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PHILADELPHIA, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1863.

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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE. Fellow-citizens of the Senate and House of Representa Ecilow-citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives:

Another year of health and sufficiently abundant harvests has passed. For there, and especially for the improved condition of our national affairs, our renewed and profound gratitude to God is due. We remain in peace and friendship with foreign Powers. The efforts of disloyal citizens of the United States to involve us in foreign wars, to sid in inexcusable insurrection, have been hunavailing. Her Britannic Majesty's Government, as was justly expected, have exercised their authority to prevent the departure of new hostile expeditions from British ports. The Emperor of France has, by a like proceeding, promptly vindicated the neutrality which he proolsimed at the beginning of the contost. Questions of great intricacy and importance have arisen out of the blockade and other belligerent operations between the Government and several of the maritime Powers, but they have been discussed and, so far as was possible, accommodated in a spirit of frankness, justice, and mutual good will. It is especially gratifying that our prize courte, by the impartiality of their adjudications, have commanded the respect and confidence of maritime Powers.

The supplemental treaty between the United States and Great Britain, for the suppression of the African slave trade, made on the 17th day of February last, has been duly ratified and carried into execution. It is believed that, so far as American ports and American citizens are concerned, that inhuman and odious traffic has been brought to

ican ports and American citizens are concerned, that inhuman and odious traffic has been brought to I shall submit for the consideration of the Senate a convention for the adjustment of possessory claims in Washington Territory, arising out of the treaty of the 15th of June, 1846, between the United States and Great Britain, and which have been the source of some disquiet among the citizens of that noy rapidly improving part of the country.

A novel and important question, involving the extent of the maritime jurisdiction of Spain in the waters which surround the island of Cuba, has been debated without reaching an agreement, and it is proposed, in an amicable spirit, to refer it to the arbitrament of a friendly Power. A convention for that purpose will be submitted to the Senate.

I have thought it proper, subject to the approval of the Senate, to concur with the interested commercial powers in an arrangement for the liquidation of the Schedt dues, upon the principles which have been heretofore adopted in regard to the imposts upon navigation in the waters of Denmark, the long-pending controversy between this Government and that of Chill, touching the seizure at Sizans, in Peru, by Chillan-officers, of a large amount in treasure belonging to citizens of the United States, has been brought to a close by the award of his Majesty the King of the Belgians, to whose arbitration the question was referred by the parties. The subject was thoroughly and patiently examined by that justly-respected magistrate, and, although the sum awarded to the claimants may not have been so large as they expected, there is no reason to distruct the wisdom of his Majesty's decision. That shall submit for the consideration of the Senate

he wisdom of his Majesty's decision. That on was promptly complied with by Chili when ist the wishood of his angusty of the last claim was promptly complied with by Chili when telligence in regard to it reached that country.

The joint commission under the act of the last for carrying into effect the convention with on the subject of claims, has been organized

would then be presented. It came, and, as was portended, it was followed by dark and doubtful days. Eleven months having now passed, we are permitted to take another review.

The rebel borders are pressed still further back, and by the complete opening of the Mississippi river the country dominated by the rebellion is divided into distant parts, with no practical communication between them. Tennessee and Arkansas bave been substantially cleared of insurgent control and influence, and the citizens in each, owners of slavers and advocates of slavery at the beginning of the rebellion, now declare openly for emancipation in their respective States. Of those States not included in the emancipation proclamation, Maryland and Missourt—neither of which, three years ago, would tolerate any restraint upon the extension of slavery into new Territories—only dispute now as to the best mode of removing it within their own limits.

Of those who were slaves at the beginning of the rebellion, full one hundred thousand are now in the United States military service—about one-half of which number actually bear arms in the ranks—thus giving the double advantage of taking so much labor from the insurgent cause and supplying the places which otherwise must be filled with so many white men. So far as tested, it is difficult to say that they are not as good solders as any. No service insurrection or tendency to violence or cruelty has marked the measures of emancipation and arming the blacks, These measures have been much discussed in foreign countries, and optemporary with such discussion the tone of public sentiment there is much improved. At home the same measures have been fully discussed, supported, criticised, and denounced, and the annual elections foil. the report of the Secretary of the Treasury, to which I invite your attention. It is sufficient to say here that it is not believed that the actual results will exhibit a state of the finances less favorable to the country than the estimates of that officer heretofore submitted, while it is confidently expected that at the close of the year both disbursements and debts will be found very considerably less than has been anticipated. anticipated.

