

SPEECH OF MR. CALHOUN, OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

In the U. S. Senate on Monday, the 16th inst., the resolutions from the lower House in relation to Oregon being taken up—

Mr. Calhoun being entitled to the floor rose and addressed the Senate very nearly as follows:

The question now under order for discussion is, whether notice shall be given to Great Britain that the convention of joint occupancy between us and her shall terminate at the end of the year. To that question I shall confine my remarks, limiting them to that and to the question immediately connected with it. I shall say nothing in regard to the title to Oregon. Having been personally connected with previous negotiations, in which that question was concerned, it will be seen by all that it is proper that I should pass it by without notice. I shall abstain from every thing of a personal character, and from every thing calculated to wound the feelings of any gentleman, but, at the same time, I shall express myself freely, fully and candidly on all the subjects on which I shall consider it my duty to touch. With these few preliminary remarks, I shall proceed at once to the question of notice.

There is one point on which we must all be agreed, and that is, that a great change has taken place since the commencement of the session in the importance of this question, and its bearing upon peace and war. At that time, this measure of notice was of the greatest and most weighty importance, involving as it did the question whether peace with Great Britain should or should not continue. Now it has become one of comparatively minor importance, and may be decided either way without exciting any very decisive effect on those important interests. So great indeed is the change, that the very reasons which are urged in the Executive message in support of the recommendation that notice should be given, have no longer their application. The feelings both of the measure and of the severer parties in the Senate which have grown out of it, are entirely altered. That the Executive recommendation to terminate this notice is founded on the conviction that pending such a notice, there can be no compromise of our difficulties on the Oregon question, must, I think, admitted on all sides. Indeed, the language of the message is explicit to that effect. It expresses the President's conviction that no compromise can be effected which we ought to accept. It announces to us that he made to the British commissioner an offer of the parallel of 49 deg., but that, after having been rejected, he ordered that it should be immediately withdrawn. And on that same conviction he recommends to Congress the passage of this notice, with a view to the removal of all impediments to the assertion of our right to the whole of the Oregon territory. Assuming that there would be no compromise, the President tells us that, at the expiration of twelve months, a period which has arrived when our title to that country must either be abandoned or firmly maintained. Throughout the whole message there is not the slightest intimation that any compromise is expected; but, on the contrary, the entire document assumes the opposite view.

Yet I admit that the grounds on which the President bases this, his conviction, are derived from the negotiation itself, and mainly from the fact that his offer of a compromise on 49 deg. was rejected. I admit, that proceeding on that foundation, it is a fair inference, that if England shall renew on her part the proposition which, when made on ours, she rejected, there would be no impediment in the way to its acceptance; at the same time the President intimates not the slightest expectation that such an offer will be made on her part, or that any compromise will be effected. Such is the view which I have been constrained to take, after the most careful examination which I have been able to give to the message of the President, and I may draw an inference from the opinions of those members of the Senate who believe in the soundness of our title to the whole territory, they concur in this view. Indeed, the grounds on which they place themselves will not admit of their supporting the notice under any other assumption. They go for the whole of Oregon, because they assert their title to the whole territory, even up to 64 deg. 40 min. is clear and unquestionable; and they think it better that we should assert our title by arms than abandon any part or portion of it. Hence it is most manifest that if they thought the notice could possibly result in a compromise, they would vote against it.

And this view which I take of the message, and in which these gentlemen concur, is, as I believe, the view entertained by the country at large. Certainly it is, if we are to draw our conclusions from the general tone of the public press; or if we need to look at what, perhaps, a still better index of public opinion—the course of our intelligent business men; or the reception of the message had the most decided effect upon the public stocks. No sooner was its language heard than insurance immediately rose, and, as our vessels returned from their foreign voyages, instead of their being sent out again to sea, they were suffered to remain inactive at the wharves.

