

Your committee have purposely abstained from the consideration of the various questions which have arisen between the two countries, in relation to the title set up by either of them because, in the views which have presented themselves to the committee, in connection, more immediately, with the course to be pursued by the Government, in the present juncture of affairs, it has occurred to them that, whether the American or the British title be the better one, the time has now arrived when the Government of the United States should discharge the obligation which has been imposed on it, of doing something towards the final adjustment and settlement of a controversy which has so long agitated the public mind, and which, if permitted to remain in its present condition, will, more than likely continue to produce the most disastrous results upon the general business of the country.

How far the American title to the Territory in dispute may be better maintained, than that of Great Britain, upon principles of reason and argument as drawn from international Law, is a question, which may well enough be discussed, by American and British statesmen. But if we are allowed to judge of the future from the past, there will be but little ground to hope that, from mere argument alone, Great Britain will ever be persuaded to abandon her whole claim to the Oregon Territory. On the contrary, we may reasonably expect, from well known principles, which ordinarily govern both men and nations in their intercourse with each other, that the longer discussion is continued upon questions vitally affecting their private interests, the more likely are first impressions to ripen into conviction, and speculative theories to become well considered rules of deliberate action. It may well be doubted then, whether either nation can expect to derive advantage or benefit from a longer discussion of their conflicting claims. The necessary tendency of such protracted discussion will be in the nature of things, not only to excite bitter and envenomed feelings between the people of the two countries, and to injure seriously their trade and commercial pursuits, but it will likewise disturb, more or less, the amicable relations which now subsist between both countries and other nations of the civilized world. Your committee, therefore, believe that the United States would be pursuing the path, both of wisdom and duty, to take some early and decisive step towards bringing to a close this protracted and exciting controversy.

By the provisions of the Constitution of the United States, the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, is authorised to make treaties, between us and foreign nations. This power has been held to relate, not only to questions of commercial and military import, but to all questions that may arise between us and foreign nations, affecting the peace and honor of the country, and which are not expressly confided to other departments of the Government. That he has the right to originate and conclude treaties affecting questions of boundary, has been so conclusively settled, as to admit, now, of no doubt. To say nothing