

country was a colonial possession of Spain. It cannot be successfully controverted, that by the public law of Europe and America, no possible act of such Indians or their predecessors could confer on Great Britain any political rights.

Great Britain does not allege the assent of Spain as the origin of her claims to the Mosquito coast. She still claims, by repeated and successive treaties, renounced and relinquished all pretensions of her own, and recognized the full and sovereign rights of Spain in the most unequivocal terms. Yet these pretensions, so without solid foundation in the beginning, and thus repeatedly abjured, were, at a recent period, revived by Great Britain against the Central American States, the legitimate successors to all the ancient jurisdiction of Spain in that region. They were first applied only to a defined part of the Atlantic coast, and lastly to a part of the coast of Costa Rica, and now asserted to the extent, notwithstanding engagements to the United States.

On the eastern coast of Nicaragua and Costa Rica, the interference of Great Britain; though exerted at one time in the form of military occupation of the port of San Juan del Norte, then in the peaceful possession of the appropriate authorities of the Central American States, is now presented by her as the rightful exercise of a protectorship over the Mosquito tribe of Indians.

But the establishment at the Balise, now reaching far beyond its treaty limits into the State of Honduras, and that of the Bay Islands, pertaining of right to the same State, are as distinctly colonial governments as those of Jamaica or Canada, and therefore contrary to the very letter as well as the spirit of the convention with the United States, as it was at the time of negotiation, and now it, understood by this government.

The interpretation which the British government, thus in assertion and act, purports to give to the convention, entirely changes its character. While it binds us to all our obligations, it in a great measure releases Great Britain from those which constituted the consideration of this government for entering into the convention. It is impossible, in my judgment, for the United States to acquiesce in such a construction of the respective relations of the two governments to each other.

To a renewed call by this government upon Great Britain, to abide by, and carry into effect, the stipulations of the convention according to its obvious import by withdrawing from the possession or occupation of portions of the Central American States of Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica, the British government has at length replied, affirming that the operation of the treaty is prospective only, and did not require Great Britain to abandon or contract any possessions held by her in Central America at the date of its conclusion.

This reply substitutes a partial issue, in the place of a general one presented by the United States. The British government passes over the question of the rights of Great Britain, real or supposed, in Central America, and assumes that she had such rights at the date of the treaty, and that those rights comprehended the protectorship of the Mosquito Indians, the extended jurisdiction and limits of the Balise, and the colony of the Bay Islands, and thereupon proceeds by implication to the stipulations of the treaty by merely future acts of Great Britain may still continue to hold the portions of Central America. The United States cannot admit either the inference or the premises. We steadily deny, that, at the date of the treaty, Great Britain had any possessions there, other than the limited and peculiar establishment at the Balise; and maintain that, if she had any, they were surrendered by the convention.

The government recognizing the obligations of the treaty, lawfully by her, and in the discussion, therefore, has not looked to rights, which we might assert, independently of the treaty, in consideration of our geographical position and of other circumstances, which create for us relations to the Central American States, different from those of any government of Europe.

The British government, in its last communication, although well knowing the views of the United States, still declines to make the two governments to overcome all obstacles to a satisfactory adjustment of the subject.

Assured of the correctness of the construction of the treaty constantly adhered to by this government, and resolved to insist on their rights in the United States, yet actuated also by the same desire, which is avowed by the British government, to remove all causes of serious misunderstanding between the two nations, associated by so many ties of interest and kindred, it has appeared to me proper not to consider an amicable solution of the controversy hopeless.

There is, however, reason to apprehend, that, with Great Britain to the actual occupation of the disputed territories, and the treaty therefore practically null, so far as regards our rights, this international difficulty cannot long remain undetermined, without involving in serious danger the friendly relations, which it is in the interest as well as the duty of both countries to cherish and preserve. It will be sufficient to mention, that, if future efforts shall result in no success, and if the treaty should be more completely annulled than it is at present, the aspect of the case permits me now to entertain the following views.

