



TO THINE OWN SELF BE TRUE, AND IT MUST FOLLOW, AS THE

NIGHT THE DAY, THOU CANST NOT THEN BE FALSE TO ANY MAN.

BY ROBT. A. THOMPSON & CO.

PICKENS COURT HOUSE, S. C. SATURDAY, MAY 11, 1861.

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POLITICAL.

Extra Session of the Southern Congress. MONTGOMERY, ALA., April 20, 1861.—Congress assembled to-day at noon, in compliance with the proclamation of President Davis, convening an extra session.

At 12 o'clock, the President of Congress, the Hon. Howell Cobb, took his chair, and the Rev. Basil Manley offered a fervent invocation to the Throne of Grace.

The President stated that a quorum was present and that Congress was now ready to transact business.

Messrs. Davis, Jones, Wigfall and Orr, new members, came forward, took the oath, and subscribed to the Constitution.

The President presented to Congress the annexed communication from a portion of the people of New Mexico:

MESILLA, March 18, 1861. To the Hon. Howell Cobb, President of the Congress of the Confederate States of America:

Sir: In pursuance of a resolution adopted at a convention of the citizens of that portion of New Mexico known as Arizona, held at this place on the 16th inst., I have the honor herewith to transmit the enclosed preamble and resolutions, unanimously adopted, with the hope and request that you will lay them before the Congress of the Confederate States of America for their consideration.

Signed by the President and Secretary. On motion of Mr. Chesnut, the reading of the preamble and resolutions referred to, was postponed for the present, and the communication was referred to the Committee on Territories.

Mr. Ochiltree, of Texas, requested to present to Congress a communication from the Governor of the Territory of Arizona, transmitting a copy of the Provisional Constitution, with the request that it be presented to Congress. The communication was received, and referred to the Territorial Committee.

Mr. Joselyn, the President's private Secretary, then appeared in the Hall, and stated that he had a message from the President.

The message was then read in a very distinct tone as follows:

GENTLEMEN OF THE CONGRESS: It is my pleasing duty to announce to you that the Constitution framed for the establishment of a permanent government for the Confederate States has been ratified by Convention in each of those States to which it was referred. To inaugurate the Government in its full proportions and upon its own substantial basis of the popular will, it only remains that elections should be held for the designation of the officers to administer it.

There is every reason to believe that at no distant day, other States identified in political principles and community of interests with those which you represent will join this Confederacy, giving to its typical constellation increased splendor to its government of free, equal and sovereign States a wider sphere of usefulness—and to the friends of constitutional liberty a greater security for its harmonious and perpetual existence.

It was, not, however, for the purpose of making this announcement that I have deputed it my duty to convene you at an earlier day than that fixed by yourselves for your meeting. The declaration of war made against this Confederacy by Abraham Lincoln, the President of the United States, in his proclamation, issued on the fifteenth day of the present month, rendered it necessary in my judgment that you should convene at the earliest practicable moment, to devise the measure necessary for the defence of the country.

The occasion is indeed an extraordinary one. It justifies me in a brief review of the relations heretofore existing between us and the States which now unite in warfare against us, and in a succinct statement of the events which have resulted in this warfare, to the end that mankind may pass intelligent and impartial judgment on its motives and objects.

During the war waged against Great Britain by her colonies on this continent, it common danger impelled them to a close alliance, and to the formation of a Confederation, by the terms of which the colonies, styling themselves States, entered "severally into a firm league of friendship with each other for their common defence, the security of their liberties, and their mutual and general welfare, binding themselves to assist each other against all force offered to, or attacks made upon them, or any of them, on account of religion, sovereignty, trade, or any other pretence whatever."

In order to guard against any misconception of their compact, the several States made explicit declaration, in a distinct article, that "each State retains its sovereignty, freedom and independence, and every power, jurisdiction and right, which is not by this Confederation expressly delegated to the United States in Congress assembled."

Under this contract of alliance, the war of the revolution was successfully waged, and resulted in the treaty of peace with Great Britain in 1783, by the terms of which the several States were, each by name, recognized to be independent.

The articles of confederation contained a clause whereby all alterations were prohibited, unless, confirmed by the Legislatures of every State, after being agreed to by Congress; and in obedience to this provision under the resolution of Congress of the 21st February, 1784, the several States appointed delegates who attended a Convention for the able and express purpose of revising the articles of confederation, and reporting to Congress and the several Legislatures such alterations and provisions therein as shall, when agreed to in Congress, and confirmed by the States, render the Federal Constitution adequate to the exigencies of government and the preservation of the Union.

