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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Fellow-citizens of the Senate and of the House of Representatives:*

[illegible] Congress of the States and of the people are again assembled to deliberate for the public [illegible] the nation to the uninterrupted [illegible] which we enjoy.

[illegible] unexampled prosperity [illegible] our internal affairs presents a [illegible] to the world. [illegible] and unrestricted population of some of the European governments, and a necessary result [illegible] and commercial wealth, and to depress [illegible] all commercial nations, but [illegible] other causes, the United States, with [illegible] products, have felt their effects less [illegible] other country, and all our great interests [illegible] prosperous and successful.

[illegible] the great events of the past year, and [illegible] the agitated and disordered state of other [illegible] our own, tranquil and happy condition, [illegible] ourselves that we are the most [illegible] on the face of the earth. While the [illegible] other countries are struggling to establish [illegible] under which they may enjoy liberty [illegible] the actual enjoyment of them—which [illegible] our fathers. While enlightened [illegible] are convulsed and distracted by civil [illegible] strife, we settle all our political controversies [illegible] the peaceful exercise of the rights of [illegible] institutions. The great republican maxim [illegible] recognized by the hearts of our people, [illegible] of the majority, constitutionally expressed [illegible] is our sure safeguard against [illegible]

It is a subject of just pride, that our [illegible] a system continue publicly to administer the affairs of a [illegible] institutions to be attributed, that while [illegible] the unbridled ambition and the [illegible] glory as the prize of the [illegible] and impoverishment of their people, [illegible] our peaceful mission in the midst of [illegible] prosperity, and an increasing individual happiness.

[illegible] our relations with all [illegible] friendly footing. Advantageous treaties have been concluded with the East [illegible] New Granada, Peru, the Two Sicilies, [illegible], Oldenburg and Mecklenburg [illegible] for example, the restrictive system [illegible] principal foreign countries [illegible] more liberal commercial policy [illegible] other enlightened nations, and [illegible] extended and extended [illegible] higher prosperity of the United States. To continue to enjoy [illegible] our foreign policy of non-interference [illegible] of other nations. We recognize [illegible] rights which we enjoy ourselves, [illegible] their political institutions, according [illegible] without pleasure. Hence we do [illegible] existing governments, capable of [illegible] own authority. We exercise all [illegible] not only from the dictates of [illegible] from a sacred regard for the independence [illegible]

[illegible] our neighbors, we do not follow [illegible] indifferent spectators of the progress [illegible] principles. The Government and people [illegible] United States have held with enthusiasm and [illegible] establishment of the French Republic, as the [illegible] to progress in union the States [illegible] confederation, similar in many respects [illegible] Federal Union. If the great and enlightened [illegible] occupying, as they do, a central [illegible] position in Europe shall succeed in [illegible] such a Confederated Governments, secure [illegible] to the citizens of each State local [illegible] subject to the peculiar condition of [illegible] trade and intercourse with [illegible] will be an important era in the history of [illegible] Whilst will equally elevate and strengthen [illegible] Germany, it must essentially promote [illegible] commerce, civilization and constitutional [illegible] throughout the world.

[illegible] Governments on this continent are relieved, we trust, from a more friendly and [illegible] that they have ever been at any [illegible]

[illegible] exchange of ratifications of the treaty of [illegible] Mexico, our intercourse with the Government of that Republic has been of the most friendly character. Extraordinary and Minister [illegible] of the United States to Mexico has [illegible] and a diplomatic representative [illegible] Mexico, of similar rank, has been received by this Government. The [illegible] between the two countries, which had [illegible] so long preserved. The [illegible] manifested on this occasion, which had [illegible] happily terminated, are [illegible] to be long preserved. The [illegible] manifested on this occasion, and which [illegible] cordial feelings, have every motive of sympathy [illegible] to bind them together in reciprocal [illegible]

[illegible] existing condition of our foreign relations [illegible] I deem it necessary for me to call your attention [illegible] to them.