Such, too, was the view taken by another portion of the Senate; among which I consider myself as included—and who were opposed to the giving of notice. They opposed it on grounds directly the reverse of those on which these gentlemen advocated it. Those who advocated the notice did so because they believed there would be no compromise, and could be none. We were opposed to the notice, because we did not agree with them in that opinion. We believed, on the contrary, that a compromise might be effected, and a common ground assumed to which both nations would agree. We did not think the American title to the whole of Oregon to be as perfectly clear as to be indisputable. We held that the title of neither nation to the whole country was perfect; and, therefore, we could not, and did not, believe that two powerful and enlightened nations, such as Great Britain and the United States, would go to war on such a question, so long as war could be possibly by honorably and properly avoided. This was the view of all who opposed the giving of notice at that time. We wished to give to both parties in this controversy a breathing time—a season for calm and mature reflection, under the influence of which they might come to some just and honorable, yet pacific, conclusion; and because we thought that the immediate giving of such a notice as was proposed would bring Great Britain to one or two alternatives—

either to acquiesce in the state of things in which we had placed the question, as to permit us to get possession of the territory by the gradual results of colonization, or to change the point, and cast the blame of making war from our shoulders upon her, compelling her to take the attitude of the aggressor.

There were other gentlemen in this body who acted from different views. These were in favor of a compromise. They, too, thought that our title was not perfect, but yet were in favor of giving notice, because they believed, notwithstanding the tone and language of the message, that the two measures were compatible—that we might give this notice to terminate the convention, and yet effect an amicable compromise of all our difficulties. The grounds on which they came to this conclusion seem to be these. In the first place, they think that the language of the Executive message shows that he still entertains the hope of compromise. They quote to us his express language, where he says that he hopes an amicable arrangement may be made of the questions in dispute. I am fully aware that the President does use this language, and that the same thing was said twice by the Secretary of State, in the course of the correspondence; but it seems impossible to me that, on the plainest and justest rules of construction, the message can be considered as expressing that meaning. It is a most solemn and weighty State paper, addressed by the Executive of the nation to a co-ordinate branch of the Government, and in which he is bound to hold the plainest and most explicit language—to state with the utmost frankness his real sentiments, and to give the reasons on which they are founded. This is his duty, and this he has performed. And he says, very clearly, that he recommends this notice in order that we may assert our title to the whole territory, and, if necessary, support that title by arms. I cannot look beyond the message or the President's motives. To do so would in my judgment, be to disparage the character of the President.

Another ground taken by these gentlemen is, that the President wants to employ this notice as a moral weapon, not a physical one. But no such idea is expressed in the message. The language of the President is explicit to the contrary. It looks not to a moral, but a physical termination of the difficulty. But admitting that he wants to use it as a moral weapon, what does that mean? It must mean that he wants to use it for the purpose of intimidation. Now, I submit to the common sense of every gentleman, whether, if this notice should be used in that light, with a great and powerful nation like Great Britain, its effect, instead of leading to a compromise, would not be precisely the reverse. It would be a direct appeal to her fears, to induce her to yield, under such a motive, what she would not yield otherwise.

The third reason is, that the convention of 1818, and renewed in 1827, was wrong from the beginning; that as a measure of policy, it was a great mistake; that its effect was to fetter the assertion of our rights; and that it would have been better, so far as our rights in the territory were concerned, if there had been no such convention at all. In that opinion I cannot concur; I dissent from it wholly; I hold precisely the opposite opinion; I believe that, but for that convention, the preservation of our rights could have been effected only by an appeal to arms. We must either have gone to war in 1818 and 1827, or must have acquiesced in the hostile claims of Great Britain, (for in that case they would have been hostile.) If we could at that time have obtained the latitude of 49 deg. as a compromise boundary, it would have been wise in us to have done so; but we attempted it in vain. That attempt failing, what other alternative was left us? Either this convention or war. The convention was a substitute for war; and, while it prevented war, it at the same time preserved our rights in Oregon inviolate so long as the convention should continue. I think that those who entered into that treaty acted wisely. It has become too common at this day for us to sit in judgment on the acts of our predecessors, and pronounce them to have been unjust, unwise, or unpolitic; while we pass over the circumstances of their day, and under which they acted. Look at the men concerned. Look at Monroe—at Rush—at Clay; it would be hard indeed, to pronounce men like those to have been either unpolitic or unwise. Or, if we look at the great names of those who have since acquiesced in the measure they adopted—at Jackson, and at others since. It would be hard to say to such men deliberately pronounced in an arrangement hostile to the best interests of their country. I do not name the prominent individuals concerned, (understood to refer to Mr. Adams,) because his course since that time has cancelled any previous credit to which he might have entitled himself.

