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MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE SESSION.

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Fellow-citizens of the Senate and of the House of Representatives:

The view which I have now to present to you of our affairs, foreign and domestic, realizes the most sanguine anticipations which have been entertained of the public prosperity. If we look to the whole, our growth as a nation continues to be rapid beyond example; if to the States which compose it, the same gratifying spectacle is exhibited. Our expansion over the vast territory within our limits has been great, without indicating any decline in those sections from which the emigration has been most conspicuous. We have daily gained strength by a native population in every quarter—a population devoted to our happy system of Government, and cherishing the bond of union with fraternal affection. Experience has already shown that the difference of climate and of industry proceeding from that cause, inseparable from such vast domains, and which under other systems might have a repulsive tendency, cannot fail to produce with us, under wise regulations, the opposite effect. What one portion wants the other may supply, and this will be most sensibly felt by the parts most distant from each other, forming thereby a domestic market and an active intercourse between the extremes and throughout every portion of our Union. Thus, by a happy distribution of power between the national and State Governments, Governments which rest exclusively on the sovereignty of the people and are fully adequate to the great purposes for which they were respectively instituted, causes which might otherwise lead to dismemberment operate powerfully to draw us closer together. In every other circumstance a correct view of the actual state of our Union must be equally gratifying to our constituents. Our relations with foreign powers are of a friendly character, although certain interesting differences remain unsettled with some. Our revenue, under the mild system of impost and tonnage, continues to be adequate to all the purposes of the Government. Our agriculture, commerce, manufactures, and navigation flourish. Our fortifications are advancing in the degree authorized by existing appropriations to maturity, and due progress is made in the augmentation of the Navy to the limit prescribed for it by law. For these blessings, we owe to Almighty God, from whom we derive them, and with profound reverence, our most grateful and unceasing acknowledgments.

In adverting to our relations with foreign powers, which are always an object of the highest importance, I have to remark, that, of the subjects which have been brought into discussion with them during the present administration, some have been satisfactorily terminated; others have been suspended, to be resumed hereafter under circumstances more favorable to success; and others are still in negotiation, with the hope that they may be adjusted with mutual accommodation to the interests and to the satisfaction of the respective parties. It has been the invariable object of this Government to cherish the most friendly relations with every power, and on principles and conditions which might make them permanent. A systematic effort has been made to place our commerce with each power on a footing of perfect reciprocity, to settle with each in a spirit of candor and liberality all existing differences, and to anticipate and remove, so far as might be practicable, all causes of future variance.

It having been stipulated by the 7th article of the convention of navigation and commerce, which was concluded on the twenty-fourth of June, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-two, between the United States and France, that the said convention should continue in force for two years from the first of October of that year, and for an indefinite term afterwards, unless one of the parties should declare its intention to renounce it, in which event it should cease to operate at the end of six months from such declaration; and no such intention having been announced, the convention having been found advantageous to both parties, it has since remained, and still remains in force. At the time when that convention was concluded many interesting subjects were left unsettled, and particularly our claim to indemnity for spoliations which were committed on our commerce in the late wars. For these interests and claims it was in the contemplation of the parties to make provision at a subsequent day by a more comprehensive and definitive treaty. The object has been duly attended to since by the Executive, but as yet it has not been accomplished. It is hoped that a favorable opportunity will present itself for opening a negotiation which may embrace and arrange all existing differences, and every other concern in which they have a common interest, upon the accession of the present King of France, an event which has occurred since the close of the last session of Congress.

With Great Britain our commercial intercourse rests on the same footing that it did at the last session. By the convention of one thousand eight hundred and fifteen the commerce between the United States and the British dominions in Europe and the East Indies was arranged on a principle of reciprocity. That convention was confirmed and continued in force, with slight exceptions, by a subsequent treaty for the term of ten years from the twentieth of October, one thousand eight hundred and eighteen, the date of the latter. The trade with the British colonies in the West Indies has not as yet been arranged by treaty, or otherwise, to our satisfaction. An approach to that result has been made by legislative acts, whereby many serious impediments which had been raised by the parties in defence of their respective claims were removed. An earnest desire exists, and has been manifested on the part of this Government, to place the commerce with the colonies likewise on a footing of reciprocal advantage, and it is hoped the British Government, seeing the justice of the proposal and its importance to the colonies, will ere long accede to it.

The Commissioners who were appointed for the adjustment of the boundary between the Territories of the United States and those of Great Britain, specified in the fifth article of the treaty of Ghent, having disagreed in their decision, and both Governments having agreed to establish that boundary by amicable negotiation between them, it is hoped that it may be satisfactorily adjusted in that mode. The boundary specified by the sixth article has been established by the decision of the Commissioners. From the progress made in that provided for by the seventh, according to a report recently received, there is good cause to presume that it will be settled in the course of the ensuing year.

