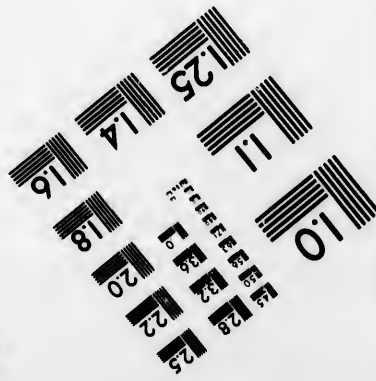
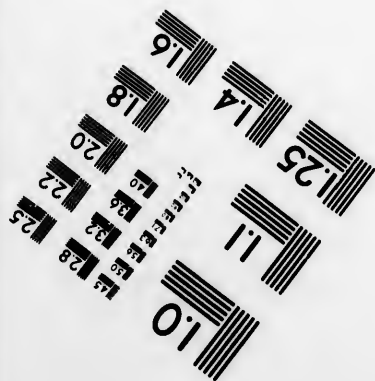
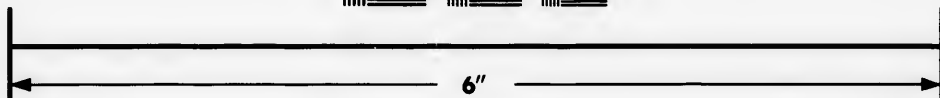
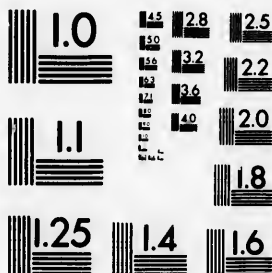


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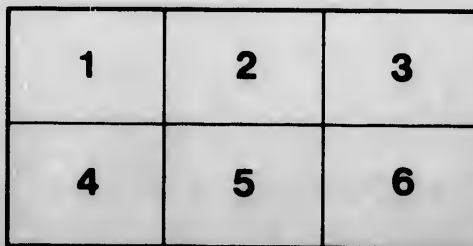
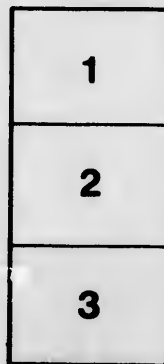
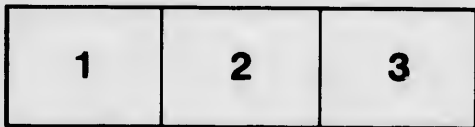
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S P E E C H
OF
MR. CULVER, OF NEW YORK,
ON
THE TEXAS AND OREGON QUESTIONS.

Delivered in the House of Representatives, U. S., January 30th, 1846.

The bill from the Senate "To establish Post Routes in Texas," being under consideration—
Mr. CULVER said—

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am one of those who believe that the annexation of Texas to this Union was unconstitutional, and, as such, is void from the beginning. I believe, further, that the Supreme Court of the United States, on a proper presentment of the case, will pronounce the joint resolutions, by which Texas was annexed, unconstitutional. And I hold that every act of ours, affirming the validity of those resolutions, will but involve us in deeper difficulty, and render our relations with that country more embarrassing. I am aware that it may seem to be travelling from the record, on a bill merely to establish post routes, to discuss the question of annexation; but we are now in Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, and the CHAIR has, again and again, decided that, whatever related to the welfare and honor of the Union, was here the legitimate subject of debate. Besides, Mr. Chairman, I remember, as do all who hear me, that, when the consummation of this Texas scheme came up, on the second week of the session, one hundred new members, like myself, were denied the right of being heard. This great measure, fraught with consequences the most important and lasting, was lashed through this House with more than railroad velocity. The padlock was put upon our lips; by aid of the "previous question," we were all gagged down. Our constituents, too, were denied a hearing. They protested loud and earnestly against this infraction of the Constitution. Their remonstrances, so long as the least ground for hope remained, poured in thick and fast. Yes, sir, 40,000 of these remonstrances now lie upon your table, denied a consideration, and refused the civility even of a reference! In addition to all this, sir, my constituents, nay, the whole free North, are to be taxed to sustain these very mail routes over the trackless wilds of Texas. They are now contributing to support an army of 4,500 sickly men in that country, to fight her battles. A fleet is now sustained from the Treasury of the nation, to scour the coasts, and to awe Mexico to silence. Am I not warranted, then, sir, in seizing *this* opportunity, since every other has been denied me, to enter my solemn protest against this nefarious scheme? Had the remonstrances of my constituents been treated with legislative courtesy; or had even two day's discussion been allowed, I would not have been found here upon my feet to-day. Why, sir, six long weeks have been consumed upon the Oregon question, and yet one hour and forty minutes, and that mostly in calling the *yeas* and *nays*, were all that was allowed upon the admission of Texas. Wherefore the difference? Ah! sir, Texas had within it that dark feature, that dreaded in-

spection, that *noli me tangere* property, that cried out "hands off!" when approached. Oregon has no SLAVERY with it. Texas, on the other hand, owes its existence and its very life-blood to slavery.

But I hear it whispered, by gentlemen around me, that "Texas is in"—"She is admitted"—"We have married her, and cannot dissolve the contract." Sir, I repudiate the marriage. I disclaim the nuptial bonds. I have high authority for saying of Texas, "If, while her first husband be living, she be married to another, she shall be called an adulteress." We had no constitutional right to propose, nor she the right to accept our proposal.

But, Mr. Chairman, first and foremost of my objections to her admission is, that Texas has violated her own ante-nuptial engagement. To this I ask the attention of the House. By the joint resolutions of last winter, Congress gave its consent to annexation, upon the *express* condition, among others, that, in that part of Texas lying north of 36° 30' north latitude, *slavery, or involuntary servitude, (except for crime,) should be prohibited.* Now, sir, how stands the case? Has this political coquette adhered to this condition? No, sir. Most shamefully has she violated it. In her new constitution, now lying before me, and on which we have given her admittance into the Union, by the 8th article, slavery is not only recognised and sanctioned throughout the *whole* extent of Texas, but her legislature is constitutionally tied up from ever "passing laws for the emancipation of slaves without the consent of their owners." This recognition and prohibition are co-extensive with the boundaries of the *entire* State. No exception, either north or south of that line! Under this 8th article, 1,500 slaves might be removed to-morrow into Northern Texas, despite the joint resolution of the last Congress. Is this the way, sir, in which northern gentlemen, whose votes for the measure were secured by this pretended compromise, are to be rewarded? Is this the way in which slavery discharges its obligations, and fulfils conditions? Do gentlemen tell me there is no territory of any amount or value north of that line? Then, sir, I pronounce the fraud, the cheat, the duplicity, the more downright and glaring. We were told of compromise—of dividing Texas into free and slave territory. A few in the North were sufficiently *green* and *soft-faced* to be caught by this cry. Without this pittance, small as it was, annexation could not have been carried. If there were nothing in that of worth, we were deceived *then*; if there were something, we have been despoiled of it *now*. And should new States hereafter be carved out of the present State of Texas, and those new States, any of them extending north of that line, be asked to prohibit slavery there, they would point to the admission of Texas as a *whole*, with a slave-holding constitution, covering her *entire* surface, from north to south, from east to west. Both the mother State of Texas and the United States would be, by this reference, estopped from insisting on any territory being free north of that line.