[illegible] spirit and desire to cultivate [illegible] intercourse with all nations. Impartiality in [illegible] relations abroad, constitute the [illegible] policy of our country. War, the [illegible] sometimes becomes inevitable, [illegible] be avoided when it can be done consistently [illegible] honor of the nation. [illegible] important results of the war with Mexico, [illegible] forced with a neighboring [illegible] demonstration it has afforded of the [illegible] of our country. Before the late war [illegible] European and other foreign Powers [illegible] and erroneous views of our [illegible] a nation, and our ability to [illegible] and especially a war waged on [illegible] They saw our armies marching [illegible] victory in every battle, and [illegible] disbandment, the veteran [illegible] themselves to their [illegible] in peace, target [illegible] the protection of [illegible] against foreign [illegible] as well as against [illegible] an army, well disciplined and [illegible] to wage war successfully. They [illegible] our militia, and were far from [illegible] defensive force, unless it might be [illegible] regulated militia, [illegible] The results of the late war with Mexico [illegible] undeceived them, but have removed [illegible] which prevailed to some extent [illegible] a portion of our own countrymen [illegible] demonstrated, that upon the breaking [illegible] not anticipated, and for which no [illegible] had been made, a volunteer army, [illegible] equal in veteran troops, and [illegible] for any emergency, and in a short [illegible] have volunteered in any other [illegible] volunteering in [illegible] the contrary, each [illegible] contributed to furnish a regular [illegible] that the chief difficulty to be [illegible] in the selection from the [illegible] offered their services. [illegible] ample means of [illegible] and the great difficulty to be [illegible] have won for both.

[illegible] facts are considered, it may reasonably be a matter of much amazement abroad, how it [illegible] our regular army in Mexico, regulars [illegible] were victorious upon every battle-field [illegible] fulfill the odds against them.

[illegible] Mexico has fully developed the [illegible] Government to prosecute vigorously and successfully a foreign war, with all [illegible] attributed to a more military form of [illegible] It has been stated by writers on [illegible] to constitute a want of that unity [illegible] of purpose, and vigor of execution, [illegible] generally admitted to belong to the monarchical forms, and this feature of [illegible] has been supposed to display [illegible] advantageously in the conduct of a war carried [illegible] the territory of a republic. The war with Great Britain, in 1812, was to a great extent confined within our own limits, and shed but little light on this subject. But the war which we have just closed by an honorable peace, evinces beyond all doubt that a popular representative government is equal to any emergency which is likely to arise in the affairs of a nation.

The war with Mexico has developed most strikingly and conspicuously another feature in our institutions. It is that, without cost to the government or danger to our liberties, we have in the bosom of our society [illegible] of men, available in a just and necessary war, virtually a standing army of two millions of armed citizen-soldiers, such as fought the battles of Mexico.

But our military strength does not consist alone in our capacity for extended and successful operations on land. The navy is an important arm of the national defences. If the services of the navy were not as brilliant as those of the army in the late war with Mexico, it was because they had no enemy to meet on their own element. While the army had opportunity of performing more conspicuous service, the navy largely participated in the conduct of the war. Both branches of the service performed their whole duty to the country.

For the able and gallant services of the officers and men of the navy—acting independently as well as in cooperation with our troops—in the conquest of the California, the capture of the Mexican fleet, and the seizure and occupation of other important points on the Gulf and Pacific coasts, the highest praise is due. Their vigilance, energy, and skill, rendered the most effective service in excluding munitions of war and other supplies from the enemy, while they secured a large estimate for abundant supplies for our own army. Our extended commerce was nowhere interrupted; and for this immunity it owes much to the evils of war the country subjected to the navy.

High praise is due to the officers of the several executive bureaus, navy yards, and stations connected with the service, all under the immediate direction of the Secretary of the Navy, for the industry, zeal, and energy, with which every thing was dispatched, and furnished to give efficiency to this branch of the service. The same vigilance exhibited in directing the operations of the navy as of the army. There was concert of action and of purpose between the heads of the two arms of the service. By the orders which went from time to time issued, our vessels of war on the Pacific and Gulf of Mexico were stationed in proper time and in proper positions to cooperate efficiently with the army. By this means their combined power was brought to bear successfully on the enemy.

The great results which have been developed and brought to light by this war, will be of immeasurable importance in the future progress of our country. They will tend powerfully to preserve us from foreign collisions, and to enable us to pursue uninterruptedly our christian policy of peace with all nations, entangling alliances with none.

Occupying, as we do, a more commanding position among nations than at any former period, and duties and our responsibilities to our members and to posterity are more seriously increased. This will be felt more sensibly when we consider the vast additions which have been recently made to our territorial possessions, and their great importance and value.

