

which he cannot enjoy, and contemplate the dreary prospect of growing old without anything to make age venerable or attractive; for age without wisdom and without knowledge is the winter's cold without the winter's fire.

Communications.

A SONG

FOR 1ST JANUARY, 1856.

'Tis the last Liquor seller
Left moaning alone,
All his late friends—the rummies
In sorrow have gone;
No Rumshops—no Taverns—
Not a tippler is nigh,
To hear his deep curses,
Or give sigh for sigh.

What ails thee?—thou lone one,
Why looking so sad,
Have the fates been against thee
Or art thou going mad;
Have thy hopes been all withered—
"Oh leave me"—he said
"All the friends of the Traffic
Are senseless or dead."

I can't see a rummy,
Let me look where I will;
I've a lot of good Liquor
As e'er came from the still,
This cursed "Prohibition"
Has ruined my trade,
For years I have flourished
But now I must fade.

My Puncheons and Jars
Stand mocking around,
And tell of the influence
I had in the town;
My hopes now are blighted,
My customers flown,
Good-bye to the traffic,
Say I with a groan—HE DIES.

N.

Editor's Department.

MIRAMICHI:

CHATHAM, SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 1856.

TERMS.—New Subscribers Twelve Shillings and Six Pence, per annum, in all cases in advance. Old Subscribers 12s. 6d. in advance, or 17s. 6d. at the end of the year. We prefer the advance price, and as it effects a large saving, we hope soon to see all our subscribers avail themselves of it.

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UNITED STATES.

THE American papers inform us that the House of Representatives had not made choice of a Speaker up to the 31st Decr., on which day the President, without the usual formal notice of the organization of the two houses, by a joint committee from the same, sent down by his Private Secretary, a written copy of his Message. This caused considerable excitement. Mr. Clingman moved that it be read. Mr. Morgan called for the yeas and nays, and several members struggled fiercely to get the floor. After a very animated debate and much confusion, it was decided, 87 against 126, that the message should not be read, and the whole subject was laid on the table.

This mode of procedure, it is reported, was adopted by the President, to get the Message to England before the meeting of Parliament. The Message is not very lengthy, contrasting it with other similar documents, but it contains some items of peculiar interest to the people of the Colonies, in reference to matters in course of negotiation and in dispute between the two Governments; we have devoted considerable space to extracts. They relate principally to the Central American question, and the Enlistment of Foreigners.

FOREIGN RELATIONS—CENTRAL AMERICA.

Whilst relations of unity continue to exist between the United States and all foreign powers; with some of them grave questions are depending, which may require the consideration of Congress. Of such questions the most important is that which has arisen out of the negotiations with Great Britain, in reference to Central America. By the convention concluded between the two governments on the 19th

of April, 1850, both parties covenanted that neither will ever occupy, fortify, colonize, assume or exercise any dominion over Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito Coast, or any part of Central America. It was the undoubted understanding of the United States in making this treaty that all the present states of the former republic of Central America and the entire territory of each would henceforth enjoy complete independence, and that both contracting parties engaged equally and to the same extent for the present and for the future; that if either then had any claim or right in Central America, such claim and all occupation or authority under it were unreservedly relinquished by the stipulations of the convention; and that no dominion was thereafter to be exercised or assumed in any part of Central America by Great Britain or the United States. This government consented to restrictions in regard to a region of country wherein we had specific and peculiar interests only upon the convention, that the like restrictions were in the same sense obligatory on Great Britain. But for this understanding of the force and effect of the convention, it would never have been concluded by us. So clear was this understanding on the part of the United States, that in a correspondence contemporaneous with the ratification of the convention, it was distinctly expressed that the mutual covenants of non-occupation were not intended to apply to the British establishment at the Balize. This qualification is to be ascribed to the fact that, in virtue of successive treaties with previous sovereigns of the country, Great Britain had obtained a concession of the right to cut mahogany or dye woods at the Balize, but with positive exclusion of all domain or sovereignty, and thus it confirms the natural construction and understood import of the treaty, as to all the rest of the region to which the stipulations applied. It, however, became apparent at an early day after entering on the discharge of my present functions, that Great Britain still continued in the exercise or assertion of large authority in all parts of Central America, commonly called the Mosquito coast, and covering the entire length of the state of Nicaragua, and a part of Costa Rica, that she regarded the Balize as her absolute domain, and was gradually extending its limits at the expense of the State of Honduras, and that she had formally colonized considerable insular group known as the Bay Islands, and belonging by right to that state. All these acts or pretensions of Great Britain being contrary to the rights of the states of Central America, and to the manifest tenor of her stipulations with the United States as understood by this government, have been made the subject of negotiations through the American Minister at London.