One other subject of discussion between the United States and Great Britain, has grown out of the attempt, which the executive of the war in which she is engaged with Russia induced her to make, to draw recruits from the United States. It is the traditional and settled policy of the United States, which from time to time has been among the great powers of the world. For many of the duties of neutrality towards the respective belligerent states, we may reasonably expect them not to interfere with our lawful enjoyment of its benefits. Notwithstanding the existence of such hostilities, our citizens retain their individual right to continue their accustomed pursuits, by land or by sea, at home or abroad, subject only to such restrictions in this relation, as the laws of the belligerent nations, or special treaties, may impose, and to such foreign right that our territory and jurisdiction shall not be invaded by either of the belligerent parties, for the transit of their armies, the operations of their fleets, the levy of troops for their service, the fitting out of cruises by or against either, or any other act or incident of war. And the undeniable rights of neutrality, individual and national, the United States will under no circumstances surrender.

In pursuance of this policy, the laws of the United States do not forbid their citizens to sell to either of the belligerent powers articles, contraband of war, or to take munitions of war or soldiers on board their private ships for transportation; and although, in so doing, the individual citizen exposes his property or person to the hazards of war, his acts do not involve any breach of national neutrality, or of themselves implicate the government. Thus, during the progress of the present war in Europe, our citizens have, without national responsibility therefore, sold gunpowder and arms to all buyers, regardless of the destination of these articles. Our merchants have been, and still continue to be, largely employed by Great Britain, and by France, in transporting troops, provisions, and munitions of war to the principal seat of military operations, and in bringing home their sick and wounded soldiers; but such use of our mercantile marine is not interdicted either by the international, or by our municipal law, and therefore does not compromise our neutral relations with Russia.

But our municipal law, in accordance with the law of nations, imperiously forbids not only foreigners, but our own citizens, to fit out, within the limits of the United States, a vessel to commit hostilities against any state with which the United States are at peace, or to increase the force of any foreign armed vessel intended for such hostilities against a friendly state.

Whatever concern may have been felt by either of the belligerent powers lest private armed cruisers, or other vessels, in the service of one, might be fitted out in the ports of the other, to deplete on the property of the other, all such fears have proved to be utterly groundless. Our citizens have been withheld from any such act or purpose by good faith, and by respect for the law.

While the laws of the Union are thus prescriptive in their prohibitions, the equipment or arming of belligerent cruisers in our ports, they provide not less absolutely that no person shall, within the territory or jurisdiction of the United States, enlist or enter himself, or hire or retain another person to enlist or enter himself, or to go beyond the limits or jurisdiction of the United States with intent to be enlisted or entered, in the service of any foreign state, either as a soldier, or as a marine or seaman on board of any vessel of war, letter of marque, or privateer, or as a member of the crew of any such vessel, or to take any part in the service of any such vessel, or to land or sea service in another state without its consent, and that whether forbidden by the municipal law or not, the very attempt to do it, without such consent, is an attack on the national sovereignty.

Such being the public rights and municipal law of the United States, no solicitude on the subject was entertained by this government, when, a year since, the British Parliament passed an act to provide for the enlistment of foreigners in the military service of Great Britain. Nothing on the face of the act, or in its public spirit, indicated that the British government proposed to attempt recruitment in the United States; nor did it ever give intimation of such intention to this government. It was matter of surprise, therefore, to find, subsequently, that the engagement of persons within the United States to proceed to Halifax, in the British privateer of Nova Scotia, and there enlist in the service of Great Britain, was going on extensively, and to the great indignation of our citizens, who were immediately taken to sea in punishment of the offence, and so put an end to any further attempts of the kind.

It is difficult to understand how it should have been supposed that troops could be raised here by Great Britain, without violation of the municipal law. The unmistakable object of the law was to prevent every such act, which, if performed, must be either in violation of the law, or in studied evasion of it; and in either alternative, it is equally and as injurious to the sovereignty of the United States.