Within less than four years the annexation of Texas to the Union has been consummated; all conducting to the Oregon Territory south of the fifty degree of north latitude, being all that was claimed and by any of my predecessors, has been adjusted; and New Mexico and Upper California have been acquired by treaty. The area of these several Territories, according to a report carefully prepared by the Commissioner of the General Land Office, from the most authentic information in his possession, and which is believed to be substantially correct, contains one million one hundred and ninety-three thousand and sixty-one square miles, or seven hundred millions five hundred and fifty-one thousand acres, while the area of the remaining twenty-nine States, and the territory not yet organized into States east of the Rocky Mountains, contains two million fifty nine thousand five hundred and thirteen square miles, or thirteen hundred and eighteen million one hundred and twenty-six thousand and fifty-eight acres.

These estimates show that the territories recently acquired, and over which our exclusive jurisdiction and dominion have been extended, constitute a country more than half as large as all that which was held by the United States before their acquisition. If Oregon be excluded from the estimate, there will still remain within the limits of Texas, New Mexico and California, eight hundred and fifty-one thousand five hundred and ninety-eight square miles, or five hundred and forty-five million one hundred and twenty-two thousand seven hundred and twenty acres, being an addition of more than one-third of all the territory owned by the United States before their acquisition, and including Oregon, nearly as great an extent of territory as the whole of Europe, Russia only excepted. The Mississippi, to which the frontier of our country is now the centre.

With the additions of the late acquisitions, the United States are now estimated to be nearly as large as the whole of Europe. It is estimated by the Superintendent of the Coast Survey, in the accompanying report, that the extent of the coast of Texas on the Gulf of Mexico is upwards of four hundred miles; of the coast of Upper California, on the Pacific, of nine hundred and seventy miles; and of Oregon, including the Straits of Fuca, of six hundred and fifty miles, making the whole extent of seaboard on the Pacific one thousand six hundred and twenty miles; and the whole extent on both the Pacific and the Gulf of Mexico two thousand and twenty miles. The boards of the coast on the Atlantic, from the United States around the Capes of Florida to the Sabine, on the eastern boundary of Texas, is estimated to be three thousand one hundred miles; so that the addition of territory, including Oregon, is very nearly equal to one-half as great as all we possessed before; and excluding Oregon, to an addition of one thousand three hundred and seventy miles, being nearly equal to one-half of the extent of coast which we possessed before the acquisitions.

We have now the three great maritime fronts—on the Atlantic, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Pacific—stretching in the direction of nearly exceeding two thousand miles. This is the extent of the west coast of the United States, including bays, sounds and inlets. The length of the main shore, and of the sea islands, is much greater. In these be included the length of the shore line of coast, as estimated by the Superintendent of the Coast Survey, in his report, would be thirty-three thousand and sixty-three miles.

It would be difficult to calculate the value of these immense additions to our territorial possessions. Possessing contiguous to the western boundary of Louisiana, extending within its limits a part of the navigable tributary waters of the Mississippi, and an extensive coast, could not long have sojourned in the hands of a foreign power without endangering the peace of our southwestern frontier.

Her products in the vicinity of the tributaries of the Mississippi must have sought market through those streams, running into and through our territory; and the dangers of irritation and collision of interests between Texas and a foreign State and ourselves would have been inevitable, while the embarrassment in the commercial intercourse between them must be attended with difficulty and unfriendliness. Had Texas fallen into the hands or under the influence and control of a strong monarchical or military foreign power, as she might have done, these dangers would have been still greater. They have been averted by her voluntary and peaceful annexation to the United States. Texas, from her position, was a natural and almost indispensable part of our territorial possessions. Scarcely she has been restored to our country, and become one of the States of our Confederacy, "upon an equal footing with the original States." The authority of Congress, the fostering care of a paternal government, adapted to the proportions of our most valuable staple commodities, and her commercial advantages, must soon make her one of our most populous States.

New Mexico, though situated in the interior, and without a seaboard, is known to contain much fertile land, to be rich in the mines of the precious metals, and to be capable of sustaining a large population. Her position, it is the intermediate and connecting territory between our settlements and our possessions in Texas, and those on the Pacific coast.

Upper California, irrespective of the vast mineral wealth recently developed there, holds at this day, in point of value and importance to the rest of the Union, the same relation that Louisiana did when that free territory was acquired from France, forty-five years ago. Extending nearly ten degrees of latitude along the Pacific, and embracing the only safe and commodious harbors on that coast for many hundred miles, with a temperate climate, and an extensive interior of fertile lands, it is scarcely possible to estimate its wealth, until it shall be brought under the government of our laws and its resources fully developed.

