

# The Annapolis Gazette.

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Tuesday, December 8, 1829.

This day, at 12 o'clock, the President of the United States communicated to both Houses of Congress the following

## MESSAGE.

John C. Calhoun, Vice President of the United States, and House of Representatives.

It affords me pleasure to render my friendly greetings to you on the occasion of your assembling at the House of Representatives to enter upon the important duties to which you have been called by the voice of your countrymen. The task devolves on me, under a provision of the Constitution, to present to you, as the legislative body of twenty-four sovereign States, the views of the President of the United States, in the discharge of his official functions, and to suggest the measures as necessary to promote the objects of our policy.

In communicating with you for the first time, it is, I trust, a source of unfeigned satisfaction, calling for mutual gratulation and devout thanks to a benign Providence, that we are at peace with all mankind, and that our country exhibits the most cheering evidence of general welfare and progressive improvement. Turning our eyes to other nations, our great care is to see our brethren of the human race secure in the blessings enjoyed by ourselves, and advancing in knowledge, in freedom, and in social happiness.

Our foreign relations, although in their general character peaceful and friendly, present subjects of difference between us and other powers, of deep interest, as well to the country at large as to many of our citizens. To effect an adjustment of these shall continue to be the object of my earnest endeavours, notwithstanding the difficulties of the task. I do not allow myself to apprehend unfavorable results. As our country is with every thing which constitutes national strength, she is fully adequate to the maintenance of all her interests. In discharging the responsible trust confided to the Executive in this respect, it is my settled purpose to ask nothing that is clearly right, and to submit to nothing that is manifestly just. I flatter myself, that supported by the intelligence and patriotism of the people, we shall be able, under the protection of Providence, to cause all our rights to be respected.

Of the unsettled matters between the United States and other powers, the most prominent are those which have, for years, been the subject of negotiation with England, France and Spain. The late periods at which our Ministers to those Governments left the United States, render it impossible, at this early day, to inform you more respectively cleared. Relying upon the justice of our views in relation to the points committed to negotiation, and the reciprocal good feeling which characterizes our intercourse with those nations, we have the best reason to hope for a satisfactory adjustment of existing differences.

With Great Britain, alike distinguished in peace and war, we may look forward to years of peaceful, amicable, and elevated co-operation. Every thing in the condition and history of the two nations, is calculated to inspire sentiments of mutual respect, and to carry conviction to the minds of both that it is their policy to preserve the most cordial relations, such as our own views, and it is not to be doubted that such are also the prevailing sentiments of our citizens. Although neither time nor opportunity has been afforded for a full development of the subject, which the present cabinet of Great Britain designs to pursue towards this country, I indulge the hope that it will be of a just and pacific character, and that the anticipation realized, we may look with confidence to a speedy and acceptable adjustment of our rights.

territorial limits, extensive population, and great power, high in the rank of nations, the United States have always found a steadfast friend. Although her recent invasion of Turkey awakened a lively sympathy for those who were exposed to the desolations of war, we cannot but anticipate that the result will prove favourable to the cause of civilization, and to the progress of human happiness. The treaty of peace between these powers having been ratified, we cannot be insensible to the great benefit to be derived to the commerce of the United States, from unlocking the navigation of the Black Sea—a free passage into which is secured to all merchant vessels bound to ports of Russia under a flag at peace with the Porte. This advantage, enjoyed upon conditions, by most of the Powers of Europe, has hitherto been withheld from us. During the past summer an antecedent, but unsuccessful attempt to obtain it, was renewed, under circumstances which promised the most favourable results. Although these results have fortunately been thus in part attained, further facilities to the enjoyment of this new field for the enterprise of our citizens, in my opinion, sufficiently desirable to ensure to them our most zealous attention.

Our trade with Austria, although of secondary importance, has been gradually increasing, and is now so extended, as to deserve the fostering care of the Government. A negotiation, commenced and nearly completed with that power, by the late administration, has been consummated by a treaty of amity, navigation, and commerce, which will be laid before the Senate.

