

MESSAGE OF THE
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
Delivered to both houses of congress, Dec. 2d, 1834.
Fellow-Citizens of the Senate and
House of Representatives:

In performing my duty at the opening of your present Session, it gives me pleasure to congratulate you again upon the prosperous condition of our beloved country. Divine Providence has favored us with general health, with rich rewards in the fields of agriculture, and in every branch of labor, and with peace to cultivate and extend the various resources which employ the virtue and enterprise of our citizens. Let us trust that, in surveying a scene so flattering to our free institutions, our joint deliberations to preserve them may be crowned with success.

Our Foreign Relations continue, with but few exceptions, to maintain the favorable aspect which they bore in my last annual Message, and promise to extend those advantages which the principles that regulate our intercourse with other nations are so well calculated to secure.

The question of the Northeastern Boundary is still pending with Great Britain, and the proposition made in accordance with the resolution of the Senate for the establishment of a line according to the treaty of 1783, has not been accepted by that Government. Believing that every disposition is felt on both sides to adjust this perplexing question to the satisfaction of all the parties interested in it, the hope is yet indulged that it may be effected on the basis of that proposition.

With the Governments of Austria, Russia, Prussia, Holland, Sweden, and Denmark, the best understanding exists. Commerce with all, is fostered and protected by reciprocal good will, under the sanction of liberal, conventional or legal provisions.

In the midst of her internal difficulties, the Queen of Spain has ratified the Convention for the payment of the claims of our citizens arising since 1819. It is in the course of execution on her part, and a copy of it is now laid before you for such legislation as may be found necessary to enable those interested to derive the benefits of it.

Yielding to the force of circumstances, and to the wise counsels of time and experience, that power has finally resolved no longer to occupy the unnatural position in which she stood to the new Governments established in this hemisphere. I have the great satisfaction of stating to you that in preparing the way for the restoration of harmony between those who have sprung from the same ancestors, who allied by common interests, profess the same religion, and speak the same language, the United States have been actively instrumental. Our efforts to effect this good work, will be persevered in while they are deemed useful to the parties, and our entire disinterestedness continues to be felt and understood. The act of Congress to counteract the discriminating duties levied to the prejudice of our navigation, in Cuba and Porto Rico, has been transmitted to the Minister of the United States at Madrid, to be communicated to the Government of the Queen. No intelligence of its receipt has yet reached the Department of State.

If the present condition of the country permits the Government to make a careful and enlarged examination of the true interests of these important portions of its dominions, no doubt is entertained that their future intercourse with the United States will be placed upon a more just and liberal basis.

The Argentine Republic, from which a minister was expected to this Government, nothing further has been heard. Occasion has been taken, on the departure of a new Consul to Buenos Ayres, to remind that Government, that its long delayed Minister, whose appointment had been made known to us, had not arrived.

It becomes my unpleasant duty to inform you that this peaceful and highly gratifying picture of our Foreign Relations, does not include those with France at this time. It is not possible that any Government and people could be more sincerely desirous of conciliating a just and friendly intercourse with another nation, than are those of the U. States with their ancient ally. This disposition is founded, as well on the most grateful and honourable recollections, associated with our struggle for independence, as upon well grounded conviction, that it is consonant with the true policy of both. The people of the United States could not therefore, see without the deepest regret, even a temporary interruption of the friendly relations between the two countries—a regret which would, I am sure, be greatly aggravated if there should turn out to be any reasonable ground for attributing such a result to any act of omission or commission on our part. I derive, therefore, the highest satisfaction from being able to assure you, that the whole course of this Government, has been characterized by a spirit so conciliatory and forbearing, as to make it impossible that our justice and moderation should be questioned, whatever may be the consequences of a longer perseverance, on the part of the French Government, in her omission to satisfy the conceded claims of our citizens.

The history of the accumulated and unprovoked aggressions upon our Commerce, committed by authority of the existing Government of France between the years 1800 and 1817, has been rendered too painfully familiar to Americans, to make its repetition either necessary or desirable. It will suffice here to remark, that there has for many years been scarcely a single administration of the French Government by whom the justice and legality of the claims of our citizens to indemnity, were not to a very considerable extent, admitted; and yet near a quarter of a century has been wasted in ineffectual negotiations to secure it.

