

THE SOMERSET HERALD.

AND FARMERS' AND MECHANICS' REGISTER.

TWO DOLLARS PER ANNUM,
HALF-YEARLY IN ADVANCE.

IF NOT PAID WITHIN THE YEAR,
\$2.50 WILL BE CHARGED.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY JONATHAN ROW, SOMERSET, SOMERSET COUNTY, PA.

New Series.]

TUESDAY, MAY 26, 1846,

Vol. 4.--No. 28.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

The existing state of the relations between the United States and Mexico, renders it proper that I should bring the subject to the consideration of Congress. In my message at the commencement of your present session, the state of these relations, the causes which led to the suspension of diplomatic intercourse between the two countries in March 1845, and the long-continued and unredressed wrongs and injuries committed by the Mexican government on the citizens of the United States in their persons and property, were briefly set forth.

As the facts and opinions which were then laid before you were carefully considered, I cannot better express my present convictions of the condition of affairs up to that time, than by referring you to that communication.

The strong desire to establish peace with Mexico, on liberal and honorable terms, and the readiness of this government to regulate and adjust our boundary, and other causes of difference with that power on such fair and equitable principles as would lead to permanent relations of the most friendly nature, induced me in September last to seek the re-opening of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Every measure adopted on our part had for its object the furtherance of these desired results. In communicating to Congress a succinct statement of the injuries which we had suffered from Mexico, and which have been accumulating during a period of more than twenty years, every expression that could tend to inflame the people of Mexico, or defeat or delay a pacific result was carefully avoided. An envoy of the United States repaired to Mexico with full powers to adjust every existing difference. But though present on the Mexican soil, by agreement between the two governments, invested with full powers, and hearing evidence of the most friendly dispositions, his mission has been unavailing. The Mexican government not only refused to receive him, or listen to his propositions, but, after a long continued series of menaces, have at last invaded our territory and shed the blood of our fellow-citizens on our own soil.

It now becomes my duty to state more in detail the origin, process and failure of that mission. In pursuance of the instructions given in September last, an inquiry was made, on the thirteenth of October, 1845, in the most friendly terms, through our consul in Mexico, of the Minister of foreign affairs, whether the Mexican government "would receive an envoy from the United States intrusted with full powers to adjust all the questions in dispute between the two governments;" with the assurance that "should the answer be in the affirmative, such an envoy would be immediately despatched to Mexico." The Mexican minister on the fifteenth of October, gave an affirmative answer to this inquiry, requesting at the same time, that our naval force at Vera Cruz might be withdrawn lest its continued presence might assume the appearance of menace and coercion pending the negotiations. This force was immediately withdrawn. On the 10th of November, 1845, Mr. John Slidell of Louisiana, was commissioned by me as envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of the United States to Mexico, and was intrusted with full powers to adjust both the questions of the Texas boundary and of indemnification to our citizens. The redress of the wrongs of our citizens naturally and inseparably blended itself with the question of boundary. The settlement of the one question in any correct view of the subject involves that of the other. I could not, for a moment, entertain the idea that the claims of our much injured and long suffering citizens, many of which had existed for more than twenty years, should be postponed, or separated from the settlement of the boundary question.

Mr. Slidell arrived at Vera Cruz on the 30th of November, and was courteously received by the authorities of that city. But the government of General Herrera was then tottering to its fall. The revolutionary party had seized upon the Texas question to effect or hasten its overthrow. Its determination to restore friendly relations with the United States, and to receive our minister, to negotiate for settlement of the Texas question, was violently assailed, and was made the great theme of denunciation against it. The government of General Herrera, there is good reason to believe, was sincerely desirous to receive our minister; but it yielded to the storm raised by its enemies, and on the 21st of December refused to accredit Mr. Slidell upon the most frivolous pretexts. These are so fully and ably exposed in the note of Mr. Slidell of the 24th of December last to the Mexican minister of foreign relations, herewith transmitted, that I deem it unnecessary to enter into further detail on this portion of the subject.

Five days after the date of Mr. Slidell's note Gen. Herrera yielded the government to Gen. Parades without a struggle, and on the 30th of December resigned

the presidency. This resolution was accomplished solely by the army, the people having taken little part in the contest; and thus the supreme power in Mexico passed into the hands of a Military officer.

Determined to leave no effort untried to effect an amicable adjustment with Mexico, I directed Mr. Slidell to present his credentials to the government of Gen. Parades, and ask to be officially received by him. There would have been less ground for taking this step had Gen. Parades come into power by a regular constitutional succession. In that event his administration would have been considered but a mere constitutional continuance of the government of Gen. Herrera, and the refusal of the latter to receive our minister would have been deemed conclusive unless an intimation had been given by Gen. Parades of his desire to reverse the decision of his predecessor.

