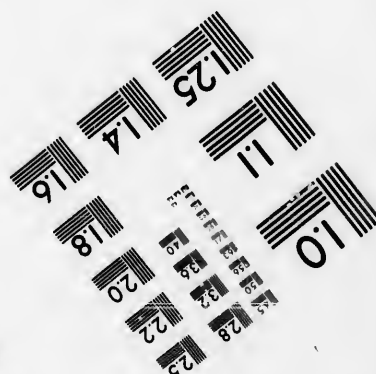
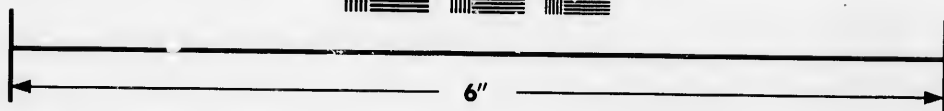
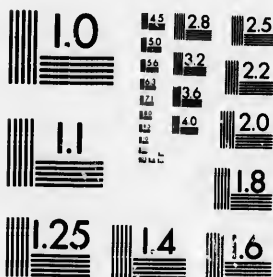


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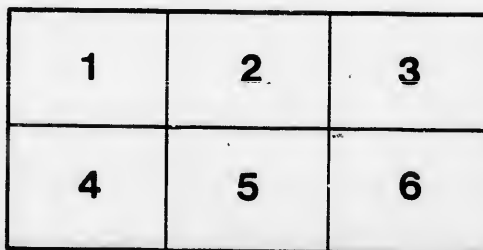
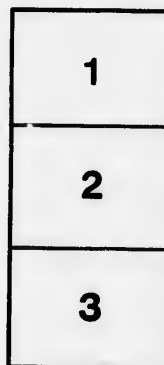
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SPEECH OF WILLIAM H. SEWARD,

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,

JULY 29, 1852.

IN SENATE, JULY 29, 1852.

A bill reported by Mr. SEWARD, from the Committee on Commerce, for a survey and reconnaissance of Bhering's Straits, the Arctic Ocean, and the courses of trade between America and China, was read.

Mr. SEWARD rose and said:

Mr. PRESIDENT: Some years ago, when ascending the Alabama, I saw a stag plunge into the river, and gallantly gain the western bank, while the desponding sportsman whose rifle he had escaped, sat down to mourn his ill luck under the deep magnolia forest that shaded the eastern shore. You, sir, are a dweller in that region, and are, as all the world knows, a gentleman of cultivated taste and liberal fortunes. Perhaps, then, you may have been that unfortunate hunter. Howsoever that may have been, I wish to converse with you now of the chase, and yet not of deer, or hawk, or hound, but of a chase upon the seas; and still not of angling or trolling, nor of the busy toil of those worthy fishermen who seem likely to embroil us, certainly without reluctance on our part, in a controversy about their rights in the Bay of Fundy, but of a nobler sport and more adventurous sportsmen than Izaak Walton, or Daniel Boone, or even Nimrod, the mightiest as well as most ancient of hunters, ever dreamed of—the chase of the whale over his broad range of the universal ocean.

Do not hastily pronounce the subject out of order or unprofitable, or unworthy of this high presence. The Phœnicians, the earliest mercantile nation known to us, enriched themselves by selling the celebrated Tyrian dye, and glass made of sand taken from the sea; and they acquired not only those sources of wealth, but the art of navigation itself, in the practice of

their humble calling as fishermen. A thousand years ago, King Alfred was laying the foundations of empire for Young England, as we are now doing for Young America. The monarch whom men justly have surnamed the Wise as well as the Great, did not disdain to listen to Oether, who related the adventures of a voyage along the coast of Norway, "so far north as commonly the whale hunters used to travel;" nor was the stranger suffered to depart until he had submitted to the King "a most just survey and description" of the Northern Seas, not only as they extended upwards to the North Cape, but also as they declined downwards along the southeast coast of Lapland, and so following the icy beach of Russia to where the river Dwina discharged its waters into the White Sea, or, as it was then called, the Sea of Archangel. Perhaps my poor speech may end in some similar lesson. The incident I have related is the burthen of the earliest historical notice of the subjugation of the monster of the seas to the uses of man. The fishery was carried on then, and near six hundred years afterwards, by the Basques, Biscayans, and Norwegians, for the food yielded by the tongue, and the oil obtained from the fat of the animal. Whalebone entered into commerce in the fifteenth century, and at first commanded the enormous price of seven hundred pounds sterling per ton, exceeding a value in this age of ten thousand dollars. Those were merry times, if not for science, at least for Royalty, when, although the material for stays and hoops was taken from the mouth, the law appropriated the tail of every whale taken by an English subject to the use of the Queen, for the supply of the Royal wardrobe.

