

from ten to seven millions. By the operation of similar prior laws of relief, from and since that of 2d March, 1824, the debt had been reduced, from upwards of twenty 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 resale of the 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 reflow in unobstructed 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 from 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 possible 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 superintendance, 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 undertakings 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 from 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 25th 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 3d 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, Chickapways, Menomonees, Sauks, 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 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 Message.

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 annually 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, or laying out roads in the Territories 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 has been inadequate to furnish officers for the necessary superintendance of the works. Under the Act 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 definitive 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 Harbour, 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 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 either of providing for individual cases of this description by special enactment, or of revising the Act of 1st May, 1820, with a view to mitigate the rigour of its exclusions, in favour 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 coast 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 had been a series of services and sacrifices to the improvement of his fellow-men. The visit of General Lafayette, alike honourable 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 favourable.

Similar motives have rendered expedient the keeping of 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 cause of complaint and of erroneous imputations upon 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 unremitting 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 re-producing 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 honour the most unequal conflicts, but covered itself and our country with un fading glory. But it is only since the close of the late war, that by the number 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 only of five frigates. The rules and regulations by which it is governed urgently 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 May, 1824, authorizing an examination and survey of the harbour 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 3d 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; 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 the Department, are, that in two years from the first of July, 1825, 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, 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 power, is a duty as sacred and indispensable, as the usurpation of power 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 my memory, as living, he was 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 an 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 labour 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 the half 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 more 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 their 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 expedition, 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 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 enterprises 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?

In 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 visited by our spirited commercial navigators, have been rarely 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 the 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 publication 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 experiment should be countenanced by the patronage of our government, as they have hitherto been by those of France and 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 faintly receive at second hand from Europe, are we not cutting ourselves off from the means of returning light for light, which 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 upon ten millions. Perhaps, of all the evidences of a prosperous and happy condition of human society, the rapidity of the increase of population is the most unequivocal. But the demonstration of our prosperity was 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