Am I too *late*, then, Mr. Chairman, in opposing the admission of Texas, when she herself has violated her own agreement? When she herself refused to come in upon the terms and on the conditions which Congress prescribed for her?

Now, sir, with this slave-holding feature in her constitution, it is easy to see why the motion made by my honorable friend from Massachusetts, (Mr. ROCKWELL,) to recommit the bill, with instructions to strike out that provision allowing slavery, was so adroitly evaded. That motion, sir, would have brought the elastic consciences of northern men to a test. It would have compelled gentlemen to have recorded their votes directly upon the

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issue of admitting Texas as a free or slave State. And subservient as politicians had shown themselves, I apprehend that gentlemen shrunk back from standing upon the record as voting in favor of perpetual slavery in Texas. Hence it was, that the "previous question" was clothed with more than its wonted odium and oppression. And when the honorable Speaker, in conformity with parliamentary usage and the decisions of this House, decided that the motion of the gentleman from Massachusetts was not cut off by the previous question, an appeal was taken, and slavery, sir, was strong enough on this floor to reverse the decision of the Chair and overturn the precedents of this House. I was not so much astonished at it, knowing, as I did, that extraordinary cases require extraordinary treatment. It was to have been expected of slavery. And the House will bear me witness how much of confusion and trouble that decision has occasioned us since.

But, Mr. Chairman, I humbly insist, that had Texas complied with all the conditions imposed, her annexation and subsequent admission would still have been unconstitutional. I deny the power of these confederated States to annex a foreign nation to this Union. It is conceded that the power is not expressly granted in the Constitution, and we have the highest authority for saying it is not there by *implication*. Some forty years ago, Mr. JEFFERSON, whose authority should be conclusive with the gentleman over the way, used this emphatic language: "*The Constitution has made no provision for our holding foreign territory, still less for incorporating foreign nations into our Union.*"—*Jeff. Cor.*, Vol. 3, p. 512.

Again, in his letter to Wilson Cary Nicholas, he says: "When I consider that the limits of the United States are precisely fixed by the *treaty of 1783*, that the Constitution expressly declares itself made *for the United States*, I cannot help believing the intention was, not to permit Congress to admit into the Union new States, which should not be formed out of the territory for which, and under whose authority alone, they were then acting." Here Mr. Jefferson denies the right to us of *holding*, much less of *incorporating*, Texas or any foreign nation into the Union. True, he was speaking of the acquisition of Louisiana. But the case of Louisiana was much stronger for the advocates of annexation than was that of Texas. There the parties were all agreed. No conflicting claims interposed. The people of this territory desired to be incorporated. The old States were all anxious for the Union. And France, the acknowledged proprietor, was willing to transfer her right to the soil. And yet, with all these adventitious circumstances, Mr. Jefferson denied to us the constitutional right to make the acquisition. It is well known that he considered an amendment of the Constitution as necessary before this end could be attained. But, in the case of Texas, all these circumstances, or nearly all, are wanting. More than one-third of the original States were opposed to the annexation. They opposed it as *States* in their sovereign capacity. Mexico, too, interposed as the original and rightful claimant, and a majority of the people of the Union were opposed to it. How, then, can the pretended disciples of Jefferson maintain for a moment its constitutionality? And mark still further, sir, the difference in the two cases: It was then being proposed to acquire Louisiana by *treaty*—not by the then unknown and unheard of method of a joint resolution. No other than the treaty-making power was dreamed of by our Government; and yet, under all these favorable circumstances, Mr. Jefferson could not deem the Constitution sufficiently elastic to admit foreign territory. True, Louisiana was purchased; but only from the necessity of the case, for our commercial safety. But, he contended, that there

should be an *ex post facto* amendment of the Constitution, which, by its retroactive effect, might legalize the acquisition.

But again, sir, I maintain, that if foreign nations can be annexed to us it must be by treaty, and not by joint resolutions of Congress. No one will deny that these joint resolutions, and the acceptance of their conditions by Texas, were in the nature of a *contract*; indeed, they constitute the only agreement or treaty in the case. By these we stipulate to annex Texas and on complying with these, Texas agreed to be annexed. Call them what you will, they are nothing short of a contract between nations, or, in other words, a treaty. Who, then, I ask, can make such a contract or treaty? Is it Congress, or is it the treaty-making power? Sir, I will adduce an authority here that South Carolina cannot gainsay. Mr. CALHOUN in his great speech in the House, in 1816, on the commercial treaty with Great Britain, an extract from which I have before me, took the ground that "*Congress cannot make a contract with a foreign nation*," "that belonged only to the treaty-making power." I shall not stop to produce a host of other authorities, that I might do, to establish this position. I am talking now to Southern men. I have given them Jefferson and Calhoun; if they will not believe them, "neither would they believe, if one rose from the dead." A treaty would have required the assent of two-thirds of the Senate; this could never have been obtained; hence the recurrence to joint resolutions.

Again, sir, I respectfully submit, that annexation was unconstitutional from another consideration. It is this: The confederated States of this Union form a sort of constitutional copartnership. They entered the firm as States. They are the old partners. And I deny that it is competent at law or equity for a part of the members of the old firm to admit new partners without the consent of *all*. The act of admission, and the acts of those so admitted, will not be obligatory upon the firm. Texas has come in—lean and hungry as she is—unbidden by many of the States, and unwelcomed by a majority of the people. And I deny that my constituents or the freemen of the North, are constitutionally bound to recognise her as a member of the confederacy; much less, sir, to pay up her debts, or endorse her doubtful reputation.

But again: What relation, I may ask, do the people of that annexed territory sustain to us? They were citizens, *de facto*, of Texas. She claimed and we acknowledged her to be an independent power. Her people, then, could not at the same time be citizens of Texas and of the United States. They could not thus owe allegiance to two sovereigns. They could not serve two masters. Are they, then, by virtue of annexation, made citizens of the United States? Suppose that 20,000 of her population were of Spanish or Mexican origin, and suppose that of this number certain ones be appointed district judges, or elected to seats upon this floor—the constitution requires such to be citizens of the United States, and to have been such citizens for at least *seven years*. When and how did *they* become such? Surely, it was at the time, and by virtue of their annexation, if ever. If that be so, sir, then this annexation is in the very teeth of the Constitution. That instrument, long ago, declared that Congress should "pass *uniform* laws on the subject of naturalization. Congress cannot make one law for naturalizing the French, another for the Swiss, another for the German, and another for the Texian. They must all bow to the same "*uniform*" law. Well, how stands the case then? Why, sir, by our laws, the Irish or German immigrant must wait five years before he becomes naturalized. But here you have naturalized the whole

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which, by it Texas brood at one sweep; by virtue of that act, they claim now to act as legislators for us, as citizens with us. I deny, Mr. Chairman, that they have come in at the right door. They have climbed up some other way, and, politically, are "thieves and robbers."

But I cannot dwell longer upon this part of the subject. I am aware that it is late in the day to discuss constitutional questions. The ligaments of the Constitution are cut asunder. The dog-star delirium of slavery has thrown the nation far from its balance.