In 1486 the Portuguese reached the Cape of Storms, and, in happy angury of an ultimate passage to India, changed its ill-omened name

to that of "Good Hope;" and immediately thereafter the Northern States of Europe, especially England and Holland, began that series of voyages, not even yet ended, in search of a passage to the East through the floating fields and mountains of ice in the Arctic Ocean. The unsuccessful search disclosed the refuge of the whales in the bays and creeks of Spitzbergen. In 1575 a London merchant wrote to a foreign correspondent for advice and direction as to the course of killing the whale, and received instructions how to build and equip a vessel of two hundred tons, and to man it exclusively with experienced whale hunters of Biscay. The attraction of dominion was stronger in that age than the lust of profit. The English now claimed Spitzbergen, and all its surrounding ice and waters, by discovery. The Dutch, with truth, alleged an earlier exploration, while the Danes claimed the whole region as a part of Greenland—a pretension that could not then be disproved; and all these parties sent armed forces upon the fishing ground, less to protect their few fishermen, than to establish exclusive rights there. After some fifty years, these nations discovered, first, that it was absurd to claim jurisdiction where no permanent possession could ever be established, by reason of the rigors of climate; and secondly, that there were fish enough and room enough for all competitors. Thenceforward, the whale fishery in the Arctic Ocean, has been free to all nations.

The Dutch perfected the harpoon, the reel, the line, and the spear, as well as the art of using them. And they established, also, the system which we have since found indispensable, of rewarding all the officers and crews employed in the fishery, not with direct wages or salaries, but with shares in the spoils of the game, proportioned to skill and experience. Combining with these the advantages of favorable position, and of frugality and perseverance quite proverbial, the Dutcheren founded a fishing settlement called Smeerenburgh, on the coast of Spitzbergen, within eleven degrees of the North Pole, and they took whales in its vicinity in such abundance that ships were needed to go out in ballast, to carry home the surplus oil and bone above the capacity of the whaling vessels. The whales, thus vigorously attacked, again changed their lurking place. Spitzbergen was abandoned by the fishermen, and the very site of Smeerenburgh is now unknown. In the year 1496, Sebastian Cabot, in the spirit of that age, seeking a northwestern passage to the Indies, gave to the world the discovery of Prima Vista, or, as we call it, Newfoundland, and the Basques, Biscayans, Dutch, and English, immediately thereafter commenced the chase for whales in the waters surrounding it.

Scarcely had the colonists of Massachusetts planted themselves at Plymouth, before the

sterility of the soil and the rigor of the climate forced them to resort to the sea to eke out their subsistence. Pursuing the whales out from their own bays, in vessels of only forty tons burthen, they appeared on the fishing ground off Newfoundland in the year 1690. Profiting by nearness of position and economy in building and equipping ships, and sharing also in the bounties with which England was then stimulating the whale fishery, they soon excelled all their rivals on the Newfoundland waters, as well as in Baffin's Bay and off the coast of Greenland. Thus encouraged, they ran down the coasts of America and Africa, and in the waters rolling between them they discovered the black whale, a new and inferior species, yet worthy of capture; and then stretching off toward the South Pole, they found still another species, the sperm whale, whose oil is still preferred above all other; and thus they enlarged the whole fishery for the benefit of the world, which since that time has distinguished the two branches of that enterprise geographically by the designation of the Northern and Southern fisheries. In 1775 the fisheries were carried on by the Americans, the English, the Dutch, and the French. The French employed only a small fleet, the Dutch a larger one of 129 sail. The English had only 96 ships, while the Americans had 132 vessels in the Southern fishery, and 177 in the Northern fishery, manned with 4,000 persons, and bringing in oil and whalebone of the value of \$1,111,000. This precociousness of American nautical enterprise elicited from Burke, in his great speech for conciliation to the colonies, a tribute familiar to our countrymen, and perhaps the most glowing passage that even that great orator ever wrote or spoke:

