line, first started at Ghent, and since settled by the Ashburton treaty; and the still *newer one* of *Oregon*, started in this last negotiation, and perpetuated to this hour, by the convention of the 6th of August, 1827.

In the order of time, the next negotiation, is that which terminated in the Ashburton treaty. And to this, the most important of all, I desire the especial attention of the Senate. I desire it, because in this transaction, more than in all others, the policy of Great Britain—that policy which has resulted so profitably to her, so disastrously to our interests—is displayed, not merely in the results, but in every feature upon the face of the correspondence. And here, in the first place, let it be remembered, that when this negotiation began, not only did the *two* questions of boundary—that of Maine and that of *Oregon*—stand open for adjustment, but other questions, also of the greatest moment. These were, the question of the “Creole,” involving the safety of a large interest peculiar to the States of the South; the question of the “*Caroline*,” involving the integrity of our soil, and the violated honor of our country; the question of “impressment and the right of search,” involving the freedom of the seas, the independence of our flag, and the security of our commerce throughout the world. These were the questions, every one of which, as well as the two questions of boundary, had been discussed between the two Governments, but remained still open when Lord Ashburton arrived. He came, in what character? That of a “Plenipotentiary of her Britannic Majesty on an extraordinary and special mission to the United States.” He came, with what object? With an “unfeigned desire to settle this (the Maine

boundary) and *all other questions* of difference between us, (the two Governments,) on principles of conciliation and justice."

Such was the Minister, such the objects of his mission, as expressly declared by himself, in that part of the correspondence with which the negotiation began. And who was the man thus commissioned by England to discharge these important duties in her behalf? The very man, above all others, best suited to the work his Government desired to be done. England knew full well the circumstances in which our Government was placed. She knew the interests she had at stake. She knew the auspicious hour had arrived to secure those interests. She knew how to select an agent best fitted to the exigencies of the case. Lord Ashburton had acquired the distinction of being the first merchant and banker in the world. He had been in the United States. Circumstances, peculiarly interesting to himself, had attracted his special attention to American affairs, and to the men who managed them. His habits and manners had been formed by a life of business, and were therefore assimilated to those of the business people of America. Never was a Minister more wisely selected. For, nothing but a plain, blunt business man, as he seemed to be, he was nevertheless, fresh from a school, where all the mysterious means by which diplomacy is rendered successful, had long been, and still are taught by men, who, by these means, have carried the laws of England around the circle of the earth. Lord Ashburton understood his mission. All the elements, by which his success was to be rendered certain, had been put in requisition before his departure from home. The British Cabinet had already prepared the way, which was to lead to the consummation of his object. They had sent a *war panic* to the United States, in advance of his advent. They had no trouble to do this. It was a thing they had often done before; and will do again, as often as a war-panic is found the cheapest means, of extorting concessions from us. How easy was the process? I will imagine the scene. I will imagine the British Minister, for Foreign Affairs, to have invited to his presence, a select few of the chief merchants and bankers of London and Liverpool engaged in American trade and stocks; and, therefore, connected with commercial houses and stockbrokers in our Atlantic cities. I will imagine him to address them thus: "Gentlemen, it is the interest of her Majesty's Government that her Majesty should have a part of the territory of Maine, in order to shorten the route, and facilitate the march, of her Majesty's armies, to put down republican principles in her Majesty's Canadian provinces. It is also necessary that her Majesty should have another part of the territory of Maine, a mountain barrier of some hundred miles in length, which a council of her Majesty's Generals—over whom Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington presided—have declared would give to her Majesty's armies great advantages over the United States in the event of war. To obtain these great objects, her Majesty's Government have determined to send a special Minister to the Government of the United States. Her Majesty's Government have reason to know, by private advices from that country, that the condition of affairs there, is most auspicious to the policy of her Majesty's Government. It is material, therefore, that her Majesty's Minister should depart on his mission as soon as practicable; but it is even more important, to the success of his mission, that, previously to his departure, the *apprehension of a war with England should be impressed upon the Government of the United States.* With this view, steps have already been taken, as you must have perceived, to have it announced, through the principal journals of London and Liverpool, in the service of her Majesty's Government, that her Majesty's Government was making extraordinary preparations for war, by land and sea—that great activity was observable in her Majesty's dock-yards, in the preparation and armament of ships for sea, peculiarly adapted to distant service—that a

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large fleet had already put to sea, apparently destined to the coast of America—that the Admiralty Board had for weeks held daily sessions—that several regiments of her Majesty's troops had been ordered from the West Indies to her Majesty's provinces in America—that every precaution had been taken to increase and strengthen her Majesty's fortifications and garrisons in those provinces—and that all these preparations were understood to be made in consequence of the threatening aspect which the Maine boundary discussion between the two countries had unhappily assumed—a state of things which had already greatly affected stocks and exchange, and increased the rate of insurance on all vessels engaged in the American trade. The announcement of these matters you have, no doubt, seen in these journals; but as these journals do not circulate in America, it is indispensable to the interests of her Majesty's Government, that the same matters should be announced in the leading journals of the principal cities in that country, particularly New York and Boston. It is likewise of great moment to her Majesty's Government, that, in addition to this announcement, those American journals should strongly depict the horrors and serious consequences of such a war. In a word, it is necessary thus to act through those American journals, first, upon the apprehensions of the commercial, and other great interests, on the seaboard, and next, through those interests, upon the apprehensions of the American Government itself. You now understand the policy of her Majesty's Government; and as Lord Ashburton, her Majesty's Minister, will depart to America within a very few months, and, also, inasmuch as it is deemed vitally important to the interests of her Majesty's Government, that these effective impressions should be made upon the Government of the United States prior to his arrival there, it is the especial desire of her Majesty's Government that each of you, gentlemen, should immediately communicate with your respective houses, agents, and business associates, in America, and especially in the cities of New York and Boston, instructing them to impart to all the public journals in their interest, and within their influence, the proper tone, in accordance with what you are now advised is the policy of her Majesty's Government."