The Treaty of Amity and Commerce between the United States and Belgium, brought to your notice in my last annual message, as sanctioned by the Senate, but the ratifications of which had not been exchanged, owing to a delay in its reception at Brussels, and a subsequent absence of the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, has been, after mature deliberation, finally disavowed by that Government, as inconsistent with the powers and instructions given to their Minister who negotiated it. This disavowal was entirely unexpected, as the liberal principles embodied in the convention, and which form the ground-work of the objections to it, were perfectly satisfactory to the Belgian representative, and were supposed to be not only within the powers granted, but expressly conformable to the instructions given to him. An offer, not yet accepted, has been made by Belgium, to renew negotiations for a treaty less liberal in its provisions, on questions of general maritime law.

Our newly established relations with the Sublime Porte promise to be useful to our commerce, and satisfactory in every respect to this Government. Our intercourse with the Barbary Powers, continues without important change, except that the present political state of Algiers has induced me to terminate the residence there of a salaried consul, and to substitute an ordinary consulate, to remain so long as the place continues in the possession of France. Our first treaty with one of the powers of the Emperor of Morocco—was formed in 1786, and was limited to fifty years. That period has almost expired. I shall take measures to renew it with the greater satisfaction, as its stipulations are just and liberal, and have been, with mutual fidelity and reciprocal advantage, scrupulously fulfilled.

Intestine dissensions have too frequently occurred to mar the prosperity, interrupt the commerce, and distract the Governments of most of the nations of this hemisphere, which have separated themselves from Spain. When a firm and permanent understanding with the parent country, shall have produced a formal acknowledgment of their independence, and the idea of danger from that quarter can no longer entertain, the friends of freedom expect that those countries, so favored by nature, will be distinguished for their love of justice and their devotion to those peaceful arts, the assiduous cultivation of which confers honour upon

nations and gives value to human life. In the mean time I confidently hope, that the apprehensions entertained, that some of the people of these luxuriant regions may be tempted, in a moment of unworthy distrust of their own capacity for the enjoyment of liberty, to commit the common error of purchasing present repose by bestowing on some favorite leader the fatal gift of irresponsible power—will not be realized. With all these Governments, and with that of Brazil, no unexpected changes in our relations have occurred during the present year. Frequent causes of just complaint have arisen upon the part of the citizens of the U. States, sometimes from the irregular action of the constituted subordinate authorities of the maritime regions, and sometimes from the leaders or partisans of those in arms against the established Governments. In all cases, representations have been, or will be made, and as soon as their political affairs are in a settled position, it is expected that our friendly remonstrances will be followed by adequate redress.

The Government of Mexico made known in December last the appointment of Commissioners and a Surveyor, on its part, to run in conjunction with ours, the boundary line between its territories and the United States, and excused the delay for the reasons anticipated—the prevalence of civil war. The Commissioners and Surveyors not having met within the time stipulated by the treaty, a new arrangement became necessary and our Charge d'Affairs was instructed, in January last, to negotiate in Mexico an article additional to the pre-existing treaty.—This instruction was acknowledged, and no difficulty was apprehended in the accomplishment of that object. By information just received that additional article to the treaty will be obtained and transmitted to this country, as soon as it can receive the ratification of the Mexican Congress.

The re-union of three States of New Granada, Venezuela and Ecuador, forming the Republic of Colombia, seems every day to become more improbable. The Commissioners of the two first are understood to be now negotiating a just division of the obligations contracted by them when united under one Government. The civil war in Ecuador is believed, has prevented even the appointment of a Commissioner on its part.

I propose, at an early period, to submit in the proper form, the appointment of a diplomatic agent to Venezuela. The importance of the commerce of that country to the United States, and the large claims of our citizens upon the Government, arising before and since the division of Colombia, rendering it, in my opinion, improper longer to delay this step.

Our representatives to Central America, Peru, and Brazil, are either at, or on their way to, their respective posts.

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