Carolina Watchman.

Devoted to Politics, News, Agriculture, Internal Improvements, Commerce, the Arts and Sciences, Morality, and the Family Circle.

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J. J. BRUNER, Editor and Proprietor.

CALENDAR FOR 1856.

1856.	Sunday.	Monday.	Tuesday.	W'n'sday.	Thursday.	Friday.	Saturday.
JAN'RY..	–	–	1	2	3	4	5
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FEB'RY..	–	–	–	–	–	1	2
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AUGUST..	–	–	–	–	–	1	2
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SEPT'BR..	–	1	2	3	4	5	6
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OCTOB'R..	–	–	–	1	2	3	4
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NOVEM..	–	–	–	–	–	–	1
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DECEMB..	–	1	2	3	4	5	6
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FOR THE WATCHMAN.

CHRISTMAS.

Among the thousands who, during the few weeks past, have joined in the festivities attending Christmas-day, we venture to say there are but few who can tell even why that day is celebrated. Then it will, doubtless, be of interest to many to know why that day is celebrated, and when it was first so done.

Christmas is so called because on that day the mass or feast of Christ is celebrated in honor of his nativity—the generally received opinion being that he was born on that day. We not long since heard an old gentleman say that we had no cause to reverence that day as Christ's birth-day. In surprise we asked him why not? Judea, he replied, is as cold a country as this, and if shepherds were to be laying out in the moonlight such nights as these they would be likely to get frost bit; and, again, some say the 6th of January was Christ's birth-day, now he certainly was not born on both days. It is also nothing but a decree of the Pope of Rome, and ought not to be respected.

These assertions of our friend caused us to think upon this subject and finally induced us to make some researches and inquiries. The earliest mention of Christmas was in the year 70, when Clemens Romanus ordered that the 25th of December should be celebrated as the birth-day of our Saviour. During the 2nd century we find mention made of the 25th of December as a day of reverence and as a holyday at several different periods; it was then celebrated by fasting and prayer—a somewhat different manner from that in which most persons celebrate it now—and in the era of Diocletian, that Emperor, while prosecuting his bloody persecutions against the Christians, ordered the churches in which they were assembled to be burned. This, however, did not deter Christians from celebrating it, and a few years after, under the reign of Constantine, the custom was openly received and encouraged.

In this first establishment of a festal day there seems to have been celebrated twelve days, in which no work was to be done, from the 25th of December to the 6th of January; the first and last of which days were the chief. On the latter (the 6th of January) the tradition says the wise men visited Christ. Under the patronage of Constantine the festival obtained a sure basis, and being soon after taken under the fostering care of the Pope has remained to this time a day respected by protestant and papist. In this brief summary of history we see that it is not an institution originated by the Pope, it having been founded in the pure atmosphere of primitive Christianity [illegible]

Upon the alteration of the Calendar by Pope Gregory [illegible] ... tered so as to bring them back to the days which they were originally intended to commemorate, among the rest Christmas was also brought back. Many persons, however, the Scotch Highlanders in particular, still reckon Christmas according to the Old Style, it thereby falling on the 6th of January. As a proof that it is the true birth day of Christ, they say that during one of the early hours of the morning of that day the heavens are lighted up, the cattle fall upon their knees in prayer, and poke* becomes green and grows one inch. Now whether the 25th of December or the 6th of January be the day of Christ's nativity it matters not, so one day or the other is rightly celebrated and to the satisfaction of those concerned. But if any person of inquiring mind desires to test the truth of the Scottish traditions by staying out in the night air until 1 o'clock they will have ample time to reflect upon it before an opportunity for so doing will be offered them in the year 1857.

