

GREENSBOROUGH PATRIOT.

"THE IGNORANT AND DEGRADED OF EVERY NATION OR CLIME MUST BE ENLIGHTENED, BEFORE OUR EARTH CAN HAVE HONOR IN THE UNIVERSE."

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THE

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UNITED STATES.

When Liberty sways as the fero of heaven,
I fury and withal her hosts, and three
The tyrant down, or drive invasion back.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

On the 8 inst. at 12 o'clock the President of the U. States communicated to both Houses of Congress the following message:

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 secured in 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 subjects 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 endeavours; and not withstanding the difficulties of the task, I do not allow myself to apprehend unfavorable results.—Blessed as our country is with every thing 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 subject with which they have been respectfully 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. Every thing 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 of the disputed points of boundary under the fifth article of the treaty of Ghent, the proceedings have hitherto been conducted in that spirit of candour and liberality which ought ever to char-

acterize 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 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, who 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, in 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 reparations 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 tedious 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 the important and inalienable 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 such alike injuries to both countries, either by concluding a Commercial Convention upon liberal and reciprocal terms, or by urging the acceptance, to their full extent, of the mutually beneficial provisions of our navigation acts. He has also been instructed to make a further appeal to the justice of Spain, in behalf of our citizens, for indemnity for spoinations upon our commerce, committed under her authority—an appeal which the pacific and moral 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 invasion of Turkey awakened a lively sympathy for those who were exposed to the desolation 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 to the commerce of the United States, from unobstructed 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 attempt, but unsuccessful attempt to obtain it, was renewed under circumstances which promised the most favorable results. Although these 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 ensure 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, the prospective condition of the authority by which the representative now 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 spoinations; 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 the 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 reasonable 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 own 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 issuance of Mexico, and the effect thereby produced upon her domestic policy, must have contributed in no small degree to 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 decision to liberty cannot be without a proper effect upon the councils of the mother country. The adoption, by Spain, of a pacific policy towards her former Colonies—an event so congenial to humanity, and a blessing to the world, in which she herself cannot fail fairly to participate—may be most reasonably expected.

The claims of our citizens upon the South American Governments, generally, are in a train of settlement; and 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 the imperial Government. This event, together with the exchange of the ratifications of the Treaty negotiated and concluded in 1828, largely terminates all serious causes of differences 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 its 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 these may be controlled by an individual Representative. Honors and offices are at the disposal of the successful candidate. Repeated ballottings 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 he 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 a 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 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 evil 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 so to 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 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 connexion 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 in 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 a 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 interests, than as an instrument created solely for the service of the People. Corruption in some, and, other, 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 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 nor continuance in office, is matter of right. The incumbent became an officer with a view to public benefits; and, when these require his removal, they are not to be sacrificed to private interests.