From its position it must command the rich commerce of China, of Asia, of the Islands of the Pacific, of Western Mexico, of Central America. The South American States, part of the Russian possessions bordering on that ocean. A great emporium will doubtless spring up also on the Californian coast, which may be destined to rival in importance New Orleans itself. The depot of the vast commerce which must exist on the Pacific will probably be at some point on the bay of San Francisco, and will occupy the same relation to the whole western coast of that ocean as New Orleans does to the valley of the Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico. To this depot our numerous whale ships will resort with their cargoes, to trade, refit, and obtain supplies. This of itself will largely contribute to build up a city, which would soon become the centre of a great and rapidly increasing commerce. Situated on a safe harbor, sufficiently capacious for all the navies as well as the commerce of the world, and convenient to excellent timber for ship building, owned by the United States, it must become our great western naval depot.

It was known that mines of the precious metals existed to a considerable extent in California at the time of its acquisition. Recent discoveries render it probable that these mines are more extensive and valuable than was anticipated. The accounts of the abundance of gold in that territory and of such extraordinary character as would scarcely command belief were first and corroborated by the authentic reports of officers in the public service, who have visited the mineral district, and derived the facts which they detail from personal observation. Reluctant to credit the reports in general circulation as to the quantity of gold, the officer commanding our forces in California visited the mineral district in July last, for the purpose of obtaining accurate information on the subject. His report to the War Department of the result of his examination and the facts obtained on the spot, is herewith laid before Congress. When he visited the country there were about four thousand persons engaged in collecting gold. There is every reason to believe that the number of persons employed has since been augmented. The explorations already made warrant the belief that the supply is very large, and that gold is found at various places in an extensive district of country.

Information received from officers of the navy and other sources, though not so full and minute, confirms the accounts of the commander of our military force in California. It appears, also, from these reports, that mines of quicksilver are found in the vicinity of the gold region. One of these is now being worked and is believed to be amongst the most productive in the world.

The effects produced by the discovery of these rich mineral deposites, and the success which has attended the labors of those who have resorted to them, have produced a surprising change in the state of affairs in California. Labor commands a most exhilarating price, and all other pursuits but that of searching for the precious metals are abandoned. Nearly the whole of the male population of the country have gone to the gold district. Ships arriving on the coast are deserted by their crews, and their voyage unfinished for want of sailors. Our commanding officer there entertains apprehensions that soldiers cannot be kept in the public service without a large increase of pay. Desertions in the command have become frequent, and he recommends that those who shall withstand the strong temptation, and remain faithful, should be rewarded.

This abundance of gold, and the all-engrossing pursuits of it, have already caused in California an unprecedented rise in the price of the necessaries of life.

Told we may the more speedily and fully avail ourselves of the undeveloped wealth of these mines, it is deemed of vast importance that a branch of the mint of the United States be established in the latitude of a year present session, in California. Among other legal advantages which this would result from such an establishment, would be that of relieving the gold in the value in that Territory. A branch mint of the United States at the great commercial depot on the western coast, would convert into current coin not only the gold derived from our own rich mines, but also the gold and specie which our commerce may bring from the whole west coast of Central and South America. The west coast of America and the adjacent interior embrace the richest and best mines of Mexico, New Granada, Central America, Chili and Peru.

The bullion and specie drawn from these countries, and especially from those of Western Mexico and Peru, to an amount in value of many millions of dollars, are now annually diverted and carried by the ships of Great Britain, to her own ports, to be recoined or used in supplying her extensive commerce, and thus contribute to increase her ability to maintain her power. If a branch mint be established at the great commercial point upon that coast, a vast amount of bullion and specie would flow thither to be recoined, and pass thence to New Orleans, New York and other Atlantic cities. The amount of our constitutional currency at home would be greatly increased, while its circulation abroad would be promoted, and be known to our merchants trading to China, and the western coast of America, that a great inconvenience and loss are experienced from the fact that our coins are not current at their par value in those countries.

The powers in Europe, far removed from the west coast of America by the Atlantic Ocean which intervenes, and by a tedious and dangerous navigation around the southern cape of the continent of America, can never successfully compete with the United States in the rich and extensive commerce which is spread to invite at so much less cost by the acquisition of California.

