



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

Follow-citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives. Throughout the year since our last meeting, the country has been eminently prosperous in all its material interests.

It is alleged as one cause for immediate secession of the Southern States are denied equal rights with the other States in the common Territories. But by what authority are these denied? Not by Congress, which has no power to exclude slavery from these Territories; and certainly not by the Supreme Court, which has solemnly decided that slaves are property, and that their owners have a right to take them into the common Territories, and hold them there under the protection of the Constitution.

It was then met and refuted by the conclusive arguments of General Jackson, who in his message of 1845, in transmitting the nullifying ordinance of South Carolina to Congress, employs the following language: "The right of the people of the States to choose their own representatives, and to elect their own officers, and to hold them to account, is a right which no power on earth can deprive them of."

It is not pretended that any clause in the Constitution gives countenance to such a theory. It is altogether founded upon a misapprehension of the true character of the sovereign character of the several States by which it was ratified. But it is beyond the power of a State, like an individual, to create a right which it has no right to secure the remainder of the nation against.

What, in the meantime, is the responsibility and true position of the Executive? He is bound by solemn oath, before God and the country, to see that the laws be faithfully executed, and that the rights of the people be maintained.

Our relations with Spain are now of a more complicated though less dangerous character than they have been for many years. Our citizens have long held, and continue to hold, numerous claims against the Spanish government.

Our relations with Mexico remain in a most unsatisfactory condition. Two annual messages I discussed extensively the subject of these relations, and do not now propose to repeat at length the facts and arguments then presented.

Our relations with Great Britain are of the most friendly character. Since the commencement of the Clayton and Bulwer treaty, and the right of search claimed by the British Government, have been amicably and honorably adjusted.