has been no perceptible addition to the number of our domestic slaves. During this period the advancement in civilization has far surpassed that of any other portion of the African race. The light and the blessings of Christianity have been extended to them, and both their moral and physical condition has been greatly improved.

Re-open the trade, and it would be difficult to determine whether the effect would be more deleterious on the interests of the master or on those of the native-born slave. Of the evils to the master, the one most to be dreaded would be the introduction of wild heathen, and untaught barbarians among the sober, orderly, and quiet slaves, whose ancestors have been on the soil for several generations. This might tend to barbarize, demoralize, and evaporate the whole mass, and produce most deplorable consequences.

The effect upon the existing slave would, if possible, be still more deplorable. At present he is treated with kindness and humanity. He is well fed, well clothed, and not over worked. His condition is incomparably better than that of the civilized which modern nations of high civilization have employed as a substitute for African slaves. Both the philanthropy and the selfinterest of the master have combined to produce this humane result. But let this trade be reopened, and what will be the effect? The same, to a considerable extent, as on a neighboring island—the only spot now on earth where the African slave trade is openly tolerated; and this is definitely and in a misnomer, under a power abundantly able at any moment to enforce their execution. There the master, intent upon present gain, extorts from the slave as much labor as his physical powers are capable of under the lash—hastening that, when death comes to his relief, his place can be supplied at a price reduced to the lowest point by the competition of rival African slave-traders. Should this be the case in our own country—which I do not deem possible—the present useful character of the domestic institution, wherein those too old and too young to work are provided for with care and humanity, and those capable of labor are not overtasked, would undergo an unfortunate change. The feeling of reciprocal dependence and attachment which now exists between master and slave would be converted into mutual distrust and hostility.

But we are obliged as a Christian and moral nation to consider what would be the effect upon unhappy Africa itself if we should reopen the slave trade. This would give the trade an impulse and extension which it has never had even in its palmiest days. The numerous victims required to supply it would convert the whole slave coast into a perfect Pandemonium, for which this country would be held responsible in the eyes both of God and man. Its petty tribes would be constantly engaged in predatory wars against each other, for the purpose of seizing slaves to supply the American market. All hopes of African civilization would thus be ended.

On the other hand, when a market for African slaves shall no longer be furnished in Cuba, and thus all the world be closed against this trade, we may then indulge a reasonable hope for the gradual improvement of Africa. The chief motive of war among the tribes will cease whenever they can no longer any demand for slaves. The resources of that fertile and miserable country might then be developed by the hand of industry, and afford subjects for legitimate foreign and domestic commerce. In this manner Christianity and civilization may gradually penetrate the benighted gloom.

The wisdom of the course pursued by this Government towards Cuba has been vindicated by the event.—Whilst we sustained a neutral position in the war waged by Great Britain and France against the Chinese empire, our late minister, in obedience to the instructions, judiciously cooperated with the ministers of those powers in all peaceful measures to secure by treaty the just concessions demanded by the interests of foreign commerce. The result is that satisfactory treaties have been concluded with China by the respective ministers of the United States, Great Britain, France, and Russia. Our treaty, or general convention of peace, amity, and commerce," with that empire was concluded at Tientsin on the 18th June, 1858, and was ratified by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, on the 21st December following.

On the 15th December, 1858, John E. Ward, a distinguished citizen of Georgia, was duly commissioned as envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to China. He left the United States for his place of destination on the 5th of February, 1859, bearing with him the ratified copy of this treaty, and arrived at Shanghai on the 28th May. From thence he proceeded to Pekin on the 16th June, but did not arrive at that city until the 25th July. According to the terms of the treaty the ratifications were to be exchanged on or before the 18th June, 1859. This was rendered impossible by reasons and events beyond his control, not necessary to detail; but still it is due to the Chinese authorities at Shanghai to state that they always assured him no advantage should be taken of the delay, and this pledge has been faithfully redeemed.

On the arrival of Mr. Ward at Peking he requested an audience of the Emperor to present his letter of credence. This he did not obtain, in consequence of his very positive refusal to submit to the humiliating ceremonies required by the etiquette of this strange people in approaching their sovereign. Nevertheless the interests of this country were conducted in the most friendly spirit and with all due regard to his personal feelings and the honor of his country. When a presentation to his Majesty was found to be impossible, the letter of his Majesty was found to be impossible, the letter of credence from the President was received with peculiar honors by Kweilang, "the Emperor's prime minister and the second man in the empire to the Emperor himself." The ratifications of the treaty were afterwards, on the 16th of August, exchanged in proper form at Pei-tsang. As the exchange did not take place until after the day prescribed by the treaty, it is deemed proper, before its publication, again to submit it to the senate.