The vast importance and commercial advantages of California have heretofore remained unappreciated by the Government of the country of which it constituted a part. Until this time its province is a part of our country, all the advantages of the Union, accrue immediately and directly than unless it were deeply interested in the speedy development of its resources and its rapid settlement. No section of our country is more interested, or will be more benefitted by the contemplated navigating, and manufacturing interests of the Eastern States. Our planting and farming interests to a large part of the Union will be greatly benefitted by it. As our commerce and navigation are enlarged and extended, our exports of agricultural products will be increased, and be introduced to and in new markets thus opened, they cannot fail to command remunerating and profitable prices.

The acquisition of California and New Mexico, the settlement of the Oregon boundary, and the annexation of Texas, extending as the Rio Grande, are results, which, combined, are of greater consequence, and will add more to the strength and wealth of the nation, than any which have preceded them since the adoption of the constitution.

But to effect these great results, not only California, and New Mexico, must be brought under the control of regularly organized governments. The existing condition of California and of that part of New Mexico lying west of the Rio Grande, and without the limits of Texas, imperiously demand that Congress should, at its present session, organize territorial governments over them.

Upon the exchange of the ratifications of the treaty of peace with Mexico on the eleventh of May last, the temporary governments which had been established over New Mexico and California by our military and naval commanders, by virtue of the rights of war, ceased to derive any obligatory force from that source of authority, and having been ceded to the United States, all government and all control over their subjects devolved upon the United States, and it became a duty imperatively demanded by the necessity of establishing territorial governments over them. I recommended the subject to the favorable consideration of Congress in my message accompanying the ratified treaty of peace on the sixth of July last, and invoked their action at that session. Congress adjourned without making any provision for their government. The inhabitants, by the cession of their country, had become entitled to the benefits of our laws and constitution, and yet were left without any regularly organized government.

Since that time, the limited power possessed by the Executive has been exerted to preserve and protect them from the anarchy and consequences of a state of nature. The only government which remained was that established by the military authority during the war. Its continuance depends upon the law of nations. It is a de facto government, and may be maintained temporarily, if they were disposed to conform and submit to it for a short time pending a period before Congress would again assemble and enact legislation on the subject. The views entertained by the Executive on this point are contained in a communication of the Secretary of State, dated the seventh of October last, which was forwarded for publication to California and New Mexico, a copy of which is herewith transmitted.

The small military force of the regular army, which was serving within the limits of the acquired territories at the close of the war, was retained in district and additional forces have been ordered there for the protection of the inhabitants, and to preserve and secure the rights and interests of the United States.

No revenue has been or could be collected at the ports in California, because Congress failed to authorize the establishment of custom-houses, or the appointment of officers for that purpose.

The Secretary of the Treasury, by a circular addressed to collectors of the customs, on the seventh day of October last, a copy of which is herewith transmitted, exercised all the power with which he is invested by law.

In pursuance of the act of the fourteenth of August last, extending the benefit of our post office laws to the people of California, the Postmaster General has appointed two agents, who have proceeded to California, and the other to Oregon, with authority to make the necessary arrangements for carrying its provisions into effect.

The monthly line of mail steamers from Panama to Astoria has been required to stop and deliver and take mails at San Diego, Monterey and San Francisco. The establishment of such steamers, connected by the isthmus of Panama with the line of mail steamers on the Atlantic between New York and Chagres, will establish a regular and speedy communication with California.

It is our solemn duty to provide, with the least practicable delay, for New Mexico and California, regularly organized territorial governments. The causes of the hesitate to do this at the last session of Congress are well known and deeply to be regretted. With the opening prospects of increased prosperity and national greatness which the acquisition of these rich and extensive territorial possessions offered, how lamentable it would be to forego or to reject these advantages, by the agitation of a domestic question which is connected with the existence of our Government itself, and to endanger, by internal strife, geographical divisions, and heated contests for political power, or for rivalry between the harmony of the glorious Union of our confederated States; that Union which binds us together as one people, and which for sixty years has been our shield and protection against every danger.

In the eyes of the world and of posterity how trivial and insignificant will be all our internal divisions and struggles compared with the preservation of the Union of the United States in all its vigor, and with all its countless blessings. No patriot would foment and excite geographical and sectional divisions. No lover of his country would deliberately endanger the value of the Union. Future generations would look in amazement on the folly of such a course. Other nations at the present day would look upon it with astonishment; and each of them as dealer to maintain and perpetuate the purest and most liberal or aristocratic principles, will view it with exultation and glee, believing its stability, the duty, how imperative the call upon us, and upon all parts of our country, to cultivate a patriotic spirit of harmony, of good fellowship, of compromise and mutual compromise, in the administration of the incomparable system of Government formed by our fathers in the midst of almost insuperable difficulties, and transmitted to us with the injunction that we should enjoy its blessings and hand it down unimpaired to those who may come after us.