"Look at the manner in which the people of New England have of late carried on the whale fishery. Whilst we follow them among the tumbling mountains of ice, and behold them penetrating into the deepest recesses of Hudson's Bay and Davis's Straits, whilst we are looking for them beneath the Arctic circle, we hear that they have pierced into the opposite region of Polar cold—that they are at the Antipodes, and engaged under the frozen serpent of the South. Falkland Island, which seemed too remote and romantic an object for the grasp of national ambition is but a stage and resting place in the progress of their victorious industry. Nor is the Equatorial heat more discouraging to them than the accumulated winter of both the Poles. We know that whilst some of them draw the line and strike the harpoon on the coast of Africa, others run the coast of Brazil. No ocean but what is vexed with their fisheries, no climate that is not witness to their toils. Neither the perseverance of Holland, nor the activity of France, nor the dexterous and firm sagacity of English enterprise, ever carried this perilous mode of hardy enterprise to the extent to which it has been pushed by this recent people—a people who are still, as it were, in the gristle, and not yet hardened into the bone of manhood."

But Britain did not conciliate. The Revolution went on, and the American whale fishery

perished, leaving not one vessel on either fishing ground.

Yet it is curious, Mr. President, to mark the elasticity of our countrymen in this their favorite enterprise. A provisional treaty of peace between the United States and Great Britain was concluded on the 30th of November, 1782. "On the 3d of February, 1783," (I read from an English paper of that period,) "the ship Bedford, Captain Moores, belonging to Massachusetts, arrived in the Downs. She passed Gravesend on the 4th, and on the 6th was reported at the custom-house in London. She was not allowed regular entry until after some consultation between the commissioners of customs and the Lords of the Council, on account of the many acts of Parliament yet in force against the rebels of America. She was loaded with 587 barrels of whale oil, and manned wholly with American seamen, and belonged to the island of Nantucket. The vessel lay at the Horsley-Downs, a little below the Tower, and was the first which displayed the thirteen stripes of America in any British port."

Nevertheless, the lost vantage ground was not easily nor speedily regained. The effort was made without protection, against exclusion in foreign markets, and against bounties by the English Government equivalent to forty dollars per man employed, or sixty per cent. on the value of every cargo obtained—bounties not occasionally nor irregularly offered, but continued from 1750 to 1824, and amounting in the aggregate to three millions of pounds sterling. Nor was this all. These bounties, enhanced with additional inducements, were offered to the Nantucket fishermen, on condition of their abandoning their country and becoming inhabitants of the adjacent British Colonies, or of the British Islands. It seemed, indeed, that a crisis in this great national interest had come. Happily there was, on the French side of the Channel, at least, one unwearied friend of America, as there were many watchful enemies of England. Lafayette wrote several letters to Boston and arrested an immigration from Nantucket to the British Colonies and Islands already on the eve of embarkation, and then addressed himself to the French monarch and his Court. France saw at once the dangers of a transfer of so great a number of seamen, together with the very secret, art and mystery of whale hunting, to her hereditary and relentless enemy. The good but ill-fated Louis XVI equipped six whaling vessels, with American harpooners, on his own account, and offered a bounty of nine dollars per man, payable by the Royal Treasury, to every American fisherman who should emigrate to France. In a whole year, only nine families, containing thirty-three persons, accepted this offer: and therefore the King, in compliance with Lafayette's first advice, adopted the expedient of discriminating in favor of

American cargoes of oil and whalebone in the French market. The American whale fishery began to revive, and in 1787, 1788, and 1789, it employed an average of 122 vessels. But it still labored under the pressure of competition, stimulated by bounties both in England and in France. In 1790, the Great and General Council of Massachusetts appealed to Congress for protection to this great interest of that Commonwealth. Mr. Jefferson, the Secretary of State, submitted an elaborate reply, which, while it was liberal in its spirit, nevertheless closed with the declaration, that "the whale fishery was a branch of industry so poor as to come to nothing with distant nations who did not support it from their treasuries—that our position placed our fishing on ground somewhat higher, such as to relieve the National Treasury from giving it support, but not to permit it to derive support from the fishery, nor to relieve the Government from the obligation to provide free markets for the productions of the fishery, if possible."