That Christ was born on the 25th of December is by no means a positive fact, but he was born sometime during the year from which the Christian era dates, and that period of the year was selected by the primitive christians as the time for celebrating his nativity, for what reasons history does not inform us. Nevertheless we think it entirely possible for Christ to have been born on that day. Bethlehem, in Judea, though only 4 degrees South of Raleigh in this State, possesses a far more mild climate; the fruits which grew thereabouts were the fig, the olive, and the pomegranite, all of which court the genial warmth of the sun; and we are also informed by both sacred and profane history that the Jews had no fire-places in their houses, therefore, we may readily conclude that of a warm winter night it would not be at all uncomfortable for shepherds to be laying out in the moonlight. Besides that part of the year was a season of rest with the husbandmen and most probably just the time at which the officers would be likely to assemble the people together to take the census; to such an assemblage, with a view of giving in the number of his family, Joseph went up to Bethlehem.

Whether the day we celebrate be Christ's birth day or not is a matter of but little consequence, so it is reverenced and respected. But the progressive spirit of our age is fast rooting it up, and where some years back to have worked on Christmas day would have been considered a sacrilege, we now find curious indifference or total disregard. The same spirit of mammonism which would fain cast aside the hallowed associations which are gathered round the birth-day of our Independence is industriously striving to obliterate from the minds of men the day we celebrate as the advent of a Savior to this sinful world. Yes they would have us sacrifice to filthy lucre that day on which we have all looked as one when father, mother, sister, brother all would meet around the family fire-place in the good old homestead and thank heaven for the mercies of the past and ask for continued blessings during the coming year.

* The year as constituted by Julius Cæsar was composed of 365 days and 6 hours. Pope Gregory, finding that each year was longer than the preceding one and that by this means the fast days were departing from those days on which they were first appointed, ordered calculations to be made so as to ascertain how much time had been gained. It was found that 11 days had been lost since the Christian era. A new Calendar was then made and every fast day put back according to the length of time it had existed. Pope Gregory was not alone in this matter, the English Parliament before adopting the new system had calculations made under its own supervision.

* A kind of wild weed used very extensively by the lower classes in Scotland and by some in this country as a salad.

For the Watchman.

A BEAUTIFUL PASSAGE FROM OSSIAN.

"O thou that rolest above, round as the shield of my fathers! Whence are thy beams, O sun! Whence thy everlasting light! Thou comest forth in thy awful beauty and the stars hide themselves in the sky; the moon cold and pale sinks in the Western wave. But thou thyself movest alone: who can be the companion of thy course? The oaks of the mountains fall; the mountains themselves decay with years: the ocean shrinks and grows again.

"The moon is lost in heaven; but thou art forever the same, rejoicing in the brightness of thy course. When the world is dark with tempests; when thunders roll and lightning flies, thou lookest in thy beauty from the clouds and laughest at the storm. Exult then oh Sun in the strength of thy youth!

"Age is dark and unlovely; it is like the glimmering light of the moon, when it shines through broken clouds, and the mist is on the hills; the blast of the North is on the plain, the traveller shrinks in the midst of his journey."

INDUSTRY.

"One law among the ancient Lydians deserves to be mentioned and to be cherished in the memory. This was the punishment of idleness as a crime, and their inuring their children to hardship from their very infancy. In the former clause of this law they deserve to be imitated, even by a christian people. If the youth of our country were generally brought up to habits of industry, how much vice and misery would be avoided. Suffered to be idle, as they are in too many instances, they become the prey of the designing, a curse to their parents, and a pest to society. This is a crying evil in our day, and demands correction. Restraint over our offspring is required at our hands, and the parent who neglects it inflicts a moral injury upon his child and his country, while he exposes himself to the wrath of his Maker. If heathen parents appreciated the results of industrious habits, surely christian parents ought not to undervalue them.

"They should keep their offspring employed in their learning and other occupations suited to their tender age, that they may be preserved from temptation and ruin. All nature teaches the lesson of industry. The sun, moon and stars, are constant in the performance of their Creator's will. The earth also on which we live unweariedly travels onward in its course, and the very insects teach us a lesson of industry. Shall we disregard the lesson?"

