

## United States.

## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

[CONCLUDED.]

The Reports from the Secretary of War, and from the various subordinate offices of the resort of that Department, present an exposition of the public administration of affairs connected with them, through the course of the current year. The present state of the army, and the distribution of the force of which it is composed, will be seen from the Report of the Major-General. Several alterations in the disposal of the troops have been found expedient in the course of the year, and the discipline of the army, though not entirely free from exception, has been generally good.

The attention of Congress is particularly invited to that part of the Report of the Secretary of War which concerns the existing system of our relations with the Indian tribes. At the establishment of the Federal Government, under the present Constitution of the United States, the principle was adopted of considering them as foreign and independent powers; and also as proprietors of lands. They were, moreover, considered as savages, whom it was our policy and our duty to use our influence in converting to Christianity, and in bringing within the pale of civilization.

As Independent Powers, we negotiated with them by treaties; as proprietors, we purchased of them all the lands which we could prevail on them to sell—as brethren of the human race, rude and ignorant, we endeavoured to bring them to the knowledge of religion and letters. The ultimate design was to incorporate in our own institutions that portion of them which could be converted to the state of civilization. In the practice of European states, before our Revolution, they had been considered as children to be governed; as tenants at discretion, to be dispossessed as occasion might require; as hunters, to be indemnified by trifling concessions for removal from the grounds upon which the game was extirpated. In changing the system, it would seem as if a full contemplation of the consequences of the change had not been taken. We have been far more successful in the acquisition of their lands than in imparting to them the principles, or inspiring them with the spirit of civilization. But in appropriating to ourselves their hunting grounds, we have brought upon ourselves the obligation of providing them with subsistence; and when we have had the rare good fortune of teaching them the arts of civilization, and the doctrines of Christianity, we have unexpectedly found them forming, in the midst of ourselves, communities claiming to be independent of ours, and rivals, of sovereignty within the territories of the members of our Union. This state of things require that a remedy should be provided. A remedy which, while it shall do justice to those unfortunate children of nature, may secure to the members of our confederation their rights of sovereignty and of soil. As the outline of a project to that effect, the views presented in the Report of the Secretary of War are recommended to the consideration of Congress.

The Report from the Engineer Department presents a comprehensive view of the progress which has been made in the great systems promotive of the public interests, commenced and organized under the authority of Congress, and the effects of which have already contributed to the security, as they will hereafter largely contribute to the honor and dignity of the nation.

The first of these great systems is that of fortifications, commenced immediately after the close of our last war, under the salutary experience which the events of that war had impressed upon our countrymen of its necessity. Introduced under the auspices of my immediate predecessor, it has been continued with the persevering and liberal encouragements of the Legislature; and combined with corresponding exertions for the gradual increase and improvement of the Navy, prepares for our extensive country a condition of defence adapted to any critical emergency which the varying course of events may bring forth. Our advances in these concerted systems have for the last two years been steady and progressive, and in a few years more will be so completed as to leave no cause for apprehension that our sea coasts will never again offer a theatre of hostile invasion.

The next of these cordial measures of policy, is the preliminary to great and lasting works of public

improvement, in the surveys of roads, examination for the course of canals, and labours for the removal of the obstructions of rivers and harbours, first commenced by the Act of Congress of 30th April 1824.

The report exhibits in one table the funds appropriated at the last and preceding Sessions of Congress, for all these fortifications, surveys, and works of public improvement; the manner in which these funds have been applied, the amount expended upon the several works under construction, and the further sums which may be necessary to complete them. In a second, the works projected by the Board of Engineers, which have not been commenced, and the estimate of their cost.

In a third, the report of the annual Board of Visitors at the Military Academy at West Point. For thirteen fortifications erecting on various points of our Atlantic coast, from Rhode Island to Louisiana, the aggregate expenditure of the year has fallen a little short of one million of dollars.

For the preparation of five additional reports of reconnoissances and surveys since the last session of Congress; for the civil constructions upon thirty-seven different public works commenced, eight others for which specific appropriations have been made by Acts of Congress, and twenty other incipient surveys under the authority given by the Act of 30th April, 1824, about one million more of dollars have been drawn from the Treasury.

To these two millions of dollars are to be added the appropriation of 250,000 dollars, to commence the erection of a Breakwater near the mouth of the Delaware river; the subscriptions to the Delaware and Chesapeake, the Louisville and Portland, the Dismal Swamp, and the Chesapeake and Ohio Canals; the large donations of lands to the States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Alabama, for objects of improvements within those states, and the sums appropriated for Light Houses, and Piers; on the coast, and a full view will be taken of the munificence of the Nation in the application of its resources to the improvement of its own condition.