I need not say to you, Mr. Chairman, nor to the House, how sorely the North feel upon this question. We speak it more in sorrow than in recrimination, when we say, that the Constitution lies trodden in the dust. The slaveholder's heel is planted upon it. And what adds to the darkness of the deed, is the base and unwarrantable *motive* which dictated this whole scheme of annexation. That motive, sir, was the strengthening, the extension, and the perpetuity of SLAVERY. And on this, sir, I have a few words to offer.

[Mr. BAYLY, of Virginia, here objected, and raised the question, that it was not in order to debate this subject. But the Chair overruled the objection, and decided that Mr. C. was in order, and he proceeded.]

In support of this position, my time will allow me to call the attention of the House only to a few admitted facts. No murmuring of complaint, or threats of revolt, were heard in the province of Texas, till after Mexico, by the edict of *Iturbide*, in 1829, proclaimed slavery abolished. From that time forward, a low but gradually increased muttering was heard from that portion of the population who had gone from the Southern States into Texas, carrying their slaves with them. This dissatisfaction gradually ripened into rebellion; and in 1833 a convention was called, and the discontented portion set up for themselves. Impartial history will yet prove that revolution to have been as destitute of any adequate provocation, as the annals of revolution ever furnished.

These Texian revolutionists, of course, had the open sympathy, as well as the covert support of the almost entire slaveholding South. It was evinced in the speeches and correspondence of Southern men, and in the almost undivided expression of the Southern press. From 1830 to 1835, the press was undisguised in claiming, that slavery must be reinstated in Texas, for its future stability in the Southern part of this Union. I have but to refer gentlemen to the tone of the press at that day, to establish the fact, that slavery was at the bottom of this whole movement. So much, sir, for the revolution and independence of Texas—as to the *motive* that dictated its annexation, I have proof which *Southern* gentlemen cannot resist. Mr. Secretary UPSHUR, in his official despatch to our Charge d'Affaires in Texas, in 1843, declared, that "Slavery would be abolished in Texas within the next ten years, and probably within half that time, unless that Government were annexed to the United States." A distinguished Senator from South Carolina, (Mr. McDUFFY,) not two years since, in the north wing of this Capitol, when alluding to the dangers of the increase of the slave population, said, "Now, if we shall annex Texas, it will operate as a safety-valve, to let off this superabundant slave population among us." Mr. CALHOUN, who, with all his political eccentricities, has the merit of speaking his sentiments boldly, has placed the true reason for annexation record. When Secretary of State, in a diplomatic communication of the 27th April, 1844, defending the policy, and urging the necessity for annexation, he says: It was made necessary in order to preserve *domestic institutions*, placed under the guarantee of their respective constitutions, and deemed essential

to their safety and prosperity." "Domestic institutions" are only another and a politer name for slavery. Here, sir, stands the recorded reason for annexation—the upholding and preservation of a foul system of human bondage! And this historical reason, uttered by the official organ of this great and free republic, will stand upon record, and be pointed to with shame and remorse, when all the aiders and abettors in this scheme shall have passed away.

But why do I multiply authorities, or dwell upon points conceded by every honest man? Sir, there is not a Southern Representative who hears me, that will rise in his place and deny that slavery was the great, prompting, and decisive cause for annexing Texas. No, sir, the act and the motive stand out in bold relief before the world. To rivet the chains of the enslaved African more firmly—to render his bondage safe and perpetual, a foreign slave territory, four times the size of New England, seven times as large as Kentucky, is seized, and, in defiance of law and Constitution, attached to this Union! And for what? Yes, sir, I ask Southern gentlemen, for what purpose did you annex it? Avow it honestly. Was it not that you might overbalance the free laborers of the North? That you might hold the reigns of legislation in your hands? That you might have the preponderance of power to wield it over us, as you wield it over your slaves? Do you wonder, then, that Northern freemen, or their representatives here, are keenly alive to this insult? How would *you* feel under a like injury? Mr. Chairman, let me put a case to my honorable friends from Virginia and South Carolina.

Suppose that, in 1836, Mr. WEBSTER, of New England, Gov. SEWARD, of New York, and my venerable friend from Massachusetts, (JOHN QUINCY ADAMS,) had entered into a secret correspondence with the authorities of Canada, proposing to annex all British North America to the United States. And suppose that, in the correspondence, it had been distinctly avowed, that the object was to give stability and perpetuity to the protective tariff—to render safe the free institutions of the North—to protect them from assaults of the South—to render more safe and secure the runaway slaves settled in Upper Canada—in short, to give, by the aid of Canadian votes, a Northern preponderance in the Senate of the United States—what think you, Mr. Chairman, would have been the tone, the feeling, the sentiment of the South? Think you that their great chieftain would have preached his "*masterly inactivity*" doctrine? But suppose, further, that the South began to rustle and be alarmed—began to remonstrate, long and loud—begged time for discussion and reflection—and suppose a drilled, iron-heeled majority refused to hear their protests, or listen to their remonstrances—told them to be quiet—that they knew not what they were remonstrating against—that it was a *Northern* question—related to the welfare of Northern interests—that it belonged to Northern men to settle it—and, at last, despite the protests of Southern Legislatures, and, unmoved by a million of Southern remonstrances, the deed is consummated, *Canada is annexed!* And to add insult to injury, it is done by thrusting the *gag* down Southern throats; and soon after this, the South are called upon to help support armies and navies in Lower Canada, and taxed to pay for post routes for the benefit of fugitive slaves in Upper Canada! Sir, the parallel is a painful one—I do not wonder that cheeks crimson at the comparison. I ask Southern gentlemen, how would *you* have met such treatment at the hands of the North? Would you not have winced under it? Would not your hot blood have risen far above its wonted temperature? Nay, more, I ask you, would not every man of you have rushed wildly from this Hall, and proclaimed the

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Union at an end? Would you not have gone home and told your constituents to get ready their "regiments of mounted riflemen," and resist the aggression unto death? Yes, you would have done so; and posterity would have awarded you deserved praise for your sternness of integrity and boldness of resistance. Then let me ask you, in the name of liberty, and all that is dear to freemen, how, think you, *we* stand under *your* treatment? Are we not made of flesh and blood as well as you? Do you draw so largely upon Northern coolness and "Christian forbearance?" Beware, lest you are over confident of the *restraining* force of these "Christian virtues." True, sir, the North is a very cool calculating people. Feeling that justice and equity are on our side, we prefer peaceful remedies. Our forbearance is proverbial. We can submit to be trampled upon, and rise again. We can be fleeced of our rights with heroic fortitude. Nay, more, we can be genteely *skinned*; but let me assure Southern gentlemen, that when you attempt to sprinkle in fine salt and pepper, we beg leave respectfully to flounce. I might allude now, sir, to a coming event, the shade of which has already passed before us, *the destruction of the tariff of 1842*, which, it is well understood here, is delayed only to wait the arrival of the delegates from Texas. It is the subject of remark, in the confidential circles of the dominant party, that these Texian votes are relied on, in one wing of this Capitol, to complete that work. Yes, sir, the cool forbearing North is asked to look philosophically on, and see these Texas votes aiding in demolishing that PROTECTIVE POLICY which has covered our land with prosperity—which has caused our valleys to resound with the hum of industry, and dotted our streams with factories and forges. Yes, sir, the fate of that system is sealed, and these new-made votes from Texas are to be its executioners.

