

THE COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT.

"I have sworn upon the Altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of Tyranny over the Mind of Man."—Thomas Jefferson.

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Message

From the President of the United States, to the two Houses of Congress, at the commencement of the third session of the Twenty-fifth Congress.

Fellow-citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives.

I congratulate you on the favorable circumstances in the condition of our

country, under which you reassemble for the performance of your official duties. Though the anticipations of an abundant harvest have not everywhere been realized, yet, on the whole, the labors of the husbandman are rewarded with a bountiful return; industry prospers in its various channels of business and enterprise; general health again prevails through our vast diversity of climate; nothing threatens, from abroad, the continuance of external peace; nor has any thing at home impaired the strength of those fraternal and domestic ties which constitute the only guaranty to the success and permanency of our happy Union, and which, formed in the hour of peril, have hitherto been honorably sustained through every vicissitude in our national affairs. These blessings, which evince the care and beneficence of Providence, call for our devout and fervent gratitude.

We have not less reason to be grateful for other bounties bestowed by the same munificent hand, and more exclusively our own.

The present year closes the first half century of our Federal institutions; and our system—differing from all others in the acknowledged, practical, and unlimited operation which it has for so long a period given to the sovereignty of the people—has now been fully tested by experience.

The Constitution devised by our forefathers as the framework and bond of that system, then untried, has become a settled form of Government; not only preserving and protecting the great principles upon which it was founded, but wonderfully promoting individual happiness and private interests. Though subject to change and entire revocation, whenever deemed inadequate to all these purposes, yet such is the wisdom of its construction and so stable has been the public sentiment, that it remains unaltered, except in matters of detail, comparatively unimportant. It has proved amply sufficient for the various emergencies incident to our condition as a nation. A formidable foreign war; agitating collisions between domestic and in some respects, rival sovereignties; temptations to interfere in the intestine commotions of neighboring countries; the dangerous influences that arise in periods of excessive prosperity; and the anti-republican tendencies of associated wealth—these, with other trials not less formidable, have all been encountered, and thus far successfully resisted.

It was reserved for the American Union to test the advantages of a government entirely dependent on the continual exercise of the popular will; and our experience has shown that it is as beneficent in practice as it is just in theory. Each successive change made in our local institutions has contributed to extend the right of suffrage, has increased the direct influence of the mass of the community, given greater freedom to individual exertion, and restricted, more and more, the powers of Government; yet the intelligence, prudence, and patriotism of the people have kept pace with this augmented responsibility. In no country has education been so widely diffused. Domestic peace has nowhere so largely reigned. The close bonds of social intercourse have in no instance prevailed with such harmony over a space so vast. All forms of religion have united, for the first time, to diffuse charity and piety, because, for the first time in the history of nations, all have been totally untrammelled, and absolutely free. The deepest recesses of the wilderness have been penetrated; yet, instead of the rudeness in the social condition consequent upon such adventures elsewhere, nu-

merous communities have sprung up, already unrivalled in prosperity, general intelligence, internal tranquility, and the wisdom of their political institutions. Internal improvement, the fruit of individual enterprise, fostered by the protection of the States, has added new links to the confederation, and fresh rewards to provident industry. Doubtful questions of domestic policy have been quietly settled by mutual forbearance; and agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, minister to each other. Taxation and public debt, the burdens which bear so heavily upon all other countries, have pressed with comparative lightness upon us. Without one entangling alliance, our friendship is prized by every nation; and the rights of our citizens are every where respected, because they are known to be guarded by a united, sensitive, and watchful people.

To this practical operation of our institutions, so evident and successful, we owe that increased attachment to them which is among the most cheering exhibitions of popular sentiment, and will prove their best security, in time to come, against foreign or domestic assaults.

This review of the results of our institutions, for half a century, without exciting a spirit of vain exultation, should serve to impress upon us the great principles from which they have sprung; constant and direct supervision by the people over every public measure; strict forbearance on the part of the Government from exercising any doubtful or disputed powers; & a cautious abstinance from all interference with concerns which properly belong, and are best left to State regulations and individual enterprise.

Full information of the state of our foreign affairs having been recently, on two different occasions, submitted to Congress, I deem it necessary now to bring to your notice only such events as have subsequently occurred, or are of such importance as to require particular attention.

The most amicable dispositions continue to be exhibited by all the nations with whom the Government and citizens of the United States have an habitual intercourse. At the date of my last annual message, Mexico was the only nation which could not be included in so gratifying a reference to our foreign relations.

I am happy to be now able to inform you that an advance has been made towards the adjustment of our difficulties with that Republic, and the restoration of the customary good feeling between the two nations. This important change has been effected by conciliatory negotiations, that have resulted in the conclusion of a treaty between the two Governments, which, when ratified, will refer to the arbitration of a friendly power all the subjects of controversy between us growing out of injuries to individuals. There is, at present, also, reason to believe that an equitable settlement of all disputed points will be attained without further difficulty or unnecessary delay, and thus authorize the free resumption of diplomatic intercourse with our sister Republic.

