

North-Carolina Free Press.

Whole No. 382.

Tarborough, (Edgecombe County, N. C.) Tuesday, December 20, 1831.

Vol. VIII—No 18.

The "North-Carolina Free Press,"
BY GEORGE HOWARD,

Is published weekly, at *Two Dollars and Fifty Cents* per year, if paid in advance—or, *Three Dollars*, at the expiration of the year. For any period less than a year, *Twenty-five Cents* per month. Subscribers are at liberty to discontinue at any time, on giving notice thereof and paying arrears—those residing at a distance must invariably pay in advance, or give a responsible reference in this vicinity.

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DOMESTIC.

MESSAGE

From the President of the U. States, to the two Houses of Congress, at the commencement of the first session of the 22d Congress.

Fellow citizens of the Senate, and House of Representatives:

The representation of the people has been renewed for the twenty-second time since the constitution they formed has been in force. For near half a century, the Chief Magistrates, who have been successively chosen, have made their annual communications of the state of the nation to its representatives. Generally, these communications have been of the most gratifying nature, testifying an advance in all the improvements of social, and all the securities of political life. But frequently, and justly, as you have been called on to be grateful for the bounties of Providence, at few periods have they been more abundantly or extensively bestowed than at the present: rarely, if ever, have we had greater reason to congratulate each other on the continued and increasing prosperity of our beloved country.

Agriculture, the first and most important occupation of man, has compensated the labors of the husbandman with plentiful crops of all the varied products of our extensive country. Manufactures have been established, in which the funds of the capitalist find a profitable investment, and which give employment and subsistence to a numerous and increasing body of industrious and dexterous mechanics. The laborer is rewarded by high wages, in the construction of works of internal improvement, which are extending with unprecedented rapidity. Science is steadily penetrating the recesses of nature and disclosing her secrets, while the ingenuity of free minds is subjecting the elements to the power of man, and making each new conquest auxiliary to his comfort. By our mails, whose speed is regularly increased, and whose routes are every year extended, the communication of public intelligence and private business is rendered frequent and safe—the intercourse between distant cities, which it formerly required weeks to accomplish, is now effected in a few days; and in the construction of rail-roads, and the application of steam power, we have a reasonable prospect that the extreme parts of our country will be so much approximated, and those most isolated by the obstacles of nature rendered so accessible, as to remove

an apprehension sometimes entertained, that the great extent of the Union would endanger its permanent existence.

If, from the satisfactory view of our agriculture, manufactures and internal improvements, we turn to the state of our navigation and trade with foreign nations and between the States, we shall scarcely find less cause for gratulation. A beneficent Providence has provided, for their exercise and encouragement, an extensive coast indented by capacious bays, noble rivers, inland seas; with a country productive of every material for ship building and every commodity for gainful commerce, and filled with a population, active, intelligent, well informed, and fearless of danger. These advantages are not neglected; and an impulse has lately been given to commercial enterprise, which fills our ship yards with new constructions, encourages all the arts and branches of industry connected with them, crowds the wharves of our cities with vessels, and covers the most distant seas with our canvass.

Let us be grateful for these blessings to the beneficent Being who has conferred them, and who suffers us to indulge a reasonable hope of their continuance and extension, while we neglect not the means by which they may be preserved. If we may dare to judge of His future designs by the manner in which his past favors have been bestowed, he has made our national prosperity to depend on the preservation of our liberties—our national force on our federal union—and our individual happiness on the maintenance of our State rights and wise institutions. If we are prosperous at home, and respected abroad, it is because we are free, united, industrious, and obedient to the laws. While we continue so, we shall, by the blessing of Heaven, go on in the happy career we have begun, and which has brought us, in the short period of our political existence, from a population of three to thirteen millions—from thirteen separate Colonies to twenty-four United States—from weakness to strength—from a rank scarcely marked in the scale of nations to a high place in their respect.

This last advantage is one that has resulted, in a great degree, from the principles which have guided our intercourse with foreign Powers, since we have assumed an equal station among them: and hence, the annual account which the Executive renders to the country, of the manner in which that branch of his duties has been fulfilled, proves instructive and salutary.

The pacific and wise policy of our government kept us in a state of neutrality during the wars that have at different periods since our political existence, been carried on by other powers: but this policy, while it gave activity and extent to our commerce, exposed it in the same proportion to injuries from the belligerent nations. Hence have arisen claims of indemnity for those injuries. England, France, Spain, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Na-

ples, and lately Portugal, had all in a greater or less degree infringed our neutral rights. Demands for reparation were made upon all. They have had in all, and continue to have in some cases, a leading influence on the nature of our relations with the powers on whom they were made.

Of the claims upon England it is unnecessary to speak, further than to say, that the state of things to which their prosecution and denial gave rise has been succeeded by arrangements, productive of mutual good feeling and amicable relations between the two countries, which it is hoped will not be interrupted. One of these arrangements is that relating to the colonial trade, which was communicated to Congress at the last session; and although the short period during which it has been in force will not enable me to form an accurate judgment of its operation, there is every reason to believe that it will prove highly beneficial. The trade thereby authorized has employed, to the 30th September last, upwards of 30,000 tons of American, and 15,000 tons of foreign shipping in the outward voyages; and, in the inward, nearly an equal amount of American, and 20,000, only, of foreign tonnage. Advantages, too, have resulted to our agricultural interests from the state of the trade between Canada and our Territories and States bordering on the St. Lawrence and the Lakes, which may prove more than equivalent to the loss sustained by the discrimination made to favor the trade of the Northern colonies with the West Indies.

