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condress.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE. (continued.)

right to issue these notes now, I tracts in the same hands, which pears to be, to make such modifi- ferable, and to make those prices upon the waste domain; that they can see no reason why it may not must necessarily recard the growth cations and additions only as will permanent, if upon the coming in give additional value to the public extraordinary, the prohibitory clause of the charter above quo- portant interests, and so well cal- lation. ted was not accompanied by any culated to enlist the feelings of the penalty or other special provision people in every quarter of the ringly pressed upon Congress, would seem to me that such a step, for enforcing it; nor have we any Union, has very naturally given which has occupied so much of its with a restriction of the sales to

subject alone that your interposi- licy that has hitherto prevailed, adjusted, is a reduction in the cost tion is required. The United are, to dispose of the public lands of such portions of the public States in settling with the trustee at moderate prices, thus enabling lands as are ascertained to be unfor their stock, have withdrawn a greater number to enter into saleable at the rate now establishtheir funds from their former di- competition for their purchase, ed by law, and a graduation, acnot feel myself excused in which contain no obligation on its large tracts in few hands; and to tions urged in favor of the mearegisting to notice them. The part; or the old bank, for such as apply the proceeds of the sales to sure referred to, are, that in alfor the purpose of suits for a faith on the part of the Govern- most quiet, and at the same time, that these lands will not be pur-

overnment had in the stock them into the Federal Union as created out of the public domain, nited States as a whole. would, under any circum- apprehensions so far as to see in one-fifth of the whole people of certainty that the efflux of time of so important a result, it will aftes, be a fit subject of inquiry; them the seeds of a future dissolu- the United States. The increase would not always in such cases, ford me sincere satisfaction. much more does it deserve tion of the Confederacy. But hap- since cannot be accurately known, and perhaps not even generally, attention, when it embraces pily our experience has already but the whole may now be safely furnish a true criterion of value; most of the public lands have been telemption of obligations to been sufficient to quiet, in a great estimated at over three and a half and the probability that persons sold, and the registers and receivthe authority and credit of degree, all such apprehensions. millions of souls; composing nine residing in the vicinity, as the pe- ers have very little to do. It is a Inted States have given val- The position, at one time assum- States, the representatives of riod for the reduction of prices subject worthy of inquiry wheth-The two years allowed are ed-that the admission of new which constitute above one-third approached, would postpone pur- er, in many cases, two or more the passege of the last pre emption hearly at an end. It is well States into the Union on the same of the Senate, and over one-sixth chases they would otherwise make, districts may not be consolidated, assood that the trustee has not footing with the original States, of the House of Representatives for the purpose of availing them- and the number of persons emthemed and cancelled the out- was incompatible with a right of of the United States. Thus have been formed a body er considerations of a similar cha- bly reduced. Indeed the time tissued, and is actually reis- rated as a surrender thereof, not- of free and independent landhold- racter, have hitherto been success- will come when it will be the true since the 3d of March, withstanding the terms of the com- ers, with a rapidity unequalled in fully urged to defeat the graduathe notes which have been pacts by which their admission the history of mankind; and this tion upon time. theired by it to a vast amount. was designed to be regulated great result has been produced May not all reasonable desires ecording to its own official has been wisely abandoned .- without leaving any thing for fulement, so late as the first of Whether in the new or the old ture adjustment between the Go- out encountering any of these ob tober last, nineteen months af- States, all now agree that the vernment and its cirizens. The jections? All will concede the nery of the federal land offices althe banking privileges given right of soil to the public lands re- system under which so much has abstract principle, that the price together. All who take a comthe charter had expired, it had mains in the Federal Government, been accomplished cannot be in- of the public lands should be protrits control uncancelled notes and that these lands constitute a trinsically bad, and with occa-ion- portioned to their relative value, tem, and believe that one of its the late Bank of the United common property, to be disposed al modifications, to correct abuses so far as that can be accomplished greatest excellencies consists in into the amount of twenty- of for the common benefit of all and adapt it to changes of circum- without departing from the rule terfering as little as possible with only six cents an acre more than millions five hundred and the States, old and new. Acqui stances, may, I think, be safely heretofore observed, requiring the internal concerns of the States, the minimum Government price. one thousand eight hundred escence in this just principle by the trusted for the future. There is, fixed prices in cases of private entixty-six dollars, of which six people of the new States has na- in the management of such extenns one hundred and seventy- turally promoted a disposition to sive interests, much virtue in sta- ject seems to lie in the mode of housand eight hundred and adopt the most liberal policy in bility, and although great and ob- ascertaining what that value is. laws in respect to the prices of The dollars were in actual the sale of the public lands. A vious improvements should not be Would not the safest plan be that the public lands, might also have which has been adopted by many a favorable influence on the legisand sixty-eight thousand at the mere object of selling the lands made without the fullest examinabank agencies, and three for the greatest possible sum of tion, and the clearest demonstraons two thousand three hun- money, without regard to higher tion of their practical utility. In and classification of them into difand minety dollars in transi- considerations, finds but few ad- the history of the past, we have ferent rates? Would it not be buy at present prices, settle on considerations, finds but few adthus showing that upwards of vocates. On the contrary, it is an assurance that this safe rule of practicable and expedient to cause those lands, with the hope of acmillions and a half of the generally conceded, that whilst action will not be departed from the relative value of the public quiring from their cultivation the the old bank were then the mode of disposition adopted in relation to the public lands; nor lands in the old districts, which means of purchasing under prekept outstanding. The im- by the Government, should al- is it believed that any necessity have been for a certain length of emption laws, from time to time Fiely of this proceedure is ob- ways be a prudent one, yet its exists for interfering with the funthe leading object ought to be the damental principles of the system, and classed into two or more rates encroachment on the rights of trusions hereafter. Indulgence to

