

Fellow Citizens of the Senate and  
House of Representatives.

Many important subjects will claim your attention, during the present Session, of which I shall endeavour to give, in aid of your deliberations, a just idea in this communication. I undertake this duty with diffidence, from the vast extent of the interests on which I have to treat, and of their great importance to every portion of our Union. I enter on it with zeal, from a thorough Conviction, that there never was a period, since the establishment of our Revolution, when, regarding the condition of the civilized world, and its bearing on us there was greater necessity for devotion in the public servants, to their respective duties, or for virtue, patriotism, and union, in our Constituents.

Meeting in you a new Congress, I deem it proper to present this view of public affairs in greater detail than might otherwise be necessary. I do it however with peculiar Satisfaction from a Knowledge that in this respect, I shall comply more fully with the sound principles of our Government. The People being with us exclusively the Sovereign, it is indispensable that full information be laid before them on all important subjects

To enable them to exercise that high power  
 with complete effect. If kept in the dark,  
 they must be incompetent to it. We are all  
 liable to error, and those who are engaged  
 in the management of public affairs, are  
 more subject to excitement, and to be led  
 astray by their particular interests and  
 passions than the great body of our Conste-  
 tuents who living at home, in the pursuit  
 of their ordinary avocations, are calm, but  
 deeply interested Spectators of events, and of  
 the conduct of those who are parties to them.  
 To the People every Department of the Gov-  
 ernment, and every individual in each,  
 are responsible, and the more full their  
 information, the better they can judge of  
 the wisdom of the policy pursued, and of  
 the conduct of each in regard to it. From  
 their dispassionate judgement, much aid  
 may always be obtained, while their ap-  
 probation will form the greatest incentive  
 and most gratifying reward for virtuous  
 actions, and the dread of their censure, the  
 best security against the abuse of their con-  
 fidence. Their interests in all vital ques-  
 tions are the same, and the bond by senti-  
 ment as well as by interest, will be pro-  
 portionably strengthened, as they are better  
 informed of the real state of public af-  
 fairs, especially in difficult conjunctures.  
 It is by such knowledge that local pre-  
 judices and jealousies are surmounted,  
 and

and that a National Policy extending its fostering care and protection to all the great interests of our Union, is formed and steadily adhered to.

A precise knowledge of our relations with Foreign Powers, as respects our negotiations and transactions with each, is thought to be particularly necessary. Equally necessary is it, that we should form a just estimate of our resources, revenue and progress in every kind of improvement connected with the National prosperity and public defence. It is by rendering justice to other Nations, that we may expect it from them. It is by our ability to resent injuries, and redress wrongs, that we may avoid them.

The Commissioners under the 5<sup>th</sup> Article of the Treaty of Ghent, having disagreed in their opinions respecting that portion of the Boundary between the Territories of the United States and Great Britain, the establishment of which had been submitted to them, have made their respective reports, in compliance with that Article, that the same might be referred to the decision of a friendly Power. It being manifest however that it would be difficult, if not impossible, for any Power to perform that office, without great delay, and much inconvenience to itself, a proposal has  
been

been made by this Government, and acceded to by that of Great Britain, to endeavour to establish that Boundary by amicable negotiation. It appearing from long experience that no satisfactory arrangement could be formed of the Commercial Inter-course between the United States & the British Colonies in this Hemisphere by Legislative acts, while each party pursued its own course, without agreement or concert with the other, a proposal has been made to the British Government to regulate this Commerce by treaty, as it has been to arrange in like manner the just claim of the Citizens of the United States inhabiting the States and Territories bordering on the Lakes and Rivers which empty into the St. Lawrence, to the navigation of that river to the Ocean. For these and other objects of high importance to the interests of both parties, a negotiation has been opened with the British Government, which, it is hoped will have a satisfactory result.

The Commissioners under the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> articles of the Treaty of Ghent having successfully closed their labors in relation to the 6<sup>th</sup> have proceeded to the discharge of those relating to the 7<sup>th</sup>. Their progress in the extensive survey, required for the performance of their duties, justifies the presumption that it will be completed in the ensuing year.