These were the means, and these only, to which, it was necessary for the British Cabinet to resort, in order to get up a war-panic on this side of the Atlantic, in advance of Lord Ashburton's arrival. And what, sir, was the fact? For months before he reached our shores, the leading papers of our seaboard cities began to send forth one wild shriek of horror at the idea of a war with England. The cry was instantly repeated by the presses of a kindred character throughout the interior. Many and mighty were the armaments which, we were told, England was preparing against us, by land and sea. Commerce, it was said, was to be swept from the ocean—cities laid in ashes—the whole face of the land made desolate, and all the countless calamities of the world were to be concentrated upon our devoted country, if we did not yield to the demands of England. The expenditures of such a war, in money and in life, were footed up in columns of frightful figures, and displayed to our people and Government as so many additional reasons why we should surrender to England such parts of our native soil, as she might think proper to exact. To be sure, it was known that all branches of the Government, and the Senate, by a unanimous vote, had declared our title to be perfect to the whole territory in question; to be sure, it was known that all branches of the Government had sworn to support the Constitution; to be sure, it was known that the Constitution forbade the dismemberment of the State of Maine, by the surrender of a territory which lay within her acknowledged limits: no matter for all this—no matter for rights, for honor, for oaths, for the Constitution—*England* wanted the territory, and that was enough. And, therefore, the public man who dared even to hesitate in the surrender of his native soil to a



foreign monarch, was denounced and reviled by these presses, as though fidelity to one's oath and country was a crime, and virtue was alone to be found in perjury and treason.

Thus, then, all things being ready—the war-panic—the bloody humbug having been skilfully conjured up in the United States, and so timed as to strike the two Houses of Congress at the very moment of their meeting—the departure of Lord Ashburton for America was duly announced in the London and Liverpool papers, and the announcement duly repeated in those of our eastern cities. England, we were told—unambitious, just, generous England—influenced solely by the pious desire to maintain the peace of the world, and to promote the sacred cause of civilization and religion, had graciously condescended to send us a messenger of peace; and, therefore, that Lord Ashburton would be furnished with plenary powers to select such parts of the State of Maine as her Majesty Victoria the First desired to possess. Upon this announcement, real joy took the place of affected terror upon the features of those, who had been the instruments of the war-panic imposture. Their eyes turned toward the ocean, burned to catch the first glimpse of the honor-burdened bark, which had been despatched to our shores, with this especial minister of peace, and gazing, now in this direction, now in that, they were beginning even to rebuke the sluggish elements, when all at once, that bark rose into view. Lord Ashburton had arrived. They hailed his advent, as that of one, who had come to rescue an otherwise ruined world. They followed him whithersoever he went, obsequious to his beck. On his side, his lordship, fully understanding this farce of the war-panic party, and knowing that the policy of his Cabinet required him to act out his part in the plot, threw into his face the alternating light of hope and gloom of despair. Unoffending in his manners to any, he was gay or grave, gentle or abrupt by turn, and concealing, under apparent frankness, the quiet craft of an old diplomatist, he expressed in his bearing, equally, a solicitude for peace and an apprehension of war.

At length the hour for action had arrived. Lord Ashburton came to the capital. On our part, the wise man of the East, [Mr. Webster,] then in the State Department, was commissioned, by the President, to cut the State of Maine in two, and to deliver over to her Majesty's Minister such portion, as her Majesty desired. The process and the form of delivery was to be styled a negotiation, in order that it might seem to the world, that our Secretary had at least talked some little about the matter, before he agreed to the surrender. His lordship and our Secretary were not strangers. They had met in London before. "They knew each other," "both for good and ill." They knew each other's objects, and dispositions, and had, therefore, no difficulty in agreeing *not to keep protocols or written memoranda* of the transactions, upon which they were about to enter. This point being settled, they proceeded.

But, inasmuch as it had been the policy of England, first to get up a war-panic in the United States, that the mission might come with the greater effect, as being the only means of maintaining peace, it was necessary to the success of her duplicity that the Minister should, at the *outset* of the negotiation, *profess* to have *full powers* to settle *all* the outstanding questions of dispute, between the two countries. This profession was necessary, as the mission was declared to be a mission of peace; and because, if a part only of the questions were settled, equally dangerous causes of war might remain in the balance. Lord Ashburton *did*, therefore, in his first note to Mr. Webster, dated at Washington, June 13, 1842, make this profession of full powers, in the following clear and emphatic language:

"The very friendly and cordial reception given by you, sir, as well as by all the authorities of your Government, to the assurance that my mission here, by my sovereign, has been determined by an unfeigned desire to *settle this, and all other* questions of difference, between us on principles of conciliation

and justice, for this purpose.

These facts were stated by Mr. Webster on the 17th, 1842,

"Lord Ashburton settled all matters."

And here the "matters in question" were the "second of view" last one of two countries, mission of questions, powers.

was evaded; boundary; wholly alien had been, of the British with full pregnant with settle every For in the *all*, because demanded

This was a question of settlement as much as our own shores to rot upon back in his

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and justice, forbid me to anticipate the possibility of the failure of our endeavors, applied with sincerity to this purpose."

These *full powers*, thus professed by the British Minister, were fully recognised by Mr. Webster, in his first note responsive to that Minister, dated at Washington, June 17, 1842, and which opens with the following words :

"Lord Ashburton having been charged by the Queen's Government with *full powers to negotiate and settle all matters* in discussion between the United States and England," &c.