But, Mr. Chairman, I will be just to the South; candor and truth demand that Southern men should not be charged, as the only participants in this transaction. No, sir, the North, (and I say it with deep humiliation of my local pride,) the North has been the slaveholders' criminal ally. We found in our midst, in 1844, some political Esaus, who, for a mess of pottage, were willing to sell the birthright of freedom; and I am sorry to add, that my own State was a guilty participant in the deed. True, a majority of her people spoke against it; but their speaking was ill-directed and inefficient, and their voice was lost in the confusion of the battle. New York may now carry with submissiveness the burden which she has imposed upon herself. It is meet she should bow her neck and kiss the rod by which she is smitten. Let her draw from her purse and pay her share of \$300,000 annually to transport the mail in Texas. Let her contribute her share of *two millions*, for an army and navy to defend her; a *million* more, to erect fortifications around her frontiers; nay, more, let New York get ready to help assume and pay up the *entire debt* of Texas. And wherefore all this sacrifice for that Texian band of patriots? O, sir, it is for the very laudable end of propping up the tottering fabric of slavery. Patriotic motive—commendable object, truly! Yes, Mr. Chairman, I would hint to my Democratic colleagues from New York to be prepared with a fair story; and, when our common constituency inquire of us, "wherefore all this bleeding and taxing for Texas?" What equivalent does she give us in return? Point them to the ruined tariff, the reinstated Subtreasury, the squandered avails of the public lands, and to a disgraceful war upon our shoulders; and no doubt, sir, our people will be satisfied with the equivalent!

But, sir, I opposed the annexation and admission of Texas, for another reason. She was engaged, *de facto*, in a war with Mexico; and, whether

right or wrong in that controversy, by taking her, we assumed the war as our own. Wise counsels would have admonished to a different course. There *was* a time when these counsels prevailed on this very question. In 1836, when Texas made overtures to our Government, Gen. JACKSON declined them, urging as a reason her war with Mexico, and our treaty of amity with the same power. In 1837, the overture was repeated to Mr. VAN BUREN, and by his prime minister, Mr. FORSYTH, was again declined, urging that, "while Texas was at war, and the United States at peace, with her adversary, her annexation involved the question of war with that adversary." Indeed, so clear were the convictions of Mr. FORSYTH, that he informed Gen. HUNT, the Texian minister, that "the overture could not even be received for future consideration, as that might imply a disposition on our part to espouse the quarrel of Texas with Mexico—a disposition wholly at variance with the spirit of the treaty." Such, sir, were the positions taken by Mr. Van Buren, not only in 1837, but in his celebrated Texas letter, of the 20th of April, 1844, he reaffirms those positions with great force and eloquence, insisting that this question was not changed; that a war yet existed between Texas and Mexico. And, sir, Mr. Van Buren, both in 1837 and 1844, had the able support of the Government organ in this city. In the "Globe," of the 29th of April, 1844, now before me, the editor fully endorses Mr. Van Buren's letter—pronounces it "a production more creditable to his talents and his patriotism than had ever been seen"—declares his "demonstrative argument against annexation satisfactory and conclusive." The same paper again, on the 1st of May, 1844, expresses itself thus:

"We fully and cordially concur with Mr. Van Buren in this view," (that taken in his letter,) "and say, it is the only wise, honorable, and practicable course. Texas and Mexico are *now* at war, and the armistice admits it."

Still further, sir, on the 4th of May, 1844, the *Globe* reiterates its position, and charges with great boldness that the story of "British interference" was a mere "pretext of recent invention." The same party organ, so late as the 15th of May, 1844, speaking of annexation, and the consequent war, insisted that,

"If the General Government should take this step, in violation of the treaty with Mexico, the character of our country would not be left to our posterity as the honorable inheritance handed down to us by WASHINGTON, JEFFERSON, and JACKSON."

These were noble sentiments, and fearlessly uttered. True, the *Globe* was not blessed then with prophetic vision, and was illy preparing its readers for the great political somerset which the party made, two weeks after, at the Baltimore convention.

Sir, Texas was a new article, interpolated in the Democratic creed at Baltimore. Up to that time it had not been made a test of a man's Democracy. I appeal to my Democratic colleagues, who always dance submissively to the tune of modern Democracy, to say if, when Mr. Van Buren's letter of the 20th of April came out, followed by the patriotic endorsement of the *Globe*, they were not responded to by the great mass of the party. A loud political "Amen" was uttered through the ranks; "Mr. Van Buren is right;" "That is the true ground." And yet—can you believe it, Mr. Chairman?—one month and ten days from that time the orders were countermanded. Slavery cried out, "Presto," "Change," "Right about face;" and, with all the subserviency of Swiss troops, the *putty-faced* regiments of the North wheeled and countermarched. The *Globe* was hustled out; the Argus ate its own words; and Van Buren, the great chief of the party, had his head brought to the block. True, he remonstrated, he entreated, he pointed to his pledged vote—to his Northern head with southern heart—to

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his long course of tried *servility*; but all in vain. He staggered at Texas; this was his death-warrant; one blow, and his head is cleft asunder. Poor Van Buren! he has at last met his deserts. But I wonder, in my very heart, how my Democratic colleagues can sleep at night. I should suppose that the spirit of their murdered chief would haunt their bedsides. How dare they rest, "while Scipio's ghost walks unavenged among them?"

But, Mr. Chairman, "honor to whom honor is due." I will do no injustice to my colleagues. They surely shall have credit where it is deserved. I said, just now, that Texas was a *new test* of Democracy. It is a *new idol-image*, set up for party adoration; and, as in the case of Nebuchadnezzar's image, *three* were found who refused to bow down and worship, so it gives me the sincerest pleasure to know that three of my colleagues (Messrs. KING, WOOD, and WHEATON,) refused to bow the knee to Texas. Their votes were put upon record; and there are some indications that the party furnace is being heated into which to cast them. But sure am I that, if their integrity is adhered to, they will, like the three of old, come out without the smell of fire about them. Sir, I trust that my colleagues will not deem my allusion unkind, for I assure them I make it in great sincerity, feeling as I do for them a "brotherly affection" for this act. Indeed, I felt that I could forgive them a score of political sins, when I witnessed their independence on the final vote for the admission of Texas. I know it is said that "the people have passed upon the issue;" but I deny it. That issue was not presented fairly and nakedly to the electors in 1844. It was artfully evaded in the North. Political men there dared not hazard their interests on that issue. Indeed, recent demonstrations even in New Hampshire—the Switzerland of modern Democracy—furnish evidence that even the Granite State repudiates the embraces of Texas. One of her own sons spurned the collar of party, and on this floor registered his protest, and, despite the anathemas of slaveholders, stood firmly for freedom and his country; and thrice has his State recorded her approval of his positions, not only in three consecutive elections, but through that pile of remonstrances presented by the venerable gentleman from Massachusetts, (Mr. ADAMS,) which lie unopened upon your table. Well, sir, if such is the result in New Hampshire, what might we not have expected from any of the other free States, had the naked issue been presented?