It is a cause of serious regret that no arrangement has yet been finally concluded between the two

Governments to secure, by joint co-operation, the suppression of the slave trade. It was the object of the British Government, in the early stages of the negotiation, to adopt a plan for the suppression which should include the concession of the mutual right of search by the ships-of-war of each party of the vessels of the other for suspected offenders. This was objected to by this Government, on the principle that, as the right of search was a right of war of a belligerent towards a neutral power, it might have an ill effect to extend it by treaty, to an offence which had been made comparatively mild, to a time of peace. Anxious, however, for the suppression of this trade, it was thought advisable, in compliance with a resolution of the House of Representatives, founded on an act of Congress, to propose to the British Government an expedient which should be free from that objection, and more effectual for the object, by making it piratical. In that mode the enormity of the crime would place the offenders out of the protection of their Government, and involve no question of search, or other question, between the parties, touching their respective rights. It was believed, also, that it would completely suppress the trade in the vessels of both parties, and, by their respective citizens and subjects, in those of other powers with whom, it was hoped, that the odium which would thereby be attached to it would produce a corresponding arrangement, and, by means thereof, its entire extirpation forever. A convention to this effect was concluded and signed in London, on the thirteenth day of March, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-four, by plenipotentiaries duly authorized by both Governments, to the ratification of which, certain obstacles have arisen which are not yet entirely removed. The difference between the parties still remaining has been reduced to a point not of sufficient magnitude, as is presumed, to be permitted to defeat an object so near to the heart of both nations, and so desirable to the friends of humanity throughout the world. As objections, however, to the principle recommended by the House of Representatives, or at least to the consequences inseparable from it, and which are understood to apply to the law, have been raised, which may deserve a reconsideration of the whole subject, I have thought it proper to suspend the conclusion of a new convention until the definitive sentiments of Congress may be ascertained. The documents relating to the negotiation are, with that intent, submitted to your consideration.

Our commerce with Sweden has been placed on a footing of perfect reciprocity by treaty, and with Russia, the Netherlands, Prussia, the free Hanseatic Cities, the Dukedoms of Oldenburg and Sardinia, by internal regulations on each side, founded on mutual agreement between the respective Governments.

The principles upon which the commercial policy of the United States is founded are to be traced to an early period. They are essentially connected with those upon which their independence was declared, and owe their origin to the enlightened men who took the lead in our affairs at that important epoch. They are developed in their first treaty of commerce with France of sixth of February, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-eight, and by a formal commission which was instituted immediately after the conclusion of their revolutionary struggle for the purpose of negotiating treaties of commerce with every European power. The first treaty of the United States with Prussia, which was negotiated by that commission, affords a signal illustration of those principles. The act of Congress of the third March, one thousand eight hundred and fifteen, adopted immediately after the return of a general peace, was a new overture to foreign nations to establish our commercial relations with them on the basis of free and equal reciprocity. That principle has pervaded all the acts of Congress and all the negotiations of the Executive on the subject since.

A convention for the settlement of important questions in relation to the Northwest Coast of this continent, and its adjoining seas, was concluded and signed at St. Petersburg, on the fifth day of April last, by the minister plenipotentiary of the United States and plenipotentiaries of the Imperial Government of Russia. It will immediately be laid before the Senate for the exercise of the constitutional authority of that body with reference to its ratification. It is proper to add, that the manner in which this negotiation was invited and conducted on the part of the Emperor has been very satisfactory.

The great and extraordinary changes which have happened in the Governments of Spain and Portugal within the last two years, without seriously affecting the friendly relations which, under all of them, have been maintained with those powers by the United States, have been obstacles to the adjustment of the particular subjects of discussion which have arisen with each. A resolution of the Senate, adopted at their last session, called for information as to the effect produced upon our relations with Spain by the recognition, on the part of the United States, of the independent South American Governments. The papers containing that information are now communicated to Congress.

A chargé d'affaires has been received from the independent Government of Brazil. That country heretofore a colonial possession of Portugal, had, some years since, been proclaimed by the sovereign of Portugal himself an independent kingdom. Since his return to Lisbon a revolution in Brazil has established a new Government there, with an Imperial title, at the head of which is placed the prince, in whom the Regency had been vested by the King at the time of his departure. There is reason to expect that, by amicable negotiation, the independence of Brazil will ere long be recognized by Portugal herself.