PERJURY.

"The word of God, as well as the common consent of all civilized nations has attributed the highest degree of sanctity to the oath, and he that is not held by it has cut loose from all moral obligations. He that has no reverence for the awful name of God, has severed the last tie which binds him to truth. He is an outlaw in the universe—a star of disastrous omen that has broken loose beyond the attraction of its central sun, and must be left to pursue its course unchecked by the only power that could keep it in its orbit. * * * So sacred were oaths esteemed among the ancient Romans that they needed no protection from law. The perjured man was simply exposed to the Censor, and that was enough. The brand of infamy was upon him, and like the taint of leprosy it banished him from the fellowship of his species and left him to the vengeance of the insulted God."

THORNWELL.

Tom Love.—One of the queerest and funniest things to think of is after love is ... No sooner does a boy acquire a tolerable stand than he begins to imagine himself a man, and ... ape mannish ways. He ... at all girls he may meet, becomes a regular attendant at church, or meeting, sports a cane, carries his head erect, and struts a little in his walk. Presently, and how very soon he falls in love—yes, falls in is the proper word—because it best indicates his happy delusions ... He lives now in a fairy region, somewhere collateral to the world and ... He perfumes his ... fragrant ... handkerchief, desperately shaves and anoints ... He quotes poetry, in which ... and "dove" and "heart" and "dart" ... predominate; and as he plunges deeper ... sweet rush of rhyme. He feeds upon the looks of his beloved; ... speaks a pleasant word ... the most astonishing ecstacies ... plunged in the gloomiest regions of ... by a frown.

He believes himself to be the most ... There never will be. He is ... idolater! He is the great favorite ... very type of magnanimity and self-abnegation. Wealth! he despises the grovelling thought! Poverty with the adorable beloved he ... apostrophises as the first ... ings, and "Love in a cottage," with ... a crust, is the beau ideal paradise of ... ...

He declares to himself with the most ... emphasis, that he would go through fire and water, undertake a pilgrimage to China or Kamschatka; swim the storm-tossed ocean; scale impassable mountains, and face legions of tigers, but for one sweet smile from her ... He doats upon a flower she has cast away. He cherishes her glove ... —next his heart. He sighs like a locomotive letting off steam. ... He scornfully deprecates the attention of other boys of his age, cuts Peter Tibbets dead, because he said the adorable Angelina had carrotty hair, and passes Harry Ball contemptuously for daring to compare that gawky ... with his incomparable Angelina.

Happy! happy! foolish boy ... with its hopes and its fears, its joys and its sorrows, its jealousies, its delights and its terrible ... ing, its solemn ... and its ... prosaic termination.

We learn by a despatch from Washington that the whole subject of slavery will be brought before the Supreme Court of the United States this winter in the case of Mr. Booth, the abolition editor, who was convicted in the United States District court of aiding in the escape of a fugitive slave, and was subsequently liberated by a State Court on a habeas corpus. This is one of the most interesting and important cases ever brought before the Supreme Court.

WHISKEY vs. "NIGGERS." WHISKEY WINS.—In a debate in the House on Tuesday last, Mr. Washburn, of Maine, ... denouncing the Democrats and the Southern K. N's as ... and claiming the Black Republicans ... the National party ... remarked that the Democratic party ... were largely in the majority, had dwindled down to 75 and could not represent the national feelings of the country. Mr. Orr inquired if Mr. W. had not been elected last year, and if his party had not been defeated by the Democrats this year? Mr. Washburn admitted such was the case, but explained that the democracy this year went against the liquor law and thus carried the State.

So that it seems that free soil can whip the Maine democracy, but that democracy and free liquor can beat the world—the people of Maine having much more regard for whiskey than for "freedom."—*Fay. Observer.*

Widow Bedott's Papers: A Mistake in Courting, and a Flare Up.