The enterprise had not yet languished into life, when the French Revolution of 1789 occurred, which involved Europe, and ultimately the United States, in wars that swept the latter, as well as the French and Dutch, from all the fisheries, and left them in the exclusive enjoyment of Britain, who achieved in those wars her now established pre-eminence as the conquerer of the seas. At their close, the British had 146 vessels in the Northern whaling ground, which captured no less than 733 whales, and thus obtained 13,590 tons of oil and 438 tons of whalebone; and fifty-six ships in the Southern whale fishery equally successful. The Americans now re-entered the game, and the tables were speedily—and, as we think, permanently—turned in their favor. In 1824, the British became discouraged, and withdrew their bounties; and in 1842 they had no more than 18 vessels in the North fishery, which captured only 24 whales. The Southern fishery declined still more rapidly; so that, in 1845, not one British whaler appeared in the South Seas. Since that time, all nations have virtually abandoned this "hardy form of perilous enterprise" in favor of the Americans. The entire whaling fleet of the world, in 1847, consisted of about 900 vessels, 40 of which belonged to France, 20 to Bremen and other ports in Northern Europe, 20 to New Holland and other British Polynesian Colonies, and all others, more than 800 in number, with a tonnage of 240,000 tons, belonged to the United States. The capital thus employed exceeded twenty millions of dollars, and the annual productions of the fisheries amounted to thirteen millions of dollars. With the decline of this enterprise in Great Britain, her commercial writers began to discountenance whale fishing altogether; and while they now represent it as a mere gambling adventure, they endeavor to stimulate the

people of Continental Europe to substitute vegetable oils for those procured in the seas.

Mr. President: Pray consider the cost, time, dangers, and hazard of the whale fishery. Each vessel with its outfit is worth \$30,000, and carries thirty able-bodied seamen, and is afloat on a single voyage one or two, perhaps three years. It finds the whale nowhere below the sixtieth degree of latitude, and can remain there only during the brief Polar summer of three months. The whole time may elapse without a whale being seen. When discovered, every stage of his capture is toilsome, and attended with multiplied dangers to the assailants, increased by the shoals, the ice, the storms, and the fogs, which protect the animal against his pursuers. The statistics are absolutely frightful to a landsman or a common seaman. In 1819, of sixty-three British ships sent to Davis's Straits, ten were lost. In 1821, out of sixty-nine, eleven were lost. Of eighty-seven ships that sailed for Davis's Straits in 1830, no less than eighteen were lost, twenty-four returned *clean*, while not one of the remainder had a full cargo, and only one or two *half fished*.

Pray consider now, sir, that the great triumph of the American fishermen was achieved, and is still sustained, not only without aid from the Government, but practically also without aid from the capital or enterprise of general commerce, and, indeed, to quote the nervous language of Jefferson, "with no auxiliaries but poverty and rigorous economy." The whaling fleet of the United States, in 1846, consisted of seven hundred and thirty-seven vessels. Of the thirty States, only five, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New York, were represented: and all of them except New York are the States least blessed in fertility and climate. New Hampshire, having only a single port, sent out only one vessel. Rhode Island, one of the three most diminutive States, equipped fifty-two. Connecticut, a small State, sent out one hundred and twenty-four. New York, with her extended territory, vast wealth, and stupendous commercial establishments, sent only eighty-five: and all the rest proceeded from that State, inferior to many others in extent, wealth, and commerce, but superior to them all in intellectual and social development—Massachusetts.

Wealth does nothing, patronage does nothing, while vigor does everything for the whale fishery. In Great Britain, London resigned it in favor of those poor and obsolete towns, Hull, in England, and Peterhead, in Scotland, as soon as the Government bounties ceased. So of the eighty-five vessels which in 1846 represented New York in the fishery, only one went up from the port of New York, the commercial capital of the State and of the continent, while no less than eight proceeded from Cold Spring, a mere nook in the mountains which crowd toward each other just above the city, as if to

prevent the waters of the Hudson from their destined meeting with the tides of the ocean. All the others were sent forth from New Suffolk, Greenport, and Sag Harbor, inconsiderable villages or hamlets on the outward coast of Long Island. Massachusetts exhibits the same case. Boston finds more lucrative employment for her capital in spindles, in railroads, and even in her fields of ice and quarries of granite; and so leaves the profits and toils of the whale fishery to Freetown, Falmouth, Sippican, Wareham, Plymouth, Holmes' Hole, Fall River, Provincetown, Fairhaven, New Bedford, and Nantucket, towns which but for their pursuit of the whale fishery would scarcely have been honored with designation on the chart or names in the gazetteer. Most wondrous of all, Nantucket is a sandy island, fifteen miles long and three miles broad, capable of maintaining by agriculture only one hundred persons, and yet it was the cradle of the whale fishery; and neither any town in America, nor in England, nor even in France, has ever successfully established or at all maintained the whale fishery, without drawing, not merely its knowledge of whale-hunting, but the officers and crews of its vessels, chiefly from that sunny shoal thus rising above the surface of the sea.