But the government of Gen. Parades owes its existence to a military revolution, by which the subsisting constitutional authorities had been subverted. The form of Government was entirely changed, as well as all the high functionaries by whom it was administered.

Under these circumstances, Mr. Slidell, in obedience to my direction, addressed a note to the Mexican minister of foreign relations, under the date of the 1st of March last, asking to be received by that government, in the diplomatic character to which he had been appointed. This minister in his reply, under date of the 12th of March, reiterated the arguments of his predecessor, and in terms that may be considered as giving just grounds of offence to the government and people of the United States, denied the application of Mr. Slidell. Nothing therefore, remained for our envoy but to demand his passports, and return to his own country.

Thus the government of Mexico, though solemnly pledged by official acts in October last, to receive and accredit an American envoy, violated their plighted faith, and refused the offer of a peaceful adjustment of our difficulties. Not only was the offer rejected, but the indignity of its rejection was enhanced by the manifest breach of faith in refusing to admit the envoy, who came because they had bound themselves to receive him. Nor can it be said that the offer was fruitless from the want of opportunity of discussing it: our envoy was present on their own soil. Nor can it be ascribed to a want of sufficient powers: our envoy had full powers to adjust every question of difference. Nor was there room for complaint that our propositions for settlement were unreasonable: permission was not even given, our envoy to make any proposition, whatever. Nor can it be objected that we, on our part, would not listen to any reasonable terms of their suggestion: the Mexican government refused all negotiation, and have made no proposition of any kind.

In my message at the commencement of the present session, I informed you that upon the earnest appeal both of the Congress and convention of Texas, I had ordered an efficient military force to take a position "between the Nueces and the Del Norte." This had become necessary to meet a threatened invasion of Texas by the Mexican forces, for which extensive military preparations had been made. The invasion was threatened solely because Texas had determined, in accordance with a solemn resolution of the Congress of the United States to annex herself to our Union; and under these circumstances, it was plainly our duty to extend our protection over her citizens and soil.

This force was concentrated at Corpus Christi, and remained there until I had received such information from Mexico as rendered it probable, if not certain, that the Mexican government would refuse to receive our envoy.

Meantime Texas, by the final action of our Congress, had become an integral part of our Union. The Congress of Texas by its act of December 10, 1835, had declared the Rio del Norte to be the boundary of that republic. Its jurisdiction had been extended and exercised beyond the Nueces. The country between that river and the Del Norte had been represented in the Congress and in the convention of Texas, had thus taken part in the act of annexation itself; and is now included within one of our Congressional districts. Our own Congress had, moreover, with great unanimity, by the act approved December 31st, 1845, recognized the country beyond the Nueces as a part of our territory, by including it within our own revenue system, and a revenue officer to reside within that district has been appointed by and with the advice of consent of the Senate. It became, therefore, of urgent necessity to provide for the defence of that portion of our country. Accordingly, on the 13th of January last, instructions were issued to the general in command of these troops to occupy the left bank of the Del Norte. This river, which is the southwest boundary of the State of Texas, is an exposed frontier.

From this quarter invasion was threatened upon it and in its immediate vicinity, in the judgment of high military experience, are the proper stations for the protecting forces of the government. In

addition to this important consideration, several others occurred to induce this movement. Among these are the facilities afforded by the ports at Brazos Santiago and the mouth of the Del Norte for the reception of supplies by sea, the stronger and more healthful military positions, the convenience for obtaining a ready and a more abundant supply of provisions, water, fuel and forage, and the advantages which are afforded by the Del Norte in forwarding supplies to such posts as may be established in the interior and upon the Indian frontier.

The movement of the troops to the Del Norte was made by the Commanding General, under positive instructions to abstain from all aggressive acts towards Mexico, or Mexican citizens, and to regard the relations between that republic and the United States as peaceful, unless she should declare war, or commit acts of hostility indicative of a state of war. He was especially directed to protect private property and respect personal rights.

The army moved from Corpus Christi on the 11th of March, and on the 23rd of that month arrived on the left bank of the Del Norte, opposite to Matamoras, where it encamped on a commanding position, which has been since strengthened by the erection of field works. A depot has also been established at Point Isabel, near the Brazos Santiago, thirty miles in rear of the encampment. The selection of his position was necessarily confined to the judgment of the general in command.