It was, by the delegates chosen by the several States, under the resolution just quoted, that the Constitution of the United States was framed in 1787, and submitted to the several

States for ratification, as shown by the seventh article, which is in these words: "The ratification of the Convention of nine States shall be sufficient for the establishment of this Constitution between the States so ratifying the same."

I have italicized certain words in the quotations just made, for the purpose of attracting attention to the singular and marked caution with which the States endeavored, in every possible form, to exclude the idea that the separate and independent sovereignty of each State was merged into one common Government and nation; and the earnest desire they evinced to impress on the Constitution its true character—that of a compact between independent States. The Constitution of 1787 having however, omitted the clause already recited from the Articles of Confederation, which provided in explicit terms that each State retained its sovereignty and independence, some alarm was seen in the States when invited to ratify the Constitution, lest this omission should be construed into an abandonment of their cherished principles, and they refused to be satisfied until amendments were added to the Constitution, placing beyond any pretence or doubt, the reservation, by the States, of all their sovereign rights and powers—not expressly delegated to the United States by the Constitution.

Strange indeed must it appear to the impartial observer, but it is none the less true, all these carefully worded clauses proved unavailing to prevent the rise and growth in the Northern States of a political school which has persistently claimed that the Government thus formed was not a compact between States, but was in effect a National Government, set up above and over the States. An organization, created by the States to secure the blessings of liberty and independence against foreign aggressions, has been gradually perverted into a machine for their control in their domestic affairs; the creature has been exalted above its creators, the principals have been made subordinate to the agent appointed by themselves.

The people of the Southern States, whose almost exclusive occupation was agriculture, early perceived a tendency in the Northern States to render the common Government subservient to their own purposes, by imposing burthens on commerce as a protection to their manufacturing and shipping interests. Long an angry controversy grew out of these attempts, often successful, to benefit one section of the country at the expense of the other.—And the danger of disruption arising from this cause was enhanced by the fact that Northern population was increasing by immigration and other causes in a greater ratio than the population of the South. By degrees, as the Northern States gained preponderance in the National Congress, self interest taught their people to yield ready assent to any plausible advocacy of their rights as a majority to govern the minority without control; they learned to listen with impatience to the suggestion of any Constitutional impediment to the exercise of their will; and so utterly have the principles of the Constitution been corrupted in the Northern mind, that in the inaugural address delivered by President Lincoln in March last, he asserts as an axiom which he plainly deems to be undeniable, that the theory of the Constitution requires that in all cases the majority shall govern; and in another memorable instance, the same Chief Magistrate did not hesitate to liken the relations between a State and the United States to those which exist between a county and a State in which it is situated, and by which it was created. This is the lamentable and fundamental error on which rests the policy that has culminated in his declaration of war against these Confederate States.

In addition to the long-continued and deep-seated resentment felt by the Southern States at the persistent abuse of the powers they had delegated to the Congress, for the purpose of enriching the manufacturing and shipping classes at the North at the expense of the South, there has existed for nearly half a century another subject of discord, involving interests of such transcendent magnitude, as at all times to create the apprehension in the minds of many devoted lovers of the Union that its permanence was impossible.

When the several States delegated certain powers to the United States Congress, a large portion of the laboring population consisted of African slaves imported into the colonies by the mother country. In twelve out of the thirteen States, negro slavery existed and the right of property in slaves was protected by law. This property was recognized in the Constitution, and provision was made against its loss by the escape of the slave. The increase in the number of slaves by further importation from Africa was also secured by a clause forbidding Congress to prohibit the slave trade anterior to a certain date; and in no clause can there be found any delegation of power to the Congress authorizing it in any manner to legislate to the prejudice, detriment or discouragement of the owners of that species of property, or excluding it from the protection of the Government.

The climate and soil of the Northern States soon proved unpropitious to the continuance of slave labor, whilst the converse was the case at the South. Under the unrestricted free intercourse between the two sections, the Northern States consulted their own interest by selling their slaves to the South, and prohibiting slavery within their limits. The South were willing purchasers of a property suitable to their wants, and paid the price of the acquisition without harboring a suspicion that their quiet possession was to be disturbed by those who were inhibited, not only by want of Constitutional authority, but by good faith as vendors, from disquieting a title emanating from themselves.