And here, sir, let it again be remembered, that the "questions of difference," these "matters in discussion," were five in number: the "Maine boundary," the "Oregon," the "Creole," the "Caroline," and the "impressment and right of search;" the second of which presented a no less dangerous cause of quarrel than the first, and the last one of all being the very same question, out of which the former war between the two countries had grown. Well, sir, Lord Ashburton had come avowedly on a mission of peace, and it was to secure that great object, by the adjustment of *all* these questions, that he, at the outset of the negotiations, professed to have the amplest powers. Were these all settled? No, sir. But, on the contrary, every question was evaded and thrown out of the negotiation, except the single question of the Maine boundary; and that, too, whilst another matter—the African squadron—a matter wholly alien to the professed business of his mission, and about which there never had been, nor ever could be any dispute, was made a part of the treaty, at the instance of the British Minister. Why was this? Why was it, that this minister of peace, with full powers to settle all, left *unsettled*, four of the five questions—two equally pregnant with causes of war? Was it because our Government was unwilling to settle everything, and thus to dispel every cloud that overhung the future? No, sir. For in the correspondence, it appears that Mr. Webster *professed* his readiness to settle *all*, because he knew that the American people were fully aware that their interests demanded that *all*, or *none*, of those difficulties should be settled at the same time. This was a secret known also to England, and therefore Lord Ashburton, in accordance with the perfidious policy of his Government, resolved that, *in the end*, but *one* question should be settled, whilst professing, in the *beginning*, the power and readiness to settle *all*. When, therefore, he had obtained of Mr. Webster a surrender of as much of the State of Maine as England thought proper to demand, and an agreement that a large part of our navy should be withdrawn from the protection of our own shores, and, at the cost of half a million of dollars annually to our people, sent to rot upon the coast of Africa, he suddenly stopped, laid down his pen, threw himself back in his chair, and said, "I am done."

Done, my lord? I am done. My lord, the "Creole?" O, in regard to that, on reflection, we will let that stand over. But, my lord, the "Caroline." True, true, yes, well, so, suppose we just let that pass. The "impressment and right of search," my lord. Indeed, that is complicated. My lord, the Oregon territory. Ah! in regard to all these things, I have *no powers*. No powers, my lord? None.

Such, Mr. President, we may imagine, from the correspondence, to have been the scene of this negotiation; such was the beginning, progress, and end of this miserable farce—this great mission of humanity and peace—a mission, whose professed object was, to remove all causes of that terrible war, which we were assured would otherwise break upon the world, and put to hazard the whole system of civilization. It was this mission that ended in the settlement of *one* question by conceding to England all she demanded, and the postponement of at least *two* others, equally fruitful in causes of quarrel and of war. The treaty was sent to the Senate. The war-panic here induced its ratification. Lord Ashburton put it into his portfolio, and hastened to the presence of her Majesty, with the consciousness of having, during a

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single campaign of six months in our capital, unaided by anything that belongs to an army, conquered for England, more of our territory, than all her arms could have conquered in a century. The Queen smiled, and ratified the treaty. She had cut a piece of our territory out of the side of our Constitution—not, indeed, by the sword, but by the yet sharper edge of negotiation. Her ministers and statesmen, in full Parliament assembled, then proudly exulted in the display of a map, marked by the hand of an English King, to prove that they had obtained, without price, without blood, by the mere means of a bullying negotiation, a territory from us, to no one inch of which had she any right whatever. The fact went forth to the world. The war-panic—the instrument with which England had worked—was found to have been a miserable humbug. The men who, on this side of the Atlantic, had been her agents in getting it up, sought to excuse their conduct, by impudently declaring that the territory surrendered was of little or no value.

Once more, I desire the Senate to remember, that I am seeking to prove England's policy to be, the settlement of but one difficulty at a time, the adjournment of all others to the future, and the resort to a war-panic, in every instance, as the best means of extorting concessions from us. With the same view, I proceed.

The Ashburton treaty was *signed*, in this capital, on the *ninth of August*, and ratified in London on the *thirteenth of October*, eighteen hundred and *forty-two*. By that treaty, England had secured a part of Maine. That object was obtained—that work done. What next? Why, sir, on the *fifth day* after the ratification of the treaty which gave her that territory, she instructed Mr. Fox, her then Minister at Washington, to *commence* negotiations with our Government about the Oregon territory; and in *those very instructions*, Lord Aberdeen tells Mr. Fox that Lord Ashburton had been "*furnished with specific and detailed instructions with respect to the treatment of this point of difference between the two Governments*,"—that is, the Oregon question. Here, then, it seems that Lord Ashburton refused to settle the Oregon dispute in connexion with that of the Maine boundary, in obedience to the specific and detailed instructions of his Government. Either so, or he violated those instructions by excluding that matter. Which did he do? This question is answered in the same despatch to Mr. Fox, in which he is told that, Lord Ashburton had brought the "*negotiations with which he was instructed to a satisfactory issue*." Yes, sir, he had obeyed his instructions in keeping out the Oregon question. To have disobeyed, would have been fatal to him. For no culprit, however guilty, stands less chance for impunity than the English Minister who disregards the orders of his Government. That Government, which conquers equally by negotiation and arms, exacts equal subordination from her diplomats and generals. When, therefore, Lord Ashburton, *at the beginning* of his conference with Mr. Webster, declared that he had full powers to settle all the questions in dispute, and, *at the conclusion*, declared that he had no power to settle any but one, that of the Maine boundary, he did but repeat the *detailed and specific* instructions of his Government. He did but carry out England's system of diplomatic duplicity and trickery. If I am asked, what object England could have had in refusing to adjust, at the same time, more than one difficulty with us, my answer is ready: it was, to give effect to the war-panic upon our Government. To illustrate this, let it be recollected that when the Ashburton negotiation opened, there were, to say nothing of the cases of "the Creole" and "the Caroline," *three* great questions in dispute—the Maine boundary, the Oregon boundary, and the impressment and right of search. These three questions, *taken together*, involved the interests, and, therefore, excited the feelings, of the *whole* American people. The whole East, felt a more immediate interest in the question of Maine, because it was more local, to the