Need I dwell here on the whale fishery as a source of national wealth and an element of national force and strength? The number of those who are actively afloat in the pursuit ranges from 15,000 to 20,000, while twenty times that greatest number of persons are indirectly engaged in the culture of hemp and the manufacture of cordage, the building of ships, furnishing their supplies, manufacturing and preparing the oil and whalebone, in sending them to market, and in the various other occupations incidentally connected with the trade. The wealth thus required leaves all the resources of the country untouched. Dr. Franklin cheered the fishermen of his day with the apothegm that whosoever took a fish out of the sea always found a piece of silver in his mouth, and our experience has confirmed its truth, although it is now rejected by the commercial writers of England.

We are the second in rank among commercial nations. Our superiority over so many results from our greater skill in ship-building, and our greater dexterity in navigation, and our greater frugality at sea. These elements were developed in the fisheries, and especially in the Northern fishery. We think that we are inferior to no nation in naval warfare. The seamen who have won our brilliant victories on the ocean and on the lakes were trained and disciplined in this the severest of all marine service; and our naval historians agree that it constituted the elementary school of all our nautical science. What, then, would compensate us for the loss or for the decline of the whale fishery?

Mr. President, I have tried to win the favor of the Senate toward the National whale fishery for a purpose. The whales have found a new retreat in the Seas of Ochotsk and Anadir, south of Bhering Straits, and in that part of the Arctic Ocean lying north of them. In 1848, Captain Roys, in the whale ship Superior, passed through those seas and through the straits, braving the perils of an unknown way and an inhospitable climate. He filled his ship in a few weeks, and the news of his success went abroad. In 1849, a fleet of 154 sail went up to this new fishing ground; in 1850, a fleet of 144; and in 1851, a fleet of 145. The vessels are manned with 30 persons each; and their value, including that of the average annual cargoes procured there, is equal to nine millions—and thus exceeds by near two millions the highest annual imports from China. But these fleets are beset by not only such dangers of their calling as customarily occur on well-explored fishing grounds, but also by the multiplied dangers of shipwreck resulting from the want of accurate topographical knowledge—the only charts of those seas being imperfect and unsatisfactory. While many and deplorable losses were sustained by the fleets of 1849-50, we have already information of the loss of eleven vessels, one-thirteenth part of the whole fleet of 1851, many of which disasters might have been avoided had there been charts, accurately indicating the shoals and headlands, and also places of sheltered anchorage near them. These facts are represented to us by the merchants, ship-owners, and underwriters, and are confirmed by Lieutenant Maury, who presides in this department of science in the navy as well as in the labors and studies of the National Observatory. We want, then, not bounties nor protection, nor even an accurate survey, but simply an exploration and reconnaissance of those seas, which have so recently become the theatre of profitable adventure and brave achievement of our whale hunters. This service can be performed by officers and crews now belonging to the navy, in two or three vessels which already belong or may be added to it, and would continue at most only throughout two or three years. Happily, the measure involves nothing new, untried, or uncommon. To say nothing of our recent search for the lamented Sir John Franklin, nor of our great exploring expedition under Captain Wilkes, we are already engaged in triangulating a coast survey of the Atlantic shore. Charts, light-houses, and beacons, show the pilot his way, not over that ocean and among its islands, but along all our rivers and even upon our inland lakes. The absence of similar guides and beacons in the waters now in question results from the fact, that the Pacific coast has but recently fallen under our sway, and Bhering's Straits and the seas they connect have not until

now been frequently navigated by the seamen of any nation. Certainly somebody must do this service. But who will? The whalers cannot. No foreign nation will, for none is interested. The constitutional power and responsibility rest with the Federal Government, and its means are inadequate.