As soon, however, as the Northern States that prohibited African slavery within their limits had reached a number sufficient to give their representation a controlling voice in the Congress, a persistent and organized system of hostile measures against the rights of the

owners of slaves in the Southern States was inaugurated, and gradually extended. A continuous series of measures was devised and prosecuted for the purpose of rendering insecure the tenure of property in slaves. Fanatical organizations, supplied with money by voluntary subscriptions, were assiduously engaged in exciting amongst the slaves a spirit of discontent and revolt; means were furnished for their escape from their owners, and agents secretly employed to entice them to abscond; the Constitutional provision for their rendition to their owners was first evaded, then openly denounced as a violation of conscientious obligation and a religious duty; men were taught that it was a merit to elude, disobey, and violently oppose the execution of the laws enacted to secure the performance of the promise contained in the Constitutional compact; owners of slaves were mobbed and even murdered in open day, solely for applying to a magistrate for the arrest of a fugitive slave; the dogmas of these voluntary organizations soon obtained control of the Legislatures of many of the Northern States, and laws were passed providing for the punishment by ruinous fines and long continued imprisonment in jails and penitentiaries, of citizens of the Southern States, who should dare to ask aid of the officers of the law for the recovery of their property. Emboldened by success, the theatre of agitation and aggression against the clearly expressed Constitutional rights of the Southern States was transferred to the Congress; Senators and Representatives were sent to the common councils of the nation, whose chief title to this distinction consisted in the display of a spirit of ultra fanaticism, and whose business was, not "to promote the general welfare or insure domestic tranquility," but to awaken the bitterest hatred against the citizens of sister States by violent denunciation of their institutions; the transaction of public affairs was impeded by repeated efforts to usurp powers not delegated by the Constitution, for the purpose of impairing the security of property in slaves, and reducing those States which held slaves to a condition of inferiority. Finally, a great party was organized for the purpose of obtaining the administration of the Government, with the avowed object of using its power for the total exclusion of the slave States from all participation in the benefits of the public domain, acquired by all the States in common, whether by conquest or purchase; of surrounding them entirely by States in which slavery should be prohibited; of thus rendering the property in slaves so insecure as to be comparatively worthless, and thereby annihilating in effect property worth thousands of millions of dollars. This party, thus organized, succeeded, in the month of November last, in the election of its candidate for the Presidency of the United States.

In the meantime, under the mild and genial climate of the Southern States, and the increasing care and attention for the well-being and comfort of the laboring class, dictated alike by interest and humanity, the African slaves had augmented in number from about 600,000 at the date of the adoption of the Constitutional compact, to upwards of 4,000,000. In moral and social condition they had been elevated from brutal savages into docile, intelligent and civilized agricultural laborers, and supplied not only with bodily comforts, but with careful religious instruction. Under the supervision of a superior race, their labor has been so directed as not only to allow a gradual and marked amelioration of their own condition, but to convert hundreds of thousands of square miles of the wilderness into cultivated lands, covered with a prosperous people; towns and cities had sprung into existence, and had rapidly increased in wealth and population under the social system of the South; the white population of the Southern slaveholding States had augmented from about 1,250,000 at the date of the adoption of the Constitution, to more than 8,500,000 in 1860; and the productions of the South in cotton, rice, sugar and tobacco, for the full development and continuance of which the labor of African slaves was, and is, indispensable, had swollen to an amount which formed nearly three-fourths of the exports of the whole United States, and had become absolutely necessary to the wants of civilized men.

With interests of such overwhelming magnitude imperilled, the people of the Southern States were driven by the conduct of the North to the adoption of some course of action to avert the danger with which they were openly menaced. With this view, the Legislature of the several States invited the people to select delegates to conventions to be held for the purpose of determining for themselves what measures were best adapted to meet so alarming a crisis in their history.

Here it may be proper to observe that from a period as early as 1798, there had existed in all of the States of the Union a party, almost uninterruptedly in the majority, based upon the creed that each State was, in the last resort, the sole judge as well of its wrongs, as of the mode and measure of redress. Indeed, it is obvious, that under the law of nations, this principle is an axiom as applied to the relations of independent sovereign States, such as those which had united themselves under the Constitutional compact. The Democratic party of the United States repeated in its successful canvass of 1856, the declaration made in numerous previous political contests, that it would "faithfully abide by and uphold the principles laid down in the Kentucky and Virginia resolutions of 1798, and in the report of Mr. Madison to the Virginia Legislature in 1799; and that it adopts those principles as constituting one of the main foundations of its political creed."