In view of the high and responsible duties which we owe to ourselves and to mankind, I trust you may be able, at your present session, to approach the adjustment of the only dispute question which seriously threatens, or probably ever can threaten, to disturb the harmony and successful operation of our system.

The recently valuable possessions of New Mexico and California are already inhabited by a considerable population. Attracted by their great fertility, their mineral wealth, their commercial advantages and the salubrity of the climate, emigrants from the older States in great numbers are already preparing to seek new homes in these inviting regions.

Shall the constituents of the domestic institutions of the different States present us from providing for them suitable governments? These institutions existed at the adoption of the constitution; but the objections which then interposed to the introduction of that spirit, of compromise which is now invoked in a country of opinions or of interests, feel or imaginary, between different sections of our country, neither can justly demand all which it might desire to obtain. Each, in the true spirit of our institutions, should concede something to the other.

Our gallant forces in the Mexican war, by whose valor and unparalleled deeds of arms we obtained these possessions as an indemnity for our just demands against Mexico, were composed of citizens who belonged to the old Slaveholding sections of our Union. They were men from slaveholding and non-slaveholding States, from the North and the South, from the East and the West. They were all companions-in-arms and fellow-citizens of the same common country, engaged in the same common cause. While prosecuting that war they were brothers and friends, and shared alike with each other common toils, dangers and sufferings.

Now, when their work is ended, when peace is restored, and they return again to their homes, put off the habiliments of war, take their places in society, and resume their pursuits in civil life, surely a spirit of harmony and concession, and of equal regard for the rights of all, and of all sections of the Union, ought to prevail in providing governments for the acquired Territories—the fruits of their common service. The best people of the United States and of every State contributed to defray the expenses of that war; and it would not be just for any one section to exclude another from all participation in the acquired territory. This would not be in consonance with the just system of government which the framers of the constitution adopted.

The question is believed to be rather abstract than practically whether slavery ever can or would exist in any portion of the acquired territory, even if it were left to the decision of the slaveholding States themselves. From the nature of the soil, climate and productions, in which the larger portion of it is composed, it could never exist; and in the probability the probabilities are, it would not. But, however this may be, the question, involving as it does a principle of equality of rights of the separate and several States, as equal partners in the confederacy, should not be adjudicated or compromised in the compromise, should not be disregarded.

In organizing governments over these Territories, no duty imposed on Congress by the constitution requires that they should legislate on the subject of slavery, while their power to do so is not only unquestioned, but claimed by many of the ablest and most eminent jurists of the country. Whether Congress shall legislate or not, the people of the acquired Territories will be entitled to form their own constitutions, with power to decide the question whether slavery shall or shall not exist within their limits. If Congress should abstain from interfering in the question, the people of these Territories will be left free to act for themselves in the matter, in the manner and to the extent they may think proper when they apply for admission as States into the Union.

No enactment of Congress could restrain the people of any of the sovereign States of the Union, old or new, North or South, slaveholding or non-slaveholding, from determining the character of their own domestic institutions as they may deem wise and proper. Any and all the States possess this right, and Congress cannot deprive them of it. The people of Georgia and of Maine, if they choose, or other States, may, in forming their constitutions, prohibit slavery within their limits, and the people of Vermont might, if they should deem it wise, so amend their constitution as to permit slavery within her limits. Both States would have the undoubted right, though, as all know, it is not probable that either would exert it.

It is fortunate for the peace and harmony of the Union, that the question is in its nature temporary, and not only continue for the brief period which will intervene before California and New Mexico may be admitted into the Union. From the rate of population now flowing into them, it is highly probable that this will soon occur.

Considering the several States and the citizens of the several States as equal, and entitled to equal rights under the Constitution, if this view of the subject question, it might well be insisted on that the principle of non-interference is the true decision, and that Congress could not, in the absence of any express grant of power, interfere with their relative rights.

From a great emergency, however, and under unusual exigencies in the Union, the Missouri compromise line in respect to slavery was adopted. The Union of Texas. After an impartial consideration of nearly thirty years in the principle of compromise received and established by those acts, and to avoid the danger to the Union which might follow if it were now disregarded, I have therefore expressed the opinion that the line of compromise should be extended to the Pacific ocean, or to a point within thirty minutes from the western boundary of Texas, where it now terminates.