I transmit herewith the instructions to him on the subject and the correspondence between him and the British Secretary for foreign affairs, by which you will perceive that the two governments differ widely and irreconcilably as to the construction of the convention and its effect on their respective relations to Central America. Great Britain so construes the convention as to maintain all her previous pretensions over the Mosquito Coast and in different parts of Central America. These pretensions as to the Mosquito Coast are founded on the assumption of political relations between Great Britain and the remnant of a tribe of Indians on that coast, entered into at a time when the whole country was a colonial possession of Spain. It cannot be successfully controverted that by the public law of Europe and America no possible act of such Indians or their predecessors could confer on Great Britain any political rights. Great Britain does not oblige the assent of Spain as the origin of her claims on the Mosquito coast. She has on the contrary by repeated and successful treaties renounced and relinquished all pretensions of her own and recognized the full and sovereign rights of Spain in the unequivocal term. Yet these pretensions so without solid foundation in the beginning, and thus repeatedly abjured, were at a recent period revived by Great Britain against the Central American States, the legitimate successors of all the ancient jurisdiction of Spain in that region. They were first applied only to a defined part of the coast of Nicaragua, afterwards to the whole of its Atlantic coast, and lastly to a part of the coast of Costa Rica, and they are now reasserted to this extent, notwithstanding engagements to the United States on the eastern coast of Nicaragua, and Costa Rica, the interference of Great Britain though exerted at one time in the form of military occupation of the port of San Juan Del Norte, have in the peaceful possession of the appropriate authorities of the Central American States, is now presented by her as the rightful exercise over the Misquito tribe of Indians. But the establishment at the Balize now reaching far beyond its territory limits into the state of Honduras and that of the Bay Islands appertaining of right to the same state, are as distinctly colonial governments as those of Jamaica or Canada, and therefore contrary to the very letter as well as to the spirit of the convention with the United States as it was at the time of the ratification, and now is, understood by this government.

The interpretation which the British Government thus, in assertion and act, persists in ascribing to the convention, entirely changes its character. While it holds us to all our obligations, it in a great measure releases Great Britain from those which constituted the consideration of this government for entering into the covenant. It is impossible, in my judgment, for the United States to acquiesce in such a construction of the respective relations of the two governments to Central America. To a renewed call by this government to abide by and carry into effect the stipulations of the

convention according to its obvious import, by withdrawing from the possession or colonization of portions of the Central American states of Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the British government has, at length, replied, affirming that the operation of the treaty is prospective only, and did not require Great Britain to abandon or contract one possession held by her in Central America at the date of its conclusion. The reply substitutes a partial issue in the place of the general one presented by the United States. The British government passes over the question of the rights of Great Britain, real or supposed, in Central America, and assumes that she had such rights at the date of the treaty, and those rights comprehended the protectorship of the Mosquito Indians, the extended jurisdiction and limits of the Balize, and the colony of the Bay Islands; and thereupon proceeds, by implication, to infer that if the stipulations of the treaty be merely future in effect, Great Britain may still continue to hold the contested portions of Central America.

The United States cannot admit either the inferences or the premises. We steadily deny that at the date of the treaty Great Britain had any postensions there than the limited and peculiar establishment at the Balize, and maintain that if she had any, they were surrendered by the convention. The Government having recognized the obligations of the treaty, has, of course, desired to see it executed by both parties, and in the discussion, therefore, has not looked to rights which we might assert independently of the treaty, in consideration of our geographical position, and of other circumstances which create for us relations to the Central American states different from those of any government of Europe. The British government, in its last communication, although well-knowing the views of the United States, still declares that it sees no reason why a conciliatory spirit may not enable the two governments to overcome the obstacles to a satisfactory adjustment of the subject.

Assured of the correctness of the construction of the treaty adhered to by this government, and resolved to insist on the rights of the United States, yet actuated also by the same desire which is avowed by the British Government to remove all causes of serious misunderstanding between two nations associated together by so many ties of interest and kindred, it has appeared to me proper not to consider an amicable solution of the controversy hopeless. There is, however, reason to apprehend that with Great Britain in the actual occupation of the disputed territories, the treaty will remain practically null, so far as regards our rights. As this international difficulty cannot remain long undetermined without involving serious dangers the friendly relations which it is the interest as well as the duty of both countries to cherish and preserve, it will afford me sincere gratification if future efforts shall result in the success anticipated heretofore with more confidence than the aspect of the case permits me now to entertain.

RECRUITMENT.

One other subject of discussion between the United States and Great Britain has grown out of the attempt which the exigencies of the war in which she is engaged with Russia induced her to draw recruits from the United States.