Such was the state of things when this resolution of notice was first introduced into the Senate. Since then, as I have said, there has been a mighty change; public opinion has developed itself, not only on this, but on the other side of the Atlantic; and that voice of public opinion has uttered itself most audibly and clearly in favor of a compromise. Here, too, the same change has been manifested, inasmuch that I hazard nothing when I say that a large, a very large majority of this body is at this moment in favor of a compromise—in honorable compromise. And does not all the language and conduct of the British Government itself clearly demonstrate that it is in favor of a compromise; and substantially on the basis which we have ourselves assumed? Sure I am that an intelligent and reflecting man can read the language of Sir Robert Peel in reply to Lord John Russell, and not see that he is prepared to act on a proposition substantially the same with that which was rejected by Mr. Packenham. This declaration of the Premier of Great Britain was made with very great effect; his object in making it was not to ensure the able and very faithful representative of Great Britain in this country, but to give emphasis to the assurance that he was ready to make a just and fair compromise of the disputed question. I hope sincerely that our government has not overlooked that declaration; it was a direct step towards compromise, and I trust it has been met in the same spirit. I trust that intelligence has, before this time, gone abroad to Great Britain to that effect, so as to remove the only difficulty which now lies in the way.

Under the views that I entertain, it is no longer a question whether our difficulties may be pacifically arranged or not, nor is it even a question as to the manner; it is simply a question of time. But there ought to be no delay, because the business of both nations and of the world requires that it should be settled. On great, and momentous, and delicate questions like these, there are the highest public considerations why there should be no delay. Once settle the question of Oregon, and we may then settle the question of Mexico; but till then, Mexico will calculate the chances of rupture between us and Great Britain, and if she sees any chance of war against us, she will go over to the Power which makes war upon us. Remove these chances, put an end to such a hope, and Mexico will speedily settle every pending question between her and the United States, and then, I trust, that we shall deal generously with her. She is weak—feeble in the extreme—and I trust that we shall adopt no harsh measures with her.

I have now explained the change which has taken place in the bearing of this measure of notice on the questions of peace and war. The change consists in this: that when the notice was recommended, there existed no hope of a compromise, but now the highest and most confident hope is felt by almost all. Now, therefore, there is no great interest connected with our deciding this question of notice, one way or another. Just in proportion as the prospect of compromise was small, the importance of the notice was great; but, as the prospect of compromise increases, the measure of notice becomes of less and less importance. We have now reached a point when we can decide the question without much feeling on either side.

I now proceed to inquire what is the bearing of this measure on the position of the Executive, and what on the position of the parties in this body. The conduct of the Executive must now be greatly changed. He must act very differently now from what he would have done when he recommended the notice, under the persuasion that there could be no compromise; but that we must assert our rights by arms. That he can advise the same thing now which he advised then, is impossible. Then, he had not the remotest expectation of a compromise. If now he has a different view, and thinks that Great Britain is ready to meet us with an offer such as we made, I here say that, if he shall now decline that offer, I do not envy him the consequences that shall follow. The change which has taken place is not a change in the President. It is a change in the state of things. So far from its being any inconsistency, it is, on the contrary, the highest consistency to agree to a compromise when matters have reached a point which was not contemplated when he sent us his message. There is prevalent among us a great error in regard to this matter of consistency. Some persons think that consistency consists in a uniform adherence to one policy, let the circumstances of the country change or not. Others think that consistency lies in always thinking the same way, after a man has seen the most cogent reasons for changing his opinion. The consistency of these persons is much like the course of a physician who, in the treatment of a malignant fever, should give emetic and calomel at the beginning, and then hold himself bound to continue to give emetics and calomel through every subsequent stage of the disease. Consistency like this would kill the patient; and there is no statesman worthy of the name who would be guilty of the political quackery of advocating always the same course of policy, though the circumstances of his country had completely altered.

But not only has the Executive position changed, but the position of the parties in the Senate has changed in no less degree; and my friends here who go for all of Oregon (friends I will call them, for I have no other than the most friendly feelings towards them) must and do feel that there has been a change. Long as they thought that notice was wholly inconsistent with any compromise, they were its warm and enthusiastic advocates; but now when they begin to discover that, notwithstanding the giving of the notice, a compromise may still be effected, they find themselves without the same reason for their former zeal; and I shall not be at all surprised if, before this question is finally put, these very gentlemen shall vote against the notice altogether.