In the meantime, the matter acquired additional importance by the recruitments in the United States not being discontinued, and the disclosure of the fact that they were prosecuted upon a systematic plan devised by official authority; that recruiting rendezvous had been opened in our principal cities, and depots for the reception of recruits established on our frontier; and the whole business conducted under the supervision and by the regular cooperation of British officers, and agents, situated in the United States. The complicity of those officers in an undertaking, which could only be accomplished by violating our laws, throwing suspicion over our attitude of neutrality and disregarding our territorial rights, is conclusively proved by the evidence elicited on the trial of such of their agents as have been apprehended and convicted.

Some of the officers thus implicated are of high official position, and many of them beyond our jurisdiction, so that legal proceedings could not reach their source of mischief. These considerations, and the fact, that the cause of complaint was not a mere casual occurrence, but a deliberate design, entered upon with full knowledge of our laws, and national policy, and conducted by responsible public functionaries, impelled me to present the case to the British government, in order to secure not only a cessation of the wrong, but its reparation. The subject is still under discussion, the result of which will be stated in due time.

BRITISH RELATIONS—CONTINUED.

I repeat the recommendation submitted to the last Congress, that provision be made for the appointment of a commissioner, in connection with Great Britain, to survey and establish the boundary line, which divides the Territory of Washington from the contiguous British possessions. By reason of the extent and importance of the country in dispute, there has been imminent danger of collision between the subjects of Great Britain and the citizens of the United States, including their respective authorities in the quarter. The prospect of a speedy arrangement, contributed to induce on both sides forbearance to assert by force what each claims as a right. Continuance of delay on the part of the two governments to act in the matter will increase the dangers and difficulties of the controversy.

Misunderstanding exists as to the extent, character, and value of the possessory rights of the Hudson Bay Company and the property of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, reserved in our treaty with Great Britain, relative to the Territory of Oregon. I have reason to believe that a cessation of the rights of both companies to the United States, which would be the readiest means of terminating all questions, can be obtained on reasonable terms; and, with a view to this end, I present the subject to the attention of Congress.

The colony of Newfoundland, having enacted the law, by the treaty of the 5th June, 1854, to be applied to the same footing as the respective belligerent states, we may reasonably expect them not to interfere with our lawful enjoyment of its benefits. Notwithstanding the existence of such hostilities, our citizens retain their individual right to continue their accustomed pursuits, by land or by sea, at home or abroad, subject only to such restrictions in this relation, as the laws of the belligerent nations, or special treaties, may impose, and to such foreign right that our territory and jurisdiction shall not be invaded by either of the belligerent parties, for the transit of their armies, the operations of their fleets, the levy of troops for their service, the fitting out of cruises by or against either, or any other act or incident of war. And the undeniable rights of neutrality, individual and national, the United States will under no circumstances surrender.

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unlike the present, signalled its determination to maintain the freedom of the seas, and of the great natural channels of navigation. The Barbary States had, for a long time, exacted the payment of tribute from all nations, whose ships frequented the Mediterranean. To the last demand of such payment made by them, the United States, although suffering less by their depredations than any other nations returned the explicit answer, that we prefer war to tribute, and thus opened the way to the relief of the commerce of the world from an ignominious tax, so long exacted by the more powerful nations of Europe.

If the manner of payment of the Sound dues differ from that of the tribute formerly conceded to the Barbary States, still their exaction by Denmark has no better foundation in right.—Each, in its origin, nothing but a tax on a common natural right, extorted by those, who were at that time able to obstruct the free and secure enjoyment of it, but who no longer possess that power.

Denmark, while retaining our assent of the freedom of the Baltic Sound and Belts, has indicated a readiness to make some new arrangement on the subject, and has invited the governments interested, including the United States, to be represented in a convention to assemble for the purpose of receiving and considering a proposition, which she intends to submit, for the capitalization of the Sound dues, and the distribution of the same to be paid as annuities among the governments, according to the respective proportions of their maritime commerce to and from the Baltic. I have declined in behalf of the United States to accept this invitation, for the most cogent reasons. One is, that Denmark does not offer to submit to the convention the question of her right to levy the Sound dues.—A second is, that the convention were allowed to take cognizance of that particular question, still it would not be competent to deal with the great international principle involved which affects the right in other cases of navigation and commercial freedom, as well as that of access to the Baltic. Above all, by the express terms of the proposition, it is contemplated that the consideration of the Sound dues shall be commingled with, and made subordinate to a matter wholly extraneous, the balance of power among the governments of Europe.