But it is not in this view of the The distinctive features of the po- come, if not sooner satisfactorily

States and Territories with an in- all the objects of graduation be A question embracing such im- dustrions and independent popu- accomplished in this way, and the

the notes of an institution, the lands sold; and that it should the new States, is desirous of any by the officers now employed in themselves under the plea of their lands with expectations that past

objections which have hitherto

all just exception.

be informed of their true condiwill be desirous of making

In some sections of the country selves of the lower price, with oth | ployed in this business considerapolicy of the General Government, as to some of the States, to translands, and to withdraw the machi-

A modification of the existing the lands sold; and that it should be made a rule redical alterations. On the continuous it had to dertaken discountenance, if it cannot pre radical alterations. On the continuous that past disposition are disposed and only only of the public service, own necessities; the fact that they legislation would be made a rule up. If the trustee has a vent, the accumulation of large trary, the general disposition ap-

continue to do so after the expiration of the new States, or entail upon the more effectually carry out the of the report they shall prove satisfied in their vicinity, and their tion of the two years. As no one them a dependent tenantry, and original policy of filling our new isfactory to Congress? Cannot intention ultimately to pay the Government price. So much weight from time to time has been attached to these considerations, The modification most perseve- been urged against it avoided? It that Congress have passed laws giving actual settlers on the pubgeneral law for the prevention of rise to numerous plans for the imlic lands a right of pre emption to provement of the existing system. bably do so for a long time to improvement, would be free from minimum price. These laws have in all instances been retrospective By the full exposition of the in their operation; but in a few value of the lands thus furnished years after their passage, crowds and extensively promulgated, per- of new settlers have been found sons living at a distance would on the public lands, for similar reasons, and under like expectarect liability to the creditors of and accomplishing a double ob- cording to their relative value, of tion, and enabled to enter into tions, who have been indulged the old bank, yet notes of the in- ject of promoting their rapid set- the prices at which they may here- competition with those residing in with the same privilege. This stitution continue to be sent forth element by the purchasers, and at after be sold. It is worthy of the vicinity; the means of acquir- course of legislation tends to imin its name, and apparently upon the same time increasing the re- consideration whether justice may ing an independent home would pair public respect for the laws of the authority of the United States, ceipts of the treasury, to sell for not be done to every interest in be brought within the reach of the country. Either the laws to was my hope that nothing The transactions connected with cash, thereby preventing the dis- this matter, and a vexed question many who are unable to purchase prevent intrusion upon the public sold occur to make necessary, the employment of the bills of the turbing influence of a large mass set at rest, perhaps for ever, by a at present prices; the population lands should be executed, or, if this occasion, any allusion to old bank are of vast extent; and of private citizens indebted to the reasonable compromise of con- of the new States would be made that should be impracticable or inlate National Bank. There should they result unfortunately, Covernment, which they have a flicting opinions. Hitherto, after more compact, and large tracts expedient, they should be modifiat circumstances, however, con- the interests of individuals may voice in controlling; to bring being offered at public sale, lands would be sold which would oth- ed or repealed. If the public with the present state of its be deeply compromised. With them into market no faster than have been disposed of at one uni-This that bear so directly on the out undertaking to decide how far, good lands are supposed to be form price, whatever difference would the land be brought within to be occupied by any, they maracter of the Government and or in what form, if any, the trus- wanted for improvements, thereby there might be in their intrinsic the means of a larger number of should, by law, be thrown open to welfare of the citizen, that I tee could be made liable for notes preventing the accumulation of value. The leading considera- purchasers, but many persons pos- all. That which is intended, in sessed of greater means would be all instances, to be legalized, content to settle on a larger quan- should at once be made legal, that marter which terminated its bank- are put in circulation after the ex- the general purposes of the Gov- most all the land districts, and tity of better lands. Such a mea- those who are disposed to conform privileges on the fourth of piration of its charter, and with- ernment; thus diminishing the particularly in those in which the sure would also seem to be more to the laws may enjoy at least eand from the peo- lands have been long surveyed and consistent with the policy of the qual privileges with those who are ne powers two years more, for ment for indemnity, in case of ple of the States by taxation, and exposed to sale, there are still re- existing laws-that of converting not. But it is not believed to be esole purpose of closing its af- loss, the question still