There has recently been issued from the publishing house of J. C. Derby a spicy volume, entitled 'The Bedott Papers,' which contains a vast amount of laughable material. As a specimen, we give a courting scene between the widow and an old codger for whom she had set her cap. Thus:

Mr. Crane—Well, Widow—I've been thinking about taking another companion, and I thought I'd ask you.

Widow—Oh, Mr. Crane, excuse my commotion—it's so unexpected. Jest hand me that are bottle o' camfire off the mantelry shelf—I'm rather faint—dew put a little mite on my hankercher, and hold it to my nuz. There, that'll dew. I'm obleeged tew ye—now I'm rather more composed—you may proceed, Mr. Crane.

Mr. Crane—Well, Widder, I was agoing to ask you whether—whether——

Widow—Continner, Mr. Crane—dew—I know it's turrible embarrasin'. I remember when my deceased husband made his suggestion to me, he stammered and stuttered, and was so awfully flustered, it was some as if he'd never git it out in the world, and I s'pose 'tis generally the case, at least it has been with all them that's made suggestions to me—you see they're generally considerable concerning about what kind of an answer their agwine to git, and it kind o' makes 'em narvous. But when an individdiwal has reason to s'pose his attachment's reciprocated, I don't see what need there is of his bein' flustrated—though I must say it's quite embarrassin' to me—pray continner.

Mr. Crane—Well, then, I want to know if you're willin' I should have Melissy?

Widow—The dragon!

Mr. Crane—I hain't said anything to her about it yet. I thought the proper way was to get your consent first. I remember when I courted Trypheny, we were engaged some time before mother ... knew anything about it, and when she found it out she was quite put out because I didn't go to her first. So when I made up my mind about Melissy, thinks me, I'll dew it right this time, and speak to the old woman first—

Widow—Old woman, hey! that's a purty name to call me!—amazin' perlite, tew! Want Melissy, hey! Tribbleation! gracious sake alive! well, I'll give it up now! I always know'd you was a simpleton, Tim Crane, but I must confess, I didn't think you was quite so big a fool.—Want Melissy, dew ye? If that don't beat all! What an everlastin' old calf you must be to s'pose she'd look at you. Why, you're old enough to be her father, and more tew—Melissy ain't only in her ... year. What a reedickilous idee for a man of your age! as gray as a rat tew! I wonder what this world is a-comin' tew; 'tis astonishin' what fools old widdiwers will make o' themselves. Have Melissy!

Mr. Crane—Why, widder, you surprise me. I'd no idea of bein' treated in this way after you'd been so polite to me, and made such a fuss over me and the girls.

Widow—Shet yer head, Tim Crane—nun o' yer sass to me. There's yer hat on that are table, and here's the door—and the sooner you put on one and march out o' t'other, the better it'll be for you. And I advise you, afore you try to get married agin, to go out west and see ef yer wit's grow'd any—and arter ye're satisfied on that pint, jest put a little lampblack on yer hair—'twould add to yer appearance, undoubtedly, and be of sarvice tew ye when you want to flourish round among the gals—and when ye've got yer hair blacked, just splinter the spine o' yer back—'twould not hurt yer looks a mite—you'd be entirely unresistable if you was a little grain straiter.

Mr. Crane—Well, I never!

Widow—Hold yer tongue—you consarned old coot you—I tell ye there's yer hat, and there's the door—be off with yourself, quick metre, or I'll give you a taste o' the broomstick.

Mr. Crane—Gimmini!

Widow—(rising) Git out, I say—I ain't a gwine to stand here and be insulted under my own ruff—and so—git along, and if ever you darken my door agin, or say a word to Melissy, it will be the wuss for you—that's all.

Mr. Crane—Tremenjous! What a winder!

Widow—Go 'long—go long, you everlastin' old gum. I won't hear another word. (stops her ears) I won't, I won't, I won't.

Exit Mr. Crane.

