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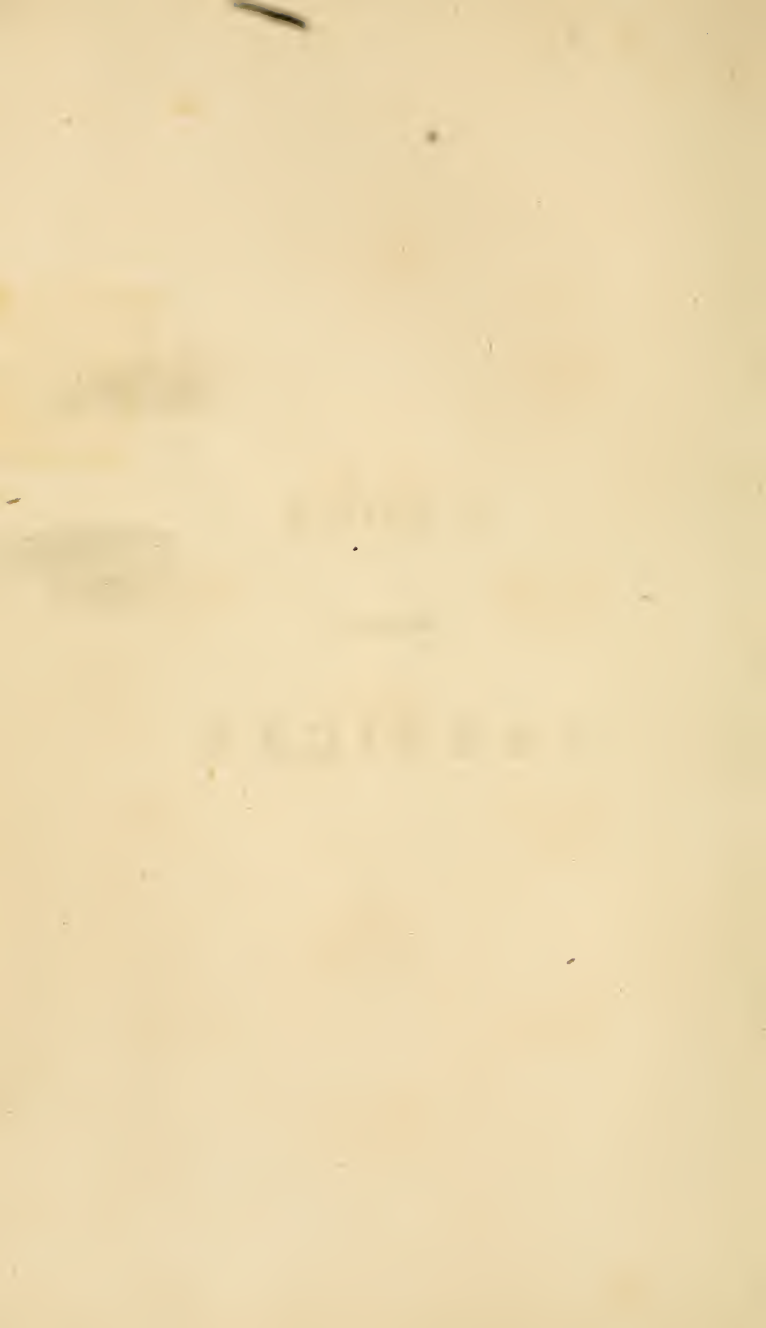


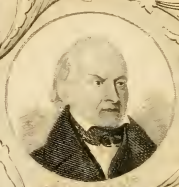
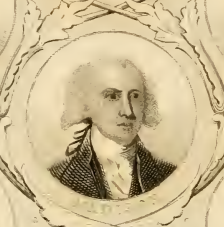
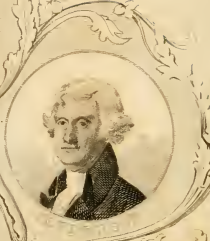
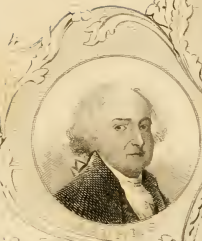
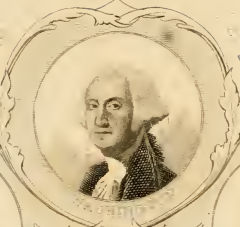


A BOOK

FOR EVERY

AMERICAN.





THE
AMERICAN'S OWN BOOK

CONTAINING

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE,

WITH THE

LIVES OF THE SIGNERS;

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES;

THE

INAUGURAL ADDRESSES AND FIRST ANNUAL MESSAGES

OF ALL THE PRESIDENTS,

FROM WASHINGTON TO PIERCE;

THE FAREWELL ADDRESSES

OF GEORGE WASHINGTON AND ANDREW JACKSON;

WITH A PORTRAIT AND LIFE OF

Each President of the United States,

TO THE PRESENT TIME.

NEW YORK:

LEAVITT & ALLEN,

27 DEY-STREET.

1855.

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THE
AMERICAN'S OWN BOOK.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

WHEN, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, and that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundations on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments, long established, should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to

provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of the colonies, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present king of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having, in direct object, the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world :

He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operations till his assent should be obtained ; and, when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature ; a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the repository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused, for a long time after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected ; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise ; the state remaining, in the mean time, exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these states ; for that purpose obstructing the laws of naturalization of foreigners, refusing to pass others to encourage their migration thither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harrass our people, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in time of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

He has combined, with others, to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation.

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us :

For protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states :

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world :

For imposing taxes on us without our consent :

For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefit of trial by jury :

For transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offences :

For abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies :

For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering, fundamentally, the forms of our governments :

For suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection, and waging war against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is, at this time, transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun, with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow-citizens, taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

In every stage of these oppressions, we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms. Our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them, from time to time, of the attempts, by their legislature, to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them, by the ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They, too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace, friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that, as free and independent States, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish com-

merce, and to do all other acts and things which independent States may of right do. And, for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

The foregoing declaration was, by order of Congress, engrossed, and signed by the following members :

JOHN HANCOCK.

New Hampshire.

JOSIAH BARTLETT,
WILLIAM WHIPPLE,
MATTHEW THORNTON.

Massachusetts Bay.

SAMUEL ADAMS,
JOHN ADAMS,
ROBERT TREAT PAINE,
ELBRIDGE GERRY.

Rhode Island.

STEPHEN HOPKINS,
WILLIAM ELLERY.

Connecticut.

ROGER SHERMAN,
SAMUEL HUNTINGTON,
WILLIAM WILLIAMS,
OLIVER WOLCOTT.

New York.

WILLIAM FLOYD,
PHILIP LIVINGSTON,
FRANCIS LEWIS,
LEWIS MORRIS.

New Jersey.

RICHARD STOCKTON,
JOHN WITHERSPOON,
FRANCIS HOPKINSON,
JOHN HART,
ABRAHAM CLARK.

Pennsylvania.

ROBERT MORRIS,
BENJAMIN RUSH,
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,
JOHN MORTON,
GEORGE CLYMER,
JAMES SMITH,

GEORGE TAYLOR,
JAMES WILSON,
GEORGE ROSS.

Delaware.

CÆSAR RODNEY,
GEORGE READ,
THOMAS M'KEAN.

Maryland.

SAMUEL CHASE,
WILLIAM PACA,
THOMAS STONE,
CHARLES CARROLL, of
Carrolton.

Virginia.

GEORGE WYTHE,
RICHARD HENRY LEE,
THOMAS JEFFERSON,
BENJAMIN HARRISON,
THOMAS NELSON, JR.
FRANCIS LIGHTFOOT LEE
CARTER BRAXTON.

North Carolina.

WILLIAM HOOPER,
JOSEPH HEWES,
JOHN PENN.

South Carolina.

EDWARD RUTLEDGE,
THOMAS HEYWARD, JR.
THOMAS LYNCH, JR.
ARTHUR MIDDLETON.

Georgia.

BUTTON GWINNETT,
LYMAN HALL,
GEORGE WALTON.

LIVES OF THE SIGNERS.

SAMUEL ADAMS.

THE memories of few men will perhaps be cherished, by their posterity, with a more jealous and grateful admiration than those of the patriotic individuals, who first signed the political independence of our country. They hazarded by the deed not only their lands and possessions, but their personal freedom and their lives; and when it is considered that most of them were in the vigor of existence, gifted with considerable fortunes, and with all the offices and emoluments at the disposal of royalty within their reach, the sacrifice which they risked appears magnified, and their disinterested patriotism more worthy of remembrance. Although many of them can rest their sole claim to lasting distinction upon the one great act with which they were adventitiously connected, still their lives present a valuable transcript of the times in which they lived, and afford examples of inflexible honesty, heroic decision, and noble energy of mind, quite as interesting as any records of the eccentricities of genius, or the grasping efforts of ambition.

Not one of the least ardent and uncompromising asserters of the rights and liberties of his country, was the subject of our present sketch—SAMUEL ADAMS. This gentleman, descended from a respectable family, which emigrated to America with the first settlers of the land, was born at Quincy, in Massachusetts, September 22d, 1722. In 1736, he became a member of Harvard College, and took his degree of Master in 1743. On this latter occasion, he proposed the following question, in which he maintained the affirmative: "Whether it be lawful to resist the supreme magistrate, if the commonwealth cannot be otherwise preserved?"

On quitting the university, he commenced the study of

the law; but soon afterwards, at the request of his mother, became a clerk in the counting-house of Thomas Cushing, at that time an eminent merchant. The genius of Adams was not suited to commercial pursuits. His devotion to politics, and his interest in the welfare of his country, diverted his attention from his own business concerns; and he retired from his mercantile connexions poorer by far than when he entered into them. In 1763, when a committee was appointed by the people of Boston to remonstrate against the taxation of the colonies by the British ministry, the instructions of that committee were drawn by Mr. Adams, and gave a powerful proof of his ability and zeal. He soon became an influential leader in the popular assemblies, and was bold in denouncing the oppressive acts of the mother country.

In 1765, he was chosen a representative to the General Court of the State, from the town of Boston. Here he soon made himself conspicuous, and became clerk of the legislative body. About this time he was the author of several spirited essays, and plans of resistance to the exactions of the British ministry. He suggested the first Congress at New York, which was a step to the establishment of a Continental Congress, ten years after.

In 1770, two regiments of troops were quartered in the town of Boston, apparently to superintend the conduct of the inhabitants. This measure roused the public indignation to the utmost, and soon gave occasion to a quarrel between a party of soldiers and citizens, in which eleven of the latter were killed or wounded, by a guard, under the command of Captain Preston. This rencontre, which is well known under the name of the "Boston Massacre," and will long remain memorable as the first instance of bloodshed between the British and Americans, did not tend to allay the excitement caused by the presence of the troops. On the following morning a meeting of the citizens was called, and Samuel Adams first rose to address the assembly. His style of eloquence was bold and impressive, and few could exercise a more absolute control over the passions of a multitude. A committee, of which he was one, was chosen to wait upon Governor Hutchinson, with a request that the troops might be in-

stantly removed. The Governor replied, that the troops were not under his command: but Adams, with his usual intrepidity, would brook no prevarication or excuse, and declared that if he permitted them to remain, it would be at his peril. The Governor, alarmed at the personal danger which threatened him, finally consented to the demand, and further hostilities were, for a time, suspended.

The injudicious management of his private affairs rendered Mr. Adams poor. When this was known in England, it was proposed to bribe him, by the gift of some lucrative office. A suggestion of the kind being made to Governor Hutchinson, he replied, that "such was the obstinacy and inflexible disposition of the man, that he could never be conciliated by any office or gift whatever." A higher compliment could not have been paid him. The offer however was made, it is said, and rejected. About the year 1773, Governor Gage renewed the experiment. Colonel Fenton waited upon Mr. Adams, with the assurance of Governor Gage, that any benefit he might ask would be conferred on him, on condition that he would forsake the popular faction; while, at the same time, significant threats were thrown out, of the consequences which might ensue, if he persisted in his opposition to the measures of the ministry. The reply of the undaunted patriot was characteristic: "Go, tell Governor Gage," said he, "that my peace has long since been made with the King of kings; and that it is the advice of Samuel Adams to him, no longer to insult the feelings of an already exasperated people."

Under the irritation produced by this answer, Governor Gage issued a proclamation, which comprehended the following language: "I do hereby, in his majesty's name, offer and promise his most gracious pardon to all persons, who shall forthwith lay down their arms, and return to the duties of peaceable subjects: excepting only from the benefits of such pardon, SAMUEL ADAMS and JOHN HANCOCK, whose offences are of too flagitious a nature to admit of any other consideration but that of condign punishment."

Mr. Adams was a member of the first Continental Congress, which assembled in Philadelphia, in 1774; and he

remained an active member of that body until the year 1781. During this period, he was one of the warmest advocates for the declaration of American independence. After that declaration had been irrevocably adopted, and when the subsequent gloom which overspread the land had depressed the spirits of the most ardent advocates of liberty, the firmness and enthusiasm of Mr. Adams were unchanged. His example contributed in a high degree to inspire his countrymen with a confidence of their final success. The following encomium upon him is from a work upon the American rebellion, by Mr. Galloway, published in England, in 1780: "He eats little, drinks little, sleeps little, thinks much, and is most indefatigable in the pursuit of his object. It was this man, who, by his superior application, managed at once the factions in Congress at Philadelphia, and the factions of New England."

In 1781, Mr. Adams retired from Congress: but having already been a member of the Convention which formed the Constitution of his native State, he was placed in the Senate, and for several years presided over that body. In 1789, he was elected Lieutenant Governor, in which office he continued till 1794; when, upon the death of Hancock, he was chosen Governor, and was annually re-elected till 1797, when he retired from public life. He died October 2d, 1803, at the advanced age of eighty-two.

In his person, Mr. Adams was only of the middle size, but his countenance indicated great decision of purpose and an energetic mind. He was a sincere and practical Christian; and the last production of his pen was in favor of Christian truth. His writings were voluminous, but as they chiefly related to the temporary politics of the day, few of them remain. He always manifested a singular indifference to pecuniary considerations. He was poor while he lived; and, it has been said, that had not the death of an only son relieved the poverty of his latter days, Samuel Adams would have had to claim a burial from private charity, or at the public expense.

JOSIAH BARTLETT.

JOSIAH BARTLETT, Governor of New Hampshire, and the first from that State who signed the Declaration of Independence, was born in Amesbury, Massachusetts, in 1729. Without the advantages of a collegiate education, but possessing a competent knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages, he commenced the study of medicine at the age of sixteen. After devoting himself for five years to the acquisition of the necessary knowledge and experience, he commenced the practice of his profession at Kingston, in the year 1750. Here he soon obtained very considerable reputation, and introduced many efficacious changes in the treatment of several diseases.

In the year 1765, Doctor Bartlett was elected to the Legislature of the province of New Hampshire, from the town of Kingston. In his legislative capacity, he was a determined opposer of the mercenary views of the royal Governor, John Wentworth, who, desiring to conciliate him to his interest, appointed him justice of the peace. This, though a trivial distinction, was a token of the Governor's respect for his talents and influence. Doctor Bartlett accepted the appointment, but continued firm in his opposition. His attachment to the patriotic side, and the spirit with which he resisted the royal exactions, soon afterwards produced his dismissal from the commission of justice of the peace, as also from a command which he held in the militia.

In 1774, a Convention was convoked at Exeter, for the purpose of choosing deputies to the Continental Congress, which was to meet at Philadelphia. In this Convention, Doctor Bartlett, and John Pickering, a lawyer of Portsmouth, were appointed delegates to Congress; but the former, having a little previously lost his house by fire, was obliged to decline the honor. The latter gentleman wishing likewise to be excused, others were chosen in their stead. From this time the political difficulties in New Hampshire increased. At length Governor Wentworth found it expedient to retire on board a man-of-war then lying in the harbor of Portsmouth; and soon after issued his proclamation adjourning the State Assembly

All the following April. This act, however, was disregarded, and soon terminated the royal government in New Hampshire, after it had existed there for a period of ninety years.

In September, 1775, Doctor Bartlett, who had been elected to the Continental Congress, took his seat in that body. Here having largely participated in an unwearied devotion to business, his health was considerably impaired: but in a second election, the ensuing year, he was again chosen a delegate to the same body. He was present on the memorable occasion of taking the vote on the question of a declaration of independence. On putting the question, it was agreed to begin with the northernmost colony. Doctor Bartlett, therefore, had the honor of being the first to vote for, and the first, after the President, to sign the Declaration of Independence.

In August, 1778, a new election taking place, Doctor Bartlett was again chosen a delegate to Congress. He continued at Philadelphia, however, but a small part of the session; and his domestic concerns requiring his attention, he resided the remaining part of his life in New Hampshire. In 1779, he was appointed Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas. In 1782, he became an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and in 1788, was advanced to the head of the bench. Doctor Bartlett was a member of the Convention which adopted the present Constitution of the State; and by his zeal greatly aided its ratification. In 1789, he was elected a Senator to Congress; but his age and infirmities induced him to decline the honor. In 1793 he was elected first Governor of the State, which office he filled with his usual fidelity and good sense, until the infirm state of his health obliged him to resign, and retire wholly from public life. He did not remain long, however, to enjoy the repose which he coveted; but died on the 19th of May, 1795, in the sixty-sixth year of his age.

The patriotism of this eminent man was of a pure and highly disinterested nature. He rose to distinction unaided by family influence or party connexions; and maintained through life a reputation for strict integrity, great penetration of mind, and considerable abilities.

CARTER BRAXTON.

CARTER BRAXTON was born in Newington, Virginia, on the 10th of September, 1736. His father was a wealthy planter, and his mother the daughter of Robert Carter, who was for some time a member, and the President of the King's council.

Carter Braxton was liberally educated at the college of William and Mary; and on his father's death, he became possessed of a considerable fortune, consisting principally of land and slaves. At the early age of nineteen, he received a large accession to his estate by marriage. But having the misfortune to lose his wife, he soon after embarked for England, with the view of improving himself by travel. He returned to America in 1760; and the following year was married to a daughter of Richard Corbin, of Lannerville, by whom he had sixteen children. Mr. Braxton did not study any profession, but became a gentleman planter, and lived in a style of hospitality and splendor, which was not incommensurate with his means. Upon his return from Europe, he was called to a seat in the House of Burgesses, where he was characterized for his patriotic zeal and firmness, in all the duties which he was called upon to discharge.

In 1775, Mr. Braxton was elected a delegate to Congress. In that body he soon after took his seat, and was present on the occasion of signing the Declaration of Independence. In June, 1776, the Convention of Virginia reduced the number of their delegates in Congress, and, in consequence, he was omitted. Mr. Braxton was a member of the first General Assembly, under the republican Constitution, which met at Williamsburg. Here he had the honor of receiving, in connexion with Thomas Jefferson, an expression of the public thanks for the "diligence, ability, and integrity, with which they executed the important trust reposed in them, as delegates in the general Congress."

In 1786, he became a member of the Council of State, which office he held until the 30th of March, 1791. After an interval of a few years, during which he occu-

pied a seat in the House of Delegates, he was re-elected into the Executive Council. He died on the 10th of October, 1797, by means of an attack of paralysis.

Mr. Braxton was a gentleman of a polished mind, of considerable conversational powers, and respectable talents. His latter days were unfortunately clouded by pecuniary embarrassments, caused by the miscarriage of his commercial speculations, and by several vexatious lawsuits. Of his numerous family, but one daughter, it is believed, survives.

CHARLES CARROLL.

CHARLES CARROLL was a descendant of Daniel Carroll, an Irish gentleman, who emigrated from England to America about the year 1689. He settled in the province of Maryland, where, a few years after, he received the appointment of Judge, and Register of the land office, and became agent for Lord Baltimore.

Charles Carroll, the father of the subject of the present sketch, was born in 1702. His son, Charles Carroll, surnamed of Carrollton, was born September 8, 1737, O. S., at Annapolis, in the province of Maryland.

At the age of eight years, he was sent to France for the purpose of obtaining an education. He was placed at a college of English Jesuits, at St. Omer's, where he remained for six years. Afterwards he staid some time at Rheims, whence he was removed to the college of Louis le Grand. On leaving college, he entered upon the study of the civil law, at Bourges; from which place he returned to Paris, where he remained till 1757, in which year he removed to London, and commenced the study of law. He returned to America in 1764, an accomplished scholar, and an accomplished man. Although he had lived abroad, and might naturally be supposed to have imbibed a predilection for the monarchical institutions of Europe, he entered with great spirit into the controversy between the colonies and Great Britain, which, about the time of his arrival, was beginning to assume a most serious aspect.

A few years following the repeal of the Stamp Act, the

violent excitement occasioned by that measure, in a degree subsided throughout all the colonies. In this calmer state of things the people of Maryland participated. But about the year 1771, great commotion was excited in that province, in consequence of the arbitrary conduct of Governor Eden and his council, touching the fees of the civil officers of the Colonial Government.

The controversy which grew out of this, became exceedingly spirited. It involved the great principles of the revolution. Several writers of distinguished character enlisted themselves on different sides of the question. Among these writers, no one was more conspicuous than Mr. Carroll. The natural consequence of his firmness in defence of the rights of the people was, that great confidence was reposed in him on their part, and he was looked up to as one who was eminently qualified to lead in the great struggle which was approaching between the colonies and the parent country.

An anecdote is related of Mr. Carroll, which will illustrate his influence with the people of Maryland. By a resolution of the delegates of Maryland, on the 22d day of June, 1774, the importation of tea was prohibited. Sometime after, however, a vessel arrived at Annapolis, having a quantity of this article on board. This becoming known, the people assembled in great multitudes, to take effectual measures to prevent its being landed. At length the excitement became so high, that the personal safety of the captain of the vessel became endangered. In this state of things, the friends of the captain made application to Mr. Carroll, to interpose his influence with the people in his behalf. The public indignation was too great to be easily allayed. This Mr. Carroll perceived, and advised the captain and his friends, as the only probable means of safety to himself, to set fire to the vessel, and burn it to the water's edge. This alternative was indeed severe; but, as it was obviously a measure of necessity, the vessel was drawn out, her sails were set, her colors unfurled, in which attitude the fire was applied to her, and, in the presence of an immense concourse of people, she was consumed. This atonement was deemed satisfactory, and the captain was no farther molested.

In the early part of 1776, Mr. Carroll, whose distinguished exertions in Maryland had become extensively known, was appointed by Congress, in connexion with Dr. Franklin and Samuel Chase, on a commission to proceed to Canada, to persuade the people of that province to relinquish their allegiance to the crown of England, and unite with the Americans in their struggle for independence.

In the discharge of their duties, the commissioners met with unexpected difficulties. The defeat and death of Montgomery, together with the compulsion which the American troops found it necessary to exercise, in obtaining the means of support in that province, conspired to diminish the ardor of the Canadians in favor of a union with the colonies, and even, at length, to render them hostile to the measure. To conciliate their affections, and to bring to a favorable result the object of their mission, the commissioners employed their utmost ingenuity and influence. They issued their proclamations, in which they assured the people of the disposition of Congress to remedy the temporary evils, which the inhabitants suffered in consequence of the presence of the American troops, so soon as it should be in their power to provide specie, and clothing, and provisions. A strong tide, however, was now setting against the American colonies, the strength of which was much increased by the Roman Catholic priests, who, as a body, had always been opposed to any connexion with the United Colonies. Despairing of accomplishing the wishes of Congress, the commissioners at length abandoned the object, and returned to Philadelphia.

The great subject of independence was, at this time, undergoing a discussion in the hall of Congress. The Maryland delegation, in that body, had been instructed by their Convention to refuse their assent to a declaration of independence. On returning to Maryland, Mr. Carroll resumed his seat in the Convention, and, with the advocates of a declaration of independence, urged the withdrawal of the above instructions, and the granting of power to their delegates to unite in such a declaration. The friends of the measure had at length the happiness, on

the 28th of June, of procuring a new set of instructions, which secured the vote of the important province of Maryland in favor of the independence of America.

On the same day on which the great question was decided in Congress, in favor of a declaration of independence, Mr. Carroll was elected a delegate to that body from Maryland, and accordingly took his seat on the eighteenth of the same month.

Although not a member of Congress at the time the question of a declaration of independence was settled, Mr. Carroll had the honor of greatly contributing to a measure so auspicious to the interests of his country, by assisting in procuring the withdrawal of the prohibiting instructions, and the adoption of a new set, by which the Maryland delegates found themselves authorized to vote for independence. He had the honor, also, of affixing his signature to the Declaration on the second of August, at which time the members generally signed an engrossed copy, which had been prepared for that purpose.

A signature to the Declaration was an important step for every individual member of Congress. It exposed the signers of it to the confiscation of their estates, and the loss of life, should the British arms prove victorious. Few men had more at stake in respect to property than Mr. Carroll, he being considered the richest individual in the colonies. But wealth was of secondary value in his estimation, in comparison with the rights and liberties of his country. When asked whether he would annex his name, he replied, "most willingly," and seizing a pen, instantly subscribed "to this record of glory." "There go a few millions," said some one who watched the pen as it traced the name of "Charles Carroll, of Carrollton," on the parchment. Millions would indeed have gone, for his fortune was princely, had not success crowned the American arms, in the long-fought contest.

Mr. Carroll was continued a member of Congress until 1778, at which time he resigned his seat in that body, and devoted himself more particularly to the interest of his native State. He had served in her Convention in 1776, in the latter part of which year he had assisted in draft-

ing her Constitution. Soon after, the new Constitution went into operation, and Mr. Carroll was chosen a member of the Senate of Maryland. In 1781 he was re-elected to the same station, and in 1788, on the adoption of the Federal Constitution, was chosen to the Senate of the United States.

In 1791, Mr. Carroll relinquished his seat in the National Senate, and was again called to the Senate of his native State. This office he continued to hold until 1804, at which time the democratic party was successful in electing their candidate, to the exclusion of this long tried and faithful patriot. At this time, Mr. Carroll took leave of public life, and sought in retirement the quiet enjoyment of his family circle.

Since the date of his retirement from public office, few incidents have occurred in the life of this worthy man which demand particular notice. Like a peaceful stream, his days glided along, and continued to be lengthened out, till the generation of illustrious men, with whom he acted on the memorable fourth of July, 1776, had all descended to the tomb. He died in 1832.

“These last thirty years of his life,” says a recent writer, “have passed away in serenity and happiness, almost unparalleled in the history of man. He has enjoyed, as it were, an Indian summer of existence, a tranquil and lovely period, when the leaves of the forest are richly variegated, but not yet seared; when the parent bird and the spring nestling are of the same flock, and move on equal wing; when the day of increase and the day of the necessity of provisions are gone; when the fruits of the earth are abundant, and the lakes of the woods are smooth and joyous, as if reflecting the bowers of Eden. Such an Indian summer has this patriot enjoyed: his life has been thrice, yea, four times blessed; blessed in his birth and education, in his health, in his basket, and in his store; blessed in his numerous and honorable progeny, which extend to several generations; blessed in the protracted measure of his days, in which have been crowded the events of many centuries; and blessed in the wonderful prosperity of his country, whose population has since his birth increased from nine hundred thousand

souls to more than twelve millions, enjoying the blessings of freemen. It is, perhaps, from the fact, that the world think it quite enough for one mortal that he should be virtuous, prosperous, and enjoy a green old age, that an analysis of his intellectual powers, or a description of his rare attainments, has seldom been attempted; but talents and attainments he had, that made him one of the most successful of the business men of the momentous period in which he lived—a period when that which the head conceived the hands were ready to execute. There were too few at that time, and those too zealous, to make the proper division of labor. The senator armed for the field, and the soldier met with the Conscript Fathers.

“Mr. Carroll was an orator. His eloquence was of the smooth, gentle, satisfactory kind, delighting all, and convincing many. It is not pretended that, like John Adams, he came down upon his hearers, as with the thunder-blast from Sinai, raising the tables of independence on high, and threatening in his wrath to break them if they were not received by the people; nor that, like Dickinson, he exhausted rhetoric and metaphysics to gain his end, and was forever striving to be heard; but Carroll came to his subject well informed, thoroughly imbued with its spirit, and with happy conceptions and graceful delivery, and with chaste and delicate language, he, without violence, conquered the understandings, and led captive the senses of his hearers. All was natural, yet sweet and polished as education could make it. He never seemed fatigued with his labors, nor faint with his exertions. His blood and judgment were so well commingled, that his highest efforts were as easy and natural as if he had been engaged in the course of ordinary duties. This happy faculty still continues with the patriarch, for his conversation has now that elegant vivacity and delicacy that characterized the sage Nestor of elder times, whose words fell like vernal snows, as he spake to the people.

“His serenity, and in no small degree, perhaps, his longevity, may be owing to the permanency of his principles. In early life he founded his political creed on the rights of man, and reposing his faith in the religion of his fathers, he has felt none of those vacillations and

changes so common in times of political or religious agitations. It were good for the nation that he should long continue among us, for in his presence all party feuds are hushed; and the demagogue, accustomed to vociferate elsewhere, in his vanity to be heard, talks not above his breath when the aged patriot is near. In a republic where titles are not known, we ought to make a peerage of talents, virtues, patriotism, and age, that every youth may learn to admire, respect, and imitate the wise and good. With all our wishes for his stay here on earth, the patriarch must soon be gathered to his fathers, and his name given to the historian and the poet. The bard shall then strike his harp and sing, 'in strains not light nor melancholy,' but with admiration, touched with religious hope,—

“Full of years and honors, through the gate
Of painless slumber he retired.
And as a river pure
Meets in its course a subterranean void,
Then dips his silver head, again to rise,
And rising glides through fields and meadows new
So hath Oileus in those happy climes,
Where joys ne'er fade, nor the soul's powers decay
But youth and spring eternal bloom.”

The name of Carroll is the only one on the Declaration to which the *residence* of the signer is appended. The reason why it was done in this case, is understood to be as follows:—The patriots who signed that document, did it, almost literally, with ropes about their necks, it being generally supposed that they would, if unsuccessful, be hung as rebels. When Carroll had signed his name, some one at his elbow remarked, “You'll get clear—there are several of that name—they will not know which to take.” “Not so,” replied he, and immediately added, “of Carrollton.”

In 1827, the Editor of the Philadelphia National Gazette published a biography of Mr. Carroll, which appeared in the American Quarterly Review. He records the following fact:—

In 1825, one of Mr. Carroll's grand-daughters was married to the Marquis of Wellesley, then Viceroy of

Ireland; and it is a singular circumstance that one hundred and forty years after the first emigration of her ancestors to America, this lady should become vice-queen of the country from which they fled, at the summit of a system which a more immediate ancestor had risked everything to destroy; or, in the energetic and poetical language of Bishop England, "that in the land from which the father's father fled in fear, his daughter's daughter now reigns as queen."

From the same publication, it appears that Mr. Carroll, some years before our revolutionary war, wrote to a member of the British Parliament as follows:—

"Your thousands of soldiers may come, but they will be masters of the spot only on which they encamp. They will find naught but enemies before and around them. If we are beaten on the plains, we will retreat to the mountains and defy them. Our resources will increase with our difficulties. Necessity will force us to exertion: until tired of combating in vain against a spirit which victory cannot subdue, your armies will evacuate our soil, and your country retire, an immense loser, from the contest. No, sir—we have made up our minds to abide the issue of the approaching struggle; and though much blood may be spilled, we have no doubt of our ultimate success."

His whole career, says Mr. Walsh, public and private, suited the dignity of his distinctive appellation—the Surviving Signer. He was always a model of regularity in conduct and sedateness in judgment. In natural sagacity, in refinement of tastes and pleasure, in unaffected habitual courtesy, in vigilant observation, vivacity of spirit and tone, susceptibility of domestic and social happiness in the best forms, he had but few equals during the greater part of his bright and long existence. The mind of Mr. Carroll was highly cultivated; he fully improved the advantages of an excellent classical education and extensive foreign travel; he read much of ancient and modern literature, and gave the keenest attention to contemporary events and characters. His patriotism never lost its earnestness and elevation. It was our good fortune, in our youth, to pass months at a time under his

roof, and we never left his mansion without additional impressions of peculiar respect for the singular felicity of temperament and perfection of self-discipline, from which it resulted that no one, neither kindred, domestic nor guest, could feel his presence and society as in the least oppressive or irksome—exact and systematic, opulent and honored, enlightened and heedful though he was.

The announcement of the death of Charles Carroll, was made as follows in one of the Baltimore papers of the date :

“ It becomes our painful duty to announce to our readers the demise of the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence. Charles Carroll of Carrollton is no more ! He expired at 4 o'clock yesterday morning. Thus, one after another, the luminaries of the Revolution are leaving this stage of action, and soon the whole of the bright galaxy, which in those dark days adorned the land, must be numbered with the silent dead, and live only in the grateful recollection of those for whom they have purchased liberty, independence, prosperity and happiness. Here and there a solitary star remains, to attract the eye and warm the hearts of those who love and admire them for their virtues and their services. Mr. Carroll had reached a good old age ; and had the happiness to see this young republic, which he had performed so prominent a part in aiding to establish, emerge from obscurity and take a station among the most powerful of the nations of the earth. He had lived to see her pass triumphantly through a second war with the mistress of the seas, as England has been long denominated, in which the proud lion was a second time compelled to cower beneath the power of the eagle ; to see her banner waving over every sea, and her prowess acknowledged and feared in every land. He has lived to witness the anomaly in the records of the world, of a powerful people almost entirely clear of debt, and without any dangerous or distracting controversy subsisting with any foreign power, which can be thought likely to require the expenditure of money for the maintenance of her rights. He saw the people for whom he had toiled, and pledged his life, his fortune, and his sacred honor, united, prosperous and happy, and lived

to see a worthy fellow-citizen elected a second time to the Chief Magistracy of the nation by an almost unanimous voice, embracing a large portion of every section of the Union; thus evincing that there is no reason to apprehend any danger of a severance of this happy Union. In casting a retrospective glance over the path he had trodden in the course of his eventful life; how it warmed and animated his heart! It was a subject upon which he always delighted to dwell; and whenever it was touched upon, it caused him almost to forget his age, and to put on the vigor and fire of youth.

“In his own immediate neighborhood, in the place of a small and obscure village, he lived to see a large and populous city spring up, and assume a station the third only in the Union in point of extent, wealth, and commercial enterprise, and inhabited by a virtuous and gallant people, partaking of his feelings, and following his bright and glorious example. What more could a mortal desire to witness? The cup of happiness with him was full to overflowing. He has fought a good fight, and his triumph has been complete. He has now run his race, and his remains repose in silence, and his grateful countrymen are showering their benedictions upon him. Peace to his ashes! May his brilliant example long serve to animate the hearts and nerve the arms of his countrymen.”

SAMUEL CHASE.

SAMUEL CHASE was born in Somerset county, Maryland, in 1741. He was educated by his father, a distinguished clergyman, who had emigrated to America, and whose attainments in classical literature were of a very superior order. Under such instruction, the son soon outstripped most of his compeers, and at the age of eighteen was sent to Annapolis to commence the study of the law. He was admitted to the bar in that town at the age of twenty, and soon after connected himself in marriage with a lady, by whom he had two sons and two daughters.

The political career of Mr. Chase may be dated from

the year 1774, when he was sent to the Congress of Philadelphia, as a delegate from his native State. This station he continued to occupy for several years. In 1776, he was appointed, in conjunction with Benjamin Franklin and Charles Carroll, to proceed to Canada, for the purpose of inducing the inhabitants to cancel their allegiance to Great Britain, and join the American Confederacy. Although the expedition proved unsuccessful, the zeal and ability of the commissioners were never, for a moment, brought into question.

On his return to Philadelphia, Mr. Chase found the question of independence in agitation, in Congress. The situation of the Maryland delegation, at this juncture, was embarrassing. They had been expressly prohibited, by their constituents, from voting in favor of a declaration of independence; and as they had accepted their appointments under this restriction, they did not feel at liberty to give their active support to such a measure. It was not compatible with the spirit of Mr. Chase quietly to endure such a situation. He left Congress and proceeded to Maryland. He traversed the province, and, assisted by his colleagues, awakened the people to a sense of patriotism and liberty, and persuaded them to send addresses to the Convention, then sitting at Annapolis, in favor of independence. Such an expression of popular feeling the Convention could not resist, and at length gave an unanimous vote for the measure of independence. With this vote Mr. Chase hastened to Philadelphia, where he arrived in time to take his seat on Monday morning, having rode, on the two previous days, one hundred and fifty miles. On the day of his arrival, the resolution to issue a declaration of independence came before the house, and he had the privilege of uniting with a majority in favor of it. Mr. Chase continued a bold, eloquent and efficient member of Congress throughout the war, when he returned to the practice of his profession.

In 1783, Mr. Chase visited England, on behalf of the State of Maryland, for the purpose of reclaiming a large amount of property, which, while a colony, she had entrusted to the Bank of England. He continued in England about a year, during which time he became ac-

quainted with many of the most distinguished men of that country, among whom were Burke, Pitt, and Fox. While in England he was married to his second wife, the daughter of Dr. Samuel Giles, of Kentbury, with whom, in 1784, he returned to America. In the year 1786, at the invitation of his friend, Colonel Howard, who had generously presented him with a portion of land in Baltimore, he removed to that city. On this occasion the corporation of Annapolis tendered to Mr. Chase the expressions of their respect in a flattering address, to which he made a suitable reply. In 1791, he accepted the appointment of Chief Justice of the General Court of Maryland.

In the year 1794, a circumstance took place in Baltimore, in which Judge Chase evinced considerable firmness and energy of character. Two men had been tarred and feathered in the public streets, on an occasion of some popular excitement. The investigation of the case was undertaken by him, in the issue of which he caused two respectable and influential individuals to be arrested as ringleaders. On being arraigned before the court they refused to give bail. Upon this the Judge informed them that they must go to jail. Accordingly, he directed the sheriff to take one of the prisoners to jail. This the sheriff declared he could not do as he apprehended resistance. "Summon the posse comitatus, then," exclaimed the Judge. "Sir," said the sheriff, "no one will serve." "Summon me, then," said Judge Chase, in a tone of lofty indignation; "I will be the posse comitatus, and I will take him to jail."

In 1796, Judge Chase was appointed by Washington an associate Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States, a station which he occupied for fifteen years, and which he supported with great dignity and ability. It was his ill fortune, however, to have his latter days embittered by an impeachment by the House of Representatives, at Washington. This impeachment originated in political animosities, from the offence which his conduct in the Circuit Court had given to the democratic party. The articles of impeachment originally reported were six in number, to which two others were afterwards added.

On five of the charges a majority of the Senate acquitted him. On the others a majority was against him ; but as a vote of two-thirds is necessary to conviction, he was acquitted of the whole. This celebrated trial commenced on the second of January, and ended on the fifth of March, 1805.

Judge Chase continued to exercise his judicial functions till 1811, when his health failed him, and he expired on the nineteenth of June in that year. In his dying hour he appeared calm and resigned. He was a firm believer in Christianity, and partook of the sacrament but a short time before his death, declaring himself to be in peace with all mankind. In his will he directed that no mourning should be worn for him, and requested that only his name, with the dates of his birth and death, should be inscribed upon his tomb. He was a sincere patriot, and, though of an irascible temperament, was a man of high intellect and undaunted courage.

ABRAHAM CLARK.

THE quiet and unobtrusive course of life which Mr. CLARK pursued, furnishes few materials for biography. He was born in Elizabethtown, New Jersey, on the 15th of February, 1726. He was an only child, and his early education, although confined to English branches of study, was respectable. For the mathematics and the civil law, he discovered an early predilection. He was bred a farmer, but not being of a robust constitution, he turned his attention to surveying, conveyancing, and imparting legal advice. As he performed the latter service gratuitously, he was called "the poor man's counsellor."

Mr. Clark's habits of life and generosity of character soon rendered him popular, and on the commencement of the troubles with the mother country, he was chosen one of the New Jersey delegation to the Continental Congress. Of this body he was a member for a considerable period, and was conspicuous for his sound patriotism and his unwavering decision. A few days after he took his seat for the first time, as a member of Congress, he was called

upon to vote for, or against, the proclamation of independence. But he was at no loss on which side to throw his influence, and readily signed the Declaration, which placed in peril his fortune and individual safety.

Mr. Clark frequently after this time represented New Jersey in the national councils; and was also often a member of the State Legislature. He was elected a representative in the second Congress, under the Federal Constitution; an appointment which he held until a short time previous to his death. Two or three of the sons of Mr. Clark were officers in the army during the revolutionary struggle. Unfortunately, they were captured by the enemy. During a part of their captivity, their sufferings were extreme, being confined in the notorious prisonship, Jersey. Painful as was the condition of his sons, Mr. Clark scrupulously avoided calling the attention of Congress to the subject, excepting in a single instance. One of his sons, a captain of artillery, had been cast into a dungeon, where he received no other food than that which was conveyed to him by his fellow-prisoners through a key-hole. On a representation of these facts to Congress, that body immediately directed a course of retaliation on a British officer. This had the desired effect, and Captain Clark's condition was improved.

On the adjournment of Congress, in June, 1794, Mr. Clark retired from public life. He did not live long, however, to enjoy the limited comforts he possessed. In the autumn of the same year, a stroke of the sun put an end to his existence, after it had been lengthened out to sixty-nine years. The church at Rahway contains his mortal remains, and a marble slab marks the spot where they are deposited. It bears the following inscription:

Firm and decided as a patriot,
Zealous and faithful as a friend to the public,
he loved his country,
and adhered to her cause
in the darkest hour of her struggles
against oppression.

GEORGE CLYMER.

GEORGE CLYMER was born in the city of Philadelphia, in 1739. His father emigrated from Bristol, in England, and became connected by marriage with a lady of Philadelphia. Young Clymer was left an orphan at the age of seven years, and after the completion of his studies he entered the counting-house of his maternal uncle. At a subsequent period, he established himself in business, in connection with Mr. Robert Ritchie, and afterwards with a father and son of the name of Meredith, a daughter of the former of whom he married.

Although engaged in mercantile pursuits for many years, Mr. Clymer was never warmly attached to them, but devoted a great part of his time to literature and the study of the fine arts. He became also well versed in the principles of law, history, and politics, and imbibed an early detestation of arbitrary rule and oppression. When all hopes of conciliation with the parent country had failed, he was one of the foremost to adopt measures necessary for a successful opposition. He accepted a captain's commission in a company of volunteers, raised for the defence of the province, and vigorously opposed, in 1773, the sale of tea, which tended indirectly to levy a tax upon the Americans, without their consent. He was appointed chairman of a committee to wait upon the consignees of the offensive article, and request them not to sell it. The consequence was, that not a single pound of tea was offered for sale in Philadelphia.

In 1775, Mr. Clymer was chosen a member of the council of safety, and one of the first continental treasurers. On the 20th of July, of the following year, he was elected a member of the Continental Congress. Though not present when the vote was taken in relation to a declaration of independence, he had the honor of affixing his signature to that instrument in the following month. In December, Congress, finding it necessary to adjourn to Baltimore, in consequence of the advance of the British army towards Philadelphia, left Mr. Clymer, Robert Morris, and George Walton, a committee to transact such

business as remained unfinished, in that city. In 1777, Mr. Clymer was again a member of Congress; and his labors during that session being extremely arduous, he was obliged to retire for a season, to repair his health. In the autumn of the same year, his family, which then resided in the county of Chester, suffered severely from an attack of the British; escaping only, with the sacrifice of considerable property. Mr. Clymer was then in Philadelphia. On the arrival of the enemy in that place, they sought out his place of residence, and were only diverted from razing it to the ground, by learning that it did not belong to him. During the same year, he was sent, in conjunction with others, to Pittsburg, to enlist warriors from the Shawnese and Delaware tribes of Indians, on the side of the United States. While residing at Pittsburg, he narrowly escaped death from the tomahawk, by accidentally turning from a road, where he afterwards learned a party of hostile savages lay encamped.

On the occasion of the establishment of a bank by Robert Morris and other patriotic citizens of Philadelphia, for the purpose of relieving the army, Mr. Clymer, who gave his active support to the measure, was chosen director of the institution. He was again elected to Congress in 1780, and for two years was a laborious member of that body. In 1782, he removed with his family to Princeton, (N. J.,) but in 1784, he was summoned by the citizens of his native State, to take a part in their General Assembly. He afterwards represented Pennsylvania in Congress for two years; when, declining a re-election, he closed his long and able legislative career.

In 1791, Congress passed a bill imposing a duty on spirits distilled in the United States. To the southern and western part of the country, this measure proved very offensive. Mr. Clymer was placed at the head of the excise department in the State of Philadelphia; but he was soon induced to resign the disagreeable office. In 1796, he was appointed, with Colonel Hawkins and Colonel Pickens, to negotiate a treaty with the Cherokee and Creek Indians, in Georgia. He sailed for Savannah, accompanied by his wife. The voyage proved extremely unpleasant and perilous; but having completed the busi-

ness of the mission, they returned to Philadelphia. Mr. Clymer was afterwards called to preside over the Philadelphia Bank, and the Academy of Fine Arts. He held these offices till the period of his death, which took place on the 23d of January, 1813, in the seventy-fourth year of his age. He was of a studious and contemplative cast of mind, and eager to promote every scheme for the improvement of his country. His intellect was strong and cultivated, his character amiable and pure, and his integrity inviolable. He was singularly punctual in the discharge of his duties, and was a man of extensive information and the smallest pretensions.

WILLIAM ELLERY.

WILLIAM ELLERY was born in Newport, Rhode Island, December 22d, 1727. He was graduated at Harvard College, in his twentieth year, and entered upon the practice of the law, at Newport, after the usual preparatory course. He acquired a competent fortune from his profession, and received the esteem and confidence of his fellow-citizens.

Mr. Ellery was elected a delegate to the Congress of 1776, and took his seat in that body on the 17th of May. Here he soon became an efficient and influential member, and during the session signed the Declaration of Independence. Of this transaction he frequently spoke. He relates having placed himself beside secretary Thompson, that he might observe how the members *looked*, as they put their names to their *death-warrant*. He tasked his powers of penetration, but could discover no symptom of fear among them, though all seemed impressed with the solemnity of the occasion. In 1777, Mr. Ellery was appointed one of the marine committee of Congress, and is supposed to have first recommended the plan of preparing fireships, and sending them out from the State of Rhode Island. He shared considerably in the common loss of property, which was sustained by the inhabitants of Newport, on the occasion of the British taking possession of that town.

Mr. Ellery continued a member of Congress until the year 1785, when he retired to his native State. He was successively a commissioner of the continental loan office, a Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Rhode Island, and collector of the customs for the town of Newport. He retained the latter office till the day of his death, which occurred on the 15th of February, 1820, at the advanced age of ninety years. The springs of existence seemed to have worn out by gradual and imperceptible degrees. On the day of his death, he had risen, as usual, and rested in his chair, employed in reading "Cicero de Officiis." While thus engaged, his family physician called to see him. On feeling his pulse, he found that it had ceased to beat. A draught of wine and water quickened it into motion, however, once more, and being placed and supported on the bed, he continued reading, until his bodily functions no longer afforded a tenement for the immortal spirit, and discontinued their operations.

Mr. Ellery was a man of much humility of spirit, and manifested an uncommon disregard of the applause of men. He looked upon the world and its convulsions with religious serenity, and in times of trouble and alarm consoled himself and others with the pious reflection of the Psalmist, "The Lord reigneth."

WILLIAM FLOYD.

WILLIAM FLOYD was born on Long Island, December 17th, 1734. His father died while he was yet young, and left him heir to a large estate. His education was somewhat limited, but his native powers being respectable, he improved himself by his intercourse with the opulent and intelligent families of his neighborhood.

At an early period of the controversy between the colonies and mother country, Mr. Floyd warmly interested himself in the cause of the former. His devotion to the popular side led to his appointment as a delegate from New York to the first Continental Congress. In the measures adopted by that body he most heartily concurred. He was re-elected a delegate the following year,

and continued a member of Congress until after the Declaration of Independence. On that occasion, he affixed his signature to the instrument, which gave such a momentous direction to the fate of a growing nation. He likewise served on numerous important committees, and rendered essential service to the patriotic cause.

Mr. Floyd suffered severely from the destructive effects of the war upon his property, and for nearly seven years, his family were refugees from their habitation, nor did he derive any benefit from his landed estate. In 1777, General Floyd (he received this appellation from his having commanded the militia on Long Island) was appointed a Senator of the State of New York. In 1778, he was again chosen to represent his native State in the Continental Congress. From this time, until the expiration of the first Congress, under the Federal Constitution, General Floyd was either a member of the National Assembly, or of the Senate of New York. In 1784, he purchased an uninhabited tract of land on the Mohawk river. To the improvement of this tract, he devoted the leisure of several successive summers; and hither he removed his residence, in 1803. He continued to enjoy unusual health, until a few days previous to his decease, when a general debility fell upon him, and he died August 4th, 1821, at the age of eighty-seven years. Gen. Floyd was uniform and independent in his conduct; and if public estimation be a just criterion of his merit, he was excelled by few, since, for more than fifty years, he was honored with offices of trust and responsibility, by his fellow-citizens.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, the statesman and philosopher, was born in Boston, on the 17th of January, 1706. His father emigrated from England, and had recourse for a livelihood to the business of a chandler and soap-boiler. His mother was a native of Boston and belonged to a respectable family of the name of Folger.

Young Franklin was placed at a grammar school, at

an early age out, at the expiration of a year, was taken home to assist his father in his business. In this occupation he continued two years, when he became heartily tired of cutting wicks for candles, filling moulds, and running errands. He resolved to embark on a seafaring life; but his parents objected, having already lost a son at sea. Having a passionate fondness for books, he was finally apprenticed as a printer to his brother, who at that time published a newspaper in Boston. It was while he was in this situation, that he began to try his powers of literary composition. Street ballads and articles in a newspaper were his first efforts. Many of his essays, which were inserted anonymously, were highly commended by people of taste. Dissatisfied with the manner in which he was treated by his relative, he, at the age of seventeen, privately quitted him, and went to Philadelphia. The day following his arrival, he wandered through the streets of that city with an appearance little short of a beggar. His pockets were distended by his clothes, which were crowded into them; and, provided with a roll of bread under each each arm, he proceeded through the principal streets of the city. His ludicrous appearance attracted the notice of several of the citizens, and, among others, of Miss Reed, the lady whom he afterwards married. He soon obtained employment as a printer, and was exemplary in the discharge of his duties. Deluded by a promise of patronage from the governor, Sir William Keith, Franklin visited England to procure the necessary materials for establishing a printing-office in Philadelphia. He was accompanied by his friend Ralph, one of his literary associates. On their arrival in London, Franklin found that he had been deceived; and he was obliged to work as a journeyman for eighteen months. In the British metropolis, the morals of neither of our adventurers were improved. Ralph conducted as if he had forgotten that he had a wife and child across the Atlantic; and Franklin was equally unmindful of his pledges to Miss Reed. About this period he published "A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain."

In 1726, Franklin returned to Philadelphia; not long

after which, he entered into business as a printer and stationer, and, in 1728, established a newspaper. In 1730, he married the lady to whom he was engaged previous to his leaving America. In 1732, he began to publish "Poor Richard's Almanac," a work which was continued for twenty-five years, and which, besides answering the purposes of a calendar, contained many excellent prudential maxims, which rendered it very useful and popular. Ten thousand copies of this almanac were published every year in America, and the maxims contained in it were often translated into the languages of Europe.

The political career of Franklin commenced in 1736, when he was appointed clerk to the General Assembly of Pennsylvania. His next office was the valuable one of postmaster; and he was subsequently chosen as a representative. He assisted in the establishment of the American Philosophical Society, and of a college, which now exists under the title of the University of Pennsylvania. Chiefly by his exertions, a public library, a fire-preventing company, an insurance company, and a voluntary association for defence, were established at Philadelphia. He was chosen a member of the Provincial Assembly, to which body he was annually re-elected for ten years. Philosophy now began to attract his attention, and, in 1749, he made those inquiries into the nature of electricity, the results of which placed him high among the men of science of the age. The experiment of the kite is well known. He had conceived the idea of explaining the phenomena of lightning upon electrical principles. While waiting for the erection of a spire for the trial of his theory, it occurred to him that he might have more ready access to the regions of the clouds by means of a common kite. He accordingly prepared one for the purpose, affixing to the upright stick an iron point. The string was, as usual, of hemp, except the lower end, which was silk, and where the hempen part terminated, a key was fastened. With this simple apparatus, on the appearance of a thunder-cloud, he went into the fields, accompanied by his son, to whom alone he communicated his intentions, dreading probably the ridicule which frequently attends unsuccessful attempts

in experimental philosophy. For some time no sign of electricity presented itself; he was beginning to despair of success, when he suddenly observed the loose fibres of the string to start forward in an erect position. He now presented his knuckle to the key, and received a strong spark. On this depended the fate of his theory: repeated sparks were drawn from the key, a phial was charged, a shock given, and all the experiments made which are usually performed with electricity. This great discovery he applied to the securing of buildings from the effects of lightning.

In 1753, Dr. Franklin was appointed deputy postmaster-general of British America. In this station, he rendered important services to General Braddock, in his expedition against Fort Du Quense, and marched at the head of a company of volunteers to the protection of the frontier. He visited England, in 1757, as agent for the State of Philadelphia; and was also entrusted by the other colonies with important business. While in London, he wrote a pamphlet, pointing out the advantages of a conquest of Canada by the English; and his arguments are believed to have conduced considerably to that event. About this period, his talents as a philosopher were duly appreciated in various parts of Europe. He was admitted a fellow of the Royal Society of London, and the degree of Doctor of Laws was conferred upon him at St. Andrews, Edinburgh, and at Oxford.

In 1762, he returned to America, and in 1764 was again appointed the agent of Philadelphia, to manage her concerns in England, in which country he arrived in the month of December. About this period the stamp act was exciting violent commotions in America. To this measure, Doctor Franklin was strongly opposed, and he presented a petition against it, which, at his suggestion, had been drawn up by the Pennsylvania Assembly. Among others, he was summoned before the House of Commons, where he underwent a long examination. His answers were fearless and decisive, and to his representations the repeal of the act was, no doubt, in a great measure, attributable. In the years 1766-67, he made an excursion to Holland, Germany, and France, where

he met with a most flattering reception. He was chosen a member of the French Academy of Sciences, and received diplomas from many other learned societies.

Certain letters had been written by Governor Hutchinson, addressed to his friends in England, which reflected in the severest manner upon the people of America. These letters had fallen into the hands of Doctor Franklin, and by him had been transmitted to America, where they were at length inserted in the public journals. For a time, no one in England knew through what channel the letters had been conveyed to America. In 1773, Franklin publicly avowed himself to be the person who obtained the letters and transmitted them to America. This produced a violent clamor against him, and upon his attending before the privy council, in the following January, to present a petition from the colony of Massachusetts, for the dismissal of Governor Hutchinson, a most abusive invective was pronounced against him by Mr. Weddeburne, afterwards Lord Loughborough. Among other epithets, the honorable member called Franklin a coward, a murderer, and a thief. During the whole of this insulting harangue, Franklin sat with a composed and unaverted aspect, "as if his countenance had been made of wood." Throughout this personal and public outrage, the whole assembly seemed greatly amused at Doctor Franklin's expense. The president even laughed aloud. There was a single person present, however, Lord North, who, to his honor be it recorded, expressed great disapprobation of the indecent conduct of the assembly. The intended insult, however, was entirely lost. The coolness and dignity of Franklin soon discomposed his enemies, who were compelled to feel the superiority of his character. Their animosity caused him to be removed from the office of postmaster-general, interrupted the payment of his salary as agent for the colonies, and finally instituted against him a suit in chancery concerning the letters of Hutchinson.

Despairing of restoring harmony between the colonies and mother country, Doctor Franklin embarked for America, where he arrived in 1776. He was received with every mark of esteem and admiration. He was imme

diately elected a delegate to the General Congress, and signed the Declaration of Independence. In 1776, he was deputed with others to proceed to Canada, to persuade the people of that province to throw off the British yoke; but the inhabitants of Canada had been so much disgusted with the zeal of the people of New England, who had burnt some of their chapels, that they refused to listen to the proposals made to them by Franklin and his associates. In 1778, he was despatched by Congress, as ambassador to France. The treaty of alliance with the French government, and the treaties of peace, in 1782 and 1783, as well as treaties with Sweden and Prussia, were signed by him. On his reaching Philadelphia, in September, 1785, his arrival was hailed by applauding thousands of his countrymen, who conducted him in triumph to his residence. This was a period of which he always spoke with peculiar pleasure. In 1788, he withdrew from public life, and on the 17th of April, 1790, he expired in the city of Philadelphia, in the eighty-fourth year of his age. Congress directed a general mourning for him throughout the United States; and the National Assembly of France decreed that each member should wear mourning for three days. Doctor Franklin lies buried in the north-west corner of Christ Church yard, in Philadelphia. In his will he directed that no monumental ornaments should mark his grave. A small marble slab points out the spot where he lies.

Doctor Franklin had two children, a son and a daughter. The son, under the British government, was appointed governor of New Jersey. On the breaking out of the revolution he took up his residence in England, where he spent the remainder of his days. The daughter was respectably married in Philadelphia, to Mr. William Bache, whose descendants still reside in that city.

In stature, Dr. Franklin was above the middle size. He possessed a sound constitution, and his countenance indicated a placid state of mind, great depth of thought, and an inflexible resolution. In youth he took a sceptical turn with regard to religion, but his strength of mind led him to fortify himself against vice by such moral principles as directed him to the most valuable ends, by honor-

able means. According to the testimony of his most intimate friend, Dr. William Smith, he became, in maturer years, a believer in divine revelation. The following epitaph on himself was written by Doctor Franklin many years previously to his death:—

The body of
 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, PRINTER,
 like the cover of an old book,
 its contents torn out,
 and stript of its lettering and gilding,
 lies here, food for worms.
 Yet the work itself shall not be lost ;
 for it will (as he believed) appear once more
 in a new
 and more beautiful edition,
 corrected and amended
 by the Author.

ELBRIDGE GERRY.

ELBRIDGE GERRY was born at Marblehead, in the State of Massachusetts, July 17th, 1744. He became a member of Harvard college before his fourteenth year, and on leaving the university, engaged in commercial pursuits at Marblehead, under the direction of his father. His inclination would have led him to the study of medicine; but great success attended his mercantile enterprise, and, in a few years, he found himself in the enjoyment of a competent fortune.

In May, 1772, Mr. Gerry was chosen a representative to the General Court of Massachusetts, to which office he was re-elected the following year. During this year he was appointed one of the committee of correspondence and inquiry. In June, the celebrated letters of Governor Hutchinson to persons in England were laid before the House by Mr. Adams. In the debates on this disclosure Mr. Gerry highly distinguished himself. He was also particularly active in the scenes of 1774. He was a member of the Provincial Congress which met at Concord, and powerfully contributed to the measures of opposition which led to the Revolution. In 1775, the new

Provincial Congress, of which he was one, assembled at Cambridge. In this body he evinced a degree of patriotic intrepidity which was surpassed by none.

A committee of Congress, among whom were Mr. Gerry, Colonel Orne, and Colonel Hancock, had been in session in the village of Menotomy, then part of the township of Cambridge. The latter gentleman, after the close of the session, had gone to Lexington. Mr. Gerry and Mr. Orne remained at the village; the other members of the committee had dispersed. Some officers of the royal army had passed through the villages just before dusk, and the circumstance so far attracted the attention of Mr. Gerry, that he despatched an express to Col. Hancock, who, with Samuel Adams, was at Lexington. Mr. Gerry and Col. Orne retired to rest, without taking the least precaution against personal exposure, and they remained quietly in their beds, until the British advance were within view of the dwelling house. It was a beautiful night, and the polished arms of the soldiers glittered in the moon-beams as they moved on in silence. The front passed on. When the centre were opposite the house occupied by the committee, an officer and file of men were detached by signal, and marched towards it. The inmates for whom they were in search found means to escape, half-dressed, into an adjoining cornfield, where they remained concealed until the troops were withdrawn. Every part of the house was searched "for the members of the rebel Congress;" even the beds in which they had lain were examined. But their property, and, among other things, a valuable watch of Mr. Gerry's, which was under his pillow, were undisturbed.

On the 17th day of June, the memorable battle of Bunker Hill was fought. The Provincial Congress was at that time in session at Watertown. Before the battle, Dr. Joseph Warren, President of the Congress, who was the companion and room-mate of Mr. Gerry, communicated to him his intention of mingling in the approaching contest. The night preceding the Doctor's departure to the scene of battle, he is said to have lodged in the same bed with Mr. Gerry. In the morning, in reply to the admonitions of his friend, he uttered the well-known words,

“*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.*”* The sweetness and the glory, he but too truly experienced, and died one of the earliest victims to the cause of his country’s freedom.

In 1775, Mr. Gerry proposed a law in the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, to encourage the fitting out of armed vessels, and to provide for the adjudication of prizes. This important measure was passed, and under its sanction several of the enemy’s vessels, with valuable cargoes, were captured. In 1776, Mr. Gerry was chosen a delegate to the Continental Congress, in which body he shortly after took his seat. His services in this capacity were numerous and important. Having married in New York, he returned to his native State, and fixed his residence at Cambridge, a few miles from Boston. In 1787, Mr. Gerry was chosen a delegate to the Convention which assembled at Philadelphia, to revise the articles of confederation. To him there appeared strong objections to the Federal Constitution, and he declined affixing his signature to the instrument. But when that Constitution had gone into effect, and he was chosen a representative to Congress, he cheerfully united in its support, since it had received the sanction of the country.

In 1797, Mr. Gerry was appointed to accompany General Pinckney and Mr. Marshall on a special mission to France. On their arrival in Paris, the tools of the government made the extraordinary demand of a large sum of money, as the condition of any negotiation. This being refused, the ridiculous attempt was made by the Directory, to excite their fears for themselves and their country. In the spring of 1798, two of the envoys, Messrs. Pinckney and Marshall, were ordered to quit the territories of France, while Mr. Gerry was invited to remain, and resume the negotiation which had been suspended. He accepted the invitation to remain, but resolutely refused to resume the negotiation. His object in remaining was to prevent an immediate rupture with France, which, it was feared, would result from his departure. His continuance seems to have eventuated in

* It is sweet and glorious to die for one’s country.

the good of his country. "He finally saved the peace of the nation," said the late President Adams, "for he alone discovered and furnished the evidence that X, Y, and Z, were employed by Talleyrand; and he alone brought home the direct, formal, and official assurances, upon which the subsequent commission proceeded, and peace was made."

Mr. Gerry returned to America in 1798, and in 1805 was elected by the republican party, Governor of Massachusetts. In the following year he retired, but in 1810 was again chosen chief magistrate of that commonwealth, which office he held for two succeeding years. In 1812 he was elected Vice President of the United States, into which office he was inaugurated on the 4th of March, 1813. While attending to his duties at Washington, he was suddenly summoned from the scene of his earthly labors. A beautiful monument, erected at the national expense, bears the following inscription:—

THE TOMB OF
ELBRIDGE GERRY,
Vice President of the United States,
who died suddenly, in this city, on his way to the
Capitol, as President of the Senate,
November 23d, 1814,
Aged 70.

B U T T O N G W I N N E T T .

BUTTON GWINNETT was born in England, about the year 1732, and on coming of age became a merchant in the city of Bristol. Some time after his marriage in his native country, he removed to Charleston, South Carolina, and having continued there two years, he purchased a large tract of land in Georgia, where he became extensively engaged in agricultural pursuits.

Mr. Gwinnett had long taken a deep interest in the welfare of the colonies; but he despaired of a successful resistance to Great Britain. His sentiments on this point, however, underwent a great change, and he became a warm advocate for opposing the unjust exactions of the mother country. In 1776, he was elected a representa-

tive of the province of Georgia, in Congress. He accordingly repaired to Philadelphia, and took his seat in the national council, to which he was re-elected the ensuing year. He was afterwards a member of the Convention held at Savannah, to frame a Constitution for the State, and is said to have furnished the outlines of the Constitution which was finally adopted. On the death of the President of the Provincial Council, Mr. Gwinnett was elected to the vacant station. In this situation he seems to have indulged in an unbecoming hostility towards an old political rival, Colonel M'Intosh: adopting several expedients to mortify his adversary, and never divesting himself of his embittered hatred towards him. In an expedition which he had projected against East Florida, Mr. Gwinnett designed to command the continental troops and militia of Georgia himself, thereby excluding Colonel M'Intosh from the command even of his own brigade.

Just at this period it became necessary to convene the Legislature. In consequence of his official duties, Mr. Gwinnett was prevented from proceeding on the expedition. He therefore appointed to the command a subordinate officer of M'Intosh's brigade. The expedition failed entirely, and contributed to defeat the election of Mr. Gwinnett as Governor of the State. This failure blasted his hopes, and brought his political career to a close. M'Intosh was foolish enough to exult in the mortification of his adversary. The consequence was, that Mr. Gwinnett presented him a challenge. They fought at the distance of only twelve feet. Both were severely wounded. The wound of Mr. Gwinnett proved fatal. He expired on the 27th of May, 1777, in the forty-fifth year of his age,—a melancholy instance of the misery produced by harboring in the heart the absorbing passion of rancorous envy.

In person Mr. Gwinnett was tall, and of a noble appearance. In his temper he was irritable; but in his manners courteous, graceful and polite.

LYMAN HALL.

LYMAN HALL was born in Connecticut, about the year 1731. After receiving a collegiate education, and acquiring a competent knowledge of medicine, he removed to Georgia, where he established himself in his profession, in Sunbury, in the district of Medway. On the commencement of the struggle with Great Britain, he accepted of a situation in the parish of St. John, which was a frontier settlement, and exposed to incursions of the Creek Indians, and of the royalists of Florida. The parish of St. John, at an early period, entered with spirit into the opposition to the mother country, while the rest of Georgia, generally, maintained different sentiments. So widely opposite were the feelings of this patriotic parish to those of the other inhabitants of the province, that an almost total alienation took place between them.

In 1774, the liberal party held a general meeting, at Savannah, where Dr. Hall appeared as a representative of the parish of St. John. The measures adopted, however, fell far short of his wishes, and those of his constituents. At a subsequent meeting, it was agreed to petition the king for a redress of grievances.

The parish of St. John, dissatisfied with the half-way measures of the Savannah Convention, endeavored to negotiate an alliance with the committee of correspondence in Charleston, South Carolina. But this being impracticable, the inhabitants of St. John resolved to cut off all commercial intercourse with Savannah and the surrounding parishes. Having taken this independent stand, they then made an unanimous choice of Dr. Hall as their representative to Congress. In the following May, Dr. Hall appeared in the hall of Congress, and by that body was unanimously admitted to a seat: but as he did not represent the whole of Georgia, it was resolved to reserve the question as to his right to vote for further deliberation. Fortunately, however, on the 15th of July, Georgia acceded to the general confederacy, and proceeded to the appointment of five delegates to Congress, three of whom attended at the adjourned meeting of that body in 1775.

Among these delegates, Dr. Hall was one. He was annually re-elected until 1780, when he retired from the national legislature. On the possession of Georgia by the British, his property was confiscated, and he obliged to leave the State. He returned in 1782, and the following year was elected to the chief magistracy of Georgia. After holding this office for some time, he retired from public life, and died at his residence in Burke county, about the sixtieth year of his age.

JOHN HANCOCK.

JOHN HANCOCK was born in Quincy, Massachusetts, in the year 1737. Both his father and grandfather were clergymen. Having lost the former relative while yet a child, he was adopted by a paternal uncle, Thomas Hancock, "the most opulent merchant in Boston, and the most enterprising man in New England." A professorship had been founded in Harvard College by his liberality, and to the library of that institution he was a principal benefactor.

Under the patronage of his uncle, the nephew received a liberal education in the above university, where he was graduated in 1754. On leaving college he was employed as a clerk in the counting-house of his uncle, where he continued till 1760, when he visited England for the purpose of extending his information and correspondence. He returned to America in 1764; shortly after which, his uncle died, leaving him the direction of his enormous business, and a fortune the largest in the province. Hancock became neither haughty nor profligate by this sudden accession of wealth. He was kind and liberal to the numerous persons dependent upon him for employment; and maintained a character for integrity and ability in the management of his vast and complicated concerns. His princely estate, added to his honorable and generous character, soon gave him influence, and ever rendered him popular.

In 1766, he was chosen a member of the Legislature of Massachusetts, and thus became intimately associated with James Otis, Samuel Adams, and other distinguished

patriots. In this assembly his genius rapidly developed itself, and he became conspicuous for the purity of his principles, and the excellence of his abilities.

The arrival of a vessel belonging to Mr. Hancock, in 1768, which was said to be loaded contrary to the revenue laws, produced a violent ebullition of popular feeling. This vessel was seized by the custom-house officers, and placed under the guns of the Romney, at that time in the harbor, for security. This seizure greatly exasperated the people, and, in their excitement, they assaulted the revenue officers, and compelled them to seek safety on board the armed vessel, or in the neighboring castle. The boat of the collector was destroyed, and several of the houses of his partisans were razed to the ground. Mr. Hancock, although in no wise concerned in the transaction, received from it a considerable accession of popularity.

A few days after the affray, which is usually termed "the Boston Massacre," and to which we have briefly adverted in the sketch of Samuel Adams, Mr. Hancock was appointed to deliver an address in commemoration of the event. After speaking of his attachment to a just government, and his detestation of tyranny, he proceeded to describe the profligacy and abandoned life of the troops quartered amongst them. Not satisfied with their own shameful debauchery, they strove to vitiate the morals of the citizens, and "thereby render them *worthy* of destruction." He spoke in terms of unmeasured indignation of the massacre of the inhabitants; and in appalling language forewarned the perpetrators of the deed, of the vengeance which would overtake them hereafter, "if the laboring earth did not expand her jaws; if the air they breathed were not commissioned to be the immediate minister of death." He proceeded in the following spirited strain:—

"But I gladly quit this theme of death. I would not dwell too long upon the horrid effects which have already followed from quartering regular troops in this town; let our misfortunes instruct posterity to guard against these evils. Standing armies are sometimes, (I would by no means say generally, much less universally,) composed

of persons who have rendered themselves unfit to live in civil society ; who are equally indifferent to the glory of a George, or a Louis ; who, for the addition of one penny a day to their wages, would desert from the Christian cross, and fight under the crescent of the Turkish Sultan ; from such men as these what has not a State to fear ? With such as these, usurping Cæsar passed the Rubicon ; with such as these he humbled mighty Rome, and forced the mistress of the world to own a master in a traitor. These are the men whom sceptred robbers now employ to frustrate the designs of God, and render vain the bounties which his gracious hand pours indiscriminately upon his creatures.”

The intrepid style of this address removed all doubts as to the devoted patriotism of Mr. Hancock. His manners and habits had spread an opinion unfavorable to his republican principles. His mansion rivalled the magnificence of an European palace. Gold and silver embroidery adorned his garments ; and his carriage, horses, and servants in livery, emulated the splendor of the English nobility. But the sentiments expressed by him in the above address were so public, and explicit, as to cause a complete renovation of his popularity. From this time, he became odious to the governor and his adherents. Efforts were made to get possession of his person, and he, with Samuel Adams, was excluded from the general pardon offered by Governor Gage, to all who would manifest a proper penitence for their opposition to the royal authority.

In 1774, Hancock was unanimously elected to the presidential chair of the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts. The following year the honor of the presidency of the Continental Congress was conferred upon him. His recent proscription by Governor Gage, no doubt, contributed to his popularity in that body. In this station Hancock continued till October, 1777 ; when his infirm health induced him to resign his office. He was afterwards a member of the Convention appointed to frame a Constitution for Massachusetts, and in 1780 was chosen first governor of the Commonwealth, to which station he was annually elected, until the year 1785,

when he resigned. After an interval of two years, he was re-elected to the same office. He continued in it till the time of his death, which took place the 8th of October, 1793, in the fifty-fifth year of his age.

Mr. Hancock was a firm and energetic patriot, and though possessed of immense wealth, devoted himself to the laborious service of his country. It has been remarked, that by the *force* with which he inscribed his name on the parchment which bears the declaration of independence, he seems to have determined that his name should never be erased. His liberality was great, and hundreds of families, in times of distress, were daily fed from his munificence. He has been accused by his enemies of a passion for popularity, but whatever may have been the truth of the charge, a fondness for being beloved can be hardly reckoned among the bad traits of a man's character. A noble instance of his contempt of wealth, in comparison with public expediency, is recorded.

At the time the American army was besieging Boston to expel the British, who held possession of the town, the entire destruction of the city was proposed by the American officers. By the execution of such a plan, the whole fortune of Mr. Hancock would have been sacrificed. Yet he readily acceded to the measure, declaring his willingness to surrender his all, whenever the liberties of his country should require it.

BENJAMIN HARRISON.

BENJAMIN HARRISON was born in Berkley, Virginia. He was the descendant of a family distinguished in the history of the State, and was a student in the College of William and Mary at the time of his father's death. In consequence of a misunderstanding with an officer of that institution, he left it before the regular period of graduation, and returned home.

The management of his father's estate now devolved upon him, and he displayed an unusual degree of prudence and ability in the discharge of his trust. He was summoned at an early date, even before he had attained

the age required by law, to sustain the reputation acquired by his ancestors, in state affairs. He was chosen a member of the Legislature about the year 1764, a station which he may be said to have held through life, since he was always elected to a seat, whenever his other political avocations admitted of his occupying it. His fortune being ample, and his influence as a political leader very considerable, the royal government proposed to create him a member of the executive council of Virginia. Mr. Harrison was not to be seduced, however, by the attractions of rank and power. Though young, he was ardently devoted to the cause of the people, and remained steadfast in his opposition to royal oppression.

Mr. Harrison was a member of the Congress of 1774, and from that period, during nearly every session, represented his native State in that assembly. In this situation he was characterized for great firmness, good sense, and a peculiar sagacity in difficult and critical junctures. He was likewise extremely popular as chairman of the committee of the whole House. An anecdote is related of him on the occasion of the Declaration of Independence. While signing the instrument, he noticed Mr. Gerry, of Massachusetts, standing beside him. Mr. Harrison himself was quite corpulent; Mr. Gerry was slender and spare. As the former raised his hand, having inscribed his name on the roll, he turned to Mr. Gerry, and facetiously observed, that when the time of hanging should come, *he* should have the advantage over him. "It will be over with me," said he, "in a minute; but you will be kicking in the air half an hour after I am gone."

Towards the close of 1777, Mr. Harrison resigned his seat in Congress, and returned to Virginia. In 1782, he was chosen Governor of the State, to which office he was twice re-elected, when he became ineligible by the provisions of the Constitution. In 1788, when the new Constitution of the United States was submitted to Virginia, he was returned a member of her Convention. In 1790, he was again proposed as a candidate for the executive chair; but declined in favour of his friend, Beverly Randolph. In the spring of 1791, Mr. Harrison was attacked

by a severe fit of the gout, a recurrence of which malady shortly after put a period to his life.

Mr. Harrison became connected by marriage with Miss Bassett, a niece to the sister of Mrs. Washington. He had many children, and several of his sons became men of distinction. His third son, William Henry Harrison, has honourably served his country, in various official capacities, and died April 4, 1841, one month after his inauguration as President of the United States.

JOHN HART.

JOHN HART was the son of Edward Hart, of Hopewell, in the county of Hunterdon, in New Jersey. He inherited from his father a considerable estate, and having married, devoted himself to agricultural pursuits, and became a worthy and respectable farmer.

The reputation which he acquired for integrity, discrimination, and enlightened prudence, soon brought him into notice, and he was often chosen a member of the Colonial Assembly. Although one of the most gentle and unobtrusive of men, he could not suppress his abhorrence of the aggressions of the British ministry. He maintained a fearless and uniform opinion with regard to the rights of the colonies, and did not hesitate to express it when occasion invited him. On the meeting of the Congress of 1774, Mr. Hart appeared and took his seat; having been elected by a conference of committees from several parts of the colony. During several succeeding sessions, he continued to represent the people of New Jersey in the same assembly. When the question of a declaration of independence was brought forward, he was at his post, and voted for the measure with unusual zeal.

In 1776, New Jersey became the theatre of war, and Mr. Hart sustained severe losses, by the destruction of his property. His children were compelled to flee; his farm was pillaged, and great exertions were made to secure him as a prisoner. For some time he was hunted with untiring perseverance. He was reduced to the most distressing shifts to elude his enemies; being often severely pressed by hunger, and destitute of a place of

repose for the night. In one instance, he was obliged to conceal himself in the usual resting-place of a large dog, who was his companion for the time.

The battles of Trenton and Princeton led to the evacuation of New Jersey by the British. On this event, Mr. Hart again collected his family around him, and began to repair the desolation of his farm. His constitution, however, had sustained a shock, which was irreparable. His health gradually failed him; and though he lived to see the prospects of his country brighten, he died before the conflict was so gloriously terminated. He expired in the year 1780. The best praise that can be awarded to Mr. Hart, is, that he was beloved by all who knew him. He was very liberal to the Baptist church of Hopewell, to which community he belonged; and his memory was hallowed by the esteem and regret of a large circle of friends.

JOSEPH HEWES.

JOSEPH HEWES was born near Kingston, in New Jersey, in the year 1730. His parents were quakers, who removed from Connecticut, on account of the existing prejudices against them among the puritans, and of the hostilities of the Indians.

At a suitable age, Joseph Hewes became a member of Princeton College; and after having graduated in due course, he was placed in the counting-house of a gentleman at Philadelphia, to be educated as a merchant. On leaving this situation, he entered into business for himself, and was highly successful in his commercial transactions. At the age of thirty he removed to North Carolina, and settled in the village of Edenton. Prosperity continued to attend him here, and he soon acquired a handsome fortune. By his probity and liberal dealings, he also gained the esteem of the people among whom he lived, and was called to represent them in the Colonial Legislature of the province. This distinction was conferred upon him for several successive years, during which he increased in popularity with his constituents.

In 1774, Mr. Hewes was chosen one of the three dele-

gates from North Carolina to the Continental Congress. No members of that body brought with them credentials of a bolder stamp than the delegates from North Carolina. They were invested with such powers as might "make any acts done by them, or consent given in behalf of this province, obligatory in honor upon any inhabitant thereof, who is not an alien to his country's good, and an apostate to the liberties of America." On the meeting of this Congress, Mr. Hewes was nominated one of the committee appointed to "state the rights of the colonies in general, the several instances in which those rights had been violated or infringed, and the means most proper to be pursued for obtaining a restoration of them." He also assisted in preparing their celebrated report, which was drawn up as follows :

"1. That they are entitled to life, liberty, and property ; and they have never ceded to any sovereign power whatever a right to dispose of either, without their consent.

"2. That our ancestors, who first settled these colonies, were, at the time of their emigration from the mother country, entitled to all the rights, liberties, and immunities of free and natural born subjects, within the realm of England.

"3. That by such emigration they by no means forfeited, surrendered, or lost, any of those rights : but that they were, and their descendants now are, entitled to the exercise and enjoyment of all such of them as their local and other circumstances enable them to exercise and enjoy.

"4. That the foundation of English liberty, and of free government, is a right in the people to participate in their legislative council ; and as the English colonists are not represented, and, from their local and other circumstances, cannot properly be represented, in the British Parliament, they are entitled to a free and exclusive power of legislation in their several Provincial Legislatures, where their right of representation can alone be pursued in all cases of taxation and internal polity, subject only to the negative of their sovereign, in such manner as has been heretofore used and accustomed ; but if, from the necessity of the case and a regard to the mutual interests of both

countries, we cheerfully consent to the operation of such acts of the British Parliament as are *bona fide* restrained to the regulation of our external commerce, for the purpose of securing the commercial advantages of the whole empire to the mother country, and the commercial benefit of its respective members; excluding every idea of taxation, internal or external, for raising a revenue on the subjects in America, without their consent.

“5. That the respective colonies are entitled to the common law of England, and, more especially, to the great and inestimable privilege of being tried by their peers of the vicinage, according to the course of that law.

“6. That they are entitled to the benefit of such of the English statutes as existed at the time of their colonization, and which they have, by experience, respectively found applicable to their several local and other circumstances.

“7. That these his majesty’s colonies are likewise entitled to all the immunities and privileges granted and confirmed to them by royal charters, or secured by their several codes of provincial laws.

“8. That they have a right peaceably to assemble, consider of their grievances, and petition the king; and that all prosecutions, prohibitory proclamations, and commitments for the same, are illegal.

“9. That the keeping a standing army in these colonies in times of peace, without consent of the Legislature of that colony in which such army is kept, is against the law.

“10. It is indispensably necessary to good government, and rendered essential by the English Constitution, that the constituent branches of the Legislature be independent of each other; and therefore the exercise of legislative power in several colonies by a council appointed during pleasure by the crown, is unconstitutional, dangerous, and destructive to the freedom of American legislation.

“All and each of which the aforesaid deputies, in behalf of themselves and their constituents, do claim, demand, and insist on, as their indisputable rights and liberties, which cannot be legally taken from them, altered or abridged, by any power whatever, without their con-

sent, by their representatives in their several Provincial Legislatures."

To the above declaration of rights was added an enumeration of the wrongs already sustained by the colonies; after stating which, the report concluded as follows:

"To these grievous acts and measures, Americans cannot submit; but in hopes their fellow-subjects in Great Britain will, on a revision of them, restore us to that state in which both countries found happiness and prosperity, we have, for the present, only resolved to pursue the following peaceable measures: 1. To enter into a non-importation, non-consumption, and non-exportation agreement, or association. 2. To prepare an address to the people of Great Britain, and a memorial to the inhabitants of British America. And, 3. To prepare a loyal address to his majesty, agreeably to resolutions already entered into."

Although engaged in extensive commercial transactions, Mr. Hewes, about this time, assisted in forming the plan of the non-importation association, and readily became a member of it. He was again elected to Congress by the people of North Carolina in 1775, and remained in Philadelphia until the adjournment of that assembly in July. He continued to represent the same State, almost without intermission, for four succeeding years, and gave very general satisfaction. The last time that he appeared in Congress was on the 29th of October, 1799. After this date, an indisposition, under which he had labored for some time, confined him to his chamber, and at length, on the 10th of November, terminated his life, in the fiftieth year of his age. His funeral was numerously attended, and in testimony of their respect to his memory, Congress resolved to wear crape round the left arm for the space of one month. Mr. Hewes left a large fortune, but no children to inherit it.

THOMAS HEYWARD.

THOMAS HEYWARD was born in St. Luke's parish, in South Carolina, in the year 1746. His father was a planter of fortune, and young Heyward received the best education that the province could afford. Having finished his scholastic studies, he entered upon those of the law, and after the usual term of application, was sent to England to complete himself in his profession. He was enrolled as a student in one of the Inns of Court, and devoted himself with great ardor to the acquirement of legal knowledge.

On completing his studies in England, he commenced the tour of Europe, which occupied him several years. After enjoying the advantages of foreign travel, he returned to his native country, and devoted himself, with great zeal, for a man of fortune, to the labors of the law. In 1775, Mr. Heyward was elected to supply a vacancy in Congress; and arrived at Philadelphia in season to join in the discussion of the great question of independence. In 1778, he was prompted by a sense of duty to accept of an appointment as Judge of the Criminal Court of the new government. Soon after his elevation to the bench, he was called upon to preside at the trial and condemnation of several persons charged with a treasonable correspondence with the enemy. The conviction of these individuals was followed by their execution, which took place within view of the British army, to whom it rendered the Judge particularly obnoxious.

In the spring of 1780, the city of Charleston was taken possession of by General Clinton. Judge Heyward, at that time, had command of a battalion. On the reduction of the place, he became a prisoner of war, and was transported, with some others, to St. Augustine. During his absence, he suffered greatly in respect to his property. His plantation was much injured, and his slaves were seized and carried away. He at length had leave to return to Philadelphia. On his passage thither, he narrowly escaped a watery grave. By some accident he fell overboard; but, fortunately, he kept himself from sinking, by holding to the rudder of the ship, until assistance

could be rendered him. On his return to Carolina, he resumed his judicial duties; in the exercise of which, he continued till 1798. He was a member of the Convention for forming the State Constitution, in 1790; and was conspicuous for his sound judgment and unchanging patriotism. Having retired from the most arduous of his public labors and cares, he died in March, 1809, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. Mr. Heyward was twice married, and was the father of several children. He was estimable for his amiable disposition, his virtuous principles, and his extensive acquaintance with men and things.

WILLIAM HOOPER.

WILLIAM HOOPER was born in Boston, on the 17th of June, 1742. He entered Harvard University at the age of fifteen, and was graduated in 1760. His father, who was pastor of Trinity Church, in Boston, had destined his son for the ministerial profession; but the latter having an inclination for the law, he was placed in the office of the celebrated James Otis, to pursue the study of his choice. On being qualified for the bar, young Hooper removed to North Carolina, and having married, finally established himself in the practice of his profession at Wilmington.

He was soon placed, by his talents, among the foremost advocates of the province, and was chosen to represent the town of Wilmington in the General Assembly. He was elected to a seat in the same body the following year, and was always one of the boldest opposers of the tyrannical encroachments of the British Government. In 1774, Mr. Hooper was chosen a delegate to the memorable Congress which met at Philadelphia. He took an important share in the discussions of this assembly, and was remarkable for his fluent and animated elocution. He was a member of the same body the following year, and during the session, drew up, as chairman of different committees, several able addresses and reports. In 1776, the private affairs of Mr. Hooper requiring his attention in North Carolina, he did not, for some time, attend upon

the sitting of Congress. He returned, however, in season to share in the honor and danger of signing the imperishable instrument which declared the Colonies of North America free and independent. Having been elected to Congress a third time, Mr. Hooper was obliged to resign his seat in February, 1777, and return to the adjustment of his own embarrassed affairs.

In 1786 he was appointed, by Congress, one of the judges of a Federal Court, formed for the purpose of settling a controversy which existed between the States of New York and Massachusetts, in regard to certain lands. In the following year, his health being considerably impaired, he sought to restore it by private retirement. This, however, he did not live long to enjoy. He died in October, 1790, at the age of forty-eight years, leaving a wife and three children. Mr. Hooper was distinguished for his conversational powers, his good taste, and his devotion to his profession. As a politician, he was constant, judicious, and enthusiastic. He never gave way to despondency; possessing an unshaken confidence that Heaven would defend the right.

STEPHEN HOPKINS.

STEPHEN HOPKINS was born near Providence, (R. I.) in a place now called Scituate, on the 7th of March, 1707. He was of respectable parentage, being a descendant of Benedict Arnold, the first governor of Rhode Island. His early education was limited, but he is said to have excelled in penmanship, and in the practical branches of mathematics.

For several years he followed the profession of a farmer. He was afterwards chosen Town Clerk of Scituate, and a Representative to the General Assembly. He was subsequently appointed a Justice of the Peace, and a Justice of one of the courts of Common Pleas. In 1733, he became Chief Justice of that court. In 1742, he removed to Providence, where he entered into commerce, and was extensively engaged in building and fitting out vessels. He was chosen a Representative from that town to the General Assembly, and became speaker of the House of

Representatives. In 1751, he was made Chief Justice of the Superior Court, and held that office till the year 1754, when he was appointed a Commissioner to the celebrated Albany Convention. The object of this Convention was the securing of the friendship of the five great Indian nations, in the approaching French war, and an union between the several colonies of America.

In 1756, Mr. Hopkins was elected Chief Magistrate of the colony of Rhode Island. This office he continued to hold, almost without intermission, until 1767; discharging its duties in an efficient and highly satisfactory manner. He resolutely espoused the cause of the colonies, and in a pamphlet entitled "The rights of Colonies Examined," proved the injustice of the Stamp Act, and other measures of the British ministry. In 1774, Mr. Hopkins received the appointment of Delegate from Rhode Island to the Continental Congress. In this assembly he took his seat on the first day of the session, and became one of the most zealous advocates of the measures adopted by that illustrious body of men. In the year 1775 and 1776, he again represented Rhode Island in Congress. In this latter year, he affixed his name to the Declaration of Independence. His signature was the only one upon the roll, which gave indications of a trembling hand; but it was not the tremulousness of fear. Mr. Hopkins had for some time been afflicted with a paralytic affection, which compelled him, when he wrote, to guide his right hand with his left.

In 1778, Mr. Hopkins was a Delegate to Congress for the last time: but for several years afterwards, he was a member of the General Assembly of Rhode Island. He closed his useful and honorable life on the 13th of July, 1785, in the seventy-eighth year of his age. Mr. Hopkins was enabled by the vigor of his understanding to surmount his early deficiencies, and rise to the most distinguished offices in the gift of his fellow-citizens. He possessed considerable fondness for literature, and greatly excelled as a mathematician. He was an unshaken friend of his country, and an enemy to civil and religious intolerance, distinguished for his liberality, and for the correct and honorable discharge of his various duties.

FRANCIS HOPKINSON.

FRANCIS HOPKINSON was born in Philadelphia, in the year 1737. His father was an Englishman, who, a short time previous to his emigration to America, married a niece of the Bishop of Worcester. He was a man of a cultivated mind and considerable literary accomplishments; and became intimate with Benjamin Franklin, by whom he was held in high estimation. Upon the death of Mr. Hopkinson, which occurred while he was in the prime of life, the care of his family devolved upon his widow, who was eminently qualified for the task. She was a woman of superior mind; and discovering early indications of talent in her son, she resolved to make every sacrifice to furnish him with a good education. She placed him at the College of Philadelphia, and lived to see him graduate with reputation, and attain a high eminence at the bar.

In 1766, Francis Hopkinson embarked for England, and received, upon the occasion, a public expression of respect and affection from the Board of Trustees of the College of Philadelphia. After a residence of more than two years in the land of his forefathers, he returned to America. He soon after married Miss Borden, of Bordentown, in New Jersey, where he took up his residence, and was appointed collector of the customs and executive counsellor. These offices he did not long enjoy, having sacrificed them to his attachment to the liberties of his country. He enlisted himself warmly in the cause of the people, and in 1776 was appointed a delegate from New Jersey to the Continental Congress. He voted for the Declaration of Independence, and affixed his signature to the engrossed copy of that instrument. In 1779, he was appointed Judge of the Admiralty Court of Pennsylvania, and for ten years continued to discharge with fidelity the duties of that office.

Soon after the adoption of the Federal Constitution, Mr. Hopkinson received from Washington the appointment of Judge of the United States for the district of Pennsylvania. In this station, he conscientiously avoided mingling in party politics. His life was suddenly

terminated, while in the midst of his usefulness on the 8th of May, 1791. He died of an apoplectic fit, which, in two hours after the attack, put a period to his existence.

Mr. Hopkinson was endued with considerable powers of humor and satire, which he employed effectually in rousing the feelings of the people, during the war of the Revolution. He was the author of several fugitive pieces which were very popular in their day. His well-known ballad, called "The Battle of the Kegs," gives evidence of a rich and exhaustless fund of humor, and will probably last the wear of centuries. He excelled in music, and had some knowledge of painting. His library was extensive, and his stock of knowledge constantly accumulating. In stature, Mr. Hopkinson was below the common size. His countenance was animated, his speech fluent; and his motions were unusually rapid. Few men were kinder in their dispositions, or more benevolent in their lives. He left, at his decease, a widow and five children. The eldest of these, Joseph Hopkinson, occupies an eminent rank among the advocates of the American bar.

SAMUEL HUNTINGTON.

SAMUEL HUNTINGTON was born in Windham, Connecticut, on the 2d of July, 1732. Being the eldest son, his father required his assistance on the farm, and his opportunities for study were accordingly brief and extremely rare. He possessed, however, a vigorous understanding, and supplied his deficiencies of instruction by an assiduous and a persevering devotion to the acquisition of knowledge. At the age of twenty-one years, he was probably equal, in point of literary attainments, to most of those who had received a collegiate education.