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East. The whole West, felt a more immediate interest in the question of Oregon, because it was more local, to the West. The whole Atlantic front, as well as the whole interior, felt a wide-spread national interest in the question of impressment and search, because it was national and wide-spread in its effects. England knew this; she knew, that so many and such great interests, stretching all over the Union, and addressing themselves to every section, would band together the whole mass of the people of every condition, vocation, and section, in their defence. She knew, that, if, in a single negotiation, and all at once, she undertook, by one of her war-panics, to frighten this whole nation into a surrender of so many and such comprehensive interests, she would have war indeed, and such a war as would eventually lop off the North American limb of her empire. She understood all this, and therefore *divided these questions, by lines of local interests*, in order to divide the people, the feelings, and the energies of this nation, by the same lines; and thus to bring her war-panic to bear upon those sections of the Union, which might suppose they had a greater interest in the preservation of peace, than in the *one* remote *sectional* question about which the war was threatened. She knew that the Maine territory lay in one corner of the Union, and thought that the other sections might, under the threat of war, be induced to acquiesce in its surrender, for the sake of peace. Whether she judged rightly or not, the treaty will tell. She knew also, that the Oregon territory lies in the opposite corner, four thousand miles from the first. She expects the same result, by the same means, in regard to this. These are the reasons why she has in her negotiations, separated these questions, as she ever has all former questions in dispute between the two countries. To divide our interests by time and space, and to conquer them one at a time, by the aid of a war-panic, in each case, is *her* system. To unite all our interests, and by the Union of all our people, to defend them all at once, should have been ours. But it has not. The Maine territory is lost; and in five days after England obtained it, by diplomatic duplicity and the terrors of a war-panic, she ordered her Minister to get Oregon, by the same means. When that is done, if done it shall be, she may then take up the question of impressment and search, should she have no other claim of territory ready to put forth.

Sir, in thus permitting England to divide our strength by lines of local interests, and to conquer those interests, one by one, because of our unwillingness to hazard a war in their separate defence, we shamefully disregard the great object of our Federal Union, and the obligation it imposes.

That Union was formed with reference, mainly, to dangers of aggression from abroad, and chiefly, from England herself. It was formed, that the whole of our interests might be successfully protected, as our Revolution was achieved, by the joint efforts of the whole people, in the defence of each one of those interests, regardless of their separate locality.

Yes, sir, it was to guard against the anticipated dangers from abroad, and chiefly from England, that this Federal Union was formed. The American colonies were the first part of her empire to revolt. She beheld, in their independence, the uprising of a mighty rival, which threatened to divide, with her, the commerce of the world, and, by the example of its institutions, to undermine the whole regal system. The men of the Revolution understood all this. They saw, in the new relations which these States must, as free States, necessarily bear to monarchical Europe, and especially to Great Britain, that she at least, smarting under the humiliating dismemberment of her empire, which she had warred so long, and at such cost of life and treasure, to prevent, would *ever remain hostile* to those States, and therefore seek every opportunity to cripple them, when that might be done, with impunity. It was the prime object of the States, to meet and repel these dangers, by their union in the Federal

compact. But of what use is this compact if, instead of every section standing forward to support the interest of each, when threatened from abroad, all, save the section whose interests are exposed, stand off, and leave those interests to be sacrificed? But, what is yet worse than this, such an abandonment of the endangered interests of one State, by the others, leaves those interests without any defence whatever. For, by the very terms of the compact, which makes it the duty of all the States to guard, jointly, the interests of each, against foreign wrongs, the power of each State to enforce even its most sacred rights, separately, by war, is expressly taken away. What was the fact with regard to Maine? Great Britain first asked the Federal Government to cede to her a part of that territory: the Government refused. Great Britain then claimed it as a right, and threatened war; the Government, to buy peace, surrendered it. Maine had to yield, because the Government refused to defend her soil, by war, if necessary, and because, the Constitution forbade her to defend it herself, by war. Had Maine never become a member of the Union, she would have had the right of war, for the defence of her territory. As it was, she had not. And thus, the very fact, that, by the Federal compact, the other States had agreed to aid, jointly, in her defence, by war if necessary, upon condition that she would surrender the right, separately, to defend herself, by the same means, left her, practically, without any defence at all. This was not the fault of the Constitution, but of those who were entrusted with the administration of its powers. Great Britain, ever armed herself, and knowing that the safety of every country, as a whole, depends upon its readiness to defend its smallest and remotest parts, knew, also, that ours was a country unprepared for war, and whose opposite parts were separated afar from each other.

By the threat of war upon all the parts, unprepared for it as they were, she hoped to make it the apparent interest of most of them, to purchase peace, by surrendering the interests of the others. By separating, for these reasons, Maine from Oregon, in the negotiations, she has obtained the territory of the former, and will, by the same diplomacy and threats, obtain that of the latter, if this Government shall again show, that it feels the fear of England more than its own obligation of self-defence.

But why this fear? Is it because it has any sound foundation in England's strength, or our weakness? No. If foundation it has at all, it exists only in that over-appreciation of her, and under-appreciation of ourselves, arising from a certain morbid admiration of her institutions, and a certain morbid indifference to our own. If, indeed, she be so powerful, that is the best of reasons, why we should show that we fear her not; for it is the very fact of our apparent fear that invites her to aggression.

But, sir, this fear is groundless. England may continue to threaten, as she ever has, and ever will, so long as we continue to believe her threats, and therefore, concede her demands. *Yet I boldly affirm that she will not, because she dare not, all other State reasons aside, make war, single-handed, against the United States, for the Oregon territory.* This is my proposition. I say she dare not. Not that I suppose her people timid, for no man is braver than a well-fed Englishman, except a better-fed American. But I say she dare not, because forbidden by those prudential reasons which ever govern her sagacious councils, as govern they ever do the councils of the truly brave.

Mercantile in its objects, and, therefore, in its calculations, no government more than hers, ever balanced, with greater care, the perils to be met and the cost of the enterprise, against the chances of success and the value of the object. I say she dare not, because of the naked baselessness of her claim, the perilous condition of her empire, and the hazard to which it would be exposed, of wreck and ruin, in a contest with a government three thousand miles remote, and which, if we did but know it, can, in such a cause, by the single blast of a bugle, start a million of armed freemen to their feet.