The negotiation which had been  
long

long depending with the French Government on several important subjects, and particularly for a just indemnity for losses sustained in the late Wars, by the Citizens of the United States, under unjustifiable seizures and confiscations of their property, has not as yet, had the desired effect. As this claim rests on the same principle with others which have been admitted by the French Government, it is not perceived on what just ground it can be rejected. A Minister will be immediately appointed to proceed to France and resume the negotiation on this and other subjects which may arise between the two Nations.

At the proposal of the Russian Imperial Government, made through the Minister of the Emperor, residing here, a full power and instructions have been transmitted to the Minister of the United States at St. Petersburg, to arrange by amicable negotiation, the respective rights and interests of the two Nations on the North West Coast of this Continent. A similar proposal had been made by His Imperial Majesty, to the Government of Great Britain, which has likewise been acceded to. The Government of the United States has been desirous by this friendly proceeding, of manifesting the great value which they have invariably attached to the friendship of the Emperor, and their solicitude to cultivate the best understanding with his Government

Government. In the discussions to which this interest has given rise, and in the arrangements by which they may terminate, the occasion has been judged proper, for asserting as a principle in which the rights and interests of the United States are involved, that the American Continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European Power.

Since the close of the last Session of Congress, the Commissioners and Arbitrators for ascertaining and determining the amount of indemnification which may be due to Citizens of the United States under the decision of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Russia, in conformity to the Convention concluded at St. Petersburg on the 12<sup>th</sup> of July 1822, have assembled in this City, and organized themselves as a Board for the performance of the duties assigned to them by that Treaty. The Commission constituted under the 11<sup>th</sup> Article of the Treaty of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February 1819 between the United States and Spain, is also in session here; and, as the term of three years limited by the Treaty, for the execution of the trust, will expire before the period of the next regular meeting of Congress, the attention of the Legislature will

will be drawn to the measures which may be necessary to accomplish the objects for which the Commission was instituted.

In compliance with a Resolution of the House of Representatives, adopted at their last session, instructions have been given to all the Ministers of the United States accredited to the Powers of Europe and America, to propose the proscription of the African Slave Trade, by claping it under the denomination, and inflicting on its Perpetrators the punishment of Piracy. Should this proposal be acceded to, it is not doubted, that this odious and criminal practice will be promptly and entirely suppressed. It is earnestly hoped that it will be acceded to from a firm belief, that it is the most effectual expedient that can be adopted for the purpose.

At the commencement of the recent War between France and Spain, it was declared by the French Government, that it would grant no Commissions to Privateers, and that neither the Commerce of Spain herself, nor of Neutral Nations should be molested by the Naval force of France, except in the breach of a lawful blockade. This declaration which  
appears

appears to have been faithfully carried into effect, concurring with principles proclaimed and cherished by the United States from the first establishment of their Independence, suggested the hope, that the time had arrived, when the proposal for adopting it as a permanent and invariable <sup>rule</sup> in all future Maritime Wars, might meet the favorable consideration of the great European Powers. Instructions have accordingly been given to our Ministers with France, Russia, and Great Britain to make those proposals to their respective Governments; and, when the friends of humanity reflect on the essential amelioration to the condition of the human race, which would result from the abolition of private war on the sea, and on the great facility by which it might be accomplished, requiring only the consent of a few Sovereigns, an earnest hope is indulged, that these overtures will meet with an attention animated by the spirit in which they were made, and that they will ultimately be successful.

The Ministers who were appointed to the Republics of Columbia and Buenos Ayres during the last Session of Congress proceeded shortly afterwards to their destinations. Of their arrival there official intelligence has not yet



yet been received. The Minister appointed to the Republic of Chili, will sail in a few days. An early appointment will also be made to Mexico. A Minister has been received from Columbia, and, the other Governments have been informed, that Ministers or Diplomatic Agents of inferior grade, would be received from each, accordingly as they might prefer, the one or the other.

The Minister appointed to Spain, proceeded soon after his appointment, for Cadix, the residence of the Sovereign to whom he was accredited. In approaching that Port, the Frigate which conveyed him, was warned off by the Commander of the French Squadron, by which it was blockaded, and not permitted to enter, although apprised by the Captain of the Frigate, of the public character of the person whom he had on-board, the landing of whom was the sole object of his proposed entry. This act being considered an infringement of the rights of Ambassadors, and of Nations, will form a just cause of complaint to the Government of France, against the Officer by whom it was commited.