But Texas is annexed—nay, she is admitted as a State, with her war, her debt, and her slavery; and what result legitimately follows? I might ask, with more propriety, what result would have followed had Mexico, the plundered party, been able to avenge her insults? There is not a gentleman on this floor who would have dared to push this annexation scheme to completion, had Great Britain been the party claiming the province of Texas. Yes, sir, had Great Britain been that claimant, and we had done by her as we have done by Mexico, our cities would ere this have been reduced to ashes, our ports blockaded, and our streets drenched in blood. Are we so base and cowardly, then, that what we would not dare to do to the "mistress of the seas," we are not ashamed to practise on poor faction-torn and priest-ridden Mexico? Is this the way, sir, that we fulfil a "treaty of amity" with a feeble sister republic? Shame on the nation that thus, in the eyes of the civilized world, adds ignominy to perfidy. [Mr. CULVER was here called to order by Mr. JONES, of Georgia, for irrelevancy; but the Chair again decided that Mr. C. was in order, and he therefore proceeded.] I am aware, Mr. Chairman, that truth is not always welcome. I perceive by gentlemen's countenances that they dislike allusions to the past. Reminiscences are not pleasant. I did not rise, sir, with

the vain hope of stopping the mails in Texas, or of detaching her from the Union. My object was rather the uttering of a few wholesome truths to my friends over the way, and stirring up their minds, by way of remembrance.

The President of the United States, in his annual message, has taken one view of this subject so novel in law, and extraordinary in diplomacy, that I must ask the attention of the House to it. Anxious to seize on some pretext to justify our conduct towards Mexico, Mr. POLK, on page 3, speaking of the offer of Mexico to recognise the independence of Texas, on condition that she would not annex herself to us, says: "The agreement to acknowledge the independence of Texas, whether *with* or without this condition, is *conclusive against Mexico.*" Ah! is that so, Mr. Chairman? Truly, this is a new feature in the law of compromise! I had heard that there was "a third rate county court lawyer" in Tennessee in 1844, but I did not suppose that one could be found so rusty in the elements of jurisprudence as to contend for such a position. I had supposed that an offer, by way of compromise, so far from being "*conclusive,*" was not even evidence against the party making it. I had supposed that a man might buy his peace. I had supposed that the laws regulating diplomacy would have allowed Mexico to have purchased her peace, without being concluded by her offer, especially when it was not accepted. I will submit to the members of the legal profession on this floor, whether or not I am right. But if Mr. POLK's position is sound, that an offer to compromise is "*conclusive*" against the party, he surely should be willing to abide by his own law. I will give his Western friends a case, then. On the 5th page of this same message I learn, that this same Mr. POLK, in July last, offered to the British Government the 49th parallel of latitude as a basis of compromise of the Oregon difficulty, tendering to Great Britain all north of that line; and that, too, sir, (I hope Western Democrats will mark it,) after his swelling inaugural had claimed that "our title to the whole of it was *clear and indisputable!*" And after, too, that the Baltimore convention, and the rowdies of Tammany Hall, had settled our title to the whole. Yet we find Mr. Polk, after all this, offering to the British fifteen thousand square miles of our "*clear and indisputable*" territory, for the sake of a compromise! The offer was not accepted. Mr. Polk then withdrew it, and again asserted our title to the whole territory. Now, should the British minister finally accede to that line, Mr. Polk is estopped from claiming beyond it. His offer is "*conclusive*" against the United States; and Mr. Pakenham would need only to cite him the case of the United States vs. Mexico, 1 Polk's reports, page 3, where it is decided that "an offer to compromise, whether accepted or not, is conclusive upon the party making it." If such law is good in Texas, it should be good in Oregon. But, sir, I leave the President and his friends to reconcile such law and logic with the writings of Coke and Littleton.

But my hostility to the incorporation of Texas into this Union rests upon a deeper foundation. I protest against it, because its design and tendency are to strengthen the bonds of slavery. That power is already too formidable in this country. The rights of the free laborers are jeopardied by its existence: For ten years it has been making its stealthy, but determined encroachments upon the North. It has not been content to remain where the Constitution left it. It has demanded the affirmative support of the General Government. The army, the navy, the treasury of the nation, have been unwarrantably drawn upon for its defence; and last, but not least, a foreign territory must be added to give it preponderance.

And what returns, let me ask, has slavery been making for the favors shown her? Her acts are recorded; they cannot be mistaken.

Look, sir, at the right of petition in this House. Where is it? What power has stricken it down? Freemen hold this right as invaluable—as one given by God and guaranteed by the Constitution of the country. Slavery has decreed that it may be exercised on some subjects, but denied on others; and I stand here to-day to protest against the insult offered to my constituents. I had the honor, on the first week of the session, to present a memorial, signed by some 2,000 of them, respectful in language, and asking the attention of Congress to a legitimate subject, over which Congress has exclusive jurisdiction. The signers were not confined to the “third party,” so called, but of all parties—by some of the most respectable and intelligent in my district. How was it treated? Denied a reference or consideration—consigned, unopened, to your table, there to take its long repose. On whose motion? On that of a *Southern* gentleman, [Mr. BAYLY, of Virginia.] And, to show the *even-handed* justice and *impartiality* of the House, I had hardly taken my seat before a gentleman from South Carolina, on my left, (Mr. SIMS,) rose and presented the proceedings of an anti-tariff meeting in his State, denouncing, in strong language, the protective policy of the country, claiming (I use the words of the petitioners) that they “desired to take off the fetters from home industry.” Sir, when *that* was presented, how was it disposed of? Did you see some eight or ten Northern gentlemen, having charge of the *table* department, jumping upon their feet, and moving to lay it on the table? Far from it, sir. It was respectfully received, referred to a standing committee of this House, has since been considered attentively, and, in due time, will be reported on. Wherefore this odious and arbitrary discrimination? Are the gentleman’s constituents better than mine? Are they, because of their loud thunder and ominous threats, to be commended to favor here over the unobtrusive Quakers from my district? All the difference that I could perceive in the two cases was, that the gentleman’s memorial asked Congress to take the fetters off home *labor*, and mine to take them off home *laborers*. The one was an abstraction worthy of South Carolina optics; the other a practical matter, worthy of the common sense of Yankees.