Conceiving a fondness for legal pursuits, he abandoned his occupation of husbandry, and resolved to enter alone and unaided upon the study of the law. He soon obtained a competent knowledge of the principles of the profession, to commence the practice of an attorney in his native town; but in 1760, he removed to Norwich, where a wider field presented itself for the exercise of his talents.

Here he soon became distinguished for his ability, his integrity, and his strict attention to business. In 1764, Mr. Huntington represented the town of Norwich in the General Assembly; and the following year was appointed to the office of King's Attorney. In 1774, he became an Associate Judge in the Superior Court, and soon after an assistant in the Council of Connecticut.

His talents and patriotism recommending him to public confidence, he was elected in 1775 a delegate to the Continental Congress. In the subsequent July, he voted in favor of the Declaration of Independence. Mr. Huntington continued a member of Congress until the year 1781, when ill health induced him to resign. On the departure of Mr. Jay as minister to Spain, he had been appointed to the presidency of the Congress, and had served in that honorable station with distinguished ability and dignity. In testimony of their approbation of his conduct in the chair, and in the execution of public business, Congress, soon after his retirement, accorded to Mr. Huntington the expression of their public thanks. On his return to his native State, he resumed his judicial functions, and in 1782 was re-elected to Congress. He did not attend, however, till the following year, when he resumed his seat. He continued a conspicuous member, until November, at which time he finally retired from the national assembly.

Soon after his return to Connecticut, he was placed at the head of the Superior Court, and the following year was chosen Lieutenant Governor of the State. In 1786, he succeeded Governor Griswold in the office of Chief Magistrate, and was annually re-elected to that station during the remainder of his life. His death took place on the 5th of January, 1796, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. Mr. Huntington was a sincere Christian, and few men possessed a greater share of mildness and equanimity of temper. He rose from the humble situation of a ploughboy by his own industry and perseverance, and without the advantage of family patronage or influence. He married in the thirtieth year of his age; but having no children, he adopted a son and daughter of his brother the Rev. Joseph Huntington.

FRANCIS LIGHTFOOT LEE.

FRANCIS LIGHTFOOT LEE was born in Virginia, in 1734. He was the fourth son of Thomas Lee, who for several years held the office of President of the King's Council. Francis Lightfoot did not receive the advantage enjoyed by his elder brothers, of an education at the English universities. He was placed, however, under the care of an accomplished domestic tutor, of the name of Craig, and acquired an early fondness for literature. He became well versed in the most important branches of science, and probably obtained as good an education as the country could then afford. The fortune bequeathed him by his father rendered the study of a profession unnecessary, and he accordingly surrendered himself for several years, to the enjoyment of literary ease and social intercourse. He possessed, however, an active mind, and warmly interested himself in the advancement of his country. In 1765, he was returned a member of the House of Burgesses from the county of Loudon, where his estate was situated. He was annually re-elected to this office until 1772, when, having married a lady of Richmond county, he removed thither, and was soon after chosen by the citizens of that place to the same station.

In 1775, Mr. Lee was appointed by the Virginia Convention a delegate to the Continental Congress. He took his seat in this assembly; and, though he seldom engaged in the public discussions, was surpassed by none in his zeal to forward the interests of the colonies. His brother, Richard Henry Lee, had the high honor of bringing forward the momentous question of independence, but no one was perhaps a warmer friend of the measure than Francis Lightfoot.

Mr. Lee retired from Congress in 1779. He was fondly attached to the pleasures of home, and eagerly sought an opportunity, when his services were not essentially needed by his country, to resume the undisturbed quiet of his former life. He was not long permitted to enjoy his seclusion. He reluctantly obeyed the summons of his fellow-citizens to represent them once more in the Legislature of Virginia. His duties were most faithfully dis-

charged while a member of this body : but he soon became weary of the bustle and vexations of public life, and relinquished them for the pleasures of retirement. In the latter period of his life, he found an unfailing source of happiness to himself, in contributing largely to the enjoyment of others. His benevolence and the urbanity of his manners rendered him beloved by all. He was a practical friend to the poor, and a companion to the young or the aged, the lighthearted or the broken in spirit. Having no children, he devoted his time chiefly to reading, farming, and company. His death was occasioned by a pleurisy, which disease also terminated the life of his wife a few days after his own departure. He died in the consoling belief of the Gospel, and in peace with all mankind and his own conscience.

The brothers of Mr. Lee were all eminently distinguished for their talents and for their services to their country. Philip Ludwell, a member of the King's Council; Thomas Ludwell, a member of the Virginia Assembly; Richard Henry, as the champion of American freedom; William, as a sheriff and alderman of London, and afterwards a Commissioner of the Continental Congress at the courts of Berlin and Vienna; and Arthur, as a scholar, a politician, and diplomatist.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, a brother of the foregoing, was born at Stratford, Westmoreland county, Virginia, on the 20th of January, 1732. He received his education in England, where his acquisitions were considerable in scientific and classical knowledge. He returned to his native country when in his nineteenth year, and devoted himself to the general study of history, politics, law, and polite literature, without engaging in any particular profession.

About the year 1757, he was chosen a delegate to the House of Burgesses, where a natural diffidence for some time prevented him from displaying the full extent of his powers and resources. This impediment, however, was gradually removed, and he rapidly rose into notice as a

persuasive and eloquent speaker. In 1764, he was appointed to draught an address to the king, and a memorial to the House of Lords, which are among the best state papers of the period. Some years afterwards, he brought forward his celebrated plan for the formation of a committee of correspondence, whose object was "to watch the conduct of the British Parliament; to spread more widely correct information on topics connected with the interests of the colonies, and to form a chosen union of the men of influence in each." This plan was originated about the same time in Massachusetts, by Samuel Adams.

The efforts of Mr. Lee in resisting the various encroachments of the British government were indefatigable, and in 1774 he attended the first General Congress at Philadelphia, as a delegate from Virginia. He was a member of most of the important committees of this body, and labored with unceasing vigilance and energy. The memorial of Congress to the people of British America, and the second address of Congress to the people of Great Britain, were both from his pen. The following year, he was again deputed to represent Virginia in the same assembly, and his exertions were equally zealous and successful. Among other responsible duties, he was appointed, as chairman of a committee, to furnish General Washington, who had been summoned to the command of the American armies, with his commission and instructions.

On the 7th of June, 1776, Mr. Lee introduced the measure, which declared, "That these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown; and that all political connexion between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved." This important motion he supported by a speech of the most brilliant eloquence. "Why then, Sir," said he, in conclusion, "why do we longer delay? Why still deliberate? Let this happy day give birth to an American republic. Let her arise, not to devastate and to conquer, but to re-establish the reign of peace and of law. The eyes of Europe are fixed upon us; she de-

mands of us a living example of freedom, that may exhibit a contrast in the felicity of the citizen to the ever-increasing tyranny which desolates her polluted shores. She invites us to prepare an asylum, where the unhappy may find solace, and the persecuted repose. She invites us to cultivate a propitious soil, where that generous plant which first sprang up and grew in England, but is now withered by the poisonous blasts of Scottish tyranny, may revive and flourish, sheltering under its salubrious and interminable shade, all the unfortunate of the human race. If we are not this day wanting in our duty, the names of the American legislators of 1776 will be placed by posterity at the side of Theseus, Lycurgus, and Romulus, of the three Williams of Nassau, and of all those whose memory has been, and ever will be, dear to virtuous men and good citizens."

The debate on the above motion of Mr. Lee, was protracted until the tenth of June, when Congress resolved: "That the consideration of the resolution respecting independence, be postponed till the first Monday in July next; and in the meanwhile, that no time may be lost, in case the Congress agree thereto, that a committee be appointed to prepare a declaration to the effect of the said resolution."

As the mover of the original resolution for independence, it would, according to parliamentary usage, have devolved upon Mr. Lee to have been appointed chairman of the committee selected to prepare a declaration, and, as chairman, to have furnished that important document. But on the day on which the resolution was taken, Mr. Lee was unexpectedly summoned to attend upon his family in Virginia, some of the members of which were dangerously ill; and Mr. Jefferson was appointed chairman in his place.

Mr. Lee continued to hold a seat in Congress till June, 1777, when he solicited leave of absence, on account of the delicate state of his health. In August, of the next year, he was again elected to Congress, and continued in that body till 1780, when he declined a re-election, believing that he would be more useful to his native State by holding a seat in her Assembly. In 1784, however,

he again accepted an appointment as representative of Congress, of which body he was unanimously elected president. In this exalted station he presided with great ability; and on his retirement, received the acknowledgments of Congress.

Mr. Lee was opposed to the adoption of the Federal Constitution, without amendment. Its tendency, he believed, was to consolidation. To guard against this, it was his wish that the respective States should impart to the Federal Head only so much power as was necessary for mutual safety and happiness. He was appointed a Senator from Virginia, under the new Constitution.

About the year 1792, Mr. Lee was compelled, by his bodily debility and infirmities, to retire wholly from public business. Not long after, he had the pleasure of receiving, from the Legislature of his native State, an unanimous vote of thanks for his public services, and of sympathy for the impaired condition of his health. He died on the 19th of June, 1794, at the age of sixty-three years.

In private life, Mr. Lee was the delight of all who knew him. He had a numerous family of children, the offspring of two marriages, who were tenderly devoted to their father. As an orator, he exercised an uncommon sway over the minds of men. His gesture was graceful and highly finished, and his language perfectly chaste. He reasoned well, and declaimed freely and splendidly; and such was his promptitude, that he required no preparation for debate. He was well acquainted with classical literature, and possessed a rich store of political knowledge. Few men have passed through life in a more honorable and brilliant manner, or left behind them a more desirable reputation, than Richard Henry Lee.

FRANCIS LEWIS.

FRANCIS LEWIS was a native of Landaff, in South Wales, where he was born in the year 1713. Being left an orphan at the age of four or five years, the care of him devolved upon a maiden aunt, who took singular pains to instruct him in the native language of his country. He

was afterwards sent to Scotland, where, in the family of a relation, he acquired a knowledge of the Gaelic. From this he was transferred to the school of Westminster, where he completed his education; and enjoyed the reputation of being a good classical scholar.

Having determined on the pursuit of commerce, he entered the counting-room of a London merchant, and in a few years acquired a competent knowledge of his profession. On attaining the age of twenty-one years, he converted the whole of his property into merchandise, and sailed for New York, where he arrived in the spring of 1735. Leaving a part of his goods to be disposed of by Mr. Edward Annesly, with whom he had formed a commercial connexion, he transported the remainder to Philadelphia. After a residence of two years in the latter city, he returned to New York, and there became extensively engaged in navigation and foreign trade. He married the sister of his partner, by whom he had several children.

Mr. Lewis acquired the character of an active and enterprising merchant. In the course of his commercial transactions, he visited several of the sea-ports of Russia, the Orkney and Shetland Islands, and was twice shipwrecked on the Irish coast.

During the French or Canadian war, he was agent for supplying the British troops, and was present, in 1756, at the surrender of Fort Oswego to the French general, de Montcalm. He exhibited great firmness and ability on the occasion; and his services were held in such consideration by the British government, that at the close of the war he received a grant of five thousand acres of land.

The conditions upon which the garrison at Fort Oswego surrendered, were shamefully violated by de Montcalm. He allowed the chief warrior of the Indians, who assisted in taking the fort, to select about thirty of the prisoners, and to do with them as he pleased. Of this number, Mr. Lewis was one. Thus placed at the disposal of savage power, a speedy death was one of the least evils to be expected. It has been asserted, however, that Mr. Lewis discovered that he was able to converse with the Indians, by reason of the similarity of the ancient lan-

guage of Wales, which he understood, to their dialect. His ability to communicate by words to the chief, so pleased the latter, that he treated him kindly, and on arriving at Montreal, requested the French governor to allow him to return to his family without ransom. The request, however, was not granted, and Mr. Lewis was sent as a prisoner to France, from which country, being some time after exchanged, he returned to America.

Although Mr. Lewis was not a native of America, yet his attachment to the country was early and devoted. He vigorously opposed the oppressive measures of Great Britain, and esteemed liberty the choicest blessing that a nation can enjoy. His intellectual powers, and uniform nobility of sentiment, commanded the respect of the people; and in 1775, he was unanimously elected a delegate to Congress. He remained a member of that body through the following year, 1776, and was among the number who signed the Declaration of Independence. For several subsequent years, he was appointed to represent New York in the national assembly; and performed various secret and important services, with great fidelity and prudence.

In 1775, Mr. Lewis removed his family and effects to a country seat which he owned on Long Island. This proved an unfortunate step. In the autumn of the following year, his house was plundered by a party of British light-horse. His extensive library and valuable papers were wantonly destroyed. His wife fell into the power of the enemy, and was retained a prisoner for several months. During her captivity, she experienced the most atrocious treatment, being closely confined, and deprived of a bed and sufficient clothing. By the influence of Washington, she was at length released; but her constitution had been so impaired by her sufferings, that in a year or two, she sank into the grave.

The latter days of Mr. Lewis were spent in comparative poverty. He died on the 30th day of December, 1803, in the ninetieth year of his age.

* It is almost needless to remark, that such an occurrence is, to say the best of it, extremely improbable. There exists no affinity between the ancient language of Wales and that of any of the Indian tribes known in North America.

PHILIP LIVINGSTON.

PHILIP LIVINGSTON was born at Albany, on the 15th of January, 1716. He was the fourth son of Gilbert Livingston, and his ancestors were highly respectable, holding a distinguished rank in New York, and possessing a beautiful tract of land on the banks of the Hudson. This tract, since known as the Manor of Livingston, has belonged to the family from that time to the present.

Philip Livingston received his education at Yale College, where he was graduated in 1737. He soon after engaged extensively in commerce in the city of New York, and was very successful in his transactions. In 1754, he was elected an alderman, and continued in the office for nine successive years. In 1759, he was returned a member to the General Assembly of the colony, where his talents and influence were most usefully employed. His views were liberal and enlightened, and he did much to improve the commercial and agricultural facilities of the country.

Previous to the revolution, it was usual for the respective colonies to have an agent in England, to manage their individual concerns with the British government. This agent was appointed by the popular branch of the Assembly. In 1770, the agent of the colony of New York dying, the celebrated Edmund Burke was chosen in his stead, and received for the office a salary of five hundred pounds. Between this gentleman and a committee of the Colonial Assembly, a correspondence was maintained; and upon their representations the agent depended for a knowledge of the state of the colony. Of this committee, Mr. Livingston was a member. From his communications and those of his colleagues, Mr. Burke doubtless obtained that information of the state of the colonies, which he sometimes brought forward to the perfect surprise of the House of Commons, and upon which he often founded arguments, and proposed measures, which were not to be resisted.

Mr. Livingston regarded with patriotic indignation, the measures by which the British ministry thought to humble the spirit of the colonies. His avowed sentiments,

and the prominent part he had always taken in favor of the rights of the colonies, caused him to be elected, in 1774, a delegate to the Continental Congress. He was also a member of the distinguished Congress of 1776, and was among those whose names are enduringly recorded on the great charter of their country's freedom and national existence. He was re-elected to the same assembly the following year, and was also chosen a Senator to the State Legislature, after the adoption of a new Constitution. He again took his seat in Congress, in May, 1778, but his health was shockingly impaired, and such was the nature of his disease, which was a dropsy in the chest, that no rational prospect existed of his recovery. Before his departure from Albany, he took a final farewell of his family and friends, and expressed his conviction that he should not live to see them again. His anticipations proved true. From the period of his return to Congress, his decline was rapid; and he closed his valuable life on the 12th of June, 1778. Suitable demonstrations of respect to his memory were paid by Congress; and his funeral was publicly attended.

Mr. Livingston married the daughter of Colonel Dirck Ten Broeck, by whom he had several children. His family has furnished many distinguished characters. Mr. Livingston was amiable in his disposition, and a firm believer in the great truths of Christianity. He died respected and esteemed by all who knew him.

THOMAS LYNCH.

THOMAS LYNCH was born on the 5th of August, 1749, at Prince George's Parish, in South Carolina.

Before he had reached the age of thirteen years, young Lynch was sent to England for his education. Having passed some time at the institution of Eton, he was entered a member of the University of Cambridge, the degrees of which college he received in due course. He left Cambridge with a high reputation for classical attainments, and virtues of character; and entered his name at the Temple, with a view to the profession of law. After

applying himself assiduously to the study of jurisprudence, and enriching himself both in mind and manners, with the numberless accomplishments of a gentleman, he returned to South Carolina, after an absence of eight or nine years.

In 1775, on the raising of the first South Carolina regiment of provincial regulars, Mr. Lynch was appointed to the command of a company. Unfortunately, on his march to Charleston, at the head of his men, he was attacked by a violent fever, which greatly injured his constitution, and from the effects of which he never afterwards wholly recovered. He joined his regiment, but the enfeebled state of his health prevented him from performing the exertions which he considered incumbent upon him. Added to this, he received afflicting intelligence of the illness of his father, at Philadelphia, and resolved to make arrangements to depart for that city. Upon applying for a furlough, however, he was denied by the commanding officer, Colonel Gadsden. But being opportunely elected to Congress, as the successor of his father, he was repaid for his disappointment, and lost no time in hastening to Philadelphia.

The health of the younger Mr. Lynch, soon after joining Congress, began to decline with the most alarming rapidity. He continued, however, his attendance upon that body, until the Declaration of Independence had been voted, and his signature affixed to it. He then set out for Carolina, a company with his father; but the life of the latter was terminated at Annapolis, by a second paralytic attack.

Soon after this afflicting event, a change of climate was recommended to Mr. Lynch, as presenting the only chance of his recovery. He embarked with his wife, on board a vessel proceeding to St. Eustatia, designing to proceed by a circuitous route to the south of France. From the time of their sailing, nothing more has been known of their fate! Various rumors for a time were in circulation, which served to keep their friends in painful suspense; but the conclusion finally adopted was, that the vessel must have foundered at sea, and the faithful pair been consigned to a watery grave.

THOMAS M'KEAN.

THOMAS M'KEAN was of Irish descent, and born in New London Chester county, Pennsylvania, on the 19th of March, 1734. After completing the regular course of school instruction, he was entered as a student at law, in the office of David Finney, who resided in Newcastle, in Delaware. Before he had attained the age of twenty one years, he commenced the practice of the law, in the Courts of Common Pleas, for the counties of Newcastle, Kent, and Sussex, and also in the Supreme Court. In 1757, he was admitted to the bar of the Supreme Court in Pennsylvania, and was elected Clerk of the House of Assembly.

The political career of Mr. M'Kean commenced in 1762, at which time he was returned a member of the Assembly from the county of Newcastle. This county he continued to represent in the same body for several successive years, although the last six years of that period, he spent in Philadelphia.

A Congress, usually called the Stamp Act Congress assembled in New York in 1765, for the purpose of obtaining a redress of the grievances under which the colonies then labored. Of this memorable body, Mr. M'Kean was a member, along with James Otis, and other celebrated men.

A short time previous to the meeting of the Congress of 1774, Mr. M'Kean took up his permanent residence in the city of Philadelphia. The people of the lower counties on the Delaware, were desirous that he should represent them in that body, and he was accordingly elected as their delegate. On the 3d of September, he took his seat in Congress. From this time until the 1st of February, 1783, a period of eight years and a half, he was annually chosen a member of the great national council. At the same time, Mr. M'Kean represented Delaware in Congress; he was president of it in 1781, and from July, 1777, was the Chief Justice of Pennsylvania.

Mr. M'Kean was, from the first, decidedly in favor of the Declaration of Independence. He subscribed his name to the original instrument, but, by some mistake,

it was omitted in the copy published in the journals of Congress.

At the time Congress passed the Declaration of Independence, the situation of Washington and his army in New Jersey, was extremely precarious. On the 5th of July, it was agreed by several public committees in Philadelphia, to despatch all the associated militia of the State to the assistance of Washington. Mr. M'Kean was at this time Colonel of a regiment of associated militia. A few days subsequent to the Declaration of Independence, he was on his way to Perth Amboy, in New Jersey, at the head of his battalion.

The associate militia being at length discharged, Mr. M'Kean returned to Philadelphia, and was present in Congress on the 2d of August, when the engrossed copy of the Declaration of Independence was signed by the members. A few days after this, receiving intelligence of his being elected a member of the Convention in Delaware, assembled for the purpose of forming a constitution for that State, he departed for Dover. Although excessively fatigued, on his arrival, at the request of a committee of gentlemen of the Convention, he retired to his room in the public inn, where he was employed the whole night in preparing a constitution for the future government of the State. This he did without the least assistance, and even without the aid of a book. At ten o'clock the next morning it was presented to the Convention, by whom it was unanimously adopted.

In 1777, Mr. M'Kean was chosen President of the State of Delaware, and during the same year was appointed Chief Justice of Pennsylvania. The duties of the latter station he discharged with great dignity and impartiality for twenty-two years. At the time of accepting these offices, he was speaker of the House of Assembly, and member of Congress. He was chosen president of Congress in 1781; and his conduct in the chair was highly honorable and satisfactory.

Mr. M'Kean was a delegate from Philadelphia, in 1787, to the Convention assembled to ratify the Constitution of the United States. He was a principal leader in this assembly; and was an able and eloquent advocate for

the adoption of the Constitution; declaring it to be, in his consideration, "the best the world had yet seen."

In 1799, he was elected a governor of the State of Pennsylvania, and his administration continued for nine years. His course was ultimately beneficial to the State; but the numerous removals from office of his political opponents produced considerable excitement, and perhaps placed his character in an unamiable light. During the years 1807 and 1808, an attempt was made to impeach him of certain crimes and misdemeanors; and an inquiry was instituted by the Legislature into his official conduct. The result was an honorable acquittal from the charges alleged, and a total vindication of his character.

In 1808, Mr. M'Kean retired from public life, having discharged the duties of a great variety of offices with much ability and reputation. He died on the 24th of June, 1817, in the eighty-third year of his age.

ARTHUR MIDDLETON.

ARTHUR MIDDLETON was born in the year 1743, in South Carolina, near the banks of the Ashley. At the age of twelve years, he was sent to the school of Hackney, near London; and two years afterwards was sent to the school of Westminster. Here he soon became a proficient in classical literature, and gained the reputation of being an excellent Greek scholar. After several years spent in obtaining his education, and in foreign travel, Mr. Middleton returned to South Carolina.

Soon after his return, he married, and again embarked for Europe, accompanied by his wife. He possessed a great fondness for travelling, and during this tour visited many places in England, and the principal places of France and Spain. In 1773, Mr. Middleton again returned to America, and settled on the delightful banks of the Ashley.

In the spring of 1775, Mr. Arthur Middleton was chosen one of a secret committee who were authorized to place the colony in a state of defence; and in June, the Provincial Assembly of South Carolina appointed him a

member of the Council of Safety. In the following year he was chosen on a committee to prepare a constitution for the colony. Shortly afterwards he was elected a delegate from South Carolina to the Congress assembled at Philadelphia. Here he had an opportunity of inscribing his name on the great charter of American liberty. At the close of the year 1777, he resigned his seat, leaving behind a character for the purest patriotism and the most fearless decision.

In 1778, Mr. Middleton was elected to the chair of Governor of South Carolina, which office had been left vacant in consequence of the resignation of John Rutledge, who had refused his assent to the new Constitution formed by the Legislature. But candidly avowing the same sentiments with the late governor, Mr. Middleton conscientiously refused to accept the appointment, under the Constitution which had been adopted. The assembly proceeded to another choice, and elected Mr. Lowndes to fill the vacancy, who gave his sanction to the new Constitution.

In the year 1779, many of the southern plantations were ravaged by the enemy, and that of Mr. Middleton did not escape. His valuable collection of paintings was much injured, but his family were fortunately absent from the place. On the surrender of Charleston, Mr. Middleton was taken prisoner, and, with several others, was sent by sea to St. Augustine, in East Florida, where he was kept in confinement for nearly a year. At length, in July, 1781, he was exchanged, and proceeded in a cartel to Philadelphia. On his arrival there, he was appointed a representative in Congress, to which office he was also elected the following year.

In 1783, Mr. Middleton declined accepting a seat in Congress, but was afterwards occasionally a member of the State Legislature. He died on the 1st of January 1787.

LEWIS MORRIS.

LEWIS MORRIS was born at the manor of Morrisania, in the State of New York, in the year 1726. He was educated at Yale College, of which institution he received the honors. On his return home, he devoted himself to agriculture. When the dissensions with the mother country began, he was in a most fortunate condition; with an ample estate, a fine family, an excellent constitution, literary taste, and general occupations, of which he was fond. He renounced at once all these comforts and attractions, in order to assert the rights of his country. He was elected a delegate from New York to the Congress of 1775, wherein he served on the most important committees. He was placed on a committee, of which Washington was chairman, to devise means to supply the colonies with ammunition; and was appointed to the arduous task of detaching the western Indians from a coalition with Great Britain. On this errand, he repaired to Pittsburg, and acted with great zeal and address. In the beginning of 1776, he resumed his seat in Congress, where he continued a laborious and very useful member.

When the subject of independence began to be openly talked of among the people of America, in none of the colonies was a greater unwillingness to the measure betrayed than among the inhabitants of New York. There were many, however, who were the determined opposers of all farther attempts at compromise; and among the latter was Mr. Morris. When he signed the Declaration of Independence, it was at the most obvious risk of his rich and beautiful estate, the dispersion of his family, and the ruin of his domestic enjoyments and hopes. He manifested on the occasion a degree of patriotism and disinterestedness, which few had it in their power to display.

It happened as was anticipated. The beautiful manor of Morrisania was laid waste by the hostile army and a tract of woodland of more than a thousand acres in extent was destroyed. Few men during the Revolution were called to make greater sacrifices than Mr. Morris; and none could make them more cheerfully.

He quitted Congress in 1777, and was afterwards a

member of the State Legislature, and a Major General of militia. His latter years were devoted to the pursuit of agriculture; his fondness for which was an amiable trait in his character. He died, very generally esteemed, on his paternal estate, in January, 1798, at the age of seventy-one years.

ROBERT MORRIS.

ROBERT MORRIS, the great financier of the American Revolution, was born in Lancashire, England, January, 1733-4, O. S., of respectable parentage. His father embarked for America, and caused him to follow at the age of thirteen. He received a respectable education, and before he reached his fifteenth year, was placed in the counting-house of Mr. Charles Willing, at that time one of the first merchants at Philadelphia. His diligence and capacity gained him the full confidence of Mr. Willing, after whose death, he entered into partnership with his son, Thomas Willing, subsequently president of the bank of the United States. This connexion lasted from the year 1754 until 1793,—a period of thirty-nine years.

At the commencement of the American Revolution, Mr. Morris was more extensively engaged in commerce than any other merchant of Philadelphia. He zealously opposed the encroachments of the British government on the liberties of the colonists, and embraced the popular cause, at the imminent sacrifice of his private interest and wealth. He declared himself immediately against the stamp act, signed, without hesitation, the non-importation agreement of 1765, and, in so doing, made a direct sacrifice of trade.

In 1775, Mr. Morris was elected, by the Legislature of Pennsylvania, a delegate to the second General Congress. He was placed upon every committee of ways and means, and connected with all the deliberations and arrangements relative to the navy, maritime affairs, and financial interests. Besides aiding his country by his talents for business, his judgment, and his knowledge, he employed his extensive credit in obtaining loans, to a large amount, for the use of the government.

In May, 1777, he was elected a third time to Congress, and continued to be the chief director of the financial operations of the government. In 1780, he proposed the establishment of a bank, the chief object of which was, to supply the army with provisions. He headed the list with a subscription of ten thousand pounds; and others followed to the amount of three hundred thousand pounds. The institution was established, and continued until the bank of North America went into operation in the following year.

In 1781, Mr Morris was appointed, by Congress, Superintendent of Finance. The state of the treasury, when he was appointed to its superintendence, was as bad as possible. Abroad, the public credit was every moment in danger of annihilation. At home, the greatest public, as well as private distress, prevailed. The treasury was so much in arrears to the servants of the public offices, that many of them could not without payment perform their duties, but must have gone to jail for debts they had contracted to enable them to live. It was even asserted, by some of the members of the board of war, that they had not the means of sending an express to the army. But the wasted and prostrate skeleton of public credit sprung to life and action at the reviving touch of Robert Morris. The face of things was suddenly changed. Public and private credit was restored; and it has been said, that "the Americans owe as much acknowledgment to the financial operations of Robert Morris, as to the negotiations of Benjamin Franklin, or even the arms of George Washington."

The establishment of the bank of North America was one of his first and most beneficial measures; an institution which he himself planned, and to forward which, he pledged his personal credit to an immense amount.

In 1786, Mr. Morris was chosen to the Assembly of Pennsylvania; and the same year was elected a member of the Convention which framed the Federal Constitution. For the adoption of the present system, he was one of the most strenuous advocates. In 1788, the General Assembly of Pennsylvania appointed him to represent the State in the first Senate of the United States, which as-

sembled in New York. He was a fluent and impressive speaker; and wrote with great ease and power. His conversation was replete with interest and instruction. When the Federal Government was organized, Washington offered him the post of Secretary of the Treasury, which he declined; and, being requested to designate a person for it, he named General Hamilton. At the conclusion of the war, he was among the first who engaged in the East India and China trade. He was, also, the first who made an attempt to effect what is termed an *out of season* passage to China.

In his latter days, Mr. Morris embarked in vast land speculations, which proved fatal to his fortune. The man who had so immensely contributed to our national existence and independence, passed the closing years of his life in a prison; a beautiful commentary upon those laws which make no distinction between guilt and misfortune, and condemn the honest debtor to the punishment of the convicted felon! He died on the 8th of May, 1806, in the seventy-third year of his age.

Until the period of his impoverishment, the house of Mr. Morris was a scene of the most lavish hospitality. It was open, for nearly half a century, to all the respectable strangers who visited Philadelphia. He was active in the acquisition of money, but no one more freely parted with his gains. No one pursued a more enlightened policy, or manifested through life a greater degree of humanity, virtue, energy, and gentlemanly spirit, than Robert Morris.

JOHN MORTON.

JOHN MORTON was born in the county of Chester, (now Delaware,) in Pennsylvania. His ancestors were of Swedish extraction; and his father died a few months previous to his birth.

About the year 1764, Mr. Morton was sent as a delegate to the General Assembly of Pennsylvania, of which he continued for several years an active and distinguished member. He was also appointed to attend the General

Congress at New York. In 1766, he was made sheriff of the county in which he resided, and, shortly after, was elevated to a seat on the bench, in the Superior Court of Pennsylvania. He was deputed to the Congress of 1774, and continued to represent Pennsylvania in that assembly through the memorable session of 1776. On the question of declaring independence, in the latter year, the delegation from Pennsylvania being divided, Mr. Morton gave his casting vote in the affirmative. This was an act of great intrepidity, under all the circumstances of the case; and placed upon him a fearful load of responsibility. But he did not hesitate to assume it. The enemies of the measure were exasperated at his conduct; but, on his death-bed, he desired his attendants to tell his revilers that the hour would come, when it would be acknowledged, that his vote in favor of American Independence was the most illustrious act of his life. It is needless to observe how fully and comprehensively his prophetic annunciation has been fulfilled.

In 1777, Mr. Morton assisted in organizing a system of confederation for the colonies, and was chairman of the committee of the whole, at the time when it was agreed to. During the same year, he was seized with an inflammatory fever, and died on the 15th of November, in the fifty-fourth year of his age. He left behind a character for piety, liberality, and patriotism, which his actions are sufficient to substantiate

THOMAS NELSON, JUN.

THOMAS NELSON was born at York, in Virginia, on the 26th of December, 1738. At the age of fourteen, he was sent to England, and placed at a private school in the neighborhood of London. He was afterwards removed to the University of Cambridge, where he enjoyed the instruction of the eminent Doctor Porteus, subsequently Bishop of London. About the close of 1761, he returned to his native country, and, in the following year, married the daughter of Philip Grymes, Esq., of Brandon. His ample fortune enabled him to indulge his spirit of hospi-

tality to its fullest extent, and to live in a style of unusual elegance.

It is not determined with certainty at what period the political career of Mr. Nelson commenced. He was a member of the House of Burgesses in 1774, and during the same year was deputed to the first General Convention of the province, which met at Williamsburg on the 1st of August. The next year he was again returned a member to the General Convention, and introduced a resolution for organizing a military force in the province.

In July, 1775, Mr. Nelson was appointed a delegate from Virginia to the General Congress about to assemble at Philadelphia. He retained his seat in this body until 1777. In May of that year, he was obliged to resign all serious occupation, in consequence of a disease in the head. When relieved from this malady, his energies were again called into action, and he was appointed Brigadier General and Commander in Chief of the forces of the commonwealth. In this office, he rendered the most important service to his country, and in times of emergency often advanced money, to carry forward the military operations. In 1779, he was again chosen to Congress; but a close application to business produced a recurrence of his former complaint, and he was again compelled to return home.

Soon after his recovery, General Nelson entered with animation into several military expeditions against the British, who, at that time, were making the Southern States the chief theatre of war. It was owing to his measures that the army was kept together, until the capture of Yorktown terminated the war. For this service, Governor Nelson had the pleasure of receiving the acknowledgments of Washington, who, in his general orders of the 20th of October, 1781, thus spoke of him: "The General would be guilty of the highest ingratitude, a crime of which he hopes he shall never be accused, if he forgot to return his sincere acknowledgments to his Excellency Governor Nelson, for the succors which he received from him, and the militia under his command, to whose activity, emulation, and bravery, the highest praises are due."

A month subsequent to the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, Governor Nelson resigned his station, in consequence of ill health, and immediately afterwards was accused by his enemies, of having transcended his powers, in acting without the consent of his council: but he was honorably acquitted by the Legislature, before whom the charge was preferred. He died on the 4th of January, 1789, just after he had completed his fiftieth year.

WILLIAM PACA.

WILLIAM PACA was born on the 31st of October, 1740. He was the second son of John Paca, a gentleman of large estate, who resided in Hartford county, Maryland. After receiving his degree of bachelor of arts at the College of Philadelphia, in 1759, he studied law, and, when admitted to the bar, established himself at Annapolis.

In 1771, Mr. Paca was chosen a representative of the county in the Legislature. At this time much contention existed between the proprietary government of Maryland and the people. Mr. Paca, who represented the people in this body, proved himself a staunch and determined assertor of their rights, which no one more clearly understood. He zealously opposed the avaricious proceedings of the proprietor and his partisans; and manifested on all occasions a settled hostility to tyranny and oppression.

Mr. Paca was a delegate from Maryland to the Continental Congress of 1774; and was re-appointed to the same station until the year 1778, at the close of which he retired. He was an open advocate for a declaration of independence, as were several of his colleagues. A majority of the people of Maryland, however, were not prepared for such a measure. A change was afterwards effected among the people in relation to this subject. The Convention of Maryland recalled their prohibitory instructions to their delegates; and Mr. Paca gladly received permission to vote according to the dictates of his own fearless and unshackled judgment.

In 1778, Mr. Paca was appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Maryland, an office which he continued

to exercise with great ability until 1780, when he was made by Congress Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals in prize and admiralty cases. In 1782, he was elected Governor of his native State. He was distinguished for great correctness and integrity in the discharge of the duties of this station, and manifested a peculiar regard for the interests of religion and literature. At the close of the year he retired to private life. In 1786, he again accepted the executive chair, and continued in it for a year. On the organization of the Federal Government, in 1789, he received from Washington the appointment of Judge of the District Court of the United States for Maryland. This office he held until the year 1799, when he died, in the sixtieth year of his age.

ROBERT TREAT PAINE.

ROBERT TREAT PAINE was born in Boston, in 1731.

At the age of fourteen years, he became a member of Harvard College, and after leaving it, kept, for a period, a public school, the fortune of his father having been considerably reduced. With the view of obtaining more ample means for the maintenance of his parents, he also made a voyage to Europe. Before entering on the study of the law, he devoted some time to the subject of theology. In 1775, he acted as chaplain to the troops of the provinces at the northward, and afterwards preached occasionally in other places. At length he applied himself earnestly to the study of the law. On being admitted to the bar, he established himself at Taunton, in the county of Bristol, where he resided for many years. In 1768, he was chosen a delegate from that town to the Convention called by the leading men of Boston, in consequence of the abrupt dissolution of the General Court by Governor Bernard.

In 1770, Mr. Paine was engaged in the celebrated trial of Captain Preston, and his men, for the part which they acted in the well known Boston Massacre. On this occasion, in the absence of the Attorney General, he conducted the prosecution on the part of the crown. He

managed the case with great credit and ability, and received from it a considerable degree of distinction. In 1773, he was elected a representative to the General Assembly, from Taunton; and was afterwards chosen a member of the Continental Congress, which met at Philadelphia. The following year he was re-elected.

Of the Congress of 1776, Mr. Paine was also a member; and to the Declaration of Independence, gave his vote and signed his name.

In 1780, Mr. Paine was sent to the Convention which met to deliberate respecting a constitution for the State of Massachusetts; and of the committee which framed that instrument he was a conspicuous member. Under the government organized, he was appointed Attorney General, an office which he held until 1790, when he was transferred to a seat on the bench of the Supreme Judicial Court. In this station he continued until his seventy-third year. His legal attainments were extensive; and he discharged his judicial functions with the most rigid impartiality. Indeed, his strict fidelity sometimes gave him the reputation of unnecessary severity; but the charge could only have proceeded from the lawless and licentious. His memory was uncommonly retentive; and his conversation was marked by great brilliancy of wit, and quickness of apprehension. If he sometimes indulged in railery, he evinced no ill humor at being the subject of it in his turn. He was an excellent scholar; and to literary and religious institutions rendered important services. The death of Judge Paine occurred on the 11th of May, 1814; he having attained the age of eighty-four years.

He was a founder of the American Academy, established in Massachusetts in 1780, and continued his services to it till his death. The degree of Doctor of Laws was conferred on him by Harvard College.

JOHN PENN.

JOHN PENN was born in Caroline county, Virginia, on the 17th of May, 1741. His early education was greatly neglected; and at his father's death, 1759, he became the sole manager of the fortune left him, which, though not large, was competent.

At the age of twenty-one, he was licensed as a practitioner of law. He rose rapidly into notice; and was soon eminently distinguished as an advocate.

In 1774, Mr. Penn moved to the province of North Carolina, where he attained as high a rank in his profession, as he had done in Virginia. The following year he was chosen a delegate from North Carolina to the General Congress, in which body he took his seat on the 12th of October. He was successively re-elected to Congress, in the years 1777, 1778, and 1779, and was respected for his promptitude and fidelity in the discharge of the duties assigned him. He was seldom absent from his seat, and was a watchful guardian of the rights and liberties of his constituents. He was urgent in forwarding the measures which led to the total emancipation of the colonies.

After the return of peace, Mr. Penn betook himself to private retirement. The even tenor of his way was marked by few prominent incidents after this period. He departed from this world, September, 1788, at the age of forty-six years. He had three children, two of whom died unmarried.

GEORGE READ.

GEORGE READ was born in Maryland, in the year 1734. Being designed by his parents for one of the learned professions, he was placed at a seminary at Chester, Pennsylvania. Having there acquired the rudiments of the languages, he was transferred to the care of the accomplished Dr. Allison, with whom he remained until his seventeenth year. He was then placed in the office of John Morland, Esq., a lawyer in the city of

Philadelphia, for the purpose of fitting himself for the legal profession.

In 1753, at the age of nineteen years, Mr. Read was admitted to the bar. In the year following, he commenced the practice of the law, in the town of Newcastle. In 1763, he was appointed Attorney General of the three lower counties on the Delaware. In the year 1765, Mr. Read was elected a representative from Newcastle county to the General Assembly of Delaware, a post which he occupied for twelve years.

On the 1st of August, 1774, Mr. Read was chosen a delegate from Delaware to the Continental Congress. To this station he was annually re-elected, during the whole revolutionary war. Mr. Read did not vote for the Declaration of Independence. But when, at length, the measure had received the sanction of the great national council, and the time arrived for signing the instrument, Mr. Read affixed his signature to it, with all the cordiality of those who had voted in its favor.

Mr. Read was president of the Convention which formed the first Constitution of the State of Delaware. In 1782, he accepted the appointment of Judge of the Court of Appeals, in admiralty cases, an office which he held until the abolition of the court. In 1787, he represented the State of Delaware in the Convention which framed the Constitution of the United States, under which he was immediately chosen a member of the Senate. The duties of this exalted station he discharged till 1793, when he accepted of a seat on the bench of the Supreme Court of Delaware, as Chief Justice. He died in this office, in the autumn of 1798.

The legal attainments of Mr. Read were extensive; and his decisions are still respected as precedents of no slight authority. In private life he was esteemed for an expanded benevolence to all around him.

CÆSAR RODNEY.

CÆSAR RODNEY was a native of Dover, in Delaware where he was born about the year 1730. He inherited from his father a large landed estate. At the age of

twenty-eight, he was appointed High Sheriff in the county where he resided, and on the expiration of his term of service, was created a Justice of the Peace and a Judge of the lower courts. In 1762, and perhaps at an earlier date, he represented the county of Kent, in the Provincial Legislature. In the year 1765, he was sent to the first General Congress, which assembled at New York, to adopt the necessary measures for obtaining a repeal of the Stamp Act, and other odious measures of the British ministry.

In 1769, Mr. Rodney was elected speaker of the House of Representatives, an office which he continued to fill for several years. About the same time, he was appointed chairman of the Committee of Correspondence with the other colonies. He was a member of the well known Congress of 1774; when he had for his colleagues, Thomas M'Kean and George Read.

At the time that the question of independence came before Congress, Mr. Rodney was absent on a tour of duty, in the southern part of Delaware. Mr. M'Kean, and Mr. Read, his colleagues, were divided upon the subject. Aware of the importance of an unanimous vote, Mr. M'Kean despatched, at his private expense, an express into Delaware, to acquaint Mr. Rodney of the delicate posture of affairs, and to hasten his return to Philadelphia. With great exertion, he arrived on the spot, just as the members were entering the door of the state-house, at the final discussion of the subject.

In the autumn of 1776, a Convention was called in Delaware, for the purpose of framing a new Constitution, and of appointing delegates to the succeeding Congress. In this Convention the influence of the royalists proved sufficiently strong to deprive Mr. Rodney of his seat in Congress. He remained, however, a member of the Council of Safety, and of the Committee of Inspection, in both of which offices he exerted himself with great diligence. In 1777, he repaired in person to the camp near Princeton, where he remained for nearly two months, in the most active and laborious employment. During the same year, he was re-appointed a delegate to Congress, but, before taking his seat, was elected President of the State.

In the latter office he continued for about four years, at the close of which period he retired from public life. He was again elected to Congress, but it does not appear that he ever after took his seat in that body. A cancer, which had afflicted him for some time, and which had greatly disfigured his face, now increased its ravages, and, in the early part of the year 1783, brought him to the grave. Mr. Rodney was distinguished for a remarkable degree of good humor and vivacity; and in generosity of character, was an ornament to human nature.

GEORGE ROSS.

GEORGE ROSS was born at Newcastle, Delaware, in the year 1730. At the age of eighteen, he entered upon the study of the law, and when admitted to the bar established himself at Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Here he married, and devoted himself with great zeal to the duties of his profession.

Mr. Ross commenced his political career in 1768, when he was sent a representative to the Assembly of his adopted State. Of this body he continued a member until the year 1774, when he was elected a delegate to the Continental Congress. To this office he was annually re-elected till January, 1777, when he retired. The high sense entertained by his constituents, of his public services and patriotism, was expressed, not merely by thanks, but by a present of one hundred and fifty pounds. This offer was respectfully but firmly declined.

Mr. Ross was an active and influential member of the Provincial Legislature. He was also a member of the Convention which assembled to prepare a declaration of rights on behalf of the State, and to define what should be considered high treason against it. In 1779, he was appointed a Judge of the Court of Admiralty, for the State of Pennsylvania. In July of the same year he died of a sudden attack of the gout, in the fiftieth year of his age. He left behind him the reputation of a thorough and skilful lawyer a consistent politician, and an estimable man.

BENJAMIN RUSH.

BENJAMIN RUSH was born in Byberry, Pennsylvania, on the 24th of December, 1745. His father died when he was only six years of age, and the care of his education devolved upon his mother, whose prudent management of her son may be learned from the result.

After completing his preparatory studies, he was entered, in 1759, a student in the College of Princeton. On leaving college, he commenced the study of medicine, under the superintendence of Dr. Redman, of Philadelphia. In 1766, he went to Edinburgh, where he spent two years at the university in that city, and from which he received the degree of M. D., in 1768. The next winter after his graduation he passed in London, and having visited France, he returned, in the autumn of the same year, to Philadelphia, and commenced the practice of medicine. In 1769, he was elected professor of chemistry in the College of Philadelphia; and was afterwards appointed professor of the institutes and practice of medicine, and of clinical practice, in the same university.

In the year 1793, Philadelphia was visited by that horrible scourge, the yellow fever. For some time after its commencement, no successful system of management was resorted to. Dr. Rush afterwards met with a manuscript, which contained an account of the yellow fever, as it prevailed in Virginia, in 1741, and which was given to him by Dr. Franklin, and had been written by Dr. Mitchell, of Virginia. In this manuscript the efficacy of powerful evacuants was urged, even in cases of extreme debility. This plan Dr. Rush adopted, and imparted the prescription to the college of physicians. An immense accession of business was the consequence, and his mode of treatment was wonderfully successful. The following entry, dated September 10th, is found in his note-book: "Thank God, out of one hundred patients, whom I visited or prescribed for this day, I have lost none."

Between the 8th and 15th of September, Dr. Rush visited and prescribed for a hundred and a hundred and twenty patients a day. In the short intervals of business,

which he spent at his meals, his house was filled with patients, chiefly the poor, waiting for his gratuitous advice. For many weeks he seldom ate without prescribing for many as he sat at table. While thus endangering his health and his life by excess of practice, Dr. Rush received repeated letters from his friends in the country, entreating him to leave the city. To one of these letters he replied, "that he had resolved to stick to his principles, his practice, and his patients, to the last extremity."

The incessant labors of Dr. Rush, during this awful visitation, nearly prostrated his constitution, but he was finally so far restored as to resume the duties of his profession. His mode of treatment was also called into question by many of his contemporaries, notwithstanding the success which had attended it. At length the prejudices against him infected not only physicians, but a considerable part of the community. The public journals were enlisted against him, and in numerous pamphlets his system was attacked with great severity. He was even called a murderer, and was at length threatened to be prosecuted and expelled the city.

Notwithstanding the great labors of Dr. Rush as a lecturer and practitioner, he was a voluminous writer. His printed works consist of seven volumes, six of which treat of medical subjects, and the other is a collection of essays, literary, moral, and philosophical. He was a constant and indefatigable scholar. He extracted so largely from the magazine of information accumulated in the mind of Benjamin Franklin, that he once mentioned to a friend his intention of writing a book with the title of *Frankliniana*, in which he proposed to collect the fragments of wisdom, which he had treasured in his memory, as they fell in conversation from the lips of that great man.

Doctor Rush was a member of the celebrated Congress of 1776, which declared these States free and independent. The impulse given to learning and science by this event he used to estimate of incalculable value. In 1777, he was appointed Physician-General of the military hospital in the middle department. In 1787, he became a member of the Convention of Pennsylvania, for the adop-

tion of the Federal Constitution. This instrument received his warmest approbation. For the last fourteen years of his life, he was treasurer for the United States Mint, by appointment of President Adams.

Doctor Rush took a deep interest in the many private associations, for the advancement of human happiness, with which Pennsylvania abounds. He led the way in the establishment of the Philadelphia Dispensary, and was the principal agent in founding Dickinson College, in Carlisle. For some years he was president of the Society for the Abolition of Slavery, and also of the Philadelphia Medical Society. He was a founder of the Philadelphia Bible Society, and vice-president of the American Philosophical Society. He was an honorary member of many of the literary institutions, both of this country and of Europe. In 1805, he was honored by the King of Prussia, with a medal, for his replies to certain questions on the yellow fever. On a similar account, he was presented with a gold medal in 1807, from the Queen of Etruria; and in 1811, the Emperor of Russia sent him a diamond ring, as a testimony of his respect for his medical character.

The pen of Doctor Rush was powerfully employed against some of the vices and habits of mankind. His "Inquiry into the Effects of Ardent Spirits upon the Human Body and Mind," has been more read than any of his works. He was a brilliant and eloquent lecturer; and he possessed in a high degree those talents which engage the heart.

The life of Doctor Rush was terminated on the 19th of April, 1813, in the sixty-eighth year of his age. During his illness, which was but of few days' continuance, his house was beset by crowds of citizens, such was the general anxiety in respect to this excellent man. When at length he died, the news of his decease spread a deep gloom over the city, and expressions of profound sympathy were received from all parts of the country.

EDWARD RUTLEDGE.

EDWARD RUTLEDGE was born in Charleston, South Carolina, November, 1749. After receiving a respectable education in the learned languages, he commenced the study of the law with his elder brother, who, at that time, was becoming the most eminent advocate at the Charleston bar.

When arrived at the age of twenty-one years, Edward Rutledge sailed for England, to complete his legal education. In 1773, he returned to his native country, and began the practice of his profession. He soon became distinguished for his quickness of apprehension, fluency of speech, and graceful delivery. The general estimation in which his talents were held, was evinced in 1774, by his appointment to the General Congress, as delegate from South Carolina. He was at this time but twenty-five years of age.

In the Congress of 1776, Mr. Rutledge took a conspicuous part in the discussions which preceded the Declaration of Independence. At a subsequent date, he was appointed, with Doctor Franklin and John Adams, a commissioner to wait upon Lord Howe, who had requested Congress to appoint such a committee to enter with him into negotiations for peace. Mr. Rutledge was again elected to Congress in 1779; but in consequence of ill health, he was unable to reach the seat of government, and returned home. In 1780, during the investment of Charleston by the British, he was taken prisoner by the enemy, and sent to St. Augustine, where he was detained nearly a year before he was exchanged.

On the evacuation of Charleston by the British, he returned to the place of his nativity, and, for the space of seventeen years, was successfully engaged in the practice of his profession; rendering from time to time important services to the State, as a member of her Legislature. In 1798, he relinquished his station at the bar, and was elected Chief Magistrate of South Carolina. He continued to perform the duties of this office until within a short time before his death, which took place on the 23d

day of January, 1800. Military and other honors were paid to his memory; and universal regret was expressed at his departure.

ROGER SHERMAN.

ROGER SHERMAN was born in Newton, Massachusetts, on the 19th of April, 1721. He was early apprenticed to a shoemaker, and followed the business of one for some time after he was twenty-two years of age. The father of Roger Sherman died in 1741, leaving his family, which was quite numerous, dependent upon his son for support. He entered upon the task with great cheerfulness. Towards his mother, whose life was protracted to a great age, he always manifested the tenderest affection, and assisted two of his younger brothers to qualify themselves for clergymen.

An elder brother had established himself in New Milford, Connecticut. In 1743, the family of Mr. Sherman removed to that place, and he again commenced business as a shoemaker; but, not long after, he entered into partnership with his brother, whose occupation was that of a country merchant. The mind of Roger Sherman was invincibly bent upon the acquisition of knowledge. The variety and extent of his attainments, even at this time, were almost incredible. He soon became known in the county of Litchfield, where he resided, as a man of superior talents, and of unusual skill in the science of mathematics. At the early age of twenty-four, he was appointed to the office of county surveyor. At this time, he had also made no trifling advances in the science of astronomy. As early as 1748, he supplied the astronomical calculations for an almanac, published in New York, and continued to furnish them for several succeeding years.

In 1749, he was married to Miss Elizabeth Hartwell, of Stoughton, in Massachusetts. After her decease, in 1760, he married Miss Rebecca Prescott, of Danvers, in the same State. By these wives he had fifteen children.

In 1754, Mr. Sherman was admitted as an attorney to the bar. The circumstance which led to his study of the profession was merely accidental, and an accident which,

in a mind less decided and persevering than that of Sherman, would have passed away without improvement. He became rapidly distinguished as a counsellor, and, the year following his admission to the bar, was appointed a Justice of the Peace for New Milford, which town he also represented in the Colonial Assembly. In 1759, he was appointed Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for the county of Litchfield, which office he held for two years. At the expiration of that time, he became a resident of New Haven, of which town, he was soon after appointed a Justice of the Peace, and often represented it in the Colonial Assembly. In 1765, he was made a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, and about the same time was appointed treasurer of Yale College, which institution bestowed upon him the honorary degree of Master of Arts.

In 1766, Mr. Sherman was elected a member of the Upper House, in the General Assembly of Connecticut; and during the same year he was appointed a Judge of the Superior Court. He continued a member of the Upper House for nineteen years, until 1785, when, the two offices which he held being considered incompatible, he relinquished his seat at the council-board, preferring his station as a Judge. The latter office he continued to exercise until 1789, when he resigned it on being chosen to Congress, under the Federal Constitution.

Mr. Sherman was a delegate to the celebrated Congress of 1774, and continued uninterruptedly a member of that body, until his death in 1793. His services during his congressional career were many and important. He was employed on numerous committees, and was indefatigable in the investigation of complicated and difficult subjects. In 1776, he received the most flattering testimony of the high respect in which he was held, in being associated with Adams, Jefferson, Franklin, and Livingston, in the responsible duty of preparing the Declaration of Independence. In the State where he resided, Mr. Sherman continued to receive repeated demonstrations of the esteem with which his fellow-citizens regarded him.

Under the new Constitution, Mr. Sherman was elected

a representative to Congress from the State of Connecticut. At the expiration of two years, a vacancy occurring in the Senate, he was elevated to a seat in that body. In this office he died on the 23d of July, 1793, in the seventy-third year of his age.

A predominant trait in the character of Roger Sherman was his practical wisdom. Although inferior to many in rapidity of genius, he was surpassed by none in clearness of apprehension, energy of mind, or honesty of action. A remark of Jefferson bears testimony to the strength and soundness of his intellect. "That is Sherman," said he to a friend, to whom he was pointing out the most remarkable men of Congress, "a man who never said a foolish thing in his life." Not less honorable to the integrity of his character, is the remark of Fisher Ames, who was wont to say: "If I am absent during the discussion of a subject, and consequently know not on which side to vote, I always look at Roger Sherman, for I am sure *if I vote with him I shall vote right.*"

JAMES SMITH.

JAMES SMITH was born in Ireland, but at what period has not been ascertained. His father was a respectable farmer, who removed to America with a numerous family, and settled on the west side of the Susquehanna river.

After being qualified for the profession of the law, Mr. Smith took up his residence as a lawyer and surveyor, near the present town of Shippensburg; but he subsequently removed to the flourishing village of York, where he continued the practice of his profession during the remainder of his life. On the commencement of the difficulties with the mother country, he resolutely enlisted himself on the patriotic side, and became an uncompromising opposer of the insulting aggressions of the British government. He was chosen a delegate to all the patriotic meetings of the province, and was always in favor of the most vigorous and decided measures. He was the first one who raised a volunteer corps in Pennsylvania, in opposition to the armies of Great Britain; and was elected captain, and afterwards colonel of a regiment. In

January, 1775, he was a delegate to the Convention for the Province of Pennsylvania, and concurred in the spirited declarations of that Assembly.

In the month of July, a Convention was held in Philadelphia, for the purpose of forming a new Constitution for Pennsylvania. Of this body, Mr. Smith was a member, and by it he was chosen a delegate to Congress. He continued to represent his constituents for several years in the great national assembly, and was always active and efficient in the discharge of his duties. On withdrawing from Congress, in November, 1788, he resumed his professional pursuits, which he continued to exercise until the year 1800, when he withdrew from the bar, having practised the law for about sixty years. He died in the year 1806.

RICHARD STOCKTON.

RICHARD STOCKTON was born near Princeton, New Jersey, on the first day of October, 1730, and received his education at the college in his native State, where he graduated at the age of eighteen.

On leaving college, Mr. Stockton commenced the study of the law, and on his admission to the bar, rose quickly to an enviable distinction. About the year 1767, he relinquished his professional business for the purpose of visiting Great Britain. During his tour through the united countries, he was received with great attention. On visiting Edinburgh, he was complimented with a public dinner, by the authorities of that city, the freedom of which was unanimously conferred upon him. During his stay in Scotland, he was so fortunate as to induce the Reverend Dr. Witherspoon, of Paisley, to remove to America, and accept the presidency of New Jersey College.

On his return to this country, Mr. Stockton stood high in the royal favor, and was appointed one of the Royal Judges of the Province, and a member of the Executive Council. But on the commencement of the aggravating system of oppression by which the mother country hoped to humiliate the colonists, he separated himself from the

Royal Council, and joyfully concurred in all the liberal measures of the day. On the 21st of June, 1776, he was elected a delegate to the General Congress, then sitting in Philadelphia. Here he discharged, with fidelity and energy, all the duties assigned him; and on the agitation of the great question of independence, he addressed the house in its behalf.

On the 30th of November, Mr. Stockton was unfortunately taken prisoner by a party of refugee royalists. He was dragged from his bed at night, and carried to New York. Here he was treated with the utmost rigor and indignity. Congress remonstrated with General Howe in his behalf, and he was finally released from his captivity; but the iron had entered his soul. His constitution had experienced an irreparable shock, and his ample fortune was completely reduced. He continued to languish for several years, and at length died, at his residence in Princeton, on the 28th of February, 1781, in the fifty-third year of his age. His character was in every respect estimable. He possessed a cultivated taste for literature, and was a polished and eloquent speaker.

THOMAS STONE.

THOMAS STONE was born in Charles county, Maryland, in 1743. He was a descendant of William Stone, who was Governor of Maryland during the protectorate of Oliver Cromwell.

After acquiring a tolerable acquaintance with the learned languages, he entered upon the study of the law. Having obtained a competent knowledge of the profession, he commenced practice in Fredericktown, Maryland. After residing at this place two years, he removed to Charles county, in the same State. At the age of twenty-eight, he received, by marriage, the sum of one thousand pounds sterling; and with it purchased a farm near the village of Port Tobacco, upon which he continued to reside during the revolutionary struggle. Although his business was by no means lucrative, nor his fortune considerable, his well known honesty and ability caused him to be sent a delegate to the Congress of 1776, to

which body he was re-elected for several subsequent years. After the Maryland legislature had relieved him and his colleagues of the restrictions which bound them, he joyfully affixed his name to the Declaration of Independence.

Mr. Stone was a member of the committee appointed by Congress to prepare Articles of Confederation; and the manner in which he discharged the duties devolving upon him in that station, was highly satisfactory. After seeing the Confederation finally agreed upon in Congress, he declined a re-appointment to that body, but became a member of the Legislature of his native State. In 1783, he was again chosen to Congress; and in the session of 1784, acted for some time as president *pro tempore*. On the adjournment of Congress this year, he retired from that body, and engaged actively in the duties of his profession. His practice now became lucrative in Annapolis, whither he had removed; and he soon rose to distinction at the bar. As an advocate, he excelled in strength of argument, and was often employed in cases of great difficulty.

Mr. Stone died on the 5th of October, 1787, in the forty-fifth year of his age, and while on the point of embarking for Europe, for the benefit of his health.

GEORGE TAYLOR.

GEORGE TAYLOR was born in Ireland, in the year 1716. At a suitable age he commenced the study of medicine but his genius not being adapted to his profession, he relinquished his medical studies, and soon after set sail for America. On his arrival he was entirely destitute of money, and was obliged to resort to manual labor to pay the expenses of his voyage. He was first engaged in the iron works of Mr. Savage, at Durham, on the Delaware, and was afterwards taken into his counting-room as a clerk. In this situation he rendered himself very useful, and, at length, upon the death of Mr. Savage, he became connected in marriage with his widow, and consequently the proprietor of the whole establishment. In a few years the fortune of Mr. Taylor was considerably augmented.

He now purchased a handsome estate, near the river Lehigh, in the county of Northampton, where he erected a spacious mansion, and took up his permanent abode. In 1764, he was chosen a member of the Provincial Assembly, where he soon became conspicuous. In this body he continued to represent the county of Northampton until 1770; but he afterwards returned to Durham, to repair the losses of fortune, to which the change of his place of business had led.

In October, 1776, he was again chosen to the Provincial Assembly; and the following month was appointed, in connexion with others, to report a set of instructions to the delegates which the Assembly had just appointed to the Continental Congress. Pennsylvania was for some time opposed to an immediate rupture with the mother country; and it was only by the casting vote of Mr. Morton, that her consent to the measure of independence was secured. On the 20th of July, 1776, the Pennsylvania Convention proceeded to a new choice of representatives. Mr. Morton, Dr. Franklin, Mr. Morris, and Mr. Wilson, who had voted in favor of the Declaration of Independence, were re-elected. Those who had opposed it were at this time dropped, and the following gentlemen were appointed in their place, viz., Mr. Taylor, Mr. Ross, Mr. Clymer, Dr. Rush, and Mr. Smith.

Mr. Taylor retired from Congress in 1777; and died on the 23d of February, 1781, in the sixty-sixth year of his age.

MATTHEW THORNTON.

MATTHEW THORNTON was born in Ireland, about the year 1714. When he was two or three years old, his father emigrated to America, and, after a residence of a few years at Wiscasset, in Maine, he removed to Worcester, in Massachusetts. Here young Thornton received a respectable education, and subsequently commenced the study of medicine. Soon after completing his preparatory course, he removed to Londonderry, in New Hampshire, where he entered upon the practice of his profession, and soon became distinguished, both as a physician and a surgeon.

In 1745, Dr. Thornton was appointed to accompany the New Hampshire troops, as a surgeon, in the well known expedition, planned by Governor Shirley, against Cape Breton. His professional abilities were here creditably tested; for of the corps of five hundred men, of whom he had charge as a physician, only six died of sickness, previous to the surrender of Louisburg, notwithstanding the hardships to which they were exposed.

Under the royal government, Dr. Thornton was invested with the office of Justice of the Peace, and commissioned as Colonel of the militia. But when that government was dissolved, Colonel Thornton abjured the British interest, and adhered to the patriotic cause. He was president of a Provincial Convention, assembled at Exeter, in 1775.

The next year he was chosen a delegate to the Continental Congress, and signed his name to the engrossed copy of the Declaration of Independence. During the same year, he was appointed Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas; and, shortly after, was raised to the office of Judge of the Superior Court of New Hampshire, in which office he continued until 1782. Two years previous to this latter date, he had purchased a farm, pleasantly situated on the banks of the Merrimack, near Exeter, where he principally devoted himself to agriculture. He was a member of the General Court for one or two years, and a senator in the State Legislature, as also a member of the Council, in 1785, under President Langdon. Dr. Thornton died while on a visit at Newburyport, on the 24th of June, 1803, in the eighty-ninth year of his age.

He was a man of strong powers of mind, and was remarkably entertaining and instructive in conversation.

GEORGE WALTON.

GEORGE WALTON was born in the county of Frederick, Virginia, about the year 1740. He was early apprenticed to a carpenter, who, being a man of contracted views, not only kept him hard at work during the day, but refused

him the privilege of a candle, by which to read at night. Young Walton, however, was resolutely bent on the acquisition of knowledge, and contrived to collect, at his leisure moments, pieces of light-wood, which served at night in place of a candle. His application was intense; and his attainments were rapid and valuable.

At the expiration of his apprenticeship, he removed to the province of Georgia, and entering upon the study of the law, commenced, in 1774, the practice of that profession. At this time the British government were in the exercise of full power in Georgia. Mr. Walton was one of the most zealous of the few advocates of the patriotic cause. He was a member of the committee which prepared a petition to the king; and in 1776, he was elected a delegate to the Continental Congress. In this station he continued to represent the State of Georgia, until October, 1781. He was extremely useful on many important committees, and always evinced much zeal and intelligence in the discharge of his duties.

In December, 1778, Mr. Walton received a Colonel's commission in the militia, and was present at the surrender of Savannah to the British arms. During the obstinate defence of that place, he was wounded in the thigh, in consequence of which, he fell from his horse, and was made a prisoner by the British troops. A brigadier general was demanded in exchange for him, but in September, 1779, he was exchanged for a captain in the navy. In the following month, he was chosen Governor of the State; and in the succeeding January, was elected a member of Congress for two years.

The remainder of Mr. Walton's life was filled up in the discharge of the most respectable offices within the gift of the State. He was at six different times chosen a Representative to Congress; twice appointed Governor of the State; once a Senator of the United States; and at four different periods a Judge of the Superior Courts. He was a man of no ordinary talents; and was conspicuous for his uniform devotion to liberty. He died on the 2d of February, 1804.

WILLIAM WHIPPLE.

WILLIAM WHIPPLE was born at Kittery, Maine, in the year 1730. His education was limited, and on leaving school, he entered on board a merchant vessel, and devoted himself for several years to commercial pursuits. His voyages were chiefly to the West Indies, and, proving successful, he acquired a considerable fortune.

In 1759, he relinquished his seafaring occupation, and commenced business at Portsmouth. He entered with spirit into the controversy between Great Britain and the colonies; and in 1775, represented the town of Portsmouth in the Provincial Congress; which met at Exeter. In 1776, he was appointed a delegate to the General Congress, of which body he continued a member until September, 1779.

In the year 1777, while Mr. Whipple was a member of Congress, the appointment of Brigadier General was bestowed upon him, and the celebrated John Stark, by the Assembly of New Hampshire. He was present at the desperate battle of Saratoga; and his meritorious conduct on the occasion was rewarded, by his being jointly appointed, with Colonel Wilkinson, as the representative of General Gates, to meet two officers from General Burgoyne, and settle the articles of capitulation. He was also selected as one of the officers, who were appointed to conduct the surrendered army to their destined encampment, on Winter Hill, in the vicinity of Boston. In 1778, General Whipple, with a detachment of New Hampshire militia, was engaged, under General Sullivan, in executing a plan for the re-taking of Rhode Island from the British.

During the remaining years of his life, Mr. Whipple filled many important offices. As a representative to the State Legislature, he was highly popular; and in 1782, he received the appointment of receiver of public moneys for New Hampshire, from Mr. Morris, the superintendent of finance. He relinquished the office in 1784, and continued in the station of Judge of the Superior Court of Judicature. The duties of the latter office he discharged until the 28th of November, 1785, when he expired, in the fifty-fifth year of his age.

WILLIAM WILLIAMS.

WILLIAM WILLIAMS was born in Lebanon, Connecticut, on the 8th of April, 1731. At the age of sixteen he entered Harvard College, and after the usual period was honorably graduated. For some time after his return home, he devoted himself to theological studies, under the direction of his father. In 1755, he belonged to the staff of Colonel Ephraim Williams, the founder of Williams College, in Massachusetts, and was present at the celebrated battle fought at the head of Lake George, between the provincial troops and the French Canadians. During the contest, Colonel Williams was shot through the head by an Indian, and killed.

Soon after this occurrence, William Williams returned to Lebanon; and in 1756, was chosen clerk of the town, an office which he continued to hold for the space of forty-five years. About the same time, he was appointed a representative to the General Assembly of Connecticut. In this latter capacity he served for many years, during which he was often appointed clerk of the House, and not unfrequently filled the speaker's chair. In 1780, he was transferred to the Upper House, being elected an Assistant; an office which he held for twenty-four years.

Mr. Williams was a member of the Continental Congress during the years 1776 and 1777; and took an honorable part in the deliberations of that body. During his campaign at the north, he had been disgusted with the British commanders, on account of the haughtiness of their conduct, and the little attachment which they manifested for his native country. The impression was powerful and enduring; and led him to form a sincere and devoted wish for the independence of America.

The following anecdote has been related as a proof of the patriotic spirit of Mr. Williams. Towards the close of the year 1776, the military affairs of the colonies wore a gloomy aspect. In this doubtful state of things, the Council of Safety for Connecticut was called to sit at Lebanon. Two of the members of this council, William Hillhouse and Benjamin Huntington, quartered with Mr. Williams. One evening, the conversation turned upon

the gloomy state of the country, and the probability that, after all, success would crown the British arms. "Well," said Mr. Williams, with great calmness, "if they succeed, it is pretty evident what will be my fate. I have done much to prosecute the contest, and one thing I have done which the British will never pardon—I have signed the Declaration of Independence. I shall be hung." Mr. Hillhouse expressed a confident hope, that America would yet be successful. Mr. Huntington observed, that, in case of ill success, *he* should be exempt from the gallows, as his signature was not attached to the Declaration, nor had he written anything against the British government. To this Mr. Williams replied, his eye kindling as he spoke, "Then, Sir, you deserve to be hanged, for not having done your duty."

Mr. Williams died on the 2d day of August, 1811, in the eighty-first year of his age.

JAMES WILSON.

JAMES WILSON was born in Scotland, about the year 1747. He received an excellent education; studying successively at Glasgow, St. Andrews, and Edinburgh and enjoying the instruction of the distinguished Dr. Blair, and the not less celebrated Dr. Watts.

After completing his studies, he embarked for America and arrived at Philadelphia early in the year 1766. Here he served some time in the capacity of tutor in the College of the city, and acquired the reputation of being a fine classical scholar. He shortly after entered the law office of Mr. John Dickinson, and at the expiration of two years, commenced practice, first at Reading and Carlisle, then at Annapolis, and finally at Philadelphia, where he continued to reside during the remainder of his life. At an early period, Mr. Wilson espoused the cause of the colonies. He was an American in principle from the time that he landed on the American shore. He became a member of the Provincial Convention of Pennsylvania, and in 1775 was unanimously elected a delegate to Congress. His standing, during the whole course of his attendance on this body, was deservedly high. He evinced great ability and fidelity in the discharge of his numerous

duties, and voted in favor of independence, in opposition to a majority of his colleagues.

The high estimation in which Mr. Wilson was held, may be learned from his receiving the appointment of Advocate General for the French government, in the United States. He continued to hold this office, which was both arduous and delicate, for several years, at the close of which, the king of France handsomely rewarded him by a gift of ten thousand livres. About the year 1782, Mr. Wilson was appointed a Counsellor and Agent for Pennsylvania, in the great controversy between that State and the State of Connecticut, relating to certain lands within the charter boundary of Pennsylvania. He discovered much legal knowledge and tact in the management of this business; and the question was finally settled in favor of Pennsylvania.

He was a member of the celebrated Convention of 1787, which assembled in Philadelphia, for the purpose of forming the Constitution of the United States. During the long deliberations on this instrument, he rendered the most important services. He was on the committee which reported the draught of the Constitution, and did much to settle, upon just principles, the great and important points which naturally arose in the formation of a new government.

When the State Convention of Pennsylvania assembled to ratify the Federal Constitution, Mr. Wilson was returned a member of that body; and as he was the only one who had assisted in forming that instrument, it devolved upon him to explain to the Convention the principles upon which it was founded, and the great objects which it had in view.

In 1789, Mr. Wilson was appointed, by Washington, a Judge of the Supreme Court, under the Federal Constitution. In this office he continued until his death, which occurred on the 28th of August, 1798, at Edenton, in North Carolina, while on a circuit attending to his judicial duties. Mr. Wilson was twice married; the first time to a daughter of William Bird, of Berks county, and the second time to a daughter of Mr. Ellis Gray, of Boston.

JOHN WITHERSPOON.

JOHN WITHERSPOON, alike distinguished as a minister of the gospel, and a patriot of the Revolution, was born in the parish of Yester, a few miles from Edinburgh, on the fifth of February, 1722. He was lineally descended from John Knox, the celebrated Scottish reformer; and was sent at an early age to the public school at Haddington, where he applied himself closely to the study of classical literature.

At the age of fourteen, he was removed to the University of Edinburgh; and on completing his theological studies, he was ordained and settled in the parish of Beith, in the west of Scotland.

Doctor Witherspoon left behind him a sphere of great usefulness and respectability, in retiring from his native land. He arrived in America in August, 1768, and in the same month was inaugurated President of the College of New Jersey. His exertions in raising the character and increasing the funds of this institution, were successful and indefatigable.

On the occurrence of the American war, the college was broken up, and the officers and students were dispersed. Doctor Witherspoon now assumed a new attitude before the American public. On becoming a citizen of the country, he warmly espoused her cause against the British ministry. He was a delegate to the Convention which formed the republican Constitution of New Jersey; and proved himself as able a politician as he was known to be philosopher and divine. Early in the year 1776, he was chosen a representative to the General Congress, by the people of New Jersey. He took a part in the deliberations on the question of independence, for which he was a warm advocate. To a gentleman, who declared that the country was not yet ripe for a declaration of independence, he replied: "Sir, in my judgment, the country is not only ripe, but rotting."

For the space of seven years, Doctor Witherspoon continued a delegate from New Jersey to the Continental Congress. Few men acted with more energy or prompt-

titude, or attended more closely and faithfully than he to the duties of his station.

At the close of the year 1779, Doctor Witherspoon voluntarily retired from Congress, and resigned the care and instruction of the students to another. His name, however, continued to add celebrity to the institution, over which he had so creditably presided. But he did not remain long in repose. In 1781, he was again chosen to Congress, and in 1783, he embarked for England, with the view of promoting the interests of the college, for which he had already done so much. He returned to America in 1784, and again withdrew from active life.

Doctor Witherspoon was an admirable model for a young preacher: "A profound theologian, perspicuous and simple in his manner; an universal scholar, acquainted with human nature; a grave, dignified, solemn speaker;—he brought all the advantages derived from these sources, to the illustration and enforcement of divine truth. His social qualities rendered him one of the most companionable of men."

Doctor Witherspoon was twice married; the first time in Scotland, at an early age, to a lady of the name of Montgomery; and the second time, at the age of seventy years, to a lady who was only twenty-three. He had several children, who all passed, or are passing, honorably through life. He died on the 15th day of November, 1794, in the seventy-third year of his age. His works have been collected in four volumes, octavo.

OLIVER WOLCOTT.

OLIVER WOLCOTT was born in Connecticut, in 1726. His family was ancient and distinguished; and his ancestors successively held a long list of honorable offices in the State. He was graduated at Yale College, in 1747; and the same year received a commission as captain in the army, in the French war. At the head of a company, which was raised by his own exertions, he proceeded to the defence of the northern frontiers, where he continued until the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.

At this time he returned to his native State, and enter-

ed upon the study of medicine. He never engaged in the practice of the profession, however, in consequence of receiving the appointment of Sheriff of the county of Litchfield. In 1774, he was elected an Assistant in the Council of the State, and continued in the office till 1786. He was also for some time Chief Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for the county, and Judge of the Court of Probate for the district of Litchfield. In 1776, he was chosen a delegate from Connecticut to the National Congress at Philadelphia. He participated in the deliberations of that body, and had the honor of recording his name in favor of the Declaration of Independence.

From the time of the adoption of that measure until 1786, he was either in attendance upon Congress, in the field in defence of his country, or, as a Commissioner of Indian affairs for the northern department, assisting in settling the terms of peace with the Six Nations. In 1786, he was chosen Lieutenant-Governor of Connecticut, an office which he continued to hold for ten years, at the expiration of which he was raised to the Chief Magistracy of the State. He died on the 1st of December, 1797, in the seventy-second year of his age.

Mr. Wolcott was possessed of great resolution of character; and his attainments in literature were of a superior order. He was also distinguished for his love of order and religion. In 1755, he was married to a Miss Collins, of Guilford, an estimable woman, with whom he enjoyed much domestic felicity, for the space of forty years.

GEORGE WYTHE.

GEORGE WYTHE was born in the county of Elizabeth city, Virginia, in the year 1726. His mother, who was a woman of superior acquirements, instructed him in the learned languages, and he made considerable progress in several of the solid sciences, and in polite literature. Before he became of age, he was deprived of both his parents; and inheriting considerable property, he became addicted, for several years, to dissipated courses and habits of profligacy. But at the age of thirty, he abandoned entirely his youthful follies, and applied himself with inde-

fatigable industry to study; never relapsing into any indulgence inconsistent with a manly and virtuous character.

Having studied the profession of law, he soon attained a high reputation at the bar, and was appointed from his native county to a seat in the House of Burgesses. He took a conspicuous part in the proceedings of this assembly, and some of the most eloquent state papers of the times were drawn up by him. The remonstrance to the House of Commons, which was of a remarkably fearless and independent tone, was the production of his pen. By his patriotic firmness and zeal, he powerfully contributed to the ultimate success of his country.

In 1775, Mr. Wythe was elected a delegate from Virginia to the Continental Congress in Philadelphia. He assisted in bringing forward and urging the Declaration of Independence, and affixed his name to that deathless instrument. During this latter year, he was appointed, in connexion with Thomas Jefferson, Edward Pendleton, and others, to revise the laws of the State of Virginia. In the year 1777, Mr. Wythe was chosen speaker of the House of Delegates, and during the same year was made Judge of the High Court of Chancery. On the new organization of the Court of Equity, in a subsequent year, he was appointed sole Chancellor, a station which he filled, with great ability, for more than twenty years.

In the course of the Revolution, Mr. Wythe suffered much in respect to his property. By judicious management, however, he contrived to retrieve his fortune, and preserve his credit unimpaired. Of the Convention of 1787, appointed to revise the Federal Constitution, he was an efficient member. During the debates, he acted for the most part as chairman. He was a warm advocate for the Constitution, and esteemed it the surest guarantee of the peace and prosperity of the country. He died on the 8th of June, 1806, in the eighty-first year of his age, after a short but very excruciating sickness. By his last will and testament, Mr. Wythe bequeathed his valuable library and philosophical apparatus to his friend, Mr. Jefferson, and distributed the remainder of his little property among the grand-children of his sister, and the slaves whom he had set free.

CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

WE, the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

ARTICLE I.

SEC. I.—All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

SEC. II.—1. The House of Representatives shall be composed of members chosen every second year, by the people of the several states: and the electors in each state shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the state legislature.

2. No person shall be a representative who shall not have attained the age of twenty-five years, and been seven years a citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an inhabitant of the state in which he shall be chosen.

3. Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several states which may be included within this union, according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to service for a term of years, and, excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other persons. The actual enumeration shall be made within three years after the first meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent term of ten years, in such manner as they shall by law direct. The number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty thousand, but each state shall have at least one representative: and until such enumeration shall be made, the state of *New Hampshire* shall be entitled to

choose three; *Massachusetts* eight; *Rhode Island and Providence Plantations*, one; *Connecticut* five; *New York* six; *New Jersey*, four; *Pennsylvania*, eight; *Delaware*, one; *Maryland*, six; *Virginia*, ten; *North Carolina*, five; *South Carolina*, five; *Georgia*, three.

4. When vacancies happen in the representation from any state, the executive authority thereof shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies.

5. The House of Representatives shall choose their speaker and other officers, and shall have the sole power of impeachment.

SEC. III.—1. The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two senators from each state, chosen by the legislature thereof, for six years; and each senator shall have one vote.

2. Immediately after they shall be assembled in consequence of the first election, they shall be divided, as equally as may be, into three classes. The seats of the senators of the first class shall be vacated at the expiration of the second year, of the second class at the expiration of the fourth year, and the third class at the expiration of the sixth year, so that one third may be chosen every second year; and if vacancies happen by resignation or otherwise, during the recess of the legislature of any state, the executive thereof may make temporary appointments until the next meeting of the legislature, which shall then fill such vacancies.

3. No person shall be a senator who shall not have attained the age of thirty years, and been nine years a citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an inhabitant of that state for which he shall be chosen.

4. The Vice-President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no vote, unless they be equally divided.

5. The Senate shall choose their other officers, and also a President pro tempore in the absence of the Vice-President, or when he shall exercise the office of President of the United States.

6. The Senate shall have the sole power to try all impeachments. When sitting for that purpose they shall be

on oath or affirmation. When the President of the United States is tried, the Chief Justice shall preside; and no person shall be convicted without the concurrence of two thirds of the members present.

7. Judgment, in cases of impeachment, shall not extend further than to removal from office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust, or profit under the United States; but the party convicted shall, nevertheless, be liable and subject to indictment, trial, judgment, and punishment according to law.

SEC. IV.—1. The times, places, and manner of holding elections for senators and representatives shall be prescribed in each state, by the legislature thereof; but the Congress may, at any time, by law, make or alter such regulations, except as to the places of choosing senators.

2. The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year; and such meeting shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.

SEC. V.—1. Each house shall be judge of the elections, returns, and qualifications of its own members; and a majority of each shall constitute a quorum to do business; but a smaller number may adjourn from day to day, and may be authorized to compel the attendance of absent members, in such manner, and under such penalties, as each house may provide.

2. Each house may determine the rules of its proceedings, punish its members for disorderly behavior, and, with the concurrence of two thirds, expel a member.

3. Each house shall keep a journal of its proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such parts as may, in their judgment, require secrecy; and the yeas and nays of the members of either house on any question shall, at the desire of one fifth of those present, be entered on the journal.

4. Neither house, during the session of Congress, shall, without the consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other place than that in which the two houses shall be sitting.

SEC VI.—1. The senators and representatives shall receive a compensation for their services, to be ascertained

by law, and paid out of the treasury of the United States. They shall, in all cases, except treason, felony, and breach of the peace, be privileged from arrest, during their attendance at the session of their respective houses, and in going to or returning from the same; and for any speech or debate in either house, they shall not be questioned in any other place.

2. No senator or representative shall, during the time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil office under the authority of the United States, which shall have been created, or the emoluments whereof shall have been increased, during such time; and no person holding any office under the United States, shall be a member of either house, during his continuance in office.

SEC. VII.—1. All bills for raising revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with amendments as on other bills.

2. Every bill, which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a law, be presented to the President of the United States: if he approve, he shall sign it; but if not, he shall return it with his objections, to that house in which it shall have originated, who shall enter the objections at large on their journal, and proceed to reconsider it. If, after such reconsideration, two thirds of that house shall agree to pass the bill, it shall be sent, together with the objections, to the other house, and if approved by two thirds of that house, it shall become a law. But in all such cases, the votes of both houses shall be determined by yeas and nays; and the names of the persons voting for and against the bill, shall be entered on the journals of each house respectively. If any bill shall not be returned by the President within ten days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the same shall be a law, in like manner as if he had signed it, unless Congress, by their adjournment, prevent its return; in which case it shall not be a law.

3. Every order, resolution, or vote, to which the concurrence of the Senate and House of Representatives may be necessary (except on a question of adjournment) shall be presented to the President of the United States;

and before the same shall take effect, shall be approved by him, or being disapproved by him, shall be re-passed by two thirds of the Senate and House of Representatives, according to the rules and limitations prescribed in the case of a bill.

SEC. VIII.—The Congress shall have power—

1. To lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises; to pay the debts and provide for the common defence and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts, and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States:
2. To borrow money on the credit of the United States:
- † 3. To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian tribes:
4. To establish a uniform rule of naturalization, and uniform laws on the subject of bankruptcies, throughout the United States:
5. To coin money, regulate the value thereof, and of foreign coin, and fix the standard of weights and measures:
6. To provide for the punishment of counterfeiting the securities and current coin of the United States:
7. To establish post-offices and post-roads:
8. To promote the progress of science and useful arts, by securing, for limited times, to authors and inventors, the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries:
9. To constitute tribunals inferior to the supreme court:
- ‡ 10. To define and punish piracies and felonies committed on the high seas, and offences against the law of nations:
- ‡ 11. To declare war, grant letters of marque and reprisal, and make rules concerning captures on land and water:
12. To raise and support armies; but no appropriation of money to that use shall be for a longer term than two years:
13. To provide and maintain a navy:

14. To make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces :

15. To provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions :

16. To provide for organizing, arming and disciplining the militia, and for governing such parts of them as may be employed in the service of the United States, reserving to the states respectively the appointment of the officers, and the authority of training the militia, according to the discipline prescribed by Congress :

17. To exercise exclusive legislation, in all cases whatsoever, over such district (not exceeding ten miles square) as may, by cession of particular states, and the acceptance of Congress, become the seat of government of the United States, and to exercise like authority over all places purchased by the consent of the legislature of the state in which the same shall be, for the erection of forts, magazines, arsenals, dock-yards, and other needful buildings : and,

18. To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

SEC. IX.—1. The migration or importation of such persons as any of the states, now existing, shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight : but a tax or duty may be imposed on such importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each person.

2. The privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended, unless when, in cases of rebellion or invasion, the public safety may require it.

3. No bill of attainder, or ex post facto law, shall be passed.

4. No capitation or other direct tax shall be laid, unless in proportion to the census or enumeration herein before directed to be taken.

5. No tax or duty shall be laid on articles exported from any state. No preference shall be given, by any

regulation of commerce or revenue, to the ports of one state over those of another; nor shall vessels bound to or from one state be obliged to enter, clear, or pay duties in another.

6. No money shall be drawn from the treasury, but in consequence of appropriations made by law; and a regular statement and account of the receipts and expenditures of all public money shall be published from time to time.

7. No title of nobility shall be granted by the United States; and no person holding any office of profit or trust under them, shall, without the consent of the Congress, accept of any present, emolument, office or title of any kind whatever, from any king, prince, or foreign state.

↓ SEC. X.—1. No state shall enter into any treaty, alliance, or confederation; grant letters of marque and reprisal; coin money; emit bills of credit; make anything but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts; pass any bill of attainder, ex post facto law, or law impairing the obligation of contracts; or grant any title of nobility.

2. No state shall, without the consent of Congress, lay any imposts or duties on imports or exports, except what may be absolutely necessary for executing its inspection laws; and the net produce of all duties and imposts laid by any state on imports or exports, shall be for the use of the treasury of the United States; and all such laws shall be subject to the revision and control of the Congress. No state shall, without the consent of Congress, lay any duty on tonnage, keep troops or ships of war in time of peace, enter into any agreement or compact with another state or with a foreign power, or engage in war, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent danger as will not admit of delay.

ARTICLE II.

SEC. I.—1. The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his office during the term of four years, and, together with the Vice-President, chosen for the same term, be elected as follows:

2. Each state shall appoint, in such manner as the legislature thereof may direct, a number of electors, equal to the whole number of senators and representatives to which the state may be entitled in the Congress; but no senator or representative, or person holding an office of trust or profit under the United States, shall be appointed an elector.

3. [Annulled. See Amendments, Art. 12.]

4. The Congress may determine the time of choosing the electors, and the day on which they shall give their votes; which day shall be the same throughout the United States.

5. No person, except a natural-born citizen, or a citizen of the United States at the time of the adoption of this constitution, shall be eligible to the office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that office, who shall not have attained the age of thirty-five years, and been fourteen years a resident within the United States.

6. In case of the removal of the President from office, or of his death, resignation, or inability to discharge the powers and duties of said office, the same shall devolve on the Vice-President; and the Congress may by law provide for the case of removal, death, resignation, or inability, both of the President and Vice-President, declaring what officer shall then act as President, and such officer shall act accordingly, until the disability be removed, or a President shall be elected.

7. The President shall, at stated times, receive for his services a compensation which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the period for which he shall have been elected; and he shall not receive, within that period, any other emolument from the United States, or any of them.

8. Before he enter on the execution of his office, he shall take the following oath or affirmation:—

“I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the constitution of the United States.”

SEC. II.—1. The President shall be commander-in

chief of the army and navy of the United States, and of the militia of the several states, when called into the actual service of the United States : he may require the opinion, in writing, of the principal officer in each of the executive departments, upon any subject relating to the duties of their respective offices ; and he shall have power to grant reprieves and pardons for offences against the United States, except in cases of impeachment.

2. He shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two thirds of the senators present concur ; and he shall nominate, and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, judges of the supreme court, and all other officers of the United States, whose appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by law. But the Congress may, by law, vest the appointment of such inferior officers as they think proper, in the President alone, in the courts of law, or in the heads of departments.

3. The President shall have power to fill up all vacancies that may happen during the recess of the Senate, by granting commissions which shall expire at the end of their next session.

SEC. III —1. He shall, from time to time, give to the Congress information of the state of the union, and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient ; he may, on extraordinary occasions, convene both houses, or either of them, and in case of disagreement between them, with respect to the time of adjournment, he may adjourn them to such time as he shall think proper ; he shall receive ambassadors, and other public ministers ; he shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed ; and shall commission all the officers of the United States.

SEC. IV.—1. The President, Vice-President, and all civil officers of the United States, shall be removed from office on impeachment for, and conviction of, treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors.

ARTICLE III.

SEC. I.—1. The judicial power of the United States shall be vested in one supreme court, and in such inferior courts as the Congress may, from time to time, ordain and establish. The judges, both of the supreme and inferior courts, shall hold their offices during good behavior, and shall, at stated times, receive for their services a compensation which shall not be diminished during their continuance in office.

SEC. II.—1. The judicial power shall extend to all cases in law and equity arising under this constitution, the laws of the United States, and treaties made, or which shall be made, under their authority; to all cases affecting ambassadors, and other public ministers and consuls; to all cases of admiralty and maritime jurisdiction to controversies to which the United States shall be a party; to controversies between two or more states; between a state and citizens of another state; between citizens of different states; between citizens of the same state, claiming lands under grants of different states, and between a state, or the citizens thereof, and foreign states, citizens or subjects.

2. In all cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, and those in which a state shall be a party, the supreme court shall have original jurisdiction. In all other cases before mentioned, the supreme court shall have appellate jurisdiction, both as to law and fact, with such exceptions, and under such regulations as the Congress shall make.

3. The trial of all crimes, except in cases of impeachment, shall be by jury; and such trial shall be held in the state where the said crimes shall have been committed; but when not committed within any state, the trial shall be at such place or places as the Congress may by law have directed.

SEC. III.—1. Treason against the United States shall consist only in levying war against them, or in adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort. No person shall be convicted of treason, unless on the testimony of two witnesses to the same overt act, or confessions in open court.

2. The Congress shall have power to declare the punishment of treason ; but no attainder of treason shall work corruption of blood, or forfeiture, except during the life of the person attainted.

ARTICLE IV.

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SEC. I.—1. Full faith and credit shall be given in each state to the public acts, records, and judicial proceedings of every other state. And the Congress may, by general laws, prescribe the manner in which such acts, records, and proceedings shall be proved, and the effect thereof.

SEC. II.—1. The citizens of each state shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several states.

2. A person charged in any state with treason, felony, or other crime, who shall flee from justice, and be found in another state, shall, on demand of the executive authority of the state from which he fled, be delivered up to be removed to the state having jurisdiction of the crime.

3. No person held to service or labor in one state, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.

SEC. III.—1. New states may be admitted by the Congress into this union ; but no new state shall be formed or erected within the jurisdiction of any other state ; nor any state be formed by the junction of two or more states, or parts of states, without the consent of the legislature of the states concerned, as well as of the Congress.

2. The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States , and nothing in this constitution shall be so construed as to prejudice any claims of the United States, or of any particular state.

SEC. IV.—1. The United States shall guarantee to every state of this union, a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion ;

and, on application of the legislature, or of the executive, (when the legislature cannot be convened,) against domestic violence.

ARTICLE V.

1. The Congress, whenever two thirds of both houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this constitution, or on the application of the legislatures of two thirds of the several states, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which, in either case, shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this constitution, when ratified by the legislatures of three fourths of the several states, or by conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other mode of ratification may be proposed by the Congress ; provided, that no amendment which may be made prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight, shall in any manner affect the first and fourth clauses in the ninth section of the first article ; and that no state, without its consent, shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the Senate.

ARTICLE VI.

1. All debts contracted, and engagements entered into, before the adoption of this constitution, shall be as valid against the United States under this constitution, as under the confederation.

2. This constitution, and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof, and all treaties made, or which shall be made under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land ; and the judges in every state shall be bound thereby ; anything in the constitution or laws of any state to the contrary notwithstanding.