The actual condition of the public finances, more than realizes the favorable anticipations that were entertained  
of

of it, at the opening of the last Session of Congress. On the first of January there was a balance in the Treasury of \$4,237,427-55. From that time to the 30<sup>th</sup> September the receipts amounted to upwards of \$16,100,000- and the expenditures to \$11,400,000- During the fourth Quarter of the year, it is estimated that the receipts will, at least, equal the expenditures and that there will remain in the Treasury on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of January next a surplus of nearly \$9,000,000- —

On the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1825 a large amount of the War Debt and a part of the Revolutionary Debt, becomes redeemable. Additional portions of the former, will continue to become redeemable, annually, until the year 1835. It is believed however that if the United States remain at peace, the whole of that Debt may be redeemed by the ordinary revenue of those years during that period, under the provision of the Act of March 3<sup>rd</sup> 1817 creating the Sinking Fund, and in that case, the only part of the Debt that will remain after the year 1835 will be the \$7,000,000 of 5 p<sup>ct</sup> Stock subscribed to the Bank of the United States, and the 3 p<sup>ct</sup> Revolutionary Debt amounting to \$13,296,099-06- both of which are redeemable at the pleasure of the Government.

The State of the Army in its organization  
and

and discipline, has been gradually improving for several years, and has now attained a high degree of perfection. The Military Disbursements have been regularly made and the Accounts regularly and promptly rendered for settlement. The supplies of various descriptions, have been of good quality, and regularly issued at all of the Posts. A system of economy and accountability has been introduced into every branch of the Service which admits of little additional improvement. This desirable state has been attained by the Act reorganizing the Staff of the Army passed on the 14<sup>th</sup> of April 1818.

The monies appropriated for Fortifications have been regularly and economically applied, and all the Works advanced as rapidly, as the amount appropriated, would admit. Three important works will be completed in the course of this year that is, Fort Washington, Fort Delaware and the Fort at the Rigolets in Louisiana.

The Board of Engineers, and the Topographical Corps, have been in constant and active service in surveying the Coast

Coast, and projecting the Works necessary for its defence.

The Military Academy has attained a degree of perfection in its discipline and instruction equal, as is believed, to any Institution of its kind, in any Country.

The money appropriated for the use of the Ordnance Department has been regularly and economically applied. The fabrication of Arms at the National Armories, and by Contract with the Department, has been gradually improving in quality and cheapness. It is believed that their quality is now such as to admit of but little improvement.

The completion of the Fortifications renders it necessary that there should be a suitable appropriation for the purpose of fabricating the Cannon and Carriages necessary for those Works.

Under the appropriation of \$5000 for exploring the Western Waters for the location of a site for a Western Armory, a Commission was instituted, consisting of Colonel McKee, Colonel Lee and Captain Tallcott, who have been engaged in exploring the Country. They have not yet reported the result of their labors, but it is believed that they will be prepared to do it, at

an early part of the Session of Congress.

During the month of June last. General Ashley and his party, who were trading under a License from the Government, were attacked by the Ricarees, while peaceably trading with the Indians, at their request. Several of the party were killed & wounded and their property taken or destroyed.

Colonel Leavenworth, who commanded Fort Atkinson at the Council Bluffs, the most Western Post. apprehending that the hostile spirit of the Ricarees, would extend to other Tribes in that Quarter, and that thereby the lives of the Traders on the Chipouire, and the peace of the Frontier would be endangered, took immediate measures to check the evil.

With a Detachment of the Regiment stationed at the Bluffs, he successfully attacked the Ricaree Village, and it is hoped that such an impression has been made on them as well as on the other Tribes on the Chipouire, as will prevent a recurrence of future hostility.

The Report of the Secretary of War, which is herewith transmitted, will exhibit in greater detail, the conduct of the Department in its various branches, and the progress which has been made in its administration during the three first Quarters of the year.