But trust the friends to whom I allude have undergone a still further change besides that of their position. I trust they now begin to see that there are some doubts in regard to our title to the whole of Oregon. That it is unquestionable then cannot now say; for it has been questioned with great ability in their presence on this floor. I know, indeed, that their convictions have been strong. But, admitting that our title seemed to them ever so clear, is not something due to the changes which have taken place? Is it nothing due to the fact that a majority even of their own political friends think that our title is not so clear but that a compromise may be honorably effected? Is nothing due to their opinion? And does not the mere fact of such a division of opinion among men perfectly honest on both sides, present the strongest reason why the dispute need not and ought not to be decided by force? I appeal to those Senators as patriots, as wise and prudent men, to say, when our contest is with so great a Power, whether they are willing to hazard all for a question on which the opinions of good and honest men all over their country are undeniably divided. I appeal to them even as party men, to say whether they will insist on pushing this question to such an extreme as to divide their party?

As to the other portion of the Senate, (in which I consider myself as included,) it is undeniable that a great change has taken place. I feel it myself. Nothing could once have induced me to consent to the notice recommended by the President; but now it is very possible I may give my vote for a modified notice in some form.

And this brings me now, at length, to the direct question. Shall we give to Great Britain the notice proposed, or shall we not? The question is not free from doubt. One reason in its favor is, that it will prevent the continued agitation of this Oregon question being kept before the country and carried into the next Presidential election. The measure of notice, if properly qualified, will, I trust, keep all quiet until the year has expired, and that then there will be no room for any further difficulty.

Another reason in its favor is, that in all probability Great Britain will not make a final move until Congress shall have decided on the subject; so that we should, as soon as possible, do something in the matter. It is not for the force of this consideration, I should do for postponing the notice for the present.

And now to the question, in what form the notice shall be given. I will vote, under no circumstances, for a naked, absolute notice. The circumstances of the case have greatly changed. We are not in the same state of things which existed when the Executive message first came in; and I cannot see in the remotest impression that there will be any compromise. If any gentleman once hoped so, and would have gone for the notice under that hope, that motive has now passed away. Nor can I vote for the resolution which has been sent us from the House of Representatives. I have two objections to it. It is equivocal in its meaning. If it means to declare that the President may settle this difficulty by compromise, it means nothing; but if it is meant as a hint to him to negotiate for a compromise, then I am him to negotiate more plainly. I am most decidedly against all equivocation in matters of State policy. Let us say plainly what we mean to say. If we mean compromise, let us say compromise; and not send the President a resolution on which he may put just any interpretation that suits him.

If we give this notice at all, I think it should be given substantially as has been proposed by the gentleman from Georgia. If I consent to the notice, it will be, as I have said, to keep this agitation from running into the next Presidential election, and finally to terminate the question; and if we give it at all, let us give it precisely as we intend, expressing the opinion that the difficulty should be settled by compromise. So much I feel inclined to vote for.

But this whole measure is subordinate to a higher end, viz: the preservation of peace and the settlement of our difficulties without a resort to arms. My vote in regard to the notice will rest on the question whether the notice will advance that end or not. And I shall, therefore, reserve myself until I shall be satisfied on that point.

I have thus stated why I am for a compromise, and how far I am in favor of giving notice. I vote on both subjects under circumstances in which I find myself placed, and for which I am not in the least responsible. I am doing the best I can, where I find myself, and not what I might have done under different circumstances. I repeat that for these circumstances I am not responsible. I have resisted that state of things which has now come to pass. In 1843 this question for the first time assumed a dangerous aspect. I then saw, or thought I saw, what was coming; and I examined the question under all its aspects. After the maturest reflection I came to the conclusion which I then stated. I saw that there were two routes before us; one of them was to adhere to the convention of 1827, to do nothing to terminate it, and to adhere strictly and rigidly to its provisions. I saw that although for a time that convention operated beneficially for Great Britain, yet the period was at hand when our turn would come to derive its benefits. Its operation threw into her hands the whole fur trade of that region, and we stood by while the whole of that rich harvest was reaped by her subjects; but I saw that we would soon derive the most important advantages from the provisions of the treaty. The restless increase of our population and the gradual progress of their enterprise was bringing them fast to the foot of the Rocky Mountains. The great South Pass had been discovered, and I saw that the settlement of Oregon by American citizens was rapidly approaching.