3. The senators and representatives before mentioned, and the members of the several state legislatures, and all executive and judicial officers, both of the United States and of the several states, shall be bound by oath or affirmation to support this constitution ; but no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States.

ARTICLE VII.

1. The ratification of the conventions of nine states shall be sufficient for the establishment of this constitution between the states so ratifying the same.

Done in convention, by the unanimous consent of the states present, the seventeenth day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the twelfth. In witness whereof, we have hereunto subscribed our names.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

President, and Deputy from Virginia.

New Hampshire.

JOHN LANGDON,
NICHOLAS GILMAN.

Massachusetts.

NATHANIEL GORHAM,
RUFUS KING.

Connecticut.

WM. SAMUEL JOHNSON,
ROGER SHERMAN.

New York.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

New Jersey.

WILLIAM LIVINGSTON,
DAVID BREARLEY,
WILLIAM PATTERSON,
JONATHAN DAYTON.

Pennsylvania.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,
THOMAS MIFFLIN,
ROBERT MORRIS,
GEORGE CLYMER,
THOMAS FITZSIMONS,
JARED INGERSOLL,
JAMES WILSON,
GOVERNEUR MORRIS.

Attest,

Delaware.

GEORGE REED,
GUNNING BEDFORD, JR.
JOHN DICKERSON,
RICHARD BASSETT,
JACOB BROOM.

Maryland.

JAMES M'HENRY,
DANIEL of ST. THO.
JENIFER,
DANIEL CARROLL.

Virginia.

JOHN BLAIR,
JAMES MADISON, JR.

North Carolina.

WILLIAM BLOUNT,
RICH. DOBBS SPAIGHT,
HUGH WILLIAMSON.

South Carolina.

JOHN RUTLEDGE,
CHARLES C. PINCKNEY,
CHARLES PINCKNEY,
PIERCE BUTLER.

Georgia.

WILLIAM FEW,
ABRAHAM BALDWIN.

WILLIAM JACKSON, *Secretary.*

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION.

ART. I.—Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

ART. II.—A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

ART. III.—No soldier shall, in time of peace, be quartered in any house without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

ART. IV.—The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated; and no warrants shall issue but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

ART. V.—No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia when in actual service, in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled, in any criminal case, to be witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

ART. VI.—In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the state and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor; and to have the assistance of counsel for his defence.

ART. VII.—In suits of common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved; and no fact, tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

ART. VIII.—Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

ART. IX.—The enumeration in the constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

ART. X.—The powers not delegated to the United States by the constitution, nor prohibited to it by the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.

ART. XI.—The judicial power of the United States shall not be construed to extend to any suit in law or equity, commenced or prosecuted against one of the United States by citizens of another state, or by citizens or subjects of any foreign state.

ART. XII.—1. The electors shall meet in their respective states, and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same state with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the persons voted for as President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice-President; and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as President, and of all persons voted for as Vice-President, and of the number of votes for each; which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates, and the votes shall then be counted; the person having the greatest number of votes for President, shall be President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest number, not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately by ballot, the Presi-

dent. But in choosing the President, the votes shall be taken by states, the representation from each state having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two thirds of the states, and a majority of all the states shall be necessary to a choice. And if the House of Representatives shall not choose a President, whenever the right of choice shall devolve upon them, before the fourth day of March next following, then the Vice-President shall act as President, as in the case of the death or other constitutional disability of the President.

2. The person having the greatest number of votes as Vice-President, shall be the Vice-President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed; and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list, the Senate shall choose the Vice-President; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two thirds of the whole number of Senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice.

3. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President, shall be eligible to that of Vice-President of the United States.

ART. XIII.—If any citizen of the United States shall accept, claim, receive or retain any title of nobility or honor, or shall, without the consent of Congress, accept or retain any present, pension, office, or emolument of any kind whatever, from any emperor, king, prince, or foreign power, such person shall cease to be a citizen of the United States, and shall be incapable of holding any office of trust or profit under them, or either of them.

WASHINGTON'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS,

APRIL 30, 1789.

*Fellow-Citizens of the Senate
and House of Representatives :*

AMONG the vicissitudes incident to life, no event could have filled me with greater anxieties than that of which the notification was transmitted by your order, and received on the 14th day of the present month. On the one hand, I was summoned by my country, whose voice I can never hear but with veneration and love, from a retreat which I had chosen with the fondest predilection, and, in my flattering hopes, with an immutable decision, as the asylum of my declining years, a retreat which was rendered every day more necessary as well as more dear to me by the addition of habit to inclination, and of frequent interruptions in my health, to the gradual waste committed on it by time. On the other hand, the magnitude and difficulty of the trust to which the voice of my country called me, being sufficient to awaken in the wisest and most experienced of her citizens a distrustful scrutiny into his qualifications, could not but overwhelm with despondence, one, who, inheriting inferior endowments from nature, and unpractised in the duties of civil administration, ought to be peculiarly conscious of his own deficiencies. In this conflict of emotions, all that I dare aver is, that it has been my faithful study to collect my duty from a just appreciation of every circumstance by which it might be effected. All I dare hope is, that if in executing this task I have been too much swayed by a grateful remembrance of former instances, or by an affectionate sensibility to this transcendent proof, of the confidence of my fellow-citizens, and have thence too little consulted my incapacity as well as disinclination for the weighty and untried cares before me, my error will be palliated by the motives which misled me, and its consequences be judged by my country with some share of the partiality with which they originated.

Such being the impressions under which I have, in obedience to the public summons, repaired to the present station, it would be peculiarly improper to omit, in this first official act, my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being who rules over the universe—who presides in the councils of nations—and whose providential aids can supply every human defect, that his benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness of the people of the United States a government instituted by themselves for these essential purposes, and may enable every instrument employed in its administration to execute with success the functions allotted to his charge. In tendering this homage to the great Author of every public and private good, I assure myself that it expresses your sentiments not less than my own, nor those of my fellow-citizens at large, less than either. No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the invisible Hand which conducts the affairs of men, more than the people of the United States. Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency; and in the important revolution just accomplished in the system of their united government, the tranquil deliberations and voluntary consent of so many distinct communities, from which the event has resulted, cannot be compared with the means by which most governments have been established, without some return of pious gratitude, along with an humble anticipation of the future blessings which the past seems to presage. These reflections, arising out of the present crisis, have forced themselves too strongly on my mind to be suppressed. You will join with me, I trust, in thinking that there are none under the influence of which the proceedings of a new and free government can more auspiciously commence.

By the article establishing the executive department, it is made the duty of the President "to recommend to your consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient." The circumstances under which I now meet you will acquit me from entering into that subject farther than to refer to the great constitutional charter under which you are assembled, and which, in defining

your powers, designates the objects to which your attention is to be given. It will be more consistent with those circumstances, and far more congenial with the feelings which actuate me, to substitute, in place of a recommendation of particular measures, the tribute that is due to the talents, the rectitude, and the patriotism which adorn the characters selected to devise and adopt them. In these honorable qualifications I behold the surest pledges that, as on one side, no local prejudices or attachments, no separate views nor party animosities, will misdirect the comprehensive and equal eye which ought to watch over this great assemblage of communities and interests: so, on another, that the foundations of our national policy will be laid in the pure and immutable principles of private morality, and the pre-eminence of free government be exemplified by all the attributes which can win the affections of its citizens, and command the respect of the world. I dwell on this prospect with every satisfaction which an ardent love for my country can inspire, since there is no truth more thoroughly established than that there exists in the economy and course of nature, an indissoluble union between virtue and happiness; between duty and advantage; between the genuine maxims of an honest and magnanimous policy and the solid rewards of public prosperity and felicity; since we ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right which Heaven itself has ordained; and since the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the republican model of government, are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as finally, staked on the experiment intrusted to the hands of the American people.

Besides the ordinary objects submitted to your care, it will remain with your judgment to decide how far an exercise of the occasional power delegated by the fifth article of the constitution is rendered expedient at the present juncture by the nature of the objections which have been urged against the system, or by the degree of inquietude which has given birth to them. Instead of undertaking particular recommendations on this subject, in which I could be guided by no lights derived from official oppor

tunities, I shall again give way to my entire confidence in your discernment and pursuit of the public good : for I assure myself that while you carefully avoid every alteration which might endanger the benefits of a united and effective government, or which ought to await the future lessons of experience, a reverence for the characteristic rights of freemen, and a regard for the public harmony, will sufficiently influence your deliberations on the question how far the former can be more impregnably fortified, or the latter be safely and advantageously promoted.

To the preceding observations I have one to add, which will be most properly addressed to the House of Representatives. It concerns myself, and will therefore be as brief as possible. When I was first honored with a call into the service of my country, then on the eve of an arduous struggle for its liberties, the light in which I contemplated my duty required that I should renounce every pecuniary compensation. From this resolution I have in no instance departed, and being still under the impressions which produced it, I must decline, as inapplicable to myself, any share in the personal emoluments which may be indispensably included in a permanent provision for the executive department, and must accordingly pray that the pecuniary estimates for the station in which I am placed, may, during my continuance in it, be limited to such actual expenditures as the public good may be thought to require.

Having thus imparted to you my sentiments as they have been awakened by the occasion which brings us together, I shall take my present leave, but not without resorting once more to the benign Parent of the human race, in humble supplication that, since he has been pleased to favor the American people with opportunities for deliberating in perfect tranquility, and dispositions for deciding with unparalleled unanimity on a form of government for the security of their union and the advancement of their happiness, so his divine blessing may be equally conspicuous in the enlarged views, the temperate consultations, and the wise measures on which the success of this government must depend.

WASHINGTON'S FIRST ANNUAL ADDRESS

JANUARY 8, 1790.

*Fellow-Citizens of the Senate,
and House of Representatives :*

I embrace with great satisfaction the opportunity which now presents itself of congratulating you on the present favorable prospects of our public affairs. The recent accession of the important state of North Carolina to the constitution of the United States, (of which official information has been received,) the rising credit and respectability of our country, the general and increasing good will towards the government of the Union, and the concord, peace, and plenty with which we are blessed, are circumstances auspicious, in an eminent degree, to our national prosperity.

In resuming your consultations for the general good, you cannot but derive encouragement from the reflection that the measures of the last session have been as satisfactory to your constituents, as the novelty and difficulty of the work allowed you to hope. Still further to realize their expectations, and to secure the blessings which a gracious Providence has placed within our reach, will, in the course of the present important session, call for the cool and deliberate exertion of your patriotism, firmness, and wisdom.

Among the many interesting objects which will engage your attention, that of providing for the common defence will merit particular regard. To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace.

A free people ought not only to be armed, but disciplined; to which end a uniform and well-digested plan is requisite: and their safety and interest require that they should promote such manufactures as tend to render them independent of others for essential, particularly military supplies.

The proper establishment of the troops which may be deemed indispensable, will be entitled to mature consideration. In the arrangements which may be made respecting it, it will be of importance to conciliate the

comfortable support of the officers and soldiers, with a due regard to economy.

There was reason to hope that the pacific measures adopted with regard to certain hostile tribes of Indians would have relieved the inhabitants of our southern and western frontiers from their depredations ; but you will perceive, from the information contained in the papers which I shall direct to be laid before you, (comprehending a communication from the commonwealth of Virginia,) that we ought to be prepared to afford protection to those parts of the Union, and, if necessary, to punish aggressors.

The interests of the United States require that our intercourse with other nations should be facilitated by such provisions as will enable me to fulfil my duty in that respect, in the manner which circumstances may render most conducive to the public good, and, to this end, that the compensations to be made to the persons who may be employed should, according to the nature of their appointments, be defined by law ; and a competent fund designated for defraying the expenses incident to the conduct of our foreign affairs.

Various considerations also render it expedient that the terms on which foreigners may be admitted to the rights of citizens, should be speedily ascertained by a uniform rule of naturalization.

Uniformity in the currency, weights, and measures of the United States, is an object of great importance, and will, I am persuaded, be duly attended to.

The advancement of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, by all proper means, will not, I trust, need recommendation ; but I cannot forbear intimating to you the expediency of giving effectual encouragement, as well to the introduction of new and useful inventions from abroad, as to the exertions of skill and genius in producing them at home ; and of facilitating the intercourse between the distant parts of our country, by a due attention to the post-office and post-roads.

Nor am I less persuaded that you will agree with me in opinion, that there is nothing which can better deserve your patronage than the promotion of science and litera-

ture. Knowledge is in every country the surest basis of public happiness. In one in which the measures of government receive their impressions so immediately from the sense of the community as in ours, it is proportionably essential. To the security of a free constitution it contributes in various ways : by convincing those who are intrusted with the public administration, that every valuable end of government is best answered by the enlightened confidence of the people ; and by teaching the people themselves to know and to value their own rights ; to discern and provide against invasions of them ; to distinguish between oppression and the necessary exercise of lawful authority ; between burdens proceeding from a disregard to their convenience, and those resulting from the inevitable exigencies of society ; to discriminate the spirit of liberty from that of licentiousness, cherishing the first, avoiding the last, and uniting a speedy but temperate vigilance against encroachments, with an inviolable respect to the laws.

Whether this desirable object will be best promoted by affording aids to seminaries of learning already established ; by the institution of a national university ; or by any other expedients, will be well worthy of a place in the deliberations of the legislature.

Gentlemen of the House of Representatives :

I saw with peculiar pleasure, at the close of the last session, the resolution entered into by you, expressive of your opinion that an adequate provision for the support of the public credit, is a matter of high importance to the national honor and prosperity. In this sentiment I entirely concur. And, to a perfect confidence in your best endeavors to devise such a provision as will be truly consistent with the end, I add an equal reliance on the cheerful co-operation of the other branch of the legislature. It would be superfluous to specify inducements to a measure in which the character and permanent interest of the United States are so obviously and so deeply concerned, and which has received so explicit a sanction from your declaration.

*Gentlemen of the Senate
and House of Representatives*

I have directed the proper officers to lay before you, respectively, such papers and estimates as regard the affairs particularly recommended to your consideration, and necessary to convey to you that information of the state of the Union which it is my duty to afford.

The welfare of our country is the great object to which our cares and efforts ought to be directed. And I shall derive great satisfaction from a co-operation with you, in the pleasing, though arduous task of insuring to our fellow-citizens the blessings which they have a right to expect from a free, efficient, and equal government.

WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS,

SEPTEMBER 17, 1796.

Friends and Fellow-Citizens:

THE period for a new election of a citizen to administer the executive government of the United States being not far distant, and the time actually arrived when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprize you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those out of whom the choice is to be made.

I beg you at the same time to do me the justice to be assured, that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation which binds a dutiful citizen to his country; and that in withdrawing the tender of service, which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest; no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness, but am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in, the office to which your suffrages have twice called me, have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of

duty, and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea. I rejoice that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty or propriety; and am persuaded, whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that in the present circumstances of our country, you will not disapprove of my determination to retire.

The impressions with which I first undertook the arduous trust, were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust, I will only say that I have, with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and administration of the government the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious, in the outset, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself; and, every day, the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more, that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services, they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe, that while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

In looking forward to the moment which is to terminate the career of my political life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country for the many honors it has conferred upon me; still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me; and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of

manifesting my inviolable attachment, by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise, and as an instructive example in our annals, that, under circumstances in which the passions, agitated in every direction, were liable to mislead—amidst appearances sometimes dubious—vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging—in situations in which not unfrequently want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism—the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and a guarantee of the plans, by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave, as a strong incitement to unceasing wishes, that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence—that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual—that the free constitution which is the work of your hands may be sacredly maintained—that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue—that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these states, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete, by so careful a preservation, and so prudent a use of this blessing, as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger, natural to that solicitude, urge me, on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments, which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation, and which appear to me all-important to the permanency of your felicity as a people. These will be offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motives to bias his counsel. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.

Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of our hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

The unity of government, which constitutes you one people, is also now dear to you. It is justly so; for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence; the support of your tranquillity at home; your peace abroad; of your safety; of your prosperity; of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee, that from different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed; it is of infinite moment, that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and to speak of it as a palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens, by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of AMERICAN, which belongs to you in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principle. You have, in a common cause, fought and triumphed together; the independence and liberty you possess, are the work of joint councils and joint efforts—of common dangers, sufferings, and success.

But these considerations, however powerfully they

address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union of the whole.

The *north*, in an unrestrained intercourse with the *south*, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter, great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise, and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The *south*, in the same intercourse, benefitting by the same agency of the *north*, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the *north*, it finds its particular navigation invigorated—and while it contributes in different ways to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength, to which itself is unequally adapted. The *east*, in like intercourse with the *west*, already finds, in the progressive improvement of interior communications by land and water, and will more and more find a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad, or manufactures at home. The *west* derives from the *east* supplies requisite for its growth and comfort—and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the secure enjoyment of indispensable outlets for its own productions, to the weight, influence, and the future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest as one nation. Any other tenure by which the *west* can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength, or from an apostate and unnatural connection with any foreign power, must be intrinsically precarious.

While, then, every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in union, all the parts combined cannot fail to find in the united mass of means and efforts, greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations; and, what is of inestimable value, they must derive from union

an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves, which so frequently afflict neighboring countries, not tied together by the same government, which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce; but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments, and intrigues, would stimulate and embitter. Hence, likewise, they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments, which, under any form of government, are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty. In this sense it is, that your union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endeavor to you the preservation of the other.

These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind, and exhibit the continuance of the union as a primary object of patriotic desire. Is there a doubt whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue of the experiment. It is well worth a fair and full experiment. With such powerful and obvious motives to union, affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those who in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its bands.

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our union, it occurs as matter of serious concern that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties, by geographical discriminations—*Northern* and *Southern*, *Atlantic* and *Western*; whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart-burnings which spring from these misrepresentations; they tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal

affection. The inhabitants of our western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head. They have seen in the negotiation by the executive, and in the unanimous ratification by the senate of the treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the general government, and in the Atlantic states, unfriendly to their interests in regard to the Mississippi. They have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties, that with Great Britain, and that with Spain, which secure to them everything they could desire, in respect to our foreign relations, towards confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of these advantages on the union by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their brethren, and connect them with aliens?

To the efficacy and permanency of your union, a government for the whole is indispensable. No alliances, however strict between the parts, can be an adequate substitute; they must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which alliances at all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay, by the adoption of a constitution of government better calculated than your former for an intimate union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This government, the offspring of your own choice, uninfluenced and unawed; adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation; completely free in its principles; in the distribution of its powers uniting security with energy, and containing within itself provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty. The basis of our political system is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government. But the constitution which at any time exists, until changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon

all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government, presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

All obstructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, control, counteract, or awe the regular deliberations and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction; to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will of party, often a small, but artful and enterprising minority of the community; and according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans, digested by common counsels and modified by mutual interests.

However combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people, and to usurp for themselves the reins of government; destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

Towards the preservation of your government, and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite not only that you steadily discountenance irregular opposition to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretext. One method of assault may be to effect in the forms of the constitution alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments, as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard by which to test the real tendency of the existing constitutions of a country; that facility in changes, upon the

credit of mere hypothesis and opinion, exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion; and remember especially, that for the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a government of as much vigor as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty, is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian. It is, indeed, little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the state, with particular reference to the founding of them upon geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you, in the most solemn manner, against the baneful effects of the spirit of party generally.

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed; but in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and, sooner or later, the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation on the ruins of the public liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind, (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight,) the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party

are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.

It serves always to distract the public councils, and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one part against another; foment occasional riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which finds a facilitated access to the government itself, through the channels of party passion. Thus the policy and will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.

There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the government, and serve to keep alive the spirit of liberty. This, within certain limits, is probably true; and in governments of a monarchical cast, patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with favor, upon the spirit of party. But in those of popular character, in governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From the natural tendency, it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose; and there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be, by force of public opinion, to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest, instead of warming, it should consume.

It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking, in a free country, should inspire caution in those intrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres; avoiding, in the exercise of the powers of one department, to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power, and proneness to abuse it, which predominates in the human heart, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing into different depositories, and constituting each the guardian of the public weal against invasions of the other, has been evinced by experiments, ancient and modern; some of them in our

country, and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If, in the opinion of the people, the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be, in any particular, wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way in which the constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent must always greatly overbalance, in permanent evil, any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness—these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connection with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principles.

It is substantially true that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?

Promote, then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it, is to use it as sparingly as possible, avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering, also, that timely disbursements to prepare for danger, frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burdens which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives; but it is necessary that public opinion should co-operate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind, that towards the payment of debts there must be revenue; that to have revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the intrinsic embarrassment, inseparable from the selection of the proper objects, (which is always a choice of difficulties,) ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining revenue which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and at no distant period, a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt but that in the course of time and things the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can it be that Providence has connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas! it is rendered impossible by its vices!

In the execution of such a plan, nothing is more essen-

tial than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations, and passionate attachment for others, should be excluded; and that in the place of them, just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges towards another an habitual hatred, or an habitual fondness, is, in some degree, a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another, disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur.

Hence frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed, and bloody contests. The nation, prompted by ill will and resentment, sometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts through passion what reason would reject; at other times it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to the projects of hostility, instigated by pride, ambition, and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes, perhaps, the liberty of nations has been the victim.

So, likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nations, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and the wars of the latter, without adequate inducements or justification. It leads, also, to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others, which are apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions, by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained, and by exciting jealousy, ill will and a disposition to retaliate in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld; and it gives to ambitious, corrupt, or deluded citizens, (who devote themselves to the favorite nation,) facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country without odium, sometimes even with popularity;

gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation to a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence, in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practise the art of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak, towards a great and powerful nation, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter. Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy too, to be useful, must be impartial, else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defence against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation, and excessive dislike for another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favorite, are liable to become suspected and odious; while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations, is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence, she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitude of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables

us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance ; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon, to be scrupulously respected ; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation ; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation ? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground ? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor or caprice ?

It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world ; so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it ; for let me not be understood as capable of patronising infidelity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat, therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But in my opinion, it is unnecessary, and would be unwise, to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, on a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Harmony, and a liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand ; neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences ; consulting the natural course of things ; diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the stream of commerce, but forcing nothing ; establishing with powers so disposed, in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them, conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and natural opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be, from time to time, abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate ; constantly keeping in

view that it is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors from another; that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character; that by such acceptance, it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favors, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. It is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish—that they will control the usual current of the passions, or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations. But if I may even flatter myself that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good; that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit; to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue; to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism; this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare by which they have been dictated.

How far, in the discharge of my official duties, I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you and to the world. To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is, that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still subsisting war in Europe, my proclamation of the 22d of April, 1793, is the index to my plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice, and by that of your representatives in both houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me, uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination, with the aids of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take, and was bound in duty and interest to take, a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it with moderation, perseverance and firmness.

The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe, that according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the belligerent powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred without anything more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct, will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me, a predominant motive has been to endeavor to gain time to our country, to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress, without interruption, to that degree of strength and constancy, which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortune.

Though in reviewing the incidents of my administration, I am unconscious of intentional error; I am, nevertheless, too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that, after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations; I anticipate, with pleasing expectation, that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow-citizens, the benign influence of good laws, under a free government; the ever favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors and dangers.

ADAMS'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS,

MARCH 4, 1797.

WHEN it was first perceived, in early times, that no middle course for America remained, between unlimited submission to a foreign legislature, and a total independence of its claims, men of reflection were less apprehensive of danger from the formidable power of fleets and armies they must determine to resist, than from those contests and dissensions which would certainly arise concerning the forms of government to be instituted over the whole and over the parts of this extensive country. Relying, however, on the purity of their intentions, the justice of their cause, and the integrity and intelligence of the people, under an overruling Providence which had so signally protected the country from the first, the representatives of this nation, then consisting of little more than half its present number not only broke to pieces the chains which were forging, and the rod of iron that was lifted up, but frankly cut asunder the ties which had bound them, and launched into an ocean of uncertainty.

The zeal and ardor of the people, during the revolutionary war, supplying the place of government, commanded a degree of order, sufficient at least for the temporary preservation of society. The confederation which was early felt to be necessary, was prepared from the models of the Batavian and Helvetic confederacies; the only examples which remain, with any detail and precision in history, and certainly the only ones which the people at large had ever considered. But, reflecting on the striking difference, in so many particulars, between this country and those, where a courier may go from the seat of government to the frontier in a single day, it was then certainly foreseen by some who assisted in Congress at the formation of it, that it could not be durable.

Negligence of its regulations, inattention to its recommendations, if not disobedience to its authority, not only in individuals, but in states, soon appeared with their melancholy consequences; universal languor; jealousies and rivalries of states; decline of navigation and commerce;

discouragement of necessary manufactures; universal fall in the value of lands and their produce; contempt of public and private faith; loss of consideration and credit with foreign nations; and, at length, in discontents, animosities, combinations, partial conventions, and insurrection, threatening some great national calamity.

In this dangerous crisis, the people of America were not abandoned by their usual good sense, presence of mind, resolution, or integrity. Measures were pursued to concert a plan to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty. The public disquisitions, discussions, and deliberations, issued in the present happy constitution of government.

Employed in the service of my country abroad during the whole course of these transactions, I first saw the constitution of the United States in a foreign country. Irritated by no literary altercation, animated by no public debate, heated by no party animosity, I read it with great satisfaction, as a result of good heads, prompted by good hearts; as an experiment better adapted to the genius, character, situation, and relations of this nation and country, than any which had ever been proposed or suggested. In its general principles and great outlines, it was conformable to such a system of government as I had ever most esteemed, and some states, my own native state in particular, had contributed to establish. Claiming a right of suffrage, in common with my fellow-citizens, in the adoption or rejection of a constitution which was to rule me and my posterity, as well as them and theirs, I did not hesitate to express my approbation of it, on all occasions, in public and in private. It was not then, nor has been since, any objection to it, in my mind, that the executive and senate were not more permanent. Nor have I ever entertained a thought of promoting any alteration in it, but such as the people themselves, in the course of their experience, should see and feel to be necessary or expedient, and by their representatives in Congress and the state legislatures, according to the constitution itself, adopt and ordain.

Returning to the bosom of my country, after a painful separation from it for ten years, I had the honor to be elected to a station under the new order of things, and I have repeatedly laid myself under the most serious obligations to support the constitution. The operation of it has equalled the most sanguine expectations of its friends; and, from an habitual attention to it, satisfaction in its administration, and delight in its effects upon the peace, order, prosperity, and happiness of the nation, I have acquired an habitual attachment to it, and veneration for it.

What other form of government, indeed, can so well deserve our esteem and love?

There may be little solidity in an ancient idea that congregations of men into cities and nations are the most pleasing objects in the sight of superior intelligences; but this is very certain, that to a benevolent human mind, there can be no spectacle presented by any nation more pleasing, more noble, majestic, or august, than an assembly like that which has so often been seen in this and the other chamber of Congress, of a government, in which the executive authority, as well as that of all the branches of the legislature, are exercised by citizens selected, at regular periods, by their neighbors, to make and execute laws for the general good. Can anything essential, anything more than mere ornament and decoration, be added to this by robes and diamonds? Can authority be more amiable and respectable, when it descends from accidents, or institutions established in remote antiquity, than when it springs fresh from the hearts and judgments of an honest and enlightened people? For it is the people only that are represented; it is their power and majesty that is reflected, and only for their good, in every legitimate government, under whatever form it may appear. The existence of such a government as ours, for any length of time, is a full proof of a general dissemination of knowledge and virtue throughout the whole body of the people. And what object or consideration more pleasing than this, can be presented to the human mind? If national pride is ever justifiable, or excusable, it is when it springs, not from power or riches, grandeur or glory, but from conviction of national innocence, information and benevolence.

In the midst of these pleasing ideas, we should be unfaithful to ourselves, if we should ever lose sight of the danger to our liberties, if anything partial or extraneous should infect the purity of our free, fair, virtuous, and independent elections. If an election is to be determined by a majority of a single vote, and that can be procured by a party, through artifice or corruption, the government may be the choice of a party, for its own ends, not of the nation for the national good. If that solitary suffrage can be obtained by foreign nations by flattery or menaces, by fraud or violence, by terror, intrigue, or venality, the government may not be the choice of the American people, but of foreign nations. It may be foreign nations who govern us, and not we, the people, who govern ourselves. And candid men will acknowledge, that in such cases, choice would have little advantage to boast of, over lot or chance.

Such is the amiable and interesting system of government (and such are some of the abuses to which it may be exposed) which the people of America have exhibited to the admiration and anxiety of the wise and virtuous of all nations for eight years, under the administration of a citizen who, by a long course of great actions, regulated by prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude, conducting a people, inspired with the same virtues, and animated with the same ardent patriotism and love of liberty, to independence and peace, to increasing wealth and unexampled prosperity, has merited the gratitude of his fellow-citizens, commanded the highest praises of foreign nations, and secured immortal glory with posterity.

In that retirement which is his voluntary choice, may he long live to enjoy the delicious recollection of his services, the gratitude of mankind, the happy fruits of them to himself and the world, which are daily increasing, and that splendid prospect of the future fortunes of this country which is opening from year to year. His name may be still a rampart, and the knowledge that he lives, a bulwark against all open or secret enemies of his country's peace. This example has been recommended to the imitation of his successors by both houses of Congress, and

by the voice of the legislatures and the people throughout the nation.

On this subject it might become me better to be silent, or to speak with diffidence; but as something may be expected, the occasion, I hope, will be admitted as an apology, if I venture to say, that,

If a preference, upon principle, of a free republican government, formed upon long and serious reflection, after a diligent and impartial inquiry after truth; if an attachment to the constitution of the United States, and a conscientious determination to support it, until it shall be altered by the judgments and wishes of the people, expressed in the mode prescribed in it; if a respectful attention to the constitutions of the individual states, and a constant caution and delicacy towards the state governments; if an equal and impartial regard to the rights, interest, honor, and happiness of all the states in the Union, without preference or regard to a northern or southern, an eastern or western position, their various political opinions on unessential points, or their personal attachments; if a love of virtuous men of all parties and denominations; if a love of science and letters, and a wish to patronise every rational effort to encourage schools, colleges, universities, academies, and every institution for propagating knowledge, virtue, and religion, among all classes of the people, not only for their benign influence on the happiness of life in all its stages and classes, and of society in all its forms, but as the only means of preserving our constitution from its natural enemies, the spirit of sophistry, the spirit of party, the spirit of intrigue, the profligacy of corruption, and the pestilence of foreign influence, which is the angel of destruction to elective governments; if a love of equal laws, of justice, and humanity in the interior administration; if an inclination to improve agriculture, commerce, and manufactures for necessity, convenience, and defence; if a spirit of equity and humanity towards the aboriginal nations of America, and a disposition to meliorate their condition by inclining them to be more friendly to us, and our citizens to be more friendly to them; if an inflexible determination to maintain peace and inviolable faith with all nations, and

that system of neutrality and impartiality among the belligerent powers of Europe which has been adopted by this government, and so solemnly sanctioned by both houses of Congress, and applauded by the legislatures of the states and the public opinion, until it shall be otherwise ordained by Congress ; if a personal esteem for the French nation, formed in a residence of seven years, chiefly among them, and a sincere desire to preserve the friendship which has been so much for the honor and interest of both nations ; if, while the conscious honor and integrity of the people of America, and the internal sentiment of their own power and energies must be preserved, an earnest endeavor to investigate every just cause, and remove every colorable pretence of complaint ; if an intention to pursue by amicable negotiation a reparation for the injuries that have been committed on the commerce of our fellow-citizens by whatever nation ; and if success cannot be obtained, to lay the facts before the legislature that they may consider what further measures the honor and interest of the government and its constituents demand ; if a resolution to do justice, as far as may depend upon me, at all times and to all nations, and maintain peace, friendship, and benevolence with all the world ; if an unshaken confidence in the honor, spirit, and resources of the American people, on which I have so often hazarded my all, and never been deceived ; if elevated ideas of the high destinies of this country and of my own duties towards it, founded on a knowledge of the moral principles and intellectual improvements of the people, deeply engraven on my mind in early life, and not obscured, but exalted by experience and age ; and, with humble reverence, I feel it to be my duty to add, if a veneration for the religion of a people who profess and call themselves Christians, and a fixed resolution to consider a decent respect for Christianity among the best recommendations for the public service, can enable me, in any degree, to comply with your wishes, it shall be my strenuous endeavor, that this sagacious injunction of the two houses shall not be without effect.

With this great example before me, with the sense and spirit the faith and honor, the duty and interest, of the

same American people, pledged to support the constitution of the United States, I entertain no doubt of its continuance in all its energy, and my mind is prepared, without hesitation, to lay myself under the most solemn obligations to support it to the utmost of my power.

And may that Being, who is supreme over all, the Patron of order, the Fountain of justice, and the Protector, in all ages of the world, of virtuous liberty, continue his blessing upon this nation and its government, and give it all possible success and duration consistent with the ends of his Providence.

ADAMS'S FIRST ANNUAL ADDRESS,

NOVEMBER 23, 1797.

*Gentlemen of the Senate
and House of Representatives :*

I WAS for some time apprehensive that it would be necessary, on account of the contagious sickness which afflicted the city of Philadelphia, to convene the national legislature at some other place. This measure it was desirable to avoid, because it would occasion much public inconvenience, and a considerable public expense, and add to the calamities of the inhabitants of this city, whose sufferings must have excited the sympathy of all their fellow-citizens; therefore, after taking measures to ascertain the state and decline of the sickness, I postponed my determination, having hopes, now happily realized, that, without hazard to the lives of the members, Congress might assemble at this place, where it was by law next to meet. I submit, however, to your consideration, whether a power to postpone the meeting of Congress, without passing the time fixed by the constitution, upon such occasions, would not be a useful amendment to the law of one thousand seven hundred and ninety-four.

Although I cannot yet congratulate you on the re-establishment of peace in Europe, and the restoration of security to the persons and properties of our citizens from

injustice and violence at sea; we have, nevertheless, abundant cause of gratitude to the Source of benevolence and influence, for interior tranquillity and personal security, for propitious seasons, prosperous agriculture, productive fisheries, and general improvements, and above all, for a rational spirit of civil and religious liberty, and a calm but steady determination to support our sovereignty, as well as our moral and religious principles, against all open and secret attacks.

Our envoys extraordinary to the French republic embarked, one in July, the other early in August, to join their colleague in Holland. I have received intelligence of the arrival of both of them in Holland, from whence they all proceeded on their journey to Paris, within a few days of the 19th of September. Whatever may be the result of this mission, I trust that nothing will have been omitted, on my part, to conduct the negotiation to a successful conclusion, on such equitable terms as may be compatible with the safety, honor, and interest of the United States. Nothing, in the mean time, will contribute so much to the preservation of peace, and the attainment of justice, as a manifestation of that energy and unanimity, of which, on many former occasions, the people of the United States have given such memorable proofs, and the exertion of those resources for national defence which a beneficent Providence has kindly placed within their power.

It may be confidently asserted that nothing has occurred, since the adjournment of Congress, which renders inexpedient those precautionary measures recommended by me to the consideration of the two houses, at the opening of your late extraordinary session. If that system was then prudent, it is more so now, as increasing depredations strengthen the reasons for its adoption.

Indeed, whatever may be the issue of the negotiation with France, or whether the war in Europe is, or is not, to continue, I hold it most certain, that permanent tranquillity and order will not soon be obtained. The state of society has so long been disturbed, the sense of moral and religious obligations so much weakened, public faith and national honor have been so impaired, respect to trea-

ties has been so diminished, and the law of nations has lost so much of its force ; while pride, ambition, avarice, and violence, have been so long unrestrained, there remains no reasonable ground on which to raise an expectation, that a commerce without protection or defence will not be plundered.

The commerce of the United States is essential, if not to their existence, at least to their comfort, their growth, prosperity, and happiness. The genius, character, and habits of the people are highly commercial ; their cities have been formed and exist upon commerce ; our agriculture, fisheries, arts, and manufactures, are connected with and depend upon it. In short, commerce has made this country what it is, and it cannot be destroyed or neglected without involving the people in poverty and distress. Great numbers are directly and solely supported by navigation ; the faith of society is pledged for the preservation of the rights of commercial and sea-faring, no less than of the other citizens. Under this view of our affairs, I should hold myself guilty of a neglect of duty, if I forbore to recommend that we should make every exertion to protect our commerce, and to place our country in a suitable posture of defence, as the only sure means of preserving both.

I have entertained an expectation that it would have been in my power, at the opening of this session, to have communicated to you the agreeable information of the due execution of our treaty with his Catholic majesty, respecting the withdrawing of his troops from our territory, and the demarkation of the line of limits ; but, by the latest authentic intelligence, Spanish garrisons were still continued within our country, and the running of the boundary line had not been commenced : these circumstances are the more to be regretted as they cannot fail to affect the Indians in a manner injurious to the United States. Still, however, indulging the hope that the answers which have been given will remove the objections offered by the Spanish officers to the immediate execution of the treaty, I have judged it proper that we should continue in readiness to receive the posts, and to run the line of limits.

Further information on this subject will be communicated in the course of the session.

In connection with this unpleasant state of things on our western frontier, it is proper for me to mention the attempts of foreign agents to alienate the affections of the Indian nations, and to excite them to actual hostilities against the United States; great activity has been exerted by those persons who have insinuated themselves among the Indian tribes residing within the territory of the United States, to influence them to transfer their affections and force to a foreign nation, to form them into a confederacy, and prepare them for a war against the United States. Although measures have been taken to counteract these infractions of our rights, to prevent Indian hostilities, and to preserve entire their attachment to the United States, it is my duty to observe, that, to give a better effect to these measures, and to obviate the consequences of a repetition of such practices, a law providing adequate punishment for such offences may be necessary.

The commissioners appointed under the fifth article of the treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation between the United States and Great Britain, to ascertain the river which was truly intended under the name of the river St. Croix, mentioned in the treaty of peace, met at Passamaquoddy Bay, in October, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-six, and viewed the mouths of the rivers in question, and adjacent shores on the islands; and being of opinion, that actual surveys of both rivers, to their sources, were necessary, gave to the agents of the two nations instructions for that purpose, and adjourned to meet at Boston, in August. They met; but the surveys requiring more time than had been supposed, and not being then completed, the commissioners again adjourned to meet at Providence, in the state of Rhode Island, in June next, when we may expect a final examination and decision.

The commissioners appointed in pursuance of the sixth article of the treaty, met at Philadelphia, in May last, to examine the claims of British subjects for debts contracted before the peace, and still remaining due to them from citizens or inhabitants of the United States. Various

causes have hitherto prevented any determinations; but the business is now resumed, and doubtless will be prosecuted without interruption.

Several decisions on the claims of the citizens of the United States for losses and damages sustained by reason of irregular and illegal captures or condemnations of their vessels or other property, have been made by the commissioners in London, conformably to the seventh article of the treaty. The sums awarded by the commissioners have been paid by the British government; a considerable number of other claims, where costs and damages, and not captured property, were the only objects in question, have been decided by arbitration, and the sums awarded to the citizens of the United States have also been paid.

The commissioners appointed, agreeably to the twenty-first article of our treaty with Spain, met at Philadelphia, in the summer past, to examine and decide on the claims of our citizens for losses they have sustained in consequence of their vessels and cargoes having been taken by the subjects of his Catholic majesty during the late war between Spain and France. Their sittings have been interrupted, but are now resumed.

The United States being obligated to make compensation for the losses and damages sustained by British subjects, upon the award of the commissioners acting under the sixth article of the treaty with Great Britain, and for the losses and damages sustained by British subjects, by reason of the capture of their vessels and merchandise, taken within the limits and jurisdiction of the United States, and brought into their ports, or taken by vessels originally armed in ports of the United States, upon the awards of the commissioners, acting under the seventh article of the same treaty; it is necessary that provision be made for fulfilling these obligations.

The numerous captures of American vessels by the cruisers of the French republic, and of some of those of Spain, have occasioned considerable expenses in making and supporting the claims of our citizens before their tribunals. The sums required for this purpose, have, in divers instances, been disbursed by the consuls of the

United States. By means of the same captures, great numbers of our seamen have been thrown ashore in foreign countries, destitute of all means of subsistence, and the sick, in particular, have been exposed to grievous sufferings. The consuls have, in these cases also, advanced money for their relief; for these advances they reasonably expect reimbursements from the United States.

The consular act, relative to seamen, requires revision and amendment; the provisions for their support in foreign countries, and for their return, are found to be inadequate and ineffectual. Another provision seems necessary to be added to the consular act; some foreign vessels have been discovered sailing under the flag of the United States, and with forged papers; it seldom happens that the consuls can detect this deception, because they have no authority to demand an inspection of the registers and sea-letters.

Gentlemen of the House of Representatives :

It is my duty to recommend to your serious consideration, those objects, which, by the constitution, are placed particularly within your sphere, the national debts and taxes.

Since the decay of the feudal system, by which the public defence was provided for chiefly at the expense of individuals, the system of loans has been introduced; and as no nation can raise within the year, by taxes, sufficient sums for the defence and military operations in time of war, the sums loaned and debts contracted have necessarily become the subjects of what have been called funding systems. The consequences arising from the continual accumulation of public debts in other countries, ought to admonish us to be careful to prevent their growth in our own. The national defence must be provided for, as well as the support of government; but both should be accomplished, as much as possible, by immediate taxes, and as little as possible by loans.

The estimates for the service of the ensuing year will, by my direction, be laid before you.

*Gentlemen of the Senate,
and House of Representatives :*

We are met together at a most interesting period. The situations of the principal powers of Europe are singular and portentous. Connected with some by treaties, and with all by commerce, no important event there can be indifferent to us. Such circumstances call with peculiar importunity, not less for a disposition to unite in all those measures on which the honor, safety, and prosperity of our country depend, than for all the exertions of wisdom and firmness.

In all such measures, you may rely on my zealous and hearty concurrence.

JEFFERSON'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

MARCH 4, 1801

Friends and Fellow-Citizens :

CALLED upon to undertake the duties of the first executive office of our country, I avail myself of the presence of that portion of my fellow-citizens which is here assembled, to express my grateful thanks for the favor with which they have been pleased to look towards me, to declare a sincere consciousness that the task is above my talents, and that I approach it with those anxious and awful presentiments, which the greatness of the charge, and the weakness of my powers, so justly inspire. A rising nation, spread over a wide and fruitful land, traversing all the seas with the rich productions of their industry, engaged in commerce with nations who feel power and forget right, advancing rapidly to destinies beyond the reach of mortal eye ; when I contemplate these transcendent objects, and see the honor, the happiness, and the hopes of this beloved country committed to the issue and the auspices of this day, I shrink from the contemplation, and humble myself before the magnitude of the undertaking. Utterly indeed should I despair, did not the presence of many whom I here see remind me that, in the other high authorities provided by our constitution,

I shall find resources of wisdom, of virtue, and of zeal, on which to rely under all difficulties. To you, then, gentlemen, who are charged with the sovereign functions of legislation, and to those associated with you, I look with encouragement for that guidance and support which may enable us to steer with safety the vessel in which we are all embarked, amid the conflicting elements of a troubled world.

During the contest of opinion through which we have passed, the animation of discussion and exertions has sometimes worn an aspect which might impose on strangers unused to think freely, and to speak and to write what they think; but this being now decided by the voice of the nation, announced according to the rules of the constitution, all will of course arrange themselves under the will of the law, and unite in common efforts for the common good. All too will bear in mind this sacred principle, that though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, that will, to be rightful, must be reasonable; that the minority possess their equal rights, which equal law must protect, and to violate, would be oppression. Let us then, fellow-citizens, unite with one heart and one mind; let us restore to social intercourse that harmony and affection, without which liberty, and even life itself, are but dreary things. And let us reflect, that, having banished from our land that religious intolerance under which mankind so long bled and suffered, we have yet gained little, if we countenance a political intolerance as despotic, as wicked, and capable of as bitter and bloody persecutions. During the throes and convulsions of the ancient world, during the agonizing spasms of infuriated man, seeking through blood and slaughter his long-lost liberty, it was not wonderful that the agitation of the billows should reach even this distant and peaceful shore; that this should be more felt and feared by some, and less by others; that this should divide opinions as to measures of safety; but every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle. We have called by different names brethren of the same principle. We are all republicans; we are all federalists. If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union, or to change

its republican form, let them stand undisturbed, as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated, where reason is left free to combat it. I know indeed that some honest men fear that a republican government cannot be strong; that this government is not strong enough. But would the honest patriot, in the full tide of successful experiment, abandon a government which has so far kept us free and firm, on the theoretic and visionary fear that this government, the world's best hope, may, by possibility, want energy to preserve itself? I trust not. I believe this, on the contrary, the strongest government on earth. I believe it the only one where every man, at the call of the laws, would fly to the standard of the law, and would meet invasions of the public order as his own personal concern. Sometimes it is said that man cannot be trusted with the government of himself. Can he then be trusted with the government of others; or have we found angels in the forms of kings, to govern him? Let history answer this question.

Let us then, with courage and confidence, pursue our own federal and republican principles, our attachment to our union and representative government. Kindly separated by nature and a wide ocean from the exterminating havoc of one quarter of the globe; too high-minded to endure the degradations of the others; possessing a chosen country, with room enough for our descendants to the thousandth and thousandth generation; entertaining a due sense of our equal right to the use of our own faculties, to the acquisitions of our industry, to honor and confidence from our fellow-citizens, resulting not from birth, but from our actions and their sense of them; enlightened by a benign religion, professed indeed and practised in various forms, yet all of them including honesty, truth, temperance, gratitude, and the love of man, acknowledging and adoring an overruling Providence, which, by all its dispensations, proves that it delights in the happiness of man here, and his greater happiness hereafter; with all these blessings, what more is necessary to make us a happy and prosperous people? Still one thing more, fellow-citizens—a wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave

hem otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned. This is the sum of good government, and this is necessary to close the circle of our felicities.

About to enter, fellow-citizens, on the exercise of duties which comprehend everything dear and valuable to you, it is proper that you should understand what I deem the essential principles of our government, and consequently those which ought to shape its administration. I will compress them within the narrowest compass they will bear, stating the general principles, but not all the limitations. Equal and exact justice to all men, of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political; peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none; the support of the state governments in all their rights, as the most competent administration for our domestic concerns, and the surest bulwarks against anti-republican tendencies; the preservation of the general government in its whole constitutional vigor, as the sheet-anchor of our peace at home and safety abroad; a jealous care of the right of election by the people; a mild and safe corrective of abuses, which are lopped by the sword of revolution, where peaceable remedies are unprovided; absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority, the vital principle of republics, from which is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate parent of despotism; a well-disciplined militia, our best reliance in peace, and for the first moments of war, till regulars may relieve them; the supremacy of the civil over the military authority; economy in the public expense, that labor may be lightly burdened; the honest payment of our debts, and sacred preservation of the public faith; encouragement of agriculture, and of commerce as its handmaid; the diffusion of information, and arraignment of all abuses at the bar of public reason; freedom of religion; freedom of the press; and freedom of person, under the protection of the habeas corpus; and trial by juries impartially selected. These principles form the bright constellation which has gone before us, and guided our steps through an age of revolution and

reformation. The wisdom of our sages and blood of our heroes have been devoted to their attainment: they should be the creed of our political faith; the text of civil instruction; the touchstone by which to try the services of those we trust; and should we wander from them in moments of error or alarm, let us hasten to retrace our steps, and to regain the road which alone leads to peace, liberty, and safety.

I repair, then, fellow-citizens, to the post you have assigned me. With experience enough in subordinate offices to have seen the difficulties of this, the greatest of all, I have learnt to expect that it will rarely fall to the lot of imperfect man to retire from this station with the reputation and the favor which bring him into it. Without pretensions to that high confidence you reposed in our first and great revolutionary character, whose pre-eminent services had entitled him to the first place in his country's love, and destined for him the fairest page in the volume of faithful history, I ask so much confidence only as may give firmness and effect to the legal administration of your affairs. I shall often go wrong through defect of judgment. When right, I shall often be thought wrong by those whose positions will not command a view of the whole ground. I ask your indulgence for my own errors, which will never be intentional; and your support against the errors of others, who may condemn what they would not, if seen in all its parts. The approbation implied by your suffrage is a consolation to me for the past; and my future solicitude will be to retain the good opinion of those who have bestowed it in advance, to conciliate that of others by doing them all the good in my power, and to be instrumental to the happiness and freedom of all.

Relying, then, on the patronage of your good will, I advance with obedience to the work, ready to retire from it whenever you become sensible how much better choices it is in your power to make. And may that infinite Power which rules the destinies of the universe, lead our councils to what is best, and give them a favorable issue for your peace and prosperity,

DECEMBER 8, 1801.

SIR: The circumstances under which we find ourselves at this place rendering inconvenient the mode heretofore practised, of making by personal address the first communication between the legislative and executive branches, I have adopted that by message, as used on all subsequent occasions through the session. In doing this, I have had principal regard to the inconvenience of the legislature, to the economy of their time, to their relief from the embarrassment of immediate answers on subjects not yet fully before them, and to the benefits thence resulting to the public affairs. Trusting that a procedure founded in these motives will meet their approbation I beg leave, through you, sir, to communicate the enclosed message, with the documents accompanying it, to the honorable the Senate, and pray you to accept, for yourself and them, the homage of my high respect and consideration.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

The Hon. the

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE.

JEFFERSON'S FIRST ANNUAL MESSAGE,

DECEMBER 8, 1801.

*Fellow-Citizens of the Senate,
and House of Representatives:*

It is a circumstance of sincere gratification to me that, on meeting the great council of our nation, I am able to announce to them, on grounds of reasonable certainty, that the wars and troubles which have for so many years afflicted our sister-nations, have at length come to an end, and that the communications of peace and commerce are once more opening among them. Whilst we devoutly return thanks to the beneficent Being who has been pleased to breathe into them the spirit of conciliation and forgiveness, we are bound, with peculiar gratitude, to be thankful to him that our own peace has been preserved

through so perilous a season, and ourselves permitted quietly to cultivate the earth, and to practise and improve those arts which tend to increase our comforts. The assurances, indeed, of friendly disposition, received from all the powers with whom we have principal relations, had inspired a confidence that our peace with them would not have been disturbed. But a cessation of irregularities which had affected the commerce of neutral nations, and of the irritations and injuries produced by them, cannot but add to this confidence, and strengthens at the same time the hope that wrongs committed on unoffending friends, under a pressure of circumstances, will now be reviewed with candor, and will be considered as founding just claims of retribution for the past, and new assurances for the future.

Among our Indian neighbors, also, a spirit of peace and friendship generally prevails; and I am happy to inform you that the continued efforts to introduce among them the implements and the practice of husbandry and of the household arts, have not been without success; that they are becoming more and more sensible of the superiority of this dependence for clothing and subsistence, over the precarious resources of hunting and fishing; and already we are able to announce that, instead of that constant diminution of their numbers, produced by their wars and their wants, some of them begin to experience an increase of population.

To this state of general peace with which we have been blessed, one only exception exists. Tripoli, the least considerable of the Barbary States, had come forward with demands unfounded either in right or in compact, and had permitted itself to denounce war, on our failure to comply before a given day. The style of the demand admitted but one answer. I sent a small squadron of frigates into the Mediterranean, with assurances to that power of our sincere desire to remain in peace; but with orders to protect our commerce against the threatened attack. The measure was seasonable and salutary. The Bey had already declared war. His cruisers were out. Two had arrived at Gibraltar. Our commerce in the Mediterranean was blockaded, and that of the Atlantic in

peril. The arrival of our squadron dispelled the danger. One of the Tripolitan cruisers, having fallen in with and engaged the small schooner *Enterprise*, commanded by Lieutenant Sterret, which had gone as a tender to our larger vessels, was captured, after a heavy slaughter of her men, without the loss of a single one on her part. The bravery exhibited by our citizens on that element will, I trust, be a testimony to the world that it is not the want of that virtue which makes us seek their peace, but a conscientious desire to direct the energies of our nation to the multiplication of the human race, and not to its destruction. Unauthorized by the constitution, without the sanction of Congress, to go beyond the line of defence, the vessel being disabled from committing further hostilities, was liberated with its crew. The legislature will doubtless consider whether, by authorizing measures of offence also, they will place our force on an equal footing with that of its adversaries. I communicate all material information on this subject, that, in the exercise of this important function confided by the constitution to the legislature exclusively, their judgment may form itself on a knowledge and consideration of every circumstance of weight.

I wish I could say that our situation with all the other Barbary States was entirely satisfactory. Discovering that some delays had taken place in the performance of certain articles stipulated by us, I thought it my duty, by immediate measures for fulfilling them, to vindicate to ourselves the right of considering the effect of departure from stipulation on their side. From the papers which will be laid before you, you will be enabled to judge whether our treaties are regarded by them as fixing at all the measure of their demands, or as guarding from the exercise of force our vessels within their power; and to consider how far it will be safe and expedient to leave our affairs with them in their present posture.

I lay before you the result of the census lately taken of our inhabitants, to a conformity with which we are now to reduce the ensuing ratio of representation and taxation. You will perceive that the increase of numbers, during the last ten years, proceeding in geometrical ratio,

promises a duplication in little more than twenty-two years. We contemplate this rapid growth, and the prospect it holds up to us, not with a view to the injuries it may enable us to do to others in some future day, but to the settlement of the extensive country still remaining vacant within our limits, to the multiplication of men susceptible of happiness, educated in the love of order, habituated to self-government, and valuing its blessings above all price.

Other circumstances, combined with the increase of numbers, have produced an augmentation of revenue arising from consumption, in a ratio far beyond that of population alone; and, though the changes of foreign relations now taking place, so desirable for the world, may for a season affect this branch of revenue, yet, weighing all probabilities of expense, as well as of income, there is reasonable ground of confidence that we may now safely dispense with all the internal taxes—comprehending excise, stamps, auctions, licenses, carriages, and refined sugars; to which the postage on newspapers may be added, to facilitate the progress of information; and that the remaining sources of revenue will be sufficient to provide for the support of government, to pay the interest of the public debts, and to discharge the principals within shorter periods than the laws or the general expectation had contemplated. War, indeed, and untoward events, may change this prospect of things, and call for expenses which the imposts could not meet. But sound principles will not justify our taxing the industry of our fellow-citizens to accumulate treasure for wars to happen we know not when, and which might not perhaps happen, but from the temptations offered by that treasure.

These views, however, of reducing our burdens, are formed on the expectation that a sensible, and, at the same time, a salutary reduction may take place in our habitual expenditures. For this purpose, those of the civil government, the army, and navy, will need revisal. When we consider that this government is charged with the external and mutual relations only of these states; that the states themselves have principal care, of our persons, our property, and our reputation, constituting the

great field of human concerns, we may well doubt whether our organization is not too complicated, too expensive ; whether offices and officers have not been multiplied unnecessarily, and sometimes injuriously to the service they were meant to promote. I will cause to be laid before you an essay towards a statement of those who, under public employment of various kinds, draw money from the treasury, or from our citizens. Time has not permitted a perfect enumeration, the ramifications of office being too multiplied and remote to be completely traced in a first trial. Among those who are dependent on executive discretion, I have begun the reduction of what was deemed necessary. The expenses of diplomatic agency have been considerably diminished. The inspectors of internal revenue, who were found to obstruct the accountability of the institution, have been discontinued. Several agencies, created by executive authority, on salaries fixed by that also, have been suppressed, and should suggest the expediency of regulating that power by law, so as to subject its exercises to legislative inspection and sanction. Other reformations of the same kind will be pursued with that caution which is requisite, in removing useless things, not to injure what is retained. But the great mass of public offices is established by law, and therefore by law alone can be abolished. Should the legislature think it expedient to pass this roll in review, and try all its parts by the test of public utility, they may be assured of every aid and light which executive information can yield. Considering the general tendency to multiply offices and dependencies, and to increase expense to the ultimate term of burden which the citizen can bear, it behooves us to avail ourselves of every occasion which presents itself for taking off the surcharge ; that it never may be seen here that, after leaving to labor the smallest portion of its earnings on which it can subsist, government shall itself consume the whole residue of what it was instituted to guard.

In our care, too, of the public contributions intrusted to our direction, it would be prudent to multiply barriers against their dissipation, by appropriating specific sums to every specific purpose susceptible of definition ; by

disallowing all applications of money varying from the appropriation in object, or transcending it in amount; by reducing the undefined field of contingencies, and thereby circumscribing discretionary powers over money; and by bringing back to a single department all accountabilities for money, where the examinations may be prompt, efficacious, and uniform.

An account of the receipts and expenditures of the last year, as prepared by the Secretary of the Treasury, will, as usual, be laid before you. The success which has attended the late sales of the public lands shows that, with attention, they may be made an important source of receipt. Among the payments, those made in discharge of the principal and interest of the national debt, will show that the public faith has been exactly maintained. To these will be added an estimate of appropriations necessary for the ensuing year. This last will, of course, be effected by such modifications of the system of expense as you shall think proper to adopt.

A statement has been formed by the Secretary of War, on mature consideration, of all the posts and stations where garrisons will be expedient, and of the number of men requisite for each garrison. The whole amount is considerably short of the present military establishment. For the surplus no particular use can be pointed out. For defence against invasion their number is as nothing; nor is it conceived needful or safe that a standing army should be kept up in time of peace for that purpose. Uncertain as we must ever be of the particular point in our circumference where an enemy may choose to invade us, the only force which can be ready at every point, and competent to oppose them, is the body of neighboring citizens, as formed into a militia. On these, collected from the parts most convenient, in numbers proportioned to the invading foe, it is best to rely, not only to meet the first attack, but, if it threatens to be permanent, to maintain the defence until regulars may be engaged to relieve them. These considerations render it important that we should, at every session, continue to amend the defects which from time to time show themselves in the laws for regulating the militia, until they are sufficiently perfect;

nor should we now or at any time separate until we can say we have done everything for the militia which we could do were an enemy at our door.

The provision of military stores on hand will be laid before you, that you may judge of the additions still requisite.

With respect to the extent to which our naval preparations should be carried, some difference of opinion may be expected to appear; but just attention to the circumstances of every part of the Union will doubtless reconcile all. A small force will probably continue to be wanted for actual service in the Mediterranean. Whatever annual sum beyond that you may think proper to appropriate for naval preparations, would perhaps be better employed in providing those articles which may be kept without waste or consumption, and be in readiness when any exigency calls them into use. Progress has been made, as will appear by papers now communicated, in providing materials for seventy-four gun ships as directed by law.

How far the authority given by the legislature for procuring and establishing sites for naval purposes has been perfectly understood and pursued in the execution, admits of some doubt. A statement of the expenses already incurred on that subject is now laid before you. I have, in certain cases, suspended or slackened these expenditures, that the legislature might determine whether so many yards are necessary as have been contemplated. The works at this place are among those permitted to go on, and five of the seven frigates directed to be laid up, have been brought and laid up here, where, besides the safety of their position, they are under the eye of the executive administration, as well as of its agents, and where yourselves also will be guided by your own view in the legislative provisions respecting them which may from time to time be necessary. They are preserved in such condition, as well the vessels as whatever belongs to them, as to be at all times ready for sea on a short warning. Two others are yet to be laid up so soon as they shall have received the repairs requisite to put them also into sound condition. As a superintending officer will be necessary at each yard, his duties and emoluments, hitherto fixed

by the executive, will be a more proper subject for legislation. A communication will also be made of our progress in the execution of the law respecting the vessels directed to be sold.

The fortifications of our harbors, more or less advanced, present considerations of great difficulty. While some of them are on a scale sufficiently proportioned to the advantages of their position, to the efficacy of their protection, and the importance of the points within it, others are so extensive, will cost so much in their first erection, so much in their maintenance, and require such a force to garrison them, as to make it questionable what is best now to be done. A statement of those commenced or projected, of the expenses already incurred, and estimates of their future cost, so far as can be foreseen, shall be laid before you, that you may be enabled to judge whether any alteration is necessary in the laws respecting this subject.

Agriculture, manufactures, commerce, and navigation, the four pillars of our prosperity, are then most thriving when left most free to individual enterprise. Protection from casual embarrassments, however, may sometimes be seasonably interposed. If, in the course of your observations or inquiries, they should appear to need any aid within the limits of our constitutional powers, your sense of their importance is a sufficient assurance they will occupy your attention. We cannot, indeed, but all feel an anxious solicitude for the difficulties under which our carrying trade will soon be placed. How far it can be relieved, otherwise than by time, is a subject of important consideration.

The judiciary system of the United States, and especially that portion of it recently erected, will of course present itself to the contemplation of Congress; and that they may be able to judge of the proportion which the institution bears to the business it has to perform, I have caused to be procured from the several states, and now lay before Congress, an exact statement of all the causes decided since the first establishment of the courts, and of those which were depending when additional courts and judges were brought in to their aid.

And, while on the judiciary organization, it will be

worthy your consideration, whether the protection of the inestimable institution of juries has been extended to all the cases involving the security of our persons and property. Their impartial selection also being essential to their value, we ought further to consider whether that is sufficiently secured in those states where they are named by a marshal depending on executive will, or designated by the court, or by officers dependent on them.

I cannot omit recommending a revisal of the laws on the subject of naturalization. Considering the ordinary chances of human life, a denial of citizenship under a residence of fourteen years, is a denial to a great proportion of those who ask it; and controls a policy pursued, from their first settlement, by many of these states, and still believed of consequence to their prosperity. And shall we refuse the unhappy fugitives from distress that hospitality which the savages of the wilderness extended to our fathers arriving in this land? Shall oppressed humanity find no asylum on this globe? The constitution, indeed, has wisely provided that, for admission to certain offices of important trust, a residence shall be required sufficient to develop character and design. But might not the general character and capabilities of a citizen be safely communicated to every one manifesting a bona fide purpose of embarking his life and fortunes permanently with us? with restrictions, perhaps, to guard against fraudulent usurpations of our flag; an abuse which brings so much embarrassment and loss on the genuine citizen, and so much danger to the nation of being involved in war, that no endeavor should be spared to detect and suppress it.

These, fellow-citizens, are the matters respecting the state of the nation, which I have thought of importance to be submitted to your consideration at this time. Some others of less moment, or not yet ready for communication, will be the subject of separate messages. I am happy in this opportunity of committing the arduous affairs of our government to the collected wisdom of the Union. Nothing shall be wanting on my part to inform, as far as in my power, the legislative judgment, nor to carry that judgment into faithful execution. The prudence and

emperance of your discussions will promote, within your own walls, that conciliation which so much befriends rational conclusion; and by its example will encourage among our constituents that progress of opinion which is tending to unite them in object and will. That all should be satisfied with any one order of things is not to be expected; but I indulge the pleasing persuasion that the great body of our citizens will cordially concur in honest and disinterested efforts, which have for their object to preserve the general and state governments in their constitutional form and equilibrium; to maintain peace abroad, and order and obedience to the laws at home; to establish principles and practices of administration favorable to the security of liberty and property, and to reduce expenses to what is necessary for the useful purposes of government.

MADISON'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS,

MARCH 4, 1809.

UNWILLING to depart from examples of the most revered authority, I avail myself of the occasion now presented, to express the profound impression made on me by the call of my country to the station, to the duties of which I am about to pledge myself by the most solemn of sanctions. So distinguished a mark of confidence, proceeding from the deliberate and tranquil suffrage of a free and virtuous nation, would, under any circumstances, have commanded my gratitude and devotion, as well as filled me with an awful sense of the trust to be assumed. Under the various circumstances which give peculiar solemnity to the existing period, I feel that both the honor and the responsibility allotted to me are inexpressibly enhanced.

The present situation of the world is indeed without a parallel; and that of our own country full of difficulties. The pressure of these too is the more severely felt, because they have fallen upon us at a moment when, the national prosperity being at a height not before attained, the con-

trast resulting from the change has been rendered the more striking. Under the benign influence of our republican institutions, and the maintenance of peace with all nations, whilst so many of them were engaged in bloody and wasteful wars, the fruits of a just policy were enjoyed in an unrivalled growth of our faculties and resources. Proofs of this were seen in the improvements of agriculture; in the successful enterprises of commerce; in the progress of manufactures and useful arts; in the increase of the public revenue, and the use made of it in reducing the public debt; and in the valuable works and establishments everywhere multiplying over the face of our land.

It is a precious reflection that the transition from this prosperous condition of our country, to the scene which has for some time been distressing us, is not chargeable on any unwarrantable views, nor, as I trust, on any involuntary errors in the public councils. Indulging no passions which trespass on the rights or repose of other nations, it has been the true glory of the United States to cultivate peace by observing justice; and to entitle themselves to the respect of the nations at war, by fulfilling their neutral obligations with the most scrupulous impartiality. If there be candor in the world, the truth of these assertions will not be questioned; posterity, at least, will do justice to them.

This unexceptionable course could not avail against the injustice and violence of the belligerent powers. In their rage against each other, or impelled by more direct motives, principles of retaliation have been introduced, equally contrary to universal reason and acknowledged law. How long their arbitrary edicts will be continued, in spite of the demonstrations that not even a pretext for them has been given by the United States, and of the fair and liberal attempt to induce a revocation of them, cannot be anticipated. Assuring myself that, under every vicissitude, the determined spirit and united councils of the nation will be safeguards to its honor and its essential interests, I repair to the post assigned me with no other discouragement than what springs from my own inadequacy to its high duties. If I do not sink under the weight of this deep conviction, it is because I find some

support in a consciousness of the purposes, and a confidence in the principles, which I bring with me into this arduous service.

To cherish peace and friendly intercourse with all nations having correspondent dispositions; to maintain sincere neutrality towards belligerent nations; to prefer in all cases amicable discussion and reasonable accommodation of differences to a decision of them by an appeal to arms; to exclude foreign intrigues and foreign partialities, so degrading to all countries, and so baneful to free ones; to foster a spirit of independence, too just to invade the rights of others, too proud to surrender our own, too liberal to indulge unworthy prejudices ourselves, and too elevated not to look down upon them in others; to hold the union of the states as the basis of their peace and happiness; to support the constitution, which is the cement of the Union, as well in its limitations as in its authorities; to respect the rights and authorities reserved to the states and to the people, as equally incorporated with, and essential to the success of, the general system; to avoid the slightest interference with the rights of conscience, or the functions of religion, so wisely exempted from civil jurisdiction; to preserve, in their full energy, the other salutary provisions in behalf of private and personal rights, and of the freedom of the press; to observe economy in public expenditures; to liberate the public resources by an honorable discharge of the public debts; to keep within the requisite limits a standing military force, always remembering that an armed and trained militia is the firmest bulwark of republics—that without standing armies, their liberty can never be in danger, nor with large ones safe; to promote, by authorized means, improvements friendly to agriculture, to manufactures, and to external as well as internal commerce; to favor, in like manner, the advancement of science and the diffusion of information, as the best aliment to true liberty; to carry on the benevolent plans which have been so meritoriously applied to the conversion of our aboriginal neighbors from the degradation and wretchedness of savage life, to a participation of the improvements of which the human mind and manners are susceptible in a civilized

state : as far as sentiments and intentions such as these can aid the fulfilment of my duty, they will be a resource which cannot fail me.

It is my good fortune, moreover, to have the path in which I am to tread, lighted by examples of illustrious services, successfully rendered in the most trying difficulties, by those who have marched before me. Of those of my immediate predecessor it might least become me here to speak. I may, however, be pardoned for not suppressing the sympathy with which my heart is full, in the rich reward he enjoys in the benedictions of a beloved country, gratefully bestowed for exalted talents zealously devoted, through a long career, to the advancement of its highest interest and happiness.

But the source to which I look for the aids which alone can supply my deficiencies, is in the well-tried intelligence and virtue of my fellow-citizens, and in the counsels of those representing them in both the other departments associated in the care of the national interests. In these my confidence will, under every difficulty, be placed, next to that in which we have all been encouraged to feel in the guardianship and guidance of that Almighty Being whose power regulates the destiny of nations, whose blessings have been so conspicuously dispensed to this rising republic, and to whom we are bound to address our devout gratitude for the past, as well as our fervent supplications and best hopes for the future.

MADISON'S FIRST ANNUAL MESSAGE,

NOVEMBER 29, 1809.

*Fellow-Citizens of the Senate,
and House of Representatives :*

At the period of our last meeting, I had the satisfaction of communicating an adjustment with one of the principal belligerent nations, highly important in itself, and still more so, as presaging a more extended accommodation. It is with deep concern I am now to inform you, that the favorable prospect has been overclouded by a refusal of

the British government to abide by the act of its minister plenipotentiary, and by its ensuing policy towards the United States, as seen through the communications of the minister sent to replace him.

Whatever pleas may be urged for a disavowal of engagements formed by diplomatic functionaries, in cases where, by the terms of the engagements, a mutual ratification is reserved; or where notice at the time may have been given of a departure from instructions; or in extraordinary cases, essentially violating the principles of equity: a disavowal could not have been apprehended in a case where no such notice or violation existed; where no such ratification was reserved; and, more especially, where, as is now in proof, an engagement, to be executed without any such ratification, was contemplated by the instructions given, and where it had, with good faith, been carried into immediate execution on the part of the United States.

These considerations not having restrained the British government from disavowing the arrangement, by virtue of which its orders in council were to be revoked, and the event authorizing the renewal of commercial intercourse having thus not taken place, it necessarily became a question of equal urgency and importance, whether the act prohibiting that intercourse was not to be considered as remaining in legal force. This question being, after due deliberation, determined in the affirmative, a proclamation to that effect was issued. It could not but happen, however, that a return to this state of things, from that which had followed an execution of the arrangement by the United States, would involve difficulties. With a view to diminish these as much as possible, the instructions from the Secretary of the Treasury, now laid before you, were transmitted to the collectors of the several ports. If, in permitting British vessels to depart without giving bonds not to proceed to their own ports, it should appear that the tenor of legal authority has not been strictly pursued, it is to be ascribed to the anxious desire which was felt that no individuals should be injured by so unforeseen an occurrence; and I rely on the regard of Congress for the equitable interests of our own citizens, to

adopt whatever further provisions may be found requisite for a general remission of penalties involuntarily incurred.

The recall of the disavowed minister having been followed by the appointment of a successor, hopes were indulged that the new mission would contribute to alleviate the disappointment which had been produced, and to remove the causes which had so long embarrassed the good understanding of the two nations. It could not be doubted, that it would at least be charged with conciliatory explanations of the steps which had been taken, and with proposals to be substituted for the rejected arrangement. Reasonable and universal as this expectation was, it also has not been fulfilled. From the first official disclosures of the new minister, it was found that he had received no authority to enter into explanations relative to either branch of the arrangement disavowed, nor any authority to substitute proposals, as to that branch which concerned the British orders in council. And finally, that his proposals with respect to the other branch, the attack on the frigate Chesapeake, were founded on a presumption, repeatedly declared to be inadmissible by the United States, that the first step towards adjustment was due from them ; the proposals, at the same time, omitting even a reference to the officer answerable for the murderous aggression, and asserting a claim not less contrary to the British laws and British practice, than to the principles and obligations of the United States.

The correspondence between the Department of State and this minister, will show how unessentially the features presented in its commencement have been varied in its progress. It will show, also, that, forgetting the respect due to all governments, he did not refrain from imputations on this which required that no further communications should be received from him. The necessity of this step will be made known to his Britannic majesty, through the minister plenipotentiary of the United States in London. And it would indicate a want of the confidence due to a government which so well understands and exacts what becomes foreign ministers near it, not to infer that the misconduct of its own representative will be viewed

in the same light in which it has been regarded here. The British government will learn, at the same time, that a ready attention will be given to communications, through any channel which may be substituted. It will be happy, if the change in this respect should be accompanied by a favorable revision of the unfriendly policy which has been so long pursued towards the United States.

With France, the other belligerent, whose trespasses on our commercial rights have long been the subject of our just remonstrances, the posture of our relations does not correspond with the measures taken on the part of the United States to effect a favorable change. The result of the several communications made to her government, in pursuance of the authorities vested by Congress in the executive, is contained in the correspondence of our minister at Paris now laid before you.

By some of the other belligerents, although professing just and amicable dispositions, injuries materially affecting our commerce have not been duly controlled or repressed. In these cases, the interpositions deemed proper on our part have not been omitted. But it well deserves the consideration of the legislature, how far both the safety and honor of the American flag may be consulted, by adequate provision against that collusive prostitution of it by individuals, unworthy of the American name, which has so much favored the real or pretended suspicions, under which the honest commerce of their fellow-citizens has suffered.

In relation to the powers on the coast of Barbary, nothing has occurred which is not of a nature rather to inspire confidence than distrust, as to the continuance of the existing amity. With our Indian neighbors, the just and benevolent system continued towards them, has also preserved peace, and is more and more advancing habits favorable to their civilization and happiness.

From a statement which will be made by the Secretary of War, it will be seen that the fortifications on our maritime frontier are in many of the ports completed, affording the defence which was contemplated; and that a further time will be required to render complete the works in the harbor of New York, and in some other places. By the

enlargement of the works, and the employment of a greater number of hands at the public armories, the supply of small arms, of an improving quality, appears to be annually increasing at a rate that, with those made on private contract, may be expected to go far towards providing for the public exigency.

The act of Congress providing for the equipment of our vessels of war having been fully carried into execution, I refer to the statement of the Secretary of the Navy for the information which may be proper on that subject. To that statement is added a view of the transfers of appropriations, authorized by the act of the session preceding the last, and of the grounds on which the transfers were made.

Whatever may be the course of your deliberations on the subject of our military establishments, I should fail in my duty in not recommending to your serious attention the importance of giving to our militia, the great bulwark of our security and resource of our power, an organization the best adapted to eventual situations, for which the United States ought to be prepared.

The sums which had been previously accumulated in the treasury, together with the receipts during the year ending on the 30th of September last, (and amounting to more than nine millions of dollars,) have enabled us to fulfil all our engagements, and to defray the current expenses of government, without recurring to any loan. But the insecurity of our commerce, and the consequent diminution of the public revenue, will probably produce a deficiency in the receipts of the ensuing year, for which, and for other details, I refer to the statements which will be transmitted from the treasury.

In the state which has been presented of our affairs with the great parties to a disastrous and protracted war, carried on in a mode equally injurious and unjust to the United States as a neutral nation, the wisdom of the national legislature will be again summoned to the important decision on the alternatives before them. That these will be met in a spirit worthy the councils of a nation conscious both of its rectitude and of its rights, and careful as well of its honor as of its peace, I have an

entire confidence. And that the result will be stamped by a unanimity becoming the occasion, and be supported by every portion of our citizens, with a patriotism enlightened and invigorated by experience, ought as little to be doubted.

In the midst of the wrongs and vexations experienced from external causes, there is much room for congratulation on the prosperity and happiness flowing from our situation at home. The blessing of health has never been more universal. The fruits of the seasons, though in particular articles and districts short of their usual redundancy, are more than sufficient for our wants and our comforts. The face of our country everywhere presents the evidence of laudable enterprise, of extensive capital, and of durable improvement. In the cultivation of the materials, and the extension of useful manufactures, more especially in the general application to household fabrics, we behold a rapid diminution of our dependence on foreign supplies. Nor is it unworthy of reflection, that this revolution in our pursuits and habits is in no slight degree a consequence of those impolitic and arbitrary edicts, by which the contending nations, in endeavoring each of them to obstruct our trade with the other, have so far abridged our means of procuring the productions and manufactures, of which our own are now taking the place.

Recollecting always, that, for every advantage which may contribute to distinguish our lot from that to which others are doomed by the unhappy spirit of the times, we are indebted to that Divine Providence whose goodness has been so remarkably extended to this rising nation, it becomes us to cherish a devout gratitude, and to implore from the same Omnipotent Source a blessing on the consultations and measures about to be undertaken for the welfare of our beloved country.

MONROE'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS,

MARCH 5, 1817.

I SHOULD be destitute of feeling if I was not deeply affected by the strong proof which my fellow-citizens have given me of their confidence, in calling me to the high office, whose functions I am about to assume. As the expression of their good opinion of my conduct in the public service, I derive from it a gratification which those who are conscious of having done all that they could do to merit it, can alone feel. My sensibility is increased by a just estimate of the importance of the trust, and of the nature and extent of its duties ; with the proper discharge of which the highest interests of a great and free people are intimately connected. Conscious of my own deficiency, I cannot enter on these duties without great anxiety for the result. From a just responsibility I will never shrink ; calculating with confidence, that in my best efforts to promote the public welfare, my motives will always be duly appreciated, and my conduct be viewed with that candor and indulgence which I have experienced in other stations.

In commencing the duties of the chief executive office it has been the practice of the distinguished men who have gone before me, to explain the principles which would govern them in their respective administrations. In following their venerated example, my attention is naturally drawn to the great causes which have contributed, in a principal degree, to produce the present happy condition of the United States. They will best explain the nature of our duties, and shed much light on the policy which ought to be pursued in future.

From the commencement of our revolution to the present day, almost forty years have elapsed, and from the establishment of this constitution, twenty-eight. Through this whole term, the government has been what may emphatically be called, self-government : and what has been the effect ? To whatever object we turn our attention, whether it relates to our foreign or domestic concerns,

we find abundant cause to felicitate ourselves in the excellence of our institutions. During a period fraught with difficulties, and marked by very extraordinary events, the United States have flourished beyond example. Their citizens, individually, have been happy, and the nation prosperous.

Under this constitution our commerce has been wisely regulated with foreign nations, and between the states; new states have been admitted into our Union; our territory has been enlarged by fair and honorable treaty, and with great advantage to the original states; the states respectively protected by the national government, under a mild paternal system, against foreign dangers, and enjoying within their separate spheres, by a wise partition of power, a just proportion of the sovereignty, have improved their police, extended their settlements, and attained a strength and maturity which are the best proofs of wholesome laws well administered. And if we look to the condition of individuals, what a proud spectacle does it exhibit! On whom has oppression fallen in any quarter of our Union? Who has been deprived of any right of person or property? Who restrained from offering his vows, in the mode which he prefers, to the Divine Author of his being? It is well known that all these blessings have been enjoyed in their fullest extent; and I add, with peculiar satisfaction, that there has been no example of a capital punishment being inflicted on any one for the crime of high treason.

Some who might admit the competency of our government to those beneficent duties, might doubt it in trials which put to the test its strength and efficiency as a member of the great community of nations. Here, too, experience has afforded us the most satisfactory proof in its favor. Just as this constitution was put into action, several of the principal states of Europe had become much agitated, and some of them seriously convulsed. Destructive wars ensued, which have of late only been terminated. In the course of these conflicts, the United States received great injury from several of the parties. It was their interest to stand aloof from the contest, to demand justice from the party committing the injury and

to cultivate, by a fair and honorable conduct, the friendship of all. War became at length inevitable, and the result has shown that our government is equal to that, the greatest of trials, under the most unfavorable circumstances. Of the virtue of the people, and of the heroic exploits of the army, the navy, and the militia, I need not speak.

Such, then, is the happy government under which we live ; a government adequate to every purpose for which the social compact is formed ; a government elective in all its branches, under which every citizen may, by his merit, obtain the highest trust recognised by the constitution ; which contains within it no cause of discord ; none to put at variance one portion of the community with another ; a government which protects every citizen in the full enjoyment of his rights, and is able to protect the nation against injustice from foreign powers.

Other considerations of the highest importance admonish us to cherish our union, and to cling to the government which supports it. Fortunate as we are in our political institutions, we have not been less so in other circumstances, on which our prosperity and happiness essentially depend. Situated within the temperate zone, and extending through many degrees of latitude along the Atlantic, the United States enjoy all the varieties of climate, and every production incident to that portion of the globe. Penetrating, internally, to the great lakes and beyond the resources of the great rivers which communicate through our whole interior, no country was ever happier with respect to its domain. Blessed too with a fertile soil, our produce has always been very abundant, leaving, even in years the least favorable, a surplus for the wants of our fellow-men in other countries. Such is our peculiar felicity, that there is not a part of our Union that is not particularly interested in preserving it. The great agricultural interest of our nation prospers under its protection. Local interests are not less fostered by it. Our fellow-citizens of the north, engaged in navigation, find great encouragement in being made the favored carriers of the vast productions of the other portions of the United States, while the inhabitants of these are amply recom-

pensed, in their turn, by the nursery for seamen and naval force, thus formed and reared up for the support of our common rights. Our manufacturers find a generous encouragement by the policy which patronizes domestic industry; and the surplus of our produce, a steady and profitable market by local wants in less favored parts at home.

Such, then, being the highly favored condition of our country, it is the interest of every citizen to maintain it. What are the dangers which menace us? If any exist, they ought to be ascertained and guarded against.

In explaining my sentiments on this subject, it may be asked, what raised us to the present happy state? How did we accomplish the revolution? How remedy the defects of the first instrument of our Union, by infusing into the national government sufficient power for national purposes, without impairing the just rights of the states, or affecting those of individuals? How sustain and pass with glory through the late war? The government has been in the hands of the people. To the people, therefore, and to the faithful and able depositaries of their trust, is the credit due. Had the people of the United States been educated in different principles, had they been less intelligent, less independent, or less virtuous, can it be believed that we should have maintained the same steady and consistent career, or been blessed with the same success? While then the constituent body retains its present sound and healthful state, everything will be safe. They will choose competent and faithful representatives for every department. It is only when the people become ignorant and corrupt, when they degenerate into a populace, that they are incapable of exercising the sovereignty. Usurpation is then an easy attainment, and an usurper soon found. The people themselves become the willing instruments of their own debasement and ruin. Let us then look to the great cause, and endeavor to preserve it in full force. Let us, by all wise and constitutional measures, promote intelligence among the people, as the best means of preserving our liberties.

Dangers from abroad are not less deserving of attention. Experiencing the fortune of other nations, the

United States may again be involved in war, and it may in that event be the object of the adverse party to upset our government, to break our union, and demolish us as a nation. Our distance from Europe, and the just, moderate, and pacific policy of our government, may form some security against these dangers, but they ought to be anticipated and guarded against. Many of our citizens are engaged in commerce and navigation, and all of them are in a certain degree dependent on their prosperous state. Many are engaged in the fisheries. These interests are exposed to invasion in the wars between other powers, and we should disregard the faithful admonitions of experience if we did not expect it. We must support our rights, or lose our character, and with it, perhaps, our liberties. A people who fail to do it, can scarcely be said to hold a place among independent nations. National honor is national property of the highest value. The sentiment in the mind of every citizen, is national strength. It ought therefore to be cherished.

To secure us against these dangers, our coast and inland frontiers should be fortified, our army and navy regulated upon just principles as to the force of each, be kept in perfect order, and our militia be placed on the best practicable footing. To put our extensive coast in such a state of defence as to secure our cities and interior from invasion, will be attended with expense, but the work when finished will be permanent, and it is fair to presume that a single campaign of invasion, by a naval force, superior to our own, aided by a few thousand land troops, would expose us to a greater expense, without taking into the estimate the loss of property and distress of our citizens, than would be sufficient for this great work. Our land and naval forces should be moderate, but adequate to the necessary purposes. The former to garrison and preserve our fortifications, and to meet the first invasions of a foreign foe; and while constituting the elements of a greater force, to preserve the science, as well as all the necessary implements of war, in a state to be brought into activity in the event of war. The latter, retained within the limits proper in state of peace, might aid in maintaining the neutrality of the United

States, with dignity, in the wars of other powers, and in saving the property of their citizens from spoliation. In time of war, with the enlargement of which the great naval resources of the country render it susceptible, and which should be duly fostered in time of peace, it would contribute essentially, both as an auxiliary of defence and as a powerful engine of annoyance, to diminish the calamities of war, and to bring the war to a speedy and honorable termination.

But it ought always to be held prominently in view, that the safety of these states, and of everything dear to a free people, must depend in an eminent degree on the militia. Invasions may be made too formidable to be resisted by any land and naval force, which it would comport either with the principles of our government or the circumstances of the United States to maintain. In such cases, recourse must be had to the great body of the people, and in a manner to produce the best effect. It is of the highest importance, therefore, that they be so organized and trained as to be prepared for any emergency. The arrangement should be such as to put at the command of the government the ardent patriotism and youthful vigor of the country. If formed on equal and just principles, it cannot be oppressive. It is the crisis which makes the pressure, and not the laws which provide a remedy for it. This arrangement should be formed, too, in time of peace, to be the better prepared for war. With such an organization of such a people, the United States have nothing to dread from foreign invasion. At its approach, an overwhelming force of gallant men might always be put in motion.

Other interests of high importance will claim attention, among which, the improvement of our country by roads and canals, proceeding always with a constitutional sanction, holds a distinguished place. By thus facilitating the intercourse between the states, we shall add much to the convenience and comfort of our fellow-citizens, much to the ornament of the country, and, what is of greater importance, we shall shorten distances, and by making each part more accessible to and dependent on the other, we shall bind the union more closely together. Nature

has done so much for us by intersecting the country with so many great rivers, bays, and lakes, approaching from distant points so near to each other, that the inducement to complete the work seems to be peculiarly strong. A more interesting spectacle was perhaps never seen than is exhibited within the limits of the United States—a territory so vast, and advantageously situated, containing objects so grand, so useful, so happily connected in all their parts.

Our manufactures, will, likewise, require the systematic and fostering care of the government. Possessing, as we do, all the raw materials, the fruit of our own soil and industry, we ought not to depend, in the degree we have done, on supplies from other countries. While we are thus dependent, the sudden event of war, unsought and unexpected, cannot fail to plunge us into the most serious difficulties. It is important, too, that the capital which nourishes our manufactures should be domestic, as its influence, in that case, instead of exhausting, as it may do in foreign hands, would be felt advantageously on agriculture, and every other branch of industry. Equally important is it to provide at home a market for our raw materials, as by extending the competition, it will enhance the price, and protect the cultivator against the casualties incident to foreign markets.

With the Indian tribes it is our duty to cultivate friendly relations, and to act with kindness and liberality in all our transactions. Equally proper is it to persevere in our efforts to extend to them the advantages of civilization.

The great amount of our revenue, and the flourishing state of the treasury are a full proof of the competency of the national resources for any emergency, as they are of the willingness of our fellow-citizens to bear the burdens which the public necessities require. The vast amount of vacant lands, the value of which daily augments, forms an additional resource of great extent and duration. These resources, besides accomplishing every other necessary purpose, put it completely in the power of the United States to discharge the national debt at an early period. Peace is the best time for improvement and preparations of every kind; it is in peace that our commerce

flourishes most, that taxes are most easily paid, and that the revenue is most productive.

The executive is charged, officially, in the departments under it, with the disbursement of the public money, and is responsible for the faithful application of it to the purposes for which it is raised. The legislature is the watchful guardian over the public purse. It is its duty to see that the disbursement has been honestly made. To meet the requisite responsibility, every facility should be afforded to the executive, to enable it to bring the public agents intrusted with the public money, strictly and promptly to account. Nothing should be presumed against them; but if, with the requisite facilities, the public money is suffered to lie long and uselessly in their hands, they will not be the only defaulters, nor will the demoralizing effect be confined to them. It will evince a relaxation and want of tone in the administration, which will be felt by the whole community. I shall do all that I can to secure economy and fidelity in this important branch of the administration, and I doubt not that the legislature will perform its duty with equal zeal. A thorough examination should be regularly made, and I will promote it.

It is particularly gratifying to me to enter on the discharge of these duties at a time when the United States are blessed with peace. It is a state most consistent with their prosperity and happiness. It will be my sincere desire to preserve it, so far as depends on the executive, on just principles with all nations, claiming nothing unreasonable of any, and rendering to each what is its due.

Equally gratifying is it to witness the increased harmony of opinion which pervades our Union. Discord does not belong to our system. Union is recommended, as well by the free and benign principles of our government, extending its blessings to every individual, as by the other eminent advantages attending it. The American people have encountered together great dangers, and sustained severe trials with success. They constitute one great family with a common interest. Experience has enlightened us on some questions of essential importance to the country. The progress has been slow, dictated by

a just reflection, and a faithful regard to every interest connected with it. To promote this harmony, in accordance with the principles of our republican government, and in a manner to give the most complete effect, and to advance, in all other respects, the best interests of our country, will be the object of my constant and zealous exertions.

Never did a government commence under auspices so favorable, nor ever was success so complete. If we look to the history of other nations, ancient or modern, we find no example of a growth so rapid, so gigantic; of a people so prosperous and happy. In contemplating what we have still to perform, the heart of every citizen must expand with joy, when he reflects how near our government has approached to perfection; that in respect to it we have no essential improvement to make; that the great object is to preserve it in the essential principles and features which characterize it, and that that is to be done by preserving the virtue and enlightening the minds of the people; and, as a security against foreign dangers, to adopt such arrangements as are indispensable to the support of our independence, our rights and liberties. If we persevere in the career in which we have advanced so far, and in the path already traced, we cannot fail, under the favor of a gracious Providence, to attain the high destiny which seems to await us.

In the administration of the illustrious men who have preceded me in this high station, with some of whom I have been connected by the closest ties from early life, examples are presented which will always be found highly instructive and useful to their successors. From these I shall endeavor to derive all the advantages which they may afford. Of my immediate predecessor, under whom so important a portion of this great and successful experiment has been made, I shall be pardoned for expressing my earnest wishes that he may long enjoy in his retirement the affections of a grateful country, the best reward of exalted talents and the most faithful and meritorious services. Relying on the aid to be derived from the other departments of government, I enter on the trust to which I have been called by the suffrages of my fellow-citizens.

with my fervent prayers to the Almighty that he will be graciously pleased to continue to us that protection which he has already so conspicuously displayed in our favor.

MONROE'S FIRST ANNUAL MESSAGE,

DECEMBER 3, 1817.

*Fellow-Citizens of the Senate,
and House of Representatives :*

AT no period of our political existence had we so much cause to felicitate ourselves at the prosperous and happy condition of our country. The abundant fruits of the earth have filled it with plenty. An extensive and profitable commerce has greatly augmented our revenue. The public credit has attained an extraordinary elevation. Our preparations for defence, in case of future wars, from which, by the experience of all nations, we ought not expect to be exempted, are advancing, under a well digested system, with all the despatch which so important a work will admit. Our free government, founded on the interests and affections of the people, has gained, and is daily gaining strength. Local jealousies are rapidly yielding to more generous, enlarged, and enlightened views of national policy. For advantages so numerous and highly important, it is our duty to unite in grateful acknowledgments to that Omnipotent Being, from whom they are derived, and in unceasing prayer that he will endow us with virtue and strength to maintain and hand them down, in their utmost purity, to our latest posterity.

I have the satisfaction to inform you, that an arrangement, which had been commenced by my predecessor, with the British government, for the reduction of the naval force, by Great Britain and the United States, on the lakes, has been concluded; by which it is provided, that neither party shall keep in service on lake Champlain more than one vessel; on lake Ontario, more than one; on lake Erie and the upper lakes, more than two; to be armed, each with one cannon only, and that all the other armed vessels of both parties, of which an exact list is

interchanged, shall be dismantled. It is also agreed, that the force retained shall be restricted in its duty to the internal purposes of each party; and that the arrangement shall remain in force until six months shall have expired after notice having been given by one of the parties to the other of its desire that it should terminate. By this arrangement, useless expense on both sides, and, what is of greater importance, the danger of collision between armed vessels in those inland waters, which was great, is prevented.