The Mexican forces at Matamoras assumed a belligerent attitude, and on the 12th of April, General Ampudia, then in command, notified General Taylor to break up his camp within twenty-four hours, and to retire beyond the Nueces river, and in the event of his failure to comply with these demands, announced that arms and arms alone, must decide the question. But no open act of hostility was committed until the twenty-fourth of April. On that day, General Arista, who had succeeded to the command of the Mexican forces, communicated to General Taylor, that "he considered hostilities commenced and should prosecute them." A party of dragoons of sixty-three men and officers were on the same day despatched from the American camp up the Rio del Norte, on its left bank, to ascertain whether the Mexican troops had crossed, or were preparing to cross the river, "became engaged with a large body of these troops, and after a short affair, in which some sixteen were killed and wounded, appear to have been surrounded and compelled to surrender.

The grievous wrongs perpetrated by Mexico upon our citizens throughout a long period of years, remain unredressed; and solemn treaties, pledging her public faith for this redress, have been disregarded. A government either unable or unwilling to enforce the execution of such treaties, fails to perform one of its plain duties.

Our commerce with Mexico has been almost annihilated. It was formerly highly beneficial to both nations; but our merchants have been deterred from prosecuting it by the system of outrage and extortion which the Mexican authorities have pursued against them, whilst their appeals through their own government for indemnity, have been made in vain. Our forbearance has gone to such an extreme as to be mistaken in its character. Had we acted with vigor in repelling the insults and redressing the injuries inflicted by Mexico at the commencement, we should doubtless have escaped all the difficulties in which we are now involved.

Instead of this, however, we have been exerting our best efforts to propitiate her good will. Upon the pretext that Texas, a nation as independent as herself, thought proper to unite its destinies with our own, she has affected to believe that we have severed her rightful territory, and, in official proclamations and manifestoes, has repeatedly threatened to make war upon us for the purpose of re-conquering Texas. In the mean time, we have tried every effort at reconciliation. The cup of forbearance had been exhausted, even before the recent information from the frontier of the Del Norte. But now, after reiterated menaces, Mexico has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our territory, and shed American blood upon the American soil. She has proclaimed that hostilities have commenced, and that the two nations are now at war.

As war exists, and notwithstanding all our efforts to avoid it, exists by the act of Mexico herself, we are called upon, by every consideration of duty and patriotism, to vindicate, with decision, the honor, the rights, and the interests of our country.

Anticipating the possibility of a crisis like that which has arrived, instructions were given in August last, "as a precautionary measure," against invasion, or threatened invading, authorizing General Taylor, if the emergency required to accept volunteers, not from Texas only, but from the States of Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee and Kentucky; and corresponding letters were addressed to the respective Governors of those States.

These instructions were repeated, and

in January last, soon after the incorporation of "Texas into our union of States," Gen. Taylor was further "authorized by the President to make a requisition on the Executive of that State, for such of its militia forces as may be needed to repel invasion or to secure the country against apprehended invasion." On the second day of March he was again reminded, "in the event of the approach of any considerable Mexican force, promptly and efficiently to use the authority with which he was clothed, to call to him such auxiliary force as he might need." War actually existing, and our territory having been invaded, General Taylor, pursuant to authority vested in him by my direction, has called on the Governor of Texas for four regiments of State troops—two to be mounted, and two to serve on foot; and on the Governor of Louisiana for four regiments of infantry, to be sent to him as soon as practicable.

In further vindication of our rights and defence of our territory, I invoke the prompt action of Congress to recognize the existence of the war, and to place at the disposal of the Executive the means of prosecuting the war with vigor, and thus hasten the restoration of peace. To this end I recommend that authority should be given to call into the public service a large body of volunteers, to serve for not less than twelve months, unless sooner discharged. A volunteer force is, beyond question, more efficient than any other description of citizen soldiers; and it is not to be doubted that a number far beyond that required, would readily rush into the field upon the call of their country. I further recommend that a liberal provision be made for sustaining our entire military force, and furnishing it with supplies and munitions of war.

The most energetic and prompt measures; and the immediate appearance in arms of a large and overpowering force, are recommended to Congress as the most certain and efficient means of bringing the existing collision with Mexico to a speedy and successful termination.

In making these recommendations, I deem it proper to declare that it is my anxious desire not only to terminate hostilities speedily, but to bring all matters in dispute between this government and Mexico to an early and amicable adjustment; and in this view, I shall be prepared to renew negotiations, whenever Mexico shall be ready to receive propositions, or to make propositions of her own.