California is near this fishing ground. Her enterprising citizens are already engaged in this pursuit, and henceforward the whale hunters of Nantucket must compete with new rivals possessing the advantage of nearness to the scenes of their labors. California, therefore, joins Massachusetts in this reasonable demand.

Mr. President, the small exploring fleet thus proposed would be obliged to quit the Northern seas early in September, and could not return to them until the succeeding June. I propose that it should spend that long sea on its performing a service not dissimilar under milder skies, in that part of the Pacific Ocean and its adjoining seas, which is usually traversed by vessels sailing from New York and San Francisco to China and the Indies. Remember, sir, if you please, that not only has no Asiatic prince, merchant, or navigator, ever explored this one of all the oceans, the broadest and most crowded and crowned with islands, but that they have forbidden that exploration by European navigators, who have performed whatever has been done at the peril, and often at the cost of, imprisonment and death. We have made no accurate survey, for we have only just now arrived and taken our stand on the Pacific coast. We are new on that ocean—nay, we are only as of yesterday upon this continent; and yet maps and charts are as necessary to the seafaring man on that ocean as on any other: and just as necessary on every ocean as monuments and guides are to him who traverses deserts of unimpressible sand or wastes of trackless snow.

Lieutenant Maury informs us that every navigator of those waters is painfully impressed with a sense of surrounding dangers—they exist, and yet the only charts that have been made fail to indicate in what forms or in what places they will appear. So imperfect is our topographical information, that a large island called Ousima, supposed to be thickly inhabited and highly cultivated, lies in the fair way to China, and yet no vessel has ever touched or gone around it. It would repay ten-fold the cost of the whole exploration if we should find on that island a good harbor and a friendly people.* Horsbergh's charts of these passages are the best. But these are of old dates, and although they have been corrected from time to time, yet they are very imperfect. The shoals

* Within the last year the Mennon, an American ship, valued with her cargo at \$500,000, was lost in the Straits of Gaspar.

in the China sea, the sea of Japan, and the straits of Gasper, are represented to us by navigators as being formed of coral, a mixture of animal and vegetable organization, and therefore increasing rapidly in magnitude as they approach near to the surface of the waters. It is particularly necessary to explore and note the shoals and islands lying between the coast of Palawan on the China sea and that of Cochinchina, and also the shoals in the vicinity of West London, Prince of Wales, and Paulo Sapata islands. The perils existing there oblige ships going up and coming down through those seas against the monsoons to beat at disadvantage, while an exploration would probably disclose eddies and currents which would allow of straight courses where now no one dares pursue them. Clements Strait and the Caramata Passage are filled with the same dangers. Again the great outlet from the China sea into the Pacific ocean by the Balice, and adjacent passages between the islands of Luconia and the coasts of China and Formosa, need to be surveyed, although the islands are generally well designated on the maps. Then proceeding northwardly, a regard to the safety of the whalerman demands that the islands between the coasts of China and Japan, and from them to the Loo Choo islands, and so on to the Russian possessions, and along them eastwardly to Bhering Straits, should be surveyed. The last attempt to perform that duty was made by a small Russian fleet, which was captured and destroyed, while its officers and crew were imprisoned by the Japanese. Lastly, as we advance eastwardly in the very track pursued by our whalers and China men, we encounter islands, and many shoals imperfectly defined, and especially the Bonin islands: while prudence requires a careful reconnoissance also of the Fox islands, which, although lying somewhat northwardly of the passage, might, if well known, afford shelter in case of inclement weather. This reconnoissance in a temperate latitude is demanded by the merchants, underwriters, and navigators, in all our Atlantic as well as in our two principal Pacific ports, and the argument for it rests on the same foundation with that which supports the proposition for the more northwardly exploration. Your mails and passengers of a certain class will be carried between San Francisco and Shanghai in steamships. Nevertheless, without such a survey as this bill proposes, you cannot establish a coaling station on the way, although the voyage exceeds seven thousand miles. Will you leave this survey and its benefits to England?