I transmit a Return of the Militia of the several States, according to the last Reports which have been made by the proper Officers in each, to the Department of War. By reference to this Return, it will be seen that it is not complete, although great exertions have been made to make it so. As the defence and even the Liberties of the Country, must depend, in times of imminent danger, on the Militia, it is of the highest importance, that it be well organized, armed, and disciplined throughout the Union. The Report of the Secretary of War shews the progress made, during the three first Quarters of the present year by the application of the fund appropriated for arming the Militia. Much difficulty is found in distributing the arms, according to the Act of Congress providing for it, from the failure of the proper Departments in many of the States, to make regular Returns. The Act of May 12<sup>th</sup> 1820 provides that the system of Tactics and Regulations of the various Corps of the Regular Army shall be extended to the Militia. This Act has been very imperfectly executed, from the want of uniformity in the organization of the Militia proceeding from the defects of the system itself and especially in its application to that main arm

arm of the public defence. It is thought that this important subject in all its branches, merits the attention of Congress.

The Report of the Secretary of the Navy which is now communicated, furnishes an account of the administration of that Department for the 3 first Quarters of the present year, with the progress made in augmenting the Navy, and the manner in which the Vessels in Commission have been employed.

The usual Force has been maintained in the Mediterranean Sea, the Pacific Ocean, and along the Atlantic Coast, & has afforded the necessary protection to our Commerce in those Seas. In the West Indies and the Gulph of Mexico, our Naval Force has been augmented by the addition of several small Vessels provided for by the Act authorizing an additional Naval Force for the suppression of Piracy" passed by Congress at their last Session. That Armament has been eminently successful in the accomplishment of its object. The Piracies by which our Commerce in the neighborhood of the Island of Cuba, had been afflicted, have been repressed, and the confidence of our Merchants, in a great measure restored.

The patriotic zeal and enterprise of Com-

Madore

Commodore Porter, to whom the command of the Expedition was confided, has been fully seconded by the Officers and men under his command. And, in reflecting with high satisfaction, on the honourable manner in which they have sustained the reputation of their Country and its Navy, the sentiment is alloyed only by a concern, that in the fulfilment of that arduous Service the diseases incident to the Season and to the Climate in which it was discharged, have deprived the Nation of many useful lives, and among them of several Officers of great promise.

In the month of August a very malignant fever made its appearance at Thompson's Island which threatened the destruction of our Station there. Many perished; and the Commanding Officer was severely attacked. Uncertain as to his fate, and knowing that most of the Medical Officers, had been rendered incapable of discharging their duties, it was thought expedient to send to that Post, an Officer of rank and experience, with several skillful Surgeons to ascertain the origin of the fever, and the probability of its recurrence there in future Seasons; to furnish every assistance to those who were suffering; and, if practicable, to avoid the necessity of abandoning so important a Station.

Commodore Rogers, with a promptitude which did him honor, cheerfully accepted that



that trust, and has discharged it in the manner anticipated from his skill and patriotism. Before his arrival, Commodore Porter, with the greater part of the Squadron, had removed from the Island, and returned to the United States, in consequence of the prevailing sickness. Much useful information has however been obtained as to the state of the Island, and great relief afforded to those who had been necessarily left there.

Although our Expedition, co-operating with an invigorated administration of the Government of the Island of Cuba and with the corresponding active exertions of a British Caval Force in the same Seas, have almost entirely destroyed the unlicensed piracies from that Island, the success of our exertions has not been equally effectual to suppress the same crime under other pretences and colours in the neighboring Island of Porto Rico. They have been committed there under the abusive issue of Spanish Commissions. At an early period of the present year, remonstrances were made to the Governor of that Island, by an Agent who was sent for the purpose, against those outrages on the peaceful Commerce

Commerce of the United States, of which many had occurred. That Officer professing his own want of authority to make satisfaction for our just Complaints answered only by a reference of them to the Government of Spain. The Minister of the U States to that Court was specially instructed to urge the necessity of the immediate and effectual interposition of that Government, directing restitution & indemnity for wrongs already committed, and interdicting the repetition of them. The Minister, as has been seen, was debarred access to the Spanish Government, and in the meantime, several new cases of flagrant outrage have occurred, and Citizens of the U States in the Island of Porto Rico have suffered, & others been threatened with a papenation for asserting their unquestionable rights, even before the lawful Tribunals of the Country.

The usual orders have been given to all our public Ships, to seize American Vessels engaged in the Slave Trade and bring them in for adjudication and I have the gratification to state that not one, so employed, has been discovered, and there is good reason to believe that our Flag is now seldom, if at all disgraced by  
that

that traffic.

