

is the interest of the United States that they should maintain the neutrality that they seek to establish, and should not be permitted to fall into the hands of any other power.

I am rather disposed to think that, in the progress of civilization in the South Seas, this group will be considered of less importance than it now appears, and instead of its being looked to as it now is, as a point of attraction, or a place wherein to obtain information and supplies, it will be only visited by whalers for recruiting. Their growth has already arrived at the greatest extent to which it can ever reach. A direct communication with Oregon and California will do away with the necessity of intercourse through the islands; they must, consequently, be left to their own resources to maintain trade; and when California and the Oregon Territory can afford the whalers equal advantages, which, when settled, they will do in a few years; the advantages derived from this source will be withdrawn. Unfortunately for these islands, a fictitious importance has been ascribed to their geographical position, in the belief that much political ascendancy in the Pacific must accrue to the nation which may possess them; this state of opinion has been brought about by the exertions of the American missionaries, who have been the means of raising the natives so rapidly in the scale of civilization, and from whose success our countrymen have acquired much influence. This ascendancy, however, has been partly the means of provoking a sectarian war, which has brought about much trouble, and been the cause of great distress both to the king and people. These troubles have probably been of some advantage to the people, and afforded the means of increasing their wealth, and causing a demand for their products, which, though trifling as to amount, yet in such a small community has been sensibly felt, and has enabled them to obtain many advantages they could not have had otherwise. I have some doubt whether the Hawaiian Islands can ever become an independent nation by the exertion of their own people, since they have unwisely invited foreigners to reside among them, and given them equal rights and privileges with natives. Endeavours are now making to introduce foreign labourers and capital, which, although proceeding from a disposition to advance and develop the resources of the islands, will have a tendency to injure the native labouring population. The introduction of foreign labour will necessarily bring with it foreign habits and custom, which the natives are, even now, too prone to imitate; and the examples that are set before them are generally, if not always, of the worst description.

The inducements held out to the king and chiefs to make large