I have the satisfaction also to state, that the commissioners under the fourth article of the treaty of Ghent, to whom it was referred to decide to which party the several islands in the bay of Passamaquoddy belonged, under the treaty of one thousand seven hundred and eighty-three, have agreed in a report, by which all the islands in the possession of each party before the late war have been decreed to it. The commissioners acting under the other articles of the treaty of Ghent, for the settlement of the boundaries, have also been engaged in the discharge of their respective duties, but have not yet completed them. The difference which arose between the two governments, under the treaty, respecting the right of the United States to take and cure fish on the coast of the British provinces, north of our limits, which had been secured by the treaty of one thousand seven hundred and eighty-three, is still in negotiation. The proposition made by this government, to extend to the colonies of Great Britain the principle of the convention of London, by which the commerce between the ports of the United States and British ports of Europe had been placed on a footing of equality, has been declined by the British government. This subject having been thus amicably discussed between the two governments, and it appearing that the British government is unwilling to depart from its present regulations, it remains for Congress to decide whether they will make any other regulations, in consequence thereof, for the protection and improvement of our navigation.

The negotiation with Spain, for spoliations on our commerce, and the settlement of boundaries, remains essentially in the state it held in the communications that were

made to Congress by my predecessor. It has been evidently the policy of the Spanish government to keep the negotiation suspended, and in this the United States have acquiesced, from an amicable disposition towards Spain, and in the expectation that her government would, from a sense of justice, finally accede to such an arrangement as would be equal between the parties. A disposition has been lately shown by the Spanish government to move in the negotiation, which has been met by this government, and should the conciliatory and friendly policy which has invariably guided our councils, be reciprocated, a just and satisfactory arrangement may be expected. It is proper, however, to remark that no proposition has yet been made from which such a result can be presumed.

It was anticipated, at an early stage, that the contest between Spain and the colonies would become highly interesting to the United States. It was natural that our citizens should sympathize in events which affected their neighbors. It seemed probable, also, that the prosecution of the conflict, along our coast, and in contiguous countries, would occasionally interrupt our commerce, and otherwise affect the persons and property of our citizens. These anticipations have been realized. Such injuries have been received from persons acting under the authority of both the parties, and for which redress has, in some instances, been withheld. Through every stage of the conflict, the United States have maintained an impartial neutrality, giving aid to neither of the parties in men, money, ships, or munitions of war. They have regarded the contest not in the light of an ordinary insurrection or rebellion, but as a civil war between parties nearly equal, having, as to neutral powers, equal rights. Our ports have been open to both, and every article, the fruit of our soil, or of the industry of our citizens, which either was permitted to take, has been equally free to the other. Should the colonies establish their independence, it is proper now to state that this government neither seeks nor would accept from them any advantage in commerce or otherwise, which will not be equally open to all other nations. The colonies will in that event become independent states, free from any obligation to, or connection

with us, which it may not then be their interest to form on a basis of fair reciprocity.

In the summer of the present year, an expedition was set on foot against East Florida, by persons claiming to act under the authority of some of the colonies, who took possession of Amelia Island, at the mouth of St. Mary's river, near the boundary of the state of Georgia. As the province lies eastward of the Mississippi, and is bounded by the United States and the ocean on every side, and has been a subject of negotiation with the government of Spain, as an indemnity for losses by spoliation, or in exchange of territory of equal value, westward of the Mississippi, a fact well known to the world, it excited surprise that any countenance should be given to this measure by any of the colonies. As it would be difficult to reconcile it with the friendly relations existing between the United States and the colonies, a doubt was entertained whether it had been authorized by them, or any of them. This doubt has gained strength, by the circumstances which have unfolded themselves in the prosecution of the enterprise, which have marked it as a mere private, unauthorized adventure. Projected and commenced with an incompetent force, reliance seems to have been placed on what might be drawn, in defiance of our laws, from within our limits; and of late, as their resources have failed, it has assumed a more marked character of unfriendliness to us, the island being made a channel for the illicit introduction of slaves from Africa into the United States, an asylum for fugitive slaves from the neighboring states, and a port for smuggling of every kind.

A similar establishment was made, at an earlier period, by persons of the same description, in the Gulf of Mexico, at a place called Galveston, within the limits of the United States, as we contend, under the cession of Louisiana. This enterprise has been marked in a more signal manner by all the objectionable circumstances which characterized the other, and more particularly by the equipment of privateers which have annoyed our commerce, and by smuggling. These establishments, if ever sanctioned by any authority whatever, which is not be-

lieved, have abused their trust and forfeited all claim to consideration. A just regard for the rights and interests of the United States required that they should be suppressed, and orders have accordingly been issued to that effect. The imperious considerations which produced this measure will be explained to the parties whom it may in any degree concern.

To obtain correct information on every subject in which the United States are interested, to inspire just sentiments in all persons in authority, on either side, of our friendly disposition, so far as it may comport with an impartial neutrality, and to secure proper respect to our commerce in every port, and from every flag, it has been thought proper to send a ship of war, with three distinguished citizens, along the southern coast, with instructions to touch at such ports as they may find most expedient for these purposes. With the existing authorities, with those in the possession of, and exercising the sovereignty, must the communication be held; from them alone can redress for past injuries, committed by persons acting under them, be obtained; by them alone can the commission of the like in future be prevented.

Our relations with the other powers of Europe have experienced no essential change since the last session. In our intercourse with each, due attention continues to be paid to the protection of our commerce, and to every other object in which the United States are interested. A strong hope is entertained, that by adhering to the maxims of a just, candid, and friendly policy, we may long preserve amicable relations with all the powers of Europe, on conditions advantageous and honorable to our country.

With the Barbary States and the Indian tribes, our pacific relations have been preserved.

In calling your attention to the internal concerns of our country, the view which they exhibit is peculiarly gratifying. The payments which have been made into the treasury show the very productive state of the public revenue. After satisfying the appropriations made by law for the support of the civil government and of the military and naval establishments, embracing suitable

provision for fortification and for the gradual increase of the navy, paying the interest of the public debt, and extinguishing more than eighteen millions of the principal, within the present year, it is estimated that a balance of more than six millions of dollars will remain in the treasury on the first day of January, applicable to the current service of the ensuing year.

The payments into the treasury during the year one thousand eight hundred and seventeen, on account of imports and tonnage, resulting principally from duties which have accrued in the present year, may be fairly estimated at twenty millions of dollars; internal revenues, at two millions five hundred thousand; public lands, at one million five hundred thousand; bank dividends and incidental receipts, at five hundred thousand; making, in the whole, twenty-four millions and five hundred thousand dollars.

The annual permanent expenditure for the support of the civil government, and of the army and navy, as now established by law, amounts to eleven millions eight hundred thousand dollars; and for the sinking fund, to ten millions; making, in the whole, twenty-one millions eight hundred thousand dollars; leaving an annual excess of revenue, beyond the expenditure, of two millions seven hundred thousand dollars, exclusive of the balance estimated to be in the treasury on the 1st day of January, one thousand eight hundred and eighteen.

In the present state of the treasury, the whole of the Louisiana debt may be redeemed in the year 1819; after which, if the public debt continues as it now is, above par, there will be annually about five millions of the sinking fund unexpended, until the year 1825, when the loan of 1812, and the stock created by funding treasury notes, will be redeemable.

It is also estimated that the Mississippi stock will be discharged during the year 1819, from the proceeds of the public lands assigned to that object; after which the receipts from those lands will annually add to the public revenue the sum of one million five hundred thousand dollars, making the permanent annual revenue amount to twenty-six millions of dollars, and leaving an annual ex-

cess of revenue after the year 1819, beyond the permanent authorized expenditure, of more than four millions of dollars.

By the last returns to the department of war, the militia force of the several states may be estimated at eight hundred thousand men, infantry, artillery, and cavalry. Great part of this force is armed, and measures are taken to arm the whole. An improvement in the organization and discipline of the militia, is one of the great objects which claim the unremitting attention of Congress.

The regular force amounts nearly to the number required by law, and is stationed along the Atlantic and inland frontiers.

Of the naval force, it has been necessary to maintain strong squadrons in the Mediterranean and in the Gulf of Mexico.

From several of the Indian tribes, inhabiting the country bordering on Lake Erie, purchases have been made of lands, on conditions very favorable to the United States, and, it is presumed, not less so to the tribes themselves. By these purchases the Indian title, with moderate reservations, has been extinguished to the whole of the land within the state of Ohio, and to a great part of that in Michigan territory, and of the state of Indiana. From the Cherokee tribe a tract has been purchased in the state of Georgia, and an arrangement made, by which, in exchange for lands beyond the Mississippi, a great part, if not the whole of the land belonging to the tribe, eastward of that river, in the states of North Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee, and in the Alabama territory, will soon be acquired. By these acquisitions, and others that may reasonably be expected soon to follow, we shall be enabled to extend our settlements from the inhabited parts of the state of Ohio, along Lake Erie, into the Michigan territory, and to connect our settlements, by degrees, through the state of Indiana and the Illinois territory, to that of Missouri. A similar and equally advantageous effect will soon be produced to the south, through the whole extent of the states and territory which border on the waters emptying into the Mississippi and the Mobile. In this progress, which the rights of nature demand, and nothing

can prevent, marking a growth rapid and gigantic, it is our duty to make new efforts for the preservation, improvement, and civilization of the native inhabitants. The hunter state can exist only in the vast uncultivated desert. It yields to the more dense and compact form and greater force of civilized population; and of right it ought to yield, for the earth was given to mankind to support the greatest number of which it is capable, and no tribe or people have a right to withhold from the wants of others more than is necessary for their own support and comfort. It is gratifying to know that the reservation of land made by the treaties with the tribes on Lake Erie, were made with a view to individual ownership among them, and to the cultivation of the soil by all, and that an annual stipend has been pledged to supply their other wants. It will merit the consideration of Congress, whether other provisions, not stipulated by the treaty, ought to be made for these tribes, and for the advancement of the liberal and humane policy of the United States towards all the tribes within our limits, and more particularly for their improvement in the arts of civilized life.

Among the advantages incident to these purchases, and to those which have preceded, the security which may thereby be afforded to our inland frontier is peculiarly important. With a strong barrier, consisting of our own people thus planted on the lakes, the Mississippi and the Mobile, with the protection to be derived from the regular force, Indian hostilities, if they do not altogether cease, will henceforth lose their terror. Fortifications in those quarters to any extent will not be necessary, and the expense attending them may be saved. A people accustomed to the use of fire-arms only, as the Indian tribes are, will shun even moderate works which are defended by cannon. Great fortifications will therefore be requisite only in future along the coast, and at some points in the interior connected with it. On these will the safety of towns and the commerce of our rivers, from the Bay of Fundy to the Mississippi, depend. On these, therefore, should the utmost attention, skill and labor be bestowed.

A considerable and rapid augmentation in the value of all the public lands, proceeding from these and other obvious causes, may henceforward be expected. The difficulties attending early emigrations will be dissipated even in the most remote parts. Several new states have been admitted into our Union, to the west and south, and territorial governments, happily organized, established over every other portion in which there is vacant land for sale. In terminating Indian hostilities, as must soon be done, in a formidable shape at least, the emigration, which has heretofore been great, will probably increase, and the demand for land, and the augmentation in its value, be in like proportion. The great increase of our population throughout the Union will alone produce an important effect, and in no quarter will it be so sensibly felt as those in contemplation. The public lands are a public stock, which ought to be disposed of to the best advantage for the nation. The nation should, therefore, derive the profit proceeding from the continual rise in their value. Every encouragement should be given to the emigrants, consistent with a fair competition between them; but that competition should operate in the first sale to the advantage of the nation rather than of individuals. Great capitalists will derive all the benefit incident to their superior wealth, under any mode of sale which may be adopted. But if, looking forward to the rise in the value of the public lands, they should have the opportunity of amassing, at a low price, vast bodies in their hands, the profit will accrue to them, and not to the public. They would also have the power, in that degree, to control the emigration and settlement in such a manner as their opinion of their respective interests might dictate. I submit the subject to the consideration of Congress, that such further provision may be made of the sale of the public lands, with a view to the public interest, should any be deemed expedient, as in their judgment may be best adapted to the object.

When we consider the vast extent of territory within the United States, the great amount and value of its productions, the connection of its parts, and other circumstances on which their prosperity and happiness depend,

we cannot fail to entertain a high sense of the advantage to be derived from the facility which may be afforded in the intercourse between them, by means of good roads and canals. Never did a country of such vast extent offer equal inducements to improvements of this kind, nor ever were consequences of such magnitude involved in them. As this subject was acted on by Congress at the last session, and there may be a disposition to revive it at present, I have brought it into view for the purpose of communicating my sentiments on a very important circumstance connected with it, with that freedom and candor which a regard for the public interest and a proper respect for Congress require. A difference of opinion has existed, from the first formation of our constitution to the present time, among our most enlightened and virtuous citizens, respecting the right of Congress to establish such a system of improvement. Taking into view the trust with which I am now honored, it would be improper, after what has passed, that this discussion should be revived with an uncertainty of my opinion respecting the right. Disregarding early impressions, I have bestowed on the subject all the deliberation which its great importance, and a just sense of my duty, required, and the result is a settled conviction in my mind that Congress do not possess the right. It is not contained in any of the specified powers granted to Congress, nor can I consider it incidental to, or a necessary mean, viewed on the most liberal scale, for carrying into effect any of the powers which are specifically granted. In communicating this result, I cannot resist the obligation which I feel, to suggest to Congress the propriety of recommending to the states an adoption of an amendment to the constitution, which shall give Congress the right in question. In cases of doubtful construction, especially of such vital interest, it comports with the nature and origin of our republican institutions, and will contribute much to preserve them, to apply to our constituents for an explicit grant of the power. We may confidently rely, that, if it appears to their satisfaction that the power is necessary, it will be granted.

In this case. I am happy to observe, that experience

has afforded the most ample proof of its utility, and that the benign spirit of conciliation and harmony, which now manifests itself throughout our Union, promises to such a recommendation the most prompt and favorable result. I think proper to suggest, also, in case this measure is adopted, that it be recommended to the states to include in the amendment sought, a right in Congress to institute, likewise, seminaries of learning, for the all-important purpose of diffusing knowledge among our fellow-citizens throughout the United States.

Our manufactures will require the continued attention of Congress. The capital employed in them is considerable, and the knowledge required in the machinery and fabric of all the most useful manufactures is of great value. Their preservation, which depends on due encouragement, is connected with the high interests of the nation.

Although the progress of the public buildings has been as favorable as circumstances have permitted, it is to be regretted the capitol is not yet in a state to receive you. There is good cause to presume that the two wings, the only parts as yet commenced, will be prepared for that purpose the next session. The time seems now to have arrived, when this subject may be deemed worthy of the attention of Congress, on a scale adequate to national purposes. The completion of the middle building will be necessary to the convenient accommodation of Congress, of the committees, and various officers belonging to it. It is evident that the other public buildings are altogether insufficient for the accommodation of the several executive departments; some of whom are much crowded, and even subject to the necessity of obtaining it in private buildings, at some distance from the head of the department, and with inconvenience to the management of the public business. Most nations have taken an interest and a pride in the improvement and ornament of their metropolis, and none were more conspicuous in that respect than the ancient republics. The policy which dictated the establishment of a permanent residence for the national government, and the spirit in which it was commenced and has been prosecuted, show that such im-

provement was thought worthy the attention of this nation. Its central position, between the northern and southern extremes of our Union, and its approach to the west, at the head of a great navigable river, which interlocks with the western waters, prove the wisdom of the councils which established it.

Nothing appears to be more reasonable and proper, than that convenient accommodation should be provided, on a well-digested plan, for the heads of the several departments, and for the attorney-general; and it is believed that the public ground in the city, applied to these objects, will be found amply sufficient. I submit this subject to the consideration of Congress, that such provision may be made in it as to them may seem proper.

In contemplating the happy situation of the United States, our attention is drawn, with peculiar interest, to the surviving officers and soldiers of our revolutionary army, who so eminently contributed, by their services, to lay its foundation. Most of those very meritorious citizens have paid the debt of nature and gone to repose. It is believed, that among the survivors there are some not provided for by existing laws, who are reduced to indigence, and even to real distress. These men have a claim on the gratitude of their country, and it will do honor to their country to provide for them. The lapse of a few years more, and the opportunity will be forever lost; indeed, so long already has been the interval, that the number to be benefitted by any provision which may be made, will not be great.

It appearing in a satisfactory manner that the revenue arising from imposts and tonnage, and from the sale of public lands, will be fully adequate to the support of the civil government, of the present military and naval establishments, including the annual augmentation of the latter to the extent provided for, to the payment of the interest on the public debt, and to the extinguishment of it at the times authorized, without the aid of the internal taxes, I consider it my duty to recommend to Congress their repeal. To impose taxes when the public exigencies require them, is an obligation of the most sacred character, especially with a free people. The faithful fulfilment

of it is among the highest proofs of their virtue and capacity for self-government. To dispense with taxes, when it may be done with perfect safety, is equally the duty of their representatives. In this instance, we have the satisfaction to know that they were imposed when the demand was imperious, and have been sustained with exemplary fidelity. I have to add, that however gratifying it may be to me, regarding the prosperous and happy condition of our country, to recommend the repeal of these taxes at this time, I shall, nevertheless, be attentive to events, and should any future emergency occur, be not less prompt to suggest such measures and burdens as may then be requisite and proper.

J. Q. ADAMS'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS,

MARCH 4, 1825.

IN compliance with a usage coeval with the existence of our federal constitution, and sanctioned by the example of my predecessors in the career upon which I am about to enter, I appear, my fellow-citizens, in your presence, and in that of Heaven, to bind myself, by the solemnities of a religious obligation, to the faithful performance of the duties allotted to me, in the station to which I have been called.

In unfolding to my countrymen the principles by which I shall be governed in the fulfilment of those duties, my first resort will be to that constitution, which I shall swear, to the best of my ability, to preserve, protect, and defend. That revered instrument enumerates the powers and prescribes the duties of the executive magistrate; and, in its first words, declares the purposes to which these, and the whole action of the government, instituted by it, should be invariably and sacredly devoted—to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to the people of this Union, in their successive generations. Since the adoption of this social compact, one of these

generations has passed away. It is the work of our forefathers. Administered by some of the most eminent men who contributed to its formation, through a most eventful period in the annals of the world, and through all the vicissitudes of peace and war, incidental to the condition of associated man, it has, not disappointed the hopes and aspirations of those illustrious benefactors of their age and nation. It has promoted the lasting welfare of that country, so dear to us all; it has, to an extent far beyond the ordinary lot of humanity, secured the freedom and happiness of this people. We now receive it as a precious inheritance from those to whom we are indebted for its establishment, doubly bound by the examples they have left us, and by the blessings which we have enjoyed, as the fruits of their labors, to transmit the same, unimpaired, to the succeeding generations.

In the compass of thirty-six years, since this great national covenant was instituted, a body of laws enacted under its authority, and in conformity with its provisions, has unfolded its powers, and carried into practical operation its effective energies. Subordinate departments have distributed the executive functions in their various relations to foreign affairs, to the revenue and expenditures, and to the military force of the Union by land and sea. A co-ordinate department of the judiciary has expounded the constitution and the laws; settling, in harmonious coincidence with the legislative will, numerous weighty questions of construction which the imperfection of human language had rendered unavoidable. The year of jubilee since the first formation of our Union has just elapsed; that of the declaration of independence is at hand. The consummation of both was effected by this constitution. Since that period, a population of four millions has multiplied to twelve. A territory, bounded by the Mississippi, has been extended from sea to sea. New states have been admitted to the Union, in numbers nearly equal to those of the first confederation. Treaties of peace, amity, and commerce, have been concluded with the principal dominions of the earth. The people of other nations, the inhabitants of regions acquired, not by conquest but by compact, have been united with us in the

participation of our rights and duties, of our burdens and blessings. The forest has fallen by the axe of our woodsmen; the soil has been made to teem by the tillage of our farmers; our commerce has whitened every ocean. The dominion of man over physical nature has been extended by the invention of our artists. Liberty and law have marched hand in hand. All the purposes of human association have been accomplished as effectively as under any other government on the globe, and at a cost, little exceeding, in a whole generation, the expenditures of other nations in a single year.

Such is the unexaggerated picture of our condition under a constitution founded upon the republican principle of equal rights. To admit that this picture has its shades, is but to say that it is still the condition of men upon earth. From evil, physical, moral and political, it is not our claim to be exempt. We have suffered sometimes by the visitation of Heaven, through disease; often by the wrongs and injustices of other nations, even to the extremities of war; and, lastly, by dissensions among ourselves—dissensions, perhaps, inseparable from the enjoyment of freedom, but which have more than once appeared to threaten the dissolution of the Union, and, with it, the overthrow of all the enjoyments of our present lot, and all our earthly hopes of the future. The causes of these dissensions have been various, founded upon differences of speculation in the theory of republican government; upon conflicting views of policy, in our relations with foreign nations; upon jealousies of partial and sectional interests, aggravated by prejudices and prepossessions, which strangers to each other are ever apt to entertain.

It is a source of gratification and of encouragement to me, to observe that the great result of this experiment upon the theory of human rights has, at the close of that generation by which it was formed, been crowned with success equal to the most sanguine expectations of its founders. Union, justice, tranquillity, the common defence, the general welfare, and the blessings of liberty, all have been promoted by the government under which we have lived. Standing at this point of time; looking back to that generation which has gone by, and forward to that

which is advancing, we may at once indulge in grateful exultation and in cheering hope. From the experience of the past, we derive instructive lessons for the future. Of the two great political parties which have divided the opinions and feelings of our country, the candid and the just will now admit that both have contributed splendid talents, spotless integrity, ardent patriotism and disinterested sacrifices, to the formation and administration of this government; and that both have required a liberal indulgence for a portion of human infirmity and error. The revolutionary wars of Europe, commencing precisely at the moment when the government of the United States first went into operation under this constitution, excited a collision of sentiments and of sympathies, which kindled all the passions, and embittered the conflict of parties, till the nation was involved in war, and the Union was shaken to its centre. This time of trial embraced a period of five-and-twenty years, during which the policy of the Union, in its relations with Europe, constituted the principal basis of our political divisions, and the most arduous part of the action of our federal government. With the catastrophe in which the wars of the French revolution terminated, and our own subsequent peace with Great Britain, this baneful weed of party strife was uprooted. From that time, no difference of principle, connected either with the theory of government, or with our intercourse with foreign nations, has existed, or been called forth in force sufficient to sustain a continued combination of parties, or give more than wholesome animation to public sentiment or legislative debate. Our political creed is, without a dissenting voice that can be heard, that the will of the people is the source, and the happiness of the people the end, of all legitimate government upon earth. That the best security for the beneficence, and the best guaranty against the abuse of power, consists in the freedom, the purity, and the frequency of popular elections. That the general government of the Union, and the separate governments of the states, are all sovereignties of legitimated powers; fellow-servants of the same masters, uncontrolled within their respective spheres, uncontrollable by encroachments upon each

other. That the firmest security of peace is the preparation during peace of the defences of war. That a rigorous economy, and accountability of public expenditures, should guard against the aggravation, and alleviate, when possible, the burden of taxation. That the military should be kept in strict subordination to the civil power. That the freedom of the press and of religious opinion should be inviolate. That the policy of our country is peace, and the ark of our salvation, union, are articles of faith upon which we are all agreed. If there have been those who doubted whether a confederated representative democracy were a government competent to the wise and orderly management of the common concerns of a mighty nation, those doubts have been dispelled. If there have been projects of partial confederacies to be erected upon the ruins of the Union, they have been scattered to the winds. If there have been dangerous attachments to one foreign nation, and antipathies against another, they have been extinguished. Ten years of peace, at home and abroad, have assuaged the animosities of political contention, and blended into harmony the most discordant elements of public opinion. There still remains one effort of magnanimity, one sacrifice of prejudice and passion, to be made by the individuals, throughout the nation, who have heretofore followed the standard of political party. It is that of discarding every remnant of rancor against each other; of embracing as countrymen and friends; and of yielding to talents and virtue alone that confidence which, in times of contention for principle, was bestowed only upon those who bore the badge of party communion.

The collisions of party spirit, which originate in speculative opinions, or in different views of administrative policy, are in their nature transitory. Those which are founded on geographical divisions, adverse interests of soil, climate, and modes of domestic life, are more permanent, and therefore perhaps more dangerous. It is this which gives inestimable value to the character of our government, at once federal and national. It holds out to us a perpetual admonition to preserve alike, and with equal anxiety, the rights of each individual state in its own

government, and the rights of the whole nation in that of the Union. Whatever is of domestic concernment, unconnected with the other members of the Union, or with foreign lands, belongs exclusively to the administration of the state governments. Whatsoever directly involves the rights and interests of the federative fraternity, or of foreign powers, is of the resort of this general government. The duties of both are obvious in the general principle, though sometimes perplexed with difficulties in the detail. To respect the rights of the state governments is the inviolable duty of that of the Union; the government of every state will feel its own obligation to respect and preserve the rights of the whole. The prejudices everywhere too commonly entertained against distant strangers are worn away, and the jealousies of jarring interests are allayed by the composition and functions of the great national councils annually assembled from all quarters of the Union at this place. Here the distinguished men from every section of our country, while meeting to deliberate upon the great interests of those by whom they are deputed, learn to estimate the talents and do justice to the virtues of each other. The harmony of the nation is promoted, and the whole Union is knit together by the sentiments of mutual respect, the habits of social intercourse, and the ties of personal friendship, formed between the representatives of its several parts, in the performance of their service at this metropolis.

Passing from this general review of the purposes and injunctions of the federal constitution, and their results, as indicating the first traces of the path of duty in the discharge of my public trust, I turn to the administration of my immediate predecessor, as the second. It has passed away in a period of profound peace: how much to the satisfaction of our country, and to the honor of our country's name, is known to you all. The great features of its policy, in general concurrence with the will of the legislature, have been—to cherish peace while preparing for defensive war; to yield exact justice to other nations, and maintain the rights of our own; to cherish the principles of freedom and of equal rights, wherever they were proclaimed; to discharge with all possible promptitude

the national debt ; to reduce within the narrowest limits of efficiency the military force ; to improve the organization and discipline of the army ; to provide and sustain a school of military science ; to extend equal protection to all the great interests of the nation ; to promote the civilization of the Indian tribes ; and to proceed in the great system of internal improvements within the limits of the constitutional power of the Union. Under the pledge of these promises, made by that eminent citizen, at the time of his first induction to this office, in his career of eight years, the internal taxes have been repealed ; sixty millions of the public debt have been discharged ; provision has been made for the comfort and relief of the aged and indigent among the surviving warriors of the revolution ; the regular armed force has been reduced, and its constitution revised and perfected ; the accountability for the expenditures of public moneys has been made more effective ; the Floridas have been peaceably acquired, and our boundary has been extended to the Pacific Ocean ; the independence of the southern nations of this hemisphere has been recognised, and recommended by example and by counsel to the potentates of Europe ; progress has been made in the defence of the country by fortifications, and the increase of the navy—towards the effectual suppression of the African traffic in slaves—in alluring the aboriginal hunters of our land to the cultivation of the soil and of the mind—in exploring the interior regions of the Union, and in preparing, by scientific researches and surveys, for the further application of our national resources to the internal improvement of our country.

In this brief outline of the promise and performance of my immediate predecessor, the line of duty for his successor is clearly delineated. To pursue to their consummation those purposes of improvement in our common condition, instituted or recommended by him, will embrace the whole sphere of my obligations. To the topic of internal improvement, emphatically urged by him at his inauguration, I recur with peculiar satisfaction. It is that from which I am convinced that the unborn millions of our posterity, who are in future ages to people this continent, will derive their most fervent gratitude to the foun

ders of the Union; that in which the beneficent action of its government will be most deeply felt and acknowledged. The magnificence and splendor of their public works are among the imperishable glories of the ancient republics. The roads and aqueducts of Rome have been the admiration of all after-ages, and have survived thousands of years after all her conquests have been swallowed up in despotism, or become the spoil of barbarians. Some diversity of opinion has prevailed with regard to the powers of Congress for legislation upon objects of this nature. The most respectful deference is due to doubts originating in pure patriotism, and sustained by venerated authority. But nearly twenty years have passed since the construction of the first national road was commenced. The authority for its construction was then unquestioned. To how many thousands of our countrymen has it proved a benefit? To what single individual has it ever proved an injury? Repeated, liberal and candid discussions in the legislature have conciliated the sentiments, and approximated the opinions of enlightened minds, upon the question of constitutional power. I cannot but hope that, by the same process of friendly, patient, and persevering deliberation, all constitutional objections will ultimately be removed. The extent and limitation of the powers of the general government, in relation to this transcendently important interest, will be settled and acknowledged to the common satisfaction of all; and every speculative scruple will be solved by a practical public blessing.

Fellow-citizens, you are acquainted with the peculiar circumstances of the recent elections, which have resulted in affording me the opportunity of addressing you at this time. You have heard the exposition of the principles which will direct me in the fulfilment of the high and solemn trust imposed upon me in this station. Less possessed of your confidence in advance than any of my predecessors, I am deeply conscious of the prospect that I shall stand, more and oftener, in need of your indulgence. Intentions upright and pure; a heart devoted to the welfare of our country, and the unceasing application of the faculties allotted to me to her service, are all the pledges that I can give to the faithful performance of the

arduous duties I am to undertake. To the guidance of the legislative councils; to the assistance of the executive and subordinate departments; to the friendly co-operation of the respective state governments; to the candid and liberal support of the people, so far as it may be deserved by honest industry and zeal, I shall look for whatever success may attend my public service; and knowing that, except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain, with fervent supplications for his favor, to his overruling providence I commit, with humble but fearless confidence, my own fate and the future destinies of my country.

J. Q. ADAMS'S FIRST ANNUAL MESSAGE,

DECEMBER 6, 1825.

To the Senate, and

House of Representatives of the United States:

IN taking a general survey of the concerns of our beloved country, with reference to subjects interesting to the common welfare, the first sentiment which impresses itself upon the mind, is of gratitude to the Omnipotent Disposer of all good, for the continuance of the signal blessings of his providence, and especially for that health which, to an unusual extent, has prevailed within our borders; and for that abundance which, in the vicissitudes of the seasons, has been scattered with profusion over our land. Nor ought we less to ascribe to Him the glory, that we are permitted to enjoy the bounties of his hand in peace and tranquillity—in peace with all the other nations of the earth, in tranquillity among ourselves. There has, indeed, rarely been a period in the history of civilized man, in which the general condition of the Christian nations has been marked so extensively by peace and prosperity.

Europe, with a few partial and unhappy exceptions, has enjoyed ten years of peace, during which all her governments whatever the theory of their constitutions

may have been, are successively taught to feel that the end of their institutions is the happiness of the people, and that the exercise of power among men can be justified only by the blessings it confers upon those over whom it is extended.

During the same period, our intercourse with all those nations has been pacific and friendly; it so continues. Since the close of your late session, no material variation has occurred in our relations with any one of them. In the commercial and navigation system of Great Britain, important changes of municipal regulations have recently been sanctioned by the acts of parliament, the effect of which upon the interests of other nations, and particularly upon ours, has not yet been fully developed. In the recent renewal of the diplomatic missions, on both sides, between the two governments, assurances have been given and received of the continuance and increase of the mutual confidence and cordiality by which the adjustment of many points of difference has already been effected, and which affords the surest pledge for the ultimate satisfactory adjustment of those which still remain open, or may hereafter arise.

The policy of the United States, in their commercial intercourse with other nations, has always been of the most liberal character. In the mutual exchange of their respective productions, they have abstained altogether from prohibitions; they have interdicted themselves the power of laying taxes upon exports, and whenever they have favored their own shipping, by special preferences or exclusive privileges in their own ports, it has been only with a view to countervail similar favors and exclusions granted by the nations with whom we have been engaged in traffic, to their own people or shipping, and to the disadvantage of ours. Immediately after the close of the last war, a proposal was fairly made, by the act of Congress of the 3d March, 1815, to all maritime nations, to lay aside the system of retaliating restrictions and exclusions, and to place the shipping of both parties to the common trade on a footing of equality in respect to the duties of tonnage and impost. This offer was partially and successively accepted by Great Britain, Sweden, the

Netherlands, the Hanseatic cities, Prussia, Sardinia, the Duke of Oldenburg, and Russia. It was also adopted, under certain modifications, in our late commercial convention with France. And by the act of Congress of the 8th of January, 1824, it has received a new confirmation with all the nations who had acceded to it, and has been offered again to all those who are or may hereafter be willing to abide in reciprocity by it. But all these regulations, whether established by treaty or by municipal enactments, are still subject to one important restriction.

The removal of discriminating duties of tonnage and impost, is limited to articles of the growth, produce, or manufacture of the country to which the vessel belongs, or to such articles as are most universally shipped from her ports. It will deserve the serious consideration of Congress, whether even this remnant of restriction may not be safely abandoned, and whether the general tender of equal competition, made in the act of 8th January, 1824, may not be extended to include all articles of merchandise not prohibited, of what country soever they may be the produce or manufacture. Propositions to this effect have already been made to us by more than one European government, and it is probable that if once established by legislation or compact with any distinguished maritime state, it would recommend itself, by the experience of its advantages, to the general accession of all.

The convention of commerce and navigation between the United States and France, concluded on the 24th of June, 1822, was, in the understanding and intent of both parties, as appears upon its face, only a temporary arrangement of the points of difference between them of the most immediate and pressing urgency. It was limited, in the first instance, to two years from the first of October, 1822, but with a proviso that it should further continue in force till the conclusion of a general and definitive treaty of commerce, unless terminated by a notice, six months in advance, of either of the parties to the other. Its operation, so far as it extended, has been mutually advantageous; and it still continues in force by common consent. But it left unadjusted several objects of great interest to the citizens and subjects of both countries, and

particularly a mass of claims, to considerable amount, of citizens of the United States upon the government of France, of indemnity for property taken or destroyed, under circumstances of the most aggravated and outrageous character. In the long period during which continued and earnest appeals have been made to the equity and magnanimity of France, in behalf of those claims, their justice has not been, as it could not be, denied. It was hoped that the accession of a new sovereign to the throne, would have afforded a favorable opportunity for presenting them to the consideration of his government. They have been presented and urged, hitherto without effect. The repeated and earnest representations of our minister at the court of France, remain as yet even without an answer. Were the demands of nations upon the justice of each other susceptible of adjudication by the decision of an impartial tribunal, those to whom I now refer would long since have been settled, and adequate indemnity would have been obtained. There are large amounts of similar claims upon the Netherlands, Naples, and Denmark. For those upon Spain, prior to 1819, indemnity was, after many years of patient forbearance, obtained, and those of Sweden have been lately compromised by a private settlement, in which the claimants themselves have acquiesced. The governments of Denmark and of Naples have been recently reminded of those yet existing against them; nor will any of them be forgotten while a hope may be indulged of obtaining justice, by the means within the constitutional power of the executive, and without resorting to those means of self-redress, which, as well as the time, circumstances, and occasion, which may require them, are within the exclusive competency of the legislature.

It is with great satisfaction that I am enabled to bear witness to the liberal spirit with which the republic of Colombia has made satisfaction for well-established claims of a similar character. And among the documents now communicated to Congress, will be distinguished a treaty of commerce and navigation with that republic, the ratifications of which have been exchanged since the last recess of the legislature. The negotiation of similar trea-

ties with all the independent South American states, has been contemplated, and may yet be accomplished. The basis of them all, as proposed by the United States, has been laid in two principles; the one, of entire and unqualified reciprocity; the other, the mutual obligation of the parties to place each other permanently on the footing of the most favored nation. These principles are, indeed, indispensable to the effectual emancipation of the American hemisphere from the thralldom of colonizing monopolies and exclusions—an event rapidly realizing in the progress of human affairs, and which the resistance still opposed in certain parts of Europe to the acknowledgment of the Southern American republics as independent states, will, it is believed, contribute more effectually to accomplish. The time has been, and that not remote, when some of these states might, in their anxious desire to obtain a nominal recognition, have accepted of a nominal independence, clogged with burdensome conditions, and exclusive commercial privileges, granted to the nation from which they have separated, to the disadvantage of all others. They now are all aware that such concessions to any European nation would be incompatible with that independence which they have declared and maintained.

Among the measures which have been suggested to them by the new relations with one another, resulting from the recent changes in their condition, is that of assembling at the Isthmus of Panama, a Congress, at which each of them should be represented, to deliberate upon objects important to the welfare of all. The republics of Colombia, of Mexico, and of Central America, have already deputed plenipotentiaries to such a meeting, and they have invited the United States to be also represented there by their ministers. The invitation has been accepted, and ministers on the part of the United States will be commissioned to attend at those deliberations, and to take part in them, so far as it may be compatible with that neutrality from which it is neither our intention nor the desire of the American states that we should depart.

The commissioners under the seventh article of the treaty of Ghent have so nearly completed their arduous labors, that, by the report recently received from their

agent on the part of the United States, there is reason to expect that the commission will be closed at their next session, appointed for the 22d of May, of the ensuing year.

The other commission appointed to ascertain the indemnities due for slaves carried away from the United States, after the close of the late war, have met with some difficulty, which has delayed their progress in the inquiry. A reference has been made to the British government on the subject, which, it may be hoped, will tend to hasten the decision of the commissioners, or serve as a substitute for it.

Among the powers specifically granted to Congress by the constitution, are those of establishing uniform laws on the subject of bankruptcies throughout the United States; and for providing for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia, and for governing such part of them as may be employed in the service of the United States. The magnitude and complexity of the interests affected by legislation upon these subjects, may account for the fact, that long and often as both of them have occupied the attention, and animated the debates of Congress, no systems have yet been devised for fulfilling, to the satisfaction of the community, the duties prescribed by these grants of power. To conciliate the claim of the individual citizen to the enjoyment of personal liberty, with the effective obligation of private contracts, is the difficult problem to be solved by a law of bankruptcy. These are objects of the deepest interest to society; affecting all that is precious in the existence of multitudes of persons, many of them in the classes essentially dependent and helpless; of the age requiring nurture, and of the sex entitled to protection from the free agency of the parent and the husband. The organization of the militia is yet more indispensable to the liberties of the country. It is only by an effective militia that we can at once enjoy the repose of peace, and bid defiance to foreign aggression; it is by the militia that we are constituted an armed nation, standing in perpetual panoply of defence, in the presence of all the other nations of the earth. To this end it would be necessary, if possible, so to shape its

organization, as to give it a more united and active energy. There are laws for establishing a uniform militia throughout the United States, and for arming and equipping its whole body. But it is a body of dislocated members, without the vigor of unity, and having little of uniformity but the name. To infuse into this most important institution the power of which it is susceptible, and to make it available for the defence of the Union, at the shortest notice, and at the smallest expense possible of time, of life, and of treasure, are among the benefits to be expected from the persevering deliberations of Congress.

Among the unequivocal indications of our national prosperity, is the flourishing state of our finances. The revenues of the present year, from all their principal sources, will exceed the anticipations of the last. The balance in the treasury on the first of January last, was a little short of two millions of dollars, exclusive of two millions and a half, being a moiety of the loan of five millions, authorized by the act of the 26th May, 1824. The receipts into the treasury from the first of January to the 30th of September, exclusive of the other moiety of the same loan, are estimated at sixteen millions five hundred thousand dollars; and it is expected that those of the current year will exceed five millions of dollars; forming an aggregate of receipts of nearly twenty-two millions, independent of the loan. The expenditures of the year will not exceed that sum more than two millions. By those expenditures, nearly eight millions of the principal of the public debt have been discharged. More than a million and a half has been devoted to the debt of gratitude to the warriors of the revolution; a nearly equal sum to the construction of fortifications and the acquisition of ordnance, and other permanent preparations of national defence; half a million to the gradual increase of the navy; an equal sum for purchases of territory from the Indians, and payment of annuities to them; and upwards of a million for objects of internal improvement, authorized by special acts of the last Congress. If we add to these, four millions of dollars for payment of interest upon the public debt, there remains a sum of about seven millions which has defrayed the whole expense of

the administration of government, in its legislative, executive, and judiciary departments, including the support of the military and naval establishments, and all the occasional contingencies of a government co-extensive with the Union.

The amount of duties secured on merchandise imported, since the commencement of the year, is about twenty-five millions and a half; and that which will accrue during the current quarter, is estimated at five millions and a half; from these thirty-one millions, deducting the drawbacks, estimated at less than seven millions, a sum exceeding twenty-four millions will constitute the revenue of the year, and will exceed the whole expenditures of the year. The entire amount of the public debt remaining due on the first of January next, will be short of eighty-one millions of dollars.

By an act of Congress of the 3d of March last, a loan of twelve millions of dollars was authorized at four and a half per cent., or an exchange of stock to that amount, of four and a half per cent., for a stock of six per cent., to create a fund for extinguishing an equal amount of the public debt, bearing an interest of six per cent., redeemable in 1826. An account of the measures taken to give effect to this act will be laid before you by the Secretary of the Treasury. As the object which it had in view has been but partially accomplished, it will be for the consideration of Congress, whether the power with which it clothed the executive should not be renewed at an early day of the present session, and under what modifications.

The act of Congress of the 3d of March last, directing the Secretary of the Treasury to subscribe, in the name and for the use of the United States, for one thousand five hundred shares of the capital stock of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal Company, has been executed by the actual subscription for the sum specified; and such other measures have been adopted by that officer, under the act, as the fulfilment of its intentions requires. The latest accounts received of this important undertaking, authorize the belief that it is in successful progress.

The payments into the treasury from proceeds of the

sales of the public lands, during the present year, were estimated at one million of dollars. The actual receipts of the first two quarters have fallen very little short of that sum: it is not expected that the second half of the year will be equally productive; but the income of the year, from that source, may now be safely estimated at a million and a half. The act of Congress of the 18th of May, 1824, to provide for the extinguishment of the debt due to the United States by the purchasers of public lands, was limited, in its operation of relief to the purchaser, to the 10th of April last. Its effect at the end of the quarter during which it expired, was to reduce that debt from ten to seven millions. By the operation of similar prior laws of relief, from and since that of 2d March, 1821, the debt has been reduced from upwards of twenty-two millions, to ten. It is exceedingly desirable that it should be extinguished altogether; and to facilitate that consummation, I recommend to Congress the revival, for one year more, of the act of 18th May, 1824, with such provisional modification as may be necessary to guard the public interests against fraudulent practices in the re-sale of relinquished land. The purchasers of public lands are among the most useful of our fellow-citizens; and, since the system of sales for cash alone has been introduced, great indulgence has been justly extended to those who had previously purchased upon credit. The debt which had been contracted under the credit sales had become unwieldy, and its extinction was alike advantageous to the purchaser and the public. Under the system of sales, matured as it has been by experience, and adapted to the exigencies of the times, the lands will continue, as they have become, an abundant source of revenue; and when the pledge of them to the public creditor shall have been redeemed, by the entire discharge of the national debt, the swelling tide of wealth with which they replenish the common treasury, may be made to re-flow, in unfailling streams of improvement, from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean.

The condition of the various branches of the public service resorting from the Department of War, and their administration during the current year, will be exhibited

in the report of the Secretary of War, and the accompanying documents, herewith communicated. The organization and discipline of the army are effective and satisfactory. To counteract the prevalence of desertion among the troops, it has been suggested to withhold from the men a small portion of their monthly pay, until the period of their discharge; and some expedient appears to be necessary, to preserve and maintain among the officers so much of the art of horsemanship as could scarcely fail to be found wanting on the possibly sudden eruption of a war, which should overtake us unprovided with a single corps of cavalry. The Military Academy at West Point, under the restrictions of a severe but paternal superintendence, recommends itself more and more to the patronage of the nation; and the number of meritorious officers which it forms and introduces to the public service, furnishes the means of multiplying the undertaking of public improvements, to which their acquirements at that institution are peculiarly adapted. The school of artillery practice, established at Fortress Monroe, is well suited to the same purpose, and may need the aid of further legislative provision to the same end. The reports of the various officers at the head of the administrative branches of the military service, connected with the quartering, clothing, subsistence, health and pay of the army, exhibit the assiduous vigilance of those officers in the performance of their respective duties, and the faithful accountability which has pervaded every part of the system.

Our relations with the numerous tribes of aboriginal natives of this country, scattered over its extensive surface, and so dependent, even for their existence, upon our power, have been during the present year highly interesting. An act of Congress of the 25th of May, 1824, made an appropriation to defray the expenses of making treaties of trade and friendship with the Indian tribes beyond the Mississippi. An act of the 3d of March, 1825, authorized treaties to be made with the Indians for their consent to the making of a road from the frontier of Missouri to that of New Mexico. And another act, of the same date, provided for defraying the expenses of holding treaties with the Sioux, Chippewas, Menomonees, Sacs,

Foxes, &c., for the purpose of establishing boundaries and promoting peace between said tribes. The first and the last objects of these acts have been accomplished; and the second is yet in a process of execution. The treaties which since the last session of Congress, have been concluded with the several tribes, will be laid before the Senate for their consideration, conformably to the constitution. They comprise large and valuable acquisitions of territory; and they secure an adjustment of boundaries, and give pledges of permanent peace between several tribes which had been long waging bloody wars against each other.

On the 12th of February last, a treaty was signed at the Indian Springs, between commissioners appointed on the part of the United States, and certain chiefs and individuals of the Creek nation of Indians, which was received at the seat of government only a very few days before the close of the last session of Congress and of the late administration. The advice and consent of the Senate was given to it on the 3d of March, too late for it to receive the ratification of the then president of the United States: it was ratified on the 7th of March, under the unsuspecting impression that it had been negotiated in good faith and in the confidence inspired by the recommendation of the Senate. The subsequent transactions in relation to this treaty will form the subject of a separate communication.

The appropriations made by Congress for public works, as well in the construction of fortifications, as for purposes of internal improvement, so far as they have been expended, have been faithfully applied. Their progress has been delayed by the want of suitable officers for superintending them. An increase of both the corps of engineers, military and topographical, was recommended by my predecessor at the last session of Congress. The reasons upon which that recommendation was founded, subsist in all their force, and have acquired additional urgency since that time. It may also be expedient to organize the topographical engineers into a corps similar to the present establishment of the corps of engineers. The Military Academy at West Point will furnish, from the cadets an-

nally graduated there, officers well qualified for carrying this measure into effect.

The board of engineers for internal improvement, appointed for carrying into execution the act of Congress of 30th of April, 1824, "to procure the necessary surveys, plans and estimates, on the subject of roads and canals," have been actively engaged in that service from the close of the last session of Congress. They have completed the surveys necessary for ascertaining the practicability of a canal from the Chesapeake bay to the Ohio river, and are preparing a full report on that subject, which, when completed, will be laid before you. The same observation is to be made with regard to the two other objects of national importance, upon which the board have been occupied; namely, the accomplishment of a national road from this city to New Orleans, and the practicability of uniting the waters of Lake Memphremagog with Connecticut river, and the improvement of the navigation of that river. The surveys have been made, and are nearly completed. The report may be expected at an early period during the present session of Congress.

The acts of Congress of the last session, relative to the surveying, marking, or laying out roads in the territory of Florida, Arkansas, and Michigan, from Missouri to Mexico, and for the continuation of the Cumberland road, are, some of them, fully executed, and others in the process of execution. Those for completing or commencing fortifications have been delayed only so far as the corps of engineers have been inadequate to furnish officers for the necessary superintendence of the works. Under the acts confirming the statutes of Virginia and Maryland, incorporating the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company, three commissioners on the part of the United States have been appointed for opening books and receiving subscriptions, in concert with a like number of commissioners appointed on the part of each of those states. A meeting of the commissioners has been postponed to await the definite report of the board of engineers. The light-houses and monuments for the safety of our commerce and mariners; the works for the security of Plymouth Beach, and for the preservation of the islands in Boston

harbor, have received the attention required by the laws relating to those objects, respectively. The continuation of the Cumberland road, the most important of them all, after surmounting no inconsiderable difficulty in fixing upon the direction of the road, has commenced under the most promising auspices, with the improvements of recent invention in the mode of construction, and with the advantage of a great reduction in the comparative cost of the work.

The operation of the laws relating to the revolutionary pensioners may deserve the renewed consideration of Congress. The act of the 18th March, 1818, while it made provision for many meritorious and indigent citizens who had served in the war of independence, opened a door to numerous abuses and impositions. To remedy this, the act of 1st May, 1820, exacted proofs of absolute indigence, which many really in want were unable, and all, susceptible of that delicacy which is allied to many virtues, must be deeply reluctant to give. The result has been, that some among the least deserving have been retained, and some in whom the requisites both of worth and want were combined, have been stricken from the list. As the numbers of these venerable relics of an age gone by, diminish; as the decays of body, mind and estate of those that survive, must, in the common course of nature, increase; should not a more liberal portion of indulgence be dealt out to them? May not the want in most instances be inferred from the demand, when the service can be duly proved; and may not the last days of human infirmity be spared the mortification of purchasing a pittance of relief, only by the exposure of its own necessities? I submit to Congress the expediency of providing for individual cases of this description, by special enactment, or of revising the act of the 1st of May, 1820, with a view to mitigate the rigor of its exclusions, in favor of persons to whom charity, now bestowed, can scarcely discharge the debt of justice.

The portion of the naval force of the Union in actual service has been chiefly employed on three stations: the Mediterranean, the coasts of South America bordering on the Pacific ocean, and the West Indies. An occasional

cruiser has been sent to range along the African shores most polluted by the traffic of slaves ; one armed vessel has been stationed on the coast of our eastern boundary, to cruise along the fishing grounds in Hudson's bay, and on the coast of Labrador ; and the first service of a new frigate has been performed, in restoring to his native soil and domestic enjoyments the veteran hero whose youthful blood and treasure had freely flowed in the cause of our country's independence, and whose whole life has been a series of services and sacrifices to the improvement of his fellow-men. The visit of General Lafayette, alike honorable to himself and to our country, closed, as it had commenced, with the most affecting testimonials of devoted attachment on his part, and of unbounded gratitude of this people to him in return. It will form, hereafter, a pleasing incident in the annals of our Union, giving to real history the intense interest of romance, and signally marking the unpurchasable tribute of a great nation's social affections to the disinterested champion of the liberties of human kind.

The constant maintenance of a small squadron in the Mediterranean, is a necessary substitute for the humiliating alternative of paying tribute for the security of our commerce in that sea, and for a precarious peace, at the mercy of every caprice of four Barbary states, by whom it was liable to be violated. An additional motive for keeping a respectable force stationed there at this time, is found in the maritime war raging between the Greeks and the Turks ; and in which the neutral navigation of this Union is always in danger of outrage and depredation. A few instances have occurred of such depredations upon our merchant vessels by privateers or pirates wearing the Grecian flag, but without real authority from the Greek or any other government. The heroic struggles of the Greeks themselves, in which our warmest sympathies as freemen and Christians have been engaged, have continued to be maintained with vicissitudes of success adverse and favorable.

Similar motives have rendered expedient the keeping a like force on the coasts of Peru and Chili, on the Pacific. The irregular and convulsive character of the war

upon the shores, has been extended to the conflicts upon the ocean. An active warfare has been kept up for years, with alternate success, though generally to the advantage of the American patriots. But their naval forces have not always been under the control of their own governments. Blockades, unjustifiable upon any acknowledged principles of international law, have been proclaimed by officers in command; and though disavowed by the supreme authorities, the protection of our own commerce against them has been made a cause of complaint and erroneous imputations against some of the most gallant officers of our navy. Complaints equally groundless have been made by the commanders of the Spanish royal forces in those seas; but the most effective protection to our commerce has been the flag and the firmness of our own commanding officers. The cessation of the war, by the complete triumph of the patriot cause, has removed, it is hoped, all cause of dissension with one party, and all vestige of force of the other. But an unsettled coast of many degrees of latitude, forming a part of our own territory, and a flourishing commerce and fishery, extending to the islands of the Pacific and to China, still require that the protecting power of the Union should be displayed under its flag, as well upon the ocean as upon the land.

The objects of the West India squadron have been, to carry into execution the laws for the suppression of the African slave trade; for the protection of our commerce against vessels of piratical character, though bearing commissions from either of the belligerent parties; for its protection against open and unequivocal pirates. These objects, during the present year, have been accomplished more effectually than at any former period. The African slave trade has long been excluded from the use of our flag; and if some few citizens of our country have continued to set the laws of the Union, as well as those of nature and humanity, at defiance, by persevering in that abominable traffic, it has been only by sheltering themselves under the banners of other nations, less earnest for the total extinction of the trade than ours. The irregular privateers have, within the last year, been in a

great measure banished from those seas ; and the pirates, for months past, appear to have been almost entirely swept away from the borders and the shores of the two Spanish islands in those regions. The active, persevering, and unremitted energy of Captain Warrington, and of the officers and men under his command, on that trying and perilous service, have been crowned with signal success, and are entitled to the approbation of their country. But experience has shown that not even a temporary suspension or relaxation from assiduity can be indulged on that station without reproducing piracy and murder in all their horrors ; nor is it probable that, for years to come, our immensely valuable commerce in those seas can navigate in security, without the steady continuance of an armed force devoted to its protection.

It were indeed a vain and dangerous illusion to believe that, in the present or probable condition of human society, a commerce so extensive and so rich as ours could exist and be pursued in safety, without the continual support of a military marine—the only arm by which the power of this confederacy can be estimated or felt by foreign nations, and the only standing military force which can never be dangerous to our own liberties at home. A permanent naval peace establishment, therefore, adapted to our present condition, and adaptable to that gigantic growth with which the nation is advancing in its career, is among the subjects which have already occupied the foresight of the last Congress, and which will deserve your serious deliberations. Our navy, commenced at an early period of our present political organization, upon a scale commensurate with the incipient energies, the scanty resources, and the comparative indigence of our infancy, was even then found adequate to cope with all the powers of Barbary, save the first, and with one of the principal maritime powers of Europe.

At a period of further advancement, but with little accession of strength, it not only sustained with honor the most unequal of conflicts, but covered itself and our country with unfading glory. But it is only since the close of the late war that, by the numbers and force of the ships of which it was composed, it could deserve the

name of a navy. Yet it retains nearly the same organization as when it consisted of only five frigates. The rules and regulations by which it is governed earnestly call for revision; and the want of a naval school of instruction, corresponding with the Military Academy at West Point, for the formation of scientific and accomplished officers, is felt with daily increasing aggravation.

The act of Congress of 26th of May, 1824, authorizing an examination and survey of the harbor of Charleston, in South Carolina, of St. Mary's, in Georgia, and of the coast of Florida, and for other purposes, has been executed so far as the appropriation would admit. Those of the third of March last, authorizing the establishment of a navy-yard and depot on the coast of Florida, in the Gulf of Mexico, and authorizing the building of ten sloops of war, and for other purposes, are in the course of execution: for the particulars of which and other objects connected with this department, I refer to the report of the Secretary of the Navy herewith communicated.

A report from the Postmaster-General is also submitted, exhibiting the present flourishing condition of that department. For the first time for many years, the receipts for the year ending on the first of July last, exceeded the expenditures during the same period, to the amount of more than forty-five thousand dollars. Other facts, equally creditable to the administration of this department, are, that in two years from the first of July, 1823, an improvement of more than one hundred and eighty-five thousand dollars, in its pecuniary affairs, has been realized; that, in the same interval, the increase of the transportation of the mail has exceeded one million five hundred thousand miles annually; and that one thousand and forty new post-offices have been established. It hence appears that, under judicious management, the income from this establishment may be relied on as fully adequate to defray its expenses; and that, by the discontinuance of post roads, altogether unproductive, others of more useful character may be opened, till the circulation of the mail shall keep pace with the spread of our population, and the comforts of friendly correspondence, the exchanges of internal traffic, and the lights of the periodical press, shall

be distributed to the remotest corners of the Union, at a charge scarcely perceptible to any individual, and without the cost of a dollar to the public treasury.

Upon this first occasion of addressing the legislature of the Union, with which I have been honored, in presenting to their view the execution, so far as it has been effected, of the measures sanctioned by them for promoting the internal improvement of our country, I cannot close the communication without recommending to their calm and persevering consideration the general principle in a more enlarged extent. The great object of the institution of civil government is the improvement of the condition of those who are parties to the social compact. And no government, in whatever form constituted, can accomplish the lawful ends of its institution, but in proportion as it improves the condition of those over whom it is established. Roads and canals, by multiplying and facilitating the communications and intercourse between distant regions and multitudes of men, are among the most important means of improvement. But moral, political and intellectual improvement, are duties assigned by the Author of our existence, to social, no less than to individual man. For the fulfilment of those duties, governments are invested with power; and, to the attainment of the end, the progressive improvement of the condition of the governed, the exercise of delegated powers is a duty as sacred and indispensable, as the usurpation of powers not granted is criminal and odious. Among the first, perhaps the very first instrument for the improvement of the condition of men, is knowledge; and to the acquisition of much of the knowledge adapted to the wants, the comforts, and enjoyments of human life, public institutions and seminaries of learning are essential. So convinced of this was the first of my predecessors in this office, now first in the memory, as, living, he was the first in the hearts of our country, that once and again, in his addresses to the Congresses with whom he co-operated in the public service, he earnestly recommended the establishment of seminaries of learning, to prepare for all the emergencies of peace and war—a national university, and a military academy. With respect to the latter,

had he lived to the present day, in turning his eyes to the institution at West Point, he would have enjoyed the gratification of his most earnest wishes. But, in surveying the city which has been honored with his name, he would have seen the spot of earth which he had destined and bequeathed to the use and benefit of his country as the site for a university, still bare and barren.

In assuming her station among the civilized nations of the earth, it would seem that our country had contracted the engagement to contribute her share of mind, of labor, and of expense, to the improvement of those parts of knowledge which lie beyond the reach of individual acquisition; and particularly to geographical and astronomical science. Looking back to the history only of half the century since the declaration of our independence, and observing the generous emulation with which the governments of France, Great Britain, and Russia, have devoted the genius, the intelligence, the treasures of their respective nations, to the common improvement of the species in these branches of science, is it not incumbent upon us to inquire whether we are not bound by obligations of a high and honorable character to contribute our portion of energy and exertion to the common stock? The voyages of discovery prosecuted in the course of that time, at the expense of those nations, have not only redounded to their glory, but to the improvement of human knowledge. We have been partakers of that improvement, and owe for it a sacred debt, not only of gratitude, but of equal or proportional exertion in the same common cause. Of the cost of these undertakings, if the mere expenditures of outfit, equipment, and completion of the expeditions, were to be considered the only charges, it would be unworthy of a great and generous nation to take a second thought. One hundred expeditions of circumnavigation, like those of Cook and La Perouse, would not burden the exchequer of the nation fitting them out, so much as the ways and means of defraying a single campaign in war. But if we take into the account the lives of those benefactors of mankind, of which their services in the cause of their species were the purchase, how shall the cost of those heroic enter-

prises be estimated? And what compensation can be made to them, or to their countries for them? Is it not by bearing them in affectionate remembrance? Is it not still more by imitating their example? by enabling countrymen of our own to pursue the same career, and to hazard their lives in the same cause?

On inviting the attention of Congress to the subject of internal improvements, upon a view thus enlarged, it is not my design to recommend the equipment of an expedition for circumnavigating the globe for purposes of scientific research and inquiry. We have objects of useful investigation nearer home, and to which our cares may be more beneficially applied. The interior of our own territories has yet been very imperfectly explored. Our coasts, along many degrees of latitude upon the shores of the Pacific Ocean, though much frequented by our spirited commercial navigators, have been barely visited by our public ships. The river of the West, first fully discovered and navigated by a countryman of our own, still bears the name of the ship in which he ascended its waters, and claims the protection of our armed national flag at its mouth. With the establishment of a military post there, or at some other point of that coast, recommended by my predecessor, and already matured in the deliberations of the last Congress, I would suggest the expediency of connecting the equipment of a public ship for the exploration of the whole north-west coast of this continent.

The establishment of a uniform standard of weights and measures, was one of the specific objects contemplated in the formation of our constitution; and to fix that standard was one of the powers delegated by express terms, in that instrument, to Congress. The governments of Great Britain and France have scarcely ceased to be occupied with inquiries and speculations on the same subject, since the existence of our constitution; and with them it has expanded into profound, laborious, and expensive researches into the figure of the earth, and the comparative length of the pendulum vibrating seconds in various latitudes, from the equator to the pole. These researches have resulted in the composition and publica-

tion of several works highly interesting to the cause of science. The experiments are yet in the process of performance. Some of them have recently been made on our own shores, within the walls of one of our own colleges, and partly by one of our own fellow-citizens. It would be honorable to our country if the sequel of the same experiments should be countenanced by the patronage of our government, as they have hitherto been by those of France and Great Britain.

Connected with the establishment of a university, or separate from it, might be undertaken the erection of an astronomical observatory, with provision for the support of an astronomer, to be in constant attendance of observation upon the phenomena of the heavens; and for the periodical publication of his observations. It is with no feeling of pride, as an American, that the remark may be made, that, on the comparatively small territorial surface of Europe, there are existing upwards of one hundred and thirty of these light-houses of the skies; while throughout the whole American hemisphere there is not one. If we reflect a moment upon the discoveries which, in the last four centuries, have been made in the physical constitution of the universe, by the means of these buildings, and of observers stationed in them, shall we doubt of their usefulness to every nation? And while scarcely a year passes over our heads without bringing some new astronomical discovery to light, which we must fain receive at second hand from Europe, are we not cutting ourselves off from the means of returning light for light, while we have neither observatory nor observer upon our half of the globe, and the earth revolves in perpetual darkness to our unsearching eyes?

When, on the 25th of October, 1791, the first president of the United States announced to Congress the result of the first enumeration of the inhabitants of this Union, he informed them that the returns gave the pleasing assurance that the population of the United States bordered on four millions of persons. At the distance of thirty years from that time, the last enumeration, five years since completed, presented a population bordering on ten millions. Perhaps of all the evidences of a prosperous and happy con-

dition of human society, the rapidity of the increase of population is the most unequivocal. But the demonstration of our prosperity rests not alone upon this indication. Our commerce, our wealth, and the extent of our territories have increased in corresponding proportions; and the number of independent communities, associated in our federal Union, has, since that time, nearly doubled. The legislative representation of the states and people, in the two houses of Congress, has grown with the growth of their constituent bodies. The House, which then consisted of sixty-five members, now numbers upwards of two hundred. The Senate, which consisted of twenty-six members, has now forty-eight. But the executive, and still more the judiciary departments, are yet in a great measure confined to their primitive organization, and are now not adequate to the urgent wants of a still growing community.

The naval armaments, which at an early period forced themselves upon the necessities of the Union, soon led to the establishment of a department of the navy. But the departments of foreign affairs and of the interior, which, early after the formation of the government, had been united in one, continue so united to this time, to the unquestionable detriment of the public service. The multiplication of our relations with the nations and governments of the old world, has kept pace with that of our population and commerce, while, within the last ten years, a new family of nations, in our own hemisphere, has arisen among the inhabitants of the earth, with whom our intercourse, commercial and political, would, of itself, furnish occupation to an active and industrious department. The constitution of the judiciary, experimental and imperfect as it was, even in the infancy of our existing government, is yet more inadequate to the administration of national justice at our present maturity. Nine years have elapsed since a predecessor in this office, now not the last, the citizen who perhaps of all others throughout the Union, contributed most to the formation and establishment of our constitution, in his valedictory address to Congress, immediately preceding his retirement from public life, urgently recommended the revision of the judiciary, and

the establishment of an additional executive department. The exigencies of the public service, and its unavoidable deficiencies, as now in exercise, have added yearly cumulative weight to the considerations presented by him as persuasive to the measure, and in recommending it to your deliberations, I am happy to have the influence of his high authority in aid of the undoubting convictions of my own experience.

The laws relating to the administration of the Patent Office are deserving of much consideration, and perhaps susceptible of some improvement. The grant of power to regulate the action of Congress on this subject, has specified both the end to be obtained and the means by which it is to be effected,—“to promote the progress of science and the useful arts, by securing, for limited times, to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries.” If an honest pride might be indulged in the reflection, that on the records of that office are already found inventions, the usefulness of which has scarcely been transcended in the annals of human ingenuity, would not its exultation be allayed by the inquiry, whether the laws have effectively insured to the inventors the reward destined to them by the constitution—even a limited term of exclusive right to their discoveries?

On the 24th of December, 1799, it was resolved by Congress, that a marble monument should be erected by the United States, in the capitol, at the city of Washington; that the family of General Washington should be requested to permit his body to be deposited under it; and that the monument be so designed as to commemorate the great events of his military and political life. In reminding Congress of this resolution, and that the monument contemplated by it remains yet without execution, I shall indulge only the remarks, that the works at the capitol are approaching to completion; that the consent of the family, desired by the resolution, was requested and obtained; that a monument has been recently erected in this city, over the remains of another distinguished patriot of the revolution; and that a spot has been reserved within the walls where you are deliberating for the benefit

of this and future ages, in which the mortal remains may be deposited of him whose spirit hovers over you, and listens with delight to every act of the representatives of his nation which can tend to exalt and adorn his and their country.

The constitution under which you are assembled, is a charter of limited powers. After full and solemn deliberation upon all or any of the objects which, urged by an irresistible sense of my own duty, I have recommended to your attention, should you come to the conclusion, that, however desirable in themselves, the enactment of laws for effecting them would transcend the powers committed to you by that venerable instrument which we are all bound to support; let no consideration induce you to assume the exercise of powers not granted to you by the people. But if the power to exercise exclusive legislation, in all cases whatsoever, over the District of Columbia; if the power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defence and general welfare of the United States; if the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes; to fix the standard of weights and measures; to establish post-offices and post-roads; to declare war; to raise and support armies; to provide and maintain a navy; to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States; and to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying these powers into execution; if these powers, and others enumerated in the constitution, may be effectually brought into action by laws promoting the improvement of agriculture, commerce and manufactures, the cultivation and encouragement of the mechanic and of the elegant arts, the advancement of literature, and the progress of the sciences, ornamental and profound; to refrain from exercising them for the benefit of the people themselves, would be to hide in the earth the talent committed to our charge—would be treachery to the most sacred of trusts.

The spirit of improvement is abroad upon the earth. It stimulates the hearts, and sharpens the faculties, not

of our fellow-citizens alone, but of the nations of Europe, and of their rulers. While dwelling with pleasing satisfaction upon the superior excellence of our political institutions, let us not be unmindful that liberty is power; that the nation blessed with the largest portion of liberty, must, in proportion to its numbers, be the most powerful nation upon earth; and that the tenure of power by man is, in the moral purposes of his Creator, upon condition that it shall be exercised to ends of beneficence, to improve the condition of himself and his fellow-men. While foreign nations, less blessed with that freedom which is power than ourselves, are advancing with gigantic strides in the career of public improvement; were we to slumber in indolence, or fold up our arms and proclaim to the world that we are palsied by the will of our constituents, would it not be to cast away the bounties of Providence, and doom ourselves to perpetual inferiority? In the course of the year now drawing to its close, we have beheld, under the auspices and expense of one state in our Union, a new university unfolding its portals to the sons of science, and holding up the torch of human improvement to the eyes that seek the light. We have seen, under the persevering and enlightened enterprise of another state, the waters of our western lakes mingle with those of the ocean. If undertakings like these have been accomplished in the course of a few years, by the authority of single members of our confederation, can we, the representative authorities of the whole Union, fall behind our fellow-servants in the exercise of the trust committed to us for the benefit of our common sovereign, by the accomplishment of works important to the whole, and to which neither the authority nor the resources of any one state can be adequate?

Finally, fellow-citizens, I shall await, with cheering hope and faithful co-operation, the result of your deliberations, assured that, without encroaching upon the powers reserved to the authorities of the respective states, or to the people, you will, with a due sense of your obligations to your country, and of the high responsibilities weighing upon yourselves, give efficacy to the means committed to you for the common good. And may He who searches

the hearts of the children of men, prosper your exertions to secure the blessings of peace and promote the highest welfare of our country.

JACKSON'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

MARCH 4, 1829. .

Fellow-Citizens :

ABOUT to undertake the arduous duties that I have been appointed to perform, by the choice of a free people, I avail myself of this customary and solemn occasion to express the gratitude which their confidence inspires, and to acknowledge the accountability which my situation enjoins. While the magnitude of their interests convinces me that no thanks can be adequate to the honor they have conferred, it admonishes me that the best return I can make, is the zealous dedication of my humble abilities to their service and their good.

As the instrument of the federal constitution, it will devolve upon me, for a stated period, to execute the laws of the United States; to superintend their foreign and confederate relations; to manage their revenue; to command their forces; and, by communications to the legislature, to watch over and to promote their interests generally. And the principles of action by which I shall endeavor to accomplish this circle of duties, it is now proper for me briefly to explain.

In administering the laws of Congress, I shall keep steadily in view the limitations as well as the extent of the executive power, trusting thereby to discharge the functions of my office, without transcending its authority. With foreign nations it will be my study to preserve peace, and to cultivate friendship on fair and honorable terms; and in the adjustment of any differences that may exist or arise, to exhibit the forbearance becoming a powerful nation, rather than the sensibility belonging to a gallant people.

In such measures as I may be called on to pursue, in regard to the rights of the separate states, I hope to be animated by a proper respect for those sovereign members

of our Union ; taking care not to confound the powers they have reserved to themselves with those they have granted to the confederacy.

The management of the public revenue—that searching operation of all governments—is among the most delicate and important trusts in ours ; and it will, of course, demand no inconsiderable share of my official solicitude. Under every aspect in which it can be considered, it would appear that advantage must result from the observance of a strict and faithful economy. This I shall aim at the more anxiously, both because it will facilitate the extinguishment of the national debt, the unnecessary duration of which is incompatible with real independence, and because it will counteract that tendency to public and private profligacy which a profuse expenditure of money by the government is but too apt to engender. Powerful auxiliaries to the attainment of this desirable end are to be found in the regulations provided by the wisdom of Congress for the specific appropriation of public money, and the prompt accountability of public officers. With regard to a proper selection of the subjects of imposts, with a view to revenue, it would seem to me that the spirit of equity, caution, and compromise, in which the constitution was formed, requires that the great interests of agriculture, commerce and manufactures, should be equally favored, and that perhaps the only exception to this rule should consist in the peculiar encouragement of any products of either of them that may be found essential to our national independence.

Internal improvement and the diffusion of knowledge, so far as they can be promoted by the constitutional acts of the federal government, are of high importance.

Considering standing armies as dangerous to free governments in time of peace, I shall not seek to enlarge our present establishment, nor to disregard that salutary lesson of political experience which teaches that the military should be held subordinate to the civil power. The gradual increase of our navy, whose flag has displayed in distant climes our skill in navigation and our fame in arms ; the preservation of our forts, arsenals, and dock-yards ; and the introduction of progressive improvements

in the discipline and science of both branches of our military service, are so plainly prescribed by prudence that I should be excused for omitting their mention, sooner than enlarging on their importance. But the bulwark of our defence is the national militia, which, in the present state of our intelligence and population, must render us invincible. As long as our government is administered for the good of the people, and is regulated by their will; as long as it secures to us the right of person and property, liberty of conscience, and of the press, it will be worth defending; and so long as it is worth defending, a patriotic militia will cover it with an impenetrable ægis. Partial injuries and occasional mortifications we may be subjected to; but a million of armed freemen, possessed of the means of war, can never be conquered by a foreign foe. To any just system therefore, calculated to strengthen this natural safeguard of the country, I shall cheerfully lend all the aid in my power.

It will be my sincere and constant desire to observe towards the Indian tribes within our limits, a just and liberal policy; and to give that humane and considerate attention to their rights and their wants, which is consistent with the habits of our government and the feelings of our people.

The recent demonstration of public sentiment inscribes on the list of executive duties, in characters too legible to be overlooked, the task of reform; which will require particularly the correction of those abuses that have brought the patronage of the federal government into conflict with the freedom of elections, and the counteraction of those causes which have disturbed the rightful course of appointment, and have placed or continued power in unfaithful or incompetent hands.

In the performance of a task thus generally delineated, I shall endeavor to select men whose diligence and talents will insure, in their respective stations, able and faithful co-operation—depending for the advancement of the public service, more on the integrity and zeal of the public officers, than on their numbers.

A diffidence, perhaps too just, in my own qualifications, will teach me to look with reverence to the exam-

ples of public virtue left by my illustrious predecessors, and with veneration to the lights that flow from the mind that founded and the mind that reformed our system. The same diffidence induces me to hope for instruction and aid from the co-ordinate branches of the government, and for the indulgence and support of my fellow-citizens generally. And a firm reliance on the goodness of that Power whose providence mercifully protected our national infancy, and has since upheld our liberties in various vicissitudes, encourages me to offer up my ardent supplications that He will continue to make our beloved country the object of his divine care and gracious benediction.

JACKSON'S FIRST ANNUAL MESSAGE.

DECEMBER 8, 1829.

*Fellow-Citizens of the Senate,
and House of Representatives :*

It affords me pleasure to tender my friendly greetings to you on the occasion of your assembling at the seat of government, to enter upon the important duties to which you have been called by the voice of our countrymen. The task devolves on me, under a provision of the constitution, to present to you, as the federal legislature of twenty-four sovereign states, and twelve millions of happy people, a view of our affairs, and to propose such measures as, in the discharge of my official functions, have suggested themselves as necessary to promote the objects of our Union.

In communicating with you for the first time, it is to me a source of unfeigned satisfaction, calling for mutual gratulation and devout thanks to a benign Providence, that we are at peace with all mankind; and that our country exhibits the most cheering evidence of general welfare and progressive improvement. Turning our eyes to other nations, our great desire is to see our brethren of the human race surrounded by the blessings enjoyed by ourselves, and advancing in knowledge, in freedom, and in social happiness.

Our foreign relations, although in their general character pacific and friendly, present objects of difference between us and other powers, of deep interest, as well to the country at large as to many of our citizens. To effect an adjustment of these shall continue to be the object of my earnest endeavors; and notwithstanding the difficulties of the task, I do not allow myself to apprehend unfavorable results. Blessed as our country is with everything which constitutes national strength, she is fully adequate to the maintenance of all her interests. In discharging the responsible trust confided to the executive in this respect, it is my settled purpose to ask nothing that is not clearly right, and to submit to nothing that is wrong; and I flatter myself, that, supported by the other branches of the government, and by the intelligence and patriotism of the people, we shall be able, under the protection of Providence, to cause all our just rights to be respected.

Of the unsettled matters between the United States and other powers, the most prominent are those which have for years been the subject of negotiation with England, France, and Spain. The late periods at which our ministers to those governments left the United States, render it impossible, at this early day, to inform you of what has been done on the subjects with which they have been respectively charged. Relying upon the justice of our views in relation to the points committed to negotiation, and the reciprocal good feeling which characterizes our intercourse with those nations, we have the best reason to hope for a satisfactory adjustment of existing differences.

With Great Britain, alike distinguished in peace and war, we may look forward to years of peaceful, honorable, and elevated competition. Everything in the condition and history of the two nations is calculated to inspire sentiments of mutual respect, and to carry conviction to the minds of both, that it is their policy to preserve the most cordial relations. Such are my own views; and it is not to be doubted that such are also the prevailing sentiments of our constituents. Although neither time nor opportunity has been afforded for a full

development of the policy which the present cabinet of Great Britain designs to pursue towards this country, I indulge the hope that it will be of a just and pacific character; and if this anticipation be realized, we may look with confidence to a speedy and acceptable adjustment of our affairs.

Under the convention for regulating the reference to arbitration, the disputed points of boundary under the fifth article of the treaty of Ghent, the proceedings have hitherto been conducted in the spirit of candor and liberality which ought ever to characterize the acts of sovereign states, seeking to adjust, by the most unexceptionable means, important and delicate subjects of contention. The first statements of the parties have been exchanged, and the final replication on our part is in a course of preparation. This subject has received the attention demanded by its great and peculiar importance to a patriotic member of this confederacy. The exposition of our rights, already made, is such as, from the high reputation of the commissioners by whom it has been prepared, we had a right to expect. Our interests at the court of the sovereign who has evinced his friendly disposition by assuming the delicate task of arbitration, have been committed to a citizen of the state of Maine, whose character, talents, and intimate acquaintance with the subject, eminently qualify him for so responsible a trust. With full confidence in the justice of our cause, and in the probity, intelligence, and uncompromising independence of the illustrious arbitrator, we can have nothing to apprehend from the result.

From France, our ancient ally, we have a right to expect that justice which becomes the sovereign of a powerful, intelligent, and magnanimous people. The beneficial effects produced by the commercial convention of 1822, limited as are its provisions, are too obvious not to make a salutary impression upon the minds of those who are charged with the administration of her government. Should this result induce a disposition to embrace to their full extent the wholesome principles which constitute our commercial policy, our minister to that court will be found instructed to cherish such a disposition,

and to aid in conducting it to useful practical conclusions. The claims of our citizens for depredations upon their property, long since committed under the authority, and, in many instances, by the express direction, of the then existing government of France, remain unsatisfied; and must, therefore, continue to furnish a subject of unpleasant discussion, and possible collision, between the two governments. I cherish, however, a lively hope, founded as well on the validity of those claims, and the established policy of all enlightened governments, as on the known integrity of the French monarch, that the injurious delays of the past will find redress in the equity of the future. Our minister has been instructed to press these demands on the French government with all the earnestness which is called for by their importance and irrefutable justice; and in a spirit that will evince the respect which is due to the feelings of those from whom the satisfaction is required.

Our minister recently appointed to Spain has been authorized to assist in removing evils alike injurious to both countries, either by concluding a commercial convention upon liberal and reciprocal terms; or by urging the acceptance, in their full extent, of the mutually beneficial provisions of our navigation act. He has also been instructed to make a further appeal to the justice of Spain, in behalf of our citizens, for indemnity for spoliations upon our commerce, committed under her authority—an appeal which the pacific and liberal course observed on our part, and a due confidence in the honor of that government, authorize us to expect will not be made in vain.

With other European powers, our intercourse is on the most friendly footing. In Russia, placed by her territorial limits, extensive population, and great power, high in the rank of nations, the United States have always found a steadfast friend. Although her recent invasions of Turkey awakened a lively sympathy for those who were exposed to the desolations of war, we cannot but anticipate that the result will prove favorable to the cause of civilization, and to the progress of human happiness. The treaty of peace between these powers having been ratified, we cannot be insensible to the great benefit to be

derived by the commerce of the United States from unlocking the navigation of the Black Sea—a free passage into which is secured to all merchant vessels bound to ports of Russia under a flag at peace with the Porte. This advantage, enjoyed upon conditions by most of the powers of Europe, has hitherto been withheld from us. During the past summer, an antecedent but unsuccessful attempt to obtain it, was renewed under circumstances which promised the most favorable results. Although those results have fortunately been thus in part attained, further facilities to the enjoyment of this new field for the enterprise of our citizens are, in my opinion, sufficiently desirable to insure to them our most zealous attention.

Our trade with Austria, although of secondary importance, has been gradually increasing; and is now so extended as to deserve the fostering care of the government. A negotiation, commenced and nearly completed with that power, by the late administration, has been consummated by a treaty of amity, navigation and commerce, which will be laid before the Senate.

During the recess of Congress, our diplomatic relations with Portugal have been resumed. The peculiar state of things in that country caused a suspension of the recognition of the representative who presented himself, until an opportunity was had to obtain from our official organ there, information regarding the actual, and, as far as practicable, prospective condition of the authority by which the representative in question was appointed. This information being received, the application of the established rule of our government, in like cases, was no longer withheld.

Considerable advances have been made during the present year in the adjustment of claims of our citizens upon Denmark for spoliations; but all that we have a right to demand from that government in their behalf has not yet been conceded. From the liberal footing, however, upon which this subject has, with the approbation of the claimants, been placed by the government, together with the uniformly just and friendly disposition which has been evinced by his Danish majesty, there is a rea-

sonable ground to hope that this single subject of difference will speedily be removed.

Our relations with the Barbary powers continue, as they have long been, of the most favorable character. The policy of keeping an adequate force in the Mediterranean, as security for the continuance of this tranquility, will be persevered in; as well as a similar one for the protection of our commerce and fisheries in the Pacific.

The southern republics of our hemisphere have not yet realized all the advantages for which they have been so long struggling. We trust, however, that the day is not distant when the restoration of peace and internal quiet, under permanent systems of government, securing the liberty, and promoting the happiness of the citizens, will crown, with complete success, their long and arduous efforts in the cause of self-government; and enable us to salute them as friendly rivals in all that is truly great and glorious.

The recent invasion of Mexico, and the effect thereby produced upon her domestic policy, must have a controlling influence upon the great question of South American emancipation. We have seen the fell spirit of civil dissension rebuked, and, perhaps, forever stifled in that republic by the love of independence. If it be true, as appearances strongly indicate, that the spirit of independence is the master-spirit; and if a corresponding sentiment prevails in the other states, this devotion to liberty cannot be without a proper effect upon the counsels of the mother country. The adoption by Spain of a pacific policy towards her former colonies—an event consoling to humanity, and a blessing to the world, in which she herself cannot fail largely to participate—may be most reasonably expected.

The claims of our citizens upon the South American governments generally, are in a train of settlement, while the principal part of those upon Brazil have been adjusted; and a decree in council, ordering bonds to be issued by the minister of the treasury for their amount, has received the sanction of his imperial majesty. This event, together with the exchange of the ratifications of the

treaty negotiated and concluded in 1828, happily terminates all serious causes of difference with that power.

Measures have been taken to place our commercial relations with Peru upon a better footing than that upon which they have hitherto rested; and if met by a proper disposition on the part of that government, important benefits may be secured to both countries.

Deeply interested as we are in the prosperity of our sister republics, and more particularly in that of our immediate neighbor, it would be most gratifying to me were I permitted to say, that the treatment which we have received at her hands has been as universally friendly, as the early and constant solicitude manifested by the United States for her success, gave us a right to expect. But it becomes my duty to inform you that prejudices long indulged by a portion of the inhabitants of Mexico against the envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of the United States, have had an unfortunate influence upon the affairs of the two countries; and have diminished that usefulness to his own which was justly to be expected from his talents and zeal. To this cause, in a great degree, is to be imputed the failure of several measures equally interesting to both parties; but particularly that of the Mexican government to ratify a treaty negotiated and concluded in its own capital, and under its own eye. Under these circumstances, it appeared expedient to give to Mr. Poinsett the option either to return or not, as in his judgment the interest of his country might require, and instructions to that end were prepared; but before they could be despatched, a communication was received from the government of Mexico, through its charge d'affaires here, requesting the recall of our minister. This was promptly complied with; and a representative, of a rank corresponding with that of the Mexican diplomatic agent near this government, was appointed. Our conduct towards that republic has been uniformly of the most friendly character; and having thus removed the only alleged obstacle to harmonious intercourse, I cannot but hope that an advantageous change will occur in our affairs.

In justice to Mr. Poinsett, it is proper to say, that my immediate compliance with the application for his recall,

and the appointment of a successor, are not to be ascribed to any evidence that the imputation of an improper interference by him in the local politics of Mexico, was well founded; nor to a want of confidence in his talents or integrity; and to add, that the truth of that charge has never been affirmed by the federal government of Mexico, in their communications with this.

I consider it one of the most urgent of my duties to bring to your attention the propriety of amending that part of our constitution which relates to the election of President and Vice-President. Our system of government was, by its framers, deemed an experiment: and they, therefore, consistently provided a mode of remedying its defects.

To the people belongs the right of electing their chief magistrate; it was never designed that their choice should, in any case, be defeated, either by the intervention of electoral colleges, or by the agency confided, under certain contingencies, to the House of Representatives. Experience proves, that, in proportion as agents to execute the will of the people are multiplied, there is danger of their wishes being frustrated. Some may be unfaithful; all are liable to err. So far, therefore, as the people can, with convenience, speak, it is safer for them to express their own will.

The number of aspirants to the presidency, and the diversity of the interests which may influence their claims, leave little reason to expect a choice in the first instance; and, in that event, the election must devolve on the House of Representatives, where, it is obvious, the will of the people may not be always ascertained, or, if ascertained, may not be regarded. From the mode of voting by states, the choice is to be made by twenty-four votes; and it may often occur that one of those will be controlled by an individual representative. Honors and offices are at the disposal of the successful candidate. Repeated ballotings may make it apparent that a single individual holds the cast in his hand. May he not be tempted to name his reward? But even without corruption—supposing the probity of the representative to be proof against the powerful motives by which it may be

assailed—the will of the people is still constantly liable to be misrepresented. One may err from ignorance of the wishes of his constituents; another, from the conviction that it is his duty to be governed by his own judgment of the fitness of the candidates; finally, although all were inflexibly honest—all accurately informed of the wishes of their constituents—yet, under the present mode of election, a minority may often elect the President; and when this happens, it may reasonably be expected that efforts will be made on the part of the majority to rectify this injurious operation of their institutions. But although no evils of this character should result from such a perversion of the first principle of our system—*that the majority is to govern*—it must be very certain that a President elected by a minority cannot enjoy the confidence necessary to the successful discharge of his duties.

In this, as in all other matters of public concern, policy requires that as few impediments as possible should exist to the free operation of the public will. Let us, then, endeavor to so amend our system, that the office of chief magistrate may not be conferred upon any citizen, but in pursuance of a fair expression of the will of the majority.

I would therefore recommend such an amendment of the constitution as may remove all intermediate agency in the election of the President and Vice-President. The mode may be so regulated as to preserve to each state its present relative weight in the election; and a failure in the first attempt may be provided for, by confining the second to a choice between the two highest candidates. In connection with such an amendment, it would seem advisable to limit the service of the chief magistrate to a single term of either four or six years. If, however, it should not be adopted, it is worthy of consideration whether a provision, disqualifying for office the representatives in Congress on whom such an election may have devolved, would not be proper.

While members of Congress can be constitutionally appointed to offices of trust and profit, it will be the practice, even under the most conscientious adherence to duty, to select them for such stations as they are believed to be

better qualified to fill than other citizens; but the purity of our government would doubtless be promoted by their exclusion from all appointments in the gift of the President, in whose election they may have been officially concerned. The nature of the judicial office, and the necessity of securing in the cabinet and diplomatic stations of the highest rank, the best talents and political experience, should, perhaps, except these from the exclusion.

There are perhaps few men who can for any great length of time enjoy office and power, without being more or less under the influence of feelings unfavorable to the faithful discharge of their public duties. Their integrity may be proof against improper considerations immediately addressed to themselves; but they are apt to acquire a habit of looking with indifference upon the public interests, and of tolerating conduct from which an unpractised man would revolt. Office is considered as a species of property; and government rather as a means of promoting individual interest, than as an instrument created solely for the service of the people. Corruption in some, and in others a perversion of correct feelings and principles, divert government from its legitimate ends, and make it an engine for the support of the few at the expense of the many. The duties of all public officers are, or at least admit of being made, so plain and simple that men of intelligence may readily qualify themselves for their performance; and I cannot but believe that more is lost by the long continuance of men in office than is generally to be gained by their experience. I submit, therefore, to your consideration, whether the efficiency of the government would not be promoted, and official industry and integrity better secured by a general extension of the law which limits appointments to four years.

In a country where offices are created solely for the benefit of the people, no one man has any more intrinsic right to official station than another. Offices were not established to give support to particular men at the public expense. No individual wrong is therefore done by removal, since neither appointment to nor continuance in office is matter of right. The incumbent became ar.

officer with a view to the public benefits ; and when these require his removal, they are not to be sacrificed to private interests. It is the people, and they alone, who have a right to complain, when a bad officer is substituted for a good one. He who is removed has the same means of obtaining a living that are enjoyed by the millions who never held office. The proposed limitation would destroy the idea of property, now so generally connected with official station ; and although individual distress may be sometimes produced, it would, by promoting that rotation which constitutes a leading principle in the republican creed, give healthful action to the system.

No very considerable change has occurred, during the recess of Congress, in the condition of either our agriculture, commerce, or manufactures. The operation of the tariff has not proved so injurious to the two former, or as beneficial to the latter, as was anticipated. Importations of foreign goods have not been sensibly diminished ; while domestic competition, under an illusive excitement, has increased the production much beyond the demand for home consumption. The consequences have been, low prices, temporary embarrassment, and partial loss. That such of our manufacturing establishments as are based upon capital, and are prudently managed, will survive the shock, and be ultimately profitable, there is no good reason to doubt.

To regulate its conduct, so as to promote equally the prosperity of these three cardinal interests, is one of the most difficult tasks of government ; and it may be regretted that the complicated restrictions which now embarrass the intercourse of nations, could not by common consent be abolished, and commerce allowed to flow in those channels to which individual enterprise, always its surest guide, might direct it. But we must ever expect selfish legislation in other nations ; and are therefore compelled to adapt our own to their regulations, in the manner best calculated to avoid serious injury, and to harmonize the conflicting interests of our agriculture, our commerce, and our manufactures. Under these impressions, I invite your attention to the existing tariff, believing that some of its provisions require modification.

The general rule to be applied in graduating the duties upon the articles of foreign growth or manufacture, is that which will place our own in fair competition with those of other countries ; and the inducements to advance even a step beyond this point, are controlling in regard to those articles which are of primary necessity in time of war. When we reflect upon the difficulty and delicacy of this operation, it is important that it should never be attempted but with the utmost caution. Frequent legislation in regard to any branch of industry, affecting its value, and by which its capital may be transferred to new channels, must always be productive of hazardous speculation and loss.

In deliberating, therefore, on these interesting subjects, local feelings and prejudices should be merged in the patriotic determination to promote the great interests of the whole. All the attempts to connect them with the party conflicts of the day are necessarily injurious, and should be discountenanced. Our action upon them should be under the control of higher and purer motives. Legislation, subjected to such influence, can never be just ; and will not long retain the sanction of the people, whose active patriotism is not bounded by sectional limits, nor insensible to that spirit of concession and forbearance which gave life to our political compact, and still sustains it. Discarding all calculations of political ascendancy, the north, the south, the east, and the west, should unite in diminishing any burden, of which either may justly complain.

The agricultural interest of our country is so essentially connected with every other, and so superior in importance to them all, that it is scarcely necessary to invite to it your particular attention. It is principally as manufactures and commerce tend to increase the value of agricultural productions, and to extend their application to the wants and comforts of society, that they deserve the fostering care of government.

Looking forward to the period, not far distant, when a sinking fund will no longer be required, the duties on those articles of importation which cannot come in competition with our own productions, are the first that should

engage the attention of Congress in the modification of the tariff. Of these, tea and coffee are the most prominent; they enter largely into the consumption of the country, and have become articles of necessity to all classes. A reduction, therefore, of the existing duties, will be felt as a common benefit: but, like all other legislation connected with commerce, to be efficacious, and not injurious, it should be gradual and certain.

The public prosperity is evinced in the increased revenue arising from the sales of public lands; and in the steady maintenance of that produced by imposts and tonnage, notwithstanding the additional duties imposed by the act of 19th May, 1828, and the unusual importations in the early part of that year.

The balance in the treasury on the 1st January, 1829, was \$5,972,435 81. The receipts of the current year are estimated at \$24,602,230; and the expenditures for the same time at \$26,164,595. Leaving a balance in the treasury, on the 1st of January next, of \$4,410,070 81.

There will have been paid on account of the public debt during the present year, the sum of \$12,405,005 80; reducing the whole debt of the government, on the first of January next, to \$48,565,406 50, including seven millions of five per cent. stock subscribed to the Bank of the United States. The payment on account of the public debt, made on the first of July last, was \$8,715,462 87. It was apprehended that the sudden withdrawal of so large a sum from the banks in which it was deposited, at a time of unusual pressure in the money market, might cause much injury to the interests dependent on bank accommodations. But this evil was wholly averted by an early anticipation of it at the treasury, aided by the judicious arrangements of the officers of the Bank of the United States.