I transmit herewith a copy of the correspondence between our envoy to Mexico and the Mexican Minister of foreign affairs, and so much of the correspondence between that envoy and the Secretary of State, and the general in command of the Del Norte, as are necessary to a full understanding of the subject.

JAMES K. POLK.
WASHINGTON, May 11th, 1846.

THE NATIONAL FAIR.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, May, 11.
MESSRS. GALES & SEATON: The enemies of American industry are represented in the press that the National Fair, to commence on the 20th instant in this city, got up by the New England manufacturers to advance their own interests.

To disabuse the public mind, and show the falsehood of these representations, and the fact that the "National Fair" originated here, to counteract the efforts of the British manufacturers to mislead Congress, and, by securing the passage of Mr. Walker's bill, prostrate American industry and secure a monopoly of the American market, I request an early publication of the following letters, in which the object and origin of the National Fair is fully set forth.

Yours, &c.

ALEX. RAMSEY.

WASHINGTON, MARCH 17, 1846.

DEAR SIR: We have a gentleman here by the name of Homer, (formerly of Manchester, England, now residing in New York,) who is occupying one of the principal committee rooms in the Capitol with several hundred specimens of British manufactures sent to him from Manchester, with written instructions to exhibit them here, and to communicate to Congress such information on the subject as will enable them to "arrive at just conclusions in regard to the proposed alterations of the present tariff." He exhibits also, at the same time, similar specimens, purporting to be of American manufacture, with the prices so arranged at Manchester as to make it appear that they could furnish them for about half price of the American goods, if the duties were taken off. Practical manufacturers, who have examined these goods, inform me that his representations are erroneous and false; yet, by this means, he is misleading and imposing upon the credulous, and furnishing false facts, to be used in debate, and we will be without the means of disproving them, and vindicating the American manufactures against these false representations and insidious machinations of the British manufacturers and their

agents and advocates here. This Mr. Homer, the representative of the British interests, not only occupies the Capitol, but the columns of the official paper also in misrepresenting American measures and men, of which you have had your full share. Now, I think this whole thing wrong, but it is approved by the party in power, and cannot be prevented; and the only way I see to prevent misrepresentation and defeat this British contrivance to prostrate our manufactures, and with them our national industry and agriculture, is to have an American committee-room, where American goods may be fairly and truly represented, and falsehood met and refuted on the spot; and with this view I take the liberty of suggesting to you, Appleton, and your friends the propriety of sending on some competent person with specimens of American and British goods, with their true prices, &c., to be exhibited in the Capitol along side of this British Manchester concern. The British manufacturers, it seems to me, ought not to monopolize the American Capitol, which is now the case, and will contribute, if not counteracted, to accomplish what the British so much desire the prostration of the American manufacturers, (their hated and dangerous rivals) not only in the American markets, but in the markets of the world.

I consulted Mr. Adams as to the propriety of convening the Committee of Manufactures to invite you, by a resolution, to do what I have suggested; but when I looked at the character of the committee, (two to one decidedly anti-tariff,) I gave it up hopeless, and concluded, on my own responsibility, to address you on the subject. Will you do me the favor to drop me a line in reply at your earliest convenience.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
A STEWART.
Hon. ABBOTT LAWRENCE, Boston.

In pursuance of the foregoing letter, a number of gentlemen attended here with specimens of American manufactures, when, upon consultation, it was determined to give the following general invitation, viz:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MARCH 24, 1846.

With a view to furnish correct information in regard to the character, prices, and extent of American manufactures, as well as to correct misrepresentations on that subject, the undersigned respectfully invite the artisans, mechanics, and manufacturers of the United States to send specimens of their various productions, with their prices, to be compared with British manufactures sent from MANCHESTER, and now being exhibited in the room of the "Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads," to influence the action of Congress in relation to the proposed modification of the tariff.

Andrew Stewart, John Strohm, James Thompson, John H. Ewing, Richard Broadhead, Jacob Erdman, Alexander Ramsey, Abm. R. McIlvaine, Moses McClean, John Blanchard, James Black, James Pollock, P. S. Yost, C. Darragh, James Buffington.

A majority of these gentlemen afterwards appointed a general committee of arrangements, who have since superintended the business of the "National Fair," &c.

UPPER CALIFORNIA.

EXTRACTS FROM A LETTER FROM CAPT. FLEMING, U. S. ARMY, DATED

"Yerba Buena, Bay of St. Francisco, Upper California, Jan. 24 1846.

