

## POETRY.

## CHRISTMAS-DAY,

1804.

BY HENRY KIRK WHITE.

Yet once more, and once more, awake, my harp,  
From silence and neglect—one lofty strain;  
Lofty, yet wilder than the winds of Heaven,  
And speaking mysteries, more than words can tell,  
I ask of thee; for I, with hymnings high,  
Would join the dirge of the departing year.

Yet with no wintry garland from the woods,  
Wrought of the leafless branch, or ivy sear,  
Wreath I thy tresses, dark December! now;  
Me higher quarell calls, with loudest song,  
And fearful joy, to celebrate the day  
Of the Redeemer.—Near two thousand suns  
Have set their seals upon the rolling lapse  
Of generations, since the day spring first  
Beamed from on high!—Now to the mighty mass  
Of that increasing aggregate, we add  
One unit more. Space, in comparison,  
How small! yet mark'd with how much misery;  
Wars, famines, and the fury, Pestilence,  
Over the nations hanging her dread scourge;  
The oppressed, torn, in silent bitterness,  
Weeping their sufferance; and the arm of wrong  
Forcing the scanty portion from the weak,  
And steeping the lone widow's couch with tears.  
So has the year been character'd with woe  
In Christian land, and mark'd with wrongs and  
crimes;

Yet 't was not thus He taught—not thus He liv'd,  
Whose birth we this day celebrated with prayer  
And much thanksgiving.—He a man of woes,  
Went on the way appointed,—path, though rude,  
Yet borne with patience still:—He came to cheer  
The broken-hearted, to raise up the sick,  
And on the wandering and benighted mind  
To pour the light of truth—O task divine!  
O more than angel teacher! He had words  
To soothe the barking waves, and hush the wind;  
And when the soul was triss'd in troubled seas,  
Wrapt in thick darkness and the howling storm,  
He, pointing to the star of peace on high,  
Arm'd it with holy fortitude, and bade it smile  
At the surrounding wreck.—  
When with the deep as wavy his heart was rack'd,  
Not for himself the tear-drop dew'd his cheek,  
But *tho' He wept, for them to Heaven He pray'd,*  
His persecutors—"Father, pardon them,  
They know not what they do."

Angels of Heaven,  
Ye who beheld him fainting on the cross  
And did him homage, say, may mortal join  
The hallelujahs to the risen God?  
Will the faint voice and grovelling song be heard  
Amid the seraphim in light divine?  
Yes, he will deign, the Prince of Peace will deign,  
For mercy, to accept the hymns of faith,  
Low though it be and humble—Lord of life,  
The Christ, the Comforter, thine advent now,  
Fills my agonizing soul—I mourn, I fly  
Far o'er the skies, beyond the rolling orbs;  
The bonds of flesh dissolve, and earth recedes,  
And care, and pain, and sorrow, are no more.

## EXTRACT

From the Message of the President of the  
United States, transmitted to both Houses  
of Congress, at Washington, on Tuesday  
the 5th instant.

With Prussia, Spain, Portugal, and in general all the European powers, between whom and the United States, relations of friendly intercourse have existed, their condition has not materially varied since the last session of Congress. I regret not to be able to say the same of our commercial intercourse with the Colonial Possessions of Great-Britain in America. Negotiations of the highest importance to our common interest have been for several years in discussion between the two Governments; and on the part of the United States have been invariably pursued in the spirit of candor and conciliation. Interests of great magnitude and delicacy had been adjusted by the conventions of 1815 and 1818, while that of 1822, mediated by the late Emperor Alexander, had promised a satisfactory compromise of claims which the Government of the United States, in justice to the rights of a numerous class of their citizens, was bound to sustain. But with regard to the commercial intercourse between the United States and the British colonies in America, it has been hitherto found impracticable to bring the parties to an understanding satisfactory to both. The relative geographical position, and the respective products of nature cultivated by human industry, had constituted the elements of a commercial inter-