It is a source of great satisfaction that we are always enabled to recur to the conduct of our Navy, with pride & commendation. As a means of National defence, it enjoys the public confidence, and is steadily assuming additional importance. It is submitted, whether a more efficient & equally economical organization of it, might not, in several respects, be effected. It is supposed that higher grades than now exist by law, would be useful. They would afford well merited rewards to those who have long & faithfully served their Country; present the best incentives to good conduct, and the best means of insuring a proper discipline; destroy the inequality in that respect between Military & Naval Services, & relieve our Officers from many inconveniences and mortifications which occur when our Vessels meet those of other Nations, Ours being the only service in which such grades do not exist.

A Report of the  
Post

Post Master General, which accompanies this communication will show the present State of the Post Office Department and its general operations for some years past.

There is established by law 88,600 miles of Post Roads; on which the Mail is now transported 85,700 miles, & contracts have been made for its transportation on all the established routes, with one or two exceptions. There are 5,240 Post Offices in the Union, and as many Post Masters. The gross amount of postage which accrued from 1<sup>st</sup> July 1822 to 1<sup>st</sup> July 1823 was \$1,114,345-12. During the same period the Expenditures of the Post Office Department amounted to \$1,169,885-51 and consisted of the following items.

viz.

|                                  |                |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Compensation to Post Masters     | \$ 353,995-98. |
| Incidental Expenses - - - - -    | 30,866-87      |
| Transportation of the Mails      | 784,600-08     |
| Payments into the Treasury - - - | 423-08.        |

On the 1<sup>st</sup> July last there was due to the Department from Post Masters \$135,245-28. From late Postmasters & Contractors \$256,749-31 making

a total amount of balances due to the Department of \$ 391,994-59. These balances embrace all delinquencies of Post Masters & Contractors which have taken place since the organization of the Department. There was due by the Department to the Contractors on the 1<sup>st</sup> July last \$26,548-64.

The transportation of the Mail within five years past has been greatly extended, and the expenditures of the Department proportionably increased. Although the Postage which has accrued within the last three years, has fallen short of the Expenditures — \$262,821-46 it appears that collections have been made from the outstanding balances, to meet the principal part of the current demands.

It is estimated that not more than \$250,000 of the above balances can be collected, and that a considerable part of this sum, can only be realized by a resort to legal process. Some improvement in the receipts for postage is expected. A prompt attention to the collection of  
 monies

monies received by Post Masters, it is believed, will enable the Department to continue its operations without aid from the Treasury unless the Expenditures shall be increased by the Establishment of new Mail routes.

A revision of some parts of the Post Office Law may be necessary; and it is submitted whether it would not be proper to provide for the appointment of Post Masters, where the compensation exceeds a certain amount, by nomination to the Senate, as other Officers of the Genl Government are appointed.

Having communicated my views to Congress, at the Commencement of the last Session respecting the encouragement which ought to be given to our Manufactures, & the principles on which it should be founded, I have only to add, that those views remain unchanged, and that the present state of those Countries with which we have the most immediate political relations, and greatest Commercial intercourse, tends to confirm them. Under this impression, I recommend a review of the Tariff, for the purpose of affording such additional protection to those articles which we are prepared

prepared to manufacture, or which are more immediately connected with the defence and independence of the Country.

The actual state of the public accounts furnishes additional evidence of the efficiency of the present system of accountability in relation to the public expenditure. Of the monies drawn from the Treasury since the 4<sup>th</sup> March 1817 the sum remaining unaccounted for on the 30<sup>th</sup> Sept<sup>r</sup> ember last is more than a million and an half of Dollars less than on the 30<sup>th</sup> Sept<sup>r</sup> preceding, and during the same period, a reduction of nearly a million of Dollars has been made in the amount of the unsettled accounts for monies advanced previously to the 4<sup>th</sup> March 1817. It will be obvious that in proportion as the mass of accounts of the latter description, is diminished by settlements, the difficulty of settling the residue, is increased, from the consideration that in many instances it can be obtained only by legal process. For more precise details on  
this

subject I refer to a Report of the French  
Comptroller of the Treasury.

The sum which was appropriated  
at the last Session for the repairs of the  
Cumberland Road has been applied with  
good effect to that object. A final Re-  
port has not yet been made by the Agent  
who was appointed to superintend it. As  
soon as it is received, it shall be com-  
municated to Congress.