If we should only adhere strictly to the convention, the progress of things would eventually decide who should have the possession of the territory. Our power to populate the region, and thus to obtain its actual possession, was far greater than that of Great Britain. Its distance from us was far less; the access to it was through an open, grassy country, and, to men so active and hardy as our Western pioneers, the journey presented comparatively small difficulties; whereas to reach Oregon from Great Britain, required a circumnavigation of twenty thousand miles—a space but a little short of the circumference of the globe. Of all the spots on the face of the earth, presenting to her the possibility of colonization, Oregon was the most remote. There were hundreds of colonies that lay nearer and presented a better soil and climate. Even New Zealand was nearer to the shores of England. All, therefore, that we had to do was to stick to the convention, to observe all its provisions with the most scrupulous fidelity, and then let the question of title be quietly and gradually settled by the actual occupation and possession of the country. To this course there was but one impediment: Great Britain might give the notice. But I had no such fear; for I had read the discussions of this question on her side, and I thought I clearly saw that she placed no great value upon Oregon, as a permanent possession of the British crown, but rather seemed to conclude that, from its geographical position, the United States must ultimately get the whole of it. But, even if her calculation was otherwise, there were great impediments in the way of her giving notice to terminate the convention. She could do so if she pleased; so could we: this was an express provision of the treaty, and could not, in itself, be considered as a hostile movement on either side. But there was another convention which Great Britain contended to be still in existence, but which we insist has expired, and that is the convention of Nootka. This treaty of Nootka is in strict analogy with our convention of 1818; and if she should give us no notice, it could not be set aside unless its provisions were violated. We had observed the terms of our convention, and this foreclosed her from the possibility of such a movement.

It seemed, then, to me clear as the light of heaven that it would not do for us to make a movement of any kind. We might indeed, give our people some facilities in reaching the country; and when they get there, we might extend our laws over them personally but not territorially. I doubted, then, and I still doubt, even the expediency of going so far as that; but most clearly, we could not set up our laws there territorially; because the moment we should do that, we must establish a custom-house, and levy and collect duties; and if there is anything that can alienate the affections of those people from us, it will be the collection of high duties. Our people have gone there as our fathers came to New-England at the beginning, and one important end they seek is the enjoyment of free trade. They will contend as earnestly for the free enjoyment of the trade of the Pacific as their ancestors did for that of the Atlantic before the Revolution. If we levy high duties on their infant trade, they will soon find a neighboring power who will extend to them greater advantages in this respect, and whose influence might tend the territory from you. My disposition has been

to let them go there and govern themselves. That is a business for which they seem to have no proper instinct, that makes their original settlements, and settles the country, and then gradually, and with great judgment and caution, extend our laws over them, as it may become necessary; for there is the most delicate and critical point in the whole affair. The other course that lay open to us was that pointed out in the bill of 1843, which provided for the practical assertion of our rights in the territory, and the exercise of our sovereignty to a certain extent, by the passage of certain general laws. I thought this course not to be a fit or proper one. I saw very plainly what would be the consequences, and, indeed, it required but little reflection to perceive this. To extend our settlements in Oregon, in conformity with the provisions of that bill, would be inconsistent with the terms of the convention, and would specify bring us either to negotiation or to war. I anticipated the result would be negotiation. And what then? Negotiation must end either in compromise or war. I never could believe in any other result. I also saw that, if we compromised, it must be on the 49th deg. The past history of the whole matter decided that, and besides as 49 deg. was the boundary on this side of the mountains, most people would think it reasonable and natural it should be the boundary on the other side.

But I would go neither for notice nor for compromise, so long as we could persevere in what I conceived to be the true American policy. Hence, I did resist the bill of 1843 in common with many able men in both Houses. It passed here by an equal majority of one vote, (the Senator voting under instructions in the affirmative,) but it was lost in the other House. Since then the proposition for notice has been repeated, with a view of taking possession of the whole country. And so now we are where we are; a position which all ought to have foreseen—where we must compromise or fight.