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These, sir, are the opinions I entertain; and I shall proceed to make them good, by an exhibition of the elements of relative strength, found in the condition of the two countries. This I deem necessary, in order to break the spell of that feeling, by which the United States, as a junior offspring, has so long been held in subordination to England, as the senior and parent nation. I deem it necessary, in order to present my country to herself, as she really is, not as an inferior Power, humbly lagging behind her superiors, but as one holding the first place in the modern system of the world, and by her institutions, her position on the globe, her immense extent, her vast resources, material and moral, her commerce, the number, freedom, intelligence, energy, happiness, and glory of her people, leading it on to that social regeneration, which promises the delivery of mankind from the miseries of antiquated monarchy. I deem it necessary, in order that my countrymen may be made to feel who they are, and what they are, as citizens of the great Republic. I deem it necessary, in order that they may feel, as they have a right to feel, that to be an American citizen, is to enjoy the proudest privilege the world has to give; that feeling thus, they may stand erect, in all the pride of this great privilege, ready, each man of them, to defend the honor and glory of his country, as things sacred to himself.

How stand we then, in the contrast with Old England? The line which separates her and us, is the line which separates the past from the present—the old, from the new state of the world. The social principles, which, originating in our Revolution, spread through Europe, drew that line strongly and deeply. By taking the lead in the royal coalition to arrest those principles, England became the head of the ancient system, threatened by their progress, as this Republic became the head of the new, as being the source of their origin. Thus, the two Governments stand confronting each other—the one having the old decaying system of hereditary power, with its abuses, to defend—the other, the new and onward system of elective authority, with its freedom to protect. Disguise it, therefore, as we may, these two Governments are, by the resistless force of events, placed in an agonist relations to each other in a struggle, which nothing human can prevent—a struggle destined to throw society backwards or forwards, as the case may be, with a shock that must unsettle the foundations of the one, or the other of those systems. And, sir, the two nations are brought more immediately into conflict, by that commercial rivalry which makes the American shores of the Pacific, so desirable to each, and which lies at the bottom of the pending difficulty between them. It is in this commercial rivalry of the two leading nations of the old and of the new system, that the great contest has begun, which involves their political destinies. For, sir, it is commerce, which now regulates the international relations of the world. It is upon commerce, that the new code of the law of nations is based. It was upon commerce, that the British empire was founded. It is by commercial monopoly alone, that it can be sustained. It is the danger to which that monopoly is exposed, from other nations, and chiefly, from the United States, which renders the British empire more precarious, at this day, than ever before, and feebler, by far, than any other of the old leading monarchies of Europe. Yes, sir, notwithstanding, I am aware that in doing so, I place myself in opposition to the universal conviction of men, in both Europe and America, I nevertheless, boldly affirm, that the British empire is, at this very hour, not the most powerful, but the feeblest and the least to be dreaded, of all those Governments. I say so, because such is her internal condition, arising from the shock already given to her commercial monopoly, that she, of all those Governments, is the only one, to which a single great reverse of fortune at arms, and especially at sea, must prove utterly destructive. That commercial monopoly upon which her empire depends, has been extended and upheld

solely by commercial wars, and was doomed, therefore, to decline with the empire itself, as soon as the means of prosecuting such wars, were diminished by internal exhaustion, or their success obstructed by the increased means of the balance of the world. The French Convention, even before the close of the last century, fully understood this secret of her strength, and of her weakness, and the great man who soon after succeeded to the government of France, acting upon the same conviction, attempted her overthrow, by closing upon her, all the ports of Europe. He failed; not because he had misjudged the true point of attack, but because Europe, manufacturing nothing for herself, was, therefore, in no condition to dispense with English commodities. He failed, because a great commercial revolution, which carried with it a total change in the habits and modes of life among men, was a thing, not to be suddenly effected, by the abrupt mandate of armed power. It was a thing to be accomplished only by time, peace, artisan-skill, and maritime enterprise. Yet, did the armed efforts of France, by exhausting the resources of England, by entailing, through all coming time, a merciless tax upon her labor, to meet the interest on a debt, that can never be paid or diminished, prepare the way for that "continental system," which subsequent peace, with its arts and its instruments, has been silently enforcing against her. The fall of Napoleon threw back into the mass of productive labor, millions of men, from the fields of battle; cleared the ocean of commercial obstructions; gave being to capital, to manufactures, and navigation, throughout Europe, as means of repairing the waste, occasioned by war, and thus made every nation, which had before been a consumer of British products, a producer of its own consumption, and, with its surplus, a competitor with her, in the open market of the world. Thus, has peace accomplished against her, what war alone, could not. Thus, are the effects of the French Revolution, now found in the treasury of England. They are seen in a debt, the mere interest on which imposes upon her famishing people, an annual tax of \$130,000,000. They are heard in the distressful cry of those people, for bread. Thus, too, has it become the interest, as it is the ability and disposition, of the nations which formerly leagued with her, in sustaining her commercial monopoly against the efforts of France, now to league against her, in breaking down that monopoly, by participating, themselves, in the work and traffic of the world, and by the disruption of that colonial system, on which her commercial ascendancy depends. Conscious of this—conscious of her danger, from domestic convulsions, provoked by taxed starvation—conscious of her danger, in the remote parts of her empire, from the ambition of her rivals, as, also, from those instincts which ever prompt colonies to revolt against a declining parent authority,—conscious of these, England sternly resolves to brave the peril; and, armed against the world, she goes forth, with fire and sword, to open new highways for her commerce in the East, that she may postpone, yet longer, the catastrophe which awaits her. For this reason it is, that she turns her cannon, also upon the States of South America. For the same reason it is, that she now seeks, by the possession of Oregon, to extend her sway upon the American front of the Pacific Ocean; because, if successful, she not only adds positive strength to herself, but, by our loss of that region, subtracts positive strength from us—the most dangerous of her rivals, commercially and politically. The most dangerous, commercially, because, with one-fourth of the world's whole tonnage already in our possession, we promise soon to hold the one-half of it; because, also, with a country vast and various in extent and resources—of an unlimited seacoast, and numberless harbors—with a close proximity to Mexico, to the West Indies, to South America—with affiliating institutions—with the great staple of cotton—with the means to manufacture that large article of consumption, in the warm climates of those countries—with a heavy demand, on our part, for their products in exchange,—because, I say,

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with these things in our favor, and aided by the mighty energies of this great people, we bid fair soon to drive her from all those markets, and to take sole possession of the Atlantic seas.