With respect to the northeastern boundary of the United States, no official correspondence between this Government and that of Great Britain has passed since that communicated to Congress towards the close of their last session. The offer to negotiate a convention for the appointment of a joint commission of survey and exploration, I am, however, assured will be met by her Majesty's Government in a conciliatory and friendly spirit, and instructions to enable the British Minister here to conclude such an arrangement will be transmitted to him without needless delay. It is hoped and expected that these instructions will be of a liberal character, and that this negotiation, if successful, will prove to be an important step towards the satisfactory and final adjustment of the controversy.

I had hoped that the respect for the laws and regard for the peace and honor of their own country, which has ever characterized the citizens of the United States, would have prevented

any portion of them from using any means to promote insurrection in the territory of a power with which we are at peace, and with which the United States are desirous of maintaining the most friendly relations. I regret deeply, however, to be obliged to inform you that this has not been the case. Information has been given to me, derived from official and other sources, that many citizens of the United States have associated together to make hostile incursions from our territory into Canada, and to aid and abet insurrection there, in violation of the obligations and laws of the United States, and in open disregard of their own duties as citizens. This information has been in a part confirmed by a hostile invasion actually made by citizens of the United States, in conjunction with Canadians and others, and accompanied by a forcible seizure of the property of our citizens, and an application thereof to the prosecution of military operations against the authorities and people of Canada.

The results of these criminal assaults upon the peace and order of a neighboring country have been, as was to be expected, fatally destructive to the misguided or deluded persons engaged in them, and highly injurious to those in whose behalf they are professed to have been undertaken. The authorities in Canada, from intelligence received of such intended movements among our citizens, have felt themselves obliged to take precautionary measures against them; have actually embodied the militia, and assumed an attitude to repel the invasion to which they believed the colonies were exposed from the United States. A state of feeling on both sides of the frontier has thus been produced, which called for prompt and vigorous interference. If an insurrection existed in Canada, the amicable dispositions of the United States towards Great Britain, as well as their duty to themselves, would lead them to maintain a strict neutrality, and to restrain their citizens from all violations of the laws which have been passed for its enforcement. But this Government recognises a still higher obligation to repress all attempts on the part of its citizens to disturb the peace of a country where order prevails, or has been re-established. Depredations by our citizens upon nations at peace with the United States, or combinations for committing them, have at all times been regarded by the American Government and people with the greatest abhorrence. Military incursions by our citizens into countries so situated, and the commission of acts of violence on the members thereof, in order to effect a change in its government, or under any pretext whatever, have, from the commencement of our Government, been held equally criminal on the part of those engaged in them, and as much deserving of punishment, as would be the disturbance of the public peace by the perpetration of similar acts within our own territory.

By no country or persons have these invaluable principles of international law—principles, the strict observance of which is so indispensable to the preservation of social order in the world—been more earnestly cherished or sacredly respected than by those great and good men who first declared, and finally established the independence of our own country. They promulgated and maintained them at an early and critical period in our history; they were subsequently embodied in legislative enactments of a highly penal character, the faithful enforcement of which has hitherto been, and will, I trust, always continue to be regarded as a duty inseparably associated with the maintenance of our national honor. That the people of the United States should feel an interest in the spread of political institutions as free as they regard their own to be, is natural; nor can a sincere solicitude for the success of all those who are, at any time, in good faith struggling for their acquisition, be imputed to our citizens as a crime. With the entire freedom of opinion, and an undisguised expression thereof, on their part, the Government has neither the right,

nor, I trust the disposition to interfere. But whether the interest or the honor of the United States require that they should be made a party to any such struggle, and, by inevitable consequence, to the war which is waged in its support, is a question which, by our Constitution, is wisely left to Congress alone to decide. It is, by the laws, already made criminal in our citizens to embarrass or anticipate that decision, by unauthorized military operations on their part. Offences of this character, in addition to their criminality as violations of the laws of our country, have a direct tendency to draw down upon our own citizens at large the multiplied evils of a foreign war, and expose to injurious imputations the good faith and honor of the country. As such they deserve to be put down with promptitude and decision. I cannot be mistaken, I am confident, in counting on the cordial and general concurrence of our fellow citizens in this sentiment. A copy of the proclamation which I have felt it my duty to issue, is herewith communicated. I cannot but hope that the good sense and patriotism, the regard for the honor and reputation of their country, the respect for the laws which they have themselves enacted for their own government, and the love of order for which the mass of our people have been so long and so justly distinguished, will deter the comparatively few who are engaged in them from a further prosecution of such desperate enterprises. In the mean time, the existing laws have been, and will continue to be faithfully executed; and every effort will be made to carry them out in their full extent. Whether they are sufficient or not, to meet the actual state of things on the Canadian frontier, it is for Congress to decide.