While, however, rejecting this proposition, and insisting on the right of free transit into and from the Baltic, I have expressed to Denmark a willingness, on the part of the United States, to share liberally with other powers in compensating her for any advantages, which commerce shall hereafter derive from expenditures made by the United States to secure the safety of the navigation of the Sound or Belts.

I lay before you, herewith, sundry documents on the subject, in which my views are more fully disclosed. Should no satisfactory arrangement be soon concluded, I shall again call your attention to the subject, with recommendation of such measures as may appear to be required in order to assert and secure the rights of the United States, so far as they are affected by the pretensions of Denmark.

FRANCE.

I announce with much gratification, that, since the adjournment of the last Congress, the question, then existing between the government and that of France, respecting the French consul at San Francisco, has been satisfactorily determined, and that the relations of the two governments continue to be most friendly and amicable.

GREECE.

A question also, which has been pending for several years between the United States and the Kingdom of Greece, growing out of the acquisition, by public authority, of that country, property belonging to the present American consul at Athens, and which had been the subject of very earnest discussion heretofore, has recently been settled to the satisfaction of the party interested and of both governments.

MEXICO.

With Spain, peaceful relations are still maintained, and some progress has been made in repairing the wrongs complained of by this government. Spain has not only disapproved the conduct of the officers, who illegally seized and detained the steamer Black Warrior at Havana, but has also paid the sum claimed as indemnity for the loss thereby inflicted on citizens of the United States.

In consequence of a destructive hurricane, which visited Cuba in 1844, the supreme authority of that Island issued a decree, permitting the importation, for the period of six months, of certain building materials and provisions, free of duty, but revoked it when about half the period only had elapsed, to the injury of citizens of the United States, who had proceeded to act on the faith of that decree. The Spanish government refused indemnification to the parties aggrieved until recently, when it was assented to, payment being promised to be made soon as the amount due can be ascertained.

Satisfaction claimed for the arrest and search of the steamer El Dorado has not yet been accorded, but there is reason to believe that it will be, and that, with others, on this subject, urged on the attention of the Spanish government. I do not abandon the hope of concluding with Spain some general arrangement, which, if it do not wholly prevent the recurrence of difficulties in Cuba, will render their less frequent, and whenever they shall occur facilitate their more speedy settlement.

MEXICO.

The interpolation of this government has been invoked by many of its citizens, on account of injuries done to their persons and property, by the Mexican republic is responsible, for the unhappy situation of that country, for some time, has not allowed its government to give due consideration to claims of private reparation, and has appeared to call for and justify some further action in such matters on the part of this government. But, if the revolutionary movements, which have lately occurred in that republic, end in the organization of a stable government, under which appeals to justice will then be made, and it may be hoped, with success, for the redress of all complaints of our citizens.

CENTRAL AMERICA.

In regard to the American republics, which, by their proximity and other considerations, have peculiar relations to this government, while it has by no means a constant aim strictly to observe all the obligations of political friendship and good neighborhood, obstacles to which have arisen from some of them, from their own insufficient power to discharge the duties which are imposed on them, and from the distracted internal condition of the State of Nicaragua, has made it incumbent on me to appeal to the good faith of our citizens to abstain from unlawful intervention in its affairs, and to adopt preventive measures to the same end, which, on a similar occasion, had the best results in re-asserting the peace of the Mexican States of Sonora and Lower California.

SOUND DUES.

Since the last session of Congress a treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation, and the surrender of fugitive criminals, with the kingdom of the Two Sicilies; a treaty of friendship, commerce, and navigation, with Nicaragua; and a convention of commercial reciprocity with the Hawaiian kingdom, have been negotiated. The latter kingdom and the State of Nicaragua have also acceded to a declaration, recognizing as an international right the principles contained in the convention between the United States and Russia of the 22d of July, 1854. These treaties and conventions will be laid before the Senate for ratification.

