

an intercourse with the British Colonies, we would now be obliged, in order to retain the right to that intercourse, to allow British vessels, both of the parent country and its possessions abroad, a liberty of exportation and importation coextensive with that of the vessels of the United States, although the interdiction of the British law of navigation should remain in full operation on the vessels of the United States.

If we are mistaken in the extent of the concessions required by the British Government, to place the United Kingdom and its possessions abroad, on the footing of the most favoured nation, the best and most friendly mode of correcting our error would have been, to have accompanied an official communication of the act of Parliament with a full and frank explanation of those conditions, the performance of which, on our part, would have satisfied that Government. By withholding all explanation, if the Congress of the United States had legislated on that subject at its last session, it must have acted either, 1st, upon the expositions of the conditions of the act of Parliament now given; or, 2dly, upon the views of the British Government as disclosed in the negotiations of 1824. It could not have conformed to the conditions of the act of Parliament, as we understand them, without a manifest sacrifice of the interests of the people of the United States, and an abandonment of those principles of reciprocity for which they have ever contended in all their negotiations with foreign powers. It now appears that it would have been unavailing, if Congress had legislated in compliance with the views of the British Government, as presented in the negotiations of 1824. According to those views that Government was then willing that the trade between the colonies and the United States should continue restricted, as it then was, by the laws of the two countries, to the direct intercourse: that is to say, that a British vessel clearing from the United States for a colonial port, should be bound to land its cargo in that port: and an American vessel clearing from the colonies for the United States, should be bound to land its cargo in them. But without any intimation to us, through the regular diplomatic channels, of an alteration in her views, Great Britain has now changed them, and on the 11th September, 1826, for the first time, announces her determination not to consent to enter into any renewed negotiation upon the intercourse between the United States and the British Colonies, so long as the pretension [the above restriction as to the direct intercourse] recorded in the act of 1823, and there applied to British Colonies alone, remains part of the law of the United States. And we are given to understand, "that the British government further owes it to the spirit of frankness which it wishes to cultivate in all its relations with the United States, to declare, that after having been compelled to apply to any country the interdiction prescribed by the act of 1825, the British government cannot hold itself bound to remove that interdiction, as a matter of course, whenever it may happen to suit the convenience of the foreign government to reconsider the measures by which the application of that interdiction was occasioned." The pretension referred to is the exact counterpart of a similar preexisting pretension contained in the act of Parliament of 1822. The British government does not appear to have reflected that its rejection of all negotiation on the subject, deprives it of the best—of the only two modes of getting rid of the exceptionable restriction.

From what has now been advanced, it has been established, 1st—That the Colonial Trade was a fit subject for the adjustment, by friendly negotiation between the two powers, of the conditions on which it should

be carried on; 2dly, That it has been long and often, in fact, the subject of negotiation between them; and 3dly, That the American Government was bound to conclude from every thing which passed between the two governments, that both parties entertained the expectation that it was to be arranged by negotiation, and only by negotiation. It was under this full conviction that your general instructions were prepared.

What may be the nature of the proposals which you were authorized to make, upon the renewal of the negotiation so confidently anticipated, it is not now proper should be communicated to the British Government. Respect for ourselves, no less than for that Government, forbids that we should obtrude upon their consideration proposals against which they have deemed it proper to shut their ears. It will be however, no violation of that respect, to say, that they were of a character, on all the disputed points between the two Governments, authorizing us to believe that they would be satisfactory.

The Government of the United States is animated by the sincerest desire to maintain with that of Great Britain, not merely the forms of courtesy and amity, but to cultivate a cordial and lasting friendship; to settle every controverted question between them upon principles of justice and reciprocity, and, by an enlarged liberality in their mutual intercourse, to advance the real prosperity of both. Entertaining this desire, it has learnt, with the most lively regret, the resolution of the British Government to close the door against those friendly explanations and that frank and mutual exposition of the wishes and views of the parties which are, or should be the object of all negotiation. The harmony of nations requires that every avenue to such explanations should always be kept fully open. But such a free access on all questions, appears to the Government of the United States to be especially desirable between two such nations as Great Britain and the United States, whose interests and happiness are so intimately interwoven. By rejecting the ordinary mode of treating through the established agency of accredited Ministers, and substituting to it that of mutual legislation, which, after all, is but another though less advantageous mode of negotiation, we deprive ourselves of many facilities. Congress and the British Parliament are numerous bodies acting in different and distant spheres, and it is not derogating from their undoubted wisdom and superior intelligence, to suppose that their organization is not the best suited to the exercise of diplomatic functions, in all cases.

A single word of explanation, an instantaneous suggestion of the modification of a proposal elicited in conference, may lead to the adjustment of a difference when Ministers are treating face to face, which might not be settled for a long time in a negotiation conducted between two bodies, each composed of several hundred members, separated by the Atlantic Ocean. We do not mean to bring forward any formal complaint against Great Britain, on account of her determination to exclude one of the means which experience has evinced to be the best adapted to accommodation of national differences. Our main purpose is, to show that the United States are not justly chargeable with the consequences which may flow from that most unexpected decision.

As the only alternative which the course adopted by that Government has left, the President has determined to give a signal proof of his anxious wish to preserve a good understanding between the two governments, by laying the whole of the correspondence which has passed between them on this subject, including the instructions to our several Ministers at the Court of

Saint James, before Congress at its next session. The wisdom of that body, in the actual state of things, is alone competent to decide whether the colonial intercourse shall remain closed, according to the pleasure of the British Government, as manifested in the late Order in Council, and whether that portion of it left open by the order shall remain open, or on what conditions, compatible with the interests of the people of the United States Congress is willing the trade should be placed.

