

# INDIANA PALLADIUM.

## MESSAGE

Of the President of the United States, communicated to the Senate and House of Representatives, at the commencement of the first Session of the Nineteenth Congress.

Fellow Citizens of the Senate and of

The House of Representatives.

In taking a general survey of the concerns of our beloved country, with reference to subjects interesting to the common welfare, the first sentiment which impresses itself upon the mind, is of gratitude to the Omnipotent Dispenser of all Good, for the continuance of the signal blessings of his Providence, and especially for that health, which to an unusual extent, has prevailed within our borders; and for that abundance which, in the vicissitude of the seasons, has been scattered in profusion over the land: nor ought we less to ascribe to him the glory that we are permitted to enjoy the bounties of his hand in peace and tranquility; in peace with all the other nations of the earth, in tranquility among ourselves. There has, indeed, rarely been a period in the history of civilized man, in which the general condition of the Christian Nations has been marked so extensively by peace and prosperity. Europe, with few partial and unhappy exceptions, has enjoyed ten years of peace during which all her governments, whatever the theory of their constitutions may have been, are successively taught to feel that the end of their institutions is the happiness of the people, and that the exercise of power among men can be justified only by the blessing it confers upon those over whom it is extended.

During the same period, our intercourse with all those nations has been pacific and friendly—it so continues. Since the close of your last session, no material variation has occurred in our relations with any one of them. In the commercial and navigation system of Great Britain, important changes of municipal regulations have recently been sanctioned by acts of Parliament, the effect of which, upon the interest of other nations and particularly upon ours, has not yet been fully developed. In the recent renewal of the diplomatic missions on both sides, between the two governments, assurances have been given and received of the continuance and increase of that mutual confidence and cordiality by which the adjustment of many points of difference had already been effected, and which affords the surest pledge for the ultimate satisfactory adjustment of those which still remain open, or may hereafter arise.

The policy of the United States, in their commercial intercourse with other nations, has always been of the most liberal character. In the mutual exchange of their respective productions, they have abstained altogether from prohibitions—they have interdicted themselves the power of laying taxes upon exports, and whenever they have favored their own shipping, by special preferences, or exclusive privileges in their own ports, it has been only with a view to counteract similar favors and exclusions granted by the nations with whom we have been engaged in traffic, to their own people or shipping, and to the disadvantage of ours. Immediately after the close of the last war, a proposal was fairly made by the act of Congress of the 3d of March, 1815, to all the maritime nations to lay aside the system of retaliating restrictions and exclusions, and to place the shipping of both parties to the common trade, on a footing of equality in respect to the duties of tonnage and impost. This offer was partially and successively accepted by Great Britain, Sweden, the Netherlands, the Hanseatic cities, Prussia, Sardinia, the duke of Oldenburgh, and Russia. It was also adopted, under certain modifications, in our late commercial convention with France. And, by the act of Congress of 8th January, 1824, it has received a new confirmation with all the nations who had acceded to it, and has been offered again to all those who are, or may hereafter be, willing to abide in reciprocating by it. But all these regulations, whether established by treaty, or by municipal enactments, are still subject to one important restriction. The removal of discriminating duties on tonnage and of impost, is limited to articles of the growth, produce, or manufacture of the country to which the vessel belongs, or to such articles as are most usually first shipped from her ports. It will deserve the serious consideration of Congress, whether even this remnant of restriction may not be safely abandoned, and whether the general tender of equal competition made in the act of the 8th January, 1824, may not be extended to include all articles of merchandise not prohibited, of what country soever they may be the produce or manufacture. Propositions to this effect have already been made to us by more than one European government, and it is probable that if once established by legislation or compact with any distinguished maritime state, it would recommend itself

by the experience of its advantages, to the general accession of all.

The convention of Commerce and Navigation between the United States and France, concluded on the 24th of June, 1822, was, in the understanding and intent of both parties, as appears upon its face, only a temporary arrangement of the points of difference between them, of the most immediate and pressing urgency. It was limited, in the first instance, to two years, from the 1st of October, 1822, but with a proviso, that it should further continue in force, till the conclusion of a general and definite treaty of commerce, unless terminated by a notice six months in advance, of either of the parties to the other. Its operation, so far as it extended, has been mutually advantageous; and it still continues in force, by common consent. But it left unadjusted several objects of great interest to the citizens and subjects of both countries, and particularly a mass of claims, to considerable amount, of

citizens of the United States upon the government of France, of indemnity for property taken or destroyed under circumstances of the most aggravated and outrageous character. In the long period during which continual and earnest appeals have been made to the equity and magnanimity of France, in behalf of these claims, their justice has not been, as it could not be, denied. It was hoped that the accession of a new Sovereign to the Throne, would have afforded a favorable opportunity for presenting them to the consideration of his government. They have been presented and urged, hitherto, without effect. The repeated and earnest representations of our Minister at the Court of France, remain as yet even without an answer. Were the demands of nations upon the justice of each other susceptible of adjudication by the sentence of an impartial tribunal, those to which I now refer would long since have been settled, and adequate indemnity would have been obtained. There are large amounts of similar claims upon the Netherlands, Naples, and Denmark. For those upon Spain, prior to 1819, indemnity was, after many years of patient forbearance, obtained, and those upon Sweden have been lately compromised by a private settlement, in which the claimants themselves have acquiesced. The governments of Denmark and of Naples have been recently reminded of those yet existing against them; nor will any of them be forgotten while a hope may be indulged of obtaining justice, by the means within the constitutional power of the Executive, and without resorting to those measures of self-redress, which, as well as the time, circumstances and occasions, which may require them, are within the exclusive competency of the legislature.