TRADUCTION.

The statements made in my last annual message, respecting the anticipated receipts and expenditures of the Treasury, have been substantially verified.

It appears from the report of the Secretary of the Treasury, that the receipts during the last fiscal year ending on the 30th of September, 1855, from all sources, in the sum of thirty million three hundred and thirty thousand dollars; and that the public expenditures for the same period, exclusive of payments on account of the public debt, and interest on the same, amounted to twenty-eight million three hundred and thirty-two thousand and six hundred and fifty dollars, and the great reduction of the public debt, including interest and premium, amounted to nine million eight hundred and forty-four thousand five hundred and twenty-eight dollars.

The balance in the Treasury at the beginning of the present fiscal year, July 1, 1855, was eighteen million nine hundred and thirty-one thousand nine hundred and seventy-six dollars; the receipts for the first quarter, and the estimated receipts for the remaining three quarters, amount, together, to sixty-four million three hundred and thirty-four thousand and six hundred and thirty-four dollars, thus affording in all, as the available resources, of the current fiscal year, the sum of eighty-three million eight hundred and fifty-six thousand seven hundred and ten dollars.

If, to the actual expenditures of the first quarter of the current fiscal year, be added the probable expenditures for the remaining three quarters, as estimated by the Secretary of the Treasury, the sum total will be seventy-one million two hundred and thirty-four thousand and six hundred and thirty-four dollars, thereby leaving an estimated balance in the Treasury on July 1, 1856, of fifteen million six hundred and twenty-three thousand eight hundred and ninety-three dollars and forty-one cents.

In the above estimated expenditures of the present fiscal year are included three million dollars to meet the last instalment of the ten millions provided for in the late treaty with Mexico, and seven million seven hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars appropriated on account of the debt due to Texas, which two sums make an aggregate amount of ten million seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and reduce the expenditures, actual or estimated, for ordinary objects of the year, to the sum of fifty million four hundred and seventy-six thousand dollars.

The amount of the public debt, at the commencement of the present fiscal year, was forty million five hundred and eighty-three thousand and thirty-one dollars, and deduction being made of subsequent payments, the whole public debt of the federal government remaining at this time is less than forty million dollars.

The remnant of certain other government stocks, amounting to two hundred and forty-three thousand dollars, referred to in my last message as outstanding, has since been paid.

I am fully persuaded that it would be difficult to devise a system superior to that, by which the fiscal business of the government is now conducted. Notwithstanding the great number of public agents of collection and disbursement, it is believed that the checks and guards provided, including the regular monthly audits, and the constant supervision of the public accounts, are more than sufficient to prevent any considerable fraud on the part of those agents, or neglect involving hazard of serious public loss, to escape detection. I renew, however, the recommendation, heretofore made by me, of the enactment of a law declaring it felony on the part of public officers to insert false entries in their books of record or account, or to make false returns, and also requiring them of the termination of their service to deliver to their successors all books, papers, and other objects of a public nature in their custody.

ARMY.

The army, during the past year, has been actively engaged in defending the Indian frontier, the state of the service permitting but few and small garrisons in our permanent fortifications. The additional regiments authorized at the last session of Congress have been recruited and organized, and a large portion of the troops have already been sent to the field. All the duties, which devolve on the military establishment, have been faithfully performed, and by many gallant and privations incident to the character of the service rendered of our troops have furnished additional evidence of their courage, zeal, and capacity to meet any requisition, which their country may make upon them. For the details of the military operations, the distribution of the troops, and additional provisions required for the military service, I refer to the report of the Secretary of War and the accompanying documents.

Experience, gathered from events which have transpired since my last annual message, has but served to confirm my opinion, then expressed, of the propriety of making provision, by a retired list, for disabled officers, and for increased compensation to the officers retained on the list for active duty. All the reasons which existed, when these measures were recommended on former occasions, continue without modification, except so far as circumstances have given to some of them additional force.