The principles thus emphatically announced embraced that to which I have already adverted, the right of each State to judge of, and redress the wrongs of which it complains. These principles were maintained by overwhelming majorities of the people of all the States of the Union at different elections, especially in the elections of Mr. Jefferson in 1805, Mr. Madison in 1808, and Pierce in

1852. In the exercise of a right so ancient, so well established, and so necessary for self-preservation, the people of the Confederate States in their Conventions, determined that the wrongs which they had suffered, and the evils with which they were menaced, required that they should revoke the delegation of powers to the Federal Government which they had ratified in their several Conventions. They consequently passed ordinances resuming all their rights as sovereign and independent States, and dissolved their connection with the other States of the Union.

Having done this, they proceeded to form a new compact among themselves, by new articles of Confederation, which have been also ratified by the several States with an approach to unanimity far exceeding that of the Conventions which adopted the Constitution of 1787. They have organized their new Governments in all its departments; the functions of the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial Magistrates are performed in accordance with the will of the people, as displayed not merely in a cheerful acquiescence, but in the enthusiastic support of the Government thus established by themselves; and but for the interference of the Government of the United States in this legitimate exercise of the right of a people in self-government, peace, happiness, and prosperity would now smile on our land.

That peace is ardently desired by this Government and people, has been manifested in every possible form. Scarcely had you assembled in February last, when, prior even to the inauguration of the Chief Magistrate you had elected, you passed a resolution expressive of your desire for the appointment of Commissioners to be sent to the Government of the United States, "for the purpose of negotiating friendly relations between that Government and the Confederate States of America, and for the settlement of all questions of disagreement between the two Governments, upon principles of right, justice, equality and good faith."

It was my pleasure, as well as my duty, to co-operate with you in this work of peace. Indeed, in my advice to you on taking the oath of office, and before receiving from you the communication of this resolution, I had said, "as a necessity, not a choice, we have resorted to the remedy of separation, and henceforth our energies must be directed to the conduct of our own affairs and the perpetuity of the Confederacy which we have formed. If a just perception of mutual interest shall permit us peaceably to pursue our separate political career, my most earnest desire will have been fulfilled."

It was in furtherance of these accordant views of the Congress and the Executive that I made choice of three discreet, able and distinguished citizens, who repaired to Washington. Aided by their cordial co-operation, and that of the Secretary of State, every effort compatible with self-respect and the dignity of the Confederacy was exhausted before I allowed myself to yield to the conviction that the Government of the United States was determined to attempt the conquest of this people, and that our cherished hopes of peace were unattainable.

On the arrival of our Commissioners in Washington, on the 5th of March, they postponed, at the suggestion of a friendly intermediary, doing more than giving an informal notice of their arrival. This was done with a view to afford time to the President who had just been inaugurated, for the discharge of other pressing official duties in the organization of his administration, before engaging his attention in the object of their mission. It was not until the 12th of the month that they officially addressed the Secretary of State, informing him of the purpose of their arrival, and stating, in the language of their instructions, their wish "to make to the Government of the United States, overtures for the opening of negotiations, assuring the Government of the United States, that the President, Congress, and people of the Confederate States earnestly desire a peaceful solution of these great questions; that it is neither their interest nor their wish to make any demand which is not founded on the strictest justice, nor do any act to injure their late confederates."

To this communication no formal reply was received until the 8th April. During the interval the Commissioners had consented to waive all questions of form. With the firm resolve to avoid war, if possible, they went so far even as to hold, during that long period, unofficial intercourse through an intermediary, whose high position and character inspired the hope of success, and through whom constant assurances were received from the Government of the United States of peaceful intentions, of the determination to evacuate Fort Sumter; and further, that no measures, changing the existing status prejudicially to the Confederate States, especially at Fort Pickens, was in contemplation; but that, in the event of any change of intention on the subject, notice would be given to the Commissioners. The crooked paths of diplomacy can scarcely furnish an example so wanting in courtesy, in candor, and directness, as was the course of the United States Government towards our Commissioners in Washington. For proof of this I refer to the annexed documents marked "A," taken in connection with further facts which I now proceed to relate.