With the remaining powers of Europe, with those on the coast of Barbary, and with all the new South American States, our relations are of a friendly character. We have ministers plenipotentiary residing with the Republics of Colombia and Chili, and have received ministers of the same rank from Colombia, Guatemala, Buenos Ayres, and Mexico. Our commercial relations with all those States are mutually beneficial and increasing. With the Republic of Colombia a treaty of commerce has been formed, of which a copy is received, and the original daily expected. A negotiation for a like treaty would have been commenced with Buenos Ayres, had it not been prevented by the indisposition and lamented decease of Mr. Rodney, our minister there, and to whose memory the most respectful attention has been shown by the Government of that Republic. An advantageous alteration in our treaty with Tunis has been obtained by our Consular Agent residing there, the official document of which, when received, will be laid before the Senate.

The attention of the Government has been drawn with great solicitude to other subjects, and particularly to that relating to a state of maritime war, involving the relative rights of neutral and belligerent in such wars. Most of the difficulties which we have experienced, and of the losses which we have sustained since the establishment of our independence, have proceeded from the unsettled state of those rights, and the extent to which the belligerent claim has been carried against the neutral party. It is impossible to look back on the occurrences of the late wars in Europe, and to behold the disregard which was paid to our rights as a neutral power, and the waste which was made of our commerce by the parties to those wars by various acts of their respective Governments, and under the pretext by each that the other had set the example, without great mortification, and a fixed purpose never to submit to the like in future. An attempt to remove those causes of possible variance by friendly negotiation and on just

principles, which should be applicable to all parties, could, it was presumed, be viewed by none other than as a proof of an earnest desire to preserve those relations with every power. In the late war between France and Spain, a crisis occurred, in which it seemed probable that all the controvertible principles involved in such wars might be brought into discussion, and settled to the satisfaction of all parties. Propositions having this object in view have been made to the Governments of Great Britain, France, Russia, and of other powers, which have been received in a friendly manner by all, but as yet no treaty has been formed with either for its accomplishment. The policy will, it is presumed, be persevered in, and in the hope that it may be successful.

It will always be recollected that with one of the parties to those wars, and from whom we received those injuries, we sought redress by war. From the other, by whose then reigning Government our vessels were seized in port as well as at sea, and their cargoes confiscated, indemnity has been expected, but has not yet been rendered. It was under the influence of the latter that our vessels were likewise seized by the Governments of Spain, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, and Naples, and from whom indemnity has been claimed and is still expected, with the exception of Spain, by whom it has been rendered. With both parties we had abundant cause of war, but we had no alternative but to resist that which was most powerful at sea and pressed us nearest at home. With this all differences were settled by a treaty founded on conditions fair and honorable to both, and which has been so far executed with perfect good faith. It has been earnestly hoped that the other would, of its own accord, and from a sentiment of justice and conciliation, make to our citizens the indemnity to which they are entitled, and thereby remove from our relations any just cause of discontent on our side.

It is estimated that the receipts into the Treasury during the current year, exclusive of loans, will exceed eighteen million five hundred thousand dollars, which, with the sum remaining in the Treasury at the end of the last year, amounting to nine million four hundred and sixty-three thousand nine hundred and twenty-two dollars and eighty-one cents, will, after discharging the current disbursements of the year, the interest on the public debt, and upwards of eleven million six hundred and thirty-three thousand dollars of the principal, leave a balance of more than three million dollars in the Treasury on the 1st day of January next.

A larger amount of the debt contracted during the late war, bearing an interest of six per cent., becoming redeemable in the course of the ensuing year than could be discharged by the ordinary revenue, the act of the 26th of May authorized a loan of five million dollars, at four and a half per cent., to meet the same. By this arrangement an annual saving will accrue to the public of seventy-five thousand dollars.

Under the act of the 24th of May last a loan of five million dollars was authorized, in order to meet the awards under the Florida treaty, which was negotiated at par with the Bank of the United States at four and a half per cent., the limit of interest fixed by the act. By this provision the claims of our citizens who had sustained so great a loss by spoliations, and from whom indemnity had been so long withheld, were promptly paid. For these advances the public will be amply repaid, at no distant day, by the sale of the lands in Florida. Of the great advantage resulting from the acquisition of the territory in other respects too high an estimate cannot be formed.

It is estimated that the receipts into the Treasury during the year one thousand eight hundred and twenty-five will be sufficient to meet the disbursements of the year, including the sum of ten million dollars, which is annually appropriated, by the act constituting the Sinking Fund, to the payment of the principal and interest of the public debt.