The recommendations, heretofore made, for a limited organization of the army, are also renewed. The thorough reorganization of the army, to those officers, whom commerce their services to the grade of colonel, qualifies them, to a considerable extent, to perform the duties of every arm of the service; but to give the highest efficiency to artillery requires the practice and special study of many years; and it is not, therefore, believed to be advisable to maintain, in time of peace, a larger force of that arm than can usually be employed in the duties pertaining to the service of the field and garrisons. The duties of the staff in all the various branches belong to the movements of troops, and the efficiency of the army in the field would materially depend upon the ability with which those duties are discharged. It is, in my view, in the case of the artillery, a specialty, but requires, also, an intimate knowledge of the duties of an officer of the line, and it is not doubted that, to complete the education of an officer for either the line or the general staff, it is desirable that he shall have served in both.

With this view, it was recommended on former occasions, that the duties of the staff should be mainly performed by details from the line; and, with a view to the advantages which would result from such a change, it is again presented for the consideration of Congress.

NAVY.

The report of the Secretary of the Navy, herewith submitted, exhibits in full the naval operations of the past year, together with the present state of the service, and it makes suggestions of further legislation, to which your attention is invited.

The construction of the six steam frigates, for which appropriations were made by the last Congress has proceeded in the most satisfactory manner, and with such expedition, as to warrant the belief that they will be ready for service early in the coming spring. Important as this addition to our naval force is, it still remains inadequate to the contingent exigencies of the protection of our commerce, and the maintenance of our interests in the United States. In view of this fact, and of the acknowledged wisdom of the policy, a gradual and systematic increase of the navy, by appropriations recommended for the construction of six steam sloops of war.

In regard to the steps taken in execution of the act of Congress to promote the efficiency of the navy, it is unnecessary for me to say more than to express entire concurrence in the observations on this subject presented by the Secretary in his report.

POST OFFICE.

It will be perceived by the report of the Postmaster General, herewith submitted, that the operations of the post office during the last fiscal year were more than equal to the increased and sixty-eight thousand three hundred and thirty-two dollars, and the great reduction of the public debt, including interest and premium, amounted to nine million eight hundred and forty-four thousand five hundred and twenty-eight dollars.

transported them, to the level of the richest and the greatest nations of Europe. And the admirable adaptation of four political institutions, those agencies, combining local self government with aggregate strength, has established the practicality of a government like ours to cover a continent with a population of more than thirty millions.

The Congress of the United States in its effort, that Congress of the United States, which had seen the World have made for it, but could never attain, and which imports to America an exemption from the mutability of common action, from the wars, the mutual invasions, and vagaries of the balance of power, which would have from time to time the governments of Europe. Our co-operative action rests in the conditions of permanent confederation prescribed by the constitution. Our balance of power is in the separate reserved rights of the States, and their equal representation in the Senate. That dependence on sovereignty in every one of the States, which secured the local self government secured to each by their co-equal power in the Senate, was the fundamental condition of the constitution. Without it the Union would never have existed. However desirous the larger States might be to re-organise the government so as to give to their population its proportionate weight in the common councils, they knew it was impossible, unless they conceded to the smaller ones authority to exercise at least a negative influence on all the measures of the government, and their legislation, in the limitation of the powers granted to the States. Indeed, the larger States themselves could not have failed to perceive, that the same power was equally necessary to them, for the security of their own domestic interests against the aggregate force of the general government. In a word, the original States went into this permanent league on the agreed promise, of exerting their common strength for the defence of the whole, and not only for the defence of each, but also for the promotion of the aggregate interests of the whole, more especially in those parts of the district outside of the cities of Washington and Georgetown.

The peculiar relation of the general government to the District of Columbia renders it proper, that it should be included in the general laws, but also its special interests, including education, more especially in those parts of the district outside of the cities of Washington and Georgetown.