The state of the finances exhibits the resources of the nation in an aspect highly flattering to its industry, and auspicious of the ability of the government, in a very short time, to extinguish the public debt. When this shall be done, our population will be relieved from a considerable portion of its present burdens; and will find not only new motives to patriotic affection, but additional

means for the display of individual enterprise. The fiscal power of the states will also be increased; and may be more extensively exerted in favor of education and other public objects; while ample means will remain in the federal government to promote the general weal, in all the modes permitted to its authority.

After the extinction of the public debt, it is not probable that any adjustment of the tariff, upon principles satisfactory to the people of the Union, will, until a remote period, if ever, leave the government without a considerable surplus in the treasury, beyond what may be required for its current service. As, then, the period approaches when the application of the revenue to payment of the debt will cease, the disposition of the surplus will present a subject for the serious deliberation of Congress; and it may be fortunate for the country that it is yet to be decided. Considered in connection with the difficulties which have heretofore attended appropriations for purposes of internal improvement, and with those which this experience tells us will certainly arise, whenever power over such subjects may be exercised by the general government; it is hoped that it may lead to the adoption of some plan which will reconcile the diversified interests of the states, and strengthen the bonds which unite them. Every member of the Union, in peace and in war, will be benefitted by the improvement of inland navigation, and the construction of highways in the several states. Let us then endeavor to attain this benefit in a mode that will be satisfactory to all. That hitherto adopted has, by many of our fellow-citizens, been deprecated as an infraction of the constitution; while by others it has been viewed as inexpedient. All feel that it has been employed at the expense of harmony in the legislative councils.

To avoid these evils, it appears to me that the most safe, just, and federal disposition which could be made of this surplus revenue, would be its apportionment among the several states, according to their ratio of representation; and should this measure not be found warranted by the constitution, that it would be expedient to propose to the states an amendment authorizing it. I regard an

appeal to the source of power, in all cases of real doubt, and where its exercise is deemed advisable to the general welfare, as among the most sacred of all our obligations. Upon this country, more than any other, has, in the providence of God, been cast the special guardianship of the great principle of adherence to written constitutions. If it fail here, all hope in regard to it will be extinguished. That this was intended to be a government of limited and specific, and not general powers, must be admitted by all; and it is our duty to preserve for it the character intended by its framers. If experience points out the necessity for an enlargement of these powers, let us apply for it to those for whose benefit it is to be exercised; and not undermine the whole system by a resort to overstrained constructions. The scheme has worked well. It has exceeded the hopes of those who devised it, and become an object of admiration to the world. We are responsible to our country and to the glorious cause of self-government, for the preservation of so great a good. The great mass of legislation relating to our internal affairs, was intended to be left where the federal convention found it—in the state governments. Nothing is clearer, in my view, than that we are chiefly indebted for the success of the constitution under which we are now acting, to the watchful and auxiliary operation of the state authorities. This is not the reflection of a day, but belongs to the most deeply-rooted convictions of my mind. I cannot, therefore, too strongly or too earnestly, for my own sense of its importance, warn you against all encroachment upon the legitimate sphere of state sovereignty. Sustained by its healthful and invigorating influence, the federal system can never fall.

In the collection of the revenue, the long credits authorized on goods imported from beyond the Cape of Good Hope are the chief cause of the losses at present sustained. If these were shortened to six, nine, and twelve months, and warehouses provided by government, sufficient to receive the goods offered in deposit for security and for debenture; and if the right of the United States to a priority of payment out of the estates of its insolvent debtors was more effectually secured, this evil

would in a great measure be obviated. An authority to construct such houses is, therefore, with the proposed alteration of the credits, recommended to your attention.

It is worthy of notice, that the laws for the collection and security of the revenue arising from imposts, were chiefly framed when the rates of duties on imported goods presented much less temptation for illicit trade than at present exists. There is reason to believe that these laws are, in some respects, quite insufficient for the proper security of the revenue, and the protection of the interests of those who are disposed to observe them. The injurious and demoralizing tendency of a successful system of smuggling is so obvious as not to require comment, and cannot be too carefully guarded against. I therefore suggest to Congress the propriety of adopting efficient measures to prevent this evil, avoiding, however, as much as possible, every unnecessary infringement of individual liberty, and embarrassment of fair and lawful business.

On an examination of the records of the treasury, I have been forcibly struck with the large amount of public money which appears to be outstanding. Of this sum thus due from individuals to the government, a considerable portion is undoubtedly desperate; and in many instances, has probably been rendered so by remissness in the agents charged with its collection. By proper exertions, a great part, however, may yet be recovered; and whatever may be the portions respectively belonging to these two classes, it behooves the government to ascertain the real state of the fact. This can be done only by the prompt adoption of judicious measures for the collection of such as may be made available. It is believed that a very large amount has been lost through the inadequacy of the means provided for the collection of debts due to the public; and that this inadequacy lies chiefly in the want of legal skill, habitually and constantly employed in the direction of the agents engaged in the service. It must, I think, be admitted, that the supervisory power over suits brought by the public, which is now vested in an *accounting* officer of the treasury, not selected with a view to his legal knowledge, and encumbered as he is

with numerous other duties, operates unfavorably to the public interest.

It is important that this branch of the public service should be subject to the supervision of such professional skill as will give it efficacy. The expense attendant upon such a modification of the executive department, would be justified by the soundest principles of economy. I would recommend, therefore, that the duties now assigned to the agent of the treasury, so far as they relate to the superintendence and management of legal proceedings on the part of the United States, be transferred to the attorney-general; and that this officer be placed on the same footing, in all respects, as the heads of the other departments—receiving like compensation, and having such subordinate officers provided for his department, as may be requisite for the discharge of these additional duties. The professional skill of the attorney-general, employed in directing the conduct of marshals and district attorneys, would hasten the collection of debts now in suit, and hereafter save much to the government. It might be further extended to the superintendence of all criminal proceedings for offences against the United States. In making this transfer, great care should be taken, however, that the power necessary to the treasury department be not impaired; one of its greatest securities consisting in a control over all accounts until they are audited or reported for suit.

In connection with the foregoing views, I would suggest, also, an inquiry, whether the provisions of the act of Congress, authorizing the discharge of the persons of debtors to the government from imprisonment, may not, consistently with the public interest, be extended to the release of the debt, where the conduct of the debtor is wholly exempt from the imputation of fraud. Some more liberal policy than that which now prevails in reference to this unfortunate class of citizens is certainly due to them, and would prove beneficial to the country. The continuance of the liability after the means to discharge it have been exhausted, can only serve to dispirit the debtor; or where his resources are but partial, the want of power in the government to com-

promise and release the demand, instigates to fraud, as the only resource for securing a support to his family. He thus sinks into a state of apathy, or becomes a useless drone in society, or a vicious member of it, if not a feeling witness of the rigor and inhumanity of his country. All experience proves that an oppressive debt is the bane of enterprise; and it should be the care of a republic not to exert a grinding power over misfortune and poverty.

Since the last session of Congress, numerous frauds on the treasury have been discovered, which I thought it my duty to bring under the cognizance of the United States Court, for this district, by a criminal prosecution. It was my opinion, and that of able counsel who were consulted, that the cases came within the penalties of the act of the 17th Congress, approved 3d March, 1823, providing for the punishment of frauds committed on the government of the United States. Either from some defect in the law or in its administration, every effort to bring the accused to trial under its provisions proved ineffectual, and the government was driven to the necessity of resorting to the vague and inadequate provisions of the common law. It is therefore my duty to call your attention to the laws which have been passed for the protection of the treasury. If, indeed, there is no provision by which those who may be unworthily entrusted with its guardianship, can be punished for the most flagrant violation of duty, extending even to the most fraudulent appropriation of the public funds to their own use, it is time to remedy so dangerous an omission. Or, if the law has been perverted from its original purposes, and criminals deserving to be punished under its provisions, have been rescued by legal subtleties, it ought to be made so plain, by amendatory provisions, as to baffle the arts of perver- sion, and accomplish the ends of its original enactment.

In one of the most flagrant cases, the court decided that the prosecution was barred by the statute which limits prosecutions for fraud to two years. In this case all the evidences of the fraud, and indeed all knowledge that a fraud had been committed, were in the possession of the party accused, until after the two years had elapsed. Surely the statute ought not to run in favor of any man

while he retains all the evidences of his crime in his own possession ; and least of all, in favor of a public officer who continues to defraud the treasury, and conceal the transaction for the brief term of two years. I would therefore recommend such an alteration of the law as will give the injured party and the government two years after the disclosure of the fraud, or after the accused is out of office, to commence their prosecution.

In connexion with this subject, I invite the attention of Congress to a general and minute inquiry into the condition of the government ; with a view to ascertain what offices can be dispensed with, what expenses retrenched, and what improvements may be made in the organization of its various parts to secure the proper responsibility of public agents, and promote efficiency and justice in all its operations.

The report of the Secretary of War will make you acquainted with the condition of our army, fortifications, arsenals, and Indian affairs. The proper discipline of the army, the training and equipment of the militia, the education bestowed at West Point, and the accumulation of the means of defence, applicable to the naval force, will tend to prolong the peace we now enjoy, and which every good citizen, more especially those who have felt the miseries of even a successful warfare, most ardently desire to perpetuate.

The returns from the subordinate branches of this service exhibit a regularity and order highly creditable to its character : both officers and soldiers seem imbued with a proper sense of duty, and conform to the restraints of exact discipline with that cheerfulness which becomes the profession of arms. There is need, however, of further legislation to obviate the inconveniences specified in the report under consideration ; to some of which it is proper that I should call your particular attention.

The act of Congress of the 2d March, 1821, to reduce and fix the military establishment, remaining unexecuted as it regards the command of one of the regiments of artillery, cannot now be deemed a guide to the executive in making the proper appointment. An explanatory act, designating the class of officers out of which this grade

is to be filled—whether from the military list, as existing prior to the act of 1821, or from it, as it has been fixed by that act—would remove this difficulty. It is also important that the laws regulating the pay and emoluments of the officers generally, should be more specific than they now are. Those, for example, in relation to the paymaster and surgeon-general, assign to them an annual salary of \$2,500; but are silent as to allowances which, in certain exigencies of the service, may be deemed indispensable to the discharge of their duties. This circumstance has been the authority for extending to them various allowances at different times under former administrations; but no uniform rule has been observed on the subject. Similar inconveniences exist in other cases, in which the construction put upon the laws by the public accountants may operate unequally, produce confusion, and expose officers to the odium of claiming what is not their due.

I recommend to your fostering care, as one of our safest means of national defence, the Military Academy. This institution has already exercised the happiest influence upon the moral and intellectual character of our army; and such of the graduates as, from various causes, may not pursue the profession of arms, will be scarcely less useful as citizens. Their knowledge of the military art will be advantageously employed in the militia service; and in a measure secure to that class of troops the advantages which in this respect belong to standing armies.

I would also suggest a review of the pension law, for the purpose of extending its benefits to every revolutionary soldier who aided in establishing our liberties, and who is unable to maintain himself in comfort. Those relics of the war of independence have strong claims upon their country's gratitude and bounty. The law is defective in not embracing within its provisions all those who were during the last war disabled from supporting themselves by manual labor. Such an amendment would add but little to the amount of pensions, and is called for by the sympathies of the people, as well as by considerations of sound policy. It will be perceived that a large addi-

tion to the list of pensioners has been occasioned by an order of the late administration, departing materially from the rules which had previously prevailed. Considering it an act of legislation, I suspended its operation as soon as I was informed that it had commenced. Before this period, however, applications under the new regulation had been preferred, to the number of one hundred and fifty-four; of which, on the 27th March, the date of its revocation, eighty-seven were admitted. For the amount there was neither estimate nor appropriation; and besides this deficiency, the regular allowances, according to the rules which have heretofore governed the department, exceed the estimate of its late secretary, by about fifty thousand dollars, for which an appropriation is asked.

Your particular attention is requested to that part of the report of the Secretary of War which relates to the money held in trust for the Seneca tribe of Indians. It will be perceived that, without legislative aid, the executive cannot obviate the embarrassments occasioned by the diminution of the dividends on that fund, which originally amounted to \$100,000, and has recently been invested in the United States three per cent. stock.

The condition and ulterior destiny of the Indian tribes within the limits of some of our states, have become objects of much interest and importance. It has long been the policy of government to introduce among them the arts of civilization, in the hope of gradually reclaiming them from a wandering life. This policy has, however, been coupled with another wholly incompatible with its success. Professing a desire to civilize and settle them, we have at the same time lost no opportunity to purchase their lands, and thrust them further into the wilderness. By this means they have not only been kept in a wandering state, but been led to look upon us as unjust and indifferent to their fate. Thus, though lavish in expenditures upon the subject, government has constantly defeated its own policy; and the Indians, in general, receding further and further to the west, have retained their savage habits. A portion, however, of the southern tribes, having mingled much with the whites, and made some pro-

gress in the arts of civilized life, have lately attempted to erect an independent government within the limits of Georgia and Alabama. These states, claiming to be the only sovereigns within their territories, extended their laws over the Indians; which induced the latter to call upon the United States for protection.

Under these circumstances, the question presented was, whether the general government had a right to sustain those people in their pretensions. The constitution declares, that "no new state shall be formed or erected within the jurisdiction of any other state," without the consent of its legislature. If the general government is not permitted to tolerate the erection of a confederate state within the territory of one of the members of this Union, against her consent, much less could it allow a foreign and independent government to establish itself there. Georgia became a member of the confederacy which eventuated in our federal union, as a sovereign state, always asserting her claim to certain limits; which having been originally defined in her colonial charter, and subsequently recognised in the treaty of peace, she has ever since continued to enjoy, except as they have been circumscribed by her own voluntary transfer of a portion of her territory to the United States, in the articles of cession of 1802. Alabama was admitted into the Union on the same footing with the original states, with boundaries which were prescribed by Congress. There is no constitutional, conventional, or legal provision, which allows them less power over the Indians within their borders, than is possessed by Maine or New York. Would the people of Maine permit the Penobscot tribe to erect an independent government within their state? And unless they did, would it not be the duty of the general government to support them in resisting such a measure? Would the people of New York permit each remnant of the Six Nations within her borders, to declare itself an independent people under the protection of the United States? Could the Indians establish a separate republic in each of their reservations in Ohio? And if they were so disposed, would it be the duty of this government to protect them in the attempt? If the principle involved

in the obvious answer to these questions be abandoned, it will follow that the objects of this government are reversed ; and that it has become a part of its duty to aid in destroying the states which it was established to protect.

Actuated by this view of the subject, I informed the Indians inhabiting parts of Georgia and Alabama, that their attempt to establish an independent government would not be countenanced by the executive of the United States ; and advised them to emigrate beyond the Mississippi, or submit to the laws of those states.

Our conduct towards these people is deeply interesting to our national character. Their present condition, contrasted with what they once were, makes a most powerful appeal to our sympathies. Our ancestors found them the uncontrolled possessors of these vast regions. By persuasion and force they have been made to retire from river to river, and from mountain to mountain, until some of the tribes have become extinct, and others have left but remnants, to preserve, for a while, their once terrible names. Surrounded by the whites, with their arts of civilization, which, by destroying the resources of the savage, doom him to weakness and decay ; the fate of the Mohegan, the Narragansett, and the Delaware, is fast overtaking the Choctaw, the Cherokee, and the Creek. That this fate surely awaits them, if they remain within the limits of the states, does not admit of a doubt. Humanity and national honor demand that every effort should be made to avert so great a calamity. It is too late to inquire whether it was just in the United States to include them and their territory within the bounds of new states whose limits they could control. That step cannot be retraced. A state cannot be dismembered by Congress, or restricted in the exercise of her constitutional power. But the people of those states, and of every state, actuated by feelings of justice and a regard for our national honor, submit to you the interesting question, whether something cannot be done, consistently with the rights of the states, to preserve this much injured race.

As a means of effecting this end, I suggest for your consideration the propriety of setting apart an ample dis-

strict west of the Mississippi, and without the limits of any state or territory now formed, to be guarantied to the Indian tribes, as long as they shall occupy it ; each tribe having a distinct control over the portion designated for its use. There, they may be secured in the enjoyment of governments of their own choice, subject to no other control from the United States than such as may be necessary to preserve peace on the frontier, and between the several tribes. There, the benevolent may endeavor to teach them the arts of civilization ; and, by promoting union and harmony among them, to raise up an interesting commonwealth, destined to perpetuate the race, and to attest the humanity and justice of this government.

This emigration should be voluntary, for it would be as cruel as unjust to compel the aborigines to abandon the graves of their fathers, and seek a home in a distant land. But they should be distinctly informed that, if they remain within the limits of the states, they must be subject to their laws. In return for their obedience as individuals, they will, without doubt, be protected in the enjoyment of those possessions which they have improved by their industry. But it seems to me visionary to suppose, that in this state of things, claims can be allowed on tracts of country on which they have neither dwelt nor made improvements, merely because they have seen them from the mountain, or passed them in the chase. Submitting to the laws of the states, and receiving, like other citizens, protection in their persons and property, they will ere long become merged in the mass of our population.

The accompanying report of the Secretary of the Navy will make you acquainted with the condition and useful employment of that branch of our service during the present year. Constituting, as it does, the best standing security of this country against foreign aggression, it claims the especial attention of government. In this spirit, the measures which, since the termination of the last war, have been in operation for its gradual enlargement, were adopted ; and it should continue to be cherished as the offspring of our national experience. It will be seen, however, that notwithstanding the great solicitude which

has been manifested for the perfect organization of this arm, and the liberality of the appropriations which that solicitude has suggested, this object has, in many important respects, not been secured.

In time of peace, we have need of no more ships of war than are requisite to the protection of our commerce. Those not wanted for this object, must lay in the harbors, where, without proper covering, they rapidly decay; and even under the best precautions for their preservation, must soon become useless. Such is already the case with many of our finest vessels; which, though unfinished, will now require immense sums of money to be restored to the condition in which they were then committed to their proper element. On this subject there can be little doubt that our best policy would be to discontinue the building of the first and second class, and look rather to the possession of ample materials, prepared for the emergencies of war, than to the number of vessels which we can float in a season of peace, as an index of our naval power. Judicious deposits in the navy-yards, of timber and other materials, fashioned under the hands of skilful workmen, and fitted for prompt application to their various purposes, would enable us, at all times, to construct vessels as fast as they can be manned; and save the heavy expense of repairs, except to such vessels as must be employed in guarding our commerce. The proper points for the establishment of these yards are indicated with so much force in the report of the Navy Board, that, in recommending it to your attention, I deem it unnecessary to do more than express my hearty concurrence in their views. The yard in this district, being already furnished with most of the machinery necessary for ship-building, will be competent to the supply of the two selected by the board as the best for the concentration of materials; and from the facility and certainty of communication between them, it will be useless to incur, at those depots, the expense of similar machinery, especially that used in preparing the usual metallic and wooden furniture of vessels.

Another improvement would be effected by dispensing altogether with the Navy Board, as now constituted, and

substituting, in its stead, bureaus similar to those already existing in the War Department. Each member of the board, transferred to the head of a separate bureau charged with specific duties, would feel, in its highest degree, that wholesome responsibility which cannot be divided without a far more proportionate diminution of its force. Their valuable services would become still more so when separately appropriated to distinct portions of the great interests of the navy; to the prosperity of which each would be impelled to devote himself by the strongest motives. Under such an arrangement, every branch of this important service would assume a more simple and precise character; its efficiency would be increased, and scrupulous economy in the expenditure of public money promoted.

I would also recommend that the marine corps be merged in the artillery or infantry, as the best mode of curing the many defects of its organization. But little exceeding in number any of the regiments of infantry, that corps has, besides its lieutenant-colonel commandant, five brevet lieutenant-colonels, who receive the full pay and emoluments of their brevet rank, without rendering proportionate service. Details for marine service could as well be made from the artillery or infantry—there being no peculiar training requisite for it.

With these improvements, and such others as zealous watchfulness and mature consideration may suggest there can be little doubt that, under an energetic administration of its affairs, the navy may soon be made everything that the nation wishes it to be. Its efficiency in the suppression of piracy in the West India seas, and wherever its squadrons have been employed in securing the interests of the country, will appear from the report of the secretary, to which I refer you for other interesting details. Among these I would bespeak the attention of Congress for the views presented in relation to the inequality between the army and navy as to the pay of officers. No such inequality should prevail between these brave defenders of their country; and where it does exist, it is submitted to Congress whether it ought not to be rectified.

The report of the Postmaster-General is referred to as exhibiting a highly satisfactory administration of that department. Abuses have been reformed; increased expedition in the transportation of the mail secured; and its revenue much improved. In a political point of view, this department is chiefly important as affording the means of diffusing knowledge. It is to the body politic what the veins and arteries are to the natural—conveying rapidly and regularly to the remotest parts of the system, correct information of the operations of the government; and bringing back to it the wishes and feelings of the people. Through its agency, we have secured to ourselves the full enjoyment of the blessings of a free press.

In this general survey of our affairs, a subject of high importance presents itself in the present organization of the judiciary. A uniform operation of the federal government in the different states is certainly desirable; and existing as they do in the Union, on the basis of perfect equality, each state has a right to expect that the benefits conferred on the citizens of others should be extended to hers. The judicial system of the United States exists in all its efficiency in only fifteen members of the Union: to three others, the circuit courts, which constitute an important part of that system, have been imperfectly extended; and to the remaining six, altogether denied. The effect has been to withhold from the inhabitants of the latter, the advantages afforded (by the supreme court) to their fellow-citizens in other states, in the whole extent of the criminal, and much of the civil authority of the federal judiciary. That this state of things ought to be remedied, if it can be done consistently with the public welfare, is not to be doubted: neither is it to be disguised that the organization of our judicial system is at once a difficult and delicate task. To extend the circuit courts equally throughout the different parts of the Union, and at the same time, to avoid such a multiplication of members as would encumber the supreme appellate tribunal, is the object desired. Perhaps it might be accomplished by dividing the circuit judges into two classes, and providing that the supreme court should be held

by those classes alternately—the chief justice always presiding.

If an extension of the circuit court system to those states which do not now enjoy its benefits should be determined upon, it would of course be necessary to revise the present arrangements of the circuits; and even if that system should not be enlarged, such a revision is recommended.

A provision for taking the census of the people of the United States will, to insure the completion of that work within a convenient time, claim the early attention of Congress.

The great and constant increase of business in the Department of State forced itself, at an early period, upon the attention of the executive. Thirteen years ago, it was, in Mr. Madison's last message to Congress, made the subject of an earnest recommendation, which has been repeated by both of his successors; and my comparatively limited experience has satisfied me of its justness. It has arisen from many causes, not the least of which is, the large addition which has been made to the family of independent nations, and the proportionate extension of our foreign relations. The remedy proposed was the establishment of a Home Department—a measure which does not appear to have met the views of Congress, on account of its supposed tendency to increase, gradually and imperceptibly, the already too strong bias of the federal system towards the exercise of authority not delegated to it. I am not, therefore, disposed to revive the recommendation; but am not the less impressed with the importance of so organizing that department, that the secretary may devote more of his time to our foreign relations. Clearly satisfied that the public good would be promoted by some suitable provision on the subject, I respectfully invite your attention to it.

The charter of the Bank of the United States expires in 1836, and its stockholders will most probably apply for a renewal of their privileges. In order to avoid the evils resulting from precipitancy in a measure involving such important principles, and such deep pecuniary interests, I feel that I cannot, in justice to the parties interested,

too soon present it to the deliberate consideration of the legislature and the people. Both the constitutionality and the expediency of the law creating this bank are well questioned by a large portion of our fellow-citizens; and it must be admitted by all, that it has failed in the great end of establishing a uniform and sound currency.

Under these circumstances, if such an institution is deemed essential to the fiscal operations of the government, I submit to the wisdom of the legislature whether a national one, founded upon the credit of the government and its revenues, might not be devised, which would avoid all constitutional difficulties; and, at the same time, secure all the advantages to the government and country that were expected to result from the present bank.

I cannot close this communication without bringing to your view the just claim of the representatives of Commodore Decatur, his officers and crew, arising from the re-capture of the frigate Philadelphia, under the heavy batteries of Tripoli. Although sensible, as a general rule, of the impropriety of executive interference under a government like ours, where every individual enjoys the right of directly petitioning Congress; yet, viewing this case as one of very peculiar character, I deem it my duty to recommend it to your favorable consideration. Besides the justice of this claim, as corresponding to those which have been since recognised and satisfied, it is the fruit of a deed of patriotic and chivalrous daring, which infused life and confidence into our infant navy, and contributed, as much as any exploit in its history, to elevate our national character. Public gratitude, therefore, stamps her seal upon it; and the meed should not be withheld which may hereafter operate as a stimulus to our gallant tars.

I now commend you, fellow-citizens, to the guidance of Almighty God, with a full reliance on his merciful providence for the maintenance of our free institutions; and with an earnest supplication, that whatever errors it may be my lot to commit, in discharging the arduous duties which have devolved on me, will find a remedy in the harmony and wisdom of your counsels.

JACKSON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS.

Fellow-Citizens :

BEING about to retire finally from public life, I beg leave to offer you my grateful thanks for the many proofs of kindness and confidence which I have received at your hands. It has been my fortune, in the discharge of public duties, civil and military, frequently to have found myself in difficult and trying situations, where prompt decision and energetic action were necessary, and where the interests of the country required that high responsibilities should be fearlessly encountered ; and it is with the deepest emotions of gratitude that I acknowledge the continued and unbroken confidence with which you have sustained me in every trial. My public life has been a long one, and I cannot hope that it has at all times been free from errors.

But I have the consolation of knowing that if mistakes have been committed, they have not seriously injured the country I so anxiously endeavored to serve ; and at the moment when I surrender my last public trust, I leave this great people prosperous and happy ; in the full enjoyment of liberty and peace ; and honored and respected by every nation of the world.

If my humble efforts have, in any degree, contributed to preserve to you these blessings, I have been more than rewarded by the honor you have heaped upon me ; and, above all, by the generous confidence with which you have supported me in every peril, and with which you have continued to animate and cheer my path to the closing hour of my political life. The time has now come, when advanced age and a broken frame warn me to retire from public concerns ; but the recollection of the many favors you have bestowed upon me is engraven

upon my heart, and I have felt that I could not part from your service without making this public acknowledgment of the gratitude I owe you. And if I use the occasion to offer to you the counsels of age and experience, you will, I trust, receive them with the same indulgent kindness which you have so often extended to me; and will, at least, see in them an earnest desire to perpetuate, in this favored land, the blessings of liberty and equal laws.

We have now lived almost fifty years under the constitution framed by the sages and patriots of the revolution. The conflicts in which the nations of Europe were engaged during a great part of this period; the spirit in which they waged war with each other; and our intimate commercial connections with every part of the civilized world, rendered it a time of much difficulty for the government of the United States. We have had our seasons of peace and of war, with all the evils which precede or follow a state of hostility with powerful nations. We encountered these trials, with our constitution yet in its infancy, and under the disadvantages which a new and untried government must always feel when it is called to put forth its whole strength, without the lights of experience to guide it, or the weight of precedent to justify its measures. But we have passed triumphantly through all these difficulties. Our constitution is no longer a doubtful experiment; and at the end of nearly half a century, we find that it has preserved unimpaired the liberties of the people, secured the rights of property, and that our country has improved, and is flourishing beyond any former example in the history of nations.

In our domestic concerns, there is everything to encourage us; and if you are true to yourselves, nothing can impede your march to the highest point of national prosperity. The states which had so long been retarded in their improvement by the Indian tribes residing in the midst of them, are at length relieved from the evil; and this unhappy race—the original dwellers in our land—are now placed in a situation where we may well hope that they will share in the blessings of civilization, and be saved from that degradation and destruction to which they were rapidly hastening while they remained in the

states; and while the safety and comfort of our own citizens have been greatly promoted by their removal, the philanthropist will rejoice that the remnant of that ill-fated race has been at length placed beyond the reach of injury or oppression, and that the paternal care of the general government will hereafter watch over them and protect them.

If we turn to our relations with foreign powers, we find our condition equally gratifying. Actuated by the sincere desire to do justice to every nation, and to preserve the blessing of peace, our intercourse with them has been conducted on the part of this government in the spirit of frankness, and I take pleasure in saying that it has generally been met in a corresponding temper. Difficulties of old standing have been surmounted by friendly discussion and the mutual desire to be just; and the claims of our citizens, which had been long withheld, have at length been acknowledged and adjusted, and satisfactory arrangements made for their final payment; and with a limited, and, I trust, a temporary exception, our relations with every foreign power are now of the most friendly character, our commerce continually expanding, and our flag respected in every quarter of the world.

These cheering and grateful prospects, and these multiplied favors, we owe, under Providence, to the adoption of the federal constitution. It is no longer a question whether this great country can remain happily united, and flourish under our present form of government. Experience, the unerring test of all human undertakings, has shown the wisdom and foresight of those who framed it; and has proved that in the union of these states there is a sure foundation for the brightest hopes of freedom, and for the happiness of the people. At every hazard, and by every sacrifice, this union must be preserved.

The necessity of watching with jealous anxiety for the preservation of the union, was earnestly pressed upon his fellow-citizens by the father of his country, in his farewell address. He has there told us, that "while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those who, in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its

bonds;" and he has cautioned us in the strongest terms against the formation of parties, on geographical discriminations, as one of the means which might disturb our union, and to which designing men would be likely to resort.

The lessons contained in this invaluable legacy of Washington to his countrymen, should be cherished in the heart of every citizen to the latest generation; and, perhaps, at no period of time could they be more usefully remembered than at the present moment. For when we look upon the scenes that are passing around us, and dwell upon the pages of his parting address, his paternal counsels would seem to be not merely the offspring of wisdom and foresight, but the voice of prophecy foretelling events, and warning us of the evil to come. Forty years have passed since that imperishable document was given to his countrymen. The federal constitution was then regarded by him as an experiment, and he so speaks of it in his address; but an experiment upon the success of which the best hopes of his country depended; and we all know that he was prepared to lay down his life, if necessary, to secure to it a full and fair trial. The trial has been made. It has succeeded beyond the proudest hopes of those who framed it. Every quarter of this widely extended nation has felt its blessings, and shared in the general prosperity produced by its adoption. But amid this general prosperity and splendid success, the dangers of which he warned us are becoming every day more evident, and the signs of evil are sufficiently apparent to awaken the deepest anxiety in the bosom of the patriot. We behold systematic efforts publicly made to sow the seeds of discord between different parts of the United States, and to place party divisions directly upon geographical distinctions; to excite the *south* against the *north*, and the *north* against the *south*, and to force into the controversy the most delicate and exciting topics, upon which it is impossible that a large portion of the Union can ever speak without strong emotions. Appeals, too, are constantly made to sectional interests, in order to influence the election of the chief magistrate, as if it were desired that he should favor a particular quarter of the

country, instead of fulfilling the duties of his station with impartial justice to all; and the possible dissolution of the Union has at length become an ordinary and familiar subject of discussion. Has the warning voice of Washington been forgotten? or have designs already been formed to sever the Union? Let it not be supposed that I impute to all of those who have taken an active part in these unwise and unprofitable discussions, a want of patriotism or of public virtue. The honorable feelings of state pride and local attachments find a place in the bosoms of the most enlightened and pure. But while such men are conscious of their own integrity and honesty of purpose, they ought never to forget that the citizens of other states are their political brethren; and that, however mistaken they may be in their views, the great body of them are equally honest and upright with themselves. Mutual suspicions and reproaches may in time create mutual hostility, and artful and designing men will always be found who are ready to foment these fatal divisions, and to inflame the natural jealousies of different sections of the country. The history of the world is full of such examples, and especially the history of republics.

What have you to gain by division and dissension? Delude not yourselves with the belief that a breach once made may be afterwards repaired. If the Union is once severed, the line of separation will grow wider and wider, and the controversies which are now debated and settled in the halls of legislation, will then be tried in fields of battle, and be determined by the sword. Neither should you deceive yourselves with the hope, that the first line of separation would be the permanent one, and that nothing but harmony and concord would be found in the new associations formed upon the dissolution of this Union. Local interests would still be found there, and unchastened ambition. And if the recollection of common dangers, in which the people of these United States stood side by side against the common foe; the memory of victories won by their united valor; the prosperity and happiness they have enjoyed under the present constitution; the proud name they bear as citizens of this great republic; if these recollections and proofs of common

interest are not strong enough to bind us together as one people, what tie will hold, this Union dissevered? The first line of separation would not last for a single generation; new fragments would be torn off; new leaders would spring up; and this great and glorious republic would soon be broken into a multitude of petty states; armed for mutual aggressions; loaded with taxes to pay armies and leaders; seeking aid against each other from foreign powers; insulted and trampled upon by the nations of Europe, until, harassed with conflicts, and humbled and debased in spirit, they would be ready to submit to the absolute dominion of any military adventurer, and to surrender their liberty for the sake of repose. It is impossible to look on the consequences that would inevitably follow the destruction of this government, and not feel indignant when we hear cold calculations about the value of the Union, and have so constantly before us a line of conduct so well calculated to weaken its ties.

There is too much at stake to allow pride or passion to influence your decision. Never for a moment believe that the great body of the citizens of any state or states can deliberately intend to do wrong. They may, under the influence of temporary excitement or misguided opinions, commit mistakes; they may be misled for a time by the suggestions of self-interest; but in a community so enlightened and patriotic as the people of the United States, argument will soon make them sensible of their errors; and when convinced, they will be ready to repair them. If they have no higher or better motives to govern them, they will at least perceive that their own interest requires them to be just to others, as they hope to receive justice at their hands.

But in order to maintain the Union unimpaired, it is absolutely necessary that the laws passed by the constituted authorities should be faithfully executed in every part of the country, and that every good citizen should, at all times, stand ready to put down, with the combined force of the nation, every attempt at unlawful resistance, under whatever pretext it may be made, or whatever shape it may assume. Unconstitutional or oppressive laws may no doubt be passed by Congress, either from

erroneous views or the want of due consideration. If they are within reach of judicial authority, the remedy is easy and peaceful; and if from the character of the law, it is an abuse of power not within the control of the judiciary, then free discussion and calm appeals to reason and to the justice of the people, will not fail to redress the wrong. But until the law shall be declared void by the courts, or repealed by Congress, no individual, or combination of individuals, can be justified in forcibly resisting its execution. It is impossible that any government can continue to exist upon any other principles. It would cease to be a government, and be unworthy of the name, if it had not the power to enforce the execution of its own laws within its own sphere of action.

It is true that cases may be imagined disclosing such a settled purpose of usurpation and oppression, on the part of the government, as would justify an appeal to arms. These, however, are extreme cases, which we have no reason to apprehend in a government where the power is in the hands of a patriotic people; and no citizen who loves his country, would in any case whatever resort to forcible resistance, unless he clearly saw that the time had come when a freeman should prefer death to submission; for if such a struggle is once begun, and the citizens of one section of the country arrayed in arms against those of another, in doubtful conflict, let the battle result as it may, there will be an end of the Union, and with it an end of the hopes of freedom. The victory of the injured would not secure to them the blessings of liberty; it would avenge their wrongs, but they would themselves share in the common ruin.

But the constitution cannot be maintained, nor the Union preserved, in opposition to public feeling, by the mere exertion of the coercive powers confided to the general government. The foundations must be laid in the affections of the people; in the security it gives to life, liberty, character, and property, in every quarter of the country; and in the fraternal attachments which the citizens of the several states bear to one another, as members of one political family, mutually contributing to promote the happiness of each other. Hence the citizens of every

state should studiously avoid everything calculated to wound the sensibility or offend the just pride of the people of other states; and they should frown upon any proceedings within their own borders likely to disturb the tranquillity of their political brethren in other portions of the Union. In a country so extensive as the United States, and with pursuits so varied, the internal regulations of the several states must frequently differ from one another in important particulars; and this difference is unavoidably increased by the varying principles upon which the American colonies were originally planted; principles which had taken deep root in their social relations before the revolution, and therefore, of necessity, influencing their policy since they became free and independent states. But each state has the unquestionable right to regulate its own internal concerns according to its own pleasure; and while it does not interfere with the rights of the people of other states, or the rights of the Union, every state must be the sole judge of that measure proper to secure the safety of its citizens, and promote their happiness; and all efforts on the part of the people of other states to cast odium upon their institutions, and all measures calculated to disturb their rights of property, or to put in jeopardy their peace and internal tranquillity, are in direct opposition to the spirit in which the Union was formed, and must endanger its safety. Motives of philanthropy may be assigned for this unwarrantable interference; and weak men may persuade themselves for a moment that they are laboring in the cause of humanity, and asserting the rights of the human race; but every one, upon sober reflection, will see that nothing but mischief can come from these improper assaults upon the feelings and rights of others. Rest assured, that the men found busy in this work of discord are not worthy of your confidence, and deserve your strongest reprobation.

In the legislation of Congress, also, and in every measure of the general government, justice to every portion of the United States should be faithfully observed. No free government can stand without virtue in the people, and a lofty spirit of patriotism; and if the sordid feelings of mere selfishness shall usurp the place which ought to

be filled by public spirit, the legislation of Congress will soon be converted into a scramble for personal and sectional advantages. Under our free institutions the citizens in every quarter of our country are capable of attaining a high degree of prosperity and happiness, without seeking to profit themselves at the expense of others; and every such attempt must in the end fail to succeed, for the people in every part of the United States are too enlightened not to understand their own rights and interests, and to detect and defeat every effort to gain undue advantages over them; and when such designs are discovered, it naturally provokes resentments which cannot be always allayed. Justice, full and ample justice, to every portion of the United States, should be the ruling principle of every freeman, and should guide the deliberations of every public body, whether it be state or national.

It is well known that there have always been those among us who wish to enlarge the powers of the general government; and experience would seem to indicate that there is a tendency on the part of this government to overstep the boundaries marked out for it by the constitution. Its legitimate authority is abundantly sufficient for all the purposes for which it is created; and its powers being expressly enumerated, there can be no justification for claiming anything beyond them. Every attempt to exercise power beyond these limits should be promptly and firmly opposed. For one evil example will lead to other measures still more mischievous; and if the principle of constructive powers, or supposed advantages, or temporary circumstances, shall ever be permitted to justify the assumption of a power not given by the constitution, the general government will before long absorb all the powers of legislation, and you will have, in effect, but one consolidated government. From the extent of our country, its diversified interests, different pursuits, and different habits, it is too obvious for argument that a single consolidated government would be wholly inadequate to watch over and protect its interests; and every friend of our free institutions should be always prepared to maintain, unimpaired and in full vigor, the rights and sovereignty of the states, and to confine the action of the

general government strictly to the sphere of its appropriate duties.

There is, perhaps, no one of the powers conferred on the federal government so liable to abuse as the taxing power. The most productive and convenient sources of revenue were necessarily given to it, that it might perform the important duties imposed upon it; and the taxes which it lays upon commerce being concealed from the real payer in the price of the article, they do not so readily attract the attention of the people as smaller sums demanded from them directly by the tax-gatherer. But the tax imposed on goods, enhances by so much the price of the commodity to the consumer; and as many of these duties are imposed on articles of necessity which are daily used by the great body of the people, the money raised by these imposts is drawn from their pockets. Congress has no right under the constitution to take money from the people, unless it is required to execute some one of the specific powers intrusted to the government: and if they raise more than is necessary for such purposes, it is an abuse of the power of taxation, and unjust and oppressive. It may indeed happen that the revenue will sometimes exceed the amount anticipated when the taxes were laid. When, however, this is ascertained, it is easy to reduce them; and, in such a case, it is unquestionably the duty of the government to reduce them, for no circumstances can justify it in assuming a power not given to it by the constitution, nor in taking away the money of the people when it is not needed for the legitimate wants of the government.

Plain as these principles appear to be, you will find that there is a constant effort to induce the general government to go beyond the limits of its taxing power, and to impose unnecessary burdens upon the people. Many powerful interests are continually at work to procure heavy duties on commerce, and to swell the revenue beyond the real necessities of the public service; and the country has already felt the injurious effects of their combined influence. They succeeded in obtaining a tariff of duties, bearing most oppressively on the agricultural and laboring classes of society, and producing a revenue that could

not be usefully employed within the range of the powers conferred upon Congress; and, in order to fasten upon the people this unjust and unequal system of taxation, extravagant schemes of internal improvement were got up, in various quarters, to squander the money and to purchase support. Thus, one unconstitutional measure was intended to be upheld by another, and the abuse of the power of taxation was to be maintained by usurping the power of expending the money in internal improvements. You cannot have forgotten the severe and doubtful struggle through which we passed, when the executive department of the government, by its veto, endeavored to arrest this prodigal scheme of injustice, and to bring back the legislation of Congress to the boundaries prescribed by the constitution. The good sense and practical judgment of the people, when the subject was brought before them, sustained the course of the executive; and this plan of unconstitutional expenditure for the purposes of corrupt influence is, I trust, finally overthrown.

The result of this decision has been felt in the rapid extinguishment of the public debt, and the large accumulation of a surplus in the treasury, notwithstanding the tariff was reduced, and is now far below the amount originally contemplated by its advocates. But, rely upon it, the design to collect an extravagant revenue, and to burden you with taxes beyond the economical wants of the government, is not yet abandoned. The various interests which have combined together to impose a heavy tariff, and to produce an overflowing treasury, are too strong, and have too much at stake, to surrender the contest. The corporations and wealthy individuals who are engaged in large manufacturing establishments, desire a high tariff to increase their gains. Designing politicians will support it to conciliate their favor, and to obtain the means of profuse expenditure, for the purpose of purchasing influence in other quarters; and since the people have decided that the federal government cannot be permitted to employ its income in internal improvements, efforts will be made to seduce and mislead the citizens of the several states, by holding out to them the deceitful prospect of benefits to be derived from a surplus revenue

collected by the general government, and annually divided among the states. And if, encouraged by these fallacious hopes, the states should disregard the principles of economy which ought to characterize every republican government, and should indulge in lavish expenditures exceeding their resources, they will, before long, find themselves oppressed with debts which they are unable to pay, and the temptation will become irresistible to support a high tariff, in order to obtain a surplus distribution. Do not allow yourselves, my fellow-citizens, to be misled on this subject. The federal government cannot collect a surplus for such purposes, without violating the principles of the constitution, and assuming powers which have not been granted. It is, moreover, a system of injustice, and, if persisted in, will inevitably lead to corruption, and must end in ruin. The surplus revenue will be drawn from the pockets of the people—from the farmer, the mechanic, and the laboring classes of society; but who will receive it when distributed among the states, where it is to be disposed of by leading politicians who have friends to favor, and political partisans to gratify? It will certainly not be returned to those who paid it, and who have most need of it, and are honestly entitled to it. There is but one safe rule, and that is to confine the general government rigidly within the sphere of its appropriate duties. It has no power to raise a revenue, or impose taxes, except for the purposes enumerated in the constitution; and if its income is found to exceed these wants, it should be forthwith reduced, and the burdens of the people so far lightened.

In reviewing the conflicts which have taken place between different interests in the United States, and the policy pursued since the adoption of our present form of government, we find nothing that has produced such deep-seated evil as the course of legislation in relation to the currency. The constitution of the United States unquestionably intended to secure the people a circulating medium of gold and silver. But the establishment of a national bank by Congress, with the privilege of issuing paper money, receivable in the payment of the public dues, and the unfortunate course of legislation in the several

states upon the same subject, drove from general circulation the constitutional currency, and substituted one of paper in its place.

It was not easy for men engaged in the ordinary pursuits of business, whose attention had not been particularly drawn to the subject, to foresee all the consequences of a currency exclusively of paper : and we ought not, on that account, to be surprised at the facility with which laws were obtained to carry into effect the paper system. Honest and even enlightened men are sometimes misled by the specious and plausible statements of the designing. But experience has now proved the mischiefs and dangers of a paper currency, and it rests with you to determine whether the proper remedy shall be applied.

The paper system being founded on public confidence, and having of itself no intrinsic value, it is liable to great and sudden fluctuations ; thereby rendering property insecure, and the wages of labor unsteady and uncertain. The corporations which create the paper money cannot be relied upon to keep the circulating medium uniform in amount. In times of prosperity, when confidence is high, they are tempted, by the prospect of gain, or by the influence of those who hope to profit by it, to extend their issues of paper beyond the bounds of discretion and the reasonable demands of business. And when these issues have been pushed on, from day to day, until public confidence is at length shaken, then a reaction takes place, and they immediately withdraw the credits they have given ; suddenly curtail their issues ; and produce an unexpected and ruinous contraction of the circulating medium, which is felt by the whole community. The banks, by this means, save themselves, and the mischievous consequences of their imprudence or cupidity are visited upon the public. Nor does the evil stop here. These ebbs and flows in the currency, and these indiscreet extensions of credit, naturally engender a spirit of speculation injurious to the habits and character of the people. We have already seen its effects in the wild spirit of speculation in the public lands, and various kinds of stock, which, within the last year or two, seized upon such a multitude of our citizens, and threatened to pervade all classes of society,

and to withdraw their attention from the sober pursuits of honest industry. It is not by encouraging this spirit that we shall best preserve public virtue, and promote the true interests of our country. But if your currency continues as exclusively paper as it now is, it will foster this eager desire to amass wealth without labor; it will multiply the number of dependents on bank accommodations and bank favors; the temptation to obtain money at any sacrifice will become stronger and stronger, and inevitably lead to corruption, which will find its way into your public councils, and destroy, at no distant day, the purity of your government. Some of the evils which arise from this system of paper, press with peculiar hardship upon the class of society least able to bear it. A portion of this currency frequently becomes depreciated or worthless, and all of it is easily counterfeited, in such a manner as to require peculiar skill and much experience to distinguish the counterfeit from the genuine notes.

These frauds are most generally perpetrated in the smaller notes, which are used in the daily transactions of ordinary business; and the losses occasioned by them are commonly thrown upon the laboring classes of society, whose situation and pursuits put it out of their power to guard themselves from these impositions, and whose daily wages are necessary for their subsistence. It is the duty of every government so to regulate its currency as to protect this numerous class, as far as practicable, from the impositions of avarice and fraud. It is more especially the duty of the United States, where the government is emphatically the government of the people, and where this respectable portion of our citizens are so proudly distinguished from the laboring classes of all other nations, by their independent spirit, their love of liberty, their intelligence, and their high tone of moral character. Their industry in peace, is the source of our wealth; and their bravery in war, has covered us with glory; and the government of the United States will but ill discharge its duties, if it leaves them a prey to such dishonest impositions. Yet it is evident that their interests cannot be effectually protected, unless silver and gold are restored to circulation.

These views alone, of the paper currency, are sufficient to call for immediate reform; but there is another consideration which should still more strongly press it upon your attention.

Recent events have proved that the paper money system of this country, may be used as an engine to undermine your free institutions; and that those who desire to engross all power in the hands of the few, and to govern by corruption or force, are aware of its power, and prepared to employ it. Your banks now furnish your only circulating medium, and money is plenty or scarce, according to the quantity of notes issued by them. While they have capitals not greatly disproportioned to each other, they are competitors in business, and no one of them can exercise dominion over the rest; and although, in the present state of the currency, these banks may and do operate injuriously upon the habits of business, the pecuniary concerns, and the moral tone of society; yet, from their number and dispersed situation, they cannot combine for the purposes of political influence; and whatever may be the dispositions of some of them, their power of mischief must necessarily be confined to a narrow space, and felt only in their immediate neighborhood.

But when the charter for the Bank of the United States was obtained from Congress, it perfected the schemes of the paper system, and gave its advocates the position they have struggled to obtain, from the commencement of the federal government down to the present hour. The immense capital, the peculiar privileges bestowed upon it, enabled it to exercise despotic sway over the other banks in every part of the country. From its superior strength, it could seriously injure, if not destroy, the business of any one of them which might incur its resentment; and it openly claimed for itself the power of regulating the currency throughout the United States. In other words, it asserted (and undoubtedly possessed) the power to make money plenty or scarce, at its pleasure, at any time, and in any quarter of the Union, by controlling the issues of other banks, and permitting an expansion, or compelling a general contraction, of the circulating medium, according to its own will. The other banking institutions were

sensible of its strength, and they soon generally became its obedient instruments, ready at all times to execute its mandates; and with the banks necessarily went also that numerous class of persons in our commercial cities, who depend altogether on bank credits for their solvency and means of business; and who are, therefore, obliged, for their own safety, to propitiate the favor of the money power by distinguished zeal and devotion in its service. The result of the ill-advised legislation which established this great monopoly was to concentrate the whole moneyed power of the Union, with its boundless means of corruption, and its numerous dependents, under the direction and command of one acknowledged head; thus organizing this particular interest as one body, and securing to it unity and concert of action throughout the United States, and enabling it to bring forward, upon any occasion, its entire and undivided strength to support or defeat any measure of the government. In the hands of this formidable power, thus perfectly organized, was also placed unlimited dominion over the amount of the circulating medium, giving it the power to regulate the value of property and the fruits of labor in every quarter of the Union; and to bestow prosperity, or bring ruin upon any city or section of the country, as might best comport with its own interest or policy.

We are not left to conjecture how the moneyed power, thus organized, and with such a weapon in its hands, would be likely to use it. The distress and alarm which pervaded and agitated the whole country, when the Bank of the United States waged war upon the people, in order to compel them to submit to its demands, cannot yet be forgotten. The ruthless and unsparing temper with which whole cities and communities were oppressed, individuals impoverished and ruined, and a scene of cheerful prosperity suddenly changed into one of gloom and despondency, ought to be indelibly impressed on the memory of the people of the United States. If such was its power in a time of peace, what would it not have been in a season of war, with an enemy at your doors? No nation but the freemen of the United States could have come out victorious from such a contest; yet, if you

had not conquered, the government would have passed from the hands of the many to the hands of the few; and this organized money power, from its secret conclave, would have dictated the choice of your highest officers, and compelled you to make peace or war, as best suited their own wishes. The forms of your government might, for a time, have remained; but its living spirit would have departed from it.

The distress and sufferings inflicted on the people by the bank, are some of the fruits of that system of policy which is continually striving to enlarge the authority of the federal government beyond the limits fixed by the constitution. The powers enumerated in that instrument do not confer on Congress the right to establish such a corporation as the Bank of the United States; and the evil consequences which followed may warn us of the danger of departing from the true rule of construction, and of permitting temporary circumstances, or the hope of better promoting the public welfare, to influence in any degree our decisions upon the extent of the authority of the general government. Let us abide by the constitution as it is written, or amend it in the constitutional mode if it is found defective.

The severe lessons of experience will, I doubt not, be sufficient to prevent Congress from again chartering such a monopoly, even if the constitution did not present an insuperable objection to it. But you must remember, my fellow-citizens, that eternal vigilance by the people is the price of liberty: and that you must pay the price if you wish to secure the blessing. It behooves you, therefore, to be watchful in your states, as well as in the federal government. The power which the moneyed interest can exercise, when concentrated under a single head, and with our present system of currency, was sufficiently demonstrated in the struggle made by the United States Bank. Defeated in the general government, the same class of intriguers and politicians will now resort to the states, and endeavor to obtain there the same organization which they failed to perpetuate in the Union; and with specious and deceitful plans of public advantages, and state interests, and state pride,

they will endeavor to establish, in the different states, one moneyed institution with overgrown capital, and exclusive privileges, sufficient to enable it to control the operations of other banks. Such an institution will be pregnant with the same evils produced by the Bank of the United States, although its sphere of action is more confined; and in the state in which it is chartered, the money power will be able to embody its whole strength, and to move together with undivided force to accomplish any object it may wish to attain. You have already had abundant evidence of its powers to inflict injury upon the agricultural, mechanical, and laboring classes of society; and over those whose engagements in trade or speculation render them dependent on bank facilities, the dominion of the state monopoly will be absolute, and their obedience unlimited. With such a bank and a paper currency, the money power would in a few years govern the state and control its measures; and if a sufficient number of states can be induced to create such establishments, the time will soon come when it will again take the field against the United States, and succeed in perfecting and perpetuating its organization by a charter from Congress.

It is one of the serious evils of our present system of banking, that it enables one class of society—and that by no means a numerous one—by its control over the currency, to act injuriously upon the interests of all the others, and to exercise more than its just proportion of influence in political affairs. The agricultural, the mechanical, and the laboring classes, have little or no share in the direction of the great moneyed corporations; and from their habits and the nature of their pursuits, they are incapable of forming extensive combinations to act together with united force. Such concert of action may sometimes be produced in a single city, or in a small district of country, by means of personal communications with each other; but they have no regular or active correspondence with those who are engaged in similar pursuits in distant places; they have but little patronage to give to the press, and exercise but a small share of influence over it; they have no crowd of dependents about

them, who hope to grow rich without labor, by their countenance and favor, and who are, therefore, always ready to execute their wishes. The planter, the farmer, the mechanic and the laborer, all know that their success depends upon their own industry and economy, and that they must not expect to become suddenly rich by the fruits of their toil. Yet these classes form the great body of the people of the United States; they are the bone and sinew of the country; men who love liberty, and desire nothing but equal rights and equal laws, and who, moreover, hold the great mass of our national wealth, although it is distributed in moderate amounts among the millions of freemen who possess it. But, with overwhelming numbers and wealth on their side, they are in constant danger of losing their fair influence in the government, and with difficulty maintain their just rights against the incessant efforts daily made to encroach upon them.

The mischief springs from the power which the moneyed interest derives from a paper currency, which they are able to control, from the multitude of corporations with exclusive privileges, which they have succeeded in obtaining in the different states, and which are employed altogether for their benefit; and unless you become more watchful in your states, and check this spirit of monopoly and thirst for exclusive privileges, you will, in the end, find that the most important powers of government have been given or bartered away, and the control over your dearest interests has passed into the hands of these corporations.

The paper-moneyed system, and its natural associates, monopoly and exclusive privileges, have already struck their roots deep in the soil, and it will require all your efforts to check its further growth, and to eradicate the evil. The men who profit by the abuses, and desire to perpetuate them, will continue to besiege the halls of legislation, in the general government as well as in the states, and will seek, by every artifice, to mislead and deceive the public servants. It is to yourselves that you must look for safety and the means of guarding and perpetuating your free institutions. In your hands is right-

fully placed the sovereignty of the country, and to you every one placed in authority is ultimately responsible. It is always in your power to see that the wishes of the people are carried into faithful execution; and their will, when once made known, must sooner or later be obeyed. And while the people remain, as I trust they ever will, uncorrupted and incorruptible, and continue watchful and jealous of their rights, the government is safe, and the cause of freedom will continue to triumph over all its enemies.

But it will require steady and persevering exertions on your part to rid yourselves of the iniquities and mischiefs of the paper system, and to check the spirit of monopoly and other abuses which have sprung up with it, and of which it is the main support. So many interests are united to resist all reform on this subject, that you must not hope the conflict will be a short one, nor success easy. My humble efforts have not been spared, during my administration of the government, to restore the constitutional currency of gold and silver: and something, I trust, has been done towards the accomplishment of this most desirable object. But enough yet remains to require all your energy and perseverance. The power, however, is in your hands, and the remedy must and will be applied, if you determine upon it.

While I am thus endeavoring to press upon your attention the principles which I deem of vital importance to the domestic concerns of the country, I ought not to pass over without notice the important considerations which should govern your policy towards foreign powers. It is unquestionably our true interest to cultivate the most friendly understanding with every nation, and to avoid, by every honorable means, the calamities of war; and we shall best attain that object by frankness and sincerity in our foreign intercourse, by the prompt and faithful execution of treaties, and by justice and impartiality in our conduct to all. But no nation, however desirous of peace, can hope to escape collisions with other powers; and the soundest dictates of policy require that we should place ourselves in a condition to assert our rights, if a resort to force should ever become necessary. Our local situation,

our long line of sea-coast, indented by numerous bays, with deep rivers opening into the interior, as well as her extended and still increasing commerce, point to the navy as our natural means of defence. It will, in the end, be found to be the cheapest and most effectual; and now is the time, in a season of peace, and with an overflowing revenue, that we can year after year add to its strength, without increasing the burdens of the people. It is your true policy. For your navy will not only protect your rich and flourishing commerce in distant seas, but enable you to reach and annoy the enemy, and will give to defence its greatest efficiency, by meeting danger at a distance from home. It is impossible, by any line of fortifications, to guard every point from attack against a hostile force advancing from the ocean, and selecting its object; but they are indispensable to prevent cities from bombardment; dock-yards and navy arsenals from destruction; to give shelter to merchant vessels in time of war, and to single ships of weaker squadrons when pressed by superior force. Fortifications of this description cannot be too soon completed and armed, and placed in a condition of the most perfect preparation. The abundant means we now possess cannot be applied in any manner more useful to the country; and when this is done, and our naval force sufficiently strengthened, and our military armed, we need not fear that any nation will wantonly insult us, or needlessly provoke hostilities. We shall more certainly preserve peace, when it is well understood that we are prepared for war.

In presenting to you, my fellow-citizens, these parting counsels, I have brought before you the leading principles upon which I endeavored to administer the government in the high office with which you twice honored me. Knowing that the path of freedom is continually beset by enemies, who often assume the disguise of friends, I have devoted the last hours of my public life to warn you of the dangers. The progress of the United States, under our free and happy institutions, has surpassed the most sanguine hopes of the founders of the republic. Our growth has been rapid, beyond all former example, in numbers, in wealth, in knowledge, and all the useful arts

which contribute to the comforts and convenience of man ; and, from the earliest ages of history to the present day, there never have been thirteen millions of people associated together in one political body, who enjoyed so much freedom and happiness as the people of these United States. You have no longer any cause to fear danger from abroad ; your strength and power are well known throughout the civilized world, as well as the high and gallant bearing of your sons. It is from within, among yourselves, from cupidity, from corruption, from disappointed ambition, and inordinate thirst for power, that factions will be formed and liberty endangered. It is against such designs, whatever disguise the actors may assume, that you have especially to guard yourselves. You have the highest of human trusts committed to your care. Providence has showered on this favored land blessings without number, and has chosen you, as the guardians of freedom, to preserve it for the benefit of the human race. May He, who holds in his hands the destinies of nations, make you worthy of the favors he has bestowed, and enable you, with pure hearts, and pure hands, and sleepless vigilance, to guard and defend to the end of time the great charge he has committed to your keeping.

My own race is nearly run ; advanced age and failing health warn me that before long I must pass beyond the reach of human events, and cease to feel the vicissitudes of human affairs. I thank God that my life has been spent in a land of liberty, and that he has given me a heart to love my country with the affection of a son. And, filled with gratitude for your constant and unwavering kindness, I bid you a last and affectionate farewell.

VAN BUREN'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS,

MARCH 4, 1837.

Fellow-citizens :

THE practice of all my predecessors imposes on me an obligation I cheerfully fulfil, to accompany the first and solemn act of my public trust with an avowal of the prin-

ciples that will guide me in performing it, and an expression of my feelings on assuming a charge so responsible and vast. In imitating their example, I tread in the footsteps of illustrious men, whose superiors, it is our happiness to believe, are not found on the executive calendar of any country. Among them we recognise the earliest and firmest pillars of the republic; those by whom our national independence was first declared; him who, above all others, contributed to establish it on the field of battle; and those whose expanded intellect and patriotism constructed, improved and perfected the inestimable institutions under which we live. If such men, in the position I now occupy, felt themselves overwhelmed by a sense of gratitude for this, the highest of all marks of their country's confidence, and by a consciousness of their inability adequately to discharge the duties of an office so difficult and exalted, how much more must these considerations affect one, who can rely on no such claim for favor or forbearance. Unlike all who have preceded me, the revolution that gave us existence as one people, was achieved at the period of my birth; and whilst I contemplate, with grateful reverence, that memorable event, I feel that I belong to a later age, and that I may not expect my countrymen to weigh my actions with the same kind and partial hand.

So sensibly, fellow-citizens, do these circumstances press themselves upon me, that I should not dare to enter upon my path of duty, did I not look for the generous aid of those who will be associated with me in the various and co-ordinate branches of the government; did I not repose with unwavering reliance on the patriotism, the intelligence and the kindness of a people who never yet deserted a public servant honestly laboring in their cause; and, above all, did I not permit myself humbly to hope for the sustaining support of an ever-watchful and beneficent Providence.

To the confidence and consolation derived from these sources, it would be ungrateful not to add those which spring from our present fortunate condition. Though not altogether exempt from embarrassments that disturb our tranquillity at home and threaten it abroad, yet in all

the attributes of a great, happy and flourishing people we stand without a parallel in the world. Abroad, we enjoy the respect, and, with scarcely an exception, the friendship of every nation; at home, while our government quietly, but efficiently performs the sole legitimate end of political institutions, in doing the greatest good to the greatest number, we present an aggregate of human prosperity surely not elsewhere to be found.

How imperious, then, is the obligation imposed upon every citizen, in his own sphere of action, whether limited or extended, to exert himself in perpetuating a condition of things so singularly happy. All the lessons of history and experience must be lost upon us, if we are content to trust alone to the peculiar advantages we happen to possess. Position and climate, and the bounteous resources that nature has scattered with so liberal a hand—even the diffused intelligence and elevated character of our people—will avail us nothing, if we fail sacredly to uphold those political institutions that were wisely and deliberately formed, with reference to every circumstance that could preserve, or might endanger the blessings we enjoy. The thoughtful framers of our constitution legislated for our country as they found it. Looking upon it with the eyes of statesmen and of patriots, they saw all the sources of rapid and wonderful prosperity; but they saw, also, that various habits, opinions, and institutions, peculiar to the various portions of so vast a region, were deeply fixed. Distinct sovereignties were in actual existence, whose cordial union was essential to the welfare and happiness of all. Between many of them there was, at least to some extent, a real diversity of interests, liable to be exaggerated through sinister designs; they differed in size, in population, in wealth, and in actual and prospective resources and power; they varied in the character of their industry and staple productions; and in some existed domestic institutions, which, unwisely disturbed, might endanger the harmony of the whole. Most carefully were all these circumstances weighed, and the foundation of the government laid upon principles of mutual concession and equitable compromise. The jealousies which the smaller states might

entertain of the power of the rest, were allayed by a rule of representation, confessedly unequal at the time, and designed forever to remain so. A natural fear that the broad scope of general legislation might bear upon and unwisely control particular interests, was counteracted by limits strictly drawn around the action of the federal authority; and to the people and the states was left unimpaired their sovereign power over the innumerable subjects embraced in the internal government of a just republic, excepting such only as necessarily appertain to the concerns of the whole confederacy, or its intercourse, as a united community, with the other nations of the world.

This provident forecast has been verified by time. Half a century, teeming with extraordinary events, and elsewhere producing astonishing results, has passed along; but on our institutions it has left no injurious mark. From a small community, we have risen to a people powerful in numbers and in strength; but with our increase has gone hand in hand the progress of just principle; the privileges, civil and religious, of the humblest individual are sacredly protected at home; and while the valor and fortitude of our people have removed far from us the slightest apprehension of foreign power, they have not yet induced us, in a single instance, to forget what is right. Our commerce has been extended to the remotest nations; the value, and even nature of the productions has been greatly changed; a wide difference has arisen in the relative wealth and resources of every portion of our country; yet the spirit of mutual regard and of faithful adherence to existing compacts, has continued to prevail in our councils, and never long been absent from our conduct. We have learned by experience a fruitful lesson; that an implicit and undeviating adherence to the principles on which we set out can carry us prosperously onward through all the conflicts of circumstances, and the vicissitudes inseparable from the lapse of years.

The success that has thus attended our great experiment is, in itself, sufficient cause for gratitude, on account of the happiness it has actually conferred, and the example it has unanswerably given. But to me, my fellow-citizens, looking forward to the far-distant future, with ardent prayers and confiding hopes, this retrospect pre-

sents a ground for still deeper delight. It impresses on my mind a firm belief that the perpetuity of our institutions depends upon themselves; that, if we maintain the principles on which they were established, they are destined to confer their benefits on countless generations yet to come, and that America will present to every friend of mankind the cheering proof, that a popular government, wisely formed, is wanting in no element of endurance or strength. Fifty years ago its rapid failure was predicted. Latent and uncontrollable causes of dissolution were supposed to exist, even by the wise and good; and not only did unfriendly or speculative theorists anticipate for us the fate of past republics, but the fear of many an honest patriot overbalanced his sanguine hopes. Look back on these forebodings, not hastily, but reluctantly made, and see how, in every instance, they have completely failed.

An imperfect experience, during the struggles of the revolution, was supposed to warrant the belief that the people would not bear the taxation requisite to the discharge of an immense public debt already incurred, and to defray the necessary expenses of government. The cost of two wars has been paid, not only without a murmur, but with unequalled alacrity. No one is now left to doubt that every burden will be cheerfully borne that may be necessary to sustain our civil institutions, or guard our honor or our welfare. Indeed, all experience has shown that the willingness of the people to contribute to these ends, in cases of emergency, has uniformly outrun the confidence of their representatives.

In the early stages of the new government, when all felt the imposing influence, as they recognised the unequalled services of the first President, it was a common sentiment, that the great weight of his character could alone bind the discordant materials of our government together, and save us from the violence of contending factions. Since his death, nearly forty years are gone. Party exasperation has been often carried to its highest point: the virtue and fortitude of the people have sometimes been greatly tried; but our system, purified and enhanced in value by all it has encountered, still pre-

serves its spirit of free and fearless discussion, blended with unimpaired fraternal feeling.

The capacity of the people for self-government, and their willingness, from a high sense of duty, and without those exhibitions of coercive power so generally employed in other countries, to submit to all needful restraints and exactions of the municipal law, have also been favorably exemplified in the history of the American states. Occasionally, it is true, the ardor of public sentiment, outrunning the regular process of the judicial tribunals, or seeking to reach cases not denounced as criminal by the existing law, has displayed itself in a manner calculated to give pain to the friends of free government, and to encourage the hopes of those who wish for its overthrow. These occurrences, however, have been less frequent in our country than any other of equal population on the globe; and with the diffusion of intelligence, it may well be hoped that they will constantly diminish in frequency and violence. The generous patriotism and sound common sense of the great mass of our fellow-citizens, will assuredly, in time, produce this result; for as every assumption of illegal power not only wounds the majesty of the law, but furnishes a pretext for abridging the liberties of the people, the latter have the most direct and permanent interest in preserving the great landmarks of social order, and maintaining, on all occasions, the inviolability of those constitutional and legal provisions which they themselves have made.

In a supposed unfitness of our institutions for those hostile emergencies which no country can always avoid, their friends found a fruitful source of apprehension; their enemies, of hope. While they foresaw less promptness of action than in governments differently formed, they overlooked the far more important considerations, that with us war could never be the result of individual or irresponsible will, but must be a measure of redress for injuries sustained, voluntarily resorted to by those who were to bear the necessary sacrifice, who would consequently feel an individual interest in the contest, and whose energy would be commensurate with the difficulties to be encountered. Actual events have proved their

error; the last war, far from impairing, gave new confidence to our government; and amid recent apprehensions of a similar conflict, we saw that the energies of our country would not be wanting in ample season to vindicate its rights. We may not possess, as we should not desire to possess, the extended and ever-ready military organization of other nations; we may occasionally suffer in the outset for the want of it, but, among ourselves, all doubt upon this great point has ceased, while a salutary experience will prevent a contrary opinion from inviting aggression from abroad.

Certain danger was foretold from the extension of our territory, the multiplication of states, and the increase of population. Our system was supposed to be adapted only to boundaries comparatively narrow. These have been widened beyond conjecture; the members of our confederacy are already doubled; and the numbers of our people are incredibly augmented. The alleged causes of danger have long surpassed anticipation, but none of the consequences have followed. The power and influence of the republic have risen to a height obvious to all mankind; respect for its authority was not more apparent at its ancient than it is at its present limits; new and inexhaustible sources of general prosperity have been opened; the effects of distance have been averted by the inventive genius of our people, developed and fostered by the spirit of our institutions; and the large variety and amount of interests, productions, and pursuits, have strengthened the chain of mutual dependence, and formed a circle of mutual benefits, too apparent ever to be overlooked.

In justly balancing the powers of the federal and state authorities, difficulties nearly insurmountable arose at the outset, and subsequent collisions were deemed inevitable. Amid these, it was scarcely believed possible that a scheme of government, so complex in construction, could remain uninjured. From time to time, embarrassments have certainly occurred; but how just is the confidence of future safety imparted by the knowledge that each in succession has been happily removed. Overlooking partial and temporary evils as inseparable from the practical operation of all human institutions, and looking only to

the general result, every patriot has reason to be satisfied. While the federal government has successfully performed its appropriate functions in relation to foreign affairs, and concerns evidently national, that of every state has remarkably improved in protecting and developing local interests and individual welfare ; and if the vibrations of authority have occasionally tended too much towards one or other, it is unquestionably certain that the ultimate operation of the entire system has been to strengthen all the existing institutions, and to elevate our whole country in prosperity and renown.

The last, perhaps the greatest, of the prominent sources of discord and disaster supposed to lurk in our political condition, was the institution of domestic slavery. Our forefathers were deeply impressed with the delicacy of this subject, and they treated it with a forbearance so evidently wise, that, in spite of every sinister foreboding, it never, until the present period, disturbed the tranquillity of our common country. Such a result is sufficient evidence of the justice and patriotism of their course ; it is evidence not to be mistaken, that an adherence to it can prevent all embarrassment from this, as well as every other anticipated cause of difficulty or danger. Have not recent events made it obvious to the slightest reflection, that the least deviation from this spirit of forbearance is injurious to every interest, that of humanity included ?

Amidst the violence of excited passions, this generous and fraternal feeling has been sometimes disregarded ; and standing as I now do before my countrymen, in this high place of honor and trust, I cannot refrain from anxiously invoking my fellow-citizens never to be deaf to its dictates. Perceiving, before my election, the deep interest this subject was beginning to excite, I believed it a solemn duty fully to make known my sentiments in regard to it ; and now, when every motive for misrepresentation has passed away, I trust that they will be candidly weighed and understood. At least, they will be my standard of conduct in the path before me. I then declared that, if the desire of those of my countrymen who were favorable to my election was gratified, "I must go into the presidential chair the inflexible and uncompromising

opponent of every attempt, on the part of Congress, to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, against the wishes of the slaveholding states; and also with a determination, equally decided, to resist the slightest interference with it in the states where it exists." I submitted also to my fellow-citizens, with fulness and frankness, the reasons which led me to this determination. The result authorizes me to believe that they have been approved, and are confided in, by a majority of the people of the United States, including those whom they most immediately affect. It now only remains to add, that no bill conflicting with these views can ever receive my constitutional sanction. These opinions have been adopted in the firm belief that they are in accordance with the spirit that actuated the venerated fathers of the republic, and that succeeding experience has proved them to be humane, patriotic, expedient, honorable and just. If the agitation of this subject was intended to reach the stability of our institutions, enough has occurred to show that it has signally failed; and that in this, as in every other instance, the apprehensions of the timid and the hopes of the wicked, for the destruction of our government, are again destined to be disappointed. Here and there, indeed, scenes of dangerous excitement have occurred; terrifying instances of local violence have been witnessed; and a reckless disregard of the consequences of their conduct has exposed individuals to popular indignation; but neither masses of the people nor sections of the country have swerved from their devotion to the bond of union, and the principles it has made sacred. It will be ever thus. Such attempts at agitation may periodically return, but with each the object will be better understood. That predominating affection for our political system which prevails throughout our territorial limits; that calm and enlightened judgment which ultimately governs our people as one vast body, will always be at hand to resist and control every effort, foreign or domestic, which aims or would lead to overthrow our institutions.

What can be more gratifying than such a retrospect as this! We look back on obstacles avoided and dangers overcome; on expectations more than realized, and pros-

perity perfectly secured. To the hopes of the hostile, the fears of the timid, and the doubts of the anxious, actual experience has given the conclusive reply. We have seen time gradually dispel every unfavorable foreboding, and our constitution surmount every adverse circumstance, dreaded at the outset as beyond control. Present excitement will, at all times, magnify present dangers; but true philosophy must teach us that none more threatening than the past can remain to be overcome; and we ought, for we have just reason, to entertain an abiding confidence in the stability of our institutions, and an entire conviction that if administered in the true form, character, and spirit in which they were established, they are abundantly adequate to preserve to us and our children the rich blessings already derived from them; to make our beloved land, for a thousand generations, that chosen spot where happiness springs from a perfect equality of political rights.

For myself, therefore, I desire to declare, that the principle that will govern me in the high duty to which my country calls me, is a strict adherence to the letter and spirit of the constitution, as it was designed by those who framed it. Looking back to it as a sacred instrument, carefully and not easily framed; remembering that it was throughout a work of concession and compromise; viewing it as limited to national objects; regarding it as leaving to the people and the states all power not explicitly parted with, I shall endeavor to preserve, protect and defend it, by anxiously referring to its provisions for direction in every action. To matters of domestic concernment which it has entrusted to the federal government, and to such as relate to our intercourse with foreign nations, I shall zealously devote myself; beyond those limits I shall never pass.

To enter, on this occasion, into a further or more minute exposition of my views on the various questions of domestic policy, would be as obtrusive as it is probably unexpected. Before the suffrages of my countrymen were conferred upon me, I submitted to them, with great precision, my opinions on all the most prominent of these

subjects. Those opinions I shall endeavor to carry out with the utmost of my ability.

Our course of foreign policy has been so uniform and intelligible, as to constitute a rule of executive conduct which leaves little to my discretion, unless, indeed, I were willing to run counter to the lights of experience, and the known opinions of my constituents. We sedulously cultivate the friendship of all nations, as the condition most compatible with our welfare, and the principles of our government. We decline alliances, as adverse to our peace. We desire commercial relations on equal terms, being ever willing to give a fair equivalent for advantages received. We endeavor to conduct our intercourse with openness and sincerity, promptly avowing our objects, and seeking to establish that mutual frankness which is as beneficial in the dealings of nations as of men. We have no disposition, and we disclaim all right, to meddle in disputes, whether internal or foreign, that may molest other countries; regarding them in their actual state, as social communities. Well knowing the tried valor of our people, and our exhaustless resources, we neither anticipate nor fear any designed aggression; and in the consciousness of our own just conduct, we feel a security that we shall never be called upon to exert our determination, never to permit an invasion of our rights, without punishment or redress.

In approaching, then, in the presence of my assembled countrymen, to make the solemn promise that yet remains, and to pledge myself that I will faithfully execute the office I am about to fill, I bring with me a settled purpose to maintain the institutions of my country, which, I trust, will atone for the errors I commit.

In receiving from the people the sacred trust twice confided to my illustrious predecessor, and which he has discharged so faithfully and so well, I know that I cannot expect to perform the arduous task with equal ability and success. But, united as I have been in his counsels, a daily witness of his exclusive and unsurpassed devotion to his country's welfare, agreeing with him in sentiments which his countrymen have warmly supported, and per-

nitted to partake largely of his confidence, I may hope that somewhat of the same cheering approbation will be found to attend upon my path. For him, I but express, with my own, the wishes of all, that he may yet long live to enjoy the brilliant evening of his well-spent life; and for myself, conscious of but one desire, faithfully to serve my country, I throw myself, without fear, on its justice and kindness. Beyond that, I only look to the gracious protection of that Divine Being whose strengthening support I humbly solicit, and whom I fervently pray to look down upon us all. May it be among the dispensations of his providence to bless our beloved country with honors and with length of days; may her ways be ways of pleasantness, and all her paths be peace.

VAN BUREN'S FIRST ANNUAL MESSAGE,

DECEMBER 4, 1837.

*To the Senate,
and House of Representatives :*

WE have reason to renew the expression of our devout gratitude to the Giver of all good for his benign protection. Our country presents on every side the evidences of that continued favor under whose auspices it has gradually risen from a few feeble and dependent colonies to a prosperous and powerful confederacy. We are blessed with domestic tranquillity and all the elements of national prosperity. The pestilence which, invading for a time some flourishing portions of the Union, interrupted the general prevalence of unusual health, has happily been limited in extent, and arrested in its fatal career. The industry and prudence of our citizens are gradually relieving them from the pecuniary embarrassments under which portions of them have labored; judicious legislation, and the natural and boundless resources of the country, have afforded wise and timely aid to private enterprise; and the activity always characteristic of our people has already in a great degree resumed its usual and profitable channels.

The condition of our foreign relations has not materially changed since the last annual message of my predecessor. We remain in peace with all nations; and no efforts on my part, consistent with the preservation of our rights and the honor of our country, shall be spared to maintain a position so consonant to our institutions. We have faithfully sustained the foreign policy with which the United States, under the guidance of their first President, took their stand in the family of nations—that of regulating their intercourse with other powers by the approved principles of private life; asking and according equal rights and equal privileges; rendering and demanding justice in all cases; advancing their own and discussing the pretensions of others, with candor, directness and sincerity; appealing at all times to reason, but never yielding to force, nor seeking to acquire anything for themselves by its exercise.

A rigid adherence to this policy has left this government with scarcely a claim upon its justice for injuries arising from acts committed by its authority. The most imposing and perplexing of those of the United States upon foreign governments, for aggressions upon our citizens, were disposed of by my predecessor. Independently of the benefits conferred upon our citizens, by restoring to the mercantile community so many millions of which they had been wrongfully divested, a great service was also rendered to his country by the satisfactory adjustment of so many ancient and irritating subjects of contention; and it reflects no ordinary credit on his successful administration of public affairs, that this great object was accomplished without compromising, on any occasion, either the honor or the peace of the nation.

With European powers, no new subjects of difficulty have arisen; and those which were under discussion, although not terminated, do not present a more unfavorable aspect for the future preservation of that good understanding which it has ever been our desire to cultivate.

Of pending questions, the most important is that which exists with the government of Great Britain, in respect to our north-eastern boundary. It is with unfeigned regret that the people of the United States must look back upon

the abortive efforts made by the executive, for a period of more than half a century, to determine, what no nation should suffer long to remain in dispute, the true line which divides its possessions from those of other powers. The nature of the settlement on the borders of the United States, and of the neighboring territory, was for a season such, that this perhaps was not indispensable to a faithful performance of the duties of the federal government.

Time has, however, changed this state of things; and has brought about a condition of affairs, in which the true interests of both countries imperatively require that this question should be put at rest. It is not to be disguised, that with full confidence, often expressed, in the desire of the British government to terminate it, we are apparently as far from its adjustment as we were at the time of signing the treaty of peace in 1783. The sole result of long-pending negotiations, and a perplexing arbitration, appears to be a conviction, on its part, that a conventional line must be adopted, from the impossibility of ascertaining the true one according to the description contained in that treaty. Without coinciding in this opinion, which is not thought to be well founded, my predecessor gave the strongest proof of the earnest desire of the United States to terminate satisfactorily this dispute, by proposing the substitution of a conventional line, if the consent of the states interested in the question could be obtained.

To this proposition, no answer has yet been received. The attention of the British government, however, has been earnestly invited to the subject, and its reply cannot, I am confident, be much longer delayed. The general relations between Great Britain and the United States are of the most friendly character, and I am well satisfied of the sincere disposition of that government to maintain them upon their present footing. This disposition has also, I am persuaded, become more general with the people of England than at any previous period. It is scarcely necessary to say to you, how cordially it is reciprocated by the government and the people of the United States. The conviction, which must be common to all, of the injurious consequences that result from keeping open this

irritating question, and the certainty that its final settlement cannot be much longer deferred, will, I trust, lead to an early and satisfactory adjustment. At your last session I laid before you the recent communications between the two governments, and between this government and that of the state of Maine, in whose solicitude concerning a subject in which she has so deep an interest, every portion of the Union participates.

The feelings produced by a temporary interruption of those harmonious relations between France and the United States, which are due as well to the recollections of former times as to a correct appreciation of existing interests, have been happily succeeded by a cordial disposition on both sides to cultivate an active friendship in their future intercourse. The opinion, undoubtedly correct, and steadily entertained by us, that the commercial relations at present existing between the two countries, are susceptible of great and reciprocally beneficial improvements, is obviously gaining ground in France: and I am assured of the disposition of that government to favor the accomplishment of such an object. This disposition shall be met in a proper spirit on our part. The few and comparatively unimportant questions that remain to be adjusted between us, can, I have no doubt, be settled with entire satisfaction, and without difficulty.

Between Russia and the United States sentiments of good-will continue to be mutually cherished. Our minister recently accredited to that court, has been received with a frankness and cordiality, and with evidences of respect for his country, which leave us no room to doubt the preservation, in future, of those amicable and liberal relations which have so long and so uninterruptedly existed between the two countries. On the few subjects under discussion between us, an early and just decision is confidently anticipated.

A correspondence has been opened with the government of Austria, for the establishment of diplomatic relations, in conformity with the wishes of Congress, as indicated by an appropriation act of the session of 1837, and arrangements made for the purpose, which will be duly carried into effect.

With Austria and Prussia, and with the states of the German empire, now composing with the latter the Commercial League, our political relations are of the most friendly character, while our commercial intercourse is gradually extending, with benefit to all who are engaged in it.

Civil war yet rages in Spain, producing intense suffering to its own people, and to other nations inconvenience and regret. Our citizens who have claims upon that country will be prejudiced for a time by the condition of its treasury, the inevitable consequence of long-continued and exhausting internal wars. The last instalment of the interest of the debt due under the convention with the queen of Spain has not been paid; and similar failures may be expected to happen until a portion of the resources of her kingdom can be devoted to the extinguishment of its foreign debt.

Having received satisfactory evidence that discriminating tonnage duties were charged upon vessels of the United States in the ports of Portugal, a proclamation was issued on the 11th day of October last, in compliance with the act of May 25th, 1832, declaring that fact, and the duties on foreign tonnage, which were levied upon Portuguese vessels in the United States, previously to the passage of that act, are accordingly revived.

The act of July 4th, 1836, suspending the discriminating duties upon the produce of Portugal imported into this country in Portuguese vessels, was passed, upon the application of that government, through its representative here, under the belief that no similar discrimination existed in Portugal to the prejudice of the United States. I regret to state that such duties are now exacted in that country upon the cargoes of American vessels; and as the act referred to vests no discretion in the executive, it is for Congress to determine upon the expediency of further legislation upon the subject. Against these discriminations, affecting the vessels of this country and their cargoes, seasonable remonstrance was made, and notice was given to the Portuguese government that unless they should be discontinued, the adoption of countervailing measures on the part of the United States would become

necessary ; but the reply of that government, received at the department of state, through our charge d'affaires at Lisbon, in the month of September last, afforded no ground to hope for the abandonment of a system so little in harmony with the treatment shown to the vessels of Portugal and their cargoes, in the ports of this country, and so contrary to the expectations we had a right to entertain.

With Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Naples, and Belgium, a friendly intercourse has been uninterruptedly maintained.

With the government of the Ottoman Porte, and its dependencies on the coast of the Mediterranean, peace and good-will are carefully cultivated, and have been fostered by such good offices as the relative distance and the condition of those countries would permit.

Our commerce with Greece is carried on under the laws of the two governments, reciprocally beneficial to the navigating interests of both ; and I have reason to look forward to the adoption of other measures which will be more extensively and permanently advantageous.

Copies of the treaties concluded with the governments of Siam and Muscat are transmitted for the information of Congress, the ratifications having been received, and the treaties made public, since the close of the last annual session. Already have we reason to congratulate ourselves on the prospect of considerable commercial benefit ; and we have, besides, received from the Sultan of Muscat, prompt evidence of his desire to cultivate the most friendly feelings, by liberal acts towards one of our vessels, bestowed in a manner so striking as to require on our part a grateful acknowledgment.

Our commerce with the island of Cuba and Porto Rico, still labors under heavy restrictions, the continuance of which is a subject of regret. The only effect of an adherence to them will be to benefit the navigation of other countries, at the expense both of the United States and Spain.

The independent nations of this continent have, ever since they emerged from the colonial state, experienced severe trials in their progress to the permanent establish-

ment of liberal political institutions. Their unsettled condition not only interrupts their own advances to prosperity, but has often seriously injured the other powers of the world. The claims of our citizens upon Peru, Chili, Brazil, the Argentine Republic, the governments formed out of the Republics of Colombia and Mexico, are still pending, although many of them have been presented for examination more than twenty years. New Grenada, Venezuela, and Ecuador, have recently formed a convention for the purpose of ascertaining and adjusting the claims upon the republic of Colombia, from which it is earnestly hoped our citizens will, ere long, receive full compensation for the injuries originally inflicted upon them, and for the delay in affording it.

An advantageous treaty of commerce has been concluded by the United States with the Peru-Bolivian Confederation, which wants only the ratification of that government. The progress of a subsequent negotiation for the settlement of claims upon Peru, has been unfavorably affected by the war between that power and Chili, and the Argentine Republic; and the same event is likely to produce delays in the settlement of our demands on those powers.

The aggravating circumstances connected with our claims upon Mexico, and a variety of events touching the honor and integrity of our government, led my predecessor to make, at the second session of the last Congress, a special recommendation of the course to be pursued to obtain a speedy and final satisfaction of the injuries complained of by this government and by our citizens. He recommended a final demand of redress, with a contingent authority to the executive to make reprisals, if that demand should be made in vain. From the proceedings of Congress on that recommendation, it appeared that the opinion of both branches of the legislature coincided with that of the executive, that any mode of redress known to the law of nations might justifiably be used. It was obvious, too, that Congress believed, with the President, that another demand should be made, in order to give undeniable and satisfactory proof of our desire to avoid extremities with a neighboring power; but that there

was an indisposition to vest a discretionary authority in the executive to take redress, should it unfortunately be either denied or unreasonably delayed by the Mexican government.

So soon as the necessary documents were prepared, after entering upon the duties of my office, a special messenger was sent to Mexico, to make a final demand of redress, with the documents required by the provisions of our treaty. The demand was made on the 20th of July last. The reply, which bears date the 29th of the same month, contains assurances of a desire on the part of that government to give a prompt and explicit answer respecting each of the complaints, but that the examination of them would necessarily be deliberate; that in this examination it would be guided by the principles of public law and the obligation of treaties; that nothing should be left undone that might lead to the most equitable adjustment of our demands; and that its determination in respect to each case, should be communicated through the Mexican minister here.

Since that time, an envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary has been accredited to this government by that of the Mexican republic. He brought with him assurances of a sincere desire that the pending differences between the two governments should be terminated in a manner satisfactory to both. He was received with reciprocal assurances, and a hope was entertained that his mission would lead to a speedy, satisfactory, and final adjustment of all existing subjects of complaint. A sincere believer in the wisdom of the pacific policy by which the United States have always been governed in their intercourse with foreign nations, it was my particular desire, from the proximity of the Mexican republic, and well-known occurrences on our frontier, to be instrumental in obviating all existing difficulties with that government, and in restoring to the intercourse between the two republics, that liberal and friendly character by which they should always be distinguished. I regret, therefore, the more deeply, to have found in the recent communications of that government, so little reason to hope that any efforts of mine for the accomplishment of those desirable objects would be successful.

Although the larger number, and many of them aggravated cases of personal wrongs have been now for years before the Mexican government, and some of the causes of national complaint, and those of the most offensive character, admitted of immediate, simple and satisfactory replies, it is only within a few days past that any specific communication in answer to our last demand, made five months ago, has been received from the Mexican minister. By the report of the secretary of state, herewith presented, and the accompanying documents, it will be seen that for not one of our public complaints has satisfaction been given or offered; that but one of the causes of personal wrong has been favorably considered; and that but four cases of both descriptions, out of all those formally presented, and earnestly pressed, have as yet been decided upon by the Mexican government.

Not perceiving in what manner any of the powers given to the executive alone, could be further usefully employed in bringing this unfortunate controversy to a satisfactory termination, the subject was, by my predecessor, referred to Congress, as one calling for its interposition. In accordance with the clearly understood wishes of the legislature, another and formal demand for satisfaction has been made upon the Mexican government; with what success the documents now communicated will show. On a careful and deliberate examination of their contents, and considering the spirit manifested by the Mexican government, it has become my painful duty to return the subject, as it now stands, to Congress, to whom it belongs to decide upon the time, the mode, and the measures of redress. Whatever may be your decision, it shall be faithfully executed, confident that it will be characterized by that moderation and *jus ice* which will, I trust, under all circumstances, govern the councils of our country.

The balance in the treasury on the first day of January, 1837, was forty-five millions, nine hundred and sixty-eight thousand, five hundred and twenty-three dollars. The receipts during the present year from all sources, including the amount of treasury notes issued, are estimated at twenty-three millions, four hundred and ninety-nine thousand, nine hundred and eighty-one dollars, constitu-

ting an aggregate of sixty-nine millions, four hundred and sixty-eight thousand, five hundred and four dollars. Of this amount, about thirty-five millions, two hundred and eighty-one thousand, three hundred and sixty-one dollars, will have been expended, at the end of the year, on appropriations made by Congress; and the residue, amounting to thirty-four millions, one hundred and eighty-seven thousand, one hundred and forty-three dollars, will be the nominal balance in the treasury on the first of January next. But of that sum, only one million, eighty-five thousand, four hundred and ninety-eight dollars, is considered as immediately available for, and applicable to, public purposes.

Those portions of it which will be for some time unavailable, consist chiefly of sums deposited with the states, and due from the former deposit banks. The details upon this subject will be found in the annual report of the secretary of the treasury. The amount of treasury notes which it will be necessary to issue during the year, on account of those funds being unavailable, will, it is supposed, not exceed four and a half millions. It seemed proper, in the condition of the country, to have the estimates on all subjects made as low as practicable, without prejudice to any great public measures. The departments were, therefore, desired to prepare their estimates accordingly; and I am happy to find that they have been able to graduate them on so economical a scale.

In the great and often unexpected fluctuations to which the revenue is subjected, it is not possible to compute the receipts beforehand with great certainty; but should they not differ essentially from present anticipations, and should the appropriations not much exceed the estimates, no difficulty seems likely to happen in defraying the current expenses with promptitude and fidelity.

Notwithstanding the great embarrassments which have recently occurred in commercial affairs, and the liberal indulgence which, in consequence of those embarrassments, has been extended to both the merchants and the banks, it is gratifying to be able to anticipate that the treasury notes, which have been issued during the present year will be redeemed and that the resources of the

treasury, without any resort to loans or increased taxes, will prove ample for defraying all charges imposed on it during 1838.

The report of the secretary of the treasury will afford you a more minute exposition of all matters connected with the administration of the finances during the current year; a period which, for the amount of public moneys disbursed and deposited with the states, as well as the financial difficulties encountered and overcome, has few parallels in our history.

Your attention was, at the last session, invited to the necessity of additional legislative provisions in respect to the collection, safe-keeping, and transfer of the public money. No law having been then matured, and not understanding the proceedings of Congress as intended to be final, it becomes my duty again to bring the subject to your notice.

On that occasion, three modes of performing this branch of the public service were presented for consideration. These were, the creation of a national bank; the revival, with modifications, of the deposit system established by the act of the 23d June, 1836, permitting the use of the public moneys by the banks; and the discontinuance of the use of such institutions for the purposes referred to, with suitable provisions for their accomplishment through the agency of public officers. Considering the opinions of both houses of Congress on the two first propositions as expressed in the negative, in which I entirely concur, it is unnecessary for me again to recur to them. In respect to the last, you have had an opportunity, since your adjournment, not only to test still further the expediency of the measure, by the continued practical operation of such parts of it as are now in force, but also to discover—what should ever be sought for and regarded with the utmost deference—the opinions and wishes of the people.

The national will is the supreme law of the republic, and, on all subjects within the limits of its constitutional powers, should be faithfully obeyed by the public servant. Since the measure in question was submitted to your consideration, most of you have enjoyed the advantage of

personal communication with your constituents. For one state only has an election been held for the federal government; but the early day at which it took place, deprives the measure under consideration of much of the support it might otherwise have derived from the result. Local elections for state officers have, however, been held in several of the states, at which the expediency of the plan proposed by the executive has been more or less discussed. You will, I am confident, yield to their results the respect due to every expression of the public voice. Desiring, however, to arrive at truth and a just view of the subject in all its bearings, you will at the same time remember, that questions of far deeper and more immediate local interest than the fiscal plans of the national treasury were involved in those elections.