Gentlemen complain that the anti-slavery sentiment of the North is endangering their cherished institutions. Who, sir, is responsible for that anti-slavery feeling? Slaveholders may thank themselves for its rapid increase these few past years. The alarming strides of slavery in the country—the deeds it has caused—be perpetrated on this floor and elsewhere—have not been among the remote causes of increased hostility to its existence. I could allude to scenes fresh in the recollection of gentlemen. How long, Mr. Chairman, since an honorable member of this House, (Mr. GIDDINGS, of Ohio,) for the exercise of a constitutional right, and the discharge of what he deemed an honest duty, was arraigned, condemned at your bar, and virtually expelled from this hall? But did you conquer him, or crush the cause? No. He returned to his high-minded constituents, and told them of the ignominy heaped upon them and him. They honored his sternness, commended his integrity, and, with a round majority, gave him a new commission, and sent him back to battle still longer on the ramparts of freedom. Sir, that event gave a new impulse to the anti-slavery feeling of the North. It formed a new era in its history. It caused that feeling to widen and deepen in the hearts of Northern freemen. It is because slavery thus attempts to awe and strike down the representatives of freedom, that we oppose its extension and increase. The case of my worthy

friend from Ohio is not the only one which the free men and free women of the North have registered in their book of remembrance. No, sir: They have not forgotten the perilous hour when their tried champion, the venerable gentleman from Massachusetts, (JOHN QUINCY ADAMS,) met that same enemy on this floor. O! sir, I would that Southern gentlemen could have known how the Northern pulse quickened on that occasion, and with what burning anxiety we waited the arrival of every mail. And at the moment when we looked to see him swept down by the billows of Southern wrath, we saw him triumph in the conflict. He bore himself like an ancient rock in the midst of the ocean, against which wave after wave dashed and broke, leaving him majestic in his victory. Never, sir, never did such rich and mellow lustre surround the sitting sun of that venerable man. Never were Northern hearts so overflowing with affection and gratitude. And when, a few months after that scene, the venerable statesman set out on a quiet and unostentatious tour through the Northern States, he was everywhere greeted with one continued round of heartfelt gratitude. I remember it well. He visited in the vicinity of my own residence. Party prejudices were forgotten, old animosities lost sight of, and one spontaneous burst of affection everywhere marked his journey. Ah, sir, we loved and honored the man who dared to stand in the breach, and battle for our rights, in the hour of peril. That was another chapter, Mr. Chairman, in the history of anti-slavery feeling.

[Mr. CULVER was here again called to order by Mr. PRICE, of Missouri, for discussing foreign topics; and Mr. McConnell, of Alabama, repeatedly, during Mr. C.'s remarks, interrupted, by calls to order; but the Chair ruled that the remarks were not out of order, and that Mr. C. was entitled to proceed.]

Mr. Chairman, as gentlemen appear uneasy, and my hour is wearing away, I will hasten.

I was alluding to the attempts of slavery to override the Constitution, here and elsewhere, urging as a reason why I oppose its extension in Texas. If the supporters of slavery had abided the terms of the compact, and been scrupulous to respect the rights of the North, stipulated in that compact, it would have disarmed its enemies of some of their keenest weapons. But, on this matter, there is a strange monomania in the South. The Constitution is regarded as a compact expressly for *Southern* interests and Southern advantages. They seem unwilling to allow that the North has some rights and immunities, secured by that instrument. Now, sir, it is time that gentlemen knew there are two sides to the Constitution.

I hold this, in relation to it: When we entered into the great constitutional co-partnership with our Southern neighbors, and became tenants in common of all the territory then reaching from Maine to Georgia, and from the Granite Hills to the Rocky Mountains, the same articles of co-partnership, which *tacitly* (for, thank God, it is not *expressly*) permitted slavery to exist in the South, took special care to give to the North something to keep in check. The men who framed the Constitution loved freedom, and hated slavery. They had just come from the fields of the Revolution. They had drunk deep at the gushing spring of liberty; and hence it was that they would not soil the pages of that instrument by the word "slave" or "slavery;" and yet, for the sake of the compromise, they permitted slavery to exist, well knowing that its days would be numbered and its duration limited. And when the North hesitated to enter the compact with slavery, the framers of the Constitution virtually replied to them—True, we negatively tolerate slavery; but we secure to you in it certain checks and antidotes; these, by

their legitimate action, will, in due time, eat out and destroy slavery. True, it is a grievous evil to be tolerated in the compact, but with it we guarantee to you *freedom of speech, liberty of the press*, and the RIGHT OF PETITION; with the judicious exercise of all these, slavery cannot long exist. Discussion, experience, and intelligence, will drive it from the land. The North finally entered the compact. Well, sir, we travelled on in our "joint occupancy" fifty years. But slavery, instead of retiring, grew with our growth and strengthened with our strength. At length the North began to exercise some of *its* rights. Slavery began to be *discussed* as a great national and moral evil. The press began to speak in tones of rebuke. Petitions began to wend their way to this Capitol. But what was the result? Why, sir, we were met, *in limine*, by the slave power. We were denied, one and all, the exercise of these rights. Our presses were demolished—discussion interdicted by mobs—our mail bags rifled, and the right of petition denied us on this floor. And we were told by the South that, if we persisted in the exercise of these rights, they would dissolve the Union. Very well. If slavery cannot abide the compact, then on her head be the consequences of its violation. We mean to adhere to the terms of the agreement; and, "while life and breath and being last," we will surrender *no* right secured to us in that compact.

I am aware, sir, that the utterance of these sentiments may subject me to the appellation of an "Abolitionist." I will put that right. I was not sent here by the "Abolitionists proper." They did not deem me orthodox; they voted for their own candidate, in opposition to me. While, therefore, I might say that I owed them nothing, as a party, yet this floor is not the place whereon to settle controversies with them. I find here a more formidable enemy, which requires all my attention; and against its attacks I will defend "Abolitionists," and all others of my constituents. And while on this point, Mr. Chairman, I beg leave to vindicate the Whigs of my own State from an imputation attempted to be cast upon them, here and elsewhere.

The cry of "*Abolition Whigs*" has been rung upon them. Well, sir, if I may be allowed to be their humble organ here, I will tell you just how far the charge is true. If opposition to perpetuating slavery by the unconstitutional acquisition of foreign slave territory; if resistance to the assaults of slavery, when slavery leaps its own bounds; if a laudable desire to elevate 14,000 of our citizens, now debarred, solely for their color, to the privileges of the elective franchise; if a generous sympathy for a distinguished citizen of Kentucky, (CASSIUS M. CLAY,) in his noble and constitutional effort to rid his own State of the curse of slavery; if standing for our rights, as the Constitution settles them, and holding slavery strictly to the same; if these positions render us obnoxious to the charge of "Whig Abolitionists," then must we plead guilty. But, beyond this, the charge is wantonly false, and put forth for *selfish* and malicious ends. Neither myself, nor the Whigs of my State, ever proposed to go beyond the Constitution to assail slavery, or to seize unconstitutional weapons with which to fight it. We believe that we understand this matter fully. We act, and shall continue to act, in self-defence. Nay, I will do justice even to the reviled "*Abolitionists*," who seem to be common targets, at which all the artillery, big and *little*, on this floor, is pointed. They do not ask Congress, or propose themselves, to violate the Constitution, in reaching slavery. They all know that, in the slave States, it is not the subject of direct action of Congress, nor have they desired such an interference. But they *do* claim that, in the Territories and in this District, the action of Congress may be legitimately

invoked. They *do* claim that they have the right to discuss, to print, to petition upon the subject, as a great moral and political evil. And so long as this right is denied them, so long will the war wax hotter against slavery. I am well known, at home and abroad, as not endorsing all their *measures*, deeming some of them ill-advised and unwarrantable; yet the mass of them are honest, patriotic, and intelligent, and they know well whereof they speak. I can assure the honorable gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BAYLY) that there are Quaker women, whose names are on the memorial which he so gallantly moved to lay upon the table, who would put him to his best in a constitutional argument on slavery in the District and Territories.