Early in April, the attention of the whole country, as well as that of our Commissioners, was attracted to extraordinary preparations for an extensive military and naval expedition in New York and other Northern ports. These preparations commenced in secrecy, for an expedition whose destination was concealed, or became known when nearly completed, and on the 6th, 8th and 7th April, transports and vessels of war, with troops, munitions and military supplies, sailed from Northern ports bound southwards. A hurried and extraordinary demonstration, the Commissioners requested the delivery of an answer to their official communication of the

12th March, and thereupon received, on the 8th April, a reply dated on the 15th of the previous month, from which it appears that, during the whole interval, whilst the Commissioners were receiving assurances, calculated to inspire hope of the success of their mission, the Secretary of State and the President of the United States had already determined to hold no intercourse with them whatever; to refuse even to listen to any proposals they had to make, and had profited by the delay created by their own assurances, in order to prepare secretly the means for effective hostile operations.

That these assurances were given, has been virtually confessed by the Government of the United States by its sending a messenger to Charleston, to give notice of its purpose, to use force, if opposed in its intention of supplying Fort Sumter. No more striking proof of the absence of good faith in the conduct of the Government of the United States towards the Confederacy can be required than is contained in the circumstances which accompanied this notice. According to the usual course of navigation, the vessels composing the expedition designed for the relief of Fort Sumter, might be expected to reach Charleston harbor on the 9th of April; yet, with our Commissioners actually in Washington, detained under assurances that notice should be given of any military movement, the notice was not addressed to them; but a messenger was sent to Charleston to give the notice to the Governor of South Carolina, and the notice was so given at a late hour on the 8th of April, the eve of the very day on which the fleet might be expected to arrive. That this manoeuvre failed in its purpose was not the fault of those who contrived it.

A heavy tempest delayed the arrival of the expedition, and gave time to the commander of our forces at Charleston to ask and receive the instructions of this Government. Even then, under all the provocation incident to the contemptuous refusal to listen to our Commissioners, and the tortuous course of the Government of the United States, I was sincerely anxious to avoid the effusion of blood, and directed a proposal to be made to the commander of Fort Sumter, who had avowed himself to be nearly out of provisions, that we would abstain from directing our fire on Fort Sumter if he would promise not to open fire on our forces unless first attacked. This proposal was refused, and the conclusion was reached that the design of the United States was to place the besieging force at Charleston between the simultaneous fire of the fleet and the fort. There remained, therefore, no alternative but to direct that the fort should at once be reduced.

This order was executed by General Beauregard, with the skill and success which were naturally to be expected from the well known character of that gallant officer; and although the bombardment lasted but thirty-three hours, our flag did not wave over its battered walls, until after the appearance of the hostile fleet off Charleston. Fortunately, not a life was lost on our side, and we were gratified in being spared the necessity of a useless effusion of blood by the prudent caution of the officers who commanded the fleet, in abstaining from the evidently futile effort to enter the harbor for the relief of Major Anderson. I refer to the report of the Secretary of War and the papers which accompany it for details of this brilliant affair.

In this connection I cannot refrain from a well deserved tribute to the noble State, the eminent soldierly qualities of whose people were so conspicuously displayed in the port of Charleston. For months they had been irritated by the spectacle of a fortress held within their principal harbor, as a standing menace against their peace and independence. Built in part with their own money, and its custody confided with their own consent to an agent who held no power over them other than such as they had themselves delegated for their own benefit, intended to be used by that agent for their own protection against foreign attack, they saw it held with persistent tenacity as a means of offence against them by the very Government which they had established for their protection. They had beleaguered it for months—felt entire confidence of their own power to capture it—yet, yielded to the requirements of discipline, curbed their impatience, submitted without complaint to the unaccustomed hardships, labors and privations of a protracted siege; and when at length their patience was rewarded by the signal for attack, and success had crowned their steady and gallant conduct—even in the very moment of triumph—they evinced a chivalrous regard for the feelings of the brave but unfortunate officer who had been compelled to lower his flag. All manifestations of exultation were checked in his presence.

Their commanding General, with their cordial approval and the consent of his Government, refrained from imposing any terms that could wound the sensibilities of the commander of the fort. He was permitted to retire with the honors of war—to salute his flag, to depart freely with all his command, and was escorted to the vessel in which he embarked, with the highest marks of respect from those against whom his guns had been so recently directed. Not only does every event connected with the siege reflect the highest honor on South Carolina, but the forbearance of her people and of this Government from making any harsh use of a victory obtained under circumstances of such peculiar provocation, attest to the fullest extent the absence of any purpose beyond securing their own tranquillity, and the sincere desire to avoid the calamities of war.