Of these great national undertakings, the Academy at West Point is among the most important in itself, and the most comprehensive in its consequences. In that Institution, a part of the revenue of the Nation is applied to defray the expense of educating a competent portion of her youth, chiefly to the knowledge and the duties of military life. It is the living armory of the Nation. While the other works of improvement enumerated in the reports now presented to the attention of Congress, are destined to ameliorate the face of nature; to multiply the facilities of communication between the different parts of the Union; to assist the labors, increase the comforts, and enhance the enjoyments of individuals—the instruction acquired at West Point enlarges the dominion and expands the capacities of mind. Its beneficial results are already experienced in the composition of the army, and their influence is left in the intellectual progress of society. The instruction is susceptible still of great improvement from benefactions proposed by several successive Boards of Visitors, to whose earnest and repeated recommendations I cheerfully add my own.

With the usual annual reports from the Secretary of the Navy and the Board of Commissioners, will be exhibited to the view of Congress, the execution of the laws relating to that Department of the public service. The repression of piracy in the West Indian and in the Grecian seas has been effectually maintained with scarcely any exception. During the war between the Governments of Buenos Ayres and of Brazil, frequent collisions between belligerent acts of power and the right of neutral commerce occurred. Licentious blockades, irregularly enlisted, or impressed seamen, and the property of honest commerce seized with violence, and even plundered under legal pretences, are disorders never separable from the conflicts of the wars upon the ocean. With a portion of them, the correspondence of our commanders on the Eastern aspect of the South American coast, and among the Islands of Greece, discover how far we have been involved. In these, the honor of our country and the rights of our citizens, have been asserted and vindicated. The appearance of new squadrons in the Mediterranean, and the blockade of the Dardanelles, indicate the danger of other obstacles to the freedom of commerce, and the necessity of keeping our Naval force in these seas. To the suggestions repeated in the report of the Secretary of the Navy, and tending to the permanent improvement of this institution, I invite the favourable consideration of Congress.

A resolution of the House of Representatives,

requesting that one of our small public vessels should be sent to the Pacific Ocean and South Sea, to examine the coasts, islands, harbors, and reefs, in these seas, and to ascertain their true situation and description, has been put in a train of execution. The vessel is nearly ready to depart; the successful accomplishment of the expedition may be greatly facilitated by suitable legislative provisions; and particularly by an appropriation to defray its necessary expense. The addition of a second, and, perhaps, a third vessel, with a slight aggravation of the cost, would contribute much to the safety of the citizens embarked on this undertaking, the results of which may be of the deepest interest to our country.

With the report of the Secretary of the Navy, will be submitted, in conformity to the act of Congress, of third March, 1827, for the gradual improvement of the Navy of the United States, statements of the expenditures under that act, and of the measures taken for carrying the same into effect. Every section of that statute contains a distinct provision, looking to the great object of the whole, the gradual improvement of the Navy. Under its salutary provisions, the timber have been procured, and are in process of seasoning for the future uses of the Navy. Arrangements have been made for the preservation of the live oak timber growing on the lands of the United States, and for its re-production, to supply, at future and distant days, the waste of that most valuable material for ship-building, by the great consumption of it, yearly, for the commercial, as well as for the military marine of our country. The construction of the two Dry Docks at Charlestown and at Norfolk, is making satisfactory progress towards a durable establishment. The examinations and inquiries to ascertain the practicability and expediency of a Marine Railway at Pensacola, though not yet accomplished, have been postponed, but to become more effectually made. The Navy Yards of the United States have been examined, and plans for their improvement, and the preservation of the public property therein; at Portsmouth, Charleston, Philadelphia, Washington, and Gosport; and to which two others are to be added, have been prepared, and received my sanction; and no other portion of my public duties has been performed with a more intimate conviction of its importance to the future welfare and security of the Union.

With the report from the Postmaster-General, is exhibited, a comparative view of the gradual increase of that establishment, from five to five years, since 1792, till this time, in the number of Post Offices, which has grown from less than two hundred to nearly eight thousand; in the revenue yielded by them, which from sixty-seven thousand dollars, has swollen to upwards of a million and a half, and in the number of miles of Post Roads, which, from five thousand six hundred and forty-two, have multiplied to one hundred and fourteen thousand five hundred and thirty-six. While, in the same period of time, the population of the Union has about thrice-doubled, the rate of increase of these offices is nearly forty, and of the revenue, and of travelled miles, from twenty to twenty-five for one. The increase of revenue, within the last five years, has been nearly equal to the whole revenue of the Department in 1812.

The expenditures of the Department, during the year which ended on the 1st of July last, have exceeded the receipts by a sum of about twenty-five thousand dollars. The excess has been occasioned by the increase of mail conveyances and facilities to the extent of near eight hundred thousand miles. It has been supplied by collections from the Postmasters, of the arrearages of preceding years. While the correct principle seems to be, that the income levied by the department should defray all its expenses, it has never been the policy of this Government to raise from this establishment any revenue to be applied to any other purposes. The suggestion of the Postmaster General, that the insurance of the safe transmission of moneys by the mail, might be assumed by the department, for a moderate and competent remuneration, will deserve the consideration of Congress.

A report from the Commissioner of the public Buildings in this City exhibits the expenditures upon them in the course of the current year. It will be seen that the humane and benevolent intentions of Congress in providing, by the act of 20th May, 1826, for the erection of a Penitentiary in this District, have been accomplished. The authority of further legislation is now required for the removal