"Now, as rapidly as possible, I will tell you where I have been, and where I am going. I crossed the Rocky Mountains on the main Arkansas, passing out at its very head-water; explored the southern shore of the great Salt Lake, and visited one of its islands. You know that on every extant map, manuscript or printed, the whole of the Great Basin is represented as a SANDY PLAIN, barren, without water, and without grass. Tell your father that, with a volunteer party of fifteen men, I crossed it between the parallels of 38° and 39°. Instead of a plain, I found it, throughout its whole extent, traversed by parallel ranges of lofty mountains; their summits white with snow, (October,) while below the valleys had none. Instead of a barren country, the mountains were covered with grasses of the best quality, and containing more deer and mountain sheep than we had seen in any previous part of our voyage. So utterly at variance with every description, from authentic sources, or from rumor or report, wholly unexplored, and never before visited by a white man. I met my party at the rendezvous, a lake southeast of the Pyramid Lake, and again separated, sending them along the east side of the Great Sierra, three or four hundred miles, in a southerly direction, where they were to cross into the valley of the St. Joaquin, near

its head. During all the time that I was not with them, Mr. Joseph Walker was their guide, Mr. Talbot (tell his mother he is well, and does well) in charge, and Mr. Kern, topographer. The eleventh day after leaving them I reached Capt. Sutter's, crossing the Sierra on the 4th December, before the snow had fallen there. Now the Sierra is absolutely impassable, and the place of our passage two years ago is luminous with masses of snow. By the route I have explored I can ride in thirty-five days from the *Fontaine qui Bouit* river to Capt. Sutter's; and for wagons, the road is decidedly far better. I wish this known to your father, as now, that the journey has been made, it may be said this too was already known. I shall make a short journey to the eastern branch of the Sacramento, and go from the Blamath lake into the Wanhath valley, through a pass alluded to in my reports in this way making the road into Oregon far shorter, and a good road in place of the present very bad one down the Columbia. When I shall have made this short exploration, I shall have explored from beginning to end THIS ROAD TO OREGON.

"I have just returned, with my party of sixteen, from an exploring journey in the *Sierra Nevada*, from the neighborhood of Sutter's to the heads of the Lake Fork. We got among heavy snows on the mountain summits, there more rugged than I had elsewhere met them: suffered again as in our first passage; got among the "horse-thieves," (Indians who lay waste the California frontier,) fought several, and fought our way down into the plain again, and back to Sutter's. Tell your father that I have something handsome to tell him of some exploits of Carson and Dick Owens, and others.

"I am going now on business to see some gentlemen on the coast, and will then join my people, and complete our survey in this part of the world as rapidly as possible. The season is now just arriving when vegetation is coming out in all the beauty I have often described to you; and in that part of our labors I shall gratify all my hopes. I find the theory of our great Basin fully confirmed in having for its southern boundary ranges of lofty mountains. The Sierra, too, is broader where this chain leaves it than in any other part that I have seen. So soon as the proper season comes, and my animals are rested, we turn our faces homeward, and be sure that grass will not grow under our feet.

"All our people are well, and we have had no sickness of any kind among us; so that I hope to be able to bring back with me all that I carried out. Many months of hardships, close trials, and anxieties have tried me severely, and my hair is turning gray before its time. But all this passes, *et le bon temps viendra*."

"Boiling Spring river, in English.—This is the outside settlement on the Arkansas, about seventy miles above Bent's Fort, where old retired hunters and traders, with Mexican and Indian wives, and their children, have collected into some villages, called by the Mexican name for civilized Indian villages pueblos, where they raise grain and stock.

OFFICIAL.

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas the Congress of the United States, by virtue of the constitutional authority vested in them, have declared by their act, bearing date this day, that, "by the act of the republic of Mexico, a state of war exists between that Government and the United States;"

Now, therefore, I, JAMES K. POLK, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the same to all it may concern; and I do specially enjoin on all persons holding offices, civil or military, under the authority of the United States, that they be vigilant and zealous in discharging the duties respectively incident thereto; and I do moreover exhort all the good people of the United States, as they love their country, as they feel the wrongs which have forced on them the last resort of injured nations, and as they consult the best means, under the blessing of Divine Providence, of abridging its calamities, that they exert themselves in preserving order, in promoting concord, in maintaining the authority and the efficacy of the laws, and in supporting and invigorating all the measures which may be adopted by the constituted authorities for obtaining a speedy, a just and an honorable peace.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed to [L.S.] these presents. Done at the city of Washington, the thirtieth day of May, one thousand eight hundred and forty-six, and of the Independence of the United States the seventieth.

JAMES K. POLK.

By the President:
JAMES BUCHANAN,
Secretary of State.