Sir, have you looked recently at the China trade? It reaches already seven millions in value annually. Have you watched the California trade? Its export of bullion alone already exceeds fifty millions of dollars annually, and as yet the mineral development of

that State has only begun. The settlement of the Pacific coast is in a state of sheer infancy. There is, speaking relatively, neither capital nor labor there adequate to exhibit the forces of industry that might be employed in that wonderful region. Nor is California yet conveniently accessible. The railway across Panama is not yet completed. The passage through Nicaragua is not perfect; that which leads through Tehuantepec is not begun: nor have we yet extended, even so far as to the Mississippi, the most important and necessary one of them all, the railroad across our own country to San Francisco. The emigrant to the Atlantic coast arrives speedily and cheaply from whatever quarter of the world; while he who would seek the Pacific shore, encounters charges and delays which few can sustain. Nevertheless, the commercial, social, political movements of the world are now in the direction of California. Separated as it is from us by foreign lands, or more impassable mountains, we are establishing there a custom-house, a mint, a dry dock, Indian agencies, and ordinary and extraordinary tribunals of justice. Without waiting for perfect or safe channels, a strong and steady stream of emigration flows thither from every State and every district eastward of the Rocky Mountains. Similar torrents of emigration are pouring into California and Australia from the South American States, from Europe, and from Asia. This movement is not a sudden, or accidental, or irregular, or convulsive one; but it is one for which men and Nature have been preparing through near four hundred years. During all that time merchants and princes have been seeking how they could reach cheaply and expeditiously, "Cathay," "China," "the East," that intercourse and commerce might be established between its ancient nations and the newer ones of the West. To these objects Da Gama, Columbus, Americus, Cabot, Hudson, and other navigators, devoted their talents, their labors, and their lives. Even the discovery of this continent and its islands, and the organization of society and government upon them, grand and important as these events have been, were but conditional, preliminary, and ancillary to the more sublime result, now in the act of consummation—the reunion of the two civilizations, which, having parted on the plains of Asia four thousand years ago, and having travelled ever afterwards in opposite directions around the world, now meet again on the coasts and islands of the Pacific ocean. Certainly, no mere human event of equal dignity and importance has ever occurred upon the earth. It will be followed by the equalization of the condition of society and the restoration of the unity of the human family. We see plainly enough why this event could not have come before, and why it has come now. A certain amount of human freedom, a certain amount of human intelli-

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gence, a certain extent of human control over the physical obstacles to such a reunion, were necessary. All the conditions have happened and concurred. Liberty has developed under improved forms of government, and science has subjected Nature in Western Europe and in America. Navigation, improved by steam, enables men to outstrip the winds, and intelligence conveyed by electricity excels in velocity the light. With these favoring circumstances there has come also a sudden abundance of gold, that largely relieves labor from its long subjection to realized capital. Sir, this movement is no delusion. It will no more stop than the emigration from Europe to our own Atlantic shores has stopped, or can stop, while labor is worth there twenty cents and here fifty cents a day. Emigration from China cannot stop while labor is worth in California five dollars a day, and in the West Indies ten dollars a month, and yet is worth in China only five dollars for that period. Accordingly, we have seen sixty-seven ships filled, in three months of the present year, with 17,000 emigrants in the ports of Hong Kong, Macao, and Whampoa, and afterwards discharge them on the shores of California, and of Cuba and other islands of the West Indies.

Sir, have you considered the basis of this movement, that this continent and Australia are capable of sustaining, and need for their development, five hundred millions, while their population is confined to fifty millions, and yet that Asia has two hundred millions of excess? As for those who doubt that this great movement will quicken activity and create wealth and power in California and Oregon, I leave them to consider what changes the movements, similar in nature but inferior in force and slower in effect, have produced already on the Atlantic coast of America. As to those who cannot see how this movement will improve the condition of Asia, I leave them to reflect upon the improvements in the condition of Europe since the discovery and colonization of America. Who does not see, then, that every year hereafter, European commerce, European politics, European thoughts, and European activity, although actually gaining greater force—and European connections, although actually becoming more intimate—will nevertheless relatively sink in importance: while the Pacific Ocean, its shores, its islands, and the vast regions beyond, will become the chief theatre of events in the World's great Hereafter? Who does not see that this movement must effect our own complete emancipation from what remains of European influence and prejudice, and in turn develop the American opinion and influence which shall remould constitutions, laws, and customs, in the land that is first greeted by the rising sun? Sir, although I am no Socialist, no dreamer of a suddenly-coming millennium, I nevertheless can-

not reject the hope that Peace is now to have her sway, and that as War has hitherto defaced and saddened the Atlantic world, the better passions of mankind will soon have their development in the new theatre of human activity.