Rise in Land.—To give our readers a ... idea of the increase in the price of land around this town in the last six years, we state the following fact: Six years ago a tract of land lying about a mile from town, was bought for ... $4 per acre, which same tract was sold ... by ... Holmes for $400 per acre. Tremendous rise, that.—*Rep. Banner.*

The Spanish Courts has just adopted, by an immense majority, the sixth article of the constitution, which declares that no title of nobility shall be required as a qualification for the discharge of any office in the gift of the crown or of the people. This is a great stride towards the reformation of Spain, as it extinguishes the last of the privileges of the Spanish nobility, and places the people of all ranks upon an equality.

Aruthian Abovion relates the following story: "Once in my youth," said he, "I went to Bayazid, in Asia Minor. While sauntering about the bazaar, my attention was arrested by a man of a wretched and melancholy appearance restlessly wandering about and trembling incessantly. On inquiring the cause of his miserable condition, the following story was told me. He was once a linen weaver, and resided at a village at the foot of Mount Ararat. Falling in love with his master's wife, he induced her to fly with him; they betook themselves to the mountains, and at evening reached a cave, where the woman rested while he went to seek provisions. After a short absence he returned; but great was his horror at beholding the woman in the jaws of a monstrous snake, which had already swallowed half her person, and was only prevented from completing its repast by her outstretched arms. 'Cut the snake with your sabre,' cried she to the man, 'or slit its jaws on each side!' But the man was petrified with fear. 'At last,' she entreated, 'hand me the sabre, and let me rescue myself.' Her cries were in vain, for he had lost all power of exertion. 'Ah!' she then exclaimed in despair, 'I see you are a coward; I will live no longer; and closing her arms above her head, she instantly sank into the monster's belly. Then the man saw the snake coil round a pillar of basalt, to crush the bones of his victim, and he heard the smothered shrieks of the woman within it. Half insane with terror and remorse, he rushed from the cave, and ever after wandered about the wretched being whom I saw."

Refusal of Government to Recognize Col. French as Minister from Nicaragua.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 24.

Col. P. H. French addressed a letter to Mr. Marcy, enclosing a copy of his credentials as Minister from Nicaragua, and requesting an interview. Mr. Marcy replied, and instead of appointing an interview, anticipated what he would have said at once, which was, in substance, that the persons who had overthrown the government of Nicaragua were not citizens; and, until there should have been some popular recognition or confirmation of their authority, the United States could not recognize Col. French, nor any one else, as Minister from the new government. I know these to be facts, and you can rely upon them as such, notwithstanding any and all statements, by whomsoever made to the contrary.

The great Gaines Will Case.—The Supreme Court of Louisiana has reversed the late decision of the Second District Court, and decreed that Daniel Clark's will of 1818 be probated, and that Mrs. General Gaines be put in possession of his property, now amounting in value to several millions of dollars.

This is perhaps the most remarkable case in the legal annals of this country. Daniel Clark, of New Orleans, was the father of Mrs. Gaines, and as such, during his active life time, made a will bequeathing to her the bulk of his vast estates. Upon his death no such will was found; but another will was discovered, making a totally different distribution of his property; and the property was accordingly appropriated. Some twenty odd years ago, Mrs. General Gaines was informed, through some contemporaries of her father, of the true state of the case; and from that day to this she has devoted herself in this cause, with a singleness of purpose, and with a perseverance and heroism of the highest order, to the restitution of her father's property and of her own character as his legal and exclusive legatee. From one court to another, in various shapes, (but never directly upon the will till within the last two years,) she has been battling with her adversaries for more than twenty years, and has expended in that time, in this litigation, thousands of dollars, often raised under the greatest difficulties, sometimes almost despairing—but never subdued.

L. Kossuth, in a late letter, alludes to the U. States and says: "Of one thing, nevertheless, I feel certain, and that is, that unless a European revolution turns the current, one great fight you must have with European kings. You can't escape that 'manifest destiny,' provided (I deliberately repeat) the Democracy of Europe does not open a safety-valve for gathering steam power.