It will appear from the correspondence herewith submitted, that the Government of Russia declines a renewal of the fourth article of the convention of April, 1824, between the United States and his Imperial Majesty, by the third article of which it is agreed that "hereafter there shall not be formed by the citizens of the United States, or under the authority of the said States, any establishment upon the northwest coast of America, nor in any of the islands adjacent, to the north of 54° 40' of north latitude; and that in the same manner there shall be none formed by Russian subjects, or under the authority of Russia, south of the same parallel;" and by the fourth, "that, during a term of ten years, counting from the signature of the present convention, the ships of both powers, or which belong to their citizens or subjects respectively, may reciprocally frequent, without any hindrance whatever, the interior seas, gulfs, harbors, and creeks upon the coast mentioned in the preceding article, for the purpose of fishing and trading with the natives of the country." The reasons assigned for declining to renew the provisions of this article, are, briefly, that the only use made by our citizens of the privilege it secures to them, has been to supply the Indians with spirituous liquors, ammunition, and firearms; that this traffic has been excluded from the Russian trade; and as the supplies furnished by the United States are injurious to the Russian establishments on the northwest coast; and calculated to produce complaints between the two Governments, his Imperial Majesty thinks it for the interest of both countries not to accede to the proposition made by the American Government for the renewal of the article last referred to.

The correspondence herewith communicated will show the ground upon which we contend that the citizens of the United States have, independent of the provisions of the convention of 1824, a right to trade with the natives upon the coast in question, at unoccupied places, liable, however, it is admitted, to be at any time extinguished by the creation of Russian establishments at such points. This right is denied by the Russian Government, which asserts that, by the operation of the treaty of 1824, each party agreed to waive the general right to land on

the vacant coast on the respective sides of the degree of latitude referred to and accepted, in lieu thereof, the mutual privileges mentioned in the fourth article. The capital and tonnage employed by our citizens in their trade with the northwest coast of America, will, perhaps, on adverting to the official statements of the commerce and navigation of the U. States for the last few years, be deemed too inconsiderable in amount to attract much attention; yet the subject may, in other respects, deserve the careful consideration of Congress.

I regret to state that the blockade of the principal ports on the eastern coast of Mexico, which, in consequence of difference between that Republic and France, was instituted in May last, unfortunately still continues, enforced by a competent French naval force, and is necessarily embarrassing to our own trade in the gulf, in common with that of other nations. Every disposition, however, is believed to exist on the part of the French Government, to render this measure as little onerous as practicable to the interests of the citizens of the United States, and to those of neutral commerce; and it is to be hoped that an early settlement of the difficulties between France and Mexico, will soon re-establish the harmonious relations formerly subsisting between them, and again open the ports of that Republic to the vessels of all friendly nations.

A convention for marking that part of the boundary between the United States and the Republic of Texas; which extends from the mouth of the Sabine to the Red river, was concluded and signed at this city on the 25th of April last. It has since been ratified by both Governments; and seasonable measures will be taken to carry it into effect on the part of the United States.

The application of that Republic for admission into this Union, made in August, 1837, and which was declined for reasons already made known to you, has been formally withdrawn, as will appear from the accompanying copy of the note of the Minister plenipotentiary of Texas, which was presented to the Secretary of State on the occasion of the exchange of the ratifications of the convention above mentioned.

Copies of the convention with Texas, of a commercial treaty concluded with the King of Greece, and of a similar treaty with the Peru Bolivian Confederation, the ratifications of which have been recently exchanged, accompany this message for the information of Congress, and for such legislative engagements as may be found necessary or expedient, in relation to either of them.

To watch over and foster the interests of a gradually increasing and widely extend commerce; to guard the rights of American citizens, whom business, or pleasures, or other motives, may tempt into distant climes; and at the same time to cultivate those sentiments of mutual respect and good will which experience has proved so beneficial in international intercourse, the Government of the United States has deemed it expedient, from time to time, to establish diplomatic connections with different foreign States, by the appointment of representatives to reside within their respective territories. I am gratified to be able to announce to you that, since the close of your last session, these relations have been opened under the happiest auspices with Austria and the Two Sicilies; that new nominations have been made in the respective missions of Russia, Brazil, Belgium, and Sweden and Norway, in this country; that a Minister Extraordinary has been received, accredited to this Government from the Argentine Confederation.

An exposition of the fiscal affairs of the Government, and of their condition for the past year, will be made to you by the Secretary of the Treasury.

The available balance in the Treasury, on the 1st of January next, is estimated at \$2,766,341. The receipts of the year, from customs and lands, will probably amount to \$20,915,698. This