The report of the Secretary of War is a document of general interest. It consists of—
First. The military operations of the year, detailed in the report of the General in-Chief.
Second. The organization of colored persons into the war spruce.

of general interest. It consists of—

First. The military operations of the year, detailed in the report of the General in Ohief.

Second. The organization of colored persons into the war service.

Third. The exchange of prisoners, fully set forth in the letter of General Hitchcock.

Fourth. The operations under the act for enrolling and calling out the national forces, detailed in the report of the Provost Marshal General;

Fifth. The organization of the Invalid Corps; and Sixth. The operation of the Invalid Corps; and Sixth. The operation of the Invalid Corps; and Sixth. The operation of the several departments of the Quartermaster General, Commissary General, Paymaster General, Chief of Engineers, Chief of Ordnance, and Surgeon General.

It has appeared impossible to make a valuable summary of this report, except such as would be too extended for this place, and hence I content myself by asking your attention to the report itself.

The duties devolving on the naval brauch of the service, during the year and throughout the whole of this unhappy contest, have been discharged with fidelity and eminent success. The extensive blockade has been constantly increasing in efficiency as the navy has expanded, yet on so long a line it has so far been impossible to entirely suppress illicit trade. From the returns received at the Navy Department, it appears that more than one thousand vessels have been captured since the blockade was instituted, and that the value of prizes aready sent in for adjudication amounts to over \$1500,000.

The naval force of the United States consists at this time of 658 vessels, completed and in the course of completion, and of these 75 are fron-olad armored steamers. The events of the war give an increased interest and importance to the navy, which will probably extend beyond the war itself. The armored vessels in our navy, completed and in service, or which are under contract and approaching completion, are believed to exceed in number those of any other Power; but while these may be relied

tion of war vessels, when have greated a new torm of naval power.

Our country has advantages superior to any other nation in our resources of iron and timber, with inexhaustible quantities of fuel in the immediate vicinity of both, and all available and in close proximity to navigable waters. Without the advantage of public works, the resources of the nation have been developed and its power displayed in the construction of a navy of such magnitude which has, at the very period of its creation, rendered signal service to the Union.

The increase in the number of seamen in the public service from 7,500 men in the apring of 1851 to about 34,000 at the present time, has been accomplished without special legislation or extraordinary bounties to promote that increase. It has been found, however, that the operations of the draft, with the high bounties paid for army recruits, is beginning to affect injurduely the naval service, and will, if not oorrected, be likely to impair its efficiency, by detaching seamen from their proper vocation, and inducing them to enter the samy. I, therefore, respectfully

surer is much improved. At home the same measures have been fully discussed, supported, criticised, and denounced, and the annual elections following are highly encouraging to those whose efficial duty it is to bear the country through this great trial. Thus we have the new reckoning. The crisis which threatened to divide the friends of the Union runs we have the new reekoning. The crisis which threatened to divide the friends of the Union is past.

Looking now to the present and future, and with reference to a resumption of the national authority within the States wherein that authority has been suspended, I have thought fit to issue a proclamation, a copy of which is herewith transmitted. On examination of this proclamation it will appear, as is believed, that nothing is attempted beyond what is amply justified by the Constitution. True, the form of an oath is given, but no man is coerced to take it. A man is only promised a pardon in case he voluntarily takes the cath. The Constitution authorizes the Executive to grant or withhold the pardon at his own absolute discretion, and this includes the power to grant on such terms as is fully established by judicial and other authorities. It is also proffered that if "in any of the States named, a State Government shall be in the mode prescribed set up, such government shall be in the mode prescribed at under it the State shall, on the constitutional conditions, be protected against invasion and domestic violence." De protected against invasion and concesso vac-lence."