The whole amount of the public debt on the first of January next may be estimated at eighty-six million dollars, inclusive of two millions five hundred thousand dollars of the loan authorized by the act of the twenty-sixth of May last. In this estimate is included a stock of seven million dollars issued for the purchase of that amount of the capital stock of the Bank of the United States, and which, as the stock of the Bank still held by the Government will at least be fully equal to its reimbursement, ought not to be considered as constituting a part of the public debt. Estimating, then, the whole amount of the public debt at seventy-nine million dollars, and regarding the annual receipts and expenditures of the Government, a well-founded hope may be entertained that, should no unexpected event occur, the whole public debt may be discharged in the course of ten years, and the Government be left at liberty thereafter to apply such portion of the revenue as may not be necessary for current expenses to such other objects as may be most conducive to the public security and welfare. That the sum applicable to these objects will be very considerable may be fairly concluded when it is recollected that a large amount of the public revenue has been applied since the late war to the construction of the public buildings in this city; to the erection of fortifications along the coast, and of arsenals in different parts of the Union; to the augmentation of the Navy; to the extinguishment of the Indian title to large tracts of fertile territory; to the acquisition of Florida; to pensions to revolutionary officers and soldiers, and to invalids of the late war. On many of these objects the expense will annually be diminished, and cease at no distant period on most of them. On the first of January, one thousand eight hundred and seventeen, the public debt amounted to one hundred and twenty-three million four hundred and ninety-one thousand nine hundred and sixty-five dollars and sixteen cents; and notwithstanding the large sums which have been applied to these objects, it has been reduced since that period thirty-seven million four hundred and forty-six thousand nine hundred and sixty-one dollars and seventy-eight cents. The last portion of the public debt will be redeemable on the first of January, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-five; and while there is the best reason to believe that the resources of the Government will be continually adequate to such portions of it as may become due in the interval, it is recommended to Congress to seize every opportunity which may present itself to reduce the rate of interest on every part thereof. The high state of the public credit and the great abundance of money are at this time very favorable to such a result. It must be very gratifying to our fellow-citizens to witness this flourishing state of the public finances, when it is recollected that no burden whatever is imposed upon them.

The military establishment in all its branches, in the performance of the various duties assigned to each, justifies the favorable view which was presented of the efficiency of its organization at the last session. All the appropriations have been regularly applied to the objects intended by Congress; and, so far as the disbursements have been made, the accounts have been rendered and settled without loss to the public. The condition of the Army itself, as relates to the officers and men in science and discipline, is highly respectable. The Military Academy, on which the Army essentially rests, and to which it is much indebted for this state of improvement, has attained, in comparison with any other institution of a like kind, a high degree of perfection. Experience, however, has shown that the dispersed condition of the

corps of artillery is unfavorable to the discipline of that important branch of the military establishment. To remedy this inconvenience eleven companies have been assembled at the fortification erected at Old Point Comfort, as a school for artillery instruction, with intention, as they shall be perfected in the various duties of that service, to order them to other posts, and to supply their places with other companies for instruction in like manner. In this mode a complete knowledge of the science and duties of this arm will be extended throughout the whole corps of artillery. But to carry this object fully into effect will require the aid of Congress, to obtain which the subject is now submitted to your consideration.

Of the progress which has been made in the construction of fortifications for the permanent defence of our maritime frontier, according to the plan decided on and to the extent of the existing appropriations, the report of the Secretary of War, which is herewith communicated, will give a detailed account. Their final completion cannot fail to give great additional security to that frontier, and to diminish, proportionably, the expense of defending it in the event of war.

The provisions in the several acts of Congress of the last session for the improvement of the navigation of the Mississippi and the Ohio, of the harbor of Presque Isle, on Lake Erie, and the repair of the Plymouth beach, are in the course of regular execution, and there is reason to believe that the appropriation, in each instance, will be adequate to the object. To carry these improvements fully into effect, the superintendence of them has been assigned to officers of the Corps of Engineers.

Under the act of thirtieth April last, authorizing the President to cause a survey to be made, with the necessary plans and estimates, of such roads and canals as he might deem of national importance in a commercial or military point of view, or for the transportation of the mail, a Board has been instituted, consisting of two distinguished officers of the Corps of Engineers and a distinguished civil engineer, with assistants, who have been actively employed in carrying into effect the object of the act. They have carefully examined the route between the Potomac and the Ohio rivers; between the latter and Lake Erie; between the Alleghany and the Susquehanna, and the routes between the Delaware and the Raritan, Barnstable and Buzzard's bay, and between Boston harbor and Narraganset bay. Such portion of the Corps of Topographical Engineers as could be spared from the survey of the coast has been employed in surveying the very important route between the Potomac and the Ohio. Considerable progress has been made in it, but the survey cannot be completed until the next season. It is gratifying to add, from the view already taken, that there is good cause to believe that this great national object may be fully accomplished.