The commissioners appointed to revise and codify the laws of the District have made such progress in the performance of their task, as to insure its completion in the time prescribed by the act of Congress.

Information has recently been received, that the peace of the settlements in the Territories of Oregon and Washington is disturbed by hostilities on the part of the Indians, with indications of extensive combinations, of a hostile character among the tribes in that quarter, the more serious in their possible effect by reason of the undetermined foreign interests existing in those Territories, to which your attention has already been especially invited. Efficient measures have been taken, which, it is believed, will restore quiet, and afford protection to our citizens.

In the Territory of Kansas, there have been some indications of good order, but as yet no favorable circumstances to justify the interposition of the Federal Executive. That could only be in case of obstruction to federal law, or of organized resistance to territorial law, assuming the character of insurrection, which, if it should occur, it would be my duty promptly to overcome and suppress. I cherish the hope, however, that the occurrence of any such untoward event will be prevented by the usual sense of the people of the Territory, who, by its organic law, possessing the right to determine their own domestic relations, are entitled, while they deplore themselves peacefully to the free exercise of that right and must be protected in the enjoyment of it, without interference on the part of the citizens of any of the States.

The southern boundary line of this Territory has never been surveyed and established. The rapidly extending settlements in that region, and the fact that the main route between Independence, in the State of Missouri, and New Mexico, is contiguous to this line, suggest the expediency of the survey of that boundary, which, by the fact that embarrassing questions of jurisdiction may consequently arise, and which, in the event of a dispute, I commend the subject to your early attention.

CONSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT.

I have thus passed in review the general state of the Union, including such particular concerns of the federal government, whether of domestic or foreign relation, as it appeared to me desirable and useful to bring to the special notice of Congress. Unlike the great states of Europe, and the United States of America, these latter are not foreign wars, but domestic strife. Whatever of discontent or public dissatisfaction exists, is attributable to the imperfection of human nature, or is incident to all governments, however perfect, which human wisdom can devise. Such subjects of political agitation, as occupy the public mind, consist, to a great extent, of exaggeration of inevitable evils, or over zeal in social improvement, or mere imagination of grievance, having but remote connexion with any of the essential functions or duties of the federal government. To whatever extent these questions exhibit a tendency menacing to the stability of the constitution, or the integrity of the Union, and no farther, they demand the consideration of the Executive, and require to be presented by him to Congress.

Before the Thirteen Colonies became a confederation of independent States, they were associated only by community of transatlantic origin, by geographical position, and by the mutual dependence on Great Britain for their political and commercial interests. The municipal and social institutions of each, its laws of property and of personal relation, even its political organization, were such only as each one chose to establish, wholly without interference from any other. In the language of the Declaration of Independence, each State had "full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent States may do." The several political opinions differed in climate, in soil, in natural productions, in religion, in systems of education, in legislation, and in the forms of political administration; and they continued to differ in these respects when they voluntarily allied themselves as States to carry on the war of the revolution.

The object of that war was to disentangle the United Colonies from foreign rule which had proved to be oppressive, and to separate them from the mother country, the political principles of the revolution were, as far as possible, consistently with the purposes of the independent power of the individual States.—For objects of common defence and security, they intrusted to the general government, a carefully defined function, leaving all other, as the acknowledged rights of the separate independent governments.

Such is the constitutional theory of our government, the practical observance of which has carried us, through nearly three generations of time without bloodshed, to the present day. It is a theory, which has been the subject of much discussion, and has raised our industrial productions, and our commerce which

transported them, to the level of the richest and the greatest nations of Europe. And the admirable adaptation of four political institutions, those agencies, combining local self government with aggregate strength, has established the practicality of a government like ours to cover a continent with a population of more than thirty millions.

the separate reserved rights of the States, and their equal representation in the Senate. That dependence on sovereignty in every one of the States, which secured the local self government secured to each by their co-equal power in the Senate, was the fundamental condition of the constitution. Without it the Union would never have existed. However desirous the larger States might be to re-organise the government so as to give to their population its proportionate weight in the common councils, they knew it was impossible, unless they conceded to the smaller ones authority to exercise at least a negative influence on all the measures of the government, and their legislation, in the limitation of the powers granted to the States. Indeed, the larger States themselves could not have failed to perceive, that the same power was equally necessary to them, for the security of their own domestic interests against the aggregate force of the general government. In a word, the original States went into this permanent league on the agreed promise, of exerting their common strength for the defence of the whole, and not only for the defence of each, but also for the promotion of the aggregate interests of the whole, more especially in those parts of the district outside of the cities of Washington and Georgetown.