During the recess of Congress, our diplomatic relations with Portugal have been resumed. The peculiar state of things in that country caused a suspension of the recognition of the Representative who presented himself, until an opportunity was had to obtain from our official organs there, information regarding the actual, and, as far as practicable, prospective condition of the authority by which the representative in question was appointed. This information being received, the application of the established rule of our Government, in like cases, was no longer withheld.

Considerable advances have been made, during the present year, in the adjustment of our claims against the Southern Republics of our own hemisphere, but all that we have a right to demand from that Government in their behalf, has not yet been conceded. From the liberal feeling, however, upon which this subject has, with the approbation of the claimants, been placed by the Government, together with the uniformly just and friendly disposition which has been evinced by His Majesty, there is a reasonable ground to hope that this single subject of difference will speedily be removed.

Our relations with the Barbary Powers continue, as they have long been, of the most favourable character. The policy of keeping an adequate force in the Mediterranean, as security for the continuance of this tranquillity, will be persevered in, as well as a similar one for the protection of our commerce and fisheries in the Pacific.

The Southern Republics of our own hemisphere, have not yet realized all the advantages for which they have been so long struggling. We trust, however, that the day is not distant, when the restoration of peace and internal quiet, under permanent systems of government, securing the liberty and promoting the happiness of the citizen, will crown with complete success, their long and arduous efforts in their behalf, and enable us to salute them as friendly rivals in all that is truly great and glorious.

The recent invasion of Mexico, and the effect thereby produced upon her domestic policy, must have a controlling influence upon the great question of South American emancipation. We have seen the fell spirit of civil dissension raked, and perhaps, fanned to a fiercer flame, by the love of independence. If it be true, as appearances strongly indicate, that the spirit of independence is the master spirit, and that a corresponding sentiment prevails in the other States, this devotion to liberty cannot be without a proper effect upon the councils of the Southern Republics. The adoption, by Spain, of a policy towards her former colonies, and event consequent to humanity, and a blessing to the world, in which she herself cannot fail largely to participate—may be most reasonably expected.

The claims of our citizens upon the South American Governments, generally, are in a train of settlement, while the principal part of those upon Brazil have been adjusted, and a Decree in Council of the Treasury for the amount, has received the sanction of His Imperial Majesty. This event, together with the exchange of the ratifications of the Treaty negotiated and concluded in 1828, happily terminates all serious causes of difference with that power.

Measures have been taken to place our commercial relations with Peru upon a better footing than that upon which they have hitherto rested, and if met by a proper disposition on the part of that Government, important benefits may be secured to both countries. Deeply interested as we are in the prosperity of our sister Republics, and more particularly in that of our immediate neighbour, it would be most gratifying to me, were I permitted to say that the treatment which we have received at her hands has been as universally friendly as the early and constant solicitude manifested by the United States for her success, gave us a right to expect. But it becomes my duty to inform you that prejudices, long indulged by a portion of the inhabitants of Mexico against the Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States, have had an unfortunate influence upon the affairs of the two countries, and have diminished that usefulness to his own which was justly to be expected from his talents and zeal. To this cause, in a great degree, is to be imputed the failure of several measures equally interesting to both parties, but particularly of the Mexican Government to ratify a treaty negotiated and concluded in its own capital and under its own eye. Under these circumstances, it appeared expedient to give to Mr. Poinsett the option either to return or not, as, in his judgment, the interest of his country might require, and instructions to that end were prepared; but before they could be despatched, a communication was received from the Government of Mexico, through its Charge d'Affaires, requesting the recall of our Minister. This was, however, requested with a representative of a probably corresponding with that of the Mexican Diplomatic agent near this Government was appointed. Our conduct towards that Republic has been uniformly of the most friendly character, and having thus removed the only alleged obstacle to harmonious intercourse, I cannot but hope that an advantageous change will occur in our affairs.

I consider it one of the most urgent of my duties to bring to your attention the propriety of amending that part of our Constitution which relates to the election of President and Vice President. Our system of government was, by its framers, deemed an experiment, and they therefore, consistently provided a mode of remedying its defects.

To the People belongs the right of electing their Chief Magistrate; it was never designed that their choice should, in any case, be defeated, either by the intervention of electoral colleges, or by the agency confided, under certain contingencies, to the House of Representatives. Experience proves, that in proportion as agents to execute the will of the people are multiplied, there is danger of their wishes being frustrated. Some may be unfaithful; all are liable to error. So far, therefore, as the people can, with convenience, speak, it is safer for them to express their own will.