It is contemplated to commence early in the next season the execution of the other branch of the act, that which relates to roads, and with the survey of a route from this city, through the Southern States, to New Orleans, the importance of which cannot be too highly estimated. All the officers of both the Corps of Engineers who could be spared from other services have been employed in exploring and surveying the routes for canals. To digest a plan for both objects, for the great purposes specified, will require a thorough knowledge of every part of our Union, and of the relation of each part to the others, and of all to the seat of the General Government. For such a digest it will be necessary that the information be full, minute, and precise. With a view to these important objects, I submit to the consideration of Congress the propriety of enlarging both the Corps of Engineers, the military and topographical. It need scarcely be remarked, that the more extensively these corps are engaged in the improvement of their country, in the execution of the powers of Congress, and in aid of the States in such improvements as lie beyond that limit, when such aid is desired, the happier the effect will be in many views of which the subject is susceptible. By profiting of their science, the works will always be well executed; and, by giving to the officers such employment, our Union will derive all the advantage, in peace as well as in war, from their talents and services, which they can afford. In this mode, also, the military will be incorporated with the civil, and unfounded and injurious distinctions and prejudices of every kind be done away. To the corps themselves, this service cannot fail to be equally useful, since, by the knowledge they would thus acquire, they would be eminently better qualified, in the event of war, for the great purposes for which they were instituted.

Our relations with the Indian tribes within our limits have not been materially changed during the year. The hostile disposition evinced by certain tribes on the Missouri during the last year still continues, and has extended in some degree to those on the Upper Mississippi and the upper lakes. Several parties of our citizens have been plundered and murdered by those tribes. In order to establish relations of friendship with them, Congress at the last session made an appropriation for treaties with them, and for the employment of a suitable military escort to accompany and attend the Commissioners at the places appointed for the negotiations. This object has not been effected. The season was too far advanced when the appropriation was made, and the distance too great to permit it, but measures have been taken, and all the preparations will be completed, to accomplish it at an early period in the next season.

Believing that the hostility of the tribes, particularly on the Upper Mississippi and the lakes, is in no small degree owing to the wars which are carried on between the tribes residing in that quarter, measures have been taken to bring about a general peace among them, which, if successful, will not only tend to the security of our citizens, but be of great advantage to the Indians themselves.

With the exception of the tribes referred to, our relations with all the others are on the same friendly footing, and it affords me great satisfaction to add, that they are making steady advances in civilization and the improvement of their condition. Many of the tribes have already made great progress in the arts of civilized life. This desirable result has been brought about by the humane and persevering policy of the Government, and particularly by means of the appropriation for the civilization of the Indians. There have been established under the provisions of this act thirty-two schools, containing nine hundred and sixteen scholars, who are well instructed in several branches of literature, and likewise in agriculture and the ordinary arts of life.

Under the appropriation to authorize treaties with the Creeks and Quapaw Indians, Commissioners have been appointed, and negotiations are now pending, but the result is not yet known.

For more full information respecting the principle which has been adopted for carrying into effect the act of Congress authorizing surveys, with plans and estimates for canals and roads, and on every other branch of duty incident to the Department of War, I refer you to the report of the Secretary.

The squadron in the Mediterranean has been maintained in the extent which was proposed in the report of the Secretary of the Navy of the last year, and has afforded to our commerce the necessary protection in that sea. Apprehending, however, that the unfriendly relations which have existed between Algiers and some of the powers of Europe might be extended to us, it has been thought expedient to augment the force there, and, in consequence, the "North Carolina," a ship of the line, has been prepared, and will sail in a few days to join it.

The force employed in the Gulf of Mexico and in the neighboring seas for the suppression of piracy has likewise been preserved essentially in the state in which it was during the last year. A persevering effort has been made for the accomplishment of that object, and much protection has thereby been afforded to our commerce; but still the practice is far from being suppressed. From every view which has been taken of the subject, it is thought that it will be necessary rather to augment than to diminish our force in that quarter. There is reason to believe that the piracies now complained of are committed by bands of robbers who inhabit the land; and who, by preserving good intelligence with the towns, and seizing favorable opportunities, rush forth and fall on unprotected merchant vessels, of which they make an easy prey. The pillage thus taken they carry to their lurking places and dispose of afterwards at prices tending to seduce the neighboring population. This combination is understood to be of great extent, and is the more to be deprecated because the crime of piracy is often attended with the murder of the crews, these robbers knowing, if any survived, their lurking places would be exposed and they be caught and punished. That this atrocious practice should be carried to such extent is cause of equal surprise and regret. It is presumed that it must be attributed to the relaxed and feeble state of the local Governments, since it is not doubted, from the high character of the Governor of Cuba, who is well known and much respected here, that if he had the power he would promptly suppress it. Whether those robbers should be pursued on the land, the local authorities be made responsible for these atrocities, or any other measure be resorted to to suppress them, is submitted to the consideration of Congress.

In execution of the laws for the suppression of the slave trade, a vessel has been occasionally sent from that squadron to the coast of Africa, with orders to return thence by the usual track of the slave ships, and to seize any of our vessels which might be engaged in that trade. None have been found, and it is believed that none are thus employed. It is well known, however, that the trade still exists under other flags.