presses itself giving each State its portion of the maining numerous and large tracts the public domain into cultivated the disposition of Congress to open his, with authority "to use the upon your consideration, whether benefits to be derived from this of every gradation of value, from farms owned by their occupants. the public lands to occupancy composate name, style and capa- it is consistent with duty and good common fund in a manner the the Government price downwards; That policy is not best promoted without regular entries and payby sending emigration up the al- ment of the Government price, as settlement and liquidation of ment, to witness this proceeding perhaps, the most equitable, that chased at the Government price, most interminable streams of the such a course must tend to worse halfairs and acts of the corpo without a single effort to arrest it. can be devised. These provi- so long as better can be conveni- West, to occupy in groups the best evils than the credit system, which and for the sale and dispo- The report of the Commissioner sions, with occasional enactments ently obtained for the same a spots of land, leaving immense it was found necessary to abolish. mof their estate, real, person- of the General Land Office, which in behalf of special interests deem- mount; that there are large tracts wastes behind them, and enlarging It would seem, therefore, to be the and mixed, but for no other will be laid before you by the ed entitled to the favor of the which even the improvements of the frontier behind the means of part of wisdom and sound policy The or in any other manner Secretary of the Treasury, will Government, have, in their execu- the adjacent lands will never raise the Government to afford it ade- to remove, as far as practicable, Just before the show how the affairs of that office tion, produced results as beneficial to that price; and that the present quate protection; but in encoura- the causes which produce intrubinking privileges ceased, its ef- have been conducted for the past upon the whole as could reasona- uniform price, combined with their ging it to occupy, with reasonable sions upon the public lands, and the were transferred by the bank year. The disposition of the pub- bly be expected in a matter so irregular value, operates to pre- denseness, the territory over which then take efficient steps to prevent tinew State institution then re- lic lands is one of the most impor- vast, so complicated, and so exci- vent a desirable compactness of it advances, and find its best de- them in future. Would any sintely incorporated, in trust, for tant trusts confided to Congress, ting. Upwards of seventy mil- settlement in the new States, and fence in the compact front which gle measure be so effective in rehe discharge of its debts and the The practicability of retaining the lions of acres have been sold, the to retard the full development of it presents to the Indian tribes. moving all plausible grounds for thement of its affairs. With this title and control of such extensive greater part of which is believed that wise policy on which our land Many of you will bring to the these intrusions as the graduation histe, by authority of Congress, domains in the General Govern- to have been purchased for actual system is founded, to the injury consideration of the subject the of price already suggested? A adjustment was subsequently ment, and at the same time admit- settlement. The population of not only of the several States advantages of local knowledge short period of industry and eco-Table of the large interest which ting the Territories embracing the new States and Territories where the lands lie, but of the U- and greater experience, and all nomy in any part of our country would enable the poorest citizen to the institution. The manner coequals with the original States, increased between 1800 and 1830 | The remedy proposed has been early and final disposition of ev- accomulate the means to buy him which a trust unexpectedly was seriously doubted by many of from less than sixty thousand to a reduction of prices according to ery disturbing question in regard a home at the lower prices, and and upon the act granting the our wisest statesmen. All feared upwards of two millions three the length of time the lands have to this important interest. If these leave him without apology for setther, and involving such great that they would become a source hundred thousand souls, constitu- been in market, without reference suggestions shall in any degree thing on lands not his own. If he interests, has been execu- of discord, and many carried their ting, at the latter period, about to any other circumstances. The contribute to the accomplishment 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 law, and now ask the enactment of another, to enable them to retain the lands occupied, upon the payment of the minimum Government price. They ask that which has been repeatedly granted before. If the future may be judged of by fer to them, for a reasonable equi- the past, little harm can be done yielding to their request. Upon a critical examination, it is found sales since the introduction of cash payments in 1820, have produced, on an average, the nett revenue of future sales will be more productive. The Government, therefore has no adequate peruniary interest to induce it to drive these people from the lands they occupy, for the purpose of selling them

Entertaining these views, I recommend the passage of a preemption law for their benefit, in connection with the preparatory steps towards the graduation of the public lands, and further and more the to cancel and not to put early settlement and cultivation of or that the public mind, even in the public mind, even i