Commerce is the great agent of this movement. Whatever nation shall put that commerce into full employment, and shall conduct it steadily with adequate expansion, will become necessarily the greatest of existing States; greater than any that has ever existed. Sir, you will claim that responsibility and that high destiny for our own country. Are you so sure that by assuming the one she will gain the other? They imply nothing less than universal commerce and the supremacy of the seas. We are second to England, indeed, but, nevertheless, how far are we not behind her in commerce and in extent of empire! I pray to know where you will go that you will not meet the flag of England fixed, planted, rooted into the very earth? If you go northward, it waves over half of this Continent of North America, which we call our own. If you go southward, it greets you on the Bermudas, the Bahamas, and the Caribbee Islands. On the Falkland Islands it guards the Straits of Magellan; on the South Shetland Island it watches the passage round the Horn; and at Adelaide Island it warns you that you have reached the Antarctic Circle. When you you ascend along the southwestern coast of America, it is seen at Galapagos, overlooking the Isthmus of Panama; and having selected it there, and at Vancouver, you only take leave of it in the far Northwest, when you are entering the Arctic Ocean. If you visit Africa, you find the same victorious cross guarding the coast of Gambia and Sierra Leone and St. Helena. It watches you at Cape Town as you pass into the Indian Ocean; while on the northern passage to that vast sea it demands your recognition from Gibraltar, as you enter the Mediterranean; from Malta, when you pass through the Sicilian Straits; on the Ionian Islands it waves in protection of Turkey; and at Adou it guards the passage from the Red Sea into the Indian Ocean. Wherever Western commerce has gained an entrance to the Continent of Asia, there that flag is seen waving over subjugated millions—at Bombay, at Ceylon, at Singapore, at Calcutta, at Lahore, and at Hong Kong; while Australia and nearly all the islands of Polynesia acknowledge its protection.

Sir, I need not tell you that wherever that flag waves, it is supported and cheered by the martial airs of England. But I care not for that. The sword is not the most winning messenger that can be sent abroad; and commerce, like power, upheld by armies and navies, may in time be found to cost too much. But what is to be regarded with more concern is, that England employs the steam engine even more

vigorously and more universally than her military force. Steam engines, punctually departing and arriving between every one of her various possessions and her inland seat of power, bring in the raw material for every manufacture and supplies for every want. The steam engine plies incessantly there, day and night, converting these materials into fabrics of every variety, for the use of man. And again the steam engine forever and without rest moves over the face of the deep, not only distributing these fabrics to every part of the globe, but disseminating also the thoughts, the principles, the language and religion of England. Sir, we are bold indeed to dare competition with such a Power. Nevertheless, the resources for it are adequate. We have coal and iron no less than she, while corn, timber, cattle, hemp, wool, cotton, silk, oil, sugar, and the grape, quicksilver, lead, copper, silver, and gold, are all found within our own broad domain in inexhaustible profusion. What energies we have already expended prove that we have in reserve all that are needful. What inventions we have made prove our equality to any exigency. Our capital increases, while labor scarcely knows the burthen of taxation. Our Panama route to China has a decided advantage over that of the Isthmus of Suez, and at the same time vessels leaving that country and coming round the Horn, will reach New York always at least five days sooner than vessels of equal speed can double the Cape of Good Hope and make the port of Liverpool.

Mr. President, we now see how conspicuous a part in the great movement of the age, California and Oregon are to sustain, and that, as yet, they are separated from us and isolated. They will adhere to us only so long as our government over them shall be conducted, not for our benefit, but for their own. Their loyalty is great, but it cannot exceed that of the thirteen ancient American colonies to Great Britain; and yet the neglect and oppression of their commerce undermined that loyalty, and resulted in their independence. I hear often of dangers to the Union, and see lines of threatened separation drawn by passionate men or alarmists, on parallels of latitude; but, in my judgment, there is only one danger of severance—and that is involved in the possibility of criminal neglect of the new communities on the Pacific coast, while the summits of the Rocky Mountains, or of the Snowy Mountains, mark the only possible line of dismemberment. Against that danger I would guard as against the worst calamity that could befall, not only my country, at her most auspicious stage of progress, but mankind also, in the hour of their brightest hopes. I would guard against it by practising impartial justice toward the new and remote States and Territories, whose political power is small, while their wants are great, and by pursuing at the same time, with liberality and constancy, the lofty course which they indicate, of an aspiring yet generous and humane national ambition.

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