This is the middle ground of compromise, upon which the different sections of the Union may meet, as they have heretofore met. If this be done, it is confidently believed a large majority of the people of every section of the country, however widely their opinions may be on the subject of slavery may differ, would cheerfully and patriotically acquiesce in it, and peace and harmony would again fill our borders.

The restriction north of the line was only yielded to the case of Missouri and Texas upon a principle of compromise, made necessary for the purpose of preserving the harmony, and possibly the existence of the Union.

It was upon these considerations that at the close of your last session I gave my sanction to the principle of the Missouri compromise line, by approving and signing the act for the organization of the Territory of Oregon.

This was a sincere desire to preserve the harmony of the Union, and to deference for the opinions of my predecessor, I felt constrained to yield my acquiescence to the extent to which they had gone in compromising this delicate and dangerous question. But if Congress shall now extend the decision by extending the compromise as to require it, the sacrifice of my opinion will be sufficiently atoned, and shall propose to extend the restriction over the whole territory, south as well as north of the cession to be a compromise, and must be regarded as an original question.

If Congress, instead of observing the course of non-interference, leaving the adoption of their own domestic institutions to the people who may inhabit these Territories, or if, instead of extending the Missouri compromise line to the Pacific, shall prefer to submit the legal and constitutional questions which may arise under the constitution, treaties and laws of the United States.

Congress is earnestly invoked, for the sake of the Union, its harmony, and our common prosperity as a national, to adjust at its present session this, the only dangerous question which threatens our peace—if not its safety. If not its adjustment, in some other way may be satisfactory.

In anticipation of the establishment of regular governments over the acquired territories, a joint commission of officers of the army and navy has been ordered to proceed to the coast of California and Oregon, for the purpose of making a reconnoissance and a report as to the proper sites for the direction of fortifications or other defensive works on land, and of suitable situations for naval stations. The information which may be expected from a scientific and skillful examination of the whole face of the coast will be exceedingly useful to Congress when they come to consider the propriety of making appropriations for these great national objects.

Proper defences on land will be necessary for the security and protection of our possessions and the establishment of navy yards, and a depot for supplies and construction of vessels, will be important alike to our navy and commercial marine. Without such establishments, every vessel, whether of the navy or of the merchant service, requiring repair, must go to great expense, some round Cape Horn to one of our Atlantic yards for that purpose. With such establishments, vessels, if it be deemed, may be built or repaired as cheaply in California as upon the Atlantic coast. They would give employment to many of our enterprising ship builders and mechanics and greater facilities and enlarge commerce in the Pacific.

As it is ascertained that mines of gold, silver, copper and quicksilver exist in New Mexico and California, and that nearly all public lands where they are found belong to the United States, it is deemed important to the public interest that provisions be made for a geological and mineralogical examination of these regions. Measures should be adopted to preserve the mineral lands, especially such as contain the precious metals, for the use of the United States; or if brought into market, to separate them from the farming lands, and dispose of them in such manner as to secure to the public a large return of money to the Treasury, and to the same than lead to the development of their wealth by individual proprietors and purchasers. To do this, it will be necessary to provide for an immediate survey and location of the lands. If Congress should deem it proper to dispose of the mineral lands, they should be sold in small quantities and at a fixed minimum price.

I recommend that Surveyor General's offices be authorized to be established in New Mexico and California, and provision made for surveying and bringing the public lands into the market at the earliest practicable period. In disposing of these lands, I recommend that the right of preemption be secured, and liberal grants made to the early emigrants who have settled, or may settle upon them.

It will be important to extend our revenue laws over these Territories, and especially over California, at an early period. There is already a considerable commerce with California and with ports of entry that must be established and collectors appointed, as revenue can be received.

If these and other necessary and proper measures be adopted for the development of the wealth and resources of New Mexico and California, and realize the anticipations which were entertained by the framers of our Government when the acquisition of these Territories, Government and navigation, and such the addition to the national wealth, that the present generation may live to witness the controlling commercial and monetary power of the world transferred from London and other European emporiums to the city of New York.