Many patriotic & enlightened Citizens  
who have made the subject an object of  
particular investigation, have suggest-  
ed an improvement of still greater im-  
portance. They are of opinion that the  
Waters of the Chesapeake and Ohio may be  
connected together by our continued Canal  
and at an expense far short of the  
value & importance of the object to  
be obtained. If this could be accom-  
plished, it is impossible to calculate  
the beneficial consequences, which  
would result from it. A great  
portion of the produce of the very  
fertile Country through which  
it would pass, would find a  
market



Market through that Channel.

Troops might be moved with great facility in War, with Cannon & every kind of munition, and in either direction. Connecting the Atlantic with the Western Country, in a line passing through the seat of the National Government, it would contribute especially to strengthen the bond of Union itself. Believing as I do that Congress have the right to appropriate money for such a national object (the jurisdiction remaining to the States through which the Canal would pass) I submit it to your consideration whether it may not be advisable to authorize by an adequate appropriation the employment of a suitable number of the Officers of the Corps of Engineers to examine the unexplored ground during the next season and to report their opinions thereon. It will likewise be proper to extend their examination to the several routes, through which the Waters of the Ohio may be connected, by Canals, with those of Lake Erie.

As the Cumberland Road will require  
annual

annual repairs, and Congress have not thought it expedient to recommend to the States an amendment to the Constitution, for the purpose of vesting in the U States a power to adopt & execute a system of Internal improvement, it is also submitted to your consideration, whether it may not be expedient to authorize the Executive to enter into an arrangement with the several States through which the road passes to establish tolls, each within its limits for the purpose of defraying the expense of future repairs & of providing also, by suitable penalties, for its protection against future injuries

The Act of Congress of the 7<sup>th</sup> May 1822. appropriated the sum of \$22,700 = for the purpose of erecting two piers as a shelter for Vessels from ice, near Cape Henlopen Delaware Bay. To effect the object of the Act the Officers of the Board of Engineers with Commodore Danbridge were directed to prepare plans and Estimates of Piers sufficient to answer the purpose intended by the Act.

Jf

It appears by their Report which accom-  
 -pany the documents from the War  
 Department, that the appropriation is not  
 adequate to the purpose intended, and  
 as the piers would be of great service,  
 both to the navigation of the Delaware  
 Bay, and the protection of vessels on the  
 adjacent parts of the Coast, I submit for  
 the consideration of Congress whether addition-  
 -al and sufficient appropriation should  
 not be made.

The board of Engineers were  
 also directed to examine and survey  
 the entrance of the Harbor of the Port of  
 Procope Isle in Pennsylvania in order to  
 make an estimate of the expenses of  
 removing the obstructions to the entrance,  
 with a plan of the best mode of effecting  
 the same, under the appropriation for  
 that purpose, by act of Congress passed  
 the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March last. The Report of the  
 board accompanies the papers from  
 the War Department, and is submitted  
 for the consideration of Congress.

A strong hope has been long  
 entertained, founded on the heroic strug-  
 -gle of the Greeks, that they would succeed

in their contest, and resume their equal station among the Nations of the Earth.

It is believed that the whole civilized world take a deep interest in their welfare. Although no power has declared in their favor, yet none according to our information has taken part against them. Their cause and their name have protected them from dangers which might, ere this, have overwhelmed any other people. The ordinary calculations of interest and of acquisition, with a view to aggrandisement which mingle so much in the transactions of nations, seems to have had no effect in regard to them. From the facts which have come to our knowledge there is good cause to believe, that their Enemy has lost forever all dominion over them; that Greece will become again an Independent Nation. That she may obtain that rank is the object of our most ardent wishes.