Mr. Chairman, I will dismiss this part of the subject by briefly explaining to you, and through you, to the country, why the North is willing and the South unwilling to abide by the original compact. The North, conscious of the integrity of its cause, and the defensibility of its claims, relies upon truth, and argument, and fact, to sustain it; while, on the other hand, the South—I hope I shall not be deemed uncharitable—the South, as if instinctively conscious of its vulnerable points, refuses investigation, silences discussion, and tramples with impunity upon the right of petition. I beg to be understood when I speak of the South. I do not mean all of the South. There are some noble spirits there—men who view this matter in a calm light. There are such upon this floor; and, I take pleasure in adding, that my personal acquaintance with some of them here has modified my feelings and opinions of slaveholders. But I mean by “the South” that larger, self-styled “Democratic,” portion of them, who spin abstractions by moonlight behind cotton bags—who think “the world was made for Cæsar, and not for all mankind”—who think that the Constitution stops short at Mason and Dixon’s line. Towards that portion even, the cool North, conscious, as I have described it to be, requires no retaliatory measures. No, sir. We have no need of “gags” and “previous questions”—of mobs and bloodshed. And I can assure my friend from South Carolina, (Mr. SIMS,) and any others who may desire to present anti-tariff memorials, that they will not find me, nor any other Northern Representative, moving to lay them upon the table unconsidered. No, sir. We say to them, frankly, send on your petitions, gentlemen—bring up your memorials; and although they ask such legislation as, if granted, would stab Northern interests to the heart, yet they shall be received, respectfully referred, considered, and acted upon. And if we cannot by cool Yankee reasoning, convince you of your wrong, and overturn your positions, we will grant your requests. Nay, more. If you desire it, come and establish your anti-tariff presses at Lowell and Merrimack—convince our “poor factory girls,” who are getting their two, three and four dollars per week, that they are oppressed, that they are worse off than your slaves—prevail on them to run away to Alabama or Texas, and sell themselves; or, if you please, come and locate your pro-slavery presses in Boston, in Providence, in New York—hold up and defend the beauties of your slave system—decry free labor—prevail on the working masses to run away South, and become slaves. Do all this, gentlemen, and, with it, we guarantee to you the broad shield of the Constitution. No Lynch law shall incarcerate your champions; no polite “committee of 60” ruffians shall tear down your press, and send it to a slave State; no ruthless mob shall shoot down your editors at night, (as ours have been,) and the murderers go unwhipped of justice. And if your citizens be illegally imprisoned in Boston, without bail, or counsel, or friends, the agents of your Governors, sent to look after them, shall not be expelled by a mob; your writ shall be allowed, and your case tested by law. We will meet you on all these, with far other weapons; will oppose argument to argument, press against press, editor against editor. We will put on our *Horace Greeley*s, our *Redwood Fishers*, and our *Charles Hudson*s, and by facts and figures and demonstration, we could give your champions such a *death hug*, that a second grapple would never be courted. And why would the North so meet this issue? Because, sir, truth loves discussion—a good cause brightens by argument; while error hates both, and its cause is made worse by investigation.

Am I not warranted, then, in assigning these as the true reasons why one section of this Union has strengthened and perpetuated its local power at the expense of the other? Is not this the reason why Texas to-day stands recorded a member of this confederacy? I assure gentlemen that this iniquitous scheme has engendered a feeling of bitterness in the North which time will not soon eradicate.

I know, Mr. Chairman, that these honest truths will not be well received here and elsewhere. And it has been intimated to me here, and at home, that the avowal of such sentiments would not be tolerated on this floor. But, sir, whatever other properties may have been ascribed to me, I believe that I was never called a *coward* in uttering my honest sentiments. And standing here in my place, and with the responsibility which attaches to the station, I pronounce this whole Texas scheme a piece of political piracy from beginning to end. I wash my hands of all participation in the guilty deed; and against the whole of it, I here, on my own, and on the behalf of my wronged constituency, enter my solemn protest.

A few words, Mr. Chairman, in defining my position upon Oregon, and I shall have done. [Mr. Houston, of Alabama, here called Mr. Culver to order, insisting that it was not in order to debate that subject on this bill. But the Chair again ruled that, as the House was now in Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, remarks upon Oregon were not out of or-

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der.] Mr. C. proceeded. I am astonished, sir, that gentlemen should think me out of order in alluding to Oregon; especially when, in discussing Oregon, for weeks, Texas has again and again been drawn into the debate, and no one thought of calling to order. Moreover, my remarks, of five minutes' duration, will stand in the place of a set speech of one hour, as I have given up all hope of obtaining the floor in the scramble with sixty competitors.

I am in favor of giving the notice to Great Britain to terminate the joint occupancy of this territory. Believing, as I do, that we have rights there which, when clearly defined and settled, we should insist upon and defend, I go for "all" that we really own. If difficulties arise in ascertaining the precise extent of those rights, I would call to my aid the light of history, and the principles settled by the law of nations. I am not one of those, sir, who believe that a Tammany club, a Baltimore caucus, or a partisan inaugural, constitute the best tribunal for settling a grave question of eminent domain. The question, for twenty-five years, was thought sufficiently intricate and doubtful to call for the aid of negotiators. When wise counsels prevailed, in the days of Monroe and Adams, and Gallatin and Rush and Clay, it was deemed a fit subject for negotiation. And so doubtful was the question of title deemed, that three times had our Government offered to divide the territory on the parallel of 49°. But it was reserved for a newborn President in 1845, in response to a political caucus, to brush away all these doubts—to throw the wisdom of his predecessors into the shade, and proclaim "our title to the whole territory to be clear and unquestionable"—so very clear as not even to be questioned. And yet, strange to tell! not five months elapse, before this same Chief Magistrate offers to give away to Great Britain *five degrees and forty minutes* of our "clear and unquestionable" soil! Understand me, Mr. Chairman, I am not saying whether he was right or wrong in his claim on the 4th of March, or in his offer on the 12th of July. I only wish to put this and this together, that my Democratic friends may see not only the quick sagacity of their new President in discerning intricate title, but also his practical consistency in holding fast to such title. I leave his friends, however, to reconcile discrepancies, and extricate him from the dilemma.

If I may be allowed a word in relation to this question of title—and it can be but a word—I would say, that up to 49°, or to the point as far north as the head waters of the Columbia, I believe our title is conclusive, and can be demonstrated to be such against the whole world.

