

The information which we have here attempted to bring together may be very briefly summed up. Of the whole territory of Oregon, there is but one district, and that not much larger than Pennsylvania, which is habitable except by hunters and Indians, and not more than an eighth part even of this district is arable land. The region actually in dispute contains at the utmost but one half of this improvable ground, and in addition to it an arid and rugged waste on which any considerable colonization is impossible. Parched with drought for nearly three fourths of the year, and drenched with rains for the remainder of the time, the soil and climate alike must baffle what experience the farmer may have gained in more favoured regions, and prove a sore trial to any constitutions not inured to such peculiar seasons. Isolated in position, with almost insurmountable obstacles to internal communications, the merchant can expect as little from the country as the agriculturist. In fine, it is hardly to much to say, that what Siberia is to Russia, Oregon is to the United States. The road thither is equally long and wearisome, and even less cheered by the sight of human habitations, though in the one case it is trodden only by the free backwoodsman and the sturdy emigrant, and in the other by the condemned exile who "drags at each remove a lengthening chain." The winter on the Columbia, indeed, is not of such iron severity as in the north of Asia, but the accounts would leave us to suppose that it is almost equally cheerless. Magnificent improvements in Oregon are vaguely talked of; but the projects are such as befit the excited imaginations of men who leave comfortable homes for such distant and dreary wilds. The India and China trade, it is thought, may be made to take this direction; and so it may, when one crack-brained projector's favourite scheme shall be accomplished, and a railroad completed, two thousand miles long, over sterile plains and rugged mountains. As yet, the wayfarer on that dreary path can hardly convey enough with him for his own sustenance.—Out of the last caravan of whose arrival in Oregon we have notice, seven persons died of hardships on the way. The rest were permitted to enter that promised land, from which, as we have seen, some of the disappointed emigrants were flitting three years ago to such refuge as a Mexican government was likely to afford them.

We would not exaggerate the unfavourable aspect of the Oregon territory, nor deny the possibility of its becoming, at some future day, the seat of a flourishing colony, if not of a populous and independant state. But the founders of it will deserve in no ordinary measure the gratitude of their posterity; the days of ease and plenty will assuredly find them in their graves. Anglo-Saxon enterprise can accomplish anything, and its especial vocation seems to lie in subduing the wilderness. Our fathers were not appalled by the grim aspect of the rock and ice-bound shores of New England, nor by its meagre soil and rugged surface. But they were sustained by other and higher motives than a mere love of roaming or backwoodman's pining for the wilderness. Impelled by conscience and a sense of religious obligation, they sought a region which they would otherwise gladly have left to its original possessors. Had their motives been less pure and elevated, their success might have been less signal. As it was, their grain of mustard seed shot up into a lofty tree, while the gold-hunting colonists of the more favoured South perished of starvation. Above all, they counted the cost like prudent men, and braved only those hardships and dangers which they had foreseen and were prepared for. In what respects the modern settlers of Oregon have followed their example, we leave others to determine, and to draw thence, if they can, an augury of good, wherewith to cheer an enterprise certainly surrounded with no unequal measure of suffering and privation. The marvellous rapidity and ease with which the colonization of the great Mississippi valley has been

effected, though held by many to fore-shadow the history of future states upon the Pacific, certainly afford no true ground of encouragement, as the parallel between the two cases entirely fails. Nature has been as lavish of her bounties to our great western valley as she is niggardly to the region drained by the Columbia and its branches.

The truth is, the extravagant notions entertained of Oregon, have been nourished by the very cause which should have made men suspicious of all stories respecting it, and have entirely checked the tide of emigration that is flowing thither. We mean the dispute respecting the ownership of the territory. Politicians and diplomatists, to make their services appear more meritorious, have striven to put a higher value upon the title they were defending. But for this reason, we should have heard little about the fertility of Oregon, the beauty of its climate, the ease of communicating with it, or its importance for commercial purposes.—The statesman's shortest and surest road to popularity nowadays, consists in an affected zeal and watchfulness for the interests of our country in its foreign relations. There is no risk here of offending one portion of the sovereign people while seeking to please another. There is no divergence, no contrariety of interests here to care for; if but few are directly interested in the prosecution of a claim against France or England, none are injured by it. The good will that is thus conciliated is all clear gain. Not one in ten thousand of our vast population would be immediately affected by the successful assertion of our claim to the whole of Oregon. To the vast majority of our people the matter is one of perfect indifference, except so far as it is linked with the interests of a party. But to this party, it is of vital importance. Hence, the warmth and jealousy of each other which politicians manifest in combating the pretensions of a foreign power. One party makes a merit of having secured so much territory by a successful negotiation, as in the case of the Ashburton Treaty; and the other party imputes to it as a fault that it did not obtain more. Lord Palmerston attacks Sir Robert Peel, because Great Britain surrendered so much by that treaty; Mr. Benton attacks Mr. Webster, because the United States surrendered so much. Both charges cannot be true; but that is of no importance. If similar attacks were not foreseen, the question about Oregon might be settled to-morrow. If the two countries are finally plunged into a war respecting it, it will not be because the bulk of the English or the American people care a straw about the land; but because the dominant party on both sides of the Atlantic wishes to preserve its ascendancy over its opponents. In its inception and fundamental character, it will be, as usual, a war not between two nations, but between two political parties.

We have shown one reason why the value of Oregon has been so ludicrously over estimated. Others may be mentioned, in which the interests of a few individuals are more directly concerned. The Hudson's Bay Company wish to preserve their lucrative traffic on the Pacific; by defending their country's title to the territory, they defend their own, and of course they will not permit Great Britain to suffer from ignorance of the value of the land, its importance to her commercial interests, or the excellence of her title to it. On the other hand, the American fur traders, acting as individuals, and finding that they cannot compete with the great capital and prudent and concerted action of this English company, would very willingly see it driven entirely off the ground. Of course, they maintain that the American title is indisputable, and that compromise or concession must not be thought of. To allow the English a footing anywhere upon the territory would be still to allow a competition against which they have no chance; they might as well allow them the whole. A right to navigate the whole of the Columbia has re-