I say, then, that there is any responsibility attached to the circumstances in which I find myself, I stand acquitted from any participation in it. The responsibility lies among my friends on the right. I ought not to yield patriotically, but impatiently, in obedience to the impatience of their people. They have suffered themselves to be pushed into their present position without due reflection.

Now, being brought to the alternative by circumstances over which I have no control, I go for compromise and against war. But in this course I am actuated by no unusual fear of consequences. I know that, under the existing state of the world, war is sometimes necessary; the utmost regard for justice and equity cannot always prevent them. And when war must be met, I shall be among the last to flinch; I may appeal to my past history in support of this assertion. But I am averse from going to war on the question for the reasons I have given. But not for these only; I have still higher reasons. All though wars may at times be necessary, yet peace is a positive good, and war is a positive evil; and I cling to peace so long as it can be preserved consistently with the national safety and honor; and I am against war so long as it can be avoided without a sacrifice of either. I am opposed to war in this case, because neither of these exigencies exist: it may be as I conceive, avowed without sacrificing either the national honor or the national safety. But if these dangers did exist to a certain extent, war is still highly inexpedient; because our right in Oregon can be sustained with more than an equal chance of success without war than with it. This is a great and weighty reason against war. He who goes stoutly to war for "all of Oregon or none," may possibly come out of it with "none." I concede to my countrymen the possession of all the bravery, patriotism, and intelligence which can be claimed for them, but we shall go into this contest with great disadvantages on our side. As long as Great Britain has a large force in the east, and is mistress of the sea, she can carry on the war at a much less expense.

There is another reason why I am opposed to it: the war would soon cease to be for Oregon; the struggle would be for empire, and it would be between the greatest Power in Europe on the one side, and the greatest and most growing and spirited people of the West on the other.—It would be pressed on upon both sides with all the force, vigor and energy, and perseverance of two great and brave nations; each would strike the other in the most vulnerable point, and the blows would be tremendous. Amidst the uproar of such a contest, Oregon would soon be forgotten—utterly forgotten; to be recovered, if at all, on the contingencies of success or the reverse.

My next reason is, that, though it is alleged that we must fight in order to protect our citizens in Oregon, instead of their protection war would ensure their utter destruction. It is the most certain way to sacrifice them. This I will never consent to do.—They are American citizens—our brethren and kindred. We have encouraged them to go there; and I never will give a vote the result of which must be their utter and speedy destruction. But if we make a compromise on latitude 49 deg. they will all be safe. If I am rightly informed, there is not a man of them to be found north of that line. This will carry all the points we have in view, instead of sacrificing them all.

I am against war, too, for reasons common to the whole Union. I believe that the most successful and triumphant war we could possibly wage—even if in ten years we should get all the most extravagant advocates of war had dared to hope for—if we could take the Canadas, and New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, and every other British possession, and drive her flag from the whole continent, and prosecute our advantages till we had thrice and she should yield up spear and shield and trident at our feet, it would be to us the most disastrous event that could happen. I do not now allude to the ravages and desolations of warfare; to the oceans of blood that must flow, and the various miseries that ever accompany the contest of arms, because I have never observed that the statement of these things had any great effect upon a brave people. No doubt the evils would be very great, because there are no two nations in the world who can do each other so much harm in war, or so much good in peace as Great Britain and the United States. The devastation would be tremendous on both sides. But all this goes for nothing; for this may all be repaired. The indispensable industry, and enterprise, and perseverance of our widely spread and non-perishing and multiplying population will still find ways and means of repairing