It is the traditional and settled policy of the United States to maintain impartial neutrality during the wars which from time to time occur among the great powers of the world, performing all the duties of neutrality towards the respective belligerent states, we may reasonably expect them not to interfere with our lawful enjoyments of its benefits. Notwithstanding the existence of such hostilities our citizens retain the individual right to continue all their accustomed pursuits by land or by sea, at home or abroad, subject only to such restrictions in this relation as the laws of war, or usages of nations or special treaties may impose, and it is our sovereign right that our territory and jurisdictions should not be invaded by either of the belligerent parties for the transit of their armies, or operations of their fleets, the levy of troops for their service, the fitting out of cruisers by or against either, or any other act or incident of war. And their undeniable rights of neutrality, individual and national, the United States will under no circumstances surrender. In pursuance of this policy the laws of the United States do not forbid their citizens to sell to either of the belligerent powers articles contraband of war, or to take munitions of war, or soldiers on board their private ships for transport, and although in so doing the individual citizen exposes his property or person to some of the hazards of war, his acts do not involve any breach of neutrality, nor of themselves implicate the government. Thus during the progress of the present war in Europe our citizens have without national responsibility therefore sold gunpowder and arms to all buyers, regardless of the destination of those articles. Our merchants have been, and still continue, to be largely employed by Great Britain and by France in transporting troops, provisions and munitions of war to the principal seat of military operations, and in bringing home their sick and wounded soldiers. But such use of our mercantile marine is not interdicted either by the national, or by our municipal law, and therefore does not compromise our neutral relations with Russia. But our municipal law, in accordance with the law of nations, peremptorily forbids, not only foreigners, but our own citizens, to fit out within the limits of the United States, a vessel to commit hostilities against any state with which the United States are at peace, or to increase the force of any foreign armed vessels intended for such hostilities against a friendly state. Whatever concern may have been felt by ei-

ther of the belligerent powers, lest private armed cruisers or other vessels in the service of one might be fitted out in the ports of this country to depredate on the property of the other, all such fears have proved to be utterly groundless. Our citizens have been withheld from any such act or purpose, by good faith and by respect for the law.

While the laws of our Union are thus peremptorily in their prohibition of the equipment or armament of belligerent cruisers in our ports, they provide not less absolutely that no person shall within the territory or jurisdiction of the United States, enlist or enter, or to go beyond the limits or jurisdiction of the United States, with intent to be enlisted or entered in the service of any foreign state, either as a soldier or as a marine or seaman on board of any vessel of war, letter of marque, or privateer, and these enactments are also in strict conformity with the Laws of Nations, which declares that no state has the right to raise troops for land or sea service in another state without its consent, and that whether forbidden by the municipal laws or not, the very attempt to do it without such consent is an attack on the national sovereignty. Such being the public rights and the municipal law of the United States, no solicitude on the subject was entertained by this government when, a year since, the British Parliament passed an act to provide for the enlistment of foreigners in the military service of Great Britain. Nothing on the face of the act, or in the public history, indicated that the British government proposed to attempt recruitment in the United States, nor did it ever give intimation of such intention to this government. It was a matter of surprise, therefore, to find, subsequently, that the engagement of persons within the United States, to proceed to Halifax, in the British province of Nova Scotia, and there enlist in the service of Great Britain, was going on extensively, with little or no disguise. Ordinary legal steps were immediately taken to arrest and punish parties concerned, and so put an end to acts infringing the municipal law, and derogatory to our sovereignty. Meanwhile, suitable representations on the subject were addressed to the British government. Thereupon, it became known by the admission of the British government itself, that the attempt to draw recruits from this country originated with it; or, at least had its approval or sanction; but it also appeared that the public agents engaged in it had stringent instructions not to violate the municipal law of the United States. It is difficult to understand how it should have been supposed that troops could be raised here by Great Britain without violation of the municipal law.

The unmistakable object of the law was to prevent every such act, which, if performed, must be either in violation of the law or in studied evasion of it, and in either alternative the act done would be alike injurious to the sovereignty of the United States. In the meantime the matter acquired additional importance by the recruitment in the United States not being discontinued and the disclosure of the fact that they were prosecuted upon a systematic plan, devised by official authority; the recruiting rendezvous had been opened in our principal cities, and depots for the reception of recruits established on our frontier, and the whole business conducted under the regular co-operation of British officers, civil and military, some in the North American provinces and some in the United States.—The complicity of these officers in an undertaking which could only be accomplished by defying our laws and disregarding our territorial rights, is conclusively proved by the evidence elicited on the part of such of their agents as have been apprehended and convicted. Some of the officers thus implicated are of high official position, and many of them beyond our jurisdiction, so that legal proceedings could not reach the source of the mischief. These considerations, and the fact that the cause of complaint was not a mere casual occurrence, but a deliberate design, entered upon with full knowledge of our laws and national policy, and conducted by responsible functionaries, impelled me to present the case to the British government, in order to secure not only a cessation of the wrong, but its reparation. The subject is still under discussion, the result of which will be communicated to you in due time.

I repeat the recommendations submitted to the last Congress, that provision be made for the appointment of a Commissioner, in connection with Great Britain, to survey and establish the boundary line which divides the territory of Washington from the contiguous British possession. By reason of the extent and importance of the country in dispute, there has been imminent danger of collision between the subjects of Great Britain and the citizens of the United States, including respective authorities in that quarter. The prospect of a speedy arrangement has contributed hitherto to induce on both sides forbearance to assert by force what each claim as a right. Continuance of delay on the part of the two governments to act in the matter will increase the danger and difficulty of the controversy.

Misunderstanding exists as to the extent, character and value of the possessory rights of the Hudson Bay Company, and the property of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, reserved in our treaty with Great Britain relative to the territory of Oregon. I have reason to believe that a cessation of the rights of both Companies to the United States, which would be the readiest means of terminating all questions, can be obtained on reasonable terms, and with a view to this end I present the subject to the attention of Congress.