The health of our squadron while at Thompson's island has been much better during the present than it was the last season. Some improvements have been made and others are contemplated there which, it is believed, will have a very salutary effect.

On the Pacific our commerce has much increased, and on that coast as well as on that sea the United States have many important interests which require attention and protection. It is thought that all the considerations which suggested the expediency of placing a squadron on that sea operate with augmented force for maintaining it there, at least in equal extent.

For detailed information respecting the state of our maritime force on each sea, the improvement necessary to be made on either, in the organization of the naval establishment generally, and of the laws for its better government, I refer you to the report of the Secretary of the Navy, which is herewith communicated.

The revenue of the Post Office Department has received a considerable augmentation in the present year. The current receipts will exceed the expenditures, although the transportation of the mail within the year has been much increased. A report of the Postmaster General, which is transmitted, will furnish in detail the necessary information respecting the administration and present state of this Department.

In conformity with a resolution of Congress of the last session, an invitation was given to General Lafayette to visit the United States, with an assurance that a ship-of-war should attend at any port of France which he might designate, to receive and convey him across the Atlantic, whenever it might be convenient for him to sail. He declined the offer of the public ship from motives of delicacy, but assured me that he had long intended and would certainly visit our Union in the course of the present year. In August last he arrived at New York, where he was received with the warmth of affection and gratitude to which his very important and disinterested services and sacrifices in our revolutionary struggle so eminently entitled him. A corresponding sentiment has since been manifested in his favor throughout every portion of our Union, and affectionate invitations have been given him to extend his visits to them. To these he has yielded all the accommodation in his power. At every designated point of rendezvous the whole population of the neighboring country has been assembled to greet him, among whom it has excited in a peculiar manner the sensibility of all to behold the surviving members of our Revolutionary contest, civil and military, who had shared with him in the toils and dangers of the war, many of them in a decrepid state. A more interesting spectacle, it is believed, was never witnessed, because none could be founded on purer principles—none proceed from higher or more disinterested motives. That the feelings of those who had fought and bled with him in a common cause should have been much excited was natural. There are, however, circumstances attending these interviews which pervaded the whole community and touched the breasts of every age, even the youngest among us. There was not an individual present who had not some relative who had not partaken in those scenes, nor an infant who had not heard the relation of them. But the circumstance which was most sensibly felt and which his presence brought forcibly to the recollection of all was the great cause in which we were engaged, and the blessings which we have derived from our success in it. The struggle was for independence and liberty, public and personal, and in this we succeeded. The meeting with one who had borne so distinguished a part in that great struggle, and from such lofty and disinterested motives, could not fail to affect profoundly every individual and of every age. It is natural that we should all take a deep interest in his future welfare, as we do. His high claims on our Union are felt, and the sentiment universal that they should be met in a generous spirit. Under these impressions I invite your attention to the subject with a view that, regarding his very important services, losses, and sacrifices, a provision may be made and tendered to him which shall correspond with the sentiments and be worthy the character of the American people.

In turning our attention to the condition of the civilized world, in which the United States have always taken a deep interest, it is gratifying to see how large a portion of it is blessed with peace. The only wars which now exist within that limit are those between Turkey and Greece, in Europe, and between Spain and the new Governments, our neighbors, in this hemisphere. In both these wars the cause of independence, of liberty, and humanity, continues to prevail. The success of Greece, when the relative population of the contending parties is considered, commands our admiration and applause, and that it has had a similar effect with the neighboring powers is obvious. The feeling of the whole civilized world is excited in a high degree in their favor. May we not hope that these sentiments, winning on the hearts of their respective Governments, may lead to a more decisive result? that they may produce an accord among them to replace Greece on the ground which she formerly held, and to which her heroic exertions at this day so eminently entitle her?

With respect to the contest to which our neighbors are a party, it is evident that Spain, as a power,