whenever merely physical disasters, war can inflict. But war has far heavier inflictions for a free people; it works a social and political change in the people themselves, and in the character of their institutions. A war such as this would be of vast extent; every nerve and muscle on either side will be strained to the utmost; every commendable duty will be put in requisition; not a portion of our entire frontier but will become the scene of contest.—It will be a Mexican war on one side, and an Indian war upon the other. In damages will be all around us; it will be a war on the Pacific and a war on the Atlantic; it will rage on every side and fill the land. Suppose Oregon shall be abandoned, we must raise seven armies and two navies, we must raise and equip an army against the Mexicans; and let no man sneer at the mention of such a power. Under the guidance and training of British officers, the Mexican population can be rendered a formidable enemy. See what Britain has done of the feeble Sepoys. The Mexicans are a brave and a hardier people, and they will form the cheapest of all armies.—With good training and good pay, they may be rendered a very formidable force.—They are most to be feared to guard the Southern frontier, and another to open a way on our Northwestern boundary, and still another to cover our Indian frontier. At the least estimate, we shall require a force of not less than two hundred thousand men in the field. In addition to that, the venerable and intelligent Albert Gallatin has calculated the cost of such a war at sixty-five millions of dollars; but that amount is too small. A hundred thousand millions is not an over-estimate, and of this sum fifty millions must be raised annually, by loans of paper, and so that allowing the war to continue for ten years, we shall have an amount of five hundred millions of public debt. And to this losses which must accrue on loans; it will be very difficult to get these loans negotiated in Europe; for owing to the unfortunate manner in which this affair has been conducted, the feeling in Europe will be generally against us. We cannot obtain the requisite sums under an interest of thirty or forty per cent. Add all these expenses, and our total debt will be less than seven hundred and fifty millions.

But this is not all. We should be plunged into the paper system as we ply as we were in the days of the Revolution; and what will then be our situation at the conclusion of the war? We shall be left with a mortgage of seven hundred and fifty millions of dollars on the labor of the American people; for it all falls on the labor of the country at last, which much of the money will go into the pockets of those who struck not a blow in the contest. We should then have the task of raising a circulating medium of a hundred thousand dollars; and that from the deplorable degradation of the currency. This a hard job, as all of us know who have gone through with it.—Besides, the influence of the war will naturally be to obliterate the line of distinction between the State and General Government. I shall hear no more about State rights, but the Government will become, in effect, a consolidated republic. By our very success, it will give a military impulse to the national mind which can never be overcome. The ambition of the nation will seek conquest after conquest, and will soon become possessed by a spirit totally inconsistent with the forms and genius of our Government; and this will lead by a straight and easy road, to that gall of all republics—a military despotism. Then we shall have to provide for three or four successful generals, who will soon be competing for the Presidency. Before the generation which waged the war shall have passed away they will witness a contest between two heads of generals. He who conquered Mexico on the one side, and Canada, and they will end their struggle by the sword. Freedom thus lost, institutions thus undermined and overturned, never can be recovered. The national ruin will be irretrievable.

I appeal, then, to the gentleman near me—to my friends, whose separation from me on this question I deeply regret—and I trust to be, as it is for you who are Democrats, a reluctance—for you who are the enemies of paper money, and the sworn destroyers of all Banks and all artificial classes in society—is it for you to vote for a measure of such very equivocal success?

But I have still higher reasons. I am opposed to war as a friend to human improvement, to human civilization, to human progress, and advancement. Never in the history of the world has there occurred a period so remarkable as the peace which followed the battle of Waterloo for the great advances made in the condition of human society, and in its various forms. The chemical and mechanical powers have been investigated and applied to advance the comforts of human life in a degree far beyond all that was ever known or hoped before. Civilization has been spreading its influence far and wide, and the general progress of human society has outstripped all that had been previously witnessed.—The invention of man has seized upon and subjugated two great agencies of the natural world which were before made the servants of man; I refer to steam and electricity, under which of course, I include magnetism, in all its phenomena.—Steam has been controlled and availed of for all the purposes of human intercourse, and by its resistless energies has brought nations together whom nature had seemed to separate by insurmountable barriers. It has shortened the passage across the Atlantic more than one half, while the rapidity of travelling on land has been three times greater than ever was known before. Within the same period man has chained the very lightning of heaven and brought it down and made it administer to the transmission of human thought, inasmuch that it may with truth be said that our ideas are not only transmitted with the rapidity of lightning, but by lightning itself. Magic wires are stretching the melodies in all directions over the globe, and when their mystic meshes shall at length have been perfected, our globe itself will be endowed with a sensitiveness which will render it impossible to touch it on any point, and the touch not be felt from one end of the world to the other. All this progress, all this growth of human happiness; all this spread of human knowledge, will be arrested by war. And shall we incur a result like that for Oregon?—And this work is as yet but commenced; it is but the breaking of the dawn of the world's jubilee. It promises a day of more refinement, more intellectual brightness, more moral elevation, and consequently of more human felicity, than the world has ever seen from its creation.

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