Above all, we cannot overlook the striking fact, that there were, at the time, in those states, more than one hundred and sixty millions of bank capital, of which large portions were subject to actual forfeiture—other large portions upheld only by special and limited legislative indulgences—and most of it, if not all, to a greater or less extent, dependent for a continuance of its corporate existence upon the will of the state legislatures to be then chosen. Apprised of this circumstance, you will judge whether it is not most probable that the peculiar condition of that vast interest in these respects, the extent to which it has been spread through all the ramifications of society, its direct connection with the then pending elections, and the feelings it was calculated to infuse into the canvass, have not exercised a far greater influence over the result than any which could possibly have been produced by a conflict of opinion in respect to a question in the administration of the general government, more remote and far less important in its bearings upon that interest.

I have found no reason to change my own opinion as to the expediency of adopting the system proposed, being perfectly satisfied that there will be neither stability nor safety, either in the fiscal affairs of the government, or in the pecuniary transactions of individuals and corporations, so long as a connection exists between them which, like

the past, offers such strong inducements to make them the subjects of political agitation. Indeed, I am more than ever convinced of the dangers to which the free and unbiassed exercise of political opinion—the only sure foundation and safeguard of republican government—would be exposed by any further increase of the already overgrown influence of corporate authorities. I cannot, therefore, consistently with my views of duty, advise a renewal of a connection which circumstances have dissolved.

The discontinuance of the use of state banks for fiscal purposes ought not to be regarded as a measure of hostility towards these institutions. Banks, properly established and conducted, are highly useful to the business of the country, and doubtless will continue to exist in the states so long as they conform to their laws, and are found to be safe and beneficial. How they should be created, what privileges they should enjoy, under what responsibilities they should act, and to what restrictions they should be subject, are questions, which, as I observed on a previous occasion, belong to the states to decide. Upon their rights, or the exercise of them, the general government can have no motive to encroach. Its duty toward them is well performed, when it refrains from legislating for their special benefit, because such legislation would violate the spirit of the constitution, and be unjust to other interests; when it takes no steps to impair their usefulness, but so manages its own affairs as to make it the interest of those institutions to strengthen and improve their condition for the security and welfare of the community at large. They have no right to insist on a connection with the federal government, nor on the use of the public money for their own benefit.

The object of the measure under consideration is, to avoid for the future a compulsory connection of this kind. It proposes to place the general government, in regard to the essential points of the collection, safe-keeping and transfer of the public money, in a situation which shall relieve it from all dependence on the will of irresponsible individuals or corporations; to withdraw those moneys from the uses of private trade, and confine them to against

constitutionally selected and controlled by law ; to abstain from improper interference with the industry of the people, and withhold inducements to improvident dealings on the part of individuals ; to give stability to the concerns of the treasury ; to preserve the measures of the government from the unavoidable reproaches that flow from such a connection, and the banks themselves from the injurious effects of a supposed participation in the political conflicts of the day, from which they will otherwise find it difficult to escape.

These are my views upon this important subject formed after careful reflection, and with no desire but to arrive at what is most likely to promote the public interest. They are now, as they were before, submitted with an unfeigned deference for the opinions of others. It was hardly to be hoped that changes so important, on a subject so interesting, could be made without producing a serious diversity of opinion ; but so long as those conflicting views are kept above the influence of individual or local interests ; so long as they pursue only the general good, and are discussed with moderation and candor, such diversity is a benefit, not an injury. If a majority of Congress see the public welfare in a different light ; and more especially if they should be satisfied that the measure proposed would not be acceptable to the people ; I shall look to their wisdom to substitute such as may be more conducive to the one, and more satisfactory to the other. In any event, they may confidently rely on my hearty co-operation to the fullest extent which my views of the constitution and my sense of duty will permit.

It is obviously important to this branch of the public service, and to the business and quiet of the country, that the whole subject should in some way be settled and regulated by law ; and, if possible, at your present session. Besides the plan above referred to, I am not aware that any one has been suggested, except that of keeping the public money in the state banks, in special deposit. This plan is, to some extent, in accordance with the practice of the government, and which, except, perhaps, during the operation of the late deposit act, has always been allowed. even during the existence of a national bank, to make a

temporary use of the state banks, in particular places, for the safe-keeping of portions of the revenue.

This discretionary power might be continued, if Congress deem it desirable, whatever general system may be adopted. So long as the connection is voluntary, we need perhaps anticipate few of those difficulties, and little of that dependence on the banks, which must attend every such connection when compulsory in its nature, and when so arranged as to make the banks a fixed part of the machinery of government. It is undoubtedly in the power of Congress so to regulate and guard it as to prevent the public money from being applied to the use, or intermingled with the affairs, of individuals. Thus arranged, although it would not give to the government that control over its own funds which I desire to secure to it by the plan I have proposed, it would, it must be admitted, in a great degree, accomplish one of the objects which has recommended that plan to my judgment—the separation of the fiscal concerns of the government from those of individuals or corporations.

With these observations, I recommend the whole matter to your dispassionate reflection; confidently hoping that some conclusion may be reached by your deliberations, which, on the one hand, shall give stability to the fiscal operations of the government, and be consistent, on the other, with the genius of our institutions, and with the interests and wishes of the great mass of our constituents.

It was my hope that nothing would occur to make necessary, on this occasion, any allusion to the late national bank. There are circumstances, however, connected with the present state of its affairs, that bear so directly on the character of the government and the welfare of the citizen, that I should not feel myself excused in neglecting to notice them. The charter which terminated its banking privileges on the fourth of March, 1836, continued its corporate powers two years more, for the sole purpose of closing its affairs, with authority "to use the corporate name, style and capacity, for the purpose of suits, for a final settlement and liquidation of the affairs and acts of the corporation, and for the sale and disposition of their

estate, real, personal and mixed, but for no other purpose or in any other manner whatsoever." Just before the banking privileges ceased, its effects were transferred by the bank to a new state institution, then recently incorporated, in trust, for the discharge of its debts and the settlement of its affairs.

With this trustee, by authority of Congress, an adjustment was subsequently made of the large interest which the government had in the stock of the institution. The manner in which a trust unexpectedly created upon the act granting the charter, and involving such great public interests, has been executed, would, under any circumstances, be a fit subject of inquiry; but much more does it deserve your attention when it embraces the redemption of obligations to which the authority and credit of the United States have given value. The two years allowed are now nearly at an end. It is well understood that the trustee has not redeemed and cancelled the outstanding notes of the bank, but has re-issued, and is continually re-issuing, since the 3d of March, 1836, the notes which have been received by it to a vast amount.

According to its own official statement, so late as the first of October last, nineteen months after the banking privileges given by the charter had expired, it had under its control uncanceled notes of the late Bank of the United States to the amount of twenty seven millions, five hundred and sixty-one thousand, eight hundred and sixty-six dollars, of which six millions, one hundred and seventy-five thousand, eight hundred and sixty-one dollars were in actual circulation, one million, four hundred and sixty-eight thousand, six hundred and twenty-seven dollars at state bank agencies, and three millions, two thousand, three hundred and ninety dollars *in transitu*: thus showing that upwards of ten millions and a half of the notes of the old bank were then still kept outstanding.

The impropriety of this procedure is obvious; it being the duty of the trustee to cancel and not to put forth the notes of an institution, whose concerns it had undertaken to wind up. If the trustee has a right to re-issue these notes now, I can see no reason why he may not continue to do so after the expiration of the two years. As no one

could have anticipated a course so extraordinary, the prohibitory clause of the charter above quoted was not accompanied by any penalty or other special provision for enforcing it; nor have we any general law for the prevention of similar acts in future.

But it is not in this view of the subject alone that your interposition is required. The United States, in settling with the trustee for their stock, have withdrawn their funds from their former direct liability to the creditors of the old bank, yet notes of the institution continue to be sent forth in its name, and apparently upon the authority of the United States. The transactions connected with the employment of the bills of the old bank are of vast extent; and should they result unfortunately, the interests of individuals may be deeply compromised. Without undertaking to decide how far, or in what form, if any, the trustee could be made liable for notes which contain no obligation on his part; or the old bank, for such as are put in circulation after the expiration of its charter, and without its authority; or the government for indemnity in case of loss, the question still presses itself upon your consideration, whether it is consistent with duty and good faith on the part of the government, to witness this proceeding without a single effort to arrest it.

The report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office, which will be laid before you by the secretary of the treasury, will show how the affairs of that office have been conducted for the past year. The disposition of the public lands is one of the most important trusts confided to Congress. The practicability of retaining the title and control of such extensive domains in the general government, and at the same time admitting the territories embracing them into the federal union, as co-equal with the original states, was seriously doubted by many of our wisest statesmen. All feared that they would become a source of discord, and many carried their apprehensions so far as to see in them the seeds of a future dissolution of the confederacy. But happily our experience has already been sufficient to quiet, in a great degree, all such apprehensions. The position at one time assumed—that the admission of new states into the Union on the same

footing with the original states, was incompatible with a right of soil in the United States, and operated as a surrender thereof, notwithstanding the terms of the compacts by which their admission was designed to be regulated—has been wisely abandoned.

Whether in the new or the old states, all now agree that the right of soil to the public lands remains in the federal government, and that these lands constitute a common property, to be disposed of for the common benefit of all the states, old and new. Acquiescence in this just principle by the people of the new states has naturally promoted a disposition to adopt the most liberal policy in the sale of the public lands. A policy which should be limited to the mere object of selling the lands for the greatest possible sum of money, without regard to higher considerations, finds but few advocates. On the contrary, it is generally conceded, that while the mode of disposition adopted by the government should always be a prudent one, yet its leading object ought to be the early settlement and cultivation of the lands sold; and that it should discountenance, if it cannot prevent, the accumulation of large tracts in the same hands, which must necessarily retard the growth of the new states, or entail upon them a dependent territory and its attendant evils.

A question embracing such important interests, and so well calculated to enlist the feelings of the people in every quarter of the Union, has very naturally given rise to numerous plans for the improvement of the existing system. The distinctive features of the policy that has hitherto prevailed, are, to dispose of the public lands at moderate prices, thus enabling a greater number to enter into competition for their purchase, and accomplishing a double object, of promoting their rapid settlement by the purchasers, and at the same time increasing the receipts of the treasury; to sell for cash, thereby preventing the disturbing influence of a large mass of private citizens indebted to the government which they have a voice in controlling; to bring them into the market no faster than good lands are supposed to be wanted for improvements, thereby preventing the accumulation of large tracts in few hands; and to apply the proceeds of the sales to the

general purposes of the government; thus diminishing the amount to be raised from the people of the states by taxation, and giving each state its portion of the benefits to be derived from this common fund in a manner the most quiet, and, at the same time, perhaps, the most equitable that can be devised.

These provisions, with occasional enactments in behalf of special interests deemed entitled to the favor of government, have, in their execution, produced results as beneficial upon the whole as could reasonably be expected in a matter so vast, so complicated, and so exciting. Upwards of seventy millions of acres have been sold, the greater part of which is believed to have been purchased for actual settlement. The population of the new states and territories created out of the public domain, increased, between 1800 and 1830, from less than sixty thousand, to upwards of two millions, three hundred thousand souls, constituting, at the latter period, about one fifth of the whole people of the United States. The increase since, cannot be accurately known, but the whole may now be safely estimated at over three and a half millions of souls; composing nine states, the representatives of which constitute above one third of the Senate, and over one sixth of the House of Representatives of the United States.

Thus has been formed a body of free and independent landholders, with a rapidity unequalled in the history of mankind; and this great result has been produced without leaving anything for future adjustment between the government and its citizens. The system under which so much has been accomplished cannot be intrinsically bad, and with occasional modifications, to correct abuses, and to adapt it to changes of circumstances, may, I think, be safely trusted for the future. There is, in the management of such extensive interests, much virtue in stability; and although great and obvious improvements should not be declined, changes should never be made without the fullest examination, and the clearest demonstration of their practical utility.

In the history of the past, we have an assurance that this safe rule of action will not be departed from in rela-

tion to the public lands ; nor is it believed that any necessity exists for interfering with the fundamental principles of the system, or that the public mind, even in the new states, is desirous of any radical alterations. On the contrary, the general disposition appears to be, to make such modifications and additions only as will more effectually carry out the original policy of filling our new states and territories with an industrious and independent population.

The modification most perseveringly pressed upon Congress, which has occupied so much of its time for years past, and will probably do so for a long time to come, if not sooner satisfactorily adjusted, is a reduction in the cost of such portions of the public lands as are ascertained to be unsaleable at the rate now established by law, and a graduation, according to their relative value, of the prices at which they may hereafter be sold. It is worthy of consideration whether justice may not be done to every interest in this matter, and a vexed question set at rest, perhaps forever, by a reasonable compromise of conflicting opinions. Hitherto, after being offered at public sale, lands have been disposed of at one uniform price, whatever difference there might be in their intrinsic value.

The leading considerations urged in favor of the measure referred to are, that in almost all the land districts, and particularly in those in which the lands have been long surveyed and exposed to sale, there are still remaining numerous and large tracts of every gradation of value, from the government price downward ; that these lands will not be purchased at the government price, so long as better can be conveniently obtained for the same amount ; that there are large tracts which even the improvements of the adjacent lands will never raise to that price ; and that the present uniform price, combined with their irregular value, operates to prevent a desirable compactness of settlement in the new states, and to retard the full development of that wise policy on which our land system is founded, to the injury not only of the several states where the lands lie, but of the United States as a whole.

The remedy proposed has been a reduction in prices,

according to the length of time the lands have been in the market, without reference to any other circumstances. The certainty that the efflux of time would not always in such cases, and perhaps not even generally, furnish a true criterion of value, and the probability that persons residing in the vicinity, as the period for the reduction of prices approached, would postpone purchases they would otherwise make, for the purpose of availing themselves of the lower price, with other considerations of a similar character, have hitherto been successfully urged to defeat the graduation upon time.

May not all reasonable desires upon this subject be satisfied without encountering any of these objections? All will concede the abstract principle, that the price of the public lands should be proportioned to their relative value, so far as that can be accomplished without departing from the rule heretofore observed, requiring fixed prices in cases of private entries. The difficulty of the subject seems to lie in the mode of ascertaining what that value is. Would not the safest plan be that which has been adopted by many of the states as to the basis of taxation—an actual valuation of lands and classification of them into different rates?

Would it not be practicable and expedient to cause the relative value of the public lands in the old districts, which have been for a certain length of time in market, to be appraised and classed into two or more rates below the present minimum price, by the officers now employed in this branch of the public service, or in any other mode deemed preferable, and to make those prices permanent, if upon the coming in of the report they shall prove satisfactory to Congress? Cannot all the objects of graduation be accomplished in this way, and the objections which have hitherto been urged against it, avoided? It would seem to me that such a step, with a restriction of the sales to limited quantities, and for actual improvement, would be free from all just exceptions.

By the full exposition of the value of the lands thus furnished and extensively promulgated, persons living at a distance would be informed of their true condition, and enabled to enter into competition with those residing in

the vicinity; the means of acquiring an independent home would be brought within the reach of many who are unable to purchase at present prices; the population of the new states would be more compact, and large tracts would be sold which would otherwise remain on hand; not only would the land be brought within the means of a large number of purchasers, but many persons possessed of greater means would be content to settle on a larger quantity of the poorer lands, rather than emigrate further west in pursuit of a smaller quantity of better lands.

Such a measure would also seem to be more consistent with the policy of the existing laws—that of converting the public domain into cultivated farms owned by their occupants. That policy is not best promoted by sending emigration up the almost interminable streams of the west, to occupy in groups the best spots of land, leaving immense wastes behind them, and enlarging the frontier beyond the means of the government to afford it adequate protection; but in encouraging it to occupy, with reasonable denseness, the territory over which it advances, and find its best defence in the compact front which it presents to the Indian tribes. Many of you will bring to the consideration of the subject the advantage of local knowledge and greater experience, and all will be desirous of making an early and final disposition of every disturbing question in regard to this important interest. If these suggestions shall in any degree contribute to the accomplishment of so important a result, it will afford me sincere satisfaction.

In some sections of the country most of the public lands have been sold, and the registers and receivers have little to do. It is a subject worthy of inquiry whether, in many cases, two or more districts might not be consolidated, and the number of persons employed in this business considerably reduced. Indeed, the time will come, when it will be the true policy of the general government, as to some of the states, to transfer to them, for a reasonable equivalent, all the refuse and unsold lands, and to withdraw the machinery of the federal land offices altogether. All who take a comprehensive view of our

federal system, and believe that one of its greatest excellencies consists in interfering as little as possible with the internal concerns of the states, look forward with great interest to this result.

A modification of the existing laws in respect to the prices of the public lands, might also have a favorable influence on the legislation of Congress, in relation to another branch of the subject. Many who have not the ability to buy at present prices, settle on those lands, with the hope of acquiring from their cultivation the means of purchasing under pre-emption laws, from time to time passed by Congress. For this encroachment on the rights of the United States, they excuse themselves under the plea of their own necessities; the fact that they dispossess nobody, and only enter upon the waste domain; that they give additional value to the public lands in their vicinity, and their intention ultimately to pay the government prices. So much weight has from time to time been attached to these considerations, that Congress have passed laws giving actual settlers on the public lands a right of pre-emption to the tracts occupied by them, at the minimum price.

These laws have in all instances been retrospective in their operations; but in a few years after their passage, crowds of new settlers have been found on the public lands, for similar reasons, and under like expectations, who have been indulged with the same privilege. This course of legislation tends to impair public respect for the laws of the country. Either the laws to prevent intrusion upon the public lands should be executed, or, if that should be impracticable or inexpedient, they should be modified or repealed. If the public lands are to be considered as open to be occupied by any, they should, by law, be thrown open to all.

That which is intended, in all instances, to be legalized, should at once be made legal, that those who are disposed to conform to the laws, may enjoy at least equal privileges with those who are not. But it is not believed to be the disposition of Congress to open the public lands to occupancy without regular entries and payment of the government price, as such a course must tend to worse

evils than the credit system, which it was found necessary to abolish.

It would seem, therefore, to be the part of wisdom and sound policy to remove, as far as practicable, the causes which produce intrusions upon the public lands, and then take efficient steps to prevent them in future. Would any single measure be so effective in removing all plausible grounds for these intrusions as the graduation of price already suggested? A short period of industry and economy in any part of our country would enable the poorest citizen to accumulate the means to buy him a home at the lowest prices, and leave him without apology for settling on lands not his own. If he did not, under such circumstances, he would enlist no sympathy in his favor; and the laws would be readily executed without doing violence to public opinion.

A large portion of our citizens have seated themselves on the public lands, without authority, since the passage of the last pre-emption law, and now ask the enactment of another, to enable them to retain the lands occupied, upon payment of the minimum government price. They ask that which has been repeatedly granted before. If the future may be judged of by the past, little harm can be done to the interests of the treasury by yielding to their request. Upon a critical examination, it is found that the lands sold at the public sales since the introduction of cash payments in 1820, have produced, on an average, the nett revenue of only six cents on an acre more than the minimum government price. There is no reason to suppose that future sales will be more productive. The government, therefore, has no adequate pecuniary interest to induce it to drive those people from the lands they occupy, for the purpose of selling them to others.

Entertaining these views, I recommend the passage of a pre-emption law for their benefit, in connection with the preparatory steps towards the graduation of the price of the public lands, and farther and more effectual provisions to prevent intrusions hereafter. Indulgence to those who have settled on these lands with expectations that past legislation would be made a rule for the future, and

at the same time removing the most plausible ground on which intrusions are excused, and adopting more efficient means to prevent them hereafter, appears to me the most judicious disposition which can be made of this difficult subject.

The limitations and restrictions to guard against abuses in the execution of the pre-emption law, will necessarily attract the attention of Congress; but under no circumstances is it considered expedient to authorize floating claims in any shape. They have been heretofore, and doubtless would be hereafter, most prolific sources of fraud and oppression, and instead of operating to confer the favor of the government on industrious settlers, are often used only to minister to a spirit of cupidity at the expense of the most meritorious of that class.

The accompanying report of the secretary of war will bring to your view the state of the army, and all the various subjects confided to the superintendence of that officer.

The principal part of the army has been concentrated in Florida, with a view and in the expectation of bringing the war in that territory to a speedy close. The necessity of stripping the posts on the maritime and inland frontiers of their entire garrisons, for the purpose of assembling in the field an army of less than four thousand men, would seem to indicate the necessity of increasing our regular forces; and the superior efficiency as well as greatly diminished expense of that description of troops, recommend this measure as one of economy, as well as of expediency. I refer to the report, for the reasons which have induced the secretary of war to urge the re-organization and enlargement of the staff of the army, and of the ordnance corps, in which I fully concur.

It is not, however, compatible with the interest of the people to maintain, in time of peace, a regular force adequate to the defence of our extensive frontiers. In periods of danger and alarm, we must rely principally upon a well-organized militia; and some general arrangement, that will render this description of force more efficient, has long been a subject of anxious solicitude. It was recommended to the first Congress, by General Washing-

tion, and has since been frequently brought to your notice, and recently its importance strongly urged by my immediate predecessor.

The provision in the constitution that renders it necessary to adopt a uniform system of organization for the militia throughout the United States, presents an insurmountable obstacle to an efficient arrangement by the classification heretofore proposed, and I invite your attention to the plan which will be submitted by the secretary of war, for the organization of the volunteer corps, and the instruction of militia officers, as more simple and practicable, if not equally advantageous, as a general arrangement of the whole militia of the United States.

A moderate increase of the corps both of military and topographical engineers, has been more than once recommended by my predecessor, and my conviction of the propriety, not to say necessity, of the measure, in order to enable them to perform the various and important duties imposed upon them, induces me to repeat the recommendation.

The Military Academy continues to answer all the purposes of its establishment, and not only furnishes well-educated officers of the army, but serves to diffuse throughout the mass of our citizens, individuals possessed of military knowledge, and the scientific attainments of civil and military engineering. At present, the cadet is bound, with the consent of his parents or guardians, to remain in service five years from the period of his enlistment, unless sooner discharged, thus exacting only one year's service in the army after his education is completed. This does not appear to me sufficient. Government ought to command for a longer period the services of those who are educated at the public expense; and I recommend that the term of enlistment be extended to seven years, and the terms of the engagement strictly enforced.

The creation of a national foundry for cannon, to be common to the service of the army and navy of the United States, has been heretofore recommended, and appears to be required, in order to place our ordnance on an equal footing with that of other countries, and to enable that

branch of the service to control the prices of those articles, and graduate the supplies to the wants of the government, as well as to regulate their quality and insure their uniformity.

The same reasons induce me to recommend the erection of a manufactory of gunpowder, to be under the direction of the ordnance office. The establishment of a manufactory of small arms west of the Alleghany mountains, upon the plan proposed by the secretary of war, will contribute to extend throughout that country the improvements which exist in establishments of a similar description in the Atlantic states, and tend to a much more economical distribution of the armament required in the western portion of our Union.

The system of removing the Indians west of the Mississippi, commenced by Mr. Jefferson, in 1804, has been steadily persevered in by every succeeding president and may be considered the settled policy of the country. Unconnected at first with any well-defined system for their improvement, the inducements held out to the Indians were confined to the greater abundance of game to be found in the west; but when the beneficial effects of their removal were made apparent, a more philanthropic and enlightened policy was adopted, in purchasing their lands east of the Mississippi. Liberal prices were given, and provisions inserted in all the treaties with them for the application of the funds they received in exchange, to such purposes as were best calculated to promote their present welfare, and advance their future civilization. These measures have been attended thus far with the happiest results.

It will be seen, by referring to the report of the commissioner of Indian affairs, that the most sanguine expectations of the friends and promoters of this system have been realized. The Choctaws, Cherokees, and other tribes that first emigrated beyond the Mississippi, have, for the most part, abandoned the hunter state, and become cultivators of the soil. The improvement of their condition has been rapid, and it is believed that they are now fitted to enjoy the advantages of a simple form of government, which has been submitted to them and received,

their sanction; and I cannot too strongly urge this subject upon the attention of Congress.

Stipulations have been made with all the Indian tribes to remove them beyond the Mississippi, except with the band of the Wyandotts, the Six Nations, in New York; the Menomonees, Mandans, and Stockbridges, in Wisconsin; and Miamies, in Indiana. With all but the Menomonees, it is expected that arrangements for their emigration will be completed the present year. The resistance which has been opposed to their removal by some tribes, even after treaties had been made with them to that effect, has arisen from various causes, operating differently on each of them.

In most instances they have been instigated to resistance by persons to whom the trade with them and the acquisition of their annuities were important; and in some by the personal influence of interested chiefs. These obstacles must be overcome; for the government cannot relinquish the execution of this policy without sacrificing important interests, and abandoning the tribes remaining east of the Mississippi to certain destruction.

The decrease in numbers of the tribes within the limits of the states and territories has been most rapid. If they be removed, they can be protected from those associations and evil practices which exert so pernicious and destructive an influence over their destinies. They can be induced to labor, and to acquire property, and its acquisition will inspire them with a feeling of independence. Their minds can be cultivated, and they can be taught the value of salutary and uniform laws, and be made sensible of the blessings of free government, and capable of enjoying its advantages.

In the possession of property, knowledge, and a good government, free to give what direction they please to their labor, and sharers in the legislation by which their persons and the profits of their industry are to be protected and secured, they will have an ever-present conviction of the importance of union, of peace among themselves, and of the preservation of amicable relations with us.

The interests of the United States would also be great-

ly promoted by freeing the relations between the general and state governments, from what has proved a most embarrassing incumbrance, by a satisfactory adjustment of conflicting titles to lands, caused by the occupation of the Indians, and by causing the resources of the whole country to be developed by the power of the state and general governments, and improved by the enterprise of a white population.

Intimately connected with this subject is the obligation of the government to fulfil its treaty stipulations, and to protect the Indians thus assembled "at their new residence from all interruptions and disturbances from any other tribes or nations of Indians, or from any other person or persons whatsoever," and the equally solemn obligation to guard from Indian hostilities its own border settlements stretching along a line of more than one thousand miles. To enable the government to redeem their pledge to the Indians, and to afford adequate protection to its own citizens, will require the continual presence of a considerable regular force on the frontiers, and the establishment of a chain of permanent posts. Examinations of the country are now making, with a view to decide on the most suitable points for the erection of fortresses and other works of defence, the results of which will be presented to you by the secretary of war at an early day, together with a plan for the effectual protection of friendly Indians, and the permanent defence of the frontier states.

By the report of the secretary of the navy, herewith communicated, it appears that unremitting exertions have been made at the different navy-yards, to carry into effect all authorized measures for the extension and employment of our naval force. The launching and preparation of the ship of the line *Pennsylvania*, and the complete repairs of the ships of the line *Ohio*, *Delaware*, and *Columbus*, may be noticed, as forming a respectable addition to this important arm of our national defence. Our commerce and navigation have received increased aid and protection during the present year. Our squadrons in the Pacific and on the Brazilian stations have been much increased, and that in the Mediterranean, although

small, is adequate to the present wants of our commerce in that sea. Additions have been made to our squadron on the West India station, where the large force under Commodore Dallas has been most actively and efficiently employed in protecting our commerce, in preventing the importation of slaves, and in co-operating with the officers of the army in carrying on the war in Florida.

The satisfactory condition of our naval force abroad leaves at our disposal the means of conveniently providing for a home squadron, for the protection of commerce upon our extensive coast. The amount of appropriations required for such a squadron will be found in the general estimates for the naval service, for the year 1838.

The naval officers engaged upon our coast survey have rendered important service to our navigation. The discovery of a new channel into the harbor of New York, through which our largest ships may pass without danger, must afford important commercial advantages to that harbor, and add greatly to its value as a naval station. The accurate survey of Georges' shoals, off the coast of Massachusetts, lately completed, will render comparatively safe, a navigation hitherto considered dangerous.

Considerable additions have been made to the number of captains, commanders, lieutenants, surgeons and assistant surgeons in the navy. These additions were rendered necessary, by the increased number of vessels put in commission, to answer the exigencies of our growing commerce.

Your attention is respectfully invited to the various suggestions of the secretary, for the improvement of the naval service.

The report of the postmaster-general exhibits the progress and condition of the mail service. The operations of the post-office department, constitute one of the most active elements of our national prosperity, and it is gratifying to observe with what vigor they are conducted. The mail routes of the United States cover an extent of about one hundred and forty-two thousand, eight hundred and seventy-seven miles, having been increased about thirty-seven thousand one hundred and three miles, within the last two years.

The annual mail transportation on these routes is about 36,228,962 miles, having been increased about 10,359,476 miles within the same period. The number of post-offices has also been increased from 10,770 to 12,099, very few of which receive the mails less than once a week, and a large portion of them daily. Contractors and postmasters in general are represented as attending to their duties with most commendable zeal and fidelity.

The revenue of the department within the year ending on the 30th of June last, was \$4,137,066 59; and its liabilities accruing within the same time, were \$3,380,847 75. The increase of revenue over that of the preceding year, was \$708,166 41.

For many interesting details, I refer you to the report of the postmaster-general, with the accompanying paper. Your particular attention is invited to the necessity of providing a more safe and convenient building for the accommodation of the department

I lay before Congress copies of reports, submitted in pursuance of a call made by me upon the heads of departments, for such suggestions as their experience might enable them to make, as to what further legislative provisions may be advantageously adopted to secure the faithful application of public money to the objects for which they are appropriated; to prevent their misapplication or embezzlement by those intrusted with the expenditure of them; and generally to increase the security of the government against losses in their disbursement. It is needless to dilate on the importance of providing such new safeguards as are within the power of legislation to promote these ends; and I have little to add to the recommendations submitted in the accompanying papers.

By law, the terms of service of our most important collecting and disbursing officers in the civil departments, are limited to four years, and when re-appointed, their bonds are required to be renewed. The safety of the public is much increased by this feature of the law, and there can be no doubt that its application to all officers intrusted with the collection or disbursement of the pub-

lic money, whatever may be the tenure of their offices, would be equally beneficial. I therefore recommend, in addition to such of the suggestions presented by the heads of department as you may think useful, a general provision that all officers of the army or navy, or in the civil department, intrusted with the receipt or payment of the public money, and whose term of service is either unlimited or for a longer time than four years, be required to give bonds, with good and sufficient securities, at the expiration of every such period.

A change in the period of terminating the fiscal year, from the first of October to the first of April, has been frequently recommended, and appears to be desirable.

The distressing casualties in steamboats, which have so frequently happened during the year, seem to evince the necessity of attempting to prevent them by means of severe provisions connected with their custom-house papers. This subject was submitted to the attention of Congress by the secretary of the treasury, in his last annual report, and will be again noticed at the present session, with additional details. It will doubtless receive that early and careful consideration which its pressing importance appears to require.

Your attention has heretofore been frequently called to the affairs of the District of Columbia, and I should not again ask it, did not their entire dependence on Congress give them a constant claim upon its notice. Separated by the constitution from the rest of the Union, limited in extent, and aided by no legislature of its own, it would seem to be a spot where a wise and uniform system of local government might have been easily adopted.

This district however, unfortunately, has been left to linger behind the rest of the Union; its codes, civil and criminal, are not only very defective, but full of obsolete or inconvenient provisions; being formed of portions of two states, discrepancies in the laws prevail in different parts of the territory, small as it is; and although it was selected as the seat of the general government, the site of its public edifices, the depository of its archives, and the residence of officers intrusted with large amounts of public property, and the management of public business,

yet it has never been subjected to, or received, that special and comprehensive legislation which these circumstances peculiarly demand.

I am well aware of the various subjects of greater magnitude and immediate interest, that press themselves on the consideration of Congress; but I believe there is no one that appeals more directly to its justice, than a liberal and even generous attention to the interests of the District of Columbia, and a thorough and careful revision of its local government.

HARRISON'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS,

MARCH 4, 1841.

Called from a retirement which I had supposed was to continue for the residue of my life, to fill the Chief Executive office of this great and free nation, I appear before you, fellow-citizens, to take the oaths which the constitution prescribes as a necessary qualification for the performance of its duties. And in obedience with a custom coeval with our government, and what I believe to be your expectations, I proceed to present to you a summary of the principles which will govern me in the discharge of the duties which I shall be called upon to perform.

It was the remark of a Roman consul, in an early period of that celebrated republic, that a most striking contrast was observable in the conduct of candidates for offices of power and trust, before and after obtaining them—they seldom carrying out in the latter case the pledges and promises made in the former. However much the world may have improved, in many respects, in the lapse of upwards of two thousand years since the remark was made by the virtuous and indignant Roman, I fear that a strict examination of the annals of some of the modern elective governments would develop similar instances of violated confidence.

Although the fiat of the people has gone forth, proclaiming me the Chief Magistrate of this glorious Union, nothing upon their part remaining to be done, it may be

thought that a motive may exist to keep up the delusion under which they may be supposed to have acted in relation to my principles and opinions; and perhaps there may be some in this assembly, who have come here either prepared to condemn those I shall now deliver, or, approving them, to doubt the sincerity with which they are uttered. But the lapse of a few months will confirm or dispel their fears. The outline of principles to govern, and measures to be adopted by an administration not yet begun, will soon be exchanged for immutable history, and I shall stand, either exonerated by my countrymen, or classed with the mass of those who promised that they might deceive, and flattered with the intention to betray.

However strong may be my present purpose to realize the expectations of a magnanimous and confiding people, I too well understand the infirmities of human nature, and the dangerous temptations to which I shall be exposed, from the magnitude of the power which it has been the pleasure of the people to commit to my hands, not to place my chief confidence upon the aid of that Almighty Power which has hitherto protected me, and enabled me to bring to favorable issues other important but still greatly inferior trusts heretofore confided to me by my country.

The broad foundation upon which our constitution rests being the people—a breath of theirs having made, as a breath can unmake, change, or modify it—it can be assigned to none of the great divisions of government, but to that of democracy. If such is its theory, those who are called upon to administer it, must recognise as its leading principle, the duty of shaping their measures so as to produce the greatest good to the greatest number. But, with these broad admissions, if we would compare the sovereignty acknowledged to exist in the mass of the people with the power claimed by other sovereignties, even by those which had been considered most purely democratic, we shall find a most essential difference. All others lay claim to power limited only by their own will. The majority of our citizens, on the contrary, possess a sovereignty, with an amount of power precisely equal to

that which has been granted to them by the parties to the national compact, and nothing beyond.

We admit of no government by Divine right ; believing that, so far as power is concerned, the beneficent Creator has made no distinction among men ; that all are upon an equality ; and that the only legitimate right to govern, is an express grant of power from the governed. The constitution of the United States is the instrument containing this grant of power to the several departments composing the government. On an examination of that instrument, it will be found to contain declarations of power granted and power withheld. The latter is also susceptible of division into power which the majority had a right to grant, but which they did not think proper to entrust to their agents, and that which they could not have granted, not being possessed by themselves. In other words, there are certain rights possessed by each individual American citizen, which, in his compact with the others, he has never surrendered. Some of them, indeed, he is unable to surrender, being, in the language of our system, inalienable.

The boasted privilege of a Roman citizen was to him a shield only against a petty provincial ruler, whilst the proud democrat of Athens could console himself under a sentence of death,—for a supposed violation of national faith, which no one understood, and which at times was the subject of the mockery of all,—or banishment from his home, his family, and his country, with or without an alleged cause ; that it was not the act of a single tyrant, or hated aristocracy, but of his assembled countrymen. Far different is the power of our sovereignty. It can interfere with no man's faith ; prescribe forms of worship for no one's observance ; inflict no punishment but after well-ascertained guilt, the result of investigation under forms prescribed by the constitution itself. These precious privileges,—and those scarcely less important, of giving expression to his thoughts and opinions, either by writing or speaking, unrestrained but by the liability of injury to others, and that of a full participation in all the advantages which flow from the government, the acknowledged property of all,—the American citizen re-

ceives from no charter derived from his fellow-man. He claims them, because he is himself a man, fashioned by the same Almighty hand as the rest of his species, and entitled to the same blessings with which He has endowed them.

Notwithstanding the limited sovereignty possessed by the people of the United States, and the restricted grant of power to the government which they have adopted, enough has been given to accomplish all the objects for which it was created. It has been found powerful in war, and hitherto, justice has been administered, an intimate union effected, domestic tranquillity preserved, and personal liberty secured to the citizen. As was to be expected, however, from the defect of language, and the necessarily sententious manner in which the constitution is written, disputes have arisen as to the amount of power which it has actually granted, or was intended to grant. This is more particularly the case in relation to that part of the instrument which treats of the legislative branch. And not only as regards the exercise of powers, claimed under a general clause, giving that body the authority to carry into effect the specified powers, but in relation to the latter also. It is, however, consolatory to reflect that most of the instances of alleged departure from the letter or spirit of the constitution, have ultimately received the sanction of a majority of the people. And the fact, that many of our statesmen, most distinguished for talent and patriotism, have been, at one time or other of their political career, on both sides of each of the most warmly disputed questions, forces upon us the inference that the errors, if errors there were, are attributable to the intrinsic difficulty, in many instances, of ascertaining the intention of the framers of the constitution, rather than the influence of any sinister or unpatriotic motives.

But the great danger to our institutions does not appear to me to be in a usurpation, by the government, of power not granted by the people, but by the accumulation, in one of the departments, of that which was assigned to others. Limited as are the powers which have been granted, they are sufficient to constitute a despotism, if concentrated in one of the departments. This danger

is greatly heightened, as it has always been observable that men are less jealous of encroachments of one department upon another than upon their own reserved rights.

When the constitution of the United States first came from the hands of the convention which formed it, many of the sternest republicans of the day were alarmed at the extent of the power which had been granted to the federal government, and more particularly to that portion which had been assigned to the executive branch. There were in it features which appeared not to be in harmony with their ideas of a simple representative democracy or republic. And knowing the tendency of power to increase itself, particularly when executed by a single individual, predictions were made that, at no very remote period, the government would terminate in virtual monarchy. It would not become me to say that the fears of these patriots have been already realized. But, as I sincerely believe that the tendency of measures and of men's opinions, for some years past, has been in that direction, it is, I conceive, strictly proper that I should take this occasion to repeat the assurances I have heretofore given, of my determination to arrest the progress of that tendency, if it really exists, and restore the government to its pristine health and vigor, as far as this can be effected by any legitimate exercise of the power placed in my hands.

I proceed to state, in as summary a manner as I can, my opinion of the sources of the evils which have been so extensively complained of, and the correctives which may be applied. Some of the former are unquestionably to be found in the defects of the constitution; others, in my opinion, are attributable to a misconstruction of some of its provisions. Of the former is the eligibility of the same individual to a second term of the presidency. The sagacious mind of Mr. Jefferson early saw and lamented this error, and attempts have been made, hitherto without success, to apply the amendatory power of the states to its correction.

As, however, one mode of correction is in the power of every president, and consequently in mine, it would be useless, and perhaps invidious, to enumerate the evils of which, in the opinion of many of our fellow-citizens, this

error of the sages who framed the constitution may have been the source, and the bitter fruits which we are still to gather from it, if it continues to disfigure our system. It may be observed, however, as a general remark, that republics can commit no greater error than to adopt or continue any feature in their systems of government which may be calculated to create or increase the love of power in the bosoms of those to whom necessity obliges them to commit the management of their affairs. And surely nothing is more likely to produce such a state of mind than the long continuance of an office of high trust. Nothing can be more corrupting, nothing more destructive to all those nobler feelings which belong to the character of a devoted republican patriot. When this corrupting passion once takes possession of the human mind, like the love of gold, it becomes insatiable. It is the never-dying worm in his bosom, grows with his growth, and strengthens with the declining years of its victim. If this is true, it is the part of wisdom for a republic to limit the service of that officer, at least, to whom she has entrusted the management of her foreign relations, the execution of her laws, and the command of her armies and navies, to a period so short as to prevent his forgetting that he is an accountable agent, not the principal—the servant, not the master. Until an amendment of the constitution can be effected, public opinion may secure the desired object. I give my aid to it by renewing the pledge heretofore given, that, under no circumstances, will I consent to serve a second term.

But if there is danger to public liberty from the acknowledged defect of the constitution, in the want of limit to the continuance of the executive power in the same hands, there is, I apprehend, not much less from a misconstruction of the instrument, as it regards the powers actually given. I cannot conceive that, by a fair construction, any or either of its provisions would be found to constitute the president a part of the legislative power. It cannot be claimed from the power to recommend, since, although enjoined as a duty upon him, it is a duty he holds in common with every other citizen. And although there may be something more of confidence in the propri-

ety of the measures recommended in the one case than in the other, in the obligations of ultimate decision there can be no difference. In the language of the constitution, "all the legislative powers" which it grants "are vested in the Congress of the United States." It would be a solecism in language to say that any portion of these is not included in the whole.

It may be said, indeed, that the constitution has given to the executive the power to annul the acts of the legislative body, by refusing to them his assent. So a similar power has necessarily resulted from that instrument to the judiciary, and yet the judiciary forms no part of the legislature. There is, it is true, this difference between these grants of power; the executive can put his negative upon the acts of the legislature for other cause than that of want of conformity to the constitution, while the judiciary can only declare void those which violate that instrument. But the decision of the judiciary is final in such a case, whereas in every instance where the veto of the executive is applied, it may be overcome by a vote of two thirds of both houses of Congress. The negative upon the acts of the legislative, by the executive authority, and that in the hands of one individual, would seem to be an incongruity in our system. Like some others of a similar character, however, it appears to be highly expedient, and if used only with the forbearance and in the spirit which was intended by its authors, it may be productive of great good, and be found one of the best safeguards to the Union.

At the period of the formation of the constitution, the principle does not appear to have enjoyed much favor in the state governments. It existed but in two, and in one of these there was a plural executive. If we would search for the motives which operated upon the purely patriotic and enlightened assembly which framed the constitution, for the adoption of a provision so apparently repugnant to the leading democratic principle, that the majority should govern, we must reject the idea that they anticipated from it any benefit to the ordinary course of legislation. They knew too well the high degree of intelligence which existed among the people, and the en-

lightened character of the state legislatures, not to have the fullest confidence that the two bodies elected by them would be worthy representatives of such constituents, and, of course, that they would require no aid in conceiving and maturing the measures which the circumstances of the country might require. And it is preposterous to suppose that a thought could for a moment have been entertained that the president, placed at the capitol in the centre of the country, could better understand the wants and wishes of the people than their own immediate representatives, who spend a part of every year among them, living with them, often laboring with them, and bound to them by the triple tie of interest, duty, and affection.

To assist or control Congress, then, in its ordinary legislation, could not, I conceive, have been the motive for conferring the veto power on the president. This argument acquires additional force from the fact of its never having been thus used by the first six presidents—and two of them were members of the convention, one presiding over its deliberations, and the other having a larger share in consummating the labors of that august body than any other person. But if bills were never returned to Congress by either of the presidents above referred to, upon the ground of their being inexpedient, or not as well adapted as they might be to the wants of the people, the veto was applied upon that of want of conformity to the constitution, or because errors had been committed from a too hasty enactment.

There is another ground for the adoption of the veto principle, which had probably more influence in recommending it to the convention than any other; I refer to the security which it gives to the just and equitable action of the legislature upon all parts of the Union. It could not but have occurred to the convention, that in a country so extensive, embracing so great a variety of soil and climate, and consequently of products, and which, from the same causes, must ever exhibit a great difference in the amount of the population of its various sections, calling for a great diversity in the employments of the people, that the legislation of the majority might not always justly regard the rights and interests of the minority;

and that acts of this character might be passed, under an express grant by the words of the constitution, and, therefore, not within the competency of the judiciary to declare void; that however enlightened and patriotic they might suppose, from past experience, the members of Congress might be, and however largely partaking, in the general, of the liberal feelings of the people, it was impossible to expect that bodies so constituted should not sometimes be controlled by local interests and sectional feeling. It was proper, therefore, to provide some umpire, from whose situation and mode of appointment more independence and freedom from such influences might be expected. Such a one was afforded by the executive department, constituted by the constitution. A person elected to that high office, having his constituents in every section, state, and subdivision of the Union, must consider himself bound by the most solemn sanctions to guard, protect, and defend the rights of all, and every portion, great or small, from the injustice and oppression of the rest.

I consider the veto power, therefore, given by the constitution to the executive of the United States, solely as a conservative power, to be used only, 1st, to protect the constitution from violation; 2dly, the people from the effects of hasty legislation, where their will had been probably disregarded, or not well understood; and, 3dly, to prevent the effects of combinations violative of the rights of minorities. In reference to the second of these objects, I may observe that I consider it the right and privilege of the people to decide disputed points of the constitution, arising from the general grant of power to Congress to carry into effect the powers expressly given. And I believe, with Mr. Madison, "that repeated recognitions, under varied circumstances, in acts of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the government, accompanied by indications, in different modes, of the concurrence of the general will of the nation, as affording to the president sufficient authority for his considering such disputed points as settled."

Upwards of half a century has elapsed since the adoption of our present form of government. It would be an object more highly desirable than the gratification of the

curiosity of speculative statesmen, if its precise situation could be ascertained, a fair exhibit made of the operations of each of its departments, of the powers which they respectively claim and exercise, of the collisions which have occurred between them, or between the whole government and those of the states, or either of them. We could then compare our actual condition, after fifty years' trial of our system, with what it was in the commencement of its operations, and ascertain whether the predictions of the patriots who opposed its adoption, or the confident hopes of its advocates, have been best realized. The great dread of the former seems to have been, that the reserved powers of the states would be absorbed by those of the federal government, and a consolidated power established, leaving to the states the shadow, only, of that independent action for which they had so zealously contended, and on the preservation of which they relied as the last hope of liberty.

Without denying that the result to which they looked with so much apprehension is in the way of being realized, it is obvious that they did not clearly see the mode of its accomplishment. The general government has seized upon none of the reserved rights of the states. As far as any open warfare may have gone, the state authorities have amply maintained their rights. To a casual observer, our system presents no appearance of discord between the different members which compose it. Even the addition of many new ones has produced no jarring. They move in their respective orbits in perfect harmony with each other. But there is still an under-current at work, by which, if not seasonably checked, the worst apprehensions of our anti-federal patriots will be realized. And not only will the state authorities be overshadowed by the great increase of power in the executive department of the general government, but the character of that government, if not its designation, be essentially and radically changed. This state of things has been in part effected by causes inherent in the constitution, and in part by the never-failing tendency of political power to increase itself.

By making the president the sole distributor of all the

patronage of the government, the framers of the constitution do not appear to have anticipated at how short a period it would become a formidable instrument to control the free operation of the state governments. Of trifling importance at first, it had early in Mr. Jefferson's administration, become so powerful as to create great alarm in the mind of that patriot, from the potent influence it might exert in controlling the freedom of the elective franchise. If such could have been the effects of its influence then, how much greater must be the danger at this time, quadrupled in amount, as it certainly is, and more completely under the control of the executive will, than their construction of their powers allowed, or the forbearing characters of all the early presidents permitted them to make? But it is not by the extent of its patronage alone that the executive department has become dangerous, but by the use which it appears may be made of the appointing power, to bring under its control the whole revenues of the country.

The constitution has declared it to be the duty of the president to see that the laws are executed, and it makes him commander-in-chief of the armies and navy of the United States. If the opinion of the most approved writers upon that species of mixed government, which, in modern Europe, is termed monarchy, in contradistinction to despotism, is correct, there was wanting no other addition to the powers of our chief magistrate to stamp a monarchical character upon our government, but the control of the public finances. And to me it appears strange, indeed, that any one should doubt that the entire control which the president possesses over the officers who have the custody of the public money, by the power of removal with or without cause, does, for all mischievous purposes at least, virtually subject the treasure also to his disposal. The first Roman emperor, in his attempt to seize the sacred treasure, silenced the opposition of the officer to whose charge it had been committed, by a significant allusion to his sword. By a selection of political instruments for the care of the public money, a reference to their commissions by a president would be quite as effectual an argument as that of Cæsar to the Roman knight.

I am not insensible of the great difficulty that exists in devising a plan for the safe-keeping and disbursement of the public revenues, and I know the importance which has been attached by men of great abilities and patriotism to the divorce, as it is called, of the treasury from the banking institutions. It is not the divorce which is complained of, but the unhallowed union of the treasury with the executive department, which has created such extensive alarm. To this danger to our republican institutions, and that created by the influence given to the executive through the instrumentality of the federal officers, I propose to apply all the remedies which may be at my command. It was certainly a great error in the framers of the constitution, not to have made the officer at the head of the treasury department entirely independent of the executive. He should at least have been removable only upon the demand of the popular branch of the legislature. I have determined never to remove a secretary of the treasury without communicating all the circumstances attending such removal to both houses of Congress.

The influence of the executive in controlling the freedom of the elective franchise through the medium of the public officers can be effectually checked by renewing the prohibition published by Mr. Jefferson, forbidding their interference in elections farther than giving their own votes; and their own independence secured by an assurance of perfect immunity, in exercising this sacred privilege of freemen under the dictates of their own unbiassed judgments. Never, with my consent, shall an officer of the people, compensated for his services out of their pockets, become the pliant instrument of executive will.

There is no part of the means placed in the hands of the executive which might be used with greater effect, for unhallowed purposes, than the control of the public press. The maxim which our ancestors derived from the mother country, that "the freedom of the press is the great bulwark of civil and religious liberty," is one of the most precious legacies which they have left us. We have learned, too, from our own, as well as the experience of other countries, that golden shackles, by whomsoever, or

by whatever pretence imposed, are as fatal to it as the iron bonds of despotism. The presses in the necessary employment of government should never be used to "clear the guilty or to varnish crimes." A decent and manly examination of the acts of the government should be not only tolerated but encouraged.

Upon another occasion, I have given my opinion, at some length, upon the impropriety of executive interference in the legislation of Congress; that the article in the constitution, making it the duty of the president to communicate information, and authorizing him to recommend measures, was not intended to make him the source of legislation, and, in particular, that he should never be looked to for schemes of finance. It would be very strange, indeed, that the constitution should have strictly forbidden one branch of the legislature from interfering in the origination of such bills, and that it should be considered proper that an altogether different department of the government should be permitted to do so. Some of our best political maxims and opinions have been drawn from our parent isle. There are others, however, which cannot be introduced into our system without singular incongruity, and the production of much mischief. And this I conceive to be one. No matter in which of the houses of parliament a bill may originate, nor by whom introduced, a minister, or a member of the opposition, by the fiction of law, or rather of constitutional principle, the sovereign is supposed to have prepared it agreeably to his will, and then submitted it to parliament for their advice and consent.

Now the very reverse is the case here, not only with regard to the principle, but the forms prescribed by the constitution. The principle certainly assigns to the only body constituted by the constitution (the legislative body) the power to make laws, and the forms even direct that the enactment should be ascribed to them. The senate, in relation to revenue bills, have the right to propose amendments; and so has the executive, by the power given him to return them to the house of representatives, with his objections. It is in his power, also, to propose amendments in the existing revenue laws, suggested by

his observations upon their defective or injurious operation. But the delicate duty of devising schemes of revenue should be left where the constitution has placed it, with the immediate representatives of the people. For similar reasons, the mode of keeping the public treasure should be prescribed by them; and the farther removed it may be from the control of the executive, the more wholesome in arrangement, and the more in accordance with republican principles.

Connected with this subject is the character of the currency. The idea of making it exclusively metallic, however well intended, appears to me to be fraught with more fatal consequences than any other scheme, having no relation to the personal rights of the citizen, that has ever been devised. If any single scheme could produce the effect of arresting, at once, that mutation of condition by which thousands of our most indigent fellow-citizens, by their industry and enterprise, are raised to the possession of wealth, that is one. If there is one measure better calculated than another to produce that state of things so much deprecated by all true republicans, by which the rich are daily adding to their hoards, and the poor sinking deeper into penury, it is an exclusive metallic currency. Or if there is a process by which the character of the country for generosity and nobleness of feeling may be destroyed by the great increase and necessary toleration of usury, it is an exclusive metallic currency.

Amongst the other duties of a delicate character which the president is called upon to perform, is the supervision of the government of the territories of the United States. Those of them which are destined to become members of our great political family, are compensated by their rapid progress from infancy to manhood, for the partial and temporary deprivation of their political rights.

It is in this district only, where American citizens are to be found, who, under a settled system of policy, are deprived of many important political privileges, without any inspiring hope as to the future. Their only consolation under circumstances of such deprivation, is that of the devoted exterior guards of a camp—that their sufferings secure tranquillity and safety within. Are there any of

their countrymen who would subject them to greater sacrifices, to any other humiliations, than those essentially necessary to the security of the object for which they were thus separated from their fellow-citizens? Are their rights alone not to be guaranteed by the application of those great principles, upon which all our constitutions are founded? We are told by the greatest of British orators and statesmen, that, at the commencement of the war of the revolution, the most stupid men in England spoke of "their American subjects." Are there, indeed, citizens of any of our states who have dreamed of *their subjects* in the District of Columbia? Such dreams can never be realized by any agency of mine.

The people of the District of Columbia are not the subjects of the people of the States, but free American citizens. Being in the latter condition when the constitution was formed, no words used in that instrument could have been intended to deprive them of that character. If there is anything in the great principles of inalienable rights, so emphatically insisted upon in our Declaration of Independence, they could neither make, nor the United States accept, a surrender of their liberties, and become the *subjects*, in other words the slaves, of their former fellow-citizens. If this be true, and it will scarcely be denied by any one who has a correct idea of his own rights as an American citizen, the grant to Congress of exclusive jurisdiction in the District of Columbia, can be interpreted, so far as respects the aggregate people of the United States, as meaning nothing more than to allow Congress the controlling power necessary to afford a free and safe exercise of the functions assigned to the general government by the constitution. In all other respects, the legislation of Congress should be adapted to their peculiar condition and wants, and be conformable with their deliberate opinions of their own interests.

I have spoken of the necessity of keeping the respective departments of the government, as well as all the other authorities of our country, within their appropriate orbits. This is a matter of difficulty in some cases, as the powers which they respectively claim are often not defined by very distinct lines. Mischievous, however, in

their tendencies, as collisions of this kind may be, those which arise between the respective communities, which for certain purposes compose one nation, are much more so; for no such nation can long exist without the careful culture of those feelings of confidence and affection which are the effective bonds of union between free and confederated states. Strong as is the tie of interest, it has been often found ineffectual. Men, blinded by their passions, have been known to adopt measures for their country in direct opposition to all the suggestions of policy. The alternative, then, is, to keep down a bad passion by creating and fostering a good one; and this seems to be the corner-stone upon which our American political architects have reared the fabric of our government.

The cement which was to bind it, and perpetuate its existence, was the affectionate attachment between all its members. To insure the continuance of this feeling, produced at first by a community of dangers, of sufferings, and of interests, the advantages of each were made accessible to all. No participation in any good, possessed by any member of an extensive confederacy, except in domestic government, was withheld from the citizen of any other member. By a process attended with no difficulty, no delay, no expense but that of removal, the citizen of the one might become the citizen of any other, and successively of the whole. The lines, too, separating powers to be exercised by the citizens of one state from those of another, seem to be so distinctly drawn as to leave no room for misunderstanding. The citizens of each state unite in their persons all the privileges which that character confers, and all that they may claim as citizens of the United States; but in no case can the same person, at the same time, act as the citizen of two separate states, and he is therefore positively precluded from any interference with the reserved powers of any state, but that of which he is, for the time being, a citizen. He may, indeed, offer to citizens of other states his advice as to their management, and the form in which it is tendered is left to his own discretion and sense of propriety.

It may be observed, however, that organized associations of citizens, requiring compliance with their wishes,

too much resemble the recommendation of Athens to her allies—supported by an armed and powerful fleet. It was, indeed, to the ambition of the leading states of Greece to control the domestic concerns of the others, that the destruction of that celebrated confederacy, and subsequently of all its members, is mainly to be attributed. And it is owing to the absence of that spirit that the Helvetic confederacy had been for so many years preserved. Never had there been seen in the institutions of the separate members of any confederacy more elements of discord. In the principles and forms of government and religion, as well as in the circumstances of the several cantons, so marked a discrepancy was observable as to promise anything but harmony in their intercourse, or permanency in their alliance. And yet, for ages neither has been interrupted. Content with the positive benefits which their union produced, with the independence and safety from foreign aggression which it secured, these sagacious people respected the institutions of each other, however repugnant to their own principles and prejudices.

Our confederacy, fellow-citizens, can only be preserved by the same forbearance. Our citizens must be content with the exercise of the powers with which the constitution clothes them. The attempt of those of one state to control the domestic institutions of another, can only result in feelings of distrust and jealousy, the certain harbingers of disunion, violence, civil war, and the ultimate destruction of our free institutions. Our confederacy is perfectly illustrated by the terms and principles governing a common copartnership. There a fund of power is to be exercised under the direction of the joint councils of the allied members, but that which has been reserved by the individual members is intangible by the common government, or the individual members composing it. To attempt it finds no support in the principles of our constitution. It should be our constant and earnest endeavor mutually to cultivate a spirit of concord and harmony among the various parts of our confederacy. Experience has abundantly taught us that the agitation, by citizens of one part of the Union, of a subject not confided to the general government, but exclusively under the guardian-

ship of the local authorities, is productive of no other consequences than bitterness, alienation, discord, and injury to the very cause which is intended to be advanced. Of all the great interests which appertain to our country, that of union—cordial, confiding, fraternal union—is by far the most important, since it is the only true and sure guaranty of all others.

In consequence of the embarrassed state of business and the currency, some of the states may meet with difficulty in their financial concerns. However deeply we may regret anything imprudent or excessive in the engagements into which states have entered for purposes of their own, it does not become us to disparage the state governments, nor to discourage them from making proper efforts for their own relief; on the contrary, it is our duty to encourage them, to the extent of our constitutional authority, to apply their best means, and cheerfully to make all necessary sacrifices, and submit to all necessary burdens, to fulfil their engagements and maintain their credit; for the character and credit of the several states form part of the character and credit of the whole country. The resources of the country are abundant, the enterprise and activity of our people proverbial; and we may well hope that wise legislation and prudent administration, by the respective governments, each acting within its own sphere, will restore former prosperity.

Unpleasant and even dangerous as collisions may sometimes be, between the constituted authorities or the citizens of our country, in relation to the lines which separate their respective jurisdictions, the results can be of no vital injury to our institutions, if that ardent patriotism, that devoted attachment to liberty, that spirit of moderation and forbearance for which our countrymen were once distinguished, continue to be cherished. If this continues to be the ruling passion of our souls, the weaker feelings of the mistaken enthusiast will be corrected, the Utopian dreams of the scheming politician dissipated, and the complicated intrigues of the demagogue rendered harmless. The spirit of liberty is the sovereign balm for every injury which our institutions may receive.

On the contrary no care that can be used in the con-

struction of our government, no division of powers, no distribution of checks in its departments will prove effectual to keep us a free people, if this spirit is suffered to decay; and decay it will without constant nurture. To the neglect of this duty, the best historians agree in attributing the ruin of all the republics with whose existence and fall their writings have made us acquainted. The same causes will ever produce the same effects; and as long as the love of power is a dominant passion of the human bosom, and as long as the understandings of men can be warped and their affections changed by operations upon their passions and prejudices, so long will the liberty of a people depend on their own constant attention to its preservation.

The danger to all well-established free governments arises from the unwillingness of the people to believe in its existence, or from the influence of designing men, diverting their attention from the quarter whence it approaches, to a source from which it can never come. This is the old trick of those who would usurp the government of their country. In the name of democracy they speak, warning the people against the influence of wealth and the danger of aristocracy. History, ancient and modern, is full of such examples. Cæsar became the master of the Roman people and the senate, under the pretence of supporting the democratic claims of the former against the aristocracy of the latter; Cromwell, in the character of protector of the liberties of the people, became the dictator of England; and Bolivar possessed himself of unlimited power with the title of his country's liberator. There is, on the contrary, no single instance on record of an extensive and well-established republic being changed into an aristocracy. The tendency of all such governments in their decline is to monarchy; and the antagonist principle to liberty there is the spirit of faction; a spirit which assumes the character, and, in times of great excitement, imposes itself upon the people as the genuine spirit of freedom, and, like the false Christs whose coming was foretold by the Savior, seeks to, and were it possible would, impose upon the true and most faithful disciples of liberty.

It is in periods like this, that it behooves the people to be most watchful of those to whom they have intruded power. And although there is at times much difficulty in distinguishing the false from the true spirit, a calm and dispassionate investigation will detect the counterfeit, as well by the character of its operations as the results that are produced. The true spirit of liberty, although devoted, persevering, bold, and uncompromising in principle, that secured, is mild, and tolerant, scrupulous as to the means it employs; whilst the spirit of party, assuming to be that of liberty, is harsh, vindictive, and intolerant, and totally reckless as to the character of the allies which it brings to the aid of its cause. When the genuine spirit of liberty animates the body of a people to a thorough examination of their affairs, it leads to the excision of every excrescence which may have fastened itself upon any of the departments of the government, and restores the system to its pristine health and beauty. But the reign of an intolerant spirit of party amongst a free people, seldom fails to result in a dangerous accession to the executive power, introduced and established amidst unusual professions of devotion to democracy.

The foregoing remarks relate almost exclusively to matters connected with our domestic concerns. It may be proper, however, that I should give some indications to my fellow-citizens of my proposed course of conduct in the management of our foreign relations. I assure them, therefore, that it is my intention to use every means in my power to preserve the friendly intercourse which now so happily subsists with every foreign nation; and that although, of course, not well informed as to the state of any pending negotiations with any of them, I see in the personal characters of the sovereigns, as well as in the mutual interests of our own and of the governments with which our relations are most intimate, a pleasing guaranty that the harmony so important to the interests of their subjects, as well as our citizens, will not be interrupted by the advancement of any claim, or pretension upon their part to which our honor would not permit us to yield. Long the defender of my country's rights in the field, I trust that my fellow-citizens will not see in my

earnest desire to preserve peace with foreign powers any indication that their rights will ever be sacrificed, or the honor of the nation tarnished, by any admission on the part of their chief magistrate unworthy of their former glory.

In the intercourse with our aboriginal neighbors, the same liberality and justice which marked the course prescribed to me by two of my illustrious predecessors, when acting under their direction in the discharge of the duties of superintendent and commissioner, shall be strictly observed. I can conceive of no more sublime spectacle—none more likely to propitiate an impartial and common Creator—than a rigid adherence to the principles of justice on the part of a powerful nation in its transactions with a weaker and uncivilized people, whom circumstances have placed at its disposal.

Before concluding, fellow-citizens, I must say something to you on the subject of the parties at this time existing in our country. To me it appears perfectly clear that the interest of that country requires that the violence of the spirit by which those parties are at this time governed, must be greatly mitigated, if not entirely extinguished, or consequences will ensue which are appalling to be thought of.

If parties in a republic are necessary to secure a degree of vigilance sufficient to keep the public functionaries within the bounds of law and duty, at that point their usefulness ends. Beyond that, they become destructive of public virtue, the parents of a spirit antagonist to that of liberty, and, eventually, its inevitable conqueror. We have examples of republics, where the love of country and of liberty at one time were the dominant passions of the whole mass of citizens. And yet, with the continuance of the name and form of free government, not a vestige of these qualities remained in the bosom of any one of its citizens. It was the beautiful remark of a distinguished English writer, that "in the Roman senate, Octavius had a party, Anthony a party, but the commonwealth had none." Yet the senate continued to meet in the temple of liberty, and to talk of the sacredness and beauty of the commonwealth, and gaze at the statues of

the elder Brutus, and of the Curtii and Decii. And the people assembled in the forum, not as in the days of Camillus and the Scipios, to cast their free votes for annual magistrates or pass upon the acts of the Senate, but to receive from the hands of the leaders of the respective parties their share of the spoils, and to shout for one or the other, as those collected in Gaul, or Egypt, and the lesser Asia, would furnish the larger dividend. The spirit of liberty had fled, and, avoiding the abodes of civilized man, had sought protection in the wilds of Scythia or Scandinavia; and so, under the operation of the same causes and influences, it will fly from our capitol and our forums. A calamity so awful, not only to our country, but to the world, must be deprecated by every patriot; and every tendency to a state of things likely to produce it, immediately checked. Such a tendency has existed—does exist. Always the friend of my countrymen, never their flatterer, it becomes my duty to say to them, from this high place to which their partiality has exalted me, that there exists in the land a spirit hostile to their best interests—hostile to liberty itself. It is a spirit contracted in its views, and selfish in its object. It looks to the aggrandizement of a few, even to the destruction of the interests of the whole. The entire remedy is with the people. Something, however, may be effected by the means which they have placed in my hands.

It is union that we want, not of a party for the sake of that party, but of the whole country for the sake of the whole country—for the defence of its interests and its honor against foreign aggression, for the defence of those principles for which our ancestors so gloriously contended. As far as it depends upon me it shall be accomplished. All the influence which I possess shall be exerted to prevent the formation at least of an executive party in the halls of the legislative body. I wish for the support of no member of that body to any measure of mine that does not satisfy his judgment and his sense of duty to those from whom he holds his appointment; nor any confidence in advance from the people, but that asked by Mr. Jefferson, "to give firmness and effect to the legal administration of their affairs."

I deem the present occasion sufficiently important and solemn to justify me in expressing to my fellow-citizens a profound reverence for the Christian Religion, and a thorough conviction that sound morals, religious liberty, and a just sense of religious responsibility, are essentially connected with all true and lasting happiness ; and to that good Being, who has blessed us by the gift of civil and religious freedom, who watched over and prospered the labors of our fathers, and has hitherto preserved to us institutions far exceeding in excellence those of any other people, let us unite in fervently commending every interest of our beloved country in all future time.

Fellow-citizens ; being fully invested with that high office to which the partiality of my countrymen has called me, I now take an affectionate leave of you. You will bear with you to your homes the remembrance of the pledge I have this day given, to discharge all the high duties of my exalted station according to the best of my ability ; and I shall enter upon their performance with entire confidence in the support of a just and generous people.

TYLER'S ADDRESS,

APRIL 9, 1841.

IN just one month after entering upon his duties as President of the United States, William Henry Harrison died—the first that has died in office since the formation of the government. Consequently, it became the duty of the Vice President, John Tyler, to assume the Presidential chair—on which occasion he published the following

ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.

Fellow-Citizens :

BEFORE my arrival at the seat of government, the painful communication was made to you, by the officers presiding over the several departments, of the deeply-regretted death of William Henry Harrison, President of the United States. Upon him you had conferred your gift, and had selected him as your chosen instrument to correct and

reform all such errors and abuses as had manifested themselves from time to time in the practical operation of the government. While standing at the threshold of this great work, he has, by the dispensation of Providence, been removed from us, and by the provisions of the constitution the efforts to be directed to the accomplishment of this vitally important task have devolved upon myself. The same occurrence has subjected the wisdom and sufficiency of our institutions to a new test.

For the first time in our history, the person elected to the Vice Presidency of the United States, by the happening of a contingency provided for in the constitution, has had devolved upon him the presidential office. The spirit of faction, which is directly opposed to the spirit of a lofty patriotism, may find, in this, occasion for assaults upon my administration. And in succeeding, under circumstances so sudden and unexpected, and to responsibilities so greatly augmented, to the administration of public affairs, I shall place in the intelligence and patriotism of the people my only sure reliance. My earnest prayer shall be constantly addressed to the all-wise and all-powerful Being who made me, and by whose dispensation I am called to the high office of president of this confederacy, that I may be enabled understandingly to carry out the principles of that constitution which I have sworn to "protect, preserve, and defend."

The usual opportunity which is afforded a chief magistrate, upon his induction to office, of presenting to his countrymen an exposition of the policy which would guide his administration, in the form of an inaugural address, not having, under the peculiar circumstances which have brought me to the discharge of the high duties of President of the United States, been offered to me, a brief exposition of the principles which will govern me in the general course of my administration of public affairs, would seem due as well to myself as to you. In regard to foreign nations, the ground-work of my policy will be justice on our part to all, submitting to injustice from none. While I shall sedulously cultivate the relation of peace and amity with one and all, it will be my most imperative duty to see that the honor of the country shall

sustain no blemish. With a view to this, the condition of our military defences will become a matter of anxious solicitude. The army, which has in other days covered itself with renown, and the navy, not inappropriately termed the right hand of the public defence, which has spread a light of glory over the American standard in all the waters of the earth, should be rendered replete with efficiency.

In view of the fact, well avouched by history, that the tendency of all human institutions is to concentrate power in the hands of a single man, and that their ultimate downfall has proceeded from this cause, I deem it of the most essential importance that a complete separation should take place between the sword and the purse. No matter where or how the public moneys shall be deposited, so long as the president can exert the power of appointing and removing, at his pleasure, the agents selected for their custody, the commander-in-chief of the army and navy is in fact the treasurer. A permanent and radical change should therefore be decreed. The patronage incident to the presidential office, already great, is constantly increasing. Such increase is destined to keep pace with the growth of our population, until, without a figure of speech, an army of office-holders may be spread over the land. The unrestrained power exerted by a selfishly ambitious man, in order either to perpetuate his authority or to hand it over to some favorite as his successor, may lead to the employment of all the means within his control to accomplish his object.

The right to remove from office, while subjected to no restraint, is inevitably destined to produce a spirit of crouching servility with the official corps, which, in order to uphold the hand which feeds them, would lead to direct and active interference in the elections, both state and federal, thereby subjecting the course of state legislation to the dictation of the chief executive officer; and making the will of that officer absolute and supreme. I will, at a proper time, invoke the action of Congress upon this subject, and shall readily acquiesce in the adoption of all proper measures which are calculated to arrest these evils, so full of danger in their tendency.

I will remove no incumbent from office who has faithfully and honestly acquitted himself of the duties of his office, except in cases where such officer has been guilty of an active partisanship, or by secret means—the less manly, and therefore the more objectionable—has given his official influence to the purposes of party, thereby bringing the patronage of the government in conflict with the freedom of elections. Numerous removals may become necessary under this rule. These will be made by me through no acerbity of feeling. I have had no cause to cherish or indulge unkind feelings towards any, but my conduct will be regulated by a profound sense of what is due to the country and its institutions; nor shall I neglect to apply the same unbending rule to those of my appointment. Freedom of opinion will be tolerated, the right of suffrage will be maintained as the birthright of every American citizen; but I say emphatically to the official corps, “thus far and no farther.”

I have dwelt the longer upon this subject, because removals from office are likely often to arise, and I would have my countrymen to understand the principle of executive action.

In all public expenditures the most rigid economy should be resorted to, and, as one of its results, a public debt in time of peace be sedulously avoided. A wise and patriotic constituency will never object to the imposition of necessary burdens for useful ends; and true wisdom dictates the resort to such means, in order to supply deficiencies in the revenue, rather than to those doubtful expedients, which, ultimating in a public debt, serve to embarrass the resources of the country, and to lessen its ability to meet any great emergency which may arise. All sinecures should be abolished. The appropriations should be direct and explicit, so as to leave as limited a share of discretion to the disbursing agents as may be found compatible with the public service. A strict responsibility on the part of all agents of the government should be maintained, and peculation and defalcation visited with immediate expulsion from office and the most condign punishment.

The public interest demands that, if any war has existed between the government and the currency, it shall

cease. Measures of a financial character, now having the sanction of legal enactment, shall be faithfully enforced until repealed by the legislative authority. But I owe it to myself to say that I regard existing enactments as unwise and impolitic, and in a high degree oppressive.

I shall promptly give sanction to any constitutional measure which, originating in Congress, shall have for its object the restoration of a sound circulating medium, so essentially necessary to give confidence in all the transactions of life, to secure to industry its just and adequate rewards, and to re-establish the public prosperity. In deciding upon the adaptation of any such measure to the end proposed, as well as its conformity to the constitution, I shall resort to the fathers of the great republican school, for advice and instruction, to be drawn from their sage views of our system of government, and the light of their ever-glorious example.

The institutions under which we live, my countrymen, secure each person in the perfect enjoyment of all his rights. The spectacle is exhibited to the world of a government deriving its power from the consent of the governed, and having imparted to it only so much power as is necessary for its successful operation. Those who are charged with its administration should carefully abstain from all attempts to enlarge the range of powers thus granted to the several departments of the government, other than by an appeal to the people for additional grants, lest by so doing they disturb that balance which the patriots and statesmen who framed the constitution designed to establish between the federal government and the states composing the Union.

The observance of these rules is enjoined upon us by that feeling of reverence and affection which finds a place in the heart of every patriot for the preservation of union and the blessings of union—for the good of our children and our children's children, through countless generations. An opposite course could not fail to generate factions, intent upon the gratification of their selfish ends; to give birth to local and sectional jealousies, and to ultimate either in breaking asunder the bonds of union, or

in building up a central system which would inevitably end in a bloody sceptre and an iron crown.

In conclusion, I beg you to be assured that I shall exert myself to carry the foregoing principles into practice during my administration of the government, and, confiding in the protecting care of an ever-watchful and overruling Providence, it shall be my first and highest duty to preserve unimpaired the free institutions under which we live, and transmit them to those who shall succeed me, in their full force and vigor.

TYLER'S FIRST ANNUAL MESSAGE,

DECEMBER 6, 1841.

*Fellow-Citizens of the Senate
and of the House of Representatives:*

IN coming together, fellow-citizens, to enter again upon the discharge of the duties with which the people have charged us, severally, we find great occasion to rejoice in the general prosperity of the country. We are in the enjoyment of all the blessings of civil and religious liberty, with unexampled means of education, knowledge, and improvement. Through the year which is now drawing to a close, peace has been in our borders, and plenty in our habitations; and although disease has visited some few portions of the land with distress and mortality, yet in general the health of the people has been preserved, and we are all called upon, by the highest obligations of duty, to renew our thanks and our devotion to our Heavenly Parent, who has continued to vouchsafe to us the eminent blessings which surround us, and who has so signally crowned the year with His goodness. If we find ourselves increasing, beyond example, in numbers, in strength, in wealth, in knowledge, in everything which promotes human and social happiness, let us ever remember our dependance, for all these, on the protection and merciful dispensations of Divine Providence.

Since your last adjournment, Alexander McLeod, a British subject, who was indicted for the murder of an American citizen, and whose case has been the subject of a correspondence heretofore communicated to you, has been acquitted by the verdict of an impartial and intelligent jury, and has, under the judgment of the court, been regularly discharged.

Great Britain having made known to this government that the expedition, which was fitted out from Canada for the destruction of the steamboat *Caroline* in the winter of 1837, and which resulted in the destruction of said boat and in the death of an American citizen, was undertaken by orders emanating from the authorities of the British government, in Canada, and demanding the dis-

charge of McLeod upon the ground that, if engaged in that expedition, he did but fulfil the orders of his government, has thus been answered in the only way in which she could be answered by a government, the powers of which are distributed among its several departments by the fundamental law. Happily for the people of Great Britain, as well as those of the United States, the only mode by which an individual, arraigned for a criminal offence, before the courts of either, can obtain his discharge, is by the independent action of the judiciary, and by proceedings equally familiar to the courts of both countries. If in Great Britain a power exists in the crown to cause to be entered a *nolle prosequi*, which is not the case with the executive power of the United States upon a prosecution pending in a state court; yet there, no more than here, can the chief executive power rescue a prisoner from custody without an order of the proper tribunal directing his discharge. The precise stage of the proceedings at which such order may be made, is a matter of municipal regulation exclusively, and not to be complained of by any other government. In cases of this kind, a government becomes politically responsible only when its tribunals of last resort are shown to have rendered unjust and injurious judgments in matters not doubtful. To the establishment and elucidation of this principle, no nation has lent its authority more efficiently than Great Britain. Alexander McLeod, having his option either to prosecute a writ of error from the decision of the Supreme Court of New York, which had been rendered upon his application for a discharge, to the Supreme Court of the United States, or to submit his case to the decision of a jury, preferred the latter, deeming it the readiest mode of obtaining his liberation; and the result has fully sustained the wisdom of his choice. The manner in which the issue submitted was tried, will satisfy the English government that the principle of justice will never fail to govern the enlightened decision of an American tribunal. I cannot fail, however, to suggest to Congress the propriety, and, in some degree, the necessity, of making such provisions by law, so far as they may constitutionally do so, for the removal at their commencement,

and at the option of the party, of all such cases as may hereafter arise, and which may involve the faithful observance and execution of our international obligations, from the State to the Federal Judiciary. This government, by our institutions, is charged with the maintenance of peace and the preservation of amicable relations with the nations of the earth, and ought to possess, without question, all the reasonable and proper means of maintaining the one and preserving the other. Whilst just confidence is felt in the judiciary of the states, yet this government ought to be competent in itself for the fulfilment of the high duties which have been devolved upon it under the organic law, by the states themselves.

In the month of September, a party of armed men from Upper Canada, invaded the territory of the United States, and forcibly seized upon the person of one Grogan, and, under circumstances of great harshness, hurriedly carried him beyond the limits of the United States, and delivered him up to the authorities of Lower Canada. His immediate discharge was ordered by those authorities, upon the facts of the case being brought to their knowledge,—a course of procedure which was to have been expected from a nation with whom we are at peace, and which was not more due to the rights of the United States, than to its own regard to justice. The correspondence which passed between the Department of State and the British Envoy, Mr. Fox, and with the governor of Vermont, as soon as the facts had been made known to this Department, are herewith communicated.

I regret that it is not in my power to make known to you an equally satisfactory conclusion in the case of the Caroline steamer; with the circumstances connected with the destruction of which, in December, 1837, by an armed force fitted out in the province of Upper Canada, you are already made acquainted. No such atonement as was due for the public wrong done to the United States by this invasion of her territory, so wholly irreconcilable with her rights as an independent power, has yet been made. In the view taken by this government, the inquiry whether the vessel was in the employment of those who were prosecuting an unauthorized war against that

province, or was engaged by the owner in the business of transporting passengers to and from Navy Island in hopes of private gain, which was most probably the case, in no degree alters the real question at issue between the two governments. The government can never concede to any foreign government the power, except in a case of the most urgent and extreme necessity, of invading its territory, either to arrest the persons or destroy the property of those who may have violated the municipal laws of such foreign government, or have disregarded their obligations arising under the law of nations. The territory of the United States must be regarded as sacredly secure against all such invasions, until they shall voluntarily acknowledge their inability to acquit themselves of their duties to others. And in announcing this sentiment, I do but affirm a principle which no nation on earth would be more ready to vindicate, at all hazards, than the people and government of Great Britain.

If, upon a full investigation of all the facts, it shall appear that the owner of the *Caroline* was governed by a hostile intent, or had made common cause with those who were in the occupancy of Navy Island, then, so far as he is concerned, there can be no claim to indemnity for the destruction of his boat, which this government would feel itself bound to prosecute, since he would have acted not only in derogation of the rights of Great Britain, but in clear violation of the laws of the United States; but that is a question which, however settled, in no manner involves the higher consideration of the violation of territorial sovereignty and jurisdiction. To recognize it as an admissible practice that each government, in its turn, upon any sudden and unauthorized outbreak, which may occur on its frontier, the extent of which renders it impossible for either to have an efficient force on every mile of it, and which outbreak, therefore, neither may be able to suppress in a day, may take vengeance into its own hands, and without even a remonstrance, and in the absence of any pressing or overruling necessity, may invade the territory of the other, would inevitably lead to results equally to be deplored by both. When border collisions come to receive the sanction, or to be made on the authority of

either government, general war must be the inevitable result. While it is the ardent desire of the United States to cultivate the relations of peace with all nations, and to fulfil all the duties of good neighborhood toward those who possess territories adjoining their own, that very desire would lead them to deny the right of any foreign power to invade their boundary with an armed force.

The correspondence between the two governments on this subject, will, at a future day of your session, be submitted to your consideration; and in the mean time I cannot but indulge the hope that the British government will see the propriety of renouncing, as a rule of future action, the precedent which has been set in the affair at Schlosser.

I herewith submit the correspondence which has recently taken place between the American Minister at the Court of St. James, Mr. Stevenson, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of that government, on the right claimed by that government to visit and detain vessels sailing under the American flag and engaged in prosecuting lawful commerce in the African seas. Our commercial interests in that region have experienced considerable increase and have become an object of much importance, and it is the duty of this government to protect them against all improper and vexatious interruption.

However desirous the United States may be for the suppression of the slave trade, they cannot consent to interpolations into the maritime code, at the mere will and pleasure of other governments. We deny the right of any such interpolation to any one, or all the nations of the earth, without our consent. We claim to have a voice in all amendments or alterations of that code; and when we are given to understand, as in this instance, by a foreign government, that its treaties with other nations cannot be executed without the establishment and enforcement of new principles of maritime police, to be applied without our consent, we must employ a language neither of equivocal import, nor susceptible of misconstruction.

American citizens, prosecuting a lawful commerce in the African seas, under the flag of their country, are not responsible for the abuse or unlawful use of that flag by others nor can they rightfully, on account of any such

alleged abuses, be interrupted, molested or detained while on the ocean; and if thus molested or detained, while pursuing honest voyages, in the usual way, and violating no law themselves, they are unquestionably entitled to indemnity. This government has manifested its repugnance to the slave trade, in a manner which cannot be misunderstood; by its fundamental law, its prescribed limits in point of time to its continuance; and against its own citizens, who might so far forget the rights of humanity as to engage in that wicked traffic, it has long since, by its municipal laws, denounced the most condign punishment. Many of the states composing this Union, had made appeals to the civilized world for its suppression long before the moral sense of other nations had become shocked by the iniquities of the traffic. Whether this government should now enter into treaties containing mutual stipulations upon this subject, is a question for its mature deliberation. Certain it is that if the right to detain American ships on the high seas can be justified on the plea of a necessity for such detention, arising out of the existence of treaties between other nations, the same plea may be extended and enlarged by the new stipulations of new treaties, to which the United States may not be a party. This government will not cease to urge upon that of Great Britain full and ample remuneration for all losses, whether arising from detention or otherwise, to which American citizens have heretofore been, or may hereafter be subjected, by the exercise of rights which this government cannot recognize as legitimate and proper. Nor will I indulge a doubt but that the sense of justice of Great Britain will constrain her to make retribution for any wrong, or loss, which any American citizen, engaged in the prosecution of lawful commerce, may have experienced at the hand of her cruisers, or other public authorities. This government, at the same time, will relax no effort to prevent its citizens, if there be any so disposed, from prosecuting a traffic so revolting to the feelings of humanity. It seeks to do no more than to protect the fair and honest trader, from molestation and injury; but while the enterprising mariner, engaged in the pursuit of an honorable trade, is entitled to its pro-

tection, it will visit with condign punishment others of an opposite character.

I invite your attention to existing laws for the suppression of the African slave trade, and recommend all such alterations as may give to them greater force and efficacy. That the American flag is grossly abused by the abandoned and profligate of other nations, is but too probable.

Congress has, not long since, had this subject under its consideration, and its importance well justifies renewed and anxious attention.

I also communicate herewith the copy of a correspondence between Mr. Stevenson and Lord Palmerston, upon the subject, so interesting to several of the southern states, of the rice duties, which resulted honorably to the justice of Great Britain, and advantageously to the United States.

At the opening of the last annual session, the president informed Congress of the progress which had then been made in negotiating a convention between this government and that of England, with a view to the final settlement of the question of the boundary between the territorial limits of the two countries. I regret to say that little further advancement of the object has been accomplished since last year; but this is owing to circumstances no way indicative of any abatement of the desire of both parties to hasten the negotiation to its conclusion, and to settle the question in dispute as early as possible. In the course of the session, it is my hope to be able to announce some further degree of progress towards the accomplishment of this highly desirable end.

The commission appointed by this government for the exploration and survey of the line of boundary separating the states of Maine and New Hampshire from the contiguous British provinces, is, it is believed, about to close its field of labors, and is expected soon to report the result of its examinations to the Department of State. The report, when received, will be laid before Congress.

The failure on the part of Spain to pay with punctuality the interest due under the convention of 1834, for the settlement of claims between the two countries, has made it the duty of the executive to call the particular attention

of that government to the subject. A disposition has been manifested by it, which is believed to be entirely sincere, to fulfil its obligations in this respect, so soon as its internal condition and the state of its finances will permit. An arrangement is in progress, from the result of which it is trusted that those of our citizens under the convention, will at no distant day receive the stipulated payments.

A treaty of commerce and navigation with Belgium was concluded and signed at Washington, on the 29th March, 1840, and was duly sanctioned by the Senate of the United States. The treaty was ratified by His Belgian Majesty, but did not receive the approbation of the Belgian Chambers within the time limited by its terms, and has therefore become void.

This occurrence assumes the graver aspect from the consideration that, in 1833, a treaty negotiated between the two governments, and ratified on the part of the United States, failed to be ratified on the part of Belgium. The representative of that government at Washington, informs the Department of State that he had been instructed to give explanations of the causes which occasioned delay in the approval of the late treaty by the legislature, and to express the regret of the king at the occurrence.

The joint commission under the convention with Texas, to ascertain the true boundary between the two countries, has concluded its labors; but the final report of the commissioner of the United States has not been received. It is understood, however, that the meridian line, as traced by the commission, lies somewhat farther east than the position hitherto assigned to it, and consequently includes in Texas some part of the territory which had been considered as belonging to the states of Louisiana and Arkansas.

The United States cannot but take a deep interest in whatever relates to this young, but growing republic. Settled principally by emigrants from the United States, we have the happiness to know that the great principles of civil liberty are there destined to flourish, under wise institutions and wholesome laws; and that, through its example, another evidence is to be afforded of the capa-

city of popular institutions to advance the prosperity, happiness, and permanent glory of the human race. The great truth, that government was made for the people, and not the people for government, has already been established in the practice and by the example of these United States ; and we can do no other than contemplate its farther exemplification by a sister republic with the deepest interest.

Our relations with the independent states of this hemisphere, formerly under the dominion of Spain, have not undergone any material change within the past year. The incessant sanguinary conflicts in, or between those countries, are to be greatly deplored, as necessarily tending to disable them from performing their duties as members of the community of nations, and rising to the destiny which the position and natural resources of many of them might lead them justly to anticipate ; as constantly giving occasion, also, directly or indirectly, for complaints on the parts of our citizens who resort thither for purposes of commercial intercourse, and as retarding reparation for wrongs already committed, some of which are by no means of recent date.

The failure of the Congress of Ecuador to hold a session, at the time appointed for that purpose, in January last, will probably render abortive a treaty of commerce with that republic, which was signed at Quito on the 13th of June, 1839, and has been duly ratified on our part, but which required the approbation of that body, prior to its ratification by the Ecuadorian executive.

A convention which has been concluded with the republic of Peru, providing for the settlement of certain claims of citizens of the United States upon the government of that republic, will be duly submitted to the Senate. The claims of our citizens against the Brazilian government, originating from captures, and other causes, are still unsatisfied. The United States have, however, so uniformly shown a disposition to cultivate relations of amity with that empire, that it is hoped the unequivocal tokens of the same spirit towards us, which an adjustment of the affairs referred to would afford, will be given without further avoidable delay.

The war with the Indian tribes on the peninsula of Florida has, during the last summer and fall, been prosecuted with untiring activity and zeal. A summer campaign was resolved upon, as the best mode of bringing it to a close. Our brave officers and men who have been engaged in that service, have suffered toils and privations, and exhibited an energy, which, in any other war, would have won for them unfading laurels. In despite of the sickness incident to the climate, they have penetrated the fastnesses of the Indians, broken up their encampments, and harassed them unceasingly. Numbers have been captured, and still greater numbers have surrendered, and have been transported to join their brethren on the lands elsewhere allotted to them by the government,—and a strong hope is entertained that, under the conduct of the gallant officer at the head of the troops in Florida, that troublesome and expensive war is destined to a speedy termination. With all the other Indian tribes we are enjoying the blessings of peace. Our duty, as well as our best interests, prompt us to observe, in all our intercourse with them, fidelity in fulfilling our engagements, the practice of strict justice, as well as the constant exercise of acts of benevolence and kindness. These are the great instruments of civilization, and through the use of them alone can the untutored child of the forest be induced to listen to its teachings.

The Secretary of State, on whom the acts of Congress have devolved the duty of directing the proceedings for the taking of the sixth census, or enumeration of the inhabitants of the United States, will report to the two houses the progress of that work. The enumeration of persons has been completed, and exhibits a grand total of 17,069,453; making an increase over the census of 1830, of 4,292,646 inhabitants, and showing a gain in a ratio exceeding $32\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. for the last ten years.

From the report of the Secretary of the Treasury, you will be informed of the condition of the finances. The balance in the treasury on the 1st of January last, as stated in the report of the Secretary of the Treasury, submitted to Congress at the extra session, was \$987,345 03. The receipts into the treasury, during the first

three quarters of this year, from all sources, amount to \$23,467,052,52. The estimated receipts for the fourth quarter amount to \$6,943,095 25; amounting to \$30,410,167 77; and making, with the balance in the treasury, on the 1st of January last, \$31,397,512 80. The expenditures for the first three quarters of this year, amount to \$24,734,346 97. The expenditures for the fourth quarter, as is estimated, will amount to \$7,290,723 73:—thus making a total of \$32,025,070 70; and leaving a deficit to be provided for, on the first of January next, of about \$627,557 90.

Of the loan of \$12,000,000, which was authorized by Congress at its late session, only \$5,252,726 88 have been negotiated. The shortness of time which it had to run has presented no inconsiderable impediment in the way of its being taken by capitalists at home, while the same cause would have operated with much greater force in the foreign market. For that reason the foreign market has not been resorted to: and it is now submitted, whether it would not be advisable to amend the law by making what remains undisposed of, payable at a more distant day.

Should it be necessary, in any view that Congress may take of the subject, to revise the existing tariff of duties, I beg leave to say, that, in the performance of that most delicate operation, moderate counsels would seem to be the wisest. The government under which it is our happiness to live, owes its existence to the spirit of compromise which prevailed among its framers; jarring and discordant opinions could only have been reconciled by that noble spirit of patriotism which prompted conciliation, and resulted in harmony. In the same spirit the compromise bill, as it is commonly called, was adopted at the session in 1833. While the people of all portions of the Union will never hesitate to pay all necessary taxes for the support of government, yet an innate repugnance exists to the imposition of burthens not really necessary for that object. In imposing duties, however, for the purposes of revenue, a right to discriminate as to the articles on which the duty shall be laid, as well as the amount, necessarily and most properly exists.

Otherwise the government would be placed in the con-

dition of having the same duties upon all articles, the productive as well as the unproductive. The slightest duty upon some, might have the effect of causing their importation to cease, whereas others entering extensively into the consumption of the country, might bear the heaviest, without any sensible diminution in the amount imported. So also the government might be justified in so discriminating, by reference to other considerations of domestic policy connected with our manufactories. So long as the duties shall be laid with reference to the wants of the treasury, no well founded objection can exist against them. It might be esteemed desirable that no such augmentation of taxes should take place, as would have the effect of annulling the ~~and~~ proceeds distribution act of the last session, which act is declared to be inoperative the moment the duties are increased beyond 20 per cent., the maximum rate established by the compromise act.