After our transition from the state of colonies to that of an independent nation, many points were found necessary to be settled between us and Great Britain. Among them was the demarcation of boundaries, not described with sufficient precision in the treaty of peace. Some of the lines that divide the States and Territories of the United States from the British provinces, have been definitively fixed. That, however, which separates us from the provinces of Canada and New Brunswick to the north and the east, was still in dispute when I came into office. But I found arrangements made for its settlement, over which I had no control. The commissioners who had been appointed under the provisions of the treaty of Ghent, having been unable to agree, a convention was made with Great Britain by my immediate predecessor in office, with the advice and consent of the Senate, by which it was agreed "that the points of difference which have arisen in the settlement of the boundary line between the American and British dominions, as described in the 5th article of the Treaty of Ghent, shall be referred, as therein provided, to some friendly sovereign or state, who shall be invited to investigate, and make a decision upon such points of difference;" and the King of the Netherlands having, by the late President, and his Britannic Majesty, been designated as such friendly sove-

reign, it became my duty to carry, with good faith, the agreement so made, into full effect. To this end I caused all the measures to be taken which were necessary to a full exposition of our case, to the sovereign arbiter; and nominated as Minister Plenipotentiary to his court, a distinguished citizen of the State most interested in the question, and who had been one of the agents previously employed for settling the controversy. On the 10th day of January last, his Majesty the King of the Netherlands delivered to the Plenipotentiaries of the United States and of Great Britain, his written opinion on the case referred to him. The papers in relation to the subject will be communicated by a special message to the proper branch of the Government, with the perfect confidence that its wisdom will adopt such measures as will secure an amicable settlement of the controversy, without infringing any constitutional right of the States immediately interested.

It affords me satisfaction to inform you that suggestions, made by my direction, to the Charge d'Affaires of his Britannic Majesty to this government, have had their desired effect in producing the release of certain American citizens, who were imprisoned for setting up the authority of the State of Maine, at a place in the disputed territory under the actual jurisdiction of his Britannic Majesty. From this, and the assurances I have received, of the desire of the local authorities to avoid any cause of collision, I have the best hopes that a good understanding will be kept up until it is confirmed by the final disposition of the subject.

The amicable relations which now subsist between the United States and Great Britain, the increasing intercourse between their citizens, and the rapid obliteration of unfriendly prejudices to which former events naturally gave rise, concurred to present this as a fit period for renewing our endeavors to provide against the recurrence of causes of irritation, which, in the event of war between Great Britain and any other power, would inevitably endanger our peace. Animated by the sincerest desire to avoid such a state of things, and peacefully to secure, under all possible circumstances, the rights and honor of the country, I have given such instructions to the Minister lately sent to the Court of London, as will evince that desire; and if met by a correspondent disposition, which we cannot doubt, will put an end to causes of collision, which, without advantage to either, tend to estrange from each other two nations who have every motive to preserve, not only peace, but an intercourse of the most amicable nature.

In my message at the opening of the last session of Congress, I expressed a confident hope that the justice of our claims upon France, urged as they were with perseverance and signal ability by our Minister there, would finally be acknowledged. This hope has been realized. A treaty has been signed which will imme-

diately be laid before the Senate for its approbation; and which, containing stipulations that require legislative acts, must have the concurrence of both Houses before it can be carried into effect. By it, the French Government engage to pay a sum which, if not quite equal to that which may be found due to our citizens, will yet, it is believed, under all circumstances, be deemed satisfactory by those interested. The offer of a gross sum, instead of the satisfaction of each individual claim, was accepted, because the only alternatives were a rigorous exaction of the whole amount stated to be due on each claim, which might, in some instances, be exaggerated by design, in others overrated through error, and which therefore it would have been both ungracious and unjust to have insisted on, or a settlement by a mixed commission, to which the French negotiators were very averse, and which experience in other cases had shown to be dilatory, and often wholly inadequate to the end. A comparatively small sum is stipulated on our part, to go to the extinction of all claims by French citizens on our Government: and a reduction of duties on our cotton and their wines has been agreed on, as a consideration for the renunciation of an important claim for commercial privileges, under the construction they gave to the treaty for the cession of Louisiana.

Should this treaty receive the proper sanction, a source of irritation will be stopped, that has, for so many years, in some degree alienated from each other two nations, who from interest, as well as the remembrance of early associations, ought to cherish the most friendly relations: an encouragement will be given for perseverance in the demands of justice, by this new proof, that if steadily pursued, they will be listened to; and admonition will be offered to those powers, if any, which may be inclined to evade them, that they will never be abandoned. Above all, a just confidence will be inspired in our fellow citizens, that their Government will exert all the powers with which they have invested it, in support of their just claims upon foreign nations; at the same time that the frank acknowledgment and provision for the payment of those which were addressed to our equity, although unsupported by legal proof, affords a practical illustration of our submission to the divine rule of doing to others what we desire they should do unto us.

Sweden and Denmark having made compensation for the irregularities committed by their vessels, or in their ports, to the perfect satisfaction of the parties concerned; and having renewed the treaties of commerce entered into with them, our political and commercial relations with those Powers continue to be on the most friendly footing.

With Spain our differences, up to the 22d of February, 1819, were settled by the treaty of Washington of that date; but, at subsequent period, our commerce with the States, formerly