is scarcely felt in it. These new States had completely achieved their independence before it was acknowledged by the United States, and they have since maintained it with little foreign pressure. The disturbances which have appeared in certain portions of that vast territory have proceeded from internal causes, which had their origin in their former Governments, and have not yet been thoroughly removed. It is manifest that these causes are daily losing their effect, and that these new States are settling down under Governments elective and representative in every branch similar to our own. In this course we ardently wish them to persevere, under a firm conviction that it will promote their happiness. In this their career, however, we have not interfered, believing that every people have a right to institute for themselves the Government which, in their judgment, may suit them best. Our example is before them, of the good effect of which, being our neighbors, they are competent judges, and to their judgment we leave it, in the expectation that other powers will pursue the same policy. The deep interest which we take in their independence, which we have acknowledged, and in their enjoyment of all the rights incident thereto, especially in the very important one of instituting their own Governments, has been declared and is known to the world. Separated, as we are, from Europe by the great Atlantic Ocean, we can have no concern in the wars of the European Governments, nor in the causes which produce them. The balance of power between them, into which ever scale it may turn, in its various vibrations, cannot affect us. It is the interest of the United States to preserve the most friendly relations with every power, and on conditions fair, equal, and applicable to all. But in regard to our neighbors our situation is different. It is impossible for the European Governments to interfere in their concerns, especially in those alluded to, which are vital, without affecting us; indeed, the motive which might induce such interference in the present state of the war between the parties, if a war it may be called, would appear to be equally applicable to us. It is gratifying to know that some of the powers with whom we enjoy a very friendly intercourse, and to whom these views have been communicated, have appeared to acquiesce in them.

The augmentation of our population, with the expansion of our Union, and increased number of States, have produced effects in certain branches of our system which merit the attention of Congress. Some of our arrangements, and particularly of the Judiciary Establishment, were made with a view to the original thirteen States only. Since then the United States have acquired a vast extent of territory; eleven new States have been admitted into the Union, and Territories have been laid off for three others, which will likewise be admitted at no distant day. An organization of the Supreme Court, which assigns to the judges any portion of the duties which belong to the inferior, requiring their passage over so vast a space, under any distribution of the States that may now be made, if not impracticable in the execution, must render it impossible for them to discharge the duties of either branch with advantage to the Union. The duties of the Supreme Court would be of great importance if its decisions were confined to the ordinary limits of other tribunals; but when it is considered that this court decides, and in the last resort, on all the great questions which arise under our Constitution, involving those between the United States individually, between the States and the United States, and between the latter and foreign powers, too high an estimate of their importance cannot be formed. The great interests of the nation seem to require that the judges of the Supreme Court should be exempted from every other duty than those which are incident to that high trust. The organization of the inferior courts would, of course, be adapted to circumstances. It is presumed that such a one might be formed as would secure an able and faithful discharge of their duties, and without any material augmentation of expense.

The condition of the aborigines within our limits, and especially those who are within the limits of any of the States, merits likewise particular attention. Experience has shown that, unless the tribes be civilized, they can never be incorporated into our system, in any form whatever. It has likewise shown that, in the regular augmentation of our population, with the extension of our settlements, their situation will become deplorable, if their extinction is not menaced. Some well digested plan, which will rescue them from such calamities, is due to their rights, to the rights of humanity, and to the honor of the nation. Their civilization is indispensable to their safety, and this can be accomplished only by degrees. The process must commence with the infant state, through whom some effect may be wrought on the parental. Difficulties of the most serious character present themselves to the attainment of this very desirable result on the territory on which they now reside. To remove them from it by force, even with a view to their own security and happiness, would be revolting to humanity, and utterly unjustifiable. Between the limits of our present States and Territories, and the Rocky mountains and Mexico, there is a vast territory to which they might be invited, with inducements which might be successful. It is thought if that territory should be divided into districts, by previous agreement with the tribes now residing there, and civil Governments be established in each, with schools for every branch of instruction in literature and the arts of civilized life, that all the tribes now within our limits might gradually be drawn there. The execution of this would necessarily be attended with expense, and that not inconsiderable; but it is doubted whether any other can be devised which would be less liable to that objection or more likely to succeed.

In looking to the interests which the United States have on the Pacific Ocean and on the Western Coast of this continent, the propriety of establishing a military post at the mouth of Columbia river, or at some other point in that quarter within our acknowledged limits, is submitted to the consideration of Congress. Our commerce and fisheries on that sea and along the coast have much increased and are increasing. It is thought that a military post to which our ships-of-war might resort would afford protection to every interest, and have a tendency to conciliate the tribes to the Northwest, with whom our trade is extensive. It is thought, also, that, by the establishment of such a post, the intercourse between our Western States and Territories and the Pacific and our trade with the tribes residing in the interior, on each side of the Rocky mountains, would be essentially promoted. To carry this object into effect, the appropriation of an adequate sum to authorize the employment of a frigate, with an officer of the Corps of Engineers, to explore the mouth of the Columbia river and the coast contiguous thereto, to enable the Executive to make such establishment at the most suitable point, is recommended to Congress.

It is thought that attention is also due to the improvement of this city. The communication between the public buildings and in various other parts and the grounds around those buildings require it. It is presumed, also, that the completion of the canal, from the Tiber to the Eastern Branch, would have a very salutary effect. Great exertions have been made and expenses incurred by the citizens in improvements of various kinds; but those which are suggested belong exclusively to the Government, or are of a nature to require expenditures beyond their resources. The public lots which are still for sale would, it is not doubted, be more than adequate to these purposes.