The appropriations the which were established by some of our statesmen in the earlier periods of the Government, that our system of government of operating with sufficient energy and success over largely extended territorial limits, and that if this were attempted, it would fail to prosper by its own weakness, have been disappointed by our own experience. By the division of power between the States and Federal Governments, the latter is found to operate with as much energy in the extremes as in the central. It is as efficient in the prohibition of the laws of the States which now compose the Union, as it was in the thirteen States which formed our constitution.

Indeed, it may well be doubted, whether if our present population had been confined within the limits of the original thirteen States, the tendencies to centralization and consolidation would not have upon such as we have experienced upon the essential reserved rights of the States, and lead to have made the Federal Government a entirely different one practically, from what it is in theory, and was intended to be by its framers. So far from entertaining apprehensions of the safety of its confidently entertained that each new State given strength and an additional guaranty for the perpetuation of the Union itself.

In pursuance of the provisions of the thirteenth article of the treaty of peace, friendship, limits and settlement with the Republic of Mexico, and of the act of July the fifth, 1848, a change of our citizens which had been "already established and declared signifies the intention to two millions twenty-three thousand eight hundred and thirty two dollars and fifty one cents, have been liquidated and paid. There remain to be paid of these claims, seventy-four thousand one hundred and eighty-seven dollars and twenty-six cents.

Congress at its last session having failed to provide for executing the fifth article of the treaty, by which the United States assume to make satisfaction for the "undisputed claims" of our citizens against Mexico, to "an amount not exceeding three and a quarter millions of dollars," the subject is again recommended to your favorable consideration.

The exchange of ratifications of the treaty with Mexico took place on the 30th May, 1848. Within one year after that time, the commissioner and surveyor which each Government stipulates to appoint, are to meet at the port of San Diego, and proceed to run and mark the said boundary in its whole course. Four months have elapsed of the one year within which the commissioner and surveyor of the respective governments are to meet at San Diego, will expire on the 30th May, 1849.

Congress, at the close of its last session, made an appropriation for the expenses of running and marking the boundary line between the two countries, but the act fix the amount of money which should be paid to the commissioner and surveyor to be appointed on the part of the United States. It is doubtful if the amount of compensation which they shall receive should be prescribed by law, and not left, as at present, to Executive discretion.

Questions were disputed at the earliest practicable period, to organize the "Territorial Government of Oregon" as provided by the act of the 14th of August last. The time expired, and parties of the territory contemplated by a small military force, left the frontier of Missouri in September last, and took the Southern route, by way of Santa Fe and the Gila, to California, with the intention of proceeding thence in one of our vessels of war to their destination. The Governor was fully advised of the plan of their coming, and of their arrival in the country, and it was confidently believed he may reach Oregon in the latter part of the present month, or early in the next. The other officers for the Territory have proceeded by sea.

In the month of May last, I communicated information to Congress that an Indian war had broken out in Oregon, and recommended that authority be given to raise an adequate number of volunteers to proceed without delay to the assistance of our fellow-citizens and the protection of the Territory. The authority to raise such a force by having their ground and Congress, as soon as their services could be dispensed with in Mexico, orders were issued to the regiment of Mounted Riflemen to proceed to Jefferson Barracks, in Missouri, to prepare to march to Oregon as soon as the necessary provision could be made.

Shortly before it was ready to march, it was attacked by the population of the act passed by Congress at the close of the last session, which directed that all the non-commissioned officers, musicians, and privates of that regiment, who had kept up their rights to Mexico, should, upon their application, be enrolled to be discharged. The effect of the provision was to disorganize the rank and file of the regiment, and before their places could be filled by recruits, the season had advanced that it was impracticable for it to proceed at the opening of the next spring.

In the meantime, I have received from the Governor of a temporary government of Oregon, giving information of the continuance of the Indian disturbances, and of the destitute and defenceless condition of the inhabitants. Orders were immediately transmitted to the commander of our regiment in the Pacific, to despatch a detachment of the regular forces on that coast, to furnish them with arms and ammunition, and to do all in his power to give them such aid and protection as the navy could afford, until the army could reach the country.

It is the policy of humanity, and one which has always been pursued by the United States, to conciliate the good will of the aboriginal tribes of this continent, and to restrain them from making war and indulging in acts of violence, by mild means rather than by force. That this course has been done with the tribes in Oregon, I have no doubt; and it is my belief that if our laws are extended over them, and the protection of our laws be afforded to them, they would be induced to remain at peace and quiet with the whites. Their ignorance of our laws, and their wants and sufferings, would be a sufficient excuse for their violation of our laws, and the punishment of their offenses would be mitigated or remitted