It is at all simple justice to the Chinese authorities to observe, that, throughout the whole transaction, they appear to have acted in good faith, and in a friendly spirit towards the United States. It is true this has been done after their own peculiar fashion; but we ought to regard with a lenient eye the ancient customs of an empire dating back for thousands of years, so far as this may be consistent with our own national honor. The conduct of our minister on the occasion has received my entire approbation.

In order to carry out the spirit of this treaty, and to give it full effect, it became necessary to conclude two supplemental conventions—the one for the adjustment and satisfaction of the claims of our citizens, the other to fix the tariff on imports and exports, and to regulate the transit duties and trade of our merchants with China. The duty was satisfactorily performed by our late minister. These conventions bear date at Shanghai on the 8th of November, 1858. Having been concluded in the light of binding agreements subsidiary to the principal treaty, and to be carried into execution without delay, they do not generally require the formality of an exchange of ratifications by the contracting parties. This was not deemed necessary by the Chinese, who are already proceeding in good faith to satisfy the claims of our citizens, and, it is hoped, to carry out the other provisions of the conventions. Still I thought it was proper to submit them to the Senate, by which they were ratified on the 3d March, 1859. I do not, however, deem it expedient to exchange the ratifications until after the departure of our minister to Peking, and these conventions could not, therefore, be exchanged at the same time with the principal treaty. No doubt is entertained that they will be ratified and exchanged by the Chinese government, should they be thought advisable; but, under the circumstances presented, I shall consider them binding engagements from their date on both parties, and cause them to be published as such for the information and guidance of our merchants trading with the Chinese empire.

It affords me much satisfaction to inform you that all our difficulties with the republic of Paraguay have been satisfactorily adjusted. It happily did not become necessary to employ the force for this purpose, which Congress had placed at my command, under the joint resolution of 28th June, 1858. It was only on the day of the President, in a friendly spirit, acceded promptly to the just and reasonable demands of the Government of the United States. Our commissioner arrived at Assumpsion, the capital of that republic, on the 25th of January, 1859, and left it on the 17th of February, having in three weeks ably and successfully accomplished all the objects of his mission. The treaties which he has concluded will be immediately submitted to the Senate.

In the view that the employment of other than peaceful means might become necessary to obtain "just satisfaction" from Paraguay, a strong naval force was concentrated in the waters of the La Plata, to await contingencies, whilst our Commissioner ascended the rivers to Assumption. The Navy Department is entitled to great credit for the promptitude, efficiency, and economy with which this expedition was fitted out and conducted. It consisted of 19 armed vessels, great and small, carrying 230 guns and 2500 men, all under the command of the Commodore and gallant Shubrick. The entire expenses of the expedition have been defrayed out of the ordinary appropriations for the naval service, except the sum of $250,000, applied to the purchase of seven of the steam vessels, constituting a part of it, under the authority of the naval appropriation act of the 3d March last. It is believed that these steamers are worth more than their cost, and they are all now usefully and actively employed in the naval service.

The appearance of so large a force, fitted out in such a prompt manner, to the far distant waters of the La Plata, and the admirable conduct of the officers and men employed in it, have had a happy effect in favor of our country throughout all that remote portion of the world.

Our relations with the great empires of France and Russia, as well as with all other governments on the continent of Europe, unless we may except that of Spain, happily continue to be of the most friendly character.

In my last annual message I presented a statement of the unsatisfactory condition of our relations with Spain, and I regret to say that this has not materially improved. Without special reference to other claims, even the "Cuba claim," the payment of which has been ably urged by our ministers, and in which more than a hundred of our citizens are directly interested, remain unsatisfied, notwithstanding both their justice and their amount ($128 835 51) had been recognized and ascertained by the Spanish government itself.

I again recommend that an appropriation be made "to assist the Spanish government for the purpose of distribution among the claimants in the Amistad case" In common with two of my predecessors, I entertain no doubt that this is required by our treaty with Spain on the 27th of October, 1795. The failure to discharge this obligation has been employed by the cabinet of Madrid as a reason against the settlement of our claims.

I need not repeat the arguments which I urged in my last annual message in favor of the acquisition of Cuba by fair purchase. My opinions on that measure remain unchanged. I therefore invite again the serious attention of Congress to that important subject. Without a recognition of this policy on their part, it will be almost impossible to initiate negotiations with any reasonable prospect of success.

Until a recent period there was good reason to believe that I should be able to announce to you on the present occasion that our difficulties with Great Britain, arising out of the Clayton and Bulwer treaty, had been finally adjusted in a manner alike honorable and satisfactory to both parties. From causes, however, which the British government had not anticipated, they have not yet completed treaty arrangements with the republics of Honduras and Nicaragua, in pursuance of the understanding between the two governments. It is, nevertheless, confidently expected that this good work will ere long be accomplished.