The number of aspirants to the Presidency, and the diversity of the interests which may influence their claims, leave little reason to expect a choice in the first instance, and in that event, the election must devolve on the House of Representatives, where, it is obvious, the will of the people may not be always ascertained, or, if ascertained, may not be regarded. From the mode of voting by States, the choice is to be made by twenty-four votes, and it may often occur, that one of these may be controlled by an individual representative. Honours and offices are at the disposal of the successful candidate. Repeated lotteries may make it appear that a single individual holds the cast in his hand. May he not be tempted to name his reward? But even without corruption—supposing the probity of the representative to be proof against the powerful motives by which he may be assailed—the will of the people is still constantly liable to be misrepresented. One may err from ignorance of the wishes of his constituents; another from a conviction that it is his duty to be governed by his own judgment of the fitness of the candidates; finally, although all were inflexibly honest, all accurately informed of the wishes of their constituents—yet, under the present mode of election, a minority may often elect the President, and when this happens, it may reasonably be expected that efforts will be made on the part of the majority, to rectify this injurious operation of their institutions. But although none of this character should result from such a provision of the first principle of our system—that the majority is to govern—it must be very certain that a President elected by a minority, cannot enjoy the confidence necessary to the successful discharge of his duties.

In this, as in all other matters of public concern, policy requires that as few impediments as possible should exist to the free operation of the public will. Let us, then, endeavour to amend our system as the office of Chief Magistrate may not be conferred upon any citizen but in pursuance of a fair expression of the will of the majority.

I would therefore recommend such an amendment of the Constitution as may remove all intermediate agency in the election of President and Vice President. The mode may be so regulated as to preserve to each State its present relative weight in the election; and a failure in the first attempt, may be provided for, by confining the second to a choice between the two highest candidates. In connexion with such an amendment, it would seem advisable to limit the service of the Chief Magistrate to a single term, of either four or six years. If, however, it should not be adopted, it is worthy of serious consideration whether a provision disqualifying for office the Representatives in Congress of whom such an election may have devolved, would not be proper.

While members of Congress can be constitutionally appointed to offices of trust and profit, it will be the practice, even under the most conscientious adherence to duty, to select them for such stations as they are believed to be better qualified to fill than other citizens; but the purity of our Government would doubtless be promoted by their exclusion from all appointments which they may have been officially concerned. The nature of the judicial office, and the necessity of securing to the highest rank, the best talents and political experience, should, perhaps, except these from the exclusion.

There are perhaps few men who can for any great length of time enjoy office and power, without being more or less under the influence of feelings unfavourable to a faithful discharge of their public duties. Their integrity may be proof against improper considerations, immediately addressed to themselves, but they are apt to acquire a habit of looking with indifference upon the public interest, and of tolerating conduct from which an unpractised man would revolt. Office is considered as a species of property, and Government, rather than a means of promoting individual interests, than as an instrument created solely for the service of the People. Corruption in some, and, in others, a perversion of correct feelings and principles, divert Government from its legitimate ends, and make it an engine for the support of the few at the expense of the many. The duties of all public officers are, or, at least, admit of being made, so plain and simple, that men of intelligence may readily qualify themselves for their performance, and I cannot but believe that more is lost by the long continuance of men in office, than is generally to be gained by their experience. I submit, therefore, to your consideration, whether the efficiency of the Government would not be promoted, and official industry and integrity better secured, by a general extension of the law which limits appointments to four years.

In a country where offices are created solely for the benefit of the People, no one man has any more intrinsic right to official station than another. Offices were established to give support to particular men at the public expense. No individual wrong is therefore done by removal, since neither appointment to, nor continuance in, office, is matter of right. The incumbent became an officer with a view to public benefits, and when these require his removal, they are not to be sacrificed to private interests. It is the People, and they alone, who have a right to complain, when an officer is

substituted for a good one. He who is removed has the same means of obtaining a living that are enjoyed by the millions who never held office. The proposed limitation would destroy the idea of property now so generally connected with official station, and although individual distress may be sometimes produced, it would, by promoting that rotation which constitutes a leading principle in the republican creed, give healthful action to the system.