"*Beware of Counterfeits.*—A bogus President's message is said to be in town, obtained by some *hocus pocus* at Washington, in MS. We hear it was offered for sale yesterday to the newspapers cheap, but it was believed nobody was verdant enough to buy. None genuine unless signed Franklin Pierce, mind—in the regular way.—*Express.*

The President's message, as originally written was offered to us two weeks ago, in manuscript. We have no doubt it was a copy of the real message as prepared on the day Congress assembled. But almost every day must bring some amendment or alteration, in the present delay of the organization of the House. We anticipated this delay and declined to purchase. So, we believe, did the Herald. We suppose the copy offered us was an old copy which *had been prepared for the Washington Union*, and had leaked out of that leaky office in some way. *It was all out up, ready for giving out to the compositors, and bore other evidences of having been in a printing office.* As to the signature of Franklin Pierce—it was *there*, but not, we think, in his proper handwriting. Probably in that of his private secretary.—*News.*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

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

The Constitution of the United States provides that Congress shall assemble annually on the first Monday of December, and it has been usual for the President to make no communication of a public character to the Senate and House of Representatives until advised of their readiness to receive it. I have deferred to this usage until the close of the first month of the session; but my convictions of duty will not permit me longer to postpone the discharge of the obligations enjoined by the Constitution upon the President "to 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."

It is a matter of congratulation that the Republic is tranquilly advancing in a career of prosperity and peace.

CENTRAL AMERICA.

Whilst relations of amity continue to exist between the United States and all foreign Powers, with some of them grave questions are depending, which may require the consideration of Congress. Of such questions the most important is that which has arisen out of the negotiations with great Britain in reference to Central America.

By the convention concluded between the two Governments on the 19th of April, 1850, both parties covenanted that "neither will ever" "occupy, or fortify, or colonize, or assume, or exercise any dominion over Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito coast, or any part of Central America."

It was the undoubted understanding of the United States, in making this treaty, that all the present States of the former Republic of Central America, and the entire territory of each, would thenceforth enjoy complete independence; and that both contracting parties engaged equally, and to the same extent, for the present and for the future; that if either then had any claim of right in Central America, such claim, and all occupation or authority under it, were unreservedly relinquished by the stipulations of the convention; and that no dominion was thereafter to be exercised or assumed in any part of Central America by Great Britain or the United States.

This Government consented to restrictions in regard to a region of country wherein we had specific and peculiar interests, only upon the conviction that the like restrictions were in the same sense obligatory on Great Britain. But for this understanding of the force and effect of the convention it would never have been concluded by us.

So clear was this understanding on the part of the United States that, in correspondence contemporaneous with the ratifications of the convention, it was distinctly expressed that the mutual covenants of non-occupation were not intended to apply to the British establishment at the Balize. This qualification is to be ascribed to the fact that, in virtue of successive treaties with previous sovereigns of the country, Great Britain had obtained a concession of the right to cut mahogany or dye-woods at the Balize, but with positive exclusion of all domain or sovereignty; and thus it confirms the natural construction and understood import of the treaty as to all the rest of the region to which the stipulations applied.

It however, became apparent, at an early day after entering upon the discharge of my present functions, that Great Britain still continued in the exercise or assertion of large authority in all that part of Central America commonly called the Mosquito coast, and covering the entire length of the State of Nicaragua and a part of Costa Rica; that she regarded the Balize as her absolute domain, and was gradually extending its limits at the expense of the State of Honduras; and that she had formally colonized a considerable insular group, known as the Bay Islands, and belonging of right to that State.

All these acts or pretensions of Great Britain, being contrary to the rights of the States of Central America, and to the manifest tenor of her stipulations with the United States, as understood by this Government, have been made the subject of negotiation through the American Minister in London. I transmit herewith the instructions to him on the subject, and the correspondence between him and the British Secretary for Foreign Affairs, by which you will perceive that the two Governments differ widely and irreconcileably as to the construction of the Convention and its effect on their respective relations to Central America.