From the view above presented, it is manifest that the situation of the United States is, in the highest

degree, prosperous and happy. There is no object which, as a people, we can desire which we do not possess, or which is not within our reach. Blessed with Governments the happiest which the world ever knew, with no distinct orders in society or divided interests in any portion of the vast territory over which their dominion extends, we have every motive to cling together which can animate a virtuous and enlightened people. The great object is to preserve these blessings and to hand them down to the latest posterity. Our experience ought to satisfy us that our progress, under the most correct and provident policy, will not be exempt from danger. Our institutions form an important epoch in the history of the civilized world. On their preservation, and in their utmost purity, everything will depend. Extending, as our interests do, to every part of the inhabited globe, and to every sea, to which our citizens are carried by their industry and enterprise, to which they are invited by the wants of others, and have a right to go, we must either protect them in the enjoyment of their rights, or abandon them, in certain events, to waste and desolation. Our attitude is highly interesting as relates to other powers, and particularly to our Southern neighbors. We have duties to perform with respect to all to which we must be faithful. To every kind of danger we should pay the most vigilant and unceasing attention, remove the cause where it may be practicable, and be prepared to meet it when inevitable.

Against foreign danger the policy of the Government seems to be already settled. The events of the late war admonished us to make our maritime frontier impregnable by a well-digested chain of fortifications, and to give efficient protection to our commerce by augmenting our Navy to a certain extent, which has been steadily pursued, and which it is incumbent upon us to complete as soon as circumstances will permit. In the event of war, it is on the maritime frontier that we shall be assailed. It is in that quarter, therefore, that we should be prepared to meet the attack. It is there that our whole force will be called into action to prevent the destruction of our towns, and the desolation and pillage of the interior. To give full effect to this policy, great improvements will be indispensable. Access to those works by every practicable communication should be made easy, and in every direction. The intercourse, also, between every part of our Union should be promoted and facilitated by the exercise of those powers which may comport with a faithful regard to the great principles of our Constitution. With respect to internal causes, those great principles point out with equal certainty the policy to be pursued. Resting on the people, as our Governments do, State and National, with well-defined powers, it is of the highest importance that they severally keep within the limits prescribed to them. Fulfilling that sacred duty, it is of equal importance that the movement between them be harmonious; and, in case of any disagreement, should any such occur, a calm appeal be made to the people, and their voice be heard and promptly obeyed. Both Governments being instituted for the common good, we cannot fail to prosper, while those who made them are attentive to the conduct of their representatives and control their measures. In the pursuit of these great objects, let a generous spirit and national views and feelings be indulged, and let every part recollect that by cherishing that spirit, and improving the condition of the others in what relates to their welfare, the general interest will not only be promoted, but the local advantage be reciprocated.

I cannot conclude this communication, the last of the kind which I shall have to make, without recollecting, with great sensibility and heartfelt gratitude, the many instances of the public confidence, and the generous support which I have received from my fellow-citizens in the various trusts with which I have been honored. Having commenced my service in early youth, and continued it since with few and short intervals, I have witnessed the great difficulties to which our Union has been exposed, and admired the virtue and courage with which they were surmounted. From the present prosperous and happy state I derive a gratification which I cannot express. That these blessings may be preserved and perpetuated will be the object of my fervent and unceasing prayers to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe.

JAMES MONROE.

WASHINGTON, December 7, 1824.

18TH CONGRESS.]

No. 379.

[2D SESSION.]

CORRESPONDENCE WITH GREAT BRITAIN RELATIVE TO THE SUPPRESSION OF THE
SLAVE TRADE.

COMMUNICATED TO CONGRESS WITH THE MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT, DECEMBER 7, 1824.

[See No. 378.]

DOCUMENTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

Papers in relation to the convention between the United States and Great Britain for the suppression of the slave trade, communicated with the President's message to Congress, December 7, 1824.

1. Proceedings of the Senate at its last session, with copies of the messages, convention, and other papers communicated to that House.
2. Mr. Adams to Mr. Rush, May 29, 1824.
3. Mr. Rush to Mr. Adams, June 28, 1824. Extract.
4. Same to same, July 5, 1824. Extract.
5. Same to same, August 9, 1824. Extract.
6. Same to same, August 30, 1824. Copy.
6. a. Mr. George Canning to Mr. Rush, August 27, 1824. Copy.
6. b. Mr. Rush to Mr. George Canning, August 30, 1824. Copy.
7. Mr. Adams to Mr. Rush, November 12, 1824. Copy.
8. Mr. Addington to Mr. Adams, November 6, 1824. Copy.
9. Mr. Adams to Mr. Addington, December 4, 1824. Copy.