Some of the provisions of the compromise act, which will go into effect on the 30th day of June next, may, however, be found exceedingly inconvenient in practice, under any regulations that Congress may adopt. I refer more particularly to that relating to the home valuation. A difference in value of the same articles, to some extent, will, necessarily, exist at different ports; but that is altogether insignificant, when compared with the conflicts in valuation, which are likely to arise, from the differences of opinion among the numerous appraisers of merchandise. In many instances the estimates of value must be conjectural; and thus, as many different rates of value may be established as there are appraisers. These differences in valuation may also be increased by the inclination, which, without the slightest imputation on their honesty, may arise on the part of appraisers, in favor of their respective ports of entry. I recommend this whole subject to the consideration of Congress, with a single additional remark. Certainty and permanency in any system of governmental policy are, in all respects, eminently desirable; but more particularly is this true in all that affects trade and commerce, the operations of which depend much more on the certainty of their returns, and

calculations which embrace distant periods of time, than on high bounties, or duties, which are liable to constant fluctuations.

At your late session, I invited your attention to the condition of the currency and exchanges, and urged the necessity of adopting such measures as were consistent with the constitutional competency of the government, in order to correct the unsoundness of the one, and, as far as practical, the inequalities of the other. No country can be in the enjoyment of its full measure of prosperity without the presence of a medium of exchange, approximating to uniformity of value. What is necessary as between the different nations of the earth, is also important as between the inhabitants of different parts of the same country: with the first the precious metals constitute the chief medium of circulation, and such also would be the case as to the last, but for inventions comparatively modern, which have furnished, in place of gold and silver, a paper circulation.

I do not propose to enter into a comparative analysis of the merits of the two systems. Such belonged more properly to the period of the introduction of the paper system. The speculative philosopher might find inducements to prosecute the inquiry, but his researches could only lead him to conclude that the paper system had probably better never have been introduced, and that society might have been much happier without it. The practical statesmen has a very different task to perform. He has to look at things as they are—to take them as he finds them—to supply deficiencies and to prune excesses as far as in him lies. The task of furnishing a corrective for derangements of the paper medium with us, is almost inexpressibly great. The power exerted by the states to charter banking corporations, and which, having been carried to a great excess, has filled the country with, in most of the states, an irredeemable paper medium, is an evil which, in some way or other, requires a corrective. The rates at which bills of exchange are negotiated between different parts of the country, furnish an index of the value of the local substitute for gold and silver, which is in many parts so depreciated as not to be received ex-

cept at a large discount, in payment of debts, or in the purchase of produce. It could earnestly be desired that every bank, not possessing the means of resumption, should follow the example of the late United States Bank of Pennsylvania, and go into liquidation, rather than, by refusing to do so, to continue embarrassments in the way of solvent institutions, thereby augmenting the difficulties incident to the present condition of things.

Whether this government, with due regard to the rights of the states, has any power to constrain the banks either to resume specie payments, or to force them into liquidation, is an inquiry that will not fail to claim your consideration. In view of the great advantages that are allowed the corporators, not among the least of which is the authority contained in most of their charters to make loans to three times the amount of their capital, thereby often deriving three times as much interest on the same amount of money as any individual is permitted by law to receive, no sufficient apology can be urged for a long-continued suspension of specie payments. Such suspension is productive of the greatest detriment to the public, by expelling from circulation the precious metals, and seriously hazarding the success of any effort that this government can make to increase commercial facilities, and to advance the public interests.

This is the more to be regretted, and the indispensable necessity of a sound currency becomes the more manifest, when we reflect on the vast amount of the internal commerce of the country. Of this we have no statistics nor just data for forming adequate opinions. But there can be no doubt but that the amount of transportation coastwise by sea, and the transportation inland by railroads and canals, and by steamboats and other modes of conveyance, over the surface of our vast rivers and immense lakes, and the value of property carried and interchanged by these means, form a general aggregate, to which the foreign commerce of the country, large as it is, makes but a distant approach.

In the absence of any controlling power over this subject, which, by forcing a general resumption of specie payments, would at once have the effect of restoring a

sound medium of exchange, and would leave to the country but little to desire, what measure of relief, falling within the limits of our constitutional competency, does it become this government to adopt? It was my painful duty, at your last session, under the weight of most solemn obligations, to differ with Congress on the measures which it proposed for my approval, and which it doubtless regarded as corrective of existing evils. Subsequent reflection, and events since occurring, have only served to confirm me in the opinions then entertained and frankly expressed.

I must be permitted to add, that no scheme of governmental policy, unaided by individual exertions, can be available for ameliorating the present condition of things. Commercial modes of exchange and a good currency are but the necessary means of commerce and intercourse, not the direct productive sources of wealth. Wealth can only be accumulated by the earnings of industry and the savings of frugality; and nothing can be more ill-judged than to look to facilities in borrowing, or to a redundant circulation, for the power of discharging pecuniary obligations. The country is full of resources, and the people full of energy, and the great and permanent remedy for the present embarrassments must be sought in industry, economy, the observance of good faith, and the favorable influence of time.

In pursuance of a pledge given to you in my last message to Congress, which pledge I urge as an apology for adventuring to present you the details of any plan, the Secretary of the Treasury will be ready to submit to you, should you require it, a plan of finance, which, while it throws around the public treasure reasonable guards for its protection and rests on powers acknowledged in practice to exist from the origin of the government, will at the same time furnish to the country a sound paper medium, and afford all reasonable facilities for regulating the exchanges. When submitted, you will perceive in it a plan amendatory of the existing laws in relation to the treasury department—subordinate in all respects to the will of Congress directly, and the will of the people indirectly—self-sustaining, should it be found in practice

to realize its promises in theory, and repealable at the pleasure of Congress.

It proposes, by effectual restraints, and by invoking the true spirit of our institutions, to separate the purse from the sword; or, more properly to speak, denies any other control to the president over the agents who may be selected to carry it into execution, but what may be indispensably necessary to secure the fidelity of such agents; and, by wise regulations, keeps plainly apart from each other private and public funds. It contemplates the establishment of a board of control, at the seat of government, with agencies at prominent commercial points, or wherever else Congress shall direct, for the safe-keeping and disbursement of the public moneys, and the substitution, at the option of the public creditor, of treasury notes, in lieu of gold and silver. It proposes to limit the issues to an amount not to exceed \$15,000,000, without the express sanction of the legislative power. It also authorizes the receipt of individual deposits of gold and silver to a limited amount, and the granting certificates of deposit, divided into such sums as may be called for by the depositors. It proceeds a step farther, and authorizes the purchase and sale of domestic bills and drafts, resting on a real and substantial basis, payable at sight, or having but a short time to run, and drawn on places not less than a hundred miles apart; which authority, except in so far as may be necessary for government purposes exclusively, is only to be exerted upon the express condition that its exercise shall not be prohibited by the state in which the agency is situated.

In order to cover the expenses incident to the plan, it will be authorized to receive moderate premiums, for certificates issued on deposits, and on bills bought and sold and thus, as far as its dealings extend, to furnish facilities to commercial intercourse at the lowest possible rates, and to subduct from the earnings of industry the least possible sum. It uses the state banks at a distance from the agencies, as auxiliaries, without imparting any power to trade in its name. It is subjected to such guards and restraints as have appeared to be necessary. It is the creature of law, and exists only at the pleasure of the

legislature. It is made to rest on an actual specie basis, in order to redeem the notes at the place of issue; produces no dangerous redundancy of circulation; affords no temptation to speculation; is attended by no inflation of prices; is equable in its operation; makes the treasury notes, which it may use along with the certificates of deposit and the notes of specie-paying banks, convertible at the place where collected, receivable in payment of government dues; and, without violating any principle of the constitution, affords the government and the people such facilities as are called for by the wants of both. Such, it has appeared to me, are its recommendations, and in view of them it will be submitted, whenever you may require it, to your consideration.

I am not able to perceive that any fair and candid objection can be urged against the plan, the principal outlines of which I have thus presented. I cannot doubt but that the notes which it proposes to furnish, at the voluntary option of the public creditor, issued in lieu of the revenue and its certificates of deposit, will be maintained at an equality with gold and silver everywhere. They are redeemable in gold and silver on demand, at the places of issue. They are receivable everywhere in payment of government dues. The treasury notes are limited to an amount of one fourth less than the estimated annual receipts of the treasury, and, in addition, they rest upon the faith of the government for their redemption. If all these assurances are not sufficient to make them available, then the idea, as it seems to me, of furnishing a sound paper medium of exchanges, may be entirely abandoned.

If a fear be indulged that the government may be tempted to run into excess in its issues at any future day, it seems to me that no such apprehension can reasonably be entertained, until all confidence in the representatives of the states and of the people, as well as of the people themselves, shall be lost. The weightiest considerations of policy require that the restraints now proposed to be thrown around the measure, should not, for light causes, be removed. To argue against any proposed plan its liability to possible abuse, is to reject every expedient,

since everything dependent on human action is liable to abuse. Fifteen millions of treasury notes may be issued as the *maximum*, but a discretionary power is to be given to the board of control, under that sum, and every consideration will unite in leading them to feel their way with caution. For the first eight years of the existence of the late bank of the United States, its circulation barely exceeded \$4,000,000, and for five of its most prosperous years, it was about equal to \$16,000,000. Furthermore, the authority given to receive private deposits to a limited amount, and to issue certificates in such sums as may be called for by the depositors, may so far fill up the channels of circulation as greatly to diminish the necessity of any considerable issue of treasury notes.

A restraint upon the amount of private deposits, has seemed to be indispensably necessary, from an apprehension, thought to be well founded, that in any emergency of trade, confidence might be so far shaken in the banks as to induce a withdrawal from them of private deposits, with a view to insure their unquestionable safety when deposited with the government, which might prove eminently disastrous to the state banks. Is it objected that it is proposed to authorize the agencies to deal in bills of exchange? It is answered that such dealings are to be carried on at the lowest possible premium, are made to rest on an unquestionably sound basis, are designed to reimburse merely the expenses which would otherwise devolve upon the treasury, and are in strict subordination to the decision of the Supreme Court, in the case of the bank of Augusta against Earle, and other reported cases; and thereby avoids all conflict with state jurisdiction, which I hold to be indispensably requisite. It leaves the banking privileges of the states without interference; looks to the treasury, and the Union; and, while furnishing every facility to the first, is careful of the interests of the last.

But above all, it is created by law, is amendable by law, and is repealable by law; and, wedded as I am to no theory, but looking solely to the advancement of the public good, I shall be among the very first to urge its repeal if it be found not to subserve the purposes and objects for

which it may be created. Nor will the plan be submitted in any overweening confidence in the sufficiency of my own judgment, but with much greater reliance on the wisdom and patriotism of Congress. I cannot abandon this subject without urging upon you, in the most emphatic manner, whatever may be your action on the suggestions which I have felt it to be my duty to submit, to relieve the chief executive magistrate, by any and all constitutional means, from a controlling power over the public treasury. If, in the plan proposed, should you deem it worthy of your consideration, that separation is not as complete as you may desire, you will, doubtless, amend it in that particular. For myself, I disclaim all desire to have any control over the public moneys, other than what is indispensably necessary to execute the laws which you may pass.

Nor can I fail to advert, in this connection, to the debts which many of the states of the Union have contracted abroad, and under which they continue to labor. That indebtedness amounts to a sum not less than \$200,000,000, and which has been retributed to them, for the most part in works of internal improvement, which are destined to prove of vast importance in ultimately advancing their prosperity and wealth. For the debts thus contracted, the states are alone responsible. I can do no more than express the belief that each state will feel itself bound by every consideration of honor, as well as of interest, to meet its engagements with punctuality. The failure, however, of any one state to do so, should in no degree affect the credit of the rest; and the foreign capitalists will have no just cause to experience alarm as to all other state stocks, because any one or more of the states may neglect to provide with punctuality the means of redeeming their engagements. Even such states, should there be any, considering the great rapidity with which their resources are developing themselves, will not fail to have the means, at no very distant day, to redeem their obligations to the uttermost farthing; nor will I doubt but that, in view of that honorable conduct which has evermore governed the states, and the people of this Union, they will each and all resort to every legitimate expe-

dient, before they will forego a faithful compliance with their obligations.

From the report of the Secretary of War, and other reports accompanying it, you will be informed of the progress which has been made in the fortifications designed for the protection of our principal cities, roadsteads, and inland frontier, during the present year, together with their true state and condition. They will be prosecuted to completion with all the expedition which the means placed by Congress at the disposal of the executive will allow.

I recommend particularly to your consideration that portion of the secretary's report which proposes the establishment of a chain of military posts from Council Bluffs to some point on the Pacific Ocean, within our limits. The benefit thereby destined to accrue to our citizens engaged in the fur trade over that wilderness region added to the importance of cultivating friendly relations with savage tribes inhabiting it, and at the same time of giving protection to our frontier settlements, and of establishing the means of safe intercourse between the American settlements at the mouth of the Columbia River, and those on this side of the Rocky Mountains, would seem to suggest the importance of carrying into effect the recommendations upon this head with as little delay as may be practicable.

The report of the Secretary of the Navy, will place you in possession of the present condition of that important arm of the national defence. Every effort will be made to add to its efficiency, and I cannot too strongly urge upon you liberal appropriations to that branch of the public service. Inducements of the weightiest character exist for the adoption of this course of policy. Our extended and otherwise exposed maritime frontier, calls for protection, to the furnishing of which an efficient naval force is indispensable. We look to no foreign conquests, nor do we propose to enter into competition with any other nation for supremacy on the ocean; but it is due not only to the honor, but to the security of the people of the United States, that no nation should be permitted to invade our waters at pleasure, and subject our towns and villages

to conflagration or pillage. Economy in all branches of the public service, is due from all the public agents to the people—but parsimony alone would suggest the withholding of the necessary means for the protection of our domestic firesides from invasion, and our national honor from disgrace. I would most earnestly recommend to Congress to abstain from all appropriations for objects not absolutely necessary; but I take upon myself, without a moment of hesitancy, all the responsibility of recommending the increase and prompt equipment of that gallant navy which has lighted up every sea with its victories, and spread an imperishable glory over the country.

The report of the Postmaster General will claim your particular attention, not only because of the valuable suggestions which it contains, but because of the great importance which, at all times, attaches to that interesting branch of the public service. The increased expense of transporting the mail along the principal routes, necessarily claims the public attention, and has awakened a corresponding solicitude on the part of the government. The transmission of the mail must keep pace with those facilities of intercommunication which are every day becoming greater through the building of railroads and the application of steam power; but it cannot be disguised that, in order to do so, the post office department is subjected to heavy exactions. The lines of communication between distant parts of the Union, are, to a great extent, occupied by railroads, which in the nature of things, possess a complete monopoly, and the department is therefore liable to heavy and unreasonable charges. This evil is destined to greatly increase in future, and some timely measure may become necessary to guard against it.

I feel it my duty to bring under your consideration a practice which has grown up in the administration of the government, and which, I am deeply convinced, ought to be corrected. I allude to the exercise of the power, which usage, rather than reason, has vested in the president, of removing incumbents from office, in order to substitute others more in favor with the dominant party. My own conduct in this respect, has been governed by a conscientious purpose to exercise the removing power,

only in cases of unfaithfulness or inability, or in those in which the exercise appeared necessary, in order to discountenance and suppress that spirit of active partisanship on the part of the holders of office, which not only withdraws them from the steady and impartial discharge of their official duties, but exerts an undue and injurious influence over elections, and degrades the character of the government itself, inasmuch as it exhibits the chief magistrate as being a party, through his agents, in the secret plots or open workings of political parties.

In respect to the exercise of this power, nothing should be left to discretion which may safely be regulated by law; and it is of high importance to restrain, as far as possible, the stimulus of personal interests in public elections. Considering the great increase which has been made in public offices in the last quarter of a century, and the probability of farther increase, we incur the hazard of witnessing violent political contests, directed too often to the single object of retaining office by those who are in, or obtaining it by those who are out. Under the influence of these convictions, I shall cordially concur in any constitutional measure for regulating, and by regulating, restraining the power of removal.

I suggest for your consideration, the propriety of making, without further delay, some specific application of the funds derived under the will of Mr. Smithson, of England, for the diffusion of knowledge; and which have, heretofore, been vested in public stocks, until such time as Congress should think proper to give them a specific direction. Nor will you, I feel confident, permit any abatement of the principal of the legacy to be made, should it turn out that the stocks, in which the investments have been made, have undergone a depreciation.

In conclusion, I commend to your care the interests of this District, for which you are the exclusive legislators. Considering that this city is the residence of the government, and for a large part of the year, of Congress, and considering, also, the great cost of the public buildings, and the propriety of affording them at all times careful protection, it seems not unreasonable that Congress should contribute toward the expense of an efficient police.

POLK'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

MARCH 4, 1845.

Fellow-Citizens :

WITHOUT solicitation on my part, I have been chosen by the free and voluntary suffrages of my countrymen to the most honorable and most responsible office on earth. I am deeply impressed with gratitude for the confidence reposed in me. Honored with this distinguished consideration at an earlier period of life than any of my predecessors, I cannot disguise the diffidence with which I am about to enter on the discharge of my official duties.

If the more aged and experienced men who have filled the office of President of the United States, even in the infancy of the republic, distrusted their ability to discharge the duties of that exalted station, what ought not to be the apprehensions of one so much younger and less endowed, now that our domain extends from ocean to ocean, that our people have so greatly increased in numbers, and at a time when so great diversity of opinion prevails in regard to the principles and policy which should characterize the administration of our government? Well may the boldest fear, and the wisest tremble, when incurring responsibilities on which may depend our country's peace and prosperity, and, in some degree, the hopes and happiness of the whole human family.

In assuming responsibilities so vast, I fervently invoke the aid of that Almighty Ruler of the Universe, in whose hands are the destinies of nations and of men, to guard this heaven-favored land against the mischiefs which, without his guidance, might arise from an unwise public policy. With a firm reliance upon the wisdom of Omnipotence to sustain and direct me in the path of duty which I am appointed to pursue, I stand in the presence of this assembled multitude of my countrymen, to take upon myself the solemn obligation, "to the best of my ability, to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States."

A concise enumeration of the principles which will guide

me in the administrative policy of the government, is not only in accordance with the examples set me by all my predecessors, but is eminently befitting the occasion.

The constitution itself, plainly written as it is, the safeguard of our federative compact, the offspring of concession and compromise, binding together in the bonds of peace and union this great and increasing family of free and independent States, will be the chart by which I shall be directed.

It will be my first care to administer the government in the true spirit of that instrument, and to assume no powers not expressly granted, or clearly implied in its terms. The government of the United States is one of delegated and limited powers; and it is by a strict adherence to the clearly granted powers, and by abstaining from the exercise of doubtful or unauthorized implied powers, that we have the only sure guaranty against the recurrence of those unfortunate collisions between the Federal and State authorities, which have occasionally so much disturbed the harmony of our system, and even threatened the perpetuity of our glorious Union.

“To the States respectively, or to the people,” have been reserved “the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States.” Each State is a complete sovereignty within the sphere of its reserved powers. The government of the Union, acting within the sphere of its delegated authority, is also a complete sovereignty. While the general government should abstain from the exercise of authority not clearly delegated to it, the States should be equally careful that, in the maintenance of their rights, they do not overstep the limits of powers reserved to them. One of the most distinguished of my predecessors attached deserved importance to “the support of the State governments in all their rights, as the most competent administration for our domestic concerns, and the surest bulwark against anti-republican tendencies;” and to the “preservation of the general government in its whole constitutional vigor, as the sheet-anchor of our peace at home and safety abroad.”

To the government of the United States has been intrusted the exclusive management of our foreign affairs.

Beyond that, it wields a few general enumerated powers. It does not force reform on the States. It leaves individuals, over whom it casts its protecting influence, entirely free to improve their own condition by the legitimate exercise of all their mental and physical powers. It is a common protector of each and all the States; of every man who lives upon our soil, whether of native or foreign birth; of every religious sect, in their worship of the Almighty according to the dictates of their own conscience; of every shade of opinion, and the most free inquiry; of every art, trade, and occupation, consistent with the laws of the States. And we rejoice in the general happiness, prosperity, and advancement of our country, which have been the offspring of freedom, and not of power.

This most admirable and wisest system of well-regulated self-government among men, ever devised by human minds, has been tested by its successful operation for more than half a century; and, if preserved from the usurpations of the federal government on the one hand, and the exercise by the States of powers not reserved to them on the other, will, I fervently hope and believe, endure for ages to come, and dispense the blessings of civil and religious liberty to distant generations. To effect objects so dear to every patriot, I shall devote myself with anxious solicitude. It will be my desire to guard against that most fruitful source of danger to the harmonious action of our system, which consists in substituting the mere discretion and caprice of the executive, or of majorities in the legislative department of the government, for powers which have been withheld from the federal government by the constitution. By the theory of our government, majorities rule; but this right is not an arbitrary or unlimited one. It is a right to be exercised in subordination to the constitution, and in conformity to it. One great object of the constitution was to restrain majorities from oppressing minorities, or encroaching upon their just rights. Minorities have a right to appeal to the constitution, as a shield against such oppression.

That the blessings of liberty which our constitution secures may be enjoyed alike by minorities and majorities, the executive has been wisely invested with a qualified veto upon the acts of the Legislature. It is a negative power, and is

conservative in its character. It arrests for a time, hasty, inconsiderate, or unconstitutional legislation; invites reconsideration, and transfers questions at issue between the legislative and executive departments to the tribunal of the people. Like all other powers, it is subject to be abused. When judiciously and properly exercised, the constitution itself may be saved from infraction, and the rights of all preserved and protected.

The inestimable value of our federal Union is felt and acknowledged by all. By this system of united and confederated States, our people are permitted, collectively and individually, to seek their own happiness in their own way; and the consequences have been most auspicious. Since the Union was formed, the number of the States has increased from thirteen to twenty-eight: two of these have taken their positions as members of the confederacy within the last week. Our population has increased from three to twenty millions. New communities and states are seeking protection under its ægis, and multitudes from the Old World are flocking to our shores to participate in its blessings. Beneath its benign sway, peace and prosperity prevail. Freed from the burdens and miseries of war, our trade and intercourse have extended throughout the world. Mind, no longer tasked in devising means to accomplish or resist schemes of ambition, usurpation, or conquest, is devoting itself to man's true interest, in developing his faculties and powers, and the capacity of nature to minister to his enjoyments. Genius is free to announce its inventions and discoveries; and the hand is free to accomplish whatever the head conceives, not incompatible with the rights of a fellow-being. All distinctions of birth or of rank have been abolished. All citizens, whether native or adopted, are placed upon terms of precise equality. All are entitled to equal rights and equal protection. No union exists between church and state, and perfect freedom of opinion is guaranteed to all sects and creeds.

These are some of the blessings secured to our happy land by our federal Union. To perpetuate them, it is our sacred duty to preserve it. Who shall assign limits to the achievements of free minds and free hands, under the protection of this glorious Union? No treason to mankind,

since the organization of society, would be equal in atrocity to that of him who would lift his hand to destroy it. He would overthrow the noblest structure of human wisdom, which protects himself and his fellow-man. He would stop the progress of free government, and involve his country either in anarchy or despotism. He would extinguish the fire of liberty which warms and animates the hearts of happy millions, and invites all the nations of the earth to imitate our example. If he say that error and wrong are committed in the administration of the government, let him remember that nothing human can be perfect; and that under no other system of government revealed by Heaven, or devised by man, has reason been allowed so free and broad a scope to combat error. Has the sword of despots proved to be a safer or surer instrument of reform in government than enlightened reason? Does he expect to find among the ruins of this Union a happier abode for our swarming millions than they now have under it? Every lover of his country must shudder at the thought of the possibility of its dissolution, and will be ready to adopt the patriotic sentiment, "Our federal Union—it must be preserved." To preserve it, the compromises which alone enabled our fathers to form a common constitution for the government and protection of so many States and distinct communities, of such diversified habits, interests, and domestic institutions, must be sacredly and religiously observed. Any attempt to disturb or destroy these compromises, being terms of the compact of Union, can lead to none other than the most ruinous and disastrous consequences.

It is a source of deep regret that, in some sections of our country, misguided persons have occasionally indulged in schemes and agitations, whose object is the destruction of domestic institutions existing in other sections—institutions which existed at the adoption of the constitution, and were recognized and protected by it. All must see that if it were possible for them to be successful in attaining their object, the dissolution of the Union, and the consequent destruction of our happy form of government, must speedily follow.

I am happy to believe that at every period of our existence as a nation, there has existed, and continues to exist,

among the great mass of our people, a devotion to the Union of the states, which will shield and protect it against the moral treason of any who would seriously contemplate its destruction. To secure a continuance of that devotion, the compromises of the constitution must not only be preserved, but sectional jealousies and heart-burnings must be discountenanced; and all should remember that they are members of the same political family, having a common destiny. To increase the attachment of our people to the Union, our laws should be just. Any policy which shall tend to favor monopolies, or the peculiar interests of sections or classes, must operate to the prejudice of the interests of their fellow-citizens, and should be avoided. If the compromises of the constitution be preserved,—if sectional jealousies and heart-burnings be discountenanced,—if our laws be just, and the government be practically administered strictly within the limits of power prescribed to it,—we may discard all apprehensions for the safety of the Union.

With these views of the nature, character, and objects of the government, and the value of the Union, I shall steadily oppose the creation of those institutions and systems which, in their nature, tend to pervert it from its legitimate purposes, and make it the instrument of sections, classes, and individuals. We need no national banks, or other extraneous institutions, planted around the government to control or strengthen it in opposition to the will of its authors. Experience has taught us how unnecessary they are as auxiliaries of the public authorities, how impotent for good and how powerful for mischief.

Ours was intended to be a plain and frugal government; and I shall regard it to be my duty to recommend to Congress, and, as far as the executive is concerned, to enforce by all the means within my power, the strictest economy in the expenditure of the public money, which may be compatible with the public interest.

A national debt has become almost an institution of European monarchies. It is viewed, in some of them, as an essential prop to existing governments. Melancholy is the condition of that people whose government can be sustained only by a system which periodically transfers large amounts from the labor of the many to the coffers of the few. Such

a system is incompatible with the ends for which our republican government was instituted. Under a wise policy, the debts contracted in our revolution, and during the war of 1812, have been happily extinguished. By a judicious application of the revenues, not required for other necessary purposes, it is not doubted that the debt which has grown out of the circumstances of the last few years may be speedily paid off.

I congratulate my fellow-citizens on the entire restoration of the credit of the general government of the Union, and that of many of the States. Happy would it be for the indebted States if they were freed from their liabilities, many of which were incautiously contracted. Although the government of the Union is neither in a legal nor a moral sense bound for the debts of the States, and it would be a violation of our compact of Union to assume them, yet we cannot but feel a deep interest in seeing all the States meet their public liabilities, and pay off their just debts, at the earliest practicable period. That they will do so, as soon as it can be done without imposing too heavy burdens on their citizens, there is no reason to doubt. The sound, moral, and honorable feeling of the people of the indebted States, cannot be questioned; and we are happy to perceive a settled disposition on their part, as their ability returns, after a season of unexampled pecuniary embarrassment, to pay off all just demands, and to acquiesce in any reasonable measures to accomplish that object.

One of the difficulties which we have had to encounter in the practical administration of the government, consists in the adjustment of our revenue laws, and the levy of the taxes necessary for the support of the government. In the general proposition, that no more money shall be collected than the necessities of an economical administration shall require, all parties seem to acquiesce. Nor does there seem to be any material difference of opinion as to the absence of right in the government to tax one section of country, or one class of citizens, or one occupation, for the mere profit of another. "Justice and sound policy forbid the federal government to foster one branch of industry to the detriment of another, or to cherish the interests of one portion to the injury of another portion of our common country." I have

heretofore declared to my fellow-citizens that, in "my judgment, it is the duty of the government to extend, as far as it may be practicable to do so, by its revenue laws, and all other means within its power, fair and just protection to all the great interests of the whole Union, embracing agriculture, manufactures, the mechanic arts, commerce, and navigation." I have also declared my opinion to be "in favor of a tariff for revenue," and that, "in adjusting the details of such a tariff, I have sanctioned such moderate discriminating duties as would produce the amount of revenue needed, and, at the same time, afford reasonable incidental protection to our home industry," and that I was "opposed to a tariff for protection merely, and not for revenue."

The power "to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises," was an indispensable one to be conferred on the federal government, which, without it, would possess no means of providing for its own support. In executing this power, by levying a tariff of duties for the support of government, the raising of *revenue* should be the *object*, and *protection* the *incident*. To reverse this principle, and make *protection* the *object*, and *revenue* the *incident*, would be to reflect manifest injustice upon all other than the protected interests. In levying duties for revenue, it is doubtless proper to make such discriminations within the *revenue principle*, as will afford incidental protection to our home interests. Within the revenue limit, there is discretion to discriminate; beyond that limit, the rightful exercise of the power is not conceded. The incidental protection afforded to our home interests by discriminations within the revenue range, it is believed will be ample. In making discriminations, all our home interests should, as far as practicable, be equally protected. The largest portion of our people are agriculturists. Others are employed in manufactures, commerce, navigation, and the mechanic arts. They are all engaged in their respective pursuits, and their joint labors constitute the national or home industry. To tax one branch of this home industry for the benefit of another, would be unjust. No one of these interests can rightfully claim an advantage over the others, or to be enriched by impoverishing the others. All are equally entitled to the fostering care and protection of the government. In exercising a sound discretion in levying

discriminating duties within the limit prescribed, care should be taken that it be done in a manner not to benefit the wealthy few, at the expense of the toiling millions, by taxing *lowest* the luxuries of life, or articles of superior quality and high price, which can only be consumed by the wealthy; and *highest* the necessaries of life, or articles of coarse quality and low price, which the poor and great mass of our people must consume. The burdens of government should, as far as practicable, be distributed justly and equally among all classes of our population. These general views, long entertained on this subject, I have deemed it proper to reiterate. It is a subject upon which conflicting interests of sections and occupations are supposed to exist, and a spirit of mutual concession and compromise in adjusting its details should be cherished by every part of our wide-spread country, as the only means of preserving harmony and a cheerful acquiescence of all in the operation of our revenue laws. Our patriotic citizens in every part of the Union will readily submit to the payment of such taxes as shall be needed for the support of their government, whether in peace or in war, if they are so levied as to distribute the burdens as equally as possible among them.

The Republic of Texas has made known her desire to come into our Union, to form a part of our confederacy, and enjoy with us the blessings of liberty secured and guaranteed by our constitution. Texas was once a part of our country—was unwisely ceded away to a foreign power—is now independent and possesses an undoubted right to dispose of a part or the whole of her territory, and to merge her sovereignty, as a separate and independent State, in ours. I congratulate my country, that, by an act of the late Congress of the United States, the assent of this government has been given to the reunion; and it only remains for the two countries to agree upon the terms, to consummate an object so important to both.

I regard the question of annexation as belonging exclusively to the United States and Texas. They are independent powers, competent to contract; and foreign nations have no right to interfere with them, or to take exceptions to their reunion. Foreign powers do not seem to appreciate the true character of our government. Our Union is a con-

federation of independent States, whose policy is peace with each other and all the world. To enlarge its limits is to extend the dominion of peace over additional territories and increasing millions. The world has nothing to fear from military ambition in our government. While the chief magistrate and the popular branch of Congress are elected for short terms by the suffrages of those millions who must, in their own persons, bear all the burdens and miseries of war, our government cannot be otherwise than pacific. Foreign powers should, therefore, look on the annexation of Texas to the United States, not as the conquest of a nation seeking to extend her dominions by arms and violence, but as the peaceful acquisition of a territory once her own, by adding another member to our confederation, with the consent of that member—thereby diminishing the chances of war, and opening to them new and ever increasing markets for their products.

To Texas the reunion is important, because the strong protecting arm of our government would be extended over her, and the vast resources of her fertile soil and genial climate would be speedily developed; while the safety of New Orleans, and of our whole southwestern frontier against hostile aggression, as well as the interests of the whole Union, would be promoted by it.

In the earlier stages of our national existence, the opinion prevailed with some, that our system of confederated States could not operate successfully over an extended territory, and serious objections have, at different times, been made to the enlargement of our boundaries. These objections were earnestly urged when we acquired Louisiana. Experience has shown that they were not well founded. The title of numerous Indian tribes to vast tracts of country has been extinguished. New States have been admitted into the Union; new territories have been created, and our jurisdiction and laws extended over them. As our population has expanded, the Union has been cemented and strengthened; as our boundaries have been enlarged, and our agricultural population has been spread over a large surface, our federative system has acquired additional strength and security. It may well be doubted whether it would not be in greater danger of overthrow if our present population

were confined to the comparatively narrow limits of the original thirteen States, than it is, now that they are sparsely settled over a more expanded territory. It is confidently believed that our system may be safely extended to the utmost bounds of our territorial limits; and that, as it shall be extended, the bonds of our Union, so far from being weakened, will become stronger.

None can fail to see the danger to our safety and future peace, if Texas remains an independent State, or becomes an ally or dependency of some foreign nation more powerful than herself. Is there one among our citizens who would not prefer perpetual peace with Texas, to occasional wars, which so often occur between bordering independent nations? Is there one who would not prefer free intercourse with her, to high duties on all our products and manufactures which enter her ports or cross her frontiers? Is there one who would not prefer an unrestricted communication with her citizens, to the frontier obstructions which must occur if she remains out of the Union? Whatever is good or evil in the local institutions of Texas, will remain her own, whether annexed to the United States or not. None of the present States will be responsible for them, any more than they are for the local institutions of each other. They have confederated together for certain specified objects. Upon the same principle that they would refuse to form a perpetual union with Texas, because of her local institutions, our forefathers would have been prevented from forming our present Union. Perceiving no valid objection to the measure, and many reasons for its adoption, vitally affecting the peace, the safety, and the prosperity of both countries, I shall, on the broad principle which formed the basis and produced the adoption of our constitution, and not in any narrow spirit of sectional policy, endeavor, by all constitutional, honorable, and appropriate means, to consummate the expressed will of the people and government of the United States, by the re-annexation of Texas to our Union at the earliest practicable period.

Nor will it become in a less degree my duty to assert and maintain, by all constitutional means, the right of the United States to that portion of our territory which lies beyond the Rocky mountains. Our title to the country of the Oregon

is "clear and unquestionable;" and already are our people preparing to perfect that title, by occupying it with their wives and children. But eighty years ago, our population was confined on the West by the ridge of the Alleghanies. Within that period—within the lifetime, I might say, of some of my hearers—our people, increasing to many millions, have filled the eastern valley of the Mississippi; adventurously ascended the Missouri to its head springs; and are already engaged in establishing the blessings of self-government in valleys, of which the rivers flow to the Pacific. The world beholds the peaceful triumphs of the industry of our emigrants. To us belongs the duty of protecting them, adequately, wherever they may be upon our soil. The jurisdiction of our laws, and the benefits of our republican institutions, should be extended over them in the distant regions which they have selected for their homes. The increasing facilities of intercourse will easily bring the States, of which the formation in that part of our territory cannot be long delayed, within the sphere of our federative Union. In the mean time, every obligation imposed by treaty or conventional stipulations should be sacredly respected.

In the management of our foreign relations, it will be my aim to observe a careful respect for the rights of other nations, while our own will be the subject of constant watchfulness. Equal and exact justice should characterize all our intercourse with foreign countries. All alliances having a tendency to jeopard the welfare and honor of our country, or sacrifice any one of the national interests, will be studiously avoided; and yet no opportunity will be lost to cultivate a favorable understanding with foreign governments, by which our navigation and commerce may be extended, and the ample products of our fertile soil, as well as the manufactures of our skilful artisans, find a ready market and remunerating prices in foreign countries.

In taking "care that the laws be faithfully executed," a strict performance of duty will be exacted from all public officers. From those officers, especially, who are charged with the collection and disbursement of the public revenue, will prompt and rigid accountability be required. Any culpable failure or delay on their part to account for the moneys intrusted to them, at the times and in the manner

required by law, will, in every instance, terminate the official connection of such defaulting officer with the government.

Although, in our country, the chief magistrate must almost of necessity be chosen by a party, and stand pledged to its principles and measures, yet, in his official action, he should not be the President of a part only, but of the whole people of the United States. While he executes the laws with an impartial hand, shrinks from no proper responsibility, and faithfully carries out in the executive department of the government, the principles and policy of those who have chosen him, he should not be unmindful that our fellow-citizens who have differed with him in opinion, are entitled to the full and free exercise of their opinions and judgment, and that the rights of all are entitled to respect and regard.

Confidently relying upon the aid and assistance of the co-ordinate departments of the government in conducting our public affairs, I enter upon the discharge of the high duties which have been assigned me by the people, again humbly supplicating that Divine Being who has watched over and protected our beloved country from its infancy to the present hour, to continue his gracious benedictions upon us, that we may continue to be a prosperous and happy people.

POLK'S MEXICAN WAR MESSAGE.

MAY 11, 1846.

*To the Senate and House of
Representatives of the United States :*

THE existing state of the relations between the United States and Mexico, renders it proper that I should bring the subject to the consideration of Congress. In my message at the commencement of your present session, the state of these relations, the causes which led to the suspension of diplomatic intercourse between the two countries in March, 1845, and the long-continued and unredressed wrongs and injuries committed by the Mexican government on citizens of

the United States, in their persons and property, were briefly set forth.

As the facts and opinions which were then laid before you were carefully considered, I cannot better express my present convictions of the condition of affairs up to that time, than by referring you to that communication.

The strong desire to establish peace with Mexico, on liberal and honorable terms, and the readiness of this government to regulate and adjust our boundary, and other causes of difference with that power, on such fair and equitable principles as would lead to permanent relations of the most friendly nature, induced me, in September last, to seek the reopening of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Every measure adopted on our part had for its object the furtherance of these desired results.

In communicating to Congress a succinct statement of the injuries which we had suffered from Mexico, and which have been accumulating during a period of more than twenty years, every expression that could tend to inflame the people of Mexico, or defeat or delay a pacific result, was carefully avoided. An envoy of the United States repaired to Mexico with full powers to adjust every existing difference. But though present on the Mexican soil, by agreement between the two governments, invested with full powers, and bearing evidence of the most friendly dispositions, his mission has been unavailing. The Mexican government not only refused to receive him, or listen to his propositions, but, after a long-continued series of menaces, have at last invaded our territory, and shed the blood of our fellow-citizens on our own soil.

It now becomes my duty to state more in detail the origin, progress, and failure of that mission. In pursuance of the instructions given in September last, an inquiry was made, on the thirteenth of October, in 1845, in the most friendly terms, through our consul in Mexico, of the minister of foreign affairs, whether the Mexican government "would receive an envoy from the United States intrusted with full powers to adjust all the questions in dispute between the two governments;" with the assurance that "should the answer be in the affirmative, such an envoy would be immediately dispatched to Mexico."

The Mexican minister, on the fifteenth of October, gave an affirmative answer to this inquiry, requesting, at the same time, that our naval force at Vera Cruz might be withdrawn, lest its continued presence might assume the appearance of menace and coercion pending the negotiations. This force was immediately withdrawn. On the 10th of November, 1845, Mr. John Slidell, of Louisiana, was commissioned by me as envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of the United States to Mexico, and was intrusted with full powers to adjust both the questions of the Texas boundary and of indemnification to our citizens.

The redress of the wrongs of our citizens naturally and inseparably blended itself with the question of boundary. The settlement of the one question in any correct view of the subject, involves that of the other. I could not, for a moment, entertain the idea that the claims of our much-injured and long-suffering citizens, many of which had existed for more than twenty years, should be postponed, or separated from the settlement of the boundary question.

Mr. Slidell arrived at Vera Cruz on the 30th of November, and was courteously received by the authorities of that city. But the government of General Herrera was then tottering to its fall. The revolutionary party had seized upon the Texas question to effect or hasten its overthrow. Its determination to restore friendly relations with the United States, and to receive our minister, to negotiate for the settlement of this question, was violently assailed, and was made the great theme of denunciation against it.

The government of General Herrera, there is good reason to believe, was sincerely desirous to receive our minister; but it yielded to the storm raised by its enemies, and on the 21st of December refused to accredit Mr. Slidell, upon the most frivolous pretexts. These are so fully and ably exposed in the note of Mr. Slidell of the 24th of December last, to the Mexican minister of foreign relations, herewith transmitted, that I deem it unnecessary to enter into further detail on this portion of the subject.

Five days after the date of Mr. Slidell's note, General Herrera yielded the government to General Paredes without a struggle, and on the 30th of December resigned the presidency. This revolution was accomplished solely by the

army, the people having taken but little part in the contest ; and thus the supreme power of Mexico passed into the hands of a military leader.

Determined to leave no effort untried to effect an amicable adjustment with Mexico, I directed Mr. Slidell to present his credentials to the government of General Paredes, and ask to be officially received by him. There would have been less ground for taking this step had General Paredes come into power by a regular constitutional succession. In that event his administration would have been considered but a mere constitutional continuance of the government of General Herrera, and the refusal of the latter to receive our minister would have been deemed conclusive, unless an intimation had been given by General Paredes of his desire to reverse the decision of his predecessor.

But the government of General Paredes owes its existence to a military revolution, by which the subsisting constitutional authorities had been subverted. The form of government was entirely changed, as well as all the high functionaries by whom it was administered.

Under these circumstances, Mr. Slidell, in obedience to my direction, addressed a note to the Mexican minister of foreign relations, under date of the 1st of March last, asking to be received by that government in the diplomatic character to which he had been appointed. This minister, in his reply, under date of the 12th of March, reiterated the arguments of his predecessor, and in terms that may be considered as giving just grounds of offence to the government and people of the United States, denied the application of Mr. Slidell. Nothing, therefore, remained for our envoy, but to demand his passports, and return to his own country.

Thus the government of Mexico, though solemnly pledged by official acts in October last, to receive and accredit an American envoy, violated their plighted faith, and refused the offer of a peaceful adjustment of our difficulties. Not only was the offer rejected, but the indignity of its rejection was enhanced by the manifest breach of faith in refusing to admit the envoy, who came because they had bound themselves to receive him. Nor can it be said that the offer was fruitless from the want of opportunity in discussing it : our envoy was present on their own soil.

Nor can it be ascribed to the want of sufficient powers: our envoy had full powers to adjust every question of difference. Nor was there room for complaint that our propositions for settlement were unreasonable: permission was not even given our envoy to make any proposition whatever. Nor can it be objected that we, on our part, would not listen to any reasonable terms of their suggestion: the Mexican government refused all negotiation, and have made no proposition of any kind.

In my message at the commencement of the present session, I informed you that upon the earnest appeal both of the Congress and convention of Texas, I had ordered an efficient military force to take a position "between the Nueces and the Del Norte." This had become necessary to meet a threatened invasion of Texas by the Mexican forces, for which extensive military preparations had been made. The invasion was threatened solely because Texas had determined, in accordance with a solemn resolution of the Congress of the United States, to annex herself to our Union; and, under these circumstances, it was plainly our duty to extend our protection over her citizens and soil.

This force was concentrated at Corpus Christi, and remained there until after I had received such information from Mexico as rendered it probable, if not certain, that the Mexican government would refuse to receive our envoy.

Meantime, Texas, by the final action of our Congress, had become an integral part of our Union. The Congress of Texas, by its act of December 19, 1836, had declared the Rio del Norte to be the boundary of that republic. Its jurisdiction had been extended and exercised beyond the Nueces.

The country between that river and the Del Norte had been represented in the Congress and in the convention of Texas, had thus taken part in the act of annexation itself, and is now included in one of our congressional districts. Our own Congress had, moreover, with great unanimity, by the act of December 31, 1845, recognized the country beyond the Nueces as a part of our territory by including it within our own revenue system: and a revenue officer, to reside within that district, has been appointed by and with the advice and consent of the senate.

It became, therefore, of urgent necessity to provide for the defence of that portion of our country. Accordingly, on the 13th of January last, instructions were issued to the general in command of these troops to occupy the left bank of the Del Norte. This river—which is the southwestern boundary of the State of Texas—is an exposed frontier. From this quarter invasion was threatened; upon it and in its immediate vicinity, in the judgment of high military experience, are the proper stations for the protecting forces of the government.

In addition to this important consideration, several others occurred to induce this movement. Among these are the facilities afforded by the ports at Brazos Santiago and the mouth of the Del Norte for the reception of supplies by sea, the stronger and more healthful military positions, the convenience for obtaining a ready and more abundant supply of provisions, water, fuel, and forage, and the advantages which are afforded by the Del Norte in forwarding supplies to such posts as may be established in the interior and upon the Indian frontier.

The movement of the troops to the Del Norte was made by the commanding general, under positive instructions to abstain from all aggressive acts towards Mexico, or Mexican citizens, and to regard the relations between that republic and the United States as peaceful, unless she should declare war, or commit acts of hostility, indicative of a state of war. He was specially directed to protect private property and respect personal rights.

The army moved from Corpus Christi on the 11th of March, and on the 28th of that month arrived on the left bank of the Del Norte, opposite to Matamoras, where it encamped on a commanding position, which has since been strengthened by the erection of field-works. A *dépôt* has also been established at Point Isabel, near the Brazos Santiago, thirty miles in rear of the encampment. The selection of this position was necessarily confided to the judgment of the general in command.

The Mexican forces at Matamoras assumed a belligerent attitude, and on the 12th of April, General Ampudia, then in command, notified General Taylor to break up his camp within twenty-four hours, and to retire beyond the Nueces

river, and in the event of his failure to comply with these demands, announced that arms, and arms alone, must decide the question. But no open act of hostility was committed until the 24th of April. On that day, General Arista, who had succeeded to the command of the Mexican forces, communicated to General Taylor that "he considered hostilities commenced, and should prosecute them." A party of dragoons of sixty-three men and officers were on the same day dispatched from the American camp up the Rio del Norte, on its left bank, to ascertain whether the Mexican troops had crossed, or were preparing to cross the river, "became engaged with a large body of these troops, and after a short affair, in which some sixteen were killed and wounded, appear to have been surrounded and compelled to surrender."

The grievous wrongs perpetrated by Mexico upon our citizens throughout a long period of years, remain unredressed; and solemn treaties, pledging her public faith for this redress, have been disregarded. A government either unable or unwilling to enforce the execution of such treaties, fails to perform one of its plainest duties.

Our commerce with Mexico has been almost annihilated. It was formerly highly beneficial to both nations; but our merchants have been deterred from prosecuting it by the system of outrage and extortion which the Mexican authorities have pursued against them, while their appeals through their own government for indemnity have been made in vain. Our forbearance has gone to such an extreme as to be mistaken in its character. Had we acted with vigor in repelling the insults and redressing the injuries inflicted by Mexico at the commencement, we should doubtless have escaped all the difficulties in which we are now involved.

Instead of this, however, we have been exerting our best efforts to propitiate her good will. Upon the pretext that Texas, a nation as independent as herself, thought proper to unite its destinies with our own, she has affected to believe that we have severed her rightful territory, and, in official proclamations and manifestoes, has repeatedly threatened to make war upon us for the purpose of reconquering Texas. In the mean time, we have tried every effort at reconciliation. The cup of forbearance had been exhausted, even be-

fore the recent information from the frontier of the Del Norte. But now, after reiterated menaces, Mexico has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our territory, and shed American blood upon the American soil. She has proclaimed that hostilities have commenced, and that the two nations are now at war.

As war exists, and, notwithstanding all our efforts to avoid it, exists by the act of Mexico herself, we are called upon, by every consideration of duty and patriotism, to vindicate, with decision, the honor, the rights, and the interests of our country.

Anticipating the possibility of a crisis like that which has arrived, instructions were given in August last, "as a precautionary measure," against invasion, or threatened invasion, authorizing General Taylor, if the emergency required, to accept volunteers, not from Texas only, but from the States of Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Kentucky; and corresponding letters were addressed to the respective governors of those States.

These instructions were repeated; and in January last, soon after the incorporation of "Texas into our Union of States," General Taylor was further "authorized by the President to make a requisition upon the executive of that State for such of its militia force as may be needed to repel invasion, or to secure the country against apprehended invasion." On the 2d day of March, he was again reminded, "in the event of the approach of any considerable Mexican force, promptly and efficiently to use the authority with which he was clothed, to call to him such auxiliary force as he might need."

War actually existing, and our territory having been invaded, General Taylor, pursuant to authority vested in him by my direction, has called on the governor of Texas for four regiments of state troops, two to be mounted, and two to serve on foot, and on the governor of Louisiana for four regiments of infantry, to be sent to him as soon as practicable.

In further vindication of our rights and defence of our territory, I invoke the prompt action of Congress to recognize the existence of the war, and to place at the disposition of the executive the means of prosecuting the war with

vigor, and thus hasten the restoration of peace. To this end I recommend that authority should be given to call into the public service a large body of volunteers, to serve for not less than six or twelve months, unless sooner discharged.

A volunteer force is, beyond question, more efficient than any other description of citizen-soldiers; and it is not to be doubted that a number far beyond that required would readily rush to the field upon the call of their country. I further recommend that a liberal provision be made for sustaining our entire military force, and furnishing it with supplies and munitions of war.

The most energetic and prompt measures, and the immediate appearance in arms of a large and overpowering force, are recommended to Congress as the most certain and efficient means of bringing the existing collision with Mexico to a speedy and successful termination.

In making these recommendations, I deem it proper to declare that it is my anxious desire, not only to terminate hostilities speedily, but to bring all matters in dispute between this government and Mexico to an early and amicable adjustment; and, in this view, I shall be prepared to renew negotiations, whenever Mexico shall be ready to receive propositions, or to make propositions of her own.

I transmit herewith a copy of the correspondence between our envoy to Mexico and the Mexican minister for foreign affairs; and so much of the correspondence between that envoy and the secretary of state, and between the secretary of war and the general in command on the Del Norte, as are necessary to a full understanding of the subject.

TAYLOR'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

MARCH 5, 1849.

ELECTED by the American people to the highest office known to our laws, I appear here to take the oath prescribed by the Constitution, and in compliance with the

time-honored custom, to address those who are now assembled.

The confidence and respect shown by my countrymen in calling me to be the Chief Magistrate of a Republic holding a high rank among the nations of the earth, have inspired me with feelings of the most profound gratitude; but when I reflect that the acceptance of the office which their partiality has bestowed imposes the discharge of the most arduous duties, involves the weightiest obligations, I am conscious that the position which I have been called to fill, though sufficient to satisfy the loftiest ambition, is surrounded by fearful responsibilities. Happily, however, in the performance of my new duties, I shall not be without able co-operation. The legislative and judicial branches of the government present prominent examples of distinguished civil attainments and matured experience, and it shall be my endeavor to call to my assistance, in the executive departments, individuals whose talents, integrity, and purity of character, will furnish ample guarantees for the faithful and honorable performance of the trusts to be committed to their charge. With such aid, and an honest purpose to do whatever is right, I hope to execute diligently, impartially, and for the best interests of the country, the manifold duties devolved upon me.

In the discharge of these duties, my guide shall be the Constitution, which I this day swear to preserve, protect, and defend. For the interpretation of that instrument, I shall look to the decisions of the judicial tribunals established by its authority, and to the practice of government under the earlier Presidents, who had so large a share in its formation. To the example of those illustrious patriots I shall always defer with reverence, and especially to his example who was, by so many titles, the Father of his country.

To command the army and navy of the United States; with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, appoint ambassadors and other officers; to give to Congress information of the state of the Union, and recommend such measures as he shall judge to be necessary, and to take care that the laws shall be faithfully executed—these are the most important functions intrusted to the President

by the Constitution, and it may be expected that I shall briefly indicate the principles which will control me in their execution.

Chosen by the body of the people, under the assurance that my administration would be devoted to the welfare of the whole country, and not to the support of any particular section, or merely local interest, I this day renew the declarations I have heretofore made, and proclaim my fixed determination to maintain, to the extent of my ability, the government in its original purity, and to adopt as the basis of my public policy those great republican doctrines which constitute the strength of our national existence.

In reference to the army and navy, lately employed with so much distinction in active service, care shall be taken to insure the highest condition of efficiency, and, in furtherance of that object, the Military and Naval Schools—sustained by the liberality of Congress—shall receive the special attention of the Executive.

As American freemen, we cannot but sympathize in all efforts to extend the blessings of civil and political liberty; but, at the same time, we are warned by the admonitions of history and the voice of our own beloved Washington, to abstain from entangling alliances with foreign nations. In all disputes between conflicting governments, it is our interest not less than our duty, to remain strictly neutral; while our geographical position, the genius of our institutions and our people, the advancing spirit of civilization, and, above all, the dictates of religion, direct us to the cultivation of peaceful and friendly relations with all other powers. It is to be hoped that no international question can now arise which a government, confident in its own strength, and resolved to protect its own just rights, may not settle by wise negotiation, and it eminently becomes a government like our own, founded on the morality and intelligence of its citizens, and upheld by their affections, to exhaust every resort of honorable diplomacy before appealing to arms. In the conduct of our foreign relations, I shall conform to these views, as I believe them essential to the best interests and true honor of the country.

The appointing power vested in the President imposes delicate and onerous duties. So far as it is possible to be

informed, I shall make honesty, capacity, and fidelity, indispensable prerequisites to the disposal of office, and the absence of either of these qualities shall be deemed sufficient cause for removal.

It shall be my study to recommend such constitutional measures to Congress as may be necessary and proper to secure encouragement and protection to the great interests of agriculture, commerce, and manufacture, to improve our rivers and harbors, to provide for the speedy extinguishment of the public debt, to enforce a strict accountability on the part of all officers of the government, and the utmost economy in all public expenditures. But it is for the wisdom of Congress itself, in which all legislative powers are vested by the Constitution, to regulate these and other matters of domestic policy. I shall look with confidence to the enlightened patriotism of that body to adopt such measures of conciliation as may harmonize conflicting interests and tend to perpetuate that Union which should be the paramount object of our hopes and affections. In any action calculated to promote an object so near the heart of every one who truly loves his country, I will zealously unite with the co-ordinate branches of the government.

In conclusion, I congratulate you, my fellow-citizens, upon the high state of prosperity to which the goodness of Divine Providence has conducted our common country. Let us invoke a continuance of the same protecting care which has led us from small beginnings to the eminence we this day occupy, and let us seek to deserve that continuance by prudence and moderation in our councils; by well-directed attempts to assuage the bitterness which too often marks unavoidable differences of opinion; by the promulgation and practice of just and liberal principles, and by an enlarged patriotism which shall acknowledge no limits but those of our own wide-spread republic.

TAYLOR'S FIRST ANNUAL MESSAGE.

*Fellow-Citizens of the Senate
and House of Representatives :*

SIXTY years have elapsed since the establishment of this government, and the Congress of the United States again assembles to legislate for an empire of freemen. The predictions of evil prophets, who formerly pretended to foretell the downfall of our institutions, are now remembered only to be derided, and the United States of America at this moment present to the world the most stable and permanent government on earth.

Such is the result of the labors of those who have gone before us. Upon Congress will eminently depend the future maintenance of our system of free government, and the transmission of it unimpaired to posterity.

We are at peace with all the other nations of the world, and seek to maintain our cherished relations of amity with them. During the past year we have been blessed by a kind Providence with an abundance of the fruits of the earth ; and, although the destroying angel for a time visited extensive portions of our territory with the ravages of a dreadful pestilence, yet the Almighty has at length deigned to stay his hand, and to restore the inestimable blessing of general health to a people who have acknowledged his power, deprecated his wrath, and implored his merciful protection.

While enjoying the benefits of amicable intercourse with foreign nations, we have not been insensible to the distractions and wars which have prevailed in other quarters of the world. It is a proper theme of thanksgiving to Him who rules the destinies of nations, that we have been able to maintain, amidst all these contests, an independent and neutral position towards all belligerent powers.

Our relations with Great Britain are of the most friendly character. In consequence of the recent alteration of the British navigation acts, British vessels, from British and other foreign ports, will (under our existing laws), after the first day of January next, be admitted to entry in our ports,

with cargoes of the growth, manufacture, or production of any part of the world, on the same terms, as to duties, imposts, and charges, as vessels of the United States with their cargoes; and our vessels will be admitted to the same advantages in British ports, entering therein on the same terms as British vessels. Should no order in council disturb this legislative arrangement, the late act of the British Parliament, by which Great Britain is brought within the terms proposed by the act of Congress of the 1st of March, 1817, it is hoped will be productive of benefit to both countries.

A slight interruption of diplomatic intercourse, which occurred between this government and France, I am happy to say, has been terminated, and our minister there has been received. It is, therefore, unnecessary to refer now to the circumstances which led to that interruption. I need not express to you the sincere satisfaction with which we shall welcome the arrival of another envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary from a sister republic, to which we have so long been, and still remain, bound by the strongest ties of amity.

Shortly after I had entered upon the discharge of the executive duties, I was apprised that a war-steamer belonging to the German empire was being fitted out in the harbor of New York, with the aid of some of our naval officers, rendered under the permission of the late Secretary of the Navy. This permission was granted during an armistice between that empire and the kingdom of Denmark, which had been engaged in the Schleswig-Holstein war. Apprehensive that this act of intervention on our part might be viewed as a violation of our neutral obligations incurred by the treaty with Denmark, and of the provisions of the act of Congress of the 20th of April, 1818, I directed that no further aid should be rendered by any agent or officer of the navy; and I instructed the Secretary of State to apprise the minister of the German empire accredited to this government of my determination to execute the law of the United States, and to maintain the faith of treaties with all nations. The correspondence which ensued between the Department of State and the minister of the German empire is herewith laid before you. The execution of the law, and the observance of the treaty, were deemed by me to be due to the

honor of the country, as well as to the sacred obligations of the constitution. I shall not fail to pursue the same course, should a similar case arise, with any other nation. Having avowed the opinion, on taking the oath of office, that in disputes between conflicting foreign governments it is our interest, not less than our duty, to remain strictly neutral, I shall not abandon it. You will perceive from the correspondence submitted to you in connection with this subject, that the course adopted in this case has been properly regarded by the belligerent powers interested in the matter.

Although a minister of the United States to the German empire was appointed by my predecessor in August, 1848, and has for a long time been in attendance at Frankfort-on-the-Main; and although a minister, appointed to represent that empire, was received and accredited here, yet no such government as that of the German empire has been definitively constituted. Mr. Donelson, our representative at Frankfort, remained there several months in the expectation that a union of the German states, under one constitution or form of government, might at length be organized. It is believed by those well acquainted with the existing relations between Prussia and the states of Germany, that no such union can be permanently established without her co-operation. In the event of the formation of such a union, and the organization of a central power in Germany, of which she should form a part, it would become necessary to withdraw our minister at Berlin; but while Prussia exists as an independent kingdom, and diplomatic relations are maintained with her, there can be no necessity for the continuance of the mission to Frankfort. I have, therefore, recalled Mr. Donelson, and directed the archives of the legation at Frankfort to be transferred to the American legation at Berlin.

Having been apprised that a considerable number of adventurers were engaged in fitting out a military expedition, within the United States, against a foreign country, and believing, from the best information I could obtain, that it was destined to invade the island of Cuba, I deemed it due to the friendly relations existing between the United States and Spain—to the treaty between the two nations—to the laws of the United States, and, above all, to the American honor

—to exert the lawful authority of this government in suppressing the expedition and preventing the invasion. To this end, I issued a proclamation, enjoining it upon the officers of the United States—civil and military—to use all lawful means within their power. A copy of that proclamation is herewith submitted. The expedition has been suppressed. So long as the act of Congress of the 20th of April, 1818, which owes its existence to the law of nations and to the policy of Washington himself, shall remain on our statute book, I hold it to be the duty of the executive faithfully to obey its injunctions.

While this expedition was in progress, I was informed that a foreigner who claimed our protection had been clandestinely, and, as was supposed, forcibly carried off in a vessel from New Orleans to the island of Cuba. I immediately caused such steps to be taken as I thought necessary, in case the information I had received should prove correct, to vindicate the honor of the country and the right of every person seeking an asylum on our soil to the protection of our laws. The person alleged to have been abducted was promptly restored, and the circumstances of the case are now about to undergo investigation before a judicial tribunal. I would respectfully suggest that, although the crime charged to have been committed in this case is held odious, as being in conflict with our opinions on the subject of national sovereignty and personal freedom, there is no prohibition of it or punishment for it provided in any act of Congress. The expediency of supplying this defect in our criminal code is therefore recommended to your consideration.

I have scrupulously avoided any interference in the wars and contentions which have recently distracted Europe.

During the late conflict between Austria and Hungary, there seemed to be a prospect that the latter might become an independent nation. However faint that prospect at the time appeared, I thought it my duty, in accordance with the general sentiment of the American people, who deeply sympathized with the Magyar patriots, to stand prepared, upon the contingency of the establishment by her of a permanent government, to be the first to welcome independent Hungary into the family of nations. For this purpose I in-

vested an agent, then in Europe, with power to declare our willingness promptly to recognize her independence in the event of her ability to sustain it. The powerful intervention of Russia in the contest extinguished the hopes of the struggling Magyars. The United States did not, at any time, interfere in the contest ; but the feelings of the nation were strongly enlisted in the cause, and by the sufferings of a brave people, who had made a gallant though unsuccessful effort to be free.

Our claims upon Portugal have been during the past year prosecuted with renewed vigor, and it has been my object to employ every effort of honorable diplomacy to procure their adjustment. Our late chargé d'affaires at Lisbon, the Hon. George W. Hopkins, made able and energetic, but unsuccessful efforts to settle these unpleasant matters of controversy, and to obtain indemnity for the wrongs which were the subjects of complaint. Our present chargé d'affaires at that court will also bring to the prosecution of these claims ability and zeal. The revolutionary and distracted condition of Portugal in past times has been represented as one of the leading causes of her delay in indemnifying our suffering citizens. But I must now say it is matter of profound regret that these claims have not yet been settled. The omission of Portugal to do justice to the American claimants has now assumed a character so grave and serious, that I shall shortly make it the subject of a special message to Congress, with a view to such ultimate action as its wisdom and patriotism may suggest.

With Russia, Austria, Prussia, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands, and the Italian States, we still maintain our accustomed amicable relations.

During the recent revolutions in the Papal States, our chargé d'affaires at Rome has been unable to present his letter of credence ; which, indeed, he was directed by my predecessor to withhold until he should receive further orders. Such was the unsettled condition of things in those states, that it was not deemed expedient to give him any instructions on the subject of presenting his credential letter different from those with which he had been furnished by the late administration until the 25th of June last ; when, in consequence of the want of accurate information of the ex-

act state of things at that distance from us, he was instructed to exercise his own discretion in presenting himself to the then existing government, if, in his judgment, sufficiently stable; or, if not, to await further events. Since that period Rome has undergone another revolution, and he abides the establishment of a government sufficiently permanent to justify him in opening diplomatic intercourse with it.

With the republic of Mexico it is our true policy to cultivate the most friendly relations. Since the ratification of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, nothing has occurred of a serious character to disturb them. A faithful observance of the treaty, and a sincere respect for her rights, cannot fail to secure the lasting confidence and friendship of that republic. The message of my predecessor to the House of Representatives, of the 8th of February last, communicating, in compliance with a resolution of that body, a copy of a paper called a Protocol, signed at Queretaro on the 30th of May, 1848, by the commissioners of the United States and the minister of foreign affairs of the Mexican government, having been a subject of correspondence between the Department of State and the envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of that republic accredited to this government, a transcript of that correspondence is herewith submitted.

The commissioner on the part of the United States for marking the boundary between the two republics, though delayed in reaching San Diego by unforeseen obstacles, arrived at that place within a short period after the time required by the treaty, and was there joined by the commissioner on the part of Mexico. They entered upon their duties; and at the date of the latest intelligence from that quarter, some progress had been made in the survey. The expenses incident to the organization of the commission, and to its conveyance to the point where its operations were to begin, have so much reduced the fund appropriated by Congress, that a further sum to cover the charges which must be incurred during the present fiscal year, will be necessary. The great length of frontier along which the boundary extends, the nature of the adjacent territory, and the difficulty of obtaining supplies, except at or near the extremes of the line, render it also indispensable that a liberal provision

should be made to meet the necessary charges during the fiscal year ending on the 30th of June, 1851. I accordingly recommend this subject to your attention.

In the adjustment of the claims of American citizens on Mexico, provided for by the late treaty, the employment of counsel on the part of the government may become important for the purpose of assisting the commissioners in protecting the interests of the United States. I recommend this subject to the early and favorable consideration of Congress.

Complaints have been made in regard to the inefficiency of the means provided by the government of New Grenada for transporting the United States mail across the isthmus of Panama, pursuant to our postal convention with that republic, of the 6th of March, 1844. Our chargé d'affaires at Bogota has been directed to make such representations to the government of New Grenada as will, it is hoped, lead to a prompt removal of this cause of complaint.

The sanguinary civil war with which the republic of Venezuela has for some time past been ravaged, has been brought to a close. In its progress, the rights of some of our citizens, resident or trading there, have been violated. The restoration of order will afford the Venezuelan government an opportunity to examine and redress these grievances, and others of longer standing, which our representatives at Caraccas have hitherto ineffectually urged upon the attention of that government.

The extension of the coast of the United States on the Pacific, and the unexampled rapidity with which the inhabitants of California especially are increasing in numbers, have imparted new consequence to our relations with the other countries whose territories border upon that ocean. It is probable that the intercourse between those countries and our possessions in that quarter, particularly with the republic of Chili, will become extensive and mutually advantageous in proportion as California and Oregon shall increase in population and wealth. It is desirable, therefore, that this government should do every thing in its power to foster and strengthen its relations with those states, and that the spirit of amity between us should be mutual and cordial.

I recommend the observance of the same course towards all other American states. The United States stand as the great American power to which, as their natural ally and friend, they will always be disposed first to look for mediation and assistance, in the event of any collision between them and any European nation. As such, we may often kindly mediate in their behalf, without entangling ourselves in foreign wars or unnecessary controversies. Whenever the faith of our treaties with any of them shall require our interference, we must necessarily interpose.

A convention has been negotiated with Brazil, providing for the satisfaction of American claims on that government, and it will be submitted to the Senate. Since the last session of Congress, we have received an envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary from that empire, and our relations with it are founded upon the most amicable understanding.

Your attention is earnestly invited to an amendment of our existing laws relating to the African slave-trade, with a view to the effectual suppression of that barbarous traffic. It is not to be denied that this trade is still, in part, carried on by means of vessels built in the United States, and owned or navigated by some of our citizens. The correspondence between the Department of State and the minister and consul of the United States at Rio de Janeiro, which has from time to time been laid before Congress, represents that it is a customary device to evade the penalties of our laws by means of sea-letters. Vessels sold in Brazil, when provided with such papers by the consul, instead of returning to the United States for a new register, proceed at once to the coast of Africa, for the purpose of obtaining cargoes of slaves. Much additional information, of the same character, has recently been transmitted to the Department of State. It has not been considered the policy of our laws to subject an American citizen, who in a foreign country purchases a vessel built in the United States, to the inconvenience of sending her home for a new register, before permitting her to proceed on a voyage. Any alteration of the laws which might have a tendency to impede the free transfer of property in vessels between our citizens, or the free navigation of those vessels between different parts of the world, when

employed in lawful commerce, should be well and cautiously considered ; but I trust that your wisdom will devise a method by which our general policy, in this respect, may be preserved, and at the same time the abuse of our flag, by means of sea-letters, in the manner indicated, may be prevented.

Having ascertained that there is no prospect of the reunion of the five states of Central America, which formerly composed the republic of that name, we have separately negotiated with some of them treaties of amity and commerce, which will be laid before the Senate.

A contract having been concluded with the State of Nicaragua, by a company composed of American citizens, for the purpose of constructing a ship canal through the territory of that State, to connect the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, I have directed the negotiation of a treaty with Nicaragua, pledging both governments to protect those who shall engage in and perfect the work. All other nations are invited by the State of Nicaragua to enter into the same treaty stipulations with her ; and the benefit to be derived by each from such an arrangement will be the protection of this great inter-oceanic communication against any power which might seek to obstruct it, or to monopolize its advantages. All states entering into such a treaty will enjoy the right of passage through the canal on payment of the same tolls.

The work, if constructed under these gaurantees, will become a bond of peace instead of a subject of contention and strife between the nations of the earth. Should the great maritime states of Europe consent to this arrangement—and we have no reason to suppose that a proposition so fair and honorable will be opposed by any—the energies of their people and ours will co-operate in promoting the success of the enterprise. I do not recommend any appropriation from the national treasury for this purpose ; nor do I believe that such an appropriation is necessary. Private enterprise, if properly protected, will complete the work should it prove to be feasible. The parties who have procured the charter from Nicaragua for its construction desire no assistance from this government beyond its protection ; and they profess that, having examined the proposed line of commu-

nication, they will be ready to commence the undertaking whenever that protection shall be extended to them. Should there appear to be reason, on examining the whole evidence, to entertain a serious doubt of the practicability of constructing such a canal, that doubt could be speedily solved by an actual exploration of the route.

Should such a work be constructed under the common protection of all nations for equal benefits to all, it would be neither just nor expedient that any great maritime state should command the communication. The territory through which the canal may be opened ought to be freed from the claims of any foreign power. No such power should occupy a position that would enable it hereafter to exercise so controlling an influence over the commerce of the world, or to obstruct a highway which ought to be dedicated to the common uses of mankind.

The routes across the isthmus at Tehuantepec and Panama are also worthy of our serious consideration. They did not fail to engage the attention of my predecessor. The negotiator of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was instructed to offer a very large sum of money for the right of transit across the isthmus of Tehuantepec. The Mexican government did not accede to the proposition for the purchase of the right of way, probably because it had already contracted with private individuals for the construction of a passage from the Guasacualco river to Tehuantepec. I shall not renew any proposition to purchase for money a right which ought to be equally secured to all nations on payment of a reasonable toll to the owners of the improvement, who would, doubtless, be well contented with that compensation and the guarantees of the maritime states of the world, in separate treaties negotiated with Mexico, binding her and them to protect those who should construct the work. Such guarantees would do more to secure the completion of the communication through the territory of Mexico than any other reasonable consideration that could be offered; and as Mexico herself would be the greatest gainer by the opening of this communication between the Gulf and the Pacific Ocean, it is presumed that she would not hesitate to yield her aid in the manner proposed to accomplish an improvement so important to her own best interests.

We have reason to hope that the proposed railroad across the isthmus of Panama will be successfully constructed under the protection of the late treaty with New Grenada, ratified and exchanged by my predecessor on the 10th day of June, 1848, which guarantees the perfect neutrality of the isthmus, and the rights of sovereignty and property of New Grenada over that territory, "with a view that the free transit from ocean to ocean may not be interrupted or embarrassed" during the existence of the treaty. It is our policy to encourage every practicable route across the isthmus which connects North and South America, either by railroad or canal, which the energy and enterprise of our citizens may induce them to complete; and I consider it obligatory upon me to adopt that policy, especially in consequence of the absolute necessity of facilitating intercourse with our possessions on the Pacific.

The position of the Sandwich Islands, with reference to the territory of the United States on the Pacific, the success of our persevering and benevolent citizens who have repaired to that remote quarter in Christianizing the natives and inducing them to adopt a system of government and laws suited to their capacity and wants, and the use made by our numerous whale-ships of the harbors of the islands as places of resort for obtaining refreshments and repairs, all combine to render their destiny peculiarly interesting to us. It is our duty to encourage the authorities of those islands in their efforts to improve and elevate the moral and political condition of the inhabitants; and we should make reasonable allowances for the difficulties inseparable from this task. We desire that the islands may maintain their independence, and that other nations should concur with us in this sentiment. We could in no event be indifferent to their passing under the dominion of any other power. The principal commercial states have in this a common interest, and it is to be hoped that no one of them will attempt to interpose obstacles to the entire independence of the islands.

The receipts into the treasury for the fiscal year ending on the thirtieth of June last were, in cash, forty-eight million eight hundred and thirty thousand ninety-seven dollars and fifty cents (\$48,830,097.50), and in treasury notes funded, ten million eight hundred and thirty-three thousand

dollars (\$10,833,000), making an aggregate of fifty-nine million six hundred and sixty-three thousand ninety-seven dollars and fifty cents (\$59,663,097.50); and the expenditures for the same time were, in cash, forty-six million seven hundred and ninety-eight thousand six hundred and sixty-seven dollars and eighty-two cents (\$46,798,667.82), and in treasury notes funded, ten million eight hundred and thirty-three thousand dollars (\$10,833,000), making an aggregate of fifty-seven million six hundred and thirty-one thousand six hundred and sixty-seven dollars and eighty-two cents (\$57,631,667.82).

The accounts and estimates which will be submitted to Congress in the report of the Secretary of the Treasury, show that there will probably be a deficit occasioned by the expenses of the Mexican war and treaty, on the first day of July next, of five million eight hundred and twenty-eight thousand one hundred and twenty-one dollars and sixty-six cents (\$5,828,121.66), and on the first day of July, 1851, of ten million five hundred and forty-seven thousand and ninety-two dollars and seventy-three cents (\$10,547,092.73), making in the whole a probable deficit, to be provided for, of sixteen million three hundred and seventy-five thousand two hundred and fourteen dollars and thirty-nine cents (\$16,375,214.39). The extraordinary expenses of the war with Mexico, and the purchase of California and New Mexico, exceed in amount this deficit, together with the loans heretofore made for those objects. I therefore recommend that authority be given to borrow whatever sum may be necessary to cover that deficit. I recommend the observance of strict economy in the appropriation and expenditure of public money.

I recommend a revision of the existing tariff, and its adjustment on a basis which may augment the revenue. I do not doubt the right or duty of Congress to encourage domestic industry, which is the great source of national, as well as individual wealth and prosperity. I look to the wisdom and patriotism of Congress for the adoption of a system which may place home labor at last on a sure and permanent footing, and, by due encouragement of manufactures, give a new and increased stimulus to agriculture, and promote the development of our vast resources and the ex-

tension of our commerce. Believing that to the attainment of these ends, as well as the necessary augmentation of the revenue and the prevention of frauds, a system of specific duties is best adapted, I strongly recommend to Congress the adoption of that system, fixing the duties at rates high enough to afford substantial and sufficient encouragement to our own industry, and, at the same time, so adjusted as to insure stability.

The question of the continuance of the sub-treasury system is respectfully submitted to the wisdom of Congress. If continued, important modifications of it appear to be indispensable.

For further details and views on the above, and other matters connected with commerce, the finances, and revenue, I refer to the report of the Secretary of the Treasury.

No direct aid has been given by the general government to the improvement of agriculture, except by the expenditure of small sums for the collection and publication of agricultural statistics, and for some chemical analyses, which have been, thus far, paid for out of the patent fund. This aid is, in my opinion, wholly inadequate. To give to this leading branch of American industry the encouragement which it merits, I respectfully recommend the establishment of an Agricultural Bureau, to be connected with the Department of the Interior. To elevate the social condition of the agriculturist, to increase his prosperity, and to extend his means of usefulness to his country, by multiplying his sources of information, should be the study of every statesman, and a primary object with every legislator.

No civil government having been provided by Congress for California, the people of that territory, impelled by the necessities of their political condition, recently met in convention, for the purpose of forming a constitution and state government, which the latest advices give me reason to suppose has been accomplished; and it is believed they will shortly apply for the admission of California into the Union as a sovereign state. Should such be the case, and should their constitution be conformable to the requisitions of the constitution of the United States, I recommend their application to the favorable consideration of Congress.

The people of New Mexico will also, it is believed, at no

very distant period, present themselves for admission into the Union. Preparatory to the admission of California and New Mexico, the people of each will have instituted for themselves a republican form of government, "laying its foundations in such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."

By awaiting their action, all causes of uneasiness may be avoided, and confidence and kind feeling preserved. With a view of maintaining the harmony and tranquillity so dear to all, we should abstain from the introduction of those exciting topics of a sectional character which have hitherto produced painful apprehensions in the public mind; and I repeat the solemn warning of the first and most illustrious of my predecessors against furnishing "any ground for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations."

A collector has been appointed at San Francisco, under an act of Congress extending the revenue laws over California; and measures have been taken to organize the custom-houses at that and the other ports mentioned in that act, at the earliest period practicable. The collector proceeded overland, and advices have not yet been received of his arrival at San Francisco. Meanwhile, it is understood that the customs have continued to be collected there by officers acting under the military authority, as they were during the administration of my predecessor. It will, I think, be expedient to confirm the collections thus made, and direct the avails (after such allowances as Congress may think fit to authorize) to be expended within the territory, or to be paid into the treasury for the purpose of meeting appropriations for the improvement of its rivers and harbors.

A party engaged on the coast survey was dispatched to Oregon in January last. According to the latest advices, they had not left California, and directions have been given to them, as soon as they shall have fixed on the sites of the two light-houses and the buoys authorized to be constructed and placed in Oregon, to proceed without delay to make reconnoissances of the most important points on the coast of California, and especially to examine and determine on sites for light-houses on that coast, the speedy erection of which is urgently demanded by our rapidly increasing commerce.

I have transferred the Indian agencies from Upper Missouri and Council Bluffs to Santa Fé and Salt Lake, and have caused to be appointed sub-agents in the valleys of the Gila, the Sacramento, and San Joaquin rivers. Still further legal provisions will be necessary for the effective and successful extension of our system of Indian intercourse over the new territories.

I recommend the establishment of a branch mint in California, as it will, in my opinion, afford important facilities to those engaged in mining, as well as to the government in the disposition of the mineral lands.

I also recommend that commissions be organized by Congress to examine and decide upon the validity of the present subsisting land titles in California and New Mexico; and that provision be made for the establishment of offices of surveyor-general in New Mexico, California, and Oregon, and for the surveying and bringing into market the public lands in those territories. Those lands, remote in position and difficult of access, ought to be disposed of on terms liberal to all, but especially favorable to the early emigrants.

In order that the situation and character of the principal mineral deposits in California may be ascertained, I recommend that a geological and mineralogical exploration be connected with the linear surveys, and that the mineral lands be divided into small lots suitable for mining, and be disposed of, by sale or lease, so as to give our citizens an opportunity of procuring a permanent right of property in the soil. This would seem to be as important to the success of mining as of agricultural pursuits.

The great mineral wealth of California, and the advantages which its ports and harbors, and those of Oregon, afford to commerce, especially with the islands of the Pacific and Indian oceans, and the populous regions of Eastern Asia, make it certain that there will arise in a few years large and prosperous communities on our western coast. It therefore becomes important that a line of communication, the best and most expeditious which the nature of the country will admit, should be opened within the territory of the United States, from the navigable waters of the Atlantic on the Gulf of Mexico, to the Pacific. Opinion, as elicited and expressed by two large and respectable conventions, lately

assembled at St. Louis and Memphis, points to a railroad as that which, if practicable, will best meet the wishes and wants of the country. But while this, if in successful operation, would be a work of great national importance, and of a value to the country which it would be difficult to estimate, it ought also to be regarded as an undertaking of vast magnitude and expense, and one which must, if it be indeed practicable, encounter many difficulties in its construction and use. Therefore, to avoid failure and disappointment, to enable Congress to judge whether, in the condition of the country through which it must pass, the work be feasible; and, if it be found so, whether it should be undertaken as a national improvement, or left to individual enterprise; and, in the latter alternative, what aid, if any, ought to be extended to it by the government, I recommend, as a preliminary measure, a careful reconnoissance of the several proposed routes by a scientific corps, and a report as to the practicability of making such a road, with an estimate of the cost of its construction and support.

For further views on these and other matters connected with the duties of the Home Department, I refer you to the report of the Secretary of the Interior.

I recommend early appropriations for continuing the river and harbor improvements which have been already begun, and also for the construction of those for which estimates have been made, as well as for examinations and estimates preparatory to the commencement of such others as the wants of the country, and especially the advance of our population over new districts and the extension of commerce may render necessary. An estimate of the amount which can be advantageously expended within the next fiscal year, under the direction of the Bureau of Topographical Engineers accompanies the report of the Secretary of War, to which I respectfully invite the attention of Congress.

The cession of territory made by the late treaty with Mexico has greatly extended our exposed frontier, and rendered its defence more difficult. That treaty has also brought us under obligations to Mexico, to comply with which a military force is requisite. But our military establishment is not materially changed, as to its efficiency, from the condition in which it stood before the commence-

ment of the Mexican war. Some addition to it will therefore be necessary ; and I recommend to the favorable consideration of Congress an increase of the several corps of the army at our distant western posts, as proposed in the accompanying report of the Secretary of War.

Great embarrassment has resulted from the effect upon rank, in the army, heretofore given to brevet and staff commissions. The views of the Secretary of War on this subject are deemed important, and, if carried into effect, will, it is believed, promote the harmony of the service. The plan proposed for retiring disabled officers, and providing an asylum for such of the rank and file as from age, wounds, and other infirmities occasioned by service, have become unfit to perform their respective duties, is recommended as a means of increasing the efficiency of the army, and as an act of justice due from a grateful country to the faithful soldier.

The accompanying report of the Secretary of the Navy presents a full and satisfactory account of the condition and operations of the naval service during the past year. Our citizens engaged in the legitimate pursuits of commerce have enjoyed its benefits. Wherever our national vessels have gone, they have been received with respect, our officers have been treated with kindness and courtesy, and they have on all occasions pursued a course of strict neutrality, in accordance with the policy of our government.

The naval force at present in commission is as large as is admissible, with the number of men authorized by Congress to be employed.

I invite your attention to the recommendation of the Secretary of the Navy on the subject of a reorganization of the navy, in its various grades of officers, and the establishing of a retired list for such of the officers as are disqualified for active and effective service. Should Congress adopt some such measure as is recommended, it will greatly increase the efficiency of the navy, and reduce its expenditures.

I also ask your attention to the views expressed by him in reference to the employment of war-steamers, and in regard to the contracts for the transportation of the United States mails and the operation of the system upon the prosperity of the navy.

By an act of Congress passed August 14, 1848, provision was made for extending post-office and mail accommodations to California and Oregon. Exertions have been made to execute that law ; but the limited provisions of the act, the inadequacy of the means it authorizes, the ill adaptation of our post-office laws to the situation of that country, and the measure of compensation for services allowed by those laws, compared with the prices of labor and rents in California, render those exertions, in a great degree, ineffectual. More particular and efficient provision by law is required on this subject.

The act of 1845, reducing postage, has now, by its operation during four years, produced results fully showing that the income from such reduced postage is sufficient to sustain the whole expense of the service of the post-office department, not including the cost of transportation in mail steamers on the lines from New York to Chagres, and from Panama to Astoria, which have not been considered by Congress as properly belonging to the mail service.

It is submitted to the wisdom of Congress whether a further reduction of postage should not now be made, more particularly on the letter correspondence. This should be relieved from the unjust burden of transportation and delivering the franked matter of Congress, for which public service provision should be made from the treasury. I confidently believe that a change may safely be made, reducing all single letter postage to the uniform rate of five cents, regardless of distance, without thereby imposing any greater tax on the treasury than would constitute a very moderate compensation for this public service ; and I therefore respectfully recommend such a reduction. Should Congress prefer to abolish the franking privilege entirely, it seems probable that no demand on the treasury would result from the proposed reduction of postage. Whether any further diminution should now be made, or the result of the reduction to five cents, which I have recommended, should be first tested, is submitted to your decision.

Since the commencement of the last session of Congress, a postal treaty with Great Britain has been received and ratified, and such regulations have been formed by the Post-office Departments of the two countries, in pursuance of that

treaty, as to carry its provisions into full operation. The attempt to extend this same arrangement, through England to France, has not been equally successful; but the purpose has not been abandoned.

For a particular statement of the condition of the post-office department, and other matters connected with that branch of the public service, I refer you to the report of the Postmaster-General.

By the act of the 3d of March, 1849, a board was constituted to make arrangements for taking the seventh census, composed of the Secretary of State, the Attorney-General, and the Postmaster-General; and it was made the duty of this board "to prepare, and cause to be printed, such forms and schedules as might be necessary for the full enumeration of the inhabitants of the United States; and also proper forms and schedules for collecting, in statistical tables, under proper heads, such information as to mines, agriculture, commerce, manufactures, education, and other topics, as would exhibit a full view of the pursuits, industry, education, and resources of the country." The duties enjoined upon the census board thus established having been performed, it now rests with Congress to enact a law for carrying into effect the provisions of the constitution which requires an actual enumeration of the people of the United States within the ensuing year.

Among the duties assigned by the constitution to the general government is one of local and limited application, but not on that account the less obligatory; I allude to the trust committed to Congress as the exclusive legislator and sole guardian of the interests of the District of Columbia. I beg to commend these interests to your kind attention. As the national metropolis, the city of Washington must be an object of general interest; and founded, as it was, under the auspices of him whose immortal name it bears, its claims to the fostering care of Congress present themselves with additional strength. Whatever can contribute to its prosperity must enlist the feelings of its constitutional guardians, and command their favorable consideration.

Our government is one of limited powers, and its successful administration eminently depends on the confinement of each of its co-ordinate branches within its own appropriate

sphere. The first section of the constitution ordains that "all legislative powers therein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives." The executive has authority to recommend (not to dictate) measures to Congress. Having performed that duty, the executive department of the government cannot rightfully control the decision of Congress on any subject of legislation, until that decision shall have been officially submitted to the President for approval. The check provided by the constitution in the clause conferring the qualified veto will never be exercised by me, except in the cases contemplated by the fathers of the republic. I view it as an extreme measure, to be resorted to only in extraordinary cases—as where it may become necessary to defend the executive against the encroachments of the legislative power, or to prevent hasty and inconsiderate or unconstitutional legislation. By cautiously confining this remedy within the sphere prescribed to it in the contemporaneous expositions of the framers of the constitution, the will of the people, legitimately expressed on all subjects of legislation, through their constitutional organs, the senators and representatives of the United States, will have its full effect. As indispensable to the preservation of our system of self-government, the independence of the representatives of the States and the people is guaranteed by the constitution; and they owe no responsibility to any human power but their constituents. By holding the representative responsible only to the people, and exempting him from all other influences, we elevate the character of the constituent, and quicken his sense of responsibility to his country. It is under these circumstances only that the elector can feel that, in the choice of the law-maker, he is himself truly a component part of the sovereign power of the nation. With equal care we should study to defend the rights of the executive and judicial departments. Our government can only be preserved in its purity by the suppression and entire elimination of every claim or tendency of one co-ordinate branch to encroachment upon another. With the strict observance of this rule and the other injunctions of the constitution; with a sedulous inculcation of that respect and love for the Union of the States, which our fathers

cherished and enjoined upon their children ; and with the aid of that overruling Providence which has so long and so kindly guarded our liberties and institutions, we may reasonably expect to transmit them, with their innumerable blessings, to the remotest posterity.

But attachment to the Union of the States should be habitually fostered in every American heart. For more than half a century, during which kingdoms and empires, have fallen, this Union has stood unshaken. The patriots who formed it have long since descended to the grave ; yet still it remains, the proudest monument to their memory, and the object of affection and admiration with every one worthy to bear the American name. In my judgment, its dissolution would be the greatest of calamities ; and to avert that should be the study of every American. Upon its preservation must depend our own happiness and that of countless generations to come. Whatever dangers may threaten it, I shall stand by it and maintain it in its integrity to the full extent of the obligations imposed and the power conferred upon me by the constitution.

PRESIDENT FILLMORE'S MESSAGE.

JULY 10, 1850.

*Fellow-Citizens of the Senate and
House of Representatives :*

A GREAT man has fallen among us, and a whole community is called to an occasion of unexpected, deep, and general mourning. I recommend to the two Houses of Congress to adopt such measures as, in their discretion, may seem proper to perform with due solemnities the funeral obsequies of Zachary Taylor, late President of the United States, and thereby to signify the great and affectionate regard of the American people for the memory of one whose life has been devoted to the public service—whose career in arms has not been surpassed in usefulness or brilliancy—

who has been so recently raised by the unsolicited voice of the people, to the highest civil authority in the government, which he administered with so much honor and advantage to his country, and by whose sudden death so many hopes of future usefulness are blighted forever. To you, Senators and Representatives of a nation in tears, I can say nothing which can alleviate the sorrow with which you are oppressed. I appeal to you to aid me under the trying circumstances which surround me in the discharge of the duties, from which, however much I may be oppressed by them, I dare not shrink; and I rely upon Him, who holds in his hands the destinies of nations, to endow me with the requisite strength for the task, and to avert from our country the evils apprehended from the heavy calamity which has befallen us. I shall most readily concur in whatever measures the wisdom of the two houses may suggest as befitting this deep and melancholy occasion.

FILLMORE'S FIRST ANNUAL MESSAGE.

DECEMBER 2, 1850.

*Fellow-Citizens of the Senate and
of the House of Representatives :*

BEING suddenly called, in the midst of the last session of Congress, by a painful dispensation of Divine Providence, to the responsible station which I now hold, I contented myself with such communications to the legislature as the exigency of the moment seemed to require. The country was shrouded in mourning for the loss of its venerated Chief Magistrate, and all hearts were penetrated with grief. Neither the time nor the occasion appeared to require or to justify, on my part, any general expression of political opinions, or any announcement of the principles which would govern me in the discharge of the duties to the performance of which I had been so unexpectedly called. I trust, there-

fore, that it may not be deemed inappropriate, if I avail myself of this opportunity of the reassembling of Congress to make known my sentiments, in a general manner, in regard to the policy which ought to be pursued by the government, both in its intercourse with foreign nations and its management and administration of internal affairs.

Nations, like individuals in a state of nature, are equal and independent, possessing certain rights, and owing certain duties to each other, arising from their necessary and unavoidable relations; which rights and duties there is no common human authority to protect and enforce. Still, they are rights and duties, binding in morals, in conscience, and in honor, although there is no tribunal to which an injured party can appeal but the disinterested judgment of mankind, and ultimately the arbitrament of the sword.

Among the acknowledged rights of nations is that which each possesses of establishing that form of government which it may deem most conducive to the happiness and prosperity of its own citizens; of changing that form as circumstances may require; and of managing its internal affairs according to its own will. The people of the United States claim this right for themselves, and they readily concede it to others. Hence it becomes an imperative duty not to interfere in the government or internal policy of other nations; and, although we may sympathize with the unfortunate or the oppressed everywhere in their struggles for freedom, our principles forbid us from taking any part in such foreign contests. We make no wars to promote or to prevent successions to thrones; to maintain any theory of a balance of power; or to suppress the actual government which any country chooses to establish for itself. We instigate no revolutions, nor suffer any hostile military expeditions to be fitted out in the United States to invade the territory or provinces of a friendly nation. The great law of morality ought to have a national as well as a personal and individual application. We should act towards other nations as we wish them to act towards us; and justice and conscience should form the rule of conduct between governments, instead of mere power, self-interest, or the desire of aggrandizement. To maintain a strict neutrality in foreign wars, to cultivate friendly relations, to reciprocate every

noble and generous act, and to perform punctually and scrupulously every treaty obligation—these are the duties which we owe to other states, and by the performance of which we best entitle ourselves to like treatment from them ; or if that, in any case, be refused, we can enforce our own rights with justice and a clear conscience.

In our domestic policy, the constitution will be my guide ; and, in questions of doubt, I shall look for its interpretation to the judicial decisions of that tribunal which was established to expound it, and to the usage of the government, sanctioned by the acquiescence of the country. I regard all its provisions as equally binding. In all its parts it is the will of the people, expressed in the most solemn form, and the constituted authorities are but agents to carry that will into effect. Every power which it has granted is to be exercised for the public good ; but no pretence of utility, no honest conviction, even, of what might be expedient, can justify the assumption of any power not granted. The powers conferred upon the government, and their distribution to the several departments, are as clearly expressed in that sacred instrument as the imperfection of human language will allow ; and I deem it my first duty not to question its wisdom, add to its provisions, evade its requirements, or nullify its commands.

Upon you, fellow-citizens, as the representatives of the States and the people, is wisely devolved the legislative power. I shall comply with my duty in laying before you from time to time any information calculated to enable you to discharge your high and responsible trust, for the benefit of our common constituents.