course between the United States and British America, insular and continental, important to the inhabitants of both countries. But it had been interdicted by Great Britain upon a principle heretofore practised upon by the colonizing nations of Europe, of holding the trade of their colonies, each in exclusive monopoly to herself. After the termination of the last war, this interdiction had been revived, and the British government declined including this portion of the negotiation at the convention of our intercourse with her possessions in 1815. The trade was then carried on exclusively in British vessels, till the act of Congress concerning navigation, of 1818, and the supplemental act of 1820, met the interdiction by a corresponding measure on the part of the United States. These measures, not of retaliation, but of necessary self-defence, were soon succeeded by an Act of Parliament, opening certain colonial ports to the vessels of the United States, coming directly from them, and to the importation from them of certain articles of our produce, burdened with heavy duties, and excluding some of the most valuable articles of our exports. The United States opened their ports to British vessels from the Colonies, upon terms as exactly corresponding with those of the Act of Parliament, as, in the relative position of the parties, could be made. And a negotiation was commenced by mutual consent, with the hope, on our part, that a reciprocal spirit of accommodation and a common sentiment of the importance of trade to the interest of the inhabitants of the two countries, between whom it must be carried on, would ultimately bring the parties to a compromise, with which both might be satisfied. With this view, the Government of the United States had determined to sacrifice something of that entire reciprocity which in all commercial arrangements with Foreign Powers they are entitled to demand, and to acquiesce in some inequalities disadvantageous to ourselves, rather than to forego the benefit of a final and permanent adjustment of this interest, to the satisfaction of Great-Britain herself. The negotiation, repeatedly suspended by accidental circumstance, was, however, by mutual agreement and express assent considered as pending, and to be speedily resumed. In the mean time, another act of Parliament so doubtful and ambiguous in its import as to have been misunderstood by the officers in the colonies who were to carry it into execution, opens again certain Colonial ports upon new conditions and terms, with a threat to close them against any Nation which may not accept those terms, as prescribed by the British Government. This act passed in July, 1825, not communicated to the Government of the United States, nor understood by the British Officers of the Customs in the Colonies where it was to be enforced, was nevertheless submitted to the consideration of Congress at their last session. With the knowledge that a negotiation upon the subject had long been in progress, and pledges given of its resumption at an early day, it was deemed expedient to await the result of that negotiation, rather than to subscribe implicitly to terms the import of which was not clear, and which the British authorities themselves, in this hemisphere, were not prepared to explain.

Immediately after the close of the last Session of Congress, one of our most distinguished citizens was despatched as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Great-Britain, furnished with instructions which we could not doubt would lead to a conclusion of this long protracted interest, upon terms acceptable to Great-Britain. Upon his arrival and

before he had delivered his letters of credence, he was met by an Order of the British Council, excluding, from and after the first of December now current, the vessels of the United States from all the Colonial British ports, excepting those immediately bordering upon our Territories. In answer to his expostulations upon a measure thus unexpected, he is informed that, according to the ancient maxims of policy of Europe, an nation having colonies, their trade is an exclusive possession of the mother country. That all participation in it by other nations, is a boon of favor not forming a subject of negotiation, but to be regulated by the Legislative Acts of the Power owning the colony. That the British Government, therefore, declines negotiating concerning it; and that, as the United States did not forthwith accept purely and simply the terms offered by the Act of Parliament, of July, 1825, Great Britain would not now admit the vessels of the United States even upon the terms on which she has opened them to the navigation of other nations.

We have been accustomed to consider the trade which we have enjoyed with the British Colonies, rather as an interchange of mutual benefits, than as a mere favor received; that, under every circumstance, we have given an ample equivalent. We have seen every other nation, holding colonies, negotiate with other nations, and grant them, freely, admission to the Colonies by Treaty; and, so far are the other colonizing nations of Europe now from refusing to negotiate for trade with their Colonies, that we ourselves have secured access to the Colonies of more than one of them by Treaty. The refusal, however, of Great-Britain to negotiate, leaves to the United States no other alternative than that of regulating, or interdicting, altogether, the trade on their part, according as either measure may affect the interests of our own country; and, with that exclusive object, I would recommend the whole subject to your calm and candid deliberations.