You will accompany the communication of the substance of this despatch, or the substance of such part of it as you may not have anticipated in any answer to Mr. Caning's note, presented from yourself to the British Government, with the assurance that, notwithstanding their present decision, the Government of the United States, at all times hereafter, will be ready, at Washington or at London, to treat of the colonial intercourse, whenever it may be their desire or inclination to negotiate on that subject. I am with great respect, your obedient servant.

H. CLAY.

AWFUL FIRE IN ALEXANDRIA.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 19.—Yesterday morning at 9 o'clock, a destructive fire broke out in Alexandria, and being soon perceived from this city, cold as the weather was, (the thermometer at 13.) our towns-men, with their engines and hose apparatus, 300 men from the Navy Yard, under Capt. Booth; and the Marines, with their engine, under Col. Henderson, flew with alacrity to the assistance of our suffering neighbors. To his aid, thus seasonably offered, with that given from Georgetown, under Providence, the arrest of the progress of the calamity may be mainly attributed, and that a vast amount of property was saved from destruction. The distance from this place to Alexandria is nearly seven miles, and some of our citizens arrived in little over an hour. The fire raged for five hours, with a brisk N. W. wind, and was visible from the Hall of Congress, and occasioned, very properly, an early adjournment of that body. The Hose and forcing machines received an ample supply of water from the river, and the water descended in the form of ice and sleet on the houses, and mantled the firemen and citizens in icy garments. The fire commenced in a cabinet maker's shop, between King and Prince streets, and extended to Fairfax and Union streets. The number of houses destroyed about forty, besides back buildings. The loss of property is estimated at 200 000 dollars. The following are named as among the principal sufferers. viz. Messrs. Hill, Brochus, Dodds, Harper, Johnstone, Rumney, Rudd, Murphy, Hopburn, C. & J. P. Thompson, Miss Wilson Jona. C. May, Horwell, Nightengale, Isabella Howard, &c.

The contents of the Post Office were removed, but the building was not burnt. The shingle roofs of the houses facilitated the ravages of the fire; but the Hose system in arresting the destruction where it was stopped, was greatly efficacious.

CONTRACT.

PROPOSALS, for completing the Joiner work of Government House by Contract, will be received at the Office of J. E. WOOLFORD, Esq. Barrister at Law, at Fredericton, until the 15th day of March next, when the lowest proposal will be accepted, if approved. At the same place, a Plan and Specifications may be viewed, and other necessary information be obtained. Undoubted security will be required.

JEDEDIAH SLASON. Fredericton, Feb. 13, 1827.

FREDERICTON, (N. B.)

TUESDAY, 20th FEB. 1827.

Alms House and Work House. COMMISSIONER FOR THE WEEK, GEO. F. STRETT, Esq.

SAVINGS BANK.

TRUSTEES NEXT WEEK, HENRY G. CLOPPER, ESQ. JAMES TAYLOR, ESQ. HENRY SMITH, ESQ.

The following extracts from the Boston C. Gazette, will probably render the anticipations of many, on the subject of war between England and Spain, (and as some have thought, France also,) less sanguine than before. The information respecting the Duke of York's health, is, we are sorry to say, only corroborated by other intelligence. In short, the Royal Duke's dissolution seems near at hand.

BOSTON, February 8.

Latest from England.—The New-York papers received yesterday informs us of the arrival at that port of the packet ship Canada, bringing London papers to the evening of the 1st January, and Liverpool to the 31, eighteen days later than previous advices. The King of Prussia, the King of France, and the Duke of York, were seriously indisposed, the latter of whom had been given over by his Physicians. We extract from the New York papers the following interesting articles:

The decided measures adopted by England to protect Portugal in her Constitutional government, were, after some hesitation, highly applauded by the French government, which had also strongly censured the conduct of Spain; and in the language of a Liverpool paper, there is every reason to believe that the Spanish Government, conscious of its own weakness, and deserted by France and the Holy Alliance, has consented to recognize the present government of Portugal. This being the case, all danger of war is past.

The London Observer of Dec. 31st says:—"Expresses from Berlin and from Vienna have brought the sentiments of those Courts on the King's Message, and on the interference of England in the affairs of Portugal. They entirely accord, it is said, with the view taken by this country, of which, indeed, little doubt could have been entertained. The whole conduct of the Austrian Cabinet with regard to Prince Miguel, has identified it with, and partly pledged it to support the new state of things in Portugal; and Prussia finds too important a part in European politics to venture to oppose the will of England, even if any secret wishes to that effect were entertained."

On Sunday last, pursuant to notice, a Sermon was preached in Christ Church in aid of the Funds of the Fredericton District Committee of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, by the Rev. SKEFFINGTON THOMSON, L. L. D. Rector of St. Stephens, in this Province; and the numerous congregation assembled were by the learned Doctor, put in possession of such valuable information on this interesting subject. The Doctor's text was taken from the 51st chap. of Isaiah and 1st verse, which he commented upon in a most able manner. We learnt that the Venerable Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge has its origin in the close of the 17th century, under a Royal Charter from William the 3d, and now verging on the venerable age of nearly a century and a half. Both in the Parent Country, and her wide extend-