No very considerable change has occurred, during the recess of Congress, in the condition of either our Agriculture, Commerce, or Manufactures. The operation of the Tariff has not proved so injurious to the two former, nor as beneficial to the latter, as was anticipated. Importations of foreign goods have not been sensibly diminished; while domestic competition, under an illusive excitement, has increased the production much beyond the demand for home consumption. The consequences have been low prices, temporary embarrassment, and partial loss. That such of our manufacturing establishments as are based upon capital, and are prudently managed, will survive the shock, and be ultimately profitable, there is no good reason to doubt.

To regulate its conduct, so as to promote equally the propriety of these three cardinal interests, is one of the most difficult tasks of Government; and it may be regretted that the complicated restrictions which now embarrass the intercourse of nations, could not by common consent be abolished, and commerce allowed to flow to those channels to which individual enterprise—always its great guide—might direct it. But we must ever expect selfish legislation in other nations, and are therefore compelled to adapt our own to their regulations, in the manner best calculated to avoid serious injury, and to harmonize the conflicting interests of our agriculture, our commerce, and our manufactures. Under these impressions, I invite your attention to the existing Tariff, believing that some of its provisions require modification.

The general rule to be applied in graduating the duties upon articles of foreign growth or manufacture, is that which will place our own in fair competition with those of other countries; and the inducements to advance even a step beyond this point, are controlling in regard to those articles which are of primary necessity in time of war. When we reflect upon the difficulty and delicacy of this operation, it is important that it should never be attempted but with the utmost caution. Frequent legislation in regard to any branch of industry, affecting its value, and by which its capital may be transferred to new channels, must always be productive of hazardous speculation and loss.

In deliberating, therefore, on these interesting subjects, local feelings and prejudices should be merged in the patriotic determination to promote the great interests of the whole. All attempts to connect them with the party conflicts of the day, are necessarily injurious, and should be discontinued. Our action upon them should be under the control of higher and purer motives. Legislation, suggested to such influences, can never be just, and will not long retain the sanction of a People, whose active patriotism is not bounded by sectional views, but responsive to that spirit of concession and forbearance, which gave life to our political compact, and will sustain it. Discarding all calculations of political expediency, the North, the South, the East, and the West, should unite in diminishing any burthen, of which either may justly complain.

The agricultural interest of our country is so essentially connected with every other, and so superior in importance to them all, that it is scarcely necessary to invite it to your particular attention. It is principally as manufactures and commerce tend to increase the value of agricultural productions, and to extend their application to the wants and comforts of society, that they deserve the fostering care of Government. Looking forward to the period, not far distant, when a sinking fund will no longer be required, the duties on those articles of importation which cannot come in competition with our own productions, are the first that should engage the attention of Congress in the modification of the tariff. Of these, tea and coffee are the most prominent; they enter largely into the consumption of the country, and have become articles of necessity to all classes. A reduction, therefore of the existing duties, will be felt as a common benefit; but, like all other legislation connected with commerce, to be efficacious, and not injurious, it should be gradual and certain.

The public prosperity is evinced in the increased revenue arising from the sales of the public lands, and in the steady maintenance of that produced by imposts and tonnage, notwithstanding the additional duties imposed by the act of 19th May, 1828, and the unusual importations in the early part of that year. The balance in the Treasury on the 1st of January, 1829, was five millions nine hundred and seventy two thousand four hundred and thirty-five dollars and eighty one cents. The receipts of the current year are estimated at twenty four millions, six hundred and two thousand, two hundred and thirty dollars; and the expenditures for the same time at twenty-six millions one hundred and sixty-four thousand five hundred and ninety six dollars, leaving a balance in the Treasury on the 1st of January next, of four millions four hundred and ten thousand and seventy dollars, and eighty one cents.