Yes, sir, the most dangerous politically, not only because powerful ourselves—we are the most secure, by the absence of powerful neighbors—but because the contiguity of her colonial possessions, renders it easy for us to wrench off that large portion of her empire, and thus to give the signal to Russia and France, to do the same with her East India and Asiatic dependencies.

But when, sir, I am told, as I shall be, that England has a larger navy than we, and would, therefore, prove the more powerful in a conflict with us, I admit the fact, but dispute the conclusion. The combative power of a nation consists, not in the number of its guns alone, but, also, in its relation to the system of the world around it, and in its own social condition. Nor is that power to be viewed in the abstract, as so much positive force; but, on the contrary, is to be considered in comparison with the power of its adversary, with the object to be defended, and with the pressure of the necessity for such defence. If Great Britain has many guns, she has also to scatter them around the world, for the defence of many colonies—colonies always threatened by rival nations, threatened with colonial revolt, and the loss of any considerable portion of which, would contract the circle of her commerce, unsettle her public and private credit, close her factories, turn out yet more of her laborers to starve, and, by bankruptcy and famine, provoke civil revolution. For, sir, her whole system, both internally and externally, is already stretched to its utmost tension. It can bear nothing more. Externally, it cannot be relaxed or contracted by the loss of colonies, without ruin. Nor can her internal condition be relieved from the pressure of taxes, by even the temporary suspension of the dividends upon her debt, because, the debt being domestic, the dividends are the chief support of a million, and the sole support of not less, perhaps, than two hundred thousand of her own subjects, who have no alternative between those dividends and famine.

And now, sir, mark the precarious condition of her colonies, independently of all danger from the ambition of her rivals. Those dependencies are in number, (I speak upon British official authority,) beside the United Kingdoms, no less than seventy, embracing an aggregate population of *one hundred and thirty millions* of souls, of whom, but *two millions and a fraction* belong to the white European race, and all the mighty balance of whom, having been subdued by her arms, and exasperated by oppression, stand ready to revolt, upon the first prospect of success. Of these two millions and a half of European whites, *all, save six hundred thousand only*, are to be found in her North American possessions, leaving but the *latter number*, scattered through, and to keep in subjection, the whole residue of *an hundred and twenty-eight millions* of human beings, whom she has reduced to her sway, throughout her *other* colonial dependencies. What a spectacle is here! One-eighth part of the whole race of man, held in subjection by the *presence of less than a million* of strangers, and by the terror of a distant Government, itself menaced with destruction, both by civil discord and ambitious neighbors. Can such a state of things long exist? Impossible. Nature admits not, of such disproportion.

On the other hand, what colonies have we to defend? Not one. Her empire, composed of fragments separated afar from each other, and all from the parent isle, “environed with a wilderness of seas,” and beset with every variety of danger, presents nothing but one vast image of distended imbecility. Our Republic, on the contrary, great in extent, yet compact by the contiguity of its parts, freed from the presence of dangerous neighbors, and covered by a contented people, exhibits on this side of the north pole, what Russia does on the other—a power, by its magni-



tude, formidable to all, yet, from position, assailable by none. For this reason it is, that I pronounce our navy greater, *relatively* to the necessity for its use, than hers; because, whilst hers must be scattered wherever she has a colony exposed, ours has but one shore to guard, and that shore lined by a million of armed men, who, in defending it, defend their own homes, families, and laws.

So true, sir, is this my conclusion, that when, by her refusal to evacuate Malta, she had violated the treaty of Amiens, and provoked a renewal of the war with France; when, in consequence, her soil, yes, her very being, was threatened with invasion, and when, in this extremity, she was compelled to cry aloud for all her sons to defend her—yet even then, she was unable to collect into her own channel, a naval armament equal to that which her great enemy had found means to create and to bring into that channel, within the three years after the destruction of the French navy, at the battle of the Nile. It was then, and for that reason, England called back to her aid her war minister, Mr. Pitt. It was for that reason that he, immediately upon his second accession to power, demanded of parliament, and received, a grant of twelve millions of dollars, as a secret-service fund, with which he subsidized the half of Europe into a coalition against France, and thus, drawing off Napoleon from the channel to the field of Austerlitz, compelled him there, to battle, instead of upon her own soil, for the empire of the world. Nor would this have saved her from after invasion, but for the fortune of her heroic Nelson at Trafalgar, where he destroyed the new navy of her enemy.

But, sir, it is said by everybody, and believed by the thoughtless, that steam navigation has increased the relative naval power of England. This I deny, and affirm, on the contrary, that it has diminished that power, first, by dispensing with one-half the seamen hitherto required for the direction of the same amount of maritime force; and secondly, by rendering England herself more assailable from the continent, than she ever was before.