It is with great satisfaction that I am enabled to bear witness to the liberal spirit with which the Republic of Colombia has made satisfaction for well established claims of a similar character. And among the documents now communicated to Congress, will be distinguished a treaty of Commerce and Navigation with that republic, the ratifications of which have been exchanged since the last recess of the legislature. The negotiation of similar treaties with all the independent South American States, has been contemplated, and may yet be accomplished. The basis of them all, as proposed by the United States, has been laid in two principles; the one of entire and unqualified reciprocity; the other the mutual obligation of the parties, to place each other permanently upon the footing of the most favored nation. These principles are, indeed, indispensable to the effectual emancipation of the American hemisphere from the thralldom of colonizing monopolies and exclusions; an event rapidly realizing in the progress of human affairs, and which the resistance still opposed in certain parts of Europe to the acknowledgment of the Southern American republics as independent states, will, it is believed, contribute more effectually to accomplish. The time has been, and that not remote, when some of those states might, in their anxious desire to obtain a nominal recognition, have accepted of a nominal independence, clogged with burthensome conditions, and exclusive commercial privileges granted to the nation from which they have separated, to the disadvantage of all others. They are now all aware that such concessions to any European nation, would be incompatible with that independence which they have declared and maintained.

Among the measures which have been suggested to them by the new relations with one another, resulting from the recent changes of their condition, is that of assembling, at the Isthmus of Panama, a Congress at which each of them should be represented, to deliberate upon objects important to the welfare of all. The republics of Colombia, of Mexico, and of central America, have already deputed Plenipotentiaries to such a meeting, and they have invited the United States to be also represented there by their ministers. The invitation has been accepted, and ministers on the part of the U. S. will be commissioned to attend those

deliberations, and to take part in them, so far as may be compatible with that neutrality from which it is neither our intention, nor the desire of the other American states, that we should depart.

The Commissioners under the seventh article of the treaty of Ghent, have so nearly completed their labors, that, by the Report recently received from the Agent on the part of the United States, there is reason to expect that the commission will be closed at their next session, appointed for the 22d of May, of the ensuing year.

The other Commission, appointed to ascertain the indemnities due for slaves carried away from the United States, after the close of the late war, have met with some difficulty, which has delayed their progress in the inquiry. A reference has been made to the British government on the subject, which, it may be hoped, will tend to hasten the decision of the Commissioners, or serve as a substitute for it.

Among the powers specifically granted to Congress by the Constitution, are those of establishing uniform laws on the subject of bankruptcies throughout the United States and of providing for organizing, arming and disciplining the militia, and for governing such part of them as may be employed in the service of the United States. The magnitude and complexity of the interests affected by legislation upon these subjects, may account for the fact, that, long and often as both of them have occupied the attention, and animated the debates of Congress, no systems have yet been devised for fulfilling, to the satisfaction of the community, the duties prescribed by these grants of power. To conciliate the claim of the individual citizen to the enjoyment of personal liberty, with the effective obligation of private contracts, is the difficult problem to be solved by a law of bankruptcy. These are objects of the deepest interest to society; affecting all that is precious in the existence of multitudes of persons, many of them in the classes essentially dependent and helpless; of the age requiring nurture, and of the sex entitled to protection, from the free agency of the parent and the husband. The organization of the militia is yet more indispensable to the liberties of the country. It is only by an effective militia that we can at once enjoy the repose of peace, and bid defiance to foreign aggression; it is by the militia that we are constituted an armed nation, standing in perpetual panoply of defence, in the presence of all the other nations of the earth. To this end, it would be necessary so to shape its organization, as to give it a more united and active energy.—There are laws for establishing an uniform militia throughout the United States, and for arming and equipping its whole body. But it is a body of dislocated members, without the vigor of unity, and having little of uniformity but the name. To infuse into this most important institution the power of which it is susceptible, and to make it available for the defence of the Union, at the shortest notice, and at the smallest expense of time, of life, and of treasure, are among the benefits to be expected from the persevering deliberations of Congress.