It was stated at the commencement of the last Session, that a great effort was then making in Spain and Portugal, to improve the condition of the people of those countries; and that it appeared to be conducted with extraordinary moderation. It need scarcely be remarked, that the result has been, so far, very different from what was then anticipated. Of events in that quarter of the globe, with which we have so much intercourse, and from which we derive our origin, we have always been anxious and interested spectators. The citizens of the United States cherish sentiments the most friendly, in favor of the liberty and happiness of their fellow men on that side of the Atlantic. In the wars of the European powers, in matters relating to themselves, we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy, so to do. It is only when our rights are invaded, or seriously menaced, that we resent injuries, or make preparation for our defence. With the movements in this Hemisphere we are of necessity more immediately connected, and by causes which must be obvious to all enlightened and impartial observers. The political system of the allied powers is essentially different in this respect from that of America. This difference pro-

ceeds from that, which exists in their respective Governments, and to the defence of our own, which has been achieved by the loss of so much blood and treasure, and matured by the wisdom of their most enlightened Citizens, and under which we have enjoyed unexampled felicity, this whole nation is devoted. We owe it therefore to Candor, and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers, to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this Hemisphere, as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing Colonies or Dependences of any European power, we have not interfered, and shall not interfere. But with the Governments who have declared their Independence, and maintained it, and whose Independence we have, on great consideration, and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interpositions for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner, their destiny, by any European power, in any other light, than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition towards the United States. In the war between those new Governments and Spain, we declared our neutrality, at the time of their recognition, and to this we have adhered, and shall continue to adhere, provided no change shall occur, which in the judgement of the competent authorities of this Government shall make

make a corresponding change, on the part of the United States, indispensable to their security.

The late events in Spain and Portugal, shew that Europe is still unsettled. Of this important fact, no stronger proof can be adduced, than that the allied powers should have thought it proper, on any principle satisfactory to themselves, to have interposed by force, in the internal concerns of Spain. To what extent, such interposition may be carried, on the same principle, is a question, in which all Independent powers, whose Governments differ from theirs, are interested; even those most remote, and surely none more so than the United States. Our policy in regard to Europe, which was adopted at an early stage of the wars which have so long agitated that quarter of the Globe, nevertheless remains the same, which is, not to interfere in the internal concerns of any of its powers; to consider the Government *de facto*, as the legitimate for us; to cultivate friendly relations with it, and to preserve those relations, by a frank, firm and manly policy, meeting in all instances, the just claims of every power; submitting to injuries from none. But, in regard to those continents, circumstances are eminently and conspicuously different. It

is impossible that the allied powers, should extend their political system, to any portion of either continent, without endangering our peace and happiness, nor can any one believe, that our Southern Brethren, if left to themselves, would adopt it of their own accord. It is equally impossible therefore, that we should behold such interposition in any form with indifference. If we look to the comparative strength and resources of Spain and those new Governments, and their distances from each other, it must be obvious that she can never subdue them. It is still the true policy of the United States, to leave the parties to themselves, in the hope, that other powers will pursue the same course.

If we compare the present condition of our union with its actual state, at the close of our Revolution, the history of the world furnishes no example, of a progress, in improvements in all the important circumstances which constitute the happiness of a Nation, which bears any resemblance to it. At the first epoch, our population did not exceed, Three millions. By the last census it amounted to about Ten millions. And what is more extraordinary, it is almost altogether, native, for the emigration from other countries has been inconsiderable. At the first epoch, half the territory within our acknowledged limits was uninhabited and a wilderness



wilderness. Since then, new Territory has been acquired, of vast extent, comprizing within it, many Rivers, particularly the Mississippi, the navigation of which to the Ocean, was of the highest importance to the original States. Over this territory, our population has expanded in every direction, and new States have been established, almost equal in number to those which formed the first bond of our union. This expansion of our population, and accession of new States to our union, have had the happiest effect on all its highest interests. That it has eminently augmented our resources & added to our strength and respectability, as a power, is admitted by all. But it is not in these important circumstances only, that this happy effect is felt. It is manifest that, by enlarging the basis of our system, and increasing the number of States, the system itself, has been greatly strengthened in both its branches. Consolidation and disunion have thereby been rendered equally impracticable. Each Government, confiding in its own strength, has less to apprehend from the other, and, in consequence each enjoying a greater freedom of action, is rendered more efficient for all the purposes for which it was instituted.

It is unnecessary to treat here, of the least  
improvements made in the system itself, by  
the adoption of this constitution, and of its  
happy effect in elevating the character, and  
in protecting the rights of the nation, as  
well as of individuals. To what then do  
we owe these blessings? It is known to  
all that we derive them from the  
excellence of our Institutions. Ought we  
not then to adopt every measure, which  
may be necessary to perpetuate them?

James Monroe

Washington 2<sup>nd</sup> Decr. 1823.

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President of the U. S. at the  
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