Great Britain so construes the Convention as to maintain unchanged all her previous pretensions over the Mosquito coast and in different parts of Central America. These pretensions as to the Mosquito coast are founded on the assumption of political relation between Great Britain and the remnant of a tribe of Indians on that coast, entered into at a time when the whole country was a colonial possession of Spain. It cannot be successfully controverted, that, by the public law of Europe and America, no possible act of such Indians or their predecessors could confer on Great Britain any political rights.

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

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

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

The interpretation which the British Government, thus in assertion and act, persists in ascribing to the Convention, entirely changes its character. While it holds us to all our obligations, it in a great measure releases Great Britain from those which constituted the consideration of this Government for entering into the Convention. It is impossible, in my judgment, for the United States to acquiesce in such a construction of the respective relations of the two Governments to Central America.

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

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

This Government, recognising the obligations of the treaty, has of course desired to see it executed in good faith by both parties, and in the discussion, therefore has not looked to rights which we might assert, independently of the treaty, in consideration of our geographical position and of other circumstances, which create for us relations to the Central American States different from those of any Government of Europe.

The British Government, in its last communication, although well knowing the views of the United States, still declares that it sees no reason why a conciliatory spirit may not enable the two Governments to overcome all obstacles to a satisfactory adjustment of the subject.

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

There is, however, reason to apprehend that, with Great Britain in the actual occupation of the disputed territories, and the treaty therefore practically null, so far as regards our rights, this international difficulty cannot long remain undetermined without involving in serious danger the friendly relations which it is the interest as well as the duty of both countries to cherish and preserve. It will afford me sincere gratification if future efforts shall result in the success anticipated heretofore with more confidence than the aspect of the case permits me now to entertain.

RECRUITEMENT.

One other subject of discussion between the United States and Great Britain has grown out of the attempt, which the exigencies of the war which she is engaged with Russia induced her to make, to draw recruits from the United States.

It is the traditional and settled policy of the United States to maintain impartial neutrality during the wars which from time to time occur among the great Powers of the world. Performing all the duties of neutrality towards the respective belligerent States, we may reasonably expect them not to interfere with our lawful enjoyment of its benefits. Notwithstanding the existence of such hostilities, our citizens retain the individual right to continue all their accustomed pursuits, by land or by sea, at home or abroad, subject only to such restrictions in this relation as the laws of war, the usage of nations, or special treaties may impose; and it is our sovereign right that our territory and jurisdiction shall not be invaded by either of the belligerent parties for the transit of their armies, the operations of their fleets, the levy of troops for their service, the fitting out of cruisers by or against either, or any other act or incident of war.—And these undeniable rights of neutrality, individual and national, the United States will, under no circumstances, surrender.

In pursuance of this policy the laws of the United States do not forbid their citizens to sell to either of the belligerent Powers articles contraband of war, or to take munitions of war or soldiers on board their private ships for transportation; and although in so doing the individual citizen exposes his property or person to some of the hazards of war, his acts do not involve any breach of national neutrality, nor of themselves implicate the Government. Thus, during the progress of the present war in Europe, our citizens have, without national responsibility therefor, sold gunpowder and arms to all buyers, regardless of the destination of those articles. Our merchantmen have been and still continue to be largely employed by Great Britain and by France in transporting troops, provisions, and munitions of war to the principal seat of military operations, and in bringing home their sick and wounded soldiers; but such use of our mercantile marine is not interdicted either by the international or by our municipal law, and therefore does not compromit our neutral relations with Russia.

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

Whatever concern may have been felt by either of the belligerent Powers lest private armed cruisers or other vessels in the service of one might be fitted out in the ports of this country to depredate on the property of the other, all