Sir, the naval power of a nation depends upon the number of its seamen, and that, upon its commercial navigation. Conscriptions, as in France, enlistments, as in England, volunteer enrolments, as with us, may promptly bring armed men into the field, whom a single campaign will perfect in all the discipline of veteran soldiers. To do this, nothing but money, and the authority of regular government, are required. Not so with seamen. They are to be created, before collected together. No money, no public authority, can man a fleet upon the sudden outbreak of war, if navigation has not provided seamen before. The half of a lifetime spent in the experience of the winds and the waves, is essential to the production of these. If, therefore, at the beginning of war, a nation has but a limited commerce, the number of its seamen must be limited, and limited also, must be its means of manning a navy. Under the old system, therefore, the great superiority of England over others in commerce and navigation, gave her a corresponding superiority in that description of force, which nothing but commerce and navigation could produce. If, for instance, we suppose, what was really the fact, that at the commencement of the war which followed the peace of Amiens, England had a foreign commerce four times greater than that of France, she was, for that reason, able to man a navy four times as large as her enemy. Nor, was it in the power of France, had she possessed four times the revenues of England, to have overcome that disparity of naval power, because money alone could create no seamen; and because, in all the world beside, there was then not enough, had she enlisted them all, to give her a naval equality with England. But under the new system, this state of things no longer exists. By the aid of steam in navigation, one half the seamen hitherto required to direct a given amount of floating force, is now all-sufficient for the same object. And now; there-

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fore, a nation, having of her own but a limited commerce and number of seamen, may supply the deficiency from the navigation of other countries. This she can do, because, whilst the aggregate of the world's commerce and seamen has been greatly increased, the aggregate demand of war, for that description of men, has been diminished at least one-half, leaving a surplus, above the requisitions of war, still to the peaceful pursuits of commercial navigation—a fact, which must greatly lessen the former interruptions occasioned by war, to the commercial intercourse of all nations. It follows, therefore, that England has lost one-half of that relative advantage, at sea, which she before enjoyed over other nations, by her superiority in that description of force, with which the money of others could not then, but now can, fully supply them.

But again, I have said that steam navigation had diminished the relative naval power of England, also in this: that it had rendered her more assailable at home. This, too, is equally applicable to the whole of her colonies. For if, as I have shown, her relative power at sea, has been so diminished, to that extent are diminished her means of self-defence, as it is upon that description of force alone, that she must rely against the dangers of invasion. Yet, this is not all, for, aided by steam, her enemy on the continental side of the channel, may now select his own hour of the night for the passage—may make it quick and in silence, regardless of those winds and tides which formerly rendered such a passage impossible for a large armament, without daylight, publicity, and infinite peril.

These were the circumstances which compelled Napoleon, even after all things were ready, to hesitate, and postpone his attempt, up to the moment, when the advancing armies of Austria and Russia drew him off to the continent. And, sir, it was an incident in nowise unworthy of remark, that an illustrious countryman of our own, Mr. Fulton, about that very time, suggested to Napoleon the idea of steam navigation, an idea received with indifference by that wonderful man, whose mighty genius, ranging through all the elements of nature to find the means of reaching the shores of his enemy, rejected that only element, which rendered his object possible. Had the genius of France but heeded the invention of America, the fate of the world might have been, probably would have been, different, and perhaps for the better. But fated was it otherwise.

Still, sir, I am not done with this contrast of the two countries. But here again, as I proceed, shall I find myself compelled to dispute what others have affirmed. Many are the writers and the readers, of all times and of all nations, who have united in declaring the monarchy to be the form of Government most powerful, especially in war, because, as they assert, in that form are to be found the greatest permanency, steadiness and unity of action. And here, sir, I should admit the reasoning to be true, if the assumption whence it proceeds, was not utterly false. But false it unquestionably is, as applicable to the British monarchy, in comparison with the American Republic. This I shall proceed to show, by contrasting the points and periods of stability in the councils of the two.

And first, as to the Executive power. In England, that branch of the public authority is vested, nominally, in the King, but really in the prime or first minister of the crown, appointed for life, if so long he is sustained in his policy, by a coincidence of opinion on the part of the House of Commons. When, therefore, that House disagrees with him, and not till then, he retires, and a change of ministers and councils ensues. In our Republic, the Executive Chief has four years assigned him by the forms of the Constitution, and never more than eight by the practice of re-election. Taking, then, the duration of the Executive power in the same hands, as the test of stability in the councils of the two governments, and how stand the facts? They stand thus: From

1754 to 1835, a period of eighty-one years, England had no less than twenty-four prime ministers. Of these, nine held power each less than a single year; but five of them held it, each, over four years, and the aggregate time of the eighty-one years, divided by the aggregate number of the twenty-four ministers, will prove that the average time of each minister in power, was but three years, four months and fourteen days.

Our Government began in 1789, and from then to 1844, a period of fifty-six years, we had but nine Presidents, and the aggregate of the fifty-six years, divided by the aggregate of the nine Presidents, will prove that the average time of each President in power, was six years, two months and seventeen days.

From the union of Ireland with England in 1801, down to 1835, a period of thirty-five years, England had fourteen prime ministers, and we, in the same period, but five Presidents—her fourteen ministers having thus enjoyed an average of two years and six months in power, and our five Presidents, an average of seven years exactly.

And now, as to the popular elective branches of the legislative power, in the two governments. How stand they in the contrast, on the point of stability? These, admit of less accuracy of comparison, because, in both countries, in England the House of Commons, with us the House of Representatives, are elected for a fixed period, and being multitudinous assemblies, are affected by re-elections, only partially and in the persons of their individual members. The House of Commons is elected for seven years—our House of Representatives for two years; yet one circumstance makes it practicable to test the stability of the former. It is this: though elected for seven years, the House of Commons is, at all times, subject to be dissolved by the Crown, at the will of the Prime Minister, whenever, in his judgment, the change of public opinion since the election of the last House, has made that House no longer the exponent of such opinion. At each dissolution a new election is ordered, that the new House, thus elected, also for seven years, may express the true sentiments of the people, but be itself dissolved, as soon as it shall cease to do so, by a new change in the public opinion. Are, then, these Houses of Commons ever thus dissolved? And if so, how often have such dissolutions occurred, under the boasted steady and stable system of the British monarchy?