It is hoped that our unavailing exertions to accomplish a cordial good understanding on this interest, will not have an unpropitious effect upon the other great topics of discussion between the two Governments. Our north eastern and north western boundaries are still unadjusted. The Commissioners under the 7th article of the Treaty of Ghent have nearly come to the close of their labours; nor can we renounce the expectation, enfeebled as it is, that they may agree upon their report to the satisfaction or acquiescence of both parties. The commission for liquidating the claims for indemnity for slaves carried away after the close of the war, has been sitting, with doubtful prospects of success. Propositions of compromise have, however, passed between the two Governments, the result of which, we flatter ourselves, may yet prove satisfactory. Our own dispositions and purposes towards Great Britain are all friendly and conciliatory; nor can we abandon, but with strong reluctance, the belief that they will, ultimately, meet a return not of favors, which we neither ask nor desire, but of equal reciprocity and good will.

The following remarks from a Boston paper, embrace a brief view of the President's Message, on the fiscal concerns of the nation:—

The Message opens with acknowledgments to the Giver of all Good for the prevalence of health, peace and prosperity throughout the country; and passes in review the relations between that and foreign nations, none of which appear to be essentially changed during the recess of Congress. The policy of cherishing and augmenting the naval force is favorably noticed.

The reduced importation of foreign goods, owing to the distressed situation of Great Britain, has necessarily produced a diminished return to the Treasury; in consequence of which the net revenue of the present year will not quite equal the last, and the receipts of the next year will fall short of those of the present. The diminution, however, to a certain extent, is attributed to the flourishing condition of some of our manufactures, and so far the equivalent is more than equal to the loss. During the year, more than eleven millions have been applied to the discharge of the principal and interest of the debt, and above seven millions to the reduction of the capital of the debt itself. The balance in the Treasury on the 1st of Jan. last, was 5,201,650 dollars 43¢. The receipts of the year are stated at about 25,500,000 dollars; and the expenditures of about one million less; so that on the first of January next, the balance in the Treasury will be 6,400,000 dollars. On the 31 of March, 1827, the public debt amounted to 123,500,000 dollars; on the 1st of January next, it will be short of 74,000,000 dollars; making a reduction of nearly 50 millions of the principal in the ten years besides the payment of interest. There will become due, in little more than twelve months to come, thirty one millions of debt, all bearing an interest of six per cent, twenty millions of which will be immediately redeemable. Leaving 15 millions at this interest, but to be, as far as practicable, paid off in 1827 and 1828, it is suggested that the remaining 16 millions might be borrowed at an interest of 5 per cent, redeemable in 1829 and 1830, by which a saving would be made to the country of near half a million of dollars, and the payment of the whole 31 millions made easy. The laxity of our collection laws in the custom-house department, which has led to recent abuses, is referred to, and suggested to the consideration of Congress.

The Navy estimates embrace an expenditure of three millions; and our present naval force is twelve line of battle ships, twenty frigates, and sloops of war in proportion.

The report from the Post-Master-General, is an able and satisfactory document. In the latter half of 1824 and the first half of 1825, the revenue of that office exceeded the expenditure more 45,000 dols. For the year ending the 30th June last, the excess of the receipts over the expenditures is nearly 80,000 dols. During this period, contracts have been made for the transportation of the mail in stages for about 260,000 miles; and for 70,000 miles annually on horseback; and 714 new Post-Offices have been established within the year.

*British West Indies.*—It has been suggested that British vessels coming from the closed ports into ports of the United States, are now liable to seizure. But our law speaks of ports closed by the ordinary Laws of Navigation, not of ports closed by a special and temporary Order of Council. Whether this makes any difference, jurists know. *Bos. Pal.*

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