Whilst indulging the hope that no other subject remained which could disturb the good understanding between the two countries, the question arising out of the adverse claims of the parties to the Island of San Juan, under the Oregon treaty of the 15th of June, 1846, and demanded a threatening prominence. In order to prevent unfriendly state collisions on that remote frontier, the late Secretary of State, on the 17th of July, 1858, addressed a note to Mr. Crampton, the British minister at Washington, communicating to him a copy of the instructions which he [Mr. Marcy] had given, on the 14th July, to Gov. Stevens, of Washington Territory, having a special reference to an "unprecedented conflict between our citizens and the British subjects on the Island of San Juan." To prevent this, the governor was instructed "that the officers of the Territory should abstain from all acts on the disputed grounds which are calculated to provoke any conflict, so far as it can be done without implying the concession to the authorities of Great Britain of an exclusive right over the premises.—The title ought to be settled before either party should attempt to exclude the other by force, or exercise complete and exclusive sovereign rights within the fairly disputed limits."

In acknowledging the receipt on the next day of Mr. Marcy's note, the British minister expressed his entire concurrence in the propriety of the course recommended to the governor of Washington territory by your [Mr. Marcy's] instructions to that officer," and stating that he had lost no time in transmitting a copy of that document to the governor-general of British North America," and had "earnestly recommended to his Excellency to take such measures as to him may appear best calculated to secure, on the part of the British local authorities, and the inhabitants of the neighborhood of the island in question, the exercise of the same spirit of forbearance which is inculcated by you [Mr. Marcy] on the authorities and citizens of the United States."

Thus matters remained upon the faith of this arrangement until the 9th July last, when General Harney paid a visit to the island. It found upon it twenty-five American residents, with their families, and also an establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company, for the purpose of raising sheep. A short time before his arrival, one of these residents had shot an animal belonging to the Company, whilst trespassing upon his premises, for which, however, he offered to pay twice its value; but that was refused. Soon after, "the chief factor of the Company, at Victoria, Mr. Dallas, son-in-law of Governor Douglas, came to the island in the British steamer-of-war Satellite, and threatened to take the American (Mr. Cutler) by force to Victoria, to answer the trespass he had committed. The American seized his rifle, and told Mr. Dallas if any such attempt was made, he would kill him on the spot. The affair then ended."

Under these circumstances, the American settlers presented a petition to the general throughout the United States Inspector of Customs, Mr. Hubbs, to place a force upon the island to protect them from the Indians as well as from oppressive interference of the authorities of the Hudson Bay Company at Victoria, with their rights as American citizens." The General immediately responded to this petition, and ordered Captain George E. Pickett, 9th Infantry, "to establish his company on Bellevue, on San Juan Island, on some suitable position near the Harbor at the southeastern extremity." This order was promptly obeyed, and a military post was established at the place designated. The force was afterwards increased, so that by the last return the whole number of troops then on the Island amounted in the aggregate to six hundred and ninety-one men.

Whilst I do not think it proper on the present occasion to go farther into the subject, and discuss the weight which ought to be attached to the statements of the British colonial authorities, contesting the accuracy of the information on which the gallant General acted, it was due to him that I should thus present his own reasons for issuing the order to Captain Pickett. From these it is quite clear his object was to prevent the British authorities on Vancouver's Island from exercising jurisdiction over American residents on the Island of San Juan, as well as to protect them against the incursions of the Indians.

Much excitement prevailed for some time throughout that region, and serious danger of a collision between the parties was apprehended. The British had a large naval force in the Pacific, and it is but an act of simple justice to the admiral on that station to state that he wisely and discreetly forbore to commit any hostile act, but determined to refer the whole affair to his government and await their instructions.

This aspect of the matter, in my opinion, demanded serious attention. It would have been a great calamity for both nations, and they have precipitated into acts of hostility not on the question of title to the island, but merely concerning what should be its condition during the intervening period while the two governments might be employed in settling the question to which of them it belongs. For this reason Lieutenant General Scott was despatched on the 17th September last to Washington Territory to take immediate command of the United States forces on the Pacific coast, should he deem this necessary. The main object of his mission was to carry out the spirit of the precautionary arrangement between the late Secretary of State and the British minister, and the late Secretary of State and the British minister, and to preserve the peace and prevent collision between the British and American authorities pending the negotiations between the two governments. Entertaining no doubt of the validity of our title, I feared scarcely add that, in any contest between American citizens were to be placed on a footing at least as favorable as that of British subjects, it being understood that Captain Pickett's company should remain on the island. It is proper to observe that considering the distance from the seat of action, and in ignorance of what might have transpired on the spot before the General's arrival, it was necessary to leave him a very liberal discretion. I am happy to state he acted with much discretion,