Here are the facts. From the first Imperial Parliament in 1801, to 1841, a period of forty years, there have been no less than thirteen Houses of Commons elected, each for the term of seven years, and no less than thirteen dissolutions of those Houses, within that period. That is to say, not one of the thirteen subsisted through the seven years' term for which it was elected, but on the contrary, every one of the thirteen were dissolved before its term expired. And if the aggregate of the forty years be divided by the aggregate of the thirteen Houses, it will be seen, that the average duration of each House, though elected for seven years, was in fact, but three years and one month, whilst no less than six, out of the thirteen Houses, were dissolved within two years after the date of their election, and two, out of the thirteen, within six months from such date.

Here, sir, are the stern facts—and the only description of facts by which the stability or fluctuation of a nation's councils, can be determined. Here are the evidences of that solidity and steadiness with which, we are told, the British empire rests upon its foundations; here, the evidences of that continuous regularity of political action, which we are asked to look to, in proof of the superiority of such a system over our own. Yes, over our own, which so many European writers admonish us to abandon, as a thing too much exposed to the dangers of anarchy from the sudden shocks of the popular will.

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public records, that no government in Europe has, since the date of our Constitution, given as few evidences of weakness in its foundations or versatility in its councils, as ours, or as many such evidences, as that of Great Britain. And what is the cause of such weakness and versatility? Internal discontent—that feverish restiveness excited in the English people by those cravings of hunger, which drive them to seek relief in the change of public councils—a relief, however, not to be found, save in that change, which shall restore the lost equilibrium of society, by a reapportionment of the elements of life among the masses.

Sir, I have drawn this contrast of the internal condition of the two countries, to show the contentment under our system—to show that its strength is to be found in that contentment—to show the discontent under the system of England—to show that in such discontent consists her weakness. I have done this, in counteraction of the efforts, so laboriously made, to depress the feeling of my country, to inculcate upon her a sense of subordination to England, and to extort from her people humiliating concession by the terror of England's imaginary power. I have done this, to show that terror to be groundless—to show our strength to be sufficient to defy her—and, with the like view, I shall proceed yet farther, with this contrast.

I have said, sir, that the social condition of the people—internal contentment—was the basis of a nation's strength, and the strength of its government; and in trying the two countries by this test, I have but to ask, what is now the great, the all-disturbing question, in England? It is that awful, that last question, which ever precedes civil butchery and revolution,—it is, “What can the government do, to save the people from starvation?” It is the question of bread, or death. It has been asked. It cannot be answered. Schemes have been devised. They have failed. Others tried, and others failed. The question recurs again and again, as often as Parliament convenes. It occupies every session. It is the standing question of debate. And the empire is convulsed by elections, which are made to turn upon the number of crumbs government can afford to throw to a starving people, and upon the number of bayonets necessary to repress those cravings of hunger, it has not the food to appease. Between standing armies and standing famine, the naked and breadless masses raving with despair, hourly threaten to dash against the constitution itself, and to bring all rights and all wrongs, all property and all men, to the bloody arbitrament of a social revolution.

On the other hand, how is it with us? What American says, “I have no bread?” What single man of them, threatens his government with revolution? Who among them all, lifts his hand to resist the execution of the law? What is the question which we yearly, in this Chamber, discuss? Is it the question, “How shall we save the people from famine?” No, sir, no. Ours is the question, “How shall we render our fellow-citizens, already comfortable and happy, still richer and yet more happy?” This is our question. The same instincts which prompt men to desire a competency, prompt them also, to desire a surplus; and it is the best means of promoting this surplus, that excite our discussions. From its foundation to this moment, therefore, this Government has shed no man's blood, for a political offence. We have prisons, but no prisoners, for such crimes. One citizen only, for many years, has been confined on a political charge, not by this, but by the government of a State, and in that case, so great has been the shock upon the public feeling, that the very men who imprisoned him, have thrown open the door and asked him to walk out, as a favor to them. No, sir, so far is any man here from resisting the execution of the law, that all stand ready to enforce it. Not an armed man, not a single bayonet, is employed by this Government to enforce obedience to its laws, over an area, eight thousand miles in circumference. In the populous cities of the east—upon the remotest

margin of the western wilderness—a plain citizen, seated amidst his countrymen, unguarded by weapons, with no protection but a paper commission, calmly pronounces judgment between man and man—between the strong and the feeble—between the rich and the poor alike—and enforces it, by merely observing, that “such is the law.” And why is all this? It is because this very law sprang from the breasts of the people—because every man feels that it is a rule, he himself aided to make—that its enforcement is essential to his own protection, and that the citizen appointed to enforce it, was appointed with his consent, and is, therefore, responsible, in part, to him.

In these things, sir, it is, that the strength of our, and the weakness of the British Government, consists. Ours, resting upon the hearts—hers, upon the backs of the people. What, then, have we to do, to secure Oregon? Extend over it, our laws. What else have we to do, for its defence? Tell the people the truth. Tell them it is their soil. Tell them this—prove it to them—as we have before told them, and before proven it. Tell them that arrogant England—their hereditary enemy, the enemy of all free governments—is seeking to snatch it from them, to fence us out from the Pacific Ocean, to belt us about, yet more closely, with her kingly despotism. Tell them these things, and then ask them, if they will surrender this large part of their country—surrender it to that government which, in two wars, employed savages to hack to pieces, in cold blood, the women and children of America—surrender it to that government which hates ours, because it is free—which envies our people for their happiness, in proportion to the misery of its own. Tell them these things, and ask, if they are ready thus to surrender this vast territory, from the mere dread of invasion by a rabble of armed paupers, threatened to be sent by a bankrupt government, whose whole power of the sword and the dungeon is required to stifle the cries of famine at home, or to protect its own life, against the uplifted hands of starving millions. Tell them these things—ask them if they are ready to make this surrender. Ask the American people this, and they will give you an answer, which shall make the British empire tremble, throughout its whole frame and foundation.

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