My opinions will be frankly expressed upon the leading subjects of legislation ; and if—which I do not anticipate—any act should pass the two houses of Congress, which should appear to me unconstitutional, and an encroachment on the just powers of other departments, or with provisions hastily adopted, and likely to produce consequences injurious and unforeseen, I should not shrink from the duty of returning it to you, with my reasons, for your further consideration. Beyond the due performance of these constitutional obligations, both my respect for the legislature and my sense of propriety will restrain me from any attempt to con-

trol or influence your proceedings. With you is the power, the honor, and the responsibility of the legislation of the country.

The government of the United States is a limited government. It is confined to the exercise of powers expressly granted, and such others as may be necessary for carrying those powers into effect; and it is at all times an especial duty to guard against any infringement on the just rights of the States. Over the objects and subjects intrusted to Congress, its legislative authority is supreme. But here that authority ceases, and every citizen who truly loves the constitution, and desires the continuance of its existence and its blessings, will resolutely and firmly resist any interference in those domestic affairs which the constitution has clearly and unequivocally left to the exclusive authority of the States; and every such citizen will also deprecate useless irritation among the several members of the Union, and all reproach and crimination tending to alienate one portion of the country from another. The beauty of our system of government consists, and its safety and durability must consist, in avoiding mutual collisions and encroachments, and in the regular separate action of all, while each is revolving in its own distinct orbit.

The constitution has made it the duty of the President to take care that the laws be faithfully executed. In a government like ours, in which all laws are passed by a majority of the representatives of the people, and these representatives are chosen for such short periods, that any injurious or obnoxious law can very soon be repealed, it would appear unlikely that any great numbers should be found ready to resist the execution of the laws. But it must be borne in mind that the country is extensive; that there may be local interests or prejudices rendering a law odious in one part, which is not so in another; and that the thoughtless and inconsiderate, misled by their passions or their imaginations, may be induced madly to resist such laws as they disapprove. Such persons should recollect that, without law, there can be no real practical liberty; that, when law is trampled under foot, tyranny rules, whether it appears in the form of a military despotism or of popular violence. The law is the only sure protection of the weak, and the

only efficient restraint upon the strong. When impartially and faithfully administered, none is beneath its protection, and none above its control. You, gentlemen, and the country, may be assured that to the utmost of my ability, and to the extent of the power vested in me, I shall at all times, and in all places, take care that the laws be faithfully executed. In the discharge of this duty, solemnly imposed upon me by the constitution and by my oath of office, I shall shrink from no responsibility, and shall endeavor to meet events as they may arise, with firmness, as well as with prudence and discretion.

The appointing power is one of the most delicate with which the executive is invested. I regard it as a sacred trust, to be exercised with the sole view of advancing the prosperity and happiness of the people. It shall be my effort to elevate the standard of official employment, by selecting for places of importance individuals fitted for the posts to which they are assigned by their own integrity, talents, and virtues. In so extensive a country, with so great a population, and where few persons appointed to office can be known to the appointing power, mistakes will sometimes unavoidably happen, and unfortunate appointments be made, notwithstanding the greatest care. In such cases the power of removal may be properly exercised, and neglect of duty or malfeasance in office will be no more tolerated in individuals appointed by myself than in those appointed by others.

I am happy in being able to say that no unfavorable change in our foreign relations has taken place since the message at the opening of the last session of Congress. We are at peace with all nations, and we enjoy in an eminent degree the blessings of that peace in a prosperous and growing commerce, and in all the forms of amicable national intercourse. The unexampled growth of the country, the present amount of its population, and its ample means of self-protection, assure for it the respect of all nations, while it is trusted that its character for justice, and a regard to the rights of other states will cause that respect to be readily and cheerfully paid.

A convention was negotiated between the United States and Great Britain, in April last, for facilitating and protect-

ing the construction of a ship canal between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, and for other purposes. This instrument has since been ratified by the contracting parties, the exchange of ratifications has been effected, and proclamation thereof has been duly made.

In addition to the stipulations contained in this convention, two other objects remain to be accomplished between the contracting powers.

First, the designation and establishment of a free port at each end of the canal.

Second, an agreement fixing the distance from the shore within which belligerent maritime operations shall not be carried on. On these points there is little doubt that the two governments will come to an understanding.

The company of citizens of the United States who have acquired from the State of Nicaragua the privilege of constructing a ship canal between the two oceans, through the territory of that State, have made progress in their preliminary arrangements. The treaty between the United States and Great Britain, of the 19th of April last, above referred to, being now in operation, it is to be hoped that the guarantees which it offers will be sufficient to secure the completion of the work with all practicable expedition. It is obvious that this result would be indefinitely postponed, if any other than peaceful measures, for the purpose of harmonizing conflicting claims to territory in that quarter, should be adopted. It will consequently be my endeavor to cause any further negotiations on the part of this government, which may be requisite for this purpose, to be so conducted as to bring them to a speedy and successful close.

Some unavoidable delay has occurred, arising from distance and the difficulty of intercourse between this government and that of Nicaragua; but, as intelligence has just been received of the appointment of an envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of that government to reside at Washington, whose arrival may soon be expected, it is hoped that no further impediments will be experienced in the prompt transaction of business between the two governments.

Citizens of the United States have undertaken the con-

nection of the two oceans by means of a railroad across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, under grants of the Mexican government to a citizen of that republic. It is understood that a thorough survey of the course of the communication is in preparation, and there is every reason to expect that it will be prosecuted with characteristic energy, especially when that government shall have consented to such stipulations with the government of the United States as may be necessary to impart a feeling of security to those who may embark their property in the enterprise. Negotiations are pending for the accomplishment of that object, and a hope is confidently entertained that, when the government of Mexico shall become duly sensible of the advantages which that country cannot fail to derive from the work, and learn that the government of the United States desires that the right of sovereignty of Mexico in the isthmus shall remain unimpaired, the stipulations referred to will be agreed to with alacrity.

By the last advices from Mexico it would appear, however, that that government entertains strong objections to some of the stipulations which the parties concerned in the project of the railroad deem necessary for their protection and security. Further consideration, it is to be hoped, or some modification of terms, may yet reconcile the differences existing between the two governments in this respect.

Fresh instructions have recently been given to the minister of the United States in Mexico, who is prosecuting the subject with promptitude and ability.

Although the negotiations with Portugal, for the payment of claims of citizens of the United States against that government, have not yet resulted in a formal treaty, yet a proposition, made by the government of Portugal for the final adjustment and payment of those claims, has recently been accepted on the part of the United States. It gives me pleasure to say that Mr. Clay, to whom the negotiation on the part of the United States had been intrusted, discharged the duties of his appointment with ability and discretion, acting always within the instructions of his government.

It is expected that a regular convention will be immediately negotiated for carrying the agreement between the two governments into effect.

The commissioner appointed under the act of Congress for carrying into effect the convention with Brazil, of the 27th of January, 1849, has entered upon the performance of the duties imposed upon him by that act. It is hoped that those duties may be completed within the time which it prescribes. The documents, however, which the imperial government, by the third article of the convention, stipulates to furnish to the United States, have not yet been received. As it is presumed that those documents will be essential for the correct disposition of the claims, it may become necessary for Congress to extend the period limited for the duration of the commission. The sum stipulated by the fourth article of the convention to be paid to this government has been received.

The collection in the ports of the United States of discriminating duties upon the vessels of Chili and their cargoes has been suspended, pursuant to the provisions of the act of Congress of the 24th of May, 1828. It is to be hoped that this measure will impart a fresh impulse to the commerce between the two countries, which of late, and especially since our acquisition of California, has, to the mutual advantage of the parties, been much augmented.

Peruvian guano has become so desirable an article to the agricultural interest of the United States, that it is the duty of the government to employ all the means properly in its power for the purpose of causing that article to be imported into the country at a reasonable price. Nothing will be omitted on my part towards accomplishing this desirable end. I am persuaded that in removing any restraints on this traffic, the Peruvian government will promote its own best interests, while it will afford a proof of a friendly disposition towards this country, which will be duly appreciated.

The treaty between the United States and his Majesty the King of the Hawaiian Islands, which has recently been made public, will, it is believed, have a beneficial effect upon the relations between the two countries.

The relations between those parts of the island of St. Domingo, which were formerly colonies of Spain and France, respectively, are still in an unsettled condition. The proximity of that island to the United States, and the delicate

questions involved in the existing controversy there, render it desirable that it should be permanently and speedily adjusted. The interests of humanity and of general commerce also demand this; and, as intimations of the same sentiment have been received from other governments, it is hoped that some plan may soon be devised to effect the object in a manner likely to give general satisfaction. The government of the United States will not fail, by the exercise of all proper friendly offices, to do all in its power to put an end to the destructive war which has raged between the different parts of the island, and to secure to them both the benefits of peace and commerce.

I refer you to the report of the Secretary of the Treasury for a detailed statement of the finances.

The total receipts into the treasury for the year ending 30th June last, were forty-seven million four hundred and twenty-one thousand seven hundred and forty-eight dollars and ninety cents (\$47,421,748 90).

The total expenditures during the same period were forty-three million two thousand one hundred and sixty-eight dollars and ninety cents (\$43,002,168 90).

The public debt has been reduced, since the last annual report from the Treasury Department, four hundred and ninety-five thousand two hundred and seventy-six dollars and seventy-nine cents (\$495,276 79).

By the 19th section of the act of 28th January, 1847, the proceeds of the sales of the public lands were pledged for the interest and principal of the public debt. The great amount of those lands subsequently granted by Congress for military bounties will, it is believed, very nearly supply the public demand for several years to come, and but little reliance can, therefore, be placed on that hitherto fruitful source of revenue.

Aside from the permanent annual expenditures, which have necessarily largely increased, a portion of the public debt, amounting to eight million seventy-five thousand nine hundred and eighty-six dollars and fifty-nine cents (\$8,075,986 59), must be provided for within the next two fiscal years. It is most desirable that these accruing demands should be met without resorting to new loans.

All experience has demonstrated the wisdom and policy

of raising a large portion of revenue for the support of government from duties on goods imported. The power to lay these duties is unquestionable, and its chief object, of course, is to replenish the treasury. But if, in doing this, an incidental advantage may be gained by encouraging the industry of our own citizens, it is our duty to avail ourselves of that advantage.

A duty laid upon an article which cannot be produced in this country—such as tea or coffee—adds to the cost of the article, and is chiefly or wholly paid by the consumer. But a duty laid upon an article which may be produced here, stimulates the skill and industry of our own country to produce the same article, which is brought into the market in competition with the foreign article, and the importer is thus compelled to reduce his price to that at which the domestic article can be sold, thereby throwing a part of the duty upon the producer of the foreign article. The continuance of this process creates the skill, and invites the capital, which finally enable us to produce the article much cheaper than it could have been procured from abroad, thereby benefiting both the producer and the consumer at home. The consequence of this is, that the artisan and the agriculturist are brought together, each affords a ready market for the produce of the other, and the whole country becomes prosperous; and the ability to produce every necessary of life renders us independent in war as well as in peace.

A high tariff can never be permanent. It will cause dissatisfaction, and will be changed. It excludes competition, and thereby invites the investment of capital in manufactures to such excess, that when changed it brings distress, bankruptcy, and ruin upon all who have been misled by its faithless protection. What the manufacturer wants is uniformity and permanency, that he may feel a confidence that he is not to be ruined by sudden changes. But to make a tariff uniform and permanent, it is not only necessary that the law should not be altered, but that the duty should not fluctuate. To effect this, all duties should be specific, wherever the nature of the article is such as to admit of it. Ad-valorem duties fluctuate with the price, and offer strong temptations to fraud and perjury. Specific duties, on the contrary, are equal and uniform in all ports,

and at all times, and offer a strong inducement to the importer to bring the best article, as he pays no more duty upon that than upon one of inferior quality. I therefore strongly recommend a modification of the present tariff, which has prostrated some of our most important and necessary manufactures, and that specific duties be imposed sufficient to raise the requisite revenue, making such discrimination in favor of the industrial pursuits of our own country as to encourage home production, without excluding foreign competition. It is also important that an unfortunate provision in the present tariff, which imposes a much higher duty upon the raw material that enters into our manufactures than upon the manufactured article, should be remedied.

The papers accompanying the report of the Secretary of the Treasury will disclose frauds attempted upon the revenue, in variety and amount so great, as to justify the conclusion that it is impossible, under any system of ad-valorem duties levied upon the foreign cost or value of the article, to secure an honest observance and an effectual administration of the laws. The fraudulent devices to evade the law which have been detected by the vigilance of the appraisers, leave no room to doubt that similar impositions not discovered, to a large amount, have been successfully practised since the enactment of the law now in force. This state of things has already had a prejudicial influence upon those engaged in foreign commerce. It has a tendency to drive the honest trader from the business of importing, and to throw that important branch of employment into the hands of unscrupulous and dishonest men, who are alike regardless of law and the obligations of an oath. By these means the plain intentions of Congress, as expressed in the law, are daily defeated. Every motive of policy and duty, therefore, impel me to ask the earnest attention of Congress to this subject. If Congress should deem it unwise to attempt any important changes, in the system of levying duties at this session, it will become indispensable to the protection of the revenue that such remedies as, in the judgment of Congress, may mitigate the evils complained of, should at once be applied.

As before stated, specific duties would, in my opinion, afford the most perfect remedy for this evil; but, if you should not concur in this view, then, as a partial remedy, I

beg leave respectfully to recommend that, instead of taking the invoice of the article abroad as a means of determining its value here, the correctness of which invoice it is in many cases impossible to verify, the law be so changed as to require a home valuation or appraisal, to be regulated in such manner as to give, as far as practicable, uniformity in the several ports.

There being no mint in California, I am informed that the laborers in the mines are compelled to dispose of their gold dust at a large discount. This appears to me to be a heavy and unjust tax upon the labor of those employed in extracting this precious metal; and I doubt not you will be disposed, at the earliest period possible, to relieve them from it by the establishment of a mint. In the mean time, as an assayer's office is established there, I would respectfully submit for your consideration the propriety of authorizing gold bullion, which has been assayed and stamped, to be received in payment of government dues. I cannot conceive that the treasury would suffer any loss by such a provision, which will at once raise bullion to its par value, and thereby save (if I am rightly informed) many millions of dollars to the laborers which are now paid in brokerage to convert this precious metal into available funds. This discount upon their hard earnings is a heavy tax, and every effort should be made by the government to relieve them from so great a burden.

More than three-fourths of our population are engaged in the cultivation of the soil. The commercial, manufacturing, and navigating interests are all, to a great extent, dependent on the agricultural. It is, therefore, the most important interest of the nation, and has a just claim to the fostering care and protection of the government, so far as they can be extended consistently with the provisions of the constitution. As this cannot be done by the ordinary modes of legislation, I respectfully recommend the establishment of an Agricultural Bureau, to be charged with the duty of giving to this leading branch of American industry the encouragement which it so well deserves. In view of the immense mineral resources of our country, provision should also be made for the employment of a competent mineralogist and chemist, who should be required, under the direction of the head of

the bureau, to collect specimens of the various minerals of our country, and to ascertain, by careful analysis, their respective elements and properties, and their adaptation to useful purposes. He should also be required to examine and report upon the qualities of different soils, and the manures best calculated to improve their productiveness. By publishing the results of such experiments, with suitable explanations, and by the collection and distribution of rare seeds and plants, with instructions as to the best system of cultivation, much may be done to promote this great national interest.

In compliance with the act of Congress, passed on the 23d of May, 1850, providing, among other things, for taking the seventh census, a superintendent was appointed, and all other measures adopted which were deemed necessary to insure the prompt and faithful performance of that duty. The appropriation already made will, it is believed, be sufficient to defray the whole expense of the work; but further legislation may be necessary in regard to the compensation of some of the marshals of the territories. It will also be proper to make provision by law, at an early day, for the publication of such abstracts of the returns as the public interests may require.

The unprecedented growth of our territories on the Pacific in wealth and population, and the consequent increase of their social and commercial relations with the Atlantic States, seem to render it the duty of the government to use all its constitutional power to improve the means of intercourse with them. The importance of opening "a line of communication, the best and most expeditious of which the nature of the country will admit," between the valley of the Mississippi and the Pacific, was brought to your notice by my predecessor, in his annual message; and as the reasons which he presented in favor of the measure still exist in full force, I beg leave to call your attention to them, and to repeat the recommendations then made by him.

The uncertainty which exists in regard to the validity of land titles in California, is a subject which demands your early consideration. Large bodies of land in that State are claimed under grants said to have been made by authority of the Spanish and Mexican governments. Many of these

have not been perfected, others have been revoked, and some are believed to be fraudulent. But until they shall have been judicially investigated, they will continue to retard the settlement and improvement of the country. I therefore respectfully recommend that provision be made by law for the appointment of commissioners to examine all such claims with a view to their final adjustment.

I also beg leave to call your attention to the propriety of extending, at an early day, our system of land laws, with such modifications as may be necessary, over the State of California and the territories of Utah and New Mexico. The mineral lands of California will, of course, form an exception to any general system which may be adopted. Various methods of disposing of them have been suggested. I was at first inclined to favor the system of leasing, as it seemed to promise the largest revenue to the government, and to afford the best security against monopolies; but further reflection, and our experience in leasing the lead mines and selling lands upon credit, have brought my mind to the conclusion that there would be great difficulty in collecting the rents, and that the relation of debtor and creditor, between the citizens and the government, would be attended with many mischievous consequences. I therefore recommend that, instead of retaining the mineral lands under the permanent control of the government, they be divided into small parcels and sold, under such restrictions, as to quantity and time, as will insure the best price, and guard most effectually against combinations of capitalists to obtain monopolies.

The annexation of Texas and the acquisition of California and New Mexico have given increased importance to our Indian relations. The various tribes brought under our jurisdiction by these enlargements of our boundaries, are estimated to embrace a population of one hundred and twenty-four thousand.

Texas and New Mexico are surrounded by powerful tribes of Indians, who are a source of constant terror and annoyance to the inhabitants. Separating into small predatory bands, and always mounted, they overrun the country, devastating farms, destroying crops, driving off whole herds of cattle, and occasionally murdering the inhabitants or carrying

them off into captivity. The great roads leading into the country are infested with them, whereby travelling is rendered extremely dangerous, and immigration is almost entirely arrested. The Mexican frontier, which, by the 11th article of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, we are bound to protect against the Indians within our border, is exposed to these incursions equally with our own. The military force stationed in that country (although forming a large portion of the army) is represented as entirely inadequate to our own protection and the fulfilment of our treaty stipulations with Mexico. The principal deficiency is in cavalry, and I recommend that Congress should, at as early a period as practicable, provide for the raising of one or more regiments of mounted men.

For further suggestions on this subject, and others connected with our domestic interests, and the defence of our frontier, I refer you to the reports of the Secretary of the Interior and of the Secretary of War.

I commend also to your favorable consideration the suggestion contained in the last-mentioned report, and in the letter of the General-in-chief, relative to the establishment of an asylum for the relief of disabled and destitute soldiers. This subject appeals so strongly to your sympathies, that it would be superfluous in me to say any thing more than barely to express my cordial approbation of the proposed object.

The navy continues to give protection to our commerce and other national interests in the different quarters of the globe, and with the exception of a single steamer on the northern lakes, the vessels in commission are distributed in six different squadrons.

The report of the head of that department will exhibit the services of these squadrons, and of the several vessels employed in each during the past year. It is a source of gratification, that while they have been constantly prepared for any hostile emergency, they have everywhere met with the respect and courtesy due as well to the dignity as to the peaceful dispositions and just purposes of the nation.

The two brigantines accepted by the government from a generous citizen of New York, and placed under the command of an officer of the navy, to proceed to the Arctic seas

in quest of the British commander, Sir John Franklin, and his companions, in compliance with the act of Congress, approved in May last, had, when last heard from, penetrated into a high northern latitude; but the success of this noble and humane enterprise is yet uncertain.

I invite your attention to the view of our present naval establishment and resources presented in the report of the Secretary of the Navy, and the suggestions therein made for its improvement, together with the naval policy recommended for the security of our Pacific coast, and the protection and extension of our commerce with Eastern Asia. Our facilities for a larger participation in the trade of the East, by means of our recent settlements on the shores of the Pacific, are too obvious to be overlooked or disregarded.

The questions in relation to rank in the army and navy, and relative rank between officers of the two branches of the service, presented to the executive by certain resolutions of the House of Representatives, at the last session of Congress, have been submitted to a board of officers in each branch of the service, and their report may be expected at an early day.

I also earnestly recommend the enactment of a law authorizing officers of the army and navy to be retired from the service when incompetent for its vigorous and active duties, taking care to make suitable provision for those who have faithfully served their country, and awarding distinctions, by retaining in appropriate commands those who have been particularly conspicuous for gallantry and good conduct. While the obligation of the country to maintain and honor those who, to the exclusion of other pursuits, have devoted themselves to its arduous service, is acknowledged, this obligation should not be permitted to interfere with the efficiency of the service itself.

I am gratified in being able to state, that the estimates of expenditure for the navy in the ensuing year are less, by more than one million of dollars, than those of the present, excepting the appropriation which may become necessary for the construction of a dock on the coast of the Pacific, propositions for which are now being considered, and on which a special report may be expected early in your present session.

There is an evident justness in the suggestion of the same report, that appropriations for the naval service proper should be separated from those for fixed and permanent objects; such as building docks and navy-yards, and the fixtures attached; and from the extraordinary objects under the care of the department which, however important, are not essentially naval.

A revision of the code for the government of the navy seems to require the immediate consideration of Congress. Its system of crimes and punishments had undergone no change for half a century, until the last session, though its defects have been often and ably pointed out, and the abolition of a particular species of corporal punishment, which then took place, without providing any substitute, has left the service in a state of defectiveness, which calls for prompt correction. I therefore recommend that the whole subject be revised without delay, and such a system established for the enforcement of discipline as shall be at once humane and effectual.

The accompanying report of the Postmaster-General presents a satisfactory view of the operations and condition of that department.

At the close of the last fiscal year, the length of the inland mail-routes in the United States (not embracing the service in Oregon and California) was one hundred and seventy-eight thousand six hundred and seventy-two miles; the annual transportation thereon, forty-six million five hundred and forty-one thousand four hundred and twenty-three miles; and the annual cost of such transportation, two million seven hundred and twenty-four thousand four hundred and twenty-six dollars.

The increase of the annual transportation over that of the preceding year was three million nine hundred and ninety-seven thousand three hundred and fifty-four miles, and the increase in cost was three hundred and forty-two thousand four hundred and forty dollars.

The number of post-offices in the United States on the first day of July last, was eighteen thousand four hundred and seventeen—being an increase of sixteen hundred and seventy during the preceding year.

The gross revenues of the department for the fiscal year

ending June 30, 1850, amounted to five million five hundred and fifty-two thousand nine hundred and seventy-one dollars and forty-eight cents, including the annual appropriation of two hundred thousand dollars for the franked matter of the departments, and excluding the foreign postages collected for and payable to the British government.

The expenditures for the same period were five million two hundred and twelve thousand nine hundred and fifty-three dollars and forty-three cents—leaving a balance of revenue over expenditures of three hundred and forty thousand and eighteen dollars and five cents.

I am happy to find that the fiscal condition of the department is such as to justify the Postmaster-General in recommending the reduction of our inland letter postage to three cents the single letter when prepaid, and five cents when not prepaid. He also recommends that the prepaid rate shall be reduced to two cents whenever the revenues of the department, after the reduction, shall exceed its expenditures by more than five per cent. for two consecutive years; that the postage upon California and other letters sent by our ocean steamers shall be much reduced; and that the rates of postage on newspapers, pamphlets, periodicals, and other printed matter, shall be modified, and some reduction thereon made.

It cannot be doubted that the proposed reductions will, for the present, diminish the revenues of the department. It is believed that the deficiency, after the surplus already accumulated shall be exhausted, may be almost wholly met, either by abolishing the existing privileges of sending free matter through the mails, or by paying out of the treasury to the Post-office Department a sum equivalent to the postage of which it is deprived by such privileges. The last is supposed to be the preferable mode, and will, if not entirely, so nearly supply that deficiency as to make any further appropriation that may be found necessary so inconsiderable as to form no obstacle to the proposed reductions.

I entertain no doubt of the authority of Congress to make appropriations for leading objects in that class of public works comprising what are usually called works of internal improvement. This authority I suppose to be derived chiefly from the power of regulating commerce with foreign nations

and among the States, and the power of laying and collecting imposts. Where commerce is to be carried on, and imposts collected, there must be ports and harbors, as well as wharves and custom-houses. If ships, laden with valuable cargoes, approach the shore, or sail along the coast, light-houses are necessary at suitable points for the protection of life and property. Other facilities and securities for commerce and navigation are hardly less important; and those clauses of the constitution, therefore, to which I have referred, have received from the origin of the government a liberal and beneficial construction. Not only have light-houses, buoys, and beacons been established, and floating lights maintained, but harbors have been cleared and improved, piers constructed, and even breakwaters for the safety of shipping, and sea walls to protect harbors from being filled up and rendered useless, by the action of the ocean, have been erected at very great expense. And this construction of the constitution appears the more reasonable from the consideration, that if these works, of such evident importance and utility, are not to be accomplished by Congress, they cannot be accomplished at all. By the adoption of the constitution the several States voluntarily parted with the power of collecting duties of imposts in their own ports; and it is not to be expected that they should raise money, by internal taxation, direct or indirect, for the benefit of that commerce, the revenues derived from which do not, either in whole or in part, go into their own treasuries. Nor do I perceive any difference between the power of Congress to make appropriations for objects of this kind on the ocean, and the power to make appropriations for similar objects on lakes and rivers, wherever they are large enough to bear on their waters an extensive traffic. The magnificent Mississippi and its tributaries, and the vast lakes of the north and northwest, appear to me to fall within the exercise of the power, as justly and as clearly as the ocean and the Gulf of Mexico. It is a mistake to regard expenditures judiciously made for these objects as expenditures for local purposes. The position or site of the work is necessarily local; but its utility is general. A ship canal around the falls of St. Mary of less than a mile in length, though local in its construction, would yet be national in its purpose and its benefits, as it

would remove the only obstruction to a navigation of more than a thousand miles, affecting several States, as well as our commercial relations with Canada. So, too, the breakwater at the mouth of the Delaware is erected, not for the exclusive benefit of the States bordering on the bay and river of that name, but for that of the whole coastwise navigation of the United States, and, to a considerable extent, also of foreign commerce. If a ship be lost on the bar at the entrance of a southern port for want of sufficient depth of water, it is very likely to be a northern ship; and if a steamboat be sunk in any part of the Mississippi, on account of its channel not having been properly cleared of obstructions, it may be a boat belonging to either of eight or ten States. I may add, as somewhat remarkable, that among all the thirty-one States there is none that is not, to a greater or less extent, bounded on the ocean or the Gulf of Mexico, or one of the great lakes, or some navigable river.

In fulfilling our constitutional duties, fellow-citizens, on this subject, as in carrying into effect all other powers conferred by the constitution, we should consider ourselves as deliberating and acting for one and the same country, and bear constantly in mind that our regard and our duty are due, not to a particular part only, but to the whole.

I therefore recommend that appropriations be made for completing such works as have been already begun, and for commencing such others as may seem to the wisdom of Congress to be of public and general importance.

The difficulties and delays incident to the settlement of private claims by Congress, amount in many cases to a denial of justice. There is reason to apprehend that many unfortunate creditors of the government have thereby been unavoidably ruined. Congress has so much business of a public character, that it is impossible it should give much attention to mere private claims; and their accumulation is now so great, that many claimants must despair of ever being able to obtain a hearing. It may well be doubted whether Congress, from the nature of its organization, is properly constituted to decide upon such cases. It is impossible that each member should examine the merits of every claim on which he is compelled to vote; and it is preposterous to ask a judge to decide a case which he has never heard. Such

decisions may, and frequently must, do injustice either to the claimant or the government, and I perceive no better remedy for this growing evil than the establishment of some tribunal to adjudicate upon such claims. I beg leave, therefore, most respectfully, to recommend that provision be made by law for the appointment of a commission to settle all private claims against the United States; and, as an *ex parte* hearing must in all contested cases be very unsatisfactory, I also recommend the appointment of a solicitor, whose duty it shall be to represent the government before such commission, and protect it against all illegal, fraudulent, or unjust claims, which may be presented for their adjudication.

This District, which has neither voice nor vote in your deliberations, looks to you for protection and aid, and I commend all its wants to your favorable consideration, with a full confidence that you will meet them not only with justice, but with liberality. It should be borne in mind that in this city, laid out by Washington and consecrated by his name, is located the Capitol of our nation, the emblem of our Union and the symbol of our greatness. Here, also, are situated all the public buildings necessary for the use of the government, and all these are exempt from taxation. It should be the pride of Americans to render this place attractive to the people of the whole republic, and convenient and safe for the transaction of the public business and the preservation of the public records. The government should, therefore, bear a liberal proportion of the burdens of all necessary and useful improvements. And, as nothing could contribute more to the health, comfort, and safety of the city, and the security of the public buildings and records, than an abundant supply of pure water, I respectfully recommend that you make such provisions for obtaining the same as in your wisdom you may deem proper.

The act passed at your last session, making certain propositions to Texas for settling the disputed boundary between that State and the Territory of New Mexico, was, immediately on its passage, transmitted by express to the governor of Texas, to be laid by him before the General Assembly for its agreement thereto. Its receipt was duly acknowledged, but no official information has yet been received of the action of the General Assembly thereon; it may, however, be

very soon expected, as, by the terms of the propositions submitted, they were to have been acted upon on or before the first day of the present month.

It was hardly to have been expected that the series of measures passed at your last session, with the view of healing the sectional differences which had sprung from the slavery and territorial questions, should at once have realized their beneficent purpose. All mutual concession in the nature of a compromise must necessarily be unwelcome to men of extreme opinions. And though without such concessions our constitution could not have been formed, and cannot be permanently sustained, yet we have seen them made the subject of bitter controversy in both sections of the republic. It required many months of discussion and deliberation to secure the concurrence of a majority of Congress in their favor. It would be strange if they had been received with immediate approbation by people and States prejudiced and heated by the exciting controversies of their representatives. I believe those measures to have been required by the circumstances and condition of the country. I believe they were necessary to allay asperities and animosities that were rapidly alienating one section of the country from another, and destroying those fraternal sentiments which are the strongest supports of the constitution. They were adopted in the spirit of conciliation, and for the purpose of conciliation. I believe that a great majority of our fellow-citizens sympathize in that spirit and that purpose, and in the main approve, and are prepared in all respects to sustain, these enactments. I cannot doubt that the American people, bound together by kindred blood and common traditions, still cherish a paramount regard for the Union of their fathers; and that they are ready to rebuke any attempt to violate its integrity, to disturb the compromises on which it is based, or to resist the laws which have been enacted under its authority.

The series of measures to which I have alluded are regarded by me as a settlement, in principle and substance—a final settlement—of the dangerous and exciting subjects which they embraced. Most of these subjects, indeed, are beyond your reach, as the legislation which disposed of them was, in its character, final and irrevocable. It may be pre-

sumed, from the opposition which they all encounter, that none of those measures was free from imperfections, but in their mutual dependence and connection they formed a system of compromise, the most conciliatory, and best for the entire country, that could be obtained from conflicting sectional interests and opinions.

For this reason I recommend your adherence to the adjustment established by those measures, until time and experience shall demonstrate the necessity of further legislation to guard against evasion or abuse.

By that adjustment we have been rescued from the wide and boundless agitation that surrounded us, and have a firm, distinct, and legal ground to rest upon. And the occasion, I trust, will justify me in exhorting my countrymen to rally upon and maintain that ground, as the best, if not the only means of restoring peace and quiet to the country, and maintaining inviolate the integrity of the Union.

And now, fellow-citizens, I cannot bring this communication to a close without invoking you to join me in humble and devout thanks to the Great Ruler of nations for the multiplied blessings which he has graciously bestowed upon us. His hand, so often visible in our preservation, has stayed the pestilence, saved us from foreign wars and domestic disturbances, and scattered plenty throughout the land.

Our liberties, religious and civil, have been maintained, the fountains of knowledge have all been kept open, and means of happiness widely spread and generally enjoyed, greater than have fallen to the lot of any other nation. And, while deeply penetrated with gratitude for the past, let us hope that his all-wise Providence will so guide our counsels as that they shall result in giving satisfaction to our constituents, securing the peace of the country, and adding new strength to the united government under which we live.

PIERCE'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

MY COUNTRYMEN: It is a relief to feel that no heart but my own can know the personal regret and bitter sorrow over which I have been borne to a position so suitable for others, rather than desirable for myself.

The circumstances under which I have been called, for a limited period, to preside over the destinies of the republic, fill me with a profound sense of responsibility, but with nothing like shrinking apprehension. I repair to the post assigned me, not to one sought, but in obedience to the unsolicited expression of your will, answerable only for a fearless, faithful, and diligent exercise of my best powers.

I ought to be, and am, truly grateful for the rare manifestation of the nation's confidence; but this, so far from lightening my obligations, only adds to their weight. You have summoned me in my weakness: you must sustain me by your strength. When looking for the fulfilment of reasonable requirements, you will not be unmindful of the great changes which have occurred, even within the last quarter of a century, and the consequent augmentation and complexity of duties imposed, in the administration both of your home and foreign affairs.

Whether the elements of inherent force in the republic have kept pace with its unparalleled progression in territory, population, and wealth, has been the subject of earnest thought and discussion, on both sides of the ocean. Less than sixty-three years ago, the Father of his country made "the" then "recent accession of the important State of North Carolina to the constitution of the United States" one of the subjects of his special congratulation. At that moment, however, when the agitation consequent upon the revolutionary struggle had hardly subsided, when we were just emerging from the weakness and embarrassment of the confederation, there was an evident consciousness of vigor equal to the great mission so wisely and bravely fulfilled by our fathers. It was not a presumptuous assurance, but a calm faith, springing from a clear view of the sources of power in a government constituted like ours. It is no para-

dox to say that, although comparatively weak, the new-born nation was intrinsically strong. Inconsiderable in population and apparent resources, it was upheld by a broad and intelligent comprehension of rights, and an all-pervading purpose to maintain them, stronger than armaments. It came from the furnace of the Revolution, tempered to the necessities of the times. The thoughts of the men of that day were as practical as their sentiments were patriotic. They wasted no portion of their energies upon idle and delusive speculations; but, with a firm and fearless step, advanced beyond the governmental landmarks which had hitherto circumscribed the limits of human freedom, and planted their standard where it has stood, against dangers which have threatened from abroad, and internal agitation, which has at times fearfully menaced at home. They approved themselves equal to the solution of the great problem, to understand which their minds had been illuminated by the dawning lights of the Revolution. The object sought was not a thing dreamed of—it was a thing realized. They had exhibited, not only the power to achieve, but what all history affirms to be so much more unusual, the capacity to maintain. The oppressed throughout the world, from that day to the present, have turned their eyes hitherward, not to find those lights extinguished, or to fear lest they should wane, but to be constantly cheered by their steady and increasing radiance.

In this our country has, in my judgment, thus far, fulfilled its highest duty to suffering humanity. It has spoken, and will continue to speak, not only by its words, but by its acts, the language of sympathy, encouragement, and hope, to those who earnestly listen to tones which pronounce for the largest rational liberty. But, after all, the most animating encouragement and potent appeal for freedom will be its own history, its trials and its triumphs. Pre-eminently, the power of our advocacy reposes on our example; but no example, be it remembered, can be powerful for lasting good, whatever apparent advantages may be gained, which is not based upon eternal principles of right and justice. Our fathers decided for themselves, both upon the hour to declare and the hour to strike. They were their own judges of the circumstances under which it became them to pledge

to each other "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor," for the acquisition of the priceless inheritance transmitted to us. The energy with which that great conflict was opened, and, under the guidance of a manifest and beneficent Providence, the uncomplaining endurance with which it was prosecuted to its consummation, were only surpassed by the wisdom and patriotic spirit of concession which characterized all the counsels of the early fathers.

One of the most impressive evidences of that wisdom is to be found in the fact, that the actual working of our system has dispelled a degree of solicitude which, at the outset, disturbed bold hearts and far-reaching intellects. The apprehension of dangers from extended territory, multiplied States, accumulated wealth, and augmented population, has proved to be unfounded. The stars upon your banner have become nearly threefold their original number, your densely populated possessions skirt the shores of the two great oceans, and yet this vast increase of people and territory has not only shown itself compatible with the harmonious action of the States and the federal government in their respective constitutional spheres, but has afforded an additional guarantee of the strength and integrity of both.

With an experience thus suggestive and cheering, the policy of my administration will not be controlled by any timid forebodings of evil from expansion. Indeed, it is not to be disguised that our attitude as a nation, and our position on the globe, render the acquisition of certain possessions, not within our jurisdiction, eminently important for our protection, if not, in the future, essential for the preservation of the rights of commerce and the peace of the world. Should they be obtained, it will be through no grasping spirit, but with a view to obvious national interest and security, and in a manner entirely consistent with the strictest observance of national faith. We have nothing in our history or position to invite aggression; we have every thing to beckon us to the cultivation of relations of peace and amity with all nations. Purposes, therefore, at once just and pacific, will be significantly marked in the conduct of our foreign affairs. I intend that my administration shall leave no blot upon our fair record, and trust I may safely give the assurance that no act within the legitimate scope of my con-

stitutional control will be tolerated, on the part of any portion of our citizens, which cannot challenge a ready justification before the tribunal of the civilized world. An administration would be unworthy of confidence at home or respect abroad, should it cease to be influenced by the conviction, that no apparent advantage can be purchased at a price so dear as that of national wrong or dishonor. It is not your privilege, as a nation, to speak of a distant past. The striking incidents of your history, replete with instruction, and furnishing abundant grounds for hopeful confidence, are comprised in a period comparatively brief. But if your past is limited, your future is boundless. Its obligations throug the unexplored pathway of advancement, and will be limitless as duration. Hence, a sound and comprehensive policy should embrace, not less the distant future, than the urgent present.

The great objects of our pursuit, as a people, are best to be attained by peace, and are entirely consistent with the tranquility and interests of the rest of mankind. With the neighboring nations upon our continent, we should cultivate kindly and fraternal relations. We can desire nothing in regard to them so much as to see them consolidate their strength, and pursue the paths of prosperity and happiness. If, in the course of their growth, we should open new channels of trade, and create additional facilities for friendly intercourse, the benefits realized will be equal and mutual. Of the complicated European systems of national polity we have heretofore been independent. From their wars, their tumults, and anxieties, we have been, happily, almost entirely exempt. Whilst these are confined to the nations which gave them existence, and within their legitimate jurisdiction, they cannot affect us, except as they appeal to our sympathies in the cause of human freedom and universal advancement. But the vast interests of commerce are common to all mankind, and the advantages of trade and international intercourse must always present a noble field for the moral influence of a great people.

With these views firmly and honestly carried out, we have a right to expect, and shall under all circumstances require, prompt reciprocity. The rights which belong to us as a nation, are not alone to be regarded, but those which pertain

to every citizen in his individual capacity, at home and abroad, must be sacredly maintained. So long as he can discern every star in its place upon that ensign, without wealth to purchase for him preferment, or title to secure for him place, it will be his privilege, and must be his acknowledged right, to stand unabashed even in the presence of princes, with a proud consciousness that he is himself one of a nation of sovereigns, and that he cannot, in legitimate pursuit, wander so far from home that the agent whom he shall leave behind in the place which I now occupy will not see that no rude hand of power or tyrannical passion is laid upon him with impunity. He must realize that upon every sea, and on every soil, where our enterprise may rightfully seek the protection of our flag, American citizenship is an inviolable panoply for the security of American rights. And, in this connection, it can hardly be necessary to reaffirm a principle which should now be regarded as fundamental. The rights, security, and repose of this confederacy reject the idea of interference or colonization on this side of the ocean by any foreign power, beyond present jurisdiction, as utterly inadmissible.

The opportunities of observation furnished by my brief experience as a soldier, confirmed in my own mind the opinion entertained and acted upon by others from the formation of the government, that the maintenance of large standing armies in our country would be not only dangerous, but unnecessary. They also illustrated the importance—I might well say the absolute necessity—of the military science and practical skill furnished in such an eminent degree by the institution which has made your army what it is, under the discipline and instruction of officers not more distinguished for their solid attainments, gallantry, and devotion to the public service, than for unobtrusive bearing and high moral tone. The army, as organized, must be the nucleus around which in every time of need the strength of your military power, the sure bulwark of your defence—a national militia—may be readily formed into a well-disciplined and efficient organization. And the skill and self devotion of the navy assure you that you may take the performance of the past as a pledge for the future, and may confidently expect that the flag which has waved its untarnished folds over every sea,

will still float in undiminished honor. But these, like many other subjects, will be appropriately brought at a future time to the attention of the co-ordinate branches of the government, to which I shall always look with profound respect, and with trustful confidence, that they will accord to me the aid and support which I shall so much need, and which their experience and wisdom will readily suggest.

In the administration of domestic affairs you expect a devoted integrity in the public service, and an observance of rigid economy in all departments, so marked as never justly to be questioned. If this reasonable expectation be not realized, I frankly confess that one of your leading hopes is doomed to disappointment, and that my efforts, in a very important particular, must result in a humiliating failure. Offices can be properly regarded only in the light of aids for the accomplishment of these objects; and as occupancy can confer no prerogative, nor importunate desire for preferment any claim, the public interest imperatively demands that they be considered with sole reference to the duties to be performed. Good citizens may well claim the protection of good laws and the benign influence of good government; but a claim for office is what the people of a republic should never recognize. No reasonable man of any party will expect the administration to be so regardless of its responsibility, and of the obvious elements of success, as to retain persons known to be under the influence of political hostility and partisan prejudice, in positions which will require not only severe labor, but cordial co-operation. Having no implied engagements to ratify, no rewards to bestow, no resentments to remember, and no personal wishes to consult, in selections for official station—I shall fulfil this difficult and delicate trust, admitting no motive as worthy either of my character or position, which does not contemplate an efficient discharge of duty and the best interests of my country. I acknowledge my obligations to the masses of my countrymen, and to them alone. Higher objects than personal aggrandizement gave direction and energy to their exertions in the late canvass, and they shall not be disappointed. They require at my hands diligence, integrity, and capacity, wherever there are duties to be performed. Without these qualities in their public servants, more stringent

laws for the prevention or punishment of fraud, negligence, and speculation, will be vain. With them, they will be unnecessary.

But these are not the only points to which you look for vigilant watchfulness. The dangers of a concentration of all power in the general government of a confederacy like ours, are too obvious to be disregarded. You have a right, therefore, to expect your agents, in every department, to regard strictly the limits imposed upon them by the constitution of the United States

The great scheme of our constitutional liberty rests upon a proper distribution of power between the State and federal authorities; and experience has shown that the harmony and happiness of our people must depend upon a just discrimination between the separate rights and responsibilities of the States, and your common rights and obligations under the general government. And here, in my opinion, are the considerations which should form the true basis of future concord in regard to the questions which have most seriously disturbed public tranquillity. If the federal government will confine itself to the exercise of power clearly granted by the constitution, it can hardly happen that its action upon any question should endanger the institutions of the States, or interfere with their right to manage matters strictly domestic according to the will of their own people.

In expressing briefly my views upon an important subject, which has recently agitated the nation to almost a fearful degree, I am moved by no other impulse than a most earnest desire for the perpetuation of that Union which has made us what we are—showing upon us blessings, and conferring a power and influence which our fathers could hardly have anticipated even with their most sanguine hopes directed to a far-off future. The sentiments I now announce were not unknown before the expression of the voice which called me here. My own position upon this subject was clear and unequivocal, upon the record of my words and my acts, and it is only recurred to at this time because silence might, perhaps, be misconstrued. With the Union my best and dearest earthly hopes are entwined. Without it, what are we, individually or collectively?—what becomes of the noblest field ever opened for the advancement of our race in religion,

in government, in the arts, and in all that dignifies and adorns mankind? From that radiant constellation, which both illumines our own way and points out to struggling nations their course, let but a single star be lost, and, if there be not utter darkness, the lustre of the whole is dimmed. Do my countrymen need any assurance that such a catastrophe is not to overtake them while I possess the power to stay it? It is with me an earnest and vital belief, that as the Union has been the source, under Providence, of our prosperity to this time, so it is the surest pledge of a continuance of the blessings we have enjoyed, and which we are sacredly bound to transmit undiminished to our children. The field of calm and free discussion in our country is open, and will always be so; but it never has been and never can be traversed for good in a spirit of sectionalism and uncharitableness. The founders of the republic dealt with things as they were presented to them, in a spirit of self-sacrificing patriotism, and, as time has proved, with a comprehensive wisdom which it will be always safe for us to consult. Every measure, tending to strengthen the fraternal feelings of all the members of our Union has had my heartfelt approbation. To every theory of society or government, whether the offspring of feverish ambition or of morbid enthusiasm, calculated to dissolve the bonds of law and affection which unite us, I shall interpose a ready and stern resistance. I believe that involuntary servitude, as it exists in different States of this confederacy, is recognized by the constitution. I believe that it stands like any other admitted right, and that the States wherein it exists are entitled to efficient remedies to enforce the constitutional provisions. I hold that the laws of 1850, commonly called the "compromise measures," are strictly constitutional, and to be unhesitatingly carried into effect. I believe that the constituted authorities of this republic are bound to regard the rights of the South in this respect, as they would view any other legal and constitutional right, and that the laws to enforce them should be respected and obeyed, not with a reluctance encouraged by abstract opinions as to their propriety in a different state of society, but cheerfully, and according to the decisions of the tribunal to which their exposition belongs. Such have been and are my convictions, and upon them I shall act. I fervently hope

that the question is at rest, and that no sectional, or ambitious, or fanatical excitement, may again threaten the durability of our institutions, or obscure the light of our prosperity.

But let not the foundation of our hope rest upon man's wisdom. It will not be sufficient that sectional prejudices find no place in the public deliberations. It will not be sufficient that the rash counsels of human passion are rejected. It must be felt that there is no national security but in the nation's humble, acknowledged dependence upon God and his overruling providence.

We have been carried in safety through a perilous crisis. Wise councils, like those which gave us the constitution, prevailed to uphold it. Let the period be remembered as an admonition, and not as an encouragement, in any section of the Union, to make experiments where experiments are fraught with such fearful hazard. Let it be impressed upon all hearts, that, beautiful as our fabric is, no earthly power or wisdom could ever reunite its broken fragments.

Standing as I do, almost within view of the green slopes of Monticello, and, as it were, within reach of the tomb of Washington, with all the cherished memories of the past gathering around me, like so many eloquent voices as exhortations from Heaven, I can express no better hope for my country than that the kind Providence which smiled upon our fathers may enable their children to preserve the blessings they have inherited.



BRIEF SKETCHES
OF THE
LIVES OF THE PRESIDENTS
OF THE UNITED STATES.

GEORGE WASHINGTON,

THE founder of American Independence, and first President of the United States, was born in 1732, in the county of Fairfax, in Virginia. He was descended from an English family which emigrated from Cheshire, about 1630; and his father, in the place of his nativity, was possessed of great landed property. He received his education from a private tutor; and was particularly instructed in mathematics and engineering. His abilities were first employed by Dinwiddie, in 1753, in making remonstrances to the French commander on the Ohio, for the infraction of the treaty between the two nations; and he afterwards negotiated with the Indians on the back settlements, for which he received the thanks of the British government. In the expedition of Braddock he served as aid-de-camp; and, on the fall of that brave but rash commander, he displayed great talent in conducting the retreat, and saving the army from a dangerous position. He retired from the service with rank of colonel; but, while engaged in the peaceful employments of an agriculturist, at Mount Vernon, he was elected senator in the national council for Frederic county, and afterwards for Fairfax.

At the commencement of the revolutionary war, he

was selected as the most proper person to take the chief command of the provincial troops. On receiving from the president of Congress official notice of this appointment, he thus addressed him: "Mr. President; although I am truly sensible of the high honor done me in this appointment, yet I feel great distress from a consciousness that my abilities and military experience may not be equal to the extensive and important trust. However, as the Congress desire it, I will enter upon the momentous duty, and exert every power I possess in their service, and for support of the glorious cause. I beg they will accept my most cordial thanks, for this distinguished testimony of their approbation. But, lest some unlucky event should happen, unfavorable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in the room, that I this day declare, with the utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the command I am honored with. As to pay, Sir, I beg leave to assure the Congress, that as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted me to accept this arduous employment at the expense of my domestic ease and happiness, I do not wish to make any profit from it. I will keep an exact account of my expenses; these, I doubt not, they will discharge, and that is all I desire."

From the moment of taking upon himself this important office, in June, 1775, he employed the great powers of his mind to his favorite object, and, by his prudence, his valor, and presence of mind, he deserved and obtained the confidence and gratitude of his country, and finally triumphed over all opposition.

The record of his services is the history of the whole war. He joined the army at Cambridge in July, 1775. On the evacuation of Boston, in March, 1776, he proceeded to New York. The battle of Long Island was fought on the 27th of August, and the battle of Whiteplains on the 28th of October. On the 25th of December, he crossed the Delaware, and soon gained the victories at Trenton and Princeton. The battle of Brandywine was fought on September 11th, 1777; of Germantown, October 4th; of Monmouth, February 28th, 1778. In 1779 and 1780, he continued in the vicinity of New York, and closed the important military operations of

the war by the capture of Cornwallis, at Yorktown, in 1781.

On the second of November, 1783, General Washington issued his farewell orders to the armies of the United States. After noticing a recent proclamation of Congress, he observed that it only remained to address himself for the last time to the armies of the United States, and to bid them an affectionate farewell. He remarked upon the circumstances under which the war was begun; the signal interpositions of Providence in their behalf, and their unparalleled perseverance through eight years of every possible suffering and discouragement. His closing words were—"Your general being now to conclude these his last public orders, to take his ultimate leave, in a short time, of the military character, and to bid adieu to the armies he has so long had the honor to command, he can only again offer in their behalf his recommendations to their grateful country, and his prayers to the God of armies. May ample justice be done to them here, and may the choicest of Heaven's favors, both here and hereafter, attend those, who, under the divine auspices, have secured innumerable blessings for others! With these wishes, and this benediction, the commander-in-chief is about to retire from service. The curtain of separation will soon be drawn, and the military scene, to him, will be closed forever."

On Tuesday noon, the fourth of December, the principal officers of the army assembled at Francis's tavern, to take a final leave of their beloved commander-in-chief. When Washington entered the room, his emotions were too strong to be repressed or concealed. Filling a glass, he turned to the surrounding officers and said—"With a heart full of love and gratitude, I now take leave of you. I most devoutly wish that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honorable." Having drank, he added, "I cannot come to each of you to take my leave, but shall be obliged to you, if each of you will come and take me by the hand." General Knox, being nearest, turned to him. Washington, in tears, grasped his hand, embraced and kissed him. In the same manner he took leave of each

succeeding officer, Lincoln, and Greene, and La Fayette, and the other valiant men with whom he had been connected in hours of peril and darkness, to be rewarded with endless gratitude and glory.

Every eye was moistened with tears. Not a word was spoken to interrupt the silent solemnity of the parting. Leaving the room, Washington passed through the corps of light infantry, and walked to Whitehall, where a coach was in waiting to receive him. The whole company followed in mute procession, with sad and dejected countenances. On entering the barge, he turned to his companions, and, waving his hat, bade them a silent farewell. They paid him a similar mark of respect and affection, and, when they could no longer distinguish in the barge the person of their beloved commander, returned, in the same solemn manner, to the place where they had first assembled.

On the disbanding of the army, Washington proceeded to Annapolis, then the seat of Congress, to resign his commission. On his way thither, he delivered to the comptroller of accounts, at Philadelphia, an account of his receipts and expenditures of public money. The whole amount that had passed through his hands, was only £14,479 18s. 9d. sterling. Nothing was charged or retained for his own services. The resignation of his command was made in a public audience. Congress received him as the guardian of his country and her liberties. He appeared there under the most affecting circumstances. The battles of a glorious war had been fought since he first appeared before them to accept, with a becoming modesty, the command of their armies. Now the eyes of a whole nation were upon him, and the voices of a liberated people proclaimed him their preserver.

His high character and services naturally entitled him to the highest gifts his country could bestow; and, on the organization of the government, he was called upon to be the first president of the states which he had preserved and established. It was a period of great difficulty and danger. The unsubdued spirit of liberty had been roused and kindled by the revolution of France, and many of his fellow-citizens were eager that the freedom and

equality which they themselves enjoyed should be extended to the subjects of the French monarch. Washington anticipated the plans of the factious, and by prudence and firmness subdued insurrection, and silenced discontent, till the parties which the intrigues of Genet, the French envoy, had roused to rebellion, were convinced of the wildness of their measures, and of the wisdom of their governor.

The president completed, in 1796, the business of his office, by signing a commercial treaty with Great Britain, and then voluntarily resigned his power at a moment when all hands and all hearts were united again to confer upon him the sovereignty of the country. Restored to the peaceful retirement of Mount Vernon, he devoted himself to the pursuits of agriculture; and though he accepted the command of the army in 1798, it was merely to unite the affections of his fellow-citizens to the general good, and was one more sacrifice to his high sense of duty. He died, after a short illness, on the 14th of December, 1799. He was buried with the honors due to the noble founder of a happy and prosperous republic.

History furnishes no parallel to the character of Washington. Wisdom, says a contemporary writer, was the predominant feature of his character. His patience, his forbearance, his firmness, in adverse as well as in prosperous events, proved of more solid advantage to his country than his bravery and talents. No man has ever appeared upon the theatre of public action whose integrity was more incorruptible, or whose principles were more perfectly free from the contamination of those selfish and unworthy passions which find their nourishment in the conflicts of party. Having no views which required concealment, his real and avowed motives were the same; and his whole correspondence does not furnish a single case from which even an enemy would infer that he was capable, under any circumstances, of stooping to the employment of duplicity.

No truth can be uttered with more confidence than that his ends were always upright, and his means always pure. He exhibits a rare example of a politician to whom wiles were absolutely unknown, and whose professions to

foreign governments, and to his own countrymen, were always sincere. If Washington possessed ambition, that passion was, in his bosom, so regulated by principles, or controlled by circumstances, that it was neither vicious nor turbulent. Intrigue was never employed as the means of its gratification; nor was personal aggrandizement its object. The various high and important stations to which he was called by the public voice, were unsought by himself; and, in consenting to fill them, he seems rather to have yielded to a general conviction, that the interests of his country would thereby be promoted, than to any particular inclination of his own.

Washington accomplished the most of his great duties with apparent ease, by a rigid observance of punctuality. It is known that whenever he assigned to meet Congress at noon, he never failed to be passing the door of the hall when the clock struck twelve. His dinner hour was four, when he always sat down to his table, only allowing five minutes for the variation of timepieces, whether his guests were present or not. It was frequently the case with new members of Congress, that they did not arrive until dinner was nearly half over, and he would remark, "Gentlemen, we are punctual here; my cook never asks whether the company has arrived, but whether the hour has." When he visited Boston in 1782, he appointed eight o'clock in the morning as the hour when he should set out for Salem, and while the Old South clock was striking eight, he was crossing his saddle. The company of cavalry which volunteered to escort him, not anticipating this strict punctuality, were parading in Tremont street after his departure; and it was not until the President had reached Charles river bridge, where he stopped a few minutes, that the troop of horse overtook him. On passing the corps, the President, with perfect good nature said:—"Major ——, I thought you had been too long in my family, not to know when it was eight o'clock."

The life of this great man has been given to us by Judge Marshall, in five vols. 8vo., and a copious selection from his manuscripts is now publishing by Mr. Jared Sparks.

JOHN ADAMS,

THE second President of the United States, was born at Braintree, Mass., October 30, 1735. He graduated at Harvard University in 1755; and, while a member of that institution, was distinguished by diligence in his studies, and by the most unequivocal evidence of genius. The three years next succeeding his graduation, he spent studying law at Worcester; and, at the same time, as a means of subsistence, instructed a class of scholars in Latin and Greek. In October, 1758, Mr. Adams presented himself, a stranger, poor, and without the influence of friends, to the superior court then sitting at Boston, for admission to practise as an attorney. He now commenced in the labors of his profession, at Quincy, then in the county of Suffolk, and soon obtained a competent portion of lucrative business.

In 1764, Mr. Adams was married to Abigail Smith; and in the year following he removed to Boston, where he acquired an extensive legal practice. Although he was offered patronage from the officers of the British government, he was induced to decline all such aids to personal distinction and affluence, choosing rather to espouse the cause of his native country, hazardous as this course evidently was. His patriotism was duly appreciated by his fellow-citizens, and he received numerous marks of public confidence in this respect.

He took a prominent part in every leading measure, and served on several committees which reported some of the most important state papers of the time. He was elected a member of the Congress, and was among the foremost in recommending the adoption of an independent government. It has been affirmed, by Mr. Jefferson himself, "that the great pillar of support to the declaration of independence, and its ablest advocate and champion on the floor of the house, was John Adams."

In 1777, he was chosen commissioner to the court of Versailles, in the place of Mr. Dean, who was recalled. It is said that at this time he had been a member of ninety committees, and chairman of twenty-five. On his

return from France, about a year afterwards, he was elected a member of the convention to prepare a form of government for the State of Massachusetts, and placed on the sub-committee chosen to draught the project of a constitution. The clause in regard to the patronage of literature was written by him. September 29, 1779, he was appointed minister plenipotentiary to negotiate a peace, and had authority to form a commercial treaty with Great Britain. In June, 1780, he was appointed in the place of Mr. Laurens, ambassador to Holland, and in 1782 he went to Paris to engage in the negotiation for peace, having previously obtained assurance that Great Britain would recognise the independence of the United States. After serving on two or three commissions to form treaties of amity and commerce with foreign powers, in 1785 Mr. Adams was appointed first minister to London.

In a letter to Mr. Jay, Mr. Adams gives the following graphic and interesting account of his public reception by the king :

“ At one, on Wednesday, the first of June, the master of ceremonies called at my house and went with me to the Secretary of State's office, in Cleaveland Row, where the Marquis of Carmarthen received me, and introduced me to Mr. Frazier, his under secretary, who had been, as his lordship said, uninterruptedly in that office, through all the changes in administration, for thirty years, having first been appointed by the Earl of Holderness. After a short conversation upon the subject of importing my effects from Holland and France free of duty, which Mr. Frazier himself introduced, Lord Carmarthen invited me to go with him in his coach to court. When we arrived in the antichamber, the *Ceil de Bœuf* of St. James, the master of the ceremonies met me, and attended me while the Secretary of State went to take the commands of the king. While I stood in this place, where it seems all ministers stand upon such occasions, always attended by the master of ceremonies, the room very full of ministers of state, bishops, and all other sorts of courtiers, as well as the next room, which is the king's bedchamber, you may

well suppose that I was the focus of all eyes. I was relieved, however, from the embarrassment of it, by the Swedish and Dutch ministers, who came to me and entertained me in a very agreeable conversation during the whole time. Some other gentlemen, whom I had seen before, came to make their compliments too; until the Marquis of Carmarthen returned and desired me to go with him to his majesty. I went with his lordship through the levee room into the king's closet. The door was shut, and I was left with his majesty and the secretary of state alone. I made the three reverences; one at the door, another about half way, and the third before the presence, according to the usage established at this, and all the northern courts of Europe, and then addressed myself to his majesty in the following words: 'Sir, the United States of America have appointed me their minister plenipotentiary to your majesty, and have directed me to deliver to your majesty this letter, which contains the evidence of it. It is in obedience to their express commands, that I have the honor to assure your majesty of their unanimous disposition and desire to cultivate the most friendly and liberal intercourse between your majesty's subjects and their citizens, and of their best wishes for your majesty's health and happiness, and for that of your royal family.

"The appointment of a minister from the United States to your majesty's court, will form an epoch in the history of England and America. I think myself more fortunate than all my fellow-citizens, in having the distinguished honor to be the first to stand in your majesty's royal presence, in a diplomatic character; and I shall esteem myself the happiest of men, if I can be instrumental in recommending my country more and more to your majesty's royal benevolence, and of restoring an entire esteem, confidence, and affection, or in better words, "the old good nature and the old good harmony," between people, who, though separated by an ocean, and under different governments, have the same language, a similar religion, and kindred blood. I beg your majesty's permission to add, that although I have sometimes before been intrusted by my country, it was never in my whole

life in a manner so agreeable to myself.' 'The king listened to every word I said, with dignity, it is true, but with apparent emotion. Whether it was the nature of the interview, or whether it was my visible agitation, for I felt more than I did or could express, that touched him, I cannot say, but he was much affected, and answered me with more tremor than I had spoken with, and said, 'Sir—The circumstances of this audience are so extraordinary, the language you have now held is so extremely proper, and the feelings you have discovered, so justly adapted to the occasion, that I must say, that I not only receive with pleasure the assurances of the friendly disposition of the people of the United States, but that I am very glad the choice has fallen upon you to be their minister. I wish you, Sir, to believe, and that it may be understood in America, that I have done nothing in the late contest, but what I thought myself indispensably bound to do, by the duty which I owed to my people. I will be frank with you. I was the last to conform to the separation: but the separation having been made, and having become inevitable, I have always said, as I say now, that I would be the first to meet the friendship of the United States, as an independent power. The moment I see such sentiments and language as yours prevail, and a disposition to give this country the preference, that moment I shall say, let the circumstances of language, religion, and blood, have their natural and full effect.'

"I dare not say that these were the king's precise words, and it is even possible that I may have, in some particular, mistaken his meaning; for although his pronunciation is as distinct as I ever heard, he hesitated sometimes between his periods, and between the members of the same period. He was indeed much affected, and I was not less so, and therefore I cannot be certain that I was so attentive, heard so clearly, and understood so perfectly, as to be confident of all his words or sense; this I do say that the foregoing is his majesty's meaning, as I then understood it, and his own words, as nearly as I can recollect them.

"The king then asked me, whether I came last from France; and upon my answering in the affirmative, he put

on an air of familiarity, and smiling, or rather laughing, said, 'There is an opinion among some people, that you are not the most attached of all your countrymen to the manners of France.' I was surprised at this, because I thought it an indiscretion, and a descent from his dignity. I was a little embarrassed, but determined not to deny the truth on one hand, nor leave him to infer from it any attachment to England on the other. I threw off as much gravity as I could, and assumed an air of gayety and a tone of decision, as far as it was decent, and said, 'That opinion, Sir, is not mistaken. I must avow to your majesty I have no attachment but to my own country.' The king replied, as quick as lightning, 'An honest man will never have any other.'

"The king then said a word or two to the secretary of state, which, being between them, I did not hear; and then turned round and bowed to me, as is customary with all kings and princes, when they give the signal to retire. I retreated, stepping backwards, as is the etiquette, and making my last reverence at the door of the chamber, I went my way; and the master of ceremonies joined me at the moment of my coming out of the king's closet, and accompanied me through all the apartments down to my carriage. Several stages of servants, gentlemen porters, and under-porters, roared out like thunder as I went along, 'Mr. Adams's servants, Mr. Adams's carriage,'" &c.

In 1788, having been absent nine years, he returned to America, landing in Boston the 17th of June. In March, 1789, the new constitution of the United States went into operation, and Mr. Adams became the first vice-president, which office he held during the whole of Washington's administration. On the resignation of Washington, John Adams became, March 4, 1797, president of the United States. He occupied this station four years, and then was succeeded by Mr. Jefferson, who was elected by a majority of one vote only. This was the termination of his public functions; and he spent the remainder of his days upon his farm in Quincy, occupying himself with agriculture, and obtaining amusement from the literature and politics of the day. He died on the fourth of July, 1826, with the same words on his lips, which

fifty years before, on that day, he had uttered on the floor of Congress—"Independence forever." His principal publications are, Letters on the American Revolution—Defence of the American Constitutions—an Essay on Canon and Feudal Law—a Series of Letters under the signature of Novanglaus—and Discourses on Davila.

THOMAS JEFFERSON,

THIRD president of the United States of America, under the constitution of 1789. He passed two years at the College of William and Mary, but his education was principally conducted by private tutors. He adopted the law as his profession. He was a member of the legislature of Virginia, from 1769 to the commencement of the American revolution. In 1775 he was a delegate in Congress from Virginia. May 15, 1776, the convention of Virginia instructed their delegates to propose to Congress a declaration of independence. In June, Mr. Lee made the motion for such a declaration in Congress, and it was voted that a committee be appointed to prepare one. The committee was elected by ballot, and consisted of Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston. The Declaration was exclusively the work of Mr. Jefferson, to whom the right of drafting it belonged as chairman of the committee, though amendments and alterations were made in it, by Adams, Franklin, and other members of the committee, and afterwards by Congress. Mr. Jefferson retired from Congress in September, 1776, and took a seat in the legislature of Virginia, in October. In 1779, he was chosen governor of Virginia, and held the office two years. He declined a foreign appointment in 1776, and again in 1781. He accepted the appointment of one of the commissioners for negotiating peace, but before he sailed, news was received of the signing the

provisional treaty, and he was excused from proceeding on the mission. He returned to Congress. In 1784, he wrote notes on the establishment of a money-unit, and of a coinage for the United States. He proposed the money-system now in use. In May, 1784, he was appointed, with Adams and Franklin, a minister plenipotentiary to negotiate treaties of commerce with foreign nations. In 1785, he was appointed minister to the French court. In 1789, he returned to America, and received from Washington the appointment of secretary of state, which he held till December, 1793, and then resigned. On some appointment being offered him by Washington, in September, 1794, he replied to the secretary, "No circumstances will ever more tempt me to engage in anything public." Notwithstanding this determination he suffered himself to be a candidate for president, and was chosen vice-president in 1796. At the election in 1801, he and Aaron Burr having an equal number of the electoral votes, the House of Representatives, after a severe struggle, finally decided in his favor. He was re-elected in 1805. At the end of his second term, he retired from office. He died July 4, 1826, at one o'clock in the afternoon, just fifty years from the date of the Declaration of Independence, aged 83. Preparations had been made throughout the United States to celebrate this day, as a jubilee; and it is a most remarkable fact, that on the same day, John Adams, a signer with Jefferson of the Declaration, and the second on the committee for drafting it, and his immediate predecessor in the office of president, also died. Mr. Jefferson's publications were, Summary View of the Rights of British America, 1774; Declaration of Independence, 1776; Notes on Virginia, 1781; Manual of Parliamentary Practice for the use of the Senate; Life of Captain Lewis, 1814; some papers in Am. Phil. Trans. IV. His works, chiefly letters, were published by his grandson, Thomas Jefferson Randolph, 4 vols. 8vo., 1829

JAMES' MADISON,

FOURTH president of the United States, was the son of James Madison, of Orange county, Va., and was born March 16th, 1751. He studied the English, Latin, Greek, French, and Italian languages, and was fitted for college under the instruction of Mr. Robertson, a Scotchman, and the Rev. Mr. Martin, a Jerseyman; was graduated at Princeton, N. J., in 1771; and afterwards remained a year at college, pursuing his studies under the superintendence of Dr. Witherspoon, the president. His constitution was impaired by his close application to his studies, and his health was for many years feeble. In 1776, he was elected a member of the general assembly of Virginia; in 1778, of the executive council; in the winter of 1779-80, of the continental Congress, of which he continued a member till 1784; in 1787, a member of Congress, and in the same year a delegate to the convention at Philadelphia, which formed the present constitution of the United States. He continued a distinguished member of Congress till March, 1797, the end of Washington's administration. On the accession of Mr. Jefferson to the presidency, in 1801, Mr. Madison was appointed secretary of state, which office he held during the eight years of Mr. Jefferson's administration; and, in 1809, he succeeded his friend and coadjutor as president of the United States. After having filled the office for two terms, he retired to his seat, Montpelier, where he passed his remaining years chiefly as a private citizen, declining political office, except that he acted as visiter and rector of the University of Virginia. He was distinguished for his great talents and acquirements, for the important offices which he filled, and for his virtues in private life. Mr. Madison was the last surviving member of the convention that formed the constitution of the United States; he was one of its most distinguished champions, and at the time of its adoption he was associated with Hamilton and Jay in the production of the celebrated work entitled the "Federalist." Mr. Madison left, in manuscript, "A careful and extended Report of the Proceedings and Discus-

sions" of the convention of 1787, that framed the constitution of the United States, which he directed in his will to be published under the authority and direction of his widow. Mr. Madison died June the 28th, 1837, in his 86th year.

JAMES MONROE,

FIFTH president of the United States, was a native of Virginia. He was educated at William and Mary College, and in 1776, joined the army in the American revolutionary struggle, and continued with it till 1778, when he retired, and engaged in the study of the law. In 1780, he held the office of military commissioner for Virginia, and in that capacity visited the southern army. In 1782, he was a member of the Virginia assembly, and in 1783, a member of Congress. In 1788, he was a member of the convention in Virginia to deliberate on the proposed constitution for the United States. In 1790, he was elected a senator of the United States from Virginia. In 1794, he received the appointment of minister plenipotentiary to France, and was recalled in 1797. In 1799, he was elected governor of Virginia. In 1802, he was sent on a special mission to France, which resulted in the purchase of Louisiana. In 1803, he was appointed minister to England. In 1805, he was associated with Mr. Charles Pinckney to negotiate with Spain. During his residence in England, he and Mr. William Pinckney negotiated a commercial treaty with Great Britain, but it was never submitted to the senate by Mr. Jefferson. He returned to America in 1808. In 1811, he was governor of Virginia, and the same year received from Mr. Madison the appointment of secretary of state, which office he held till his election of president, March 4, 1817. During a part of the time, in 1814 and 1815, he also performed the duties of secretary of war. He was again elected president in 1821. He died July 4th, 1831.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS,

SIXTH president of the United States, was the son of John Adams, second president of the United States. He was born in Quincy, Mass., in 1767, and was named for his great grandfather, John Quincy, who bore a distinguished part in the councils of the province.

At the age of eleven years he visited France with his father, and remained in various parts of Europe most of the time, till 1785, when he returned to the United States, and became a member of Harvard University. In 1787, he left college, and commenced the study of law with Theophilus Parsons, of Newburyport. After completing his legal studies he removed to Boston, with a view of employing himself in the practice of his profession. His leisure was occupied in political studies and writings, and his reputation was soon established as a distinguished statesman.

In 1794, he was appointed minister resident to the Netherlands, by Gen. Washington, who afterwards appointed him minister plenipotentiary to Portugal; but before entering on the duties of this station, his destination was changed to Berlin, in Prussia, where he negotiated a treaty of commerce. He was recalled by his father in 1801.

In 1802, he was elected to the senate of Massachusetts, and in 1803, was chosen to represent his native state in the Senate of the United States; which place he resigned in 1808. In 1806, he was appointed professor of rhetoric and oratory in Harvard college. In 1809, he was appointed minister to Russia by Mr. Madison, and afterwards one of the commissioners for negotiating a treaty of peace with England. In 1817, he was appointed secretary of state by Mr. Monroe, which office he honorably filled till he was chosen president of the United States, in 1825, by the House of Representatives, he having received the votes of thirteen states, Gen. Jackson seven, and Mr. Crawford of four states.

After serving his country as president for four years, Mr. Adams was succeeded by Gen. Andrew Jackson.

In 1831, he accepted a seat in Congress, as the representative of his native district. In this body he took the rank to which great talents, experience, and services fully entitled him. His speeches were marked with the stern independence and fearless expression of opinion which, throughout his life, were his great characteristics. He could always command respectful attention. He particularly distinguished himself as the strenuous advocate of the right of petition, which had for some years been trampled under foot by Congress, on account of the clamor of the representatives from the southern states.

Mr. Adams remained in Congress until his death, which occurred on the 23d of February, 1848. As he rose to move the previous question in the house, he was attacked by paralysis, and being conveyed into the rotunda of the Capitol, he remained there insensible till the next day, when, surrounded by many faithful and lamenting friends, his long and useful life was brought to a close. He died like a hero on the scene of his glory! and left a name and fame of a great and good man to the admiration and reverence of his countrymen.

A N D R E W J A C K S O N ,

SEVENTH President of the United States, was born of Irish parents, at Waxaw, S. C., March 15, 1767. When fourteen years of age, he joined the revolutionary army, with his brother, and was soon after, with his brother and several others, taken prisoner by the British, and treated with great severity. In a short time his brother died, and in 1783 his mother was taken away, leaving him without kindred in the country of his birth. His mother had destined him for the ministry, and he pursued his studies with that view till he was eighteen years of age, when he commenced the study of the law, under the direction of Spruce M'Cay, Esq., and finished under the tuition of Col. John Stokes.

In 1788, he removed to Tennessee, and commenced the

practice of law at Nashville, in which he was quite successful, and, in 1791, was appointed attorney-general for the district. In 1796, he was chosen a member of the convention for framing a constitution for the State ; and the same year elected representative to Congress. In 1797, he became a member of the United States Senate, which office he resigned the following year, and soon after was appointed judge of the supreme court of the State, and major-general of the Tennessee militia.

In 1812, he took command of 2,500 Tennessee volunteers ; and continued in the service of the country during the war with Great Britain, until its close at New Orleans, January 8, 1815. Afterwards he commanded an expedition against the Seminoles, and was appointed governor of Florida in 1821. In 1822, he was again elected a member of the United States Senate.

In 1828, General Jackson was elected President of the United States, to which high office he was again elected in 1832. His popularity during his administration was great and uninterrupted. After the close of his second term, General Jackson issued a valedictory address to the people of the United States, and withdrew wholly from public life, to his residence in Tennessee, where he died on the 8th of June, 1845, aged 78 years. Men will accord to him the merit of possessing great energy and strength of will, remarkable military skill, and warm patriotism, whatever opinion may be entertained of the wisdom of his policy while in official stations.

MARTIN VAN BUREN,

EIGHTH President of the United States, was born at Kinderhook, New York, December 5, 1782. His parents were of Dutch descent, and in humble circumstances. At the age of fourteen he commenced the study of the law, in the office of Francis Sylvester, Esq., in his native village. In 1803, he was admitted to the bar of the supreme court, and com-

menced practice in Kinderhook. In 1809, he removed to Hudson for the improvement of his professional prospects.

In 1812, he was elected to the state senate, and in 1815, was appointed attorney-general of the state. In 1816, he removed to Albany, where his practice became extensive and lucrative. February 6, 1821, he was appointed to the United States Senate, and in August following was returned a member of the convention to revise the constitution of the State. In November, 1828, he was elected governor of the State of New York, which office he resigned March 12, 1829, in consequence of his appointment as Secretary of State of the United States by General Jackson. In the summer of 1831, he was sent to London as minister to the court of St. James; but the Senate refused to confirm the appointment in December following.

In 1833, Mr. Van Buren was elected Vice-President of the United States; and in 1837, he was elected President by 167 of the 311 electoral votes. After four years' service in this exalted position, he resigned the "White House" to General Harrison.

In 1848, Mr. Van Buren was nominated for the presidency by a portion of the Democratic party in the North, opposed to the extension of slavery. He did not, however, receive the electoral vote of a single State. He continues to reside at Kinderhook, New York, where he is engaged in agricultural pursuits.

WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON,

NINTH President of the United States, was born in Charles City county, Virginia, on the 9th of February, 1773, and was the third son of Benjamin Harrison, a distinguished patriot of the revolution, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and governor of Virginia, in 1781-3. Young Harrison was educated at Hampden Sidney College, and turned his attention to the study of medicine. The hostilities of the Indians on the northwestern border having begun to excite general attention, the young student

resolved to relinquish his professional pursuits, and join the army destined to the defence of the Ohio frontier. In 1791, soon after the death of his father, who died in April of the same year, he received from President Washington, when only in his nineteenth year, the commission of ensign; in 1792, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant; and he fought under General Wayne, who spoke of his gallant conduct in a very flattering manner. After the desperate battle at the Miami Rapids, he was promoted to the rank of captain, and was placed in the command of Fort Washington. In 1797, he resigned his commission in the army, and was immediately appointed Secretary of the Northwest Territory. In 1799, at the age of 26, he was elected a delegate from this territory to Congress, and in this office he performed very important services for his constituents. On the erection of Indiana into a territorial government, he was appointed its first governor, and he held this office by reappointment till 1813. In addition to the duties in the civil and military government of the territory, he was commissioner and superintendent of Indian affairs; and in the course of his administration, he concluded thirteen important treaties with the different tribes. On the 7th of November, 1811, he gained over the Indians the celebrated battle of Tippecanoe, the news of which was received throughout the country with a burst of enthusiasm. During the last war with Great Britain, he was made commander of the north-western army of the United States, and he bore a conspicuous part in the leading events in the campaign of 1812-13, the defence of Fort Meigs, and the victory of the Thames. In 1814, he was appointed, in conjunction with his companions in arms, Governor Shelby and General Cass, to treat with the Indians in the Northwest, at Greenville; and in the following year he was placed at the head of a commission to treat with various other important tribes.

In 1816, General Harrison was elected a member of Congress from Ohio; and in 1828, he was sent minister plenipotentiary to the republic of Colombia. On his return he took up his residence at North Bend, on the Ohio, sixteen miles below Cincinnati, where he lived upon his farm, in comparative retirement, till he was called by the people of the United States to preside over the country as its chief

magistrate. His election was a triumphant one; of 294 votes for President, he received 234; and his progress from his residence, the log cabin, to the White House was marked by the most gratifying demonstrations of popular affection and confidence. His inaugural address, though not marked by any uncommon ability as a literary performance, yet was of such a tone and character as to strengthen his hold upon the affections of the American people. From the time when he was first nominated for the office of President of the United States till his death, he had been rising in public esteem and confidence; he entered upon the duties of his office with an uncommon degree of popularity, and a high expectation was cherished that his administration would be honorable to himself and advantageous to the country. His death, which took place just a month after his inauguration, caused a deep sensation throughout the country, and was regarded as a most calamitous event. He was the first President of the United States that has died in office. The members of his cabinet, in their official notification of the event, say:—"The people of the United States, overwhelmed, like ourselves, by an event so unexpected and so melancholy, will derive consolation from knowing that his death was calm and resigned, as his life had been patriotic, useful, and distinguished; and that the last utterance of his lips expressed a fervent desire for the perpetuity of the constitution, and the preservation of its true principles. In death, as in life, the happiness of his country was uppermost in his thoughts."

JOHN TYLER,

TENTH President of the United States, was born in Charles City county, Virginia, on the 21st of March, 1790. In his early youth he was noted for his love of books, and at twelve years of age he entered William and Mary College. He passed through the course at the age of seventeen, and on that occasion delivered an address on the subject of female

education, which was pronounced by the faculty to have been the best commencement oration delivered there within their recollection.

After leaving college, Mr. Tyler devoted himself to the study of law under the instruction of Edmund Randolph. At nineteen years of age he was admitted to practice law in his native county; and a few days after he reached the age of twenty-one, he was chosen nearly unanimously a member of the house of delegates, in which he took a seat, December, 1811. The war breaking out soon after, Mr. Tyler supported the policy of Mr. Madison and the Democratic party, and his speeches commanded universal attention. During the session of 1815-16, while he was still a member of the house of delegates, Mr. Tyler was elected one of the executive council, in which capacity he acted until November, 1816, when he was elected to fill the vacancy in the congressional representation of Richmond district. He had just reached the twenty-sixth year of his age, when he entered the House of Representatives. There he continued to distinguish himself as an eloquent orator and consistent Democrat, until 1821, when ill health compelled him to resign his office. Soon after he entered the legislature, and distinguished himself as the advocate of a system of internal improvements.

In December, 1825, Mr. Tyler was elected governor of Virginia; re-elected at the next session of the legislature, and before the expiration of his term chosen to succeed John Randolph as United States senator. He was at this time the most popular of the Virginia statesmen. In the Senate, Mr. Tyler joined the opposition to Mr. Adams' administration; and when General Jackson succeeded to the chief magistracy, he supported the policy of that energetic officer. On the 20th of February, 1836, Mr. Tyler resigned his seat in the Senate, in consequence of his opinion upon the right of instruction, and retiring to Williamsburg, commenced the practice of his profession. In the Spring of 1838, he was elected by the Whigs of James City county a member of the house of delegates, in which body he acted with the newly-formed Whig party. In 1839, the Whigs placed Mr. Tyler on the ticket with General Harrison, as their candidate for the Vice-presidency. This ticket was triumphant, and

he assumed the office to which he had been chosen in March, 1841. One month after, by the death of General Harrison, Mr. Tyler became President of the United States. His course while in office was such as to lose him the popularity which he once possessed. At the expiration of his term, he retired to his seat near Williamsburgh, where he has since continued to reside.

JAMES KNOX POLK,

ELEVENTH President of the United States, was born in Mecklenburg county, North Carolina, on the 2d of November, 1795. The original name of his ancestors was Pollock, which, by an easy transition, assumed its present form. Connections of the family were honorably distinguished at the framing of the Mecklenburgh Declaration of Independence, and throughout the revolutionary struggle. In 1806, while James was very young, his family removed to Tennessee, and settled in the fertile valley of Duck river. The opportunities for instruction in this neighborhood were limited. With much exertion James acquired the elements of a good English education. In the autumn of 1815, he entered the University of North Carolina, being then in the twentieth year of his age.

At the university, Mr. Polk's career was distinguished, and he graduated in 1818, with the highest honors of his class. In 1819, he commenced the study of the law in the office of Felix Grundy, so distinguished as a representative and senator in Congress. Being admitted to the bar in 1820, he commenced practice in the county of Maury. In 1823, he was chosen to represent his district in the State Legislature, where he became distinguished for ability in debate.

In August, 1825, Mr. Polk, then in his thirtieth year, was chosen to represent his district in Congress. He was a decided Democrat, and an early and warm friend of General Jackson. He resolutely opposed the administration of Mr. Adams; and, when General Jackson became Presi-

dent, was one of the leading advocates of his political measures. In December, 1835, Mr. Polk was elected Speaker of the House of Representatives, and again chosen to that station in 1837. After a service of fourteen years in Congress, Mr. Polk, in 1839, declined a re-election from the district which had so long sustained him. In August of the same year, he was elected governor of Tennessee. In 1841, he was a candidate for re-election to the same office, but was defeated, the Whig candidate, James C. Jones, being elected.

On the 29th of May, 1844, Mr. Polk received the nomination of the Democratic National Convention at Baltimore, for President of the United States. To this high office he was elected in the fall of the same year, by a majority in the electoral college of 65 votes. His administration was one of the most eventful in the annals of the republic, and the duties of the administration were consequently arduous. The war with Mexico was vigorously and triumphantly prosecuted; a large extent of territory was added to the domain of the United States, and the Democratic system of measures fully carried into operation. After the close of his term, Mr. Polk retired to Tennessee, with a broken constitution. He died on the 15th of June, 1848, at the age of fifty-three years.

ZACHARY TAYLOR,

TWELFTH President of the United States, was born in Orange county, Virginia, in November, 1784. His father, Colonel Richard Taylor, soon after the birth of Zachary, removed to Kentucky, and settled near Louisville. After receiving a limited education, Zachary, displaying a strong predilection for the exercises and accomplishments which become a soldier, obtained a lieutenancy in the Seventh Regiment of the United States Infantry. At this period (1808), every thing portended a war with Great Britain. But before it broke out in 1812, Zachary had risen to the

rank of captain. His first exploit, the defence of Fort Harrison against the Indians, indicated his firmness and ability. For this gallant defence he was promoted to the rank of major. During the remainder of the war, he had no opportunity of distinguishing himself.

In 1832, Taylor was promoted to the rank of colonel. On the commencement of the Florida war, he was ordered to service in that quarter. In this "war of movements," Colonel Taylor was more successful than his predecessors. He brought the Indians to a general action in December, 1837, at Okeechobee. The Indians were defeated with considerable loss, and forced to maintain peace for a while. Taylor was now raised to the rank of brevet brigadier-general.

When the government of the United States determined to send an army into Texas, in 1845, General Taylor was chosen to command it. His brilliant campaign during the Mexican war will be found upon the page of history. It is sufficient here to say, that it raised his reputation as a skilful general and daring soldier to such a height as to secure for him the admiration of his countrymen, and prepare the way for offering him the brightest testimony of their esteem—the presidential chair.

In 1848, General Taylor received the nomination of the Whig National Convention, for the presidency; was elected by a handsome majority, and was inaugurated on the 4th of March, 1849. "A Whig, but not an ultra Whig;" he chose moderate Whigs to form his cabinet, and made moderation the prominent feature of his administration. After performing the duties of his high office for about fifteen months, to the general satisfaction of the people, President Taylor died at Washington, on the 9th of July, 1850. His last words eloquently expressed the character of his life: "I have endeavored to do my duty."

MILLARD FILLMORE,

THIRTEENTH President of the United States, was born in Cayuga county, New York, January the 7th, 1800. His father, Nathaniel Fillmore, was a farmer, who, soon after Millard's birth, lost all his property, through some defective title. The narrow means of his father deprived Millard of any educational advantages beyond what were afforded by the ill-taught schools of the county. At the age of fifteen he was sent into the wilds of Livingston county, to learn the clothier trade. Four months afterwards he was placed with another person, to pursue the same business and wool-carding. Four years passed away while he was working at this business, his leisure moments being given to reading and the improvement of his mind. At the age of nineteen, through the kindly aid of Judge Wood, Millard began the study of law. To defray his expenses he taught school three months in the year. In 1821, he removed to Buffalo; and, in 1823, was admitted to practice in the village of Aurora, in Erie county. In 1830, he returned to Buffalo, where he fixed his residence.

In 1829, Mr. Fillmore was elected to represent Erie county in the Legislature, to which office he was re-elected the two following years. In that body he particularly distinguished himself as the advocate of the bill abolishing imprisonment for debt. In 1832, he was elected to Congress. In 1836, he was again elected to Congress, in which body he distinguished himself by a strenuous opposition to the measures of the Van Buren administration. Mr. Fillmore was re-elected to the next Congress, and, his party being in the majority, placed at the head of the important committee of Ways and Means. In this arduous office he proposed and supported with great ability measures which were calculated to revive the drooping affairs of the country. In 1844, he became the Whig candidate for governor of New York, but was defeated. In 1847, he was elected Comptroller of that State by an unprecedented majority. In 1848, he was nominated upon the ticket with General

Taylor as the Whig candidate for Vice-president, and elected. By the death of the President, Mr. Fillmore succeeded to his office in July, 1850. In every station he has been distinguished for force of talent, energy of will, and urbanity of deportment. His present high position he owes, in a great measure, to his own exertions, and his career is a model for the imitation of young Americans.

FRANKLIN PIERCE.

FRANKLIN PIERCE was born at Hillsborough, N. H., on the 23d of November, 1804. He was the fourth son of Benjamin Pierce, a brave soldier of the war of independence, a governor of New Hampshire, and till his death a leading man in the Granite State. For several years, Franklin attended school at Hancock and Traverstown. He then attended Exeter Academy, where he completed his preparatory studies, and at the age of sixteen he entered Bowdoin College. Among his classmates were Calvin E. Stowe (since Rev. Dr. Stowe), and others who have since become highly distinguished. During his first two years at college, Franklin was not a studious scholar, being rather given to levity and social amusement. But he was popular among the collegians. When his college course was about half finished, he was induced to teach a district school at Hebron, in Maine, for three months, it being very difficult to obtain any one to fill the situation. In 1824, Mr. Pierce took his degree at college, and then devoted himself to the study of law in the offices successively of Hon. Edmund Parker, at Amherst, Hon. Levi Woodbury, at Portsmouth, and in the law school of Judge Howe, at Northampton, Mass. In 1827, he was admitted to the bar, and he began the practice of the law in Hillsborough.

Mr. Pierce espoused the doctrines of the Democratic party. In the second year of his practice, when only twenty-five years old, he was elected to represent the town of Hills-

borough in the State Legislature. The three successive years he was also elected to that body; and in 1831 and '32, he was made Speaker of the House of Representatives. Mr. Pierce was, like his father, an active and zealous supporter of General Jackson during this period.

In the summer of 1833, Mr. Pierce was elected from his native district to the lower house of Congress. At Washington he was punctual and earnest in attending to his duties, seldom speaking, but always voting. His speeches on the revolutionary claims, the deposit question, and the West Point Academy, are remarkable for their practical cast, and the earnest desire they express for economy in the national expenditure. Mr. Pierce continued in the House until 1837, when he was elected to a seat in the United States Senate. There he was known as a working member, and a thorough-going supporter of the financial measures of President Van Buren. In 1838, Mr. Pierce removed from Hillsborough to Concord. His friends of Hillsborough tendered him a public dinner as a mark of their esteem, but the honor was declined.

In 1842, Mr. Pierce was led by the ill health of his wife to resign his seat in the Senate, and retire to Concord, where he devoted himself to his profession with such success, as to rise to the foremost rank at the bar. For three years he had but little visible connection with politics. In 1845, the governor of New Hampshire appointed him to fill the vacancy in the United States Senate occasioned by the resignation of Judge Woodbury. This honor was respectfully declined. About this time President Polk appointed Mr. Pierce District Attorney of New Hampshire. This office he accepted and held until 1847. In 1845, the Democracy of the State nominated him for governor, but this high office he declined. In the next year, President Polk offered him the post of Attorney-General of the United States, but this also he declined. Few men have declined to accept so many high appointments.

Mr. Pierce was now to appear upon a new scene. On the breaking out of the Mexican war, he enlisted as a private in the Concord company. Soon after he was appointed Colonel of the Ninth Regiment, and then Brigadier-General.

Both these appointments he accepted, and on the 28th of June, 1847, he reached Vera Cruz, with his brigade of 2,400 men. There he was taken ill, but soon recovered, and set out at the head of his command to join General Scott. The march was exceedingly difficult. Fifteen miles from Vera Cruz, the brigade was attacked by guerrillas, but they were repulsed. At the National Bridge the guerrillas again attacked the brigade, and were again gallantly repulsed. After a very harassing march, Gen. Pierce joined General Scott at Puebla, on the 6th of August. In the battles in the valley of Mexico, Gen. Pierce was not permitted to participate as fully as he desired on account of sickness and accident, but he displayed courage and activity. When it was ascertained that there would be no more fighting, Gen. Pierce returned to the United States, resigned his commission, and retired to Concord, where he was warmly welcomed, the Legislature presenting him with a splendid sword as a token of esteem.

Gen. Pierce now devoted himself to his profession. In November, 1850, he was elected president of the convention assembled to revise the constitution of New Hampshire. In January, 1852, the Democracy of New Hampshire presented Gen. Pierce as their candidate for the presidency of the United States. The General declined the honor; but the National Convention of the Democratic party sanctioned the choice of New Hampshire, nominating Franklin Pierce for the presidency, on the 49th ballot, with singular unanimity. He accepted this unexpected honor with modest diffidence. William R. King, of Alabama was nominated upon the same ticket as the Democratic candidate for the vice-presidency. Throughout the exciting canvass, Gen. Pierce conducted himself with dignity and modesty. At the election in November, he received a tremendous majority over his opponent, Gen. Winfield Scott. Vermont, Massachusetts, Kentucky, and Tennessee, were the only states in which the Pierce and King electoral tickets did not succeed. On the 4th of March, 1853, the President elect was inaugurated under brighter auspices than had been known for many years in the United States.

In November, 1834, Gen. Pierce married Jane Means,

the youngest child of the Rev. Dr. Appleton, late president of Bowdoin College. They have had three children. The first died in infancy, the second at the age of five years, and the third, Benjamin Pierce, eleven years old, was killed by an accident on the railroad, a short time after the father's election to the presidency. General Pierce is therefore childless.





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