The peculiar relation of the general government to the District of Columbia renders it proper, that it should be included in the general laws, but also its special interests, including education, more especially in those parts of the district outside of the cities of Washington and Georgetown.

The commissioners appointed to revise and codify the laws of the District have made such progress in the performance of their task, as to insure its completion in the time prescribed by the act of Congress.

Information has recently been received, that the peace of the settlements in the Territories of Oregon and Washington is disturbed by hostilities on the part of the Indians, with indications of extensive combinations, of a hostile character among the tribes in that quarter, the more serious in their possible effect by reason of the undetermined foreign interests existing in those Territories, to which your attention has already been especially invited. Efficient measures have been taken, which, it is believed, will restore quiet, and afford protection to our citizens.

In the Territory of Kansas, there have been some indications of good order, but as yet no favorable circumstances to justify the interposition of the Federal Executive. That could only be in case of obstruction to federal law, or of organized resistance to territorial law, assuming the character of insurrection, which, if it should occur, it would be my duty promptly to overcome and suppress. I cherish the hope, however, that the occurrence of any such untoward event will be prevented by the usual sense of the people of the Territory, who, by its organic law, possessing the right to determine their own domestic relations, are entitled, while they deplore themselves peacefully to the free exercise of that right and must be protected in the enjoyment of it, without interference on the part of the citizens of any of the States.

The southern boundary line of this Territory has never been surveyed and established. The rapidly extending settlements in that region, and the fact that the main route between Independence, in the State of Missouri, and New Mexico, is contiguous to this line, suggest the expediency of the survey of that boundary, which, by the fact that embarrassing questions of jurisdiction may consequently arise, and which, in the event of a dispute, I commend the subject to your early attention.

CONSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS OF SLAVERY.

This subject has only, by the reciprocal guaranty of all the rights of every State against interference on the part of another, was the present form of government established by our fathers and transmitted to us; and by no other means is it possible for it to exist. If one State ceases to respect the rights of another, the latter is bound to resist, and to defend its interests—a portion of the States assume to impose their institutions on the others, or refuse to fulfil their obligations to them.—we are no longer united friendly States, but distracted, hostile ones, in consequence of any law or regulation which is forbidden, to touch the matter in the sense of attack or offence. It was placed under the general safeguard of the Union, in the sense of defence against either invasion or domestic violence, like all other local interests of the several States. Each State is equally bound to respect the rights of each and all of its citizens, and every citizen of each State became solemnly bound by his allegiance to the constitution, that any person held to service or labor in one State, escaping into another, should not be discharged from that service or labor, but should be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service of labor might be due by the laws of his State.

Thus, then, only, by the reciprocal guaranty of all the rights of every State against interference on the part of another, was the present form of government established by our fathers and transmitted to us; and by no other means is it possible for it to exist. If one State ceases to respect the rights of another, the latter is bound to resist, and to defend its interests—a portion of the States assume to impose their institutions on the others, or refuse to fulfil their obligations to them.—we are no longer united friendly States, but distracted, hostile ones, in consequence of any law or regulation which is forbidden, to touch the matter in the sense of attack or offence. It was placed under the general safeguard of the Union, in the sense of defence against either invasion or domestic violence, like all other local interests of the several States. Each State is equally bound to respect the rights of each and all of its citizens, and every citizen of each State became solemnly bound by his allegiance to the constitution, that any person held to service or labor in one State, escaping into another, should not be discharged from that service or labor, but should be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service of labor might be due by the laws of his State.

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