Among the unequivocal indications of our national prosperity, is the flourishing state of our finances. The revenues of the present year, from all their principal sources, will exceed the anticipations of the last. The balance in the Treasury, on the first of January last was a little short of two millions of dollars, exclusive of two millions and a half, being the moiety of the loan of five millions, authorized by the act of the 26th May, 1824. The receipts into the Treasury from the first of January to the 13th of September, exclusive of the other moiety of the same loan, are estimated at sixteen millions five hundred thousand dollars; and it is expected that those of the current quarter will exceed five millions of dollars; forming an aggregate of receipts of nearly twenty-two millions, independent of the loan. The expenditures of the year will not exceed that sum more than two millions. By those expenditures, nearly eight millions of the principal of the public debt have been discharged. More than a million and a half has been devoted to the debt of gratitude to the warriors of the Revolution; a nearly equal sum to the construction of fortifications, and the acquisition of ordnance and other permanent preparations of national defence; half a million to the gradual increase of the Navy; an equal sum for purchases of Territory from the Indians, and payment of annuities to them; and upwards of a million for objects of Internal Improvement, authorized by special acts of the last Congress. If we add to these, four millions of dollars for payment of interest upon the public debt, there remains a sum of about seven millions, which have defrayed the whole expense of the Administration of Government, in its Legislative, Executive, and Judiciary Departments, including the support of the Military and naval Establishments and all the occasional contingencies of a Government co-extensive with the Union.

The amount of duties secured on merchandise imported, from the commencement of those

the year, is about twenty-five millions and a half; and that which will accrue during the current quarter, is estimated at five millions; deducting the drawbacks, estimated at less than seven millions, a sum exceeding twenty-four millions will constitute the revenue of the year; and will exceed the whole expenditures of the year. The entire amount of public debt remaining due on the first of January next, will be short of eighty-one million of dollars.

By an act of Congress of the third of March last, a loan of twelve millions of dollars was authorized at four and a half per cent, or an exchange of stock to that amount of four and a half per cent, for a stock of six per cent, to create a fund for extinguishing an equal amount of the public debt, bearing an interest of six per cent, redeemable in the year one thousand eight hundred and twenty-six. An account of the measures taken to give effect to this act will be laid before you by the secretary of the Treasury. As the object which it had in view has been but partially accomplished, it will be for the consideration of Congress, whether the power with which it clothed the Executive should not be renewed at an early day of the present session, and under what modifications.

The act of Congress of the third of March last directing the Secretary of the Treasury to subscribe, in the name and for the use of the U. S., 1500 shares of the capital stock of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal Company has been executed by the actual subscription for the amount specified; and such other measures have been adopted by that officer, under the act, as the fulfilment of its intentions requires. The latest accounts received of this important undertaking, authorize the belief that it is in successful progress.

The payments into the Treasury from proceeds of the sales of the Public Lands, during the present year were estimated at one million of dollars. The actual receipts of the two first quarters have fallen very little short of that sum: it is not expected that the second half of the year will be equally productive; but the income of the year from that source may now be safely estimated at a million and a half. The act of congress of 18th May, 1824, to provide for the extinguishment of the debt due to the United States, by the purchasers of public lands, was limited in its operation of relief to the purchaser, to the tenth of April last. Its effects at the end of the quarter during which it expired, was to reduce that debt from ten to seven millions. By the operation of similar prior laws of relief, from and since that of 2d March 1821, the debt had been reduced, from upwards of twenty-two millions, to ten. It is exceedingly desirable that it should be extinguished altogether; and to facilitate that consummation, I recommend to Congress the revival, for one year or more, of the act of 18 May, 1824 with such provisional modifications as may be necessary to guard the public interest against fraudulent practices in the resale of the relinquished land. The purchasers of the public lands are among the most useful of our fellow citizens; and since the system of sales for cash alone has been introduced, great indulgence has been justly extended to those who had previously purchased upon credit. The debt which had been contracted under the credit sales had become unwieldy, and its extinction was alike advantageous to the purchaser and the public. Under the system of sales, matured, as it has been, by experience, and adapted to the exigencies of the times, the lands will continue, as they have become, an abundant source of revenue; and when the pledge of them to the public creditor shall have been redeemed by the entire discharge of the national debt, the swelling tide of wealth with which they replenish the common Treasury may be made to reflow in unfailing streams of improvement from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean.

The condition of the various branches of the public service resorting from the Department of War, and their administration during the current year, will be exhibited in the Report from the Secretary of War, and the accompanying documents herewith communicated. The organization and discipline of the Army are effective and satisfactory. To counteract the prevalence of desertion among the troops, it has been suggested to withhold from the men a small portion of their monthly pay, until the period of their discharge; and some expedient appears to be necessary, to preserve and maintain among the officers so much of the act of horsemanship as could scarcely fail to be found wanting, on the possible sudden eruption of a war, which should overtake us unprovided with a single corps of cavalry. The Military Academy at West-Point, under the restrictions of a severe but paternal superintendance, recommends itself more and more to the patronage of the Nation; and the number of meritorious officers which it forms and introduces to the public service, furnishes the means of multiplying the undertakings of public improvements, to which their acquirements at that institution are peculiarly adapted. The school of Ar-