There will have been paid, on account of the public debt, during the present year, the sum of twelve millions four hundred and five thousand and five dollars and fifty cents; reducing

the whole debt of the Government, on the first of January next, to forty eight millions five hundred and sixty five thousand four hundred and six dollars and fifty cents, including seven millions of five per cent. stock, subscribed to the Bank of the United States. The payment on account of the public debt, made on the first of July last, was eight millions seven hundred and fifteen thousand four hundred and sixty two dollars and eighty seven cents. It was apprehended that the sudden withdrawal of so large a sum from the banks in which it was deposited, at a time of unusual pressure in the money market, might cause much injury to the interests dependent on bank accommodations. But this evil was wholly averted by an early anticipation of it at the Treasury, aided by the judicious arrangements of the officers of the Bank of the United States.

This state of the finances exhibits the resources of the nation in an aspect highly flattering to its industry, and auspicious of the ability of Government, in a very short time, to extinguish the public debt. When this shall be done, our population will be relieved from a considerable portion of its present burthen, and will find, not only new motives to patriotic affection, but additional means for the display of individual enterprise. The fiscal power of the States will also be increased, and may be more extensively exercised in favour of education and other public objects, while ample means will remain in the Federal Government to promote the general weal, in all the modes permitted to its authority.

After the extinction of the public debt, it is not probable that any adjustment of the tariff, upon principles satisfactory to the People of the Union, will, until a remote period, if ever, leave the Government without a considerable surplus in the Treasury, beyond what may be required for its present service. As then the period approaches, when the application of the revenue to the payment of debt will cease, the disposition of the surplus will present a subject for the serious deliberation of Congress; and it may be fortunate for the country that it is yet to be decided. Considered in connexion with the difficulties which have heretofore attended appropriations for purposes of internal improvement, and with those which this experience tells us will certainly arise, whenever power over such subjects may be exercised by the General Government, it is hoped that it may lead to the adoption of some plan which will reconcile the diversified interests of the States, and strengthen the bonds which unite them. Every member of the Union, in peace and in war, will be benefited by the improvement of inland navigation and the construction of highways in the several States. Let us then endeavour to attain the benefit in a mode which will be satisfactory to all. That higher adaptations, by many of our fellow citizens, have been deprecated as an infraction of the Constitution, while by others it has been viewed as an impediment. All feel that it has been employed at the expense of harmony in the legislative councils.

To avoid these evils, it appears to me that the most safe, just, and federal disposition which could be made of the surplus revenue, would be its apportionment among the several States according to their ratio of representation, and should this measure not be found warranted by the Constitution, that it would be expedient to propose to the States an amendment authorizing it. I regard an appeal to the source of power, in cases of real doubt, and where its exercise is deemed indispensable to the general welfare, as among the most sacred of all our obligations. Upon this country more than any other, has, in the providence of God, been bestowed the special guardianship of the great principle of adherence to written constitutions. If it fail here all hope is regard to it will be extinguished. That this was intended to be a Government of limited and specific, and not general powers, must be admitted by all; and it is our duty to preserve for it the character intended by its framers. If experience points out the necessity for an enlargement of these powers, let us apply for it to those for whose benefit it is to be exercised; and not undermine the whole system by a resort to overstrained constructions. The scheme has worked well. It has exceeded the hopes of those who devised it, and become an object of admiration to the world. We are responsible to our country, and to the glorious cause of our government, for the preservation of so great a good.

The great mass of legislation relating to our internal affairs, was intended to be left with the Federal Convention found it in the States Governments. Nothing is clearer, in my view, than that we are chiefly indebted for the success of the Constitution under which we are now acting, to the watchful and auxiliary operations of the State authorities. This is not the reflection of a day, but belongs to the most deeply rooted convictions of my mind. I do not, therefore, too strongly or too earnestly, feel my own sense of its importance, were you to gain any encroachments upon the legitimate sphere of State sovereignty. Sustained by a healthful and invigorating influence, the Federal system can never fail.

In the collection of the revenue, the long credits authorized on goods imported from beyond the Cape of Good Hope are the chief cause of the losses at present sustained. If these were shortened to six, eight, and twelve months, and warehouses provided by Government, sufficient to receive the goods on deposit for security and for debtors; and if the right of the United States to a priority of payment out of the residue of its insolvent debtors were more effectually secured, this evil would, in a great measure, be obviated. An

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