The constitutional obligation of the United States to guarantee to every State in the Union a republi-can form of government, and to protect the State in the cases stated, is explicit and full. But why tender-the benefits of this provision only to a State Go-vernment set up in this particular way? This section of the Constitution contemplates a case wherein the element within a State favorable to a republican form of government in the Union may be too feeble for an opposite and hostile element, external to and even within the State; and such are precisely the cases with which we are now dealing. An attempt to cuarantee and protect a revived State governeven within the State; and such are precisely the cases with which we are now dealing. An attempt to guarantee and protect a revived State government, constructed in whole or in preponderating part from the very element against whose hostility and violence it is to be 'protected, is simply abound. There must be a test by which to separate the opposing elements, so as to build only from the sound; and that test is a sufficiently liberal one which accepts as sound whoever will make a sworp regarda-

posing elements, so as to build only from the sound; and that test is a sufficiently liberal one which accepts as sound whoever will make a sworn recantation of his former unsoundness.

But if it be proper to require as a test of admission to the political body an oath of allegiance to the Constitution of the United States, and to the Union under it, why not also to the laws and proclamations were enasted and put forth for the purpose of adding in the suppression of the redelion. To give them their fullest effect, there had to be a pledge for their maintenance. In my judgment they have aided, and will further aid, the cause for which they were enlisted.

To give up this principle would be not only to relinquish a lever of power, but would also be a crucial and astounding breach of faith. I may add, at this point, that while I remain in my present position I shall not attempt to retreat, or modify the emancipation proclamation. Nor shall I return to slavery any person who is free by the terms of the proclamation or by any act of Congress.

For these and other reasons, it is thought best that

And it is suggested as not improper that, in conline analysis, the Secondary, the subtility of the confidence of the Secondary of the subtility of the confidence of the Secondary of the subtility of the confidence of the Secondary of the subtility The Mississippi squadron has been actively engaged in successful efforts to overcome the rebels and restore the national ascendency in the great central valley of the Union.

Kear Admiral Porter, whose activity, energy, and readints of resources eminently fitted him for that command, has exhibited extraordinary vigor in various haval expeditions on the Mississippi and its tribuaries, and in zealous co-operation with the army in most of its important operations.;

The capture of Arkansas Post, on the Whiteriver, in January, the destruction of the butteries at Grand of the control of th

chould be furnished by the Government, and it would be well if every midehipman were to receive instruction it whis now important branch of his profession. If the public is not yet prepared to combine what at present are two distinct pursuits, and make every naval officer an engineer as well as a sallor. I would recommend the formation of a class of those who may have youthly selected with the contract of the c

VOLUNTEER OFFICEES—PROMOTIONS, &c.

The important service rendered by volunteer officers, and the courage and skill displayed by them, as also their adaptation to the profession, commends them to las consideration of Congress: While it cannot be expected, and would nobe desirable, to incorporate percent, and the percent of the service. Those and worth should not be lost to the service. Those and worth should not be lost to the service. Those and worth should not be lost to the service. These are among them some yellow their content of the service where officers of the line of undergo an examination for promotion to successive grades after leaving the academy until they attain the rank of commander. Such a regulation would avoid the necessity for retiring boards, and be an incentive to excellence and a just reward to those who strive to acquire professional knowledge after graduating from the academy, and entering on their career of active duty. Such a rule is established with the engineer corps and medical officers, and is productive of beneficial results. A lits rule should be established with assistant paymasters, who ought not to be promoted until after the ordeal of an examination.

Suitable means should be taken to receive, prepare, and train boys for the line, now useless for cruising, might be stationed at some suitable place, penhaps at the Naval Academy, where boys between the agas of twelve and eighteen might be enlisted and educated as seanen. The sone of salors and others in the public naval and military service should be entitled to consideration for admittance to this school-ship, and it VOLUNTEER OFFICEES-PROMOTIONS, &c. of the Republic, have how become personal less.

The strength and durability of wooden yessels are, in some respects, in erfor to those made of iron, and consequently they are less capable of sustaining the heaviest armament, and when they are plated with iron the dimensional torqueased. Consequently large ships-of-war,

THE WAR PRESS. (PUBLISHED WEEKLY.)

The money must always accompany the n no instance can these terms be deviated fy AT Postmasters are requested to ast as Agents for THE WAR PRESS. To the getter-up of the Club of ten or twenty, an axira copy of the Paper will be given.

ted centers, can wisely strengthen to army by wearsoning its navel power.

Obfortunately for the country, the distinct element which for some years gave direction to public affairs so shaped the measures of Government as to keep down and cripple our navy. Aware that it was a branch of the service which could have no sympathy in a denationalizing or distinct eneme, or be made subject to re-