Scarcely had the President of the United States received intelligence of the failure of the scheme which he had devised for the reinforcement of Fort Sumter, when he issued the declaration of war against this Confederacy, which has prompted me to convey you. In this extraordinary production, that high functionary affects total ignorance of the existence of an independent Government, which, possessing the entire and undisputed direction of

its people, is exercising its functions without question over seven sovereign States—over more than five millions of people—and over a territory whose area exceeds half a million of square miles. He terms sovereign States "combinations too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings, or by the powers vested in the marshals by law." He calls for an army of seventy-five thousand men to act as a posse comitatus in aid of the process of the courts of justice in States where no courts exist, whose mandates and decrees are not cheerfully obeyed and respected by a willing people. He avows that "the first service to be assigned to the forces called out, will be, not to execute the process of the courts, but to capture forts and strongholds situated within the admitted limits of this Confederacy, and garrisoned by its troops; and declares that "this effort" is intended to maintain the perpetuity of popular Government." He concludes by commanding "the persons composing the combinations aforesaid," to wit: the five millions of these States, "to retire peaceably to their respective abodes within twenty days."

Apparently contradictory as are the terms of this singular document, one point was unmistakably evident. The President of the United States called for an army of seventy-five thousand men, whose first service was to be to capture our forts. It was a plain declaration of war, which I was not at liberty to disregard, because of my knowledge that under the Constitution of the United States, the President was usurping a power granted exclusively to the Congress. He is the sole organ of communication between that country and foreign powers. The law of nations did not permit me to question the authority of the Executive of a foreign nation to declare war against this Confederacy. Although I might have refrained from taking active measures for our defence, if the States of the Union had all intimated the action of Virginia, North Carolina, Arkansas, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri, by denouncing the call for troops as an unconstitutional usurpation of power to which they refused to respond, I was not at liberty to disregard the fact that many of the States seemed quite content to submit to the exercise of the power assumed by the President of the United States, and were actively engaged in levying troops to be used for the purpose indicated in the proclamation.

Deprived of the aid of Congress at the moment, I was under the necessity of confining my action to a call on the States for volunteers for the common defence, in accordance with the authority you had confided to me before your adjournment. I deemed it proper further to issue proclamation inviting applications from persons disposed to aid our defence in private armed vessels on the high seas, to the end that preparations might be made for the immediate issue of letters of marque and reprisal, which you alone, under the Constitution, have power to grant. I entertain no doubt you will concur with me in the opinion that in the absence of a fleet of public vessels, it will be eminently expedient to supply their place by private armed vessels, so happily styled by the publicists of the United States "the militia of the sea," and so often and justly relied on by them as an efficient and admirable instrument of defensive warfare. I earnestly recommend the immediate passage of a law authorizing me to accept the numerous proposals already received.

I cannot close this review of the acts of the Government of the United States without referring to a proclamation issued by their President under date of the 19th inst., in which, after declaring that an insurrection had broken out in this Confederacy against the Government of the United States, he announces a blockade of all the ports of these States, and threatens to punish as pirates all persons who shall assist any vessel of the United States under letters of marque issued by this Government. Notwithstanding the authenticity of this proclamation, you will concur with me that it is hard to believe it could have emanated from a President of the United States. As an announcement of a mere paper blockade, so manifestly a violation of the law of nations, that it would seem incredible that it could have been issued by authority—but conceding this to be the case so far as the Executive is concerned, it will be difficult to satisfy the people of these States that their late confederates will sanction its declarations, will determine to ignore the usages of civilized nations, and will inaugurate a war of extermination on both sides, by treating as pirates, open enemies acting under the authority of commissions issued by an organized Government. If such proclamation was issued, it could only have been published under the sudden influence of passion, and we may rest assured mankind will be spared the horrors of the conflict it seems to invite.

For the details of the administration of the different departments, I refer to the reports of the Secretaries which accompany this message.

The State Department has furnished the necessary instructions for three Commissioners who have been sent to England, France, Russia and Belgium, since your adjournment, to ask our recognition as a member of the family of nations, and to make with each of those powers treaties of amity and commerce. Further steps will be taken to enter into like negotiations with the other European powers in pursuance of your resolutions passed at the last session. Sufficient time has not yet elapsed since the departure of these Commissioners for the receipt of intelligence from them. As I deem it desirable that Commissioners or other diplomatic agents should also be sent at an early period to the independent American powers South of our Confederacy, with all of whom it is our interest and earnest wish to maintain the most cordial and friendly relations, I suggest the expediency of making the necessary preparations for that purpose.

Having been officially notified by the public authorities of the State of Virginia that