In affirming such a title, I confess I do not draw my strongest arguments from the discovery of the whole continent by Columbus, in 1492; nor from the subsequent grant of it all by the Pope of Rome to the King of Spain. Such discovery and grant, to be sure, should not be lightly heeded by Great Britain, for she, herself, subsequently, claimed right to parcel out in large slices, giving by charter to Massachusetts colony all between 42° and 48°, from the Atlantic to the Pacific; and another to Virginia, reaching from "sea to sea" between certain other parallels. Nor yet do I draw largely from the discovery of the northwest coast in 1543, by Spain. That discovery was not followed by exploration and settlement, for nearly two hundred years, if we except a temporary trading post at Nootka; and even that was abandoned in 1795. It cannot, moreover, be denied, that the Spanish claim to the country, whatever it was, was somewhat modified by the Nootka Sound Convention, in 1790. Under that convention, Great Britain obtained certain rights of hunting, trading, and "making settlements." How far those rights were subsequently modified or abrogated, by the war between Great Britain and Spain in 1796, I shall not stop now to enquire. What I would say is, that discovery alone is not the most satisfactory evidence of title; and yet I would not assert that it did not form a remote link in the chain.

By the Florida treaty of 1819, Spain transferred to us all her rights, whatever they were, to the whole territory. Yet, I am free to admit, that the discovery of the country by Spain, and her transfer to us, do not furnish the clearest and most conclusive evidence of title. I prefer resting our claims upon more substantial, satisfactory, and practical evidence. I speak now of the portion south of 49°. I rest them upon the strong grounds of the exploration of the Columbia river, in 1792, by Capt. Robert Gray, of Boston. That indefatigable Yankee navigator passed the bar at the mouth of that hitherto disputed river, sailed up its channel several miles, and gave it the name of "Columbia," in honor of his own ship. Confirmatory of the title by Gray's exploration, we have that of Lewis and Clark, in 1805, who explored, under the patronage of the Government of the United States, the head waters of the same river, and traced it to the ocean. These explorations were followed in 1810 by the settlement at Astoria, by John Jacob Astor, at the mouth of that river. This post was taken by the British in the war of 1812, but was formally and solemnly restored to the United States by the treaty of Ghent, in 1814, since which time pioneers and settlers from our country have been steadily filling up the territory. These explorations, settlements, and occupation, constitute, with me, a good, valid, conclusive title—a title sufficiently perfect, without the transfer from Spain. In this opinion I am supported by the arguments of the American negotiators in 1818, before we obtained the Spanish title. Certain it is, that those distinguished plenipotentiaries then maintained the validity of our title to all south of the 49th parallel, on the strength of Capt. Gray's discovery and exploration, and the subsequent settlement and occupation. Those positions and arguments were re-affirmed by Mr. Calhoun, in his official correspondence with the British minister in 1844, and reiterated again by Mr. Buchanan in 1845.

Now, sir, candor compels us to admit, that just so far as we strengthen our title to all south of 49° by the acts of Capt. Gray, and Lewis and Clark; so, north of that line by the discovery and exploration of Fraser's river by McKenzie, a British subject, in 1792, is the British title strengthened to the country drained by its waters. If the law of nations aids us in deriving title from these sources, it should be allowed equally to aid our antagonist.

I therefore say frankly, that our title to that part lying north of the 49th parallel, is not so "clear and indisputable" as it is to the portion south. And had our negotiators effected a settlement on that line in 1818, '24, or '27, the country and the world would have acquiesced in its equity and fairness. And had Mr. Polk adjusted the matter on this basis in 1845, the country would have been less inclined to have grumbled at the result, than it would have been to have smiled at the sudden evaporation of his inaugural claim. And I say here, sir, that if honorable negotiation can effect a compromise, substantially on this line, wo to the man who plunges us into a war for that to which our claim is not "clear and unquestionable." I am not saying that we have no color of title north of this line, nor that our adversary has a perfect one; but I would say, that our rights there are a fit subject for honorable negotiation.

As we have rights, therefore, in Oregon, I shall vote for the notice, believing its tendency will be, not to provoke war, but quicken negotiation, and produce an amicable adjustment. Embarrassments will but thicken around by every month's delay. The irritated feelings between the two countries is every day rising higher and higher; and unless an adjustment be speedily effected this feeling will place the question beyond the control of negotiation. In its present shape the temptations for political capital are too strong to be resisted by party demagogues. It should, if possible, at once be placed beyond their reach.

Moreover, the notice is not of itself just cause of offence. It is a stipulated right in the convention of 1827. Great Britain having agreed that we might give it, will not thereby have any cause for offence. And if Mr. Polk and his advisers see fit to surround it with offensive embarrassments, provocative of war, on their heads be the consequences. But I do not believe that war will come of it. The respective nations have interests too vast and momentous involved in the issue. The age is too enlightened and peaceful—public sentiment too much advanced in correct views—the matter *really* in dispute too small—to warrant the probability of so direful an event. Besides, one section of this Union is already planting itself in hostility to a war, and that section generally bears sway in the nation. To that section the present Chief Magistrate is known to be closely allied, easily swayed by its counsels, and controlled by its preferences. That section, well knowing the disastrous effects of a war upon its cherished interests, is alarmed at its bare possibility. Yes, Mr. Chairman, the scene has been one a little amusing, to see gentlemen who, twelve months ago, were ready to brave war, dishonor, and disgrace to grab what did not belong to us, now fluttering with the timidity of an affrighted maiden at the bare mention of taking possession of what *does* belong to us. They were loud in shouting responses to the Baltimore compact—"All Oregon and Texas," while that was to gain them a President and Texas; but, these obtained, the compact is repudiated.

I ask my Northern Democratic friends if this is the way their Southern allies fulfil compacts? Have you not been cheated? Is this the reward for your Texas fealty? Would you not have been wise to have kept Texas as a hostage for Oregon a few weeks? Pray, then, profit by experience. Don't be caught a second time. Southern friendship you will find co-extensive with Southern interests, and deep as Southern pockets. They want your help on one occasion more. They wish your co-operation in striking down the tariff of 1842. Give them this, and let them stave off Oregon, till the deed is consummated, and then, my word for it, the favors you get from them for Oregon, or for any other interest not kindred to their own, will be few and far between. And to that portion of the Southern army who originated and consummated the Texas scheme, and who now hesitate about Oregon—who start back, and cry out, "A lion in the way!"—to you I would say, if war *shall* come, remember that *you* have aroused the spirit of territorial acquisition, which is now returning to trouble you. You have labored for nine years to wake up a national hatred against Great Britain for her anti-slavery movements. That hatred aroused, is now casting heavy embarrassments over negotiation; embarrassments which are hourly multiplying the chances of war. And with the horrors of war floating before you, I should not wonder if your vision rested upon results connected with it. Does it not a little trouble you, when you think of the long line of FREE States that will yet be carved out, stretching three thousand miles west to the Pacific Ocean, coupled with the probability that all CANADA may yet be called in to restore the lost balance of the Union? If your sleep is disturbed by the horrors of war—if the visions of British steamers in your harbors—of your cities in flames—of marshalled "regiments of black troops" in your midst—if these haunt you, and if all these, in due time, shall be realized—point to Texas, and say, this is the price we pay for it, remembering, that He who sits in the circle of the Heavens, and holds the balance in His hands, will mete out justice to nations, as well as to individuals.

Thanking the House for their kind attention at this late hour, and you, Mr. Chairman, for the firm support which you have given me, and tendering my acknowledgments to the gentlemen over the way for the calm and *uninterrupted* manner in which *they* have permitted me to speak, I relieve your patience.

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