

# THE DESERET NEWS.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

No. 45.

Salt Lake City, Wednesday, December 10, 1873.

Vol. XXII.

ESTABLISHED 1850.

## THE DESERET NEWS, WEEKLY.

One copy, one year, in advance, \$4.00  
" six months, " " 2.00  
" three " " " 1.00

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DAVID O. CALDER,

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

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## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

### The Financial Crisis—The "Virginus."

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

The year that has passed since the submission of my last message to Congress, has, especially the latter part of it, been an eventful one to the country. In the midst of great national prosperity, a financial crisis has occurred that has brought low the fortunes of a great many. Political partisanship has almost ceased to exist, especially in the agricultural region; and the capture upon the high seas of a vessel bearing our flag has, for a time, threatened the most serious consequences, and agitated the public mind from one end of the country to the other. This, happily, now is in the course of a satisfactory adjustment honorable to both the nations concerned.

### Relations with Foreign Powers.

The relations of the United States, however, with most of the other nations continues to be friendly and cordial. With France, Germany, Russia, Italy, and the minor powers, with Brazil and most of the South American republics, and with Japan, nothing has occurred during the year to demand special notice. The correspondence between the departments of State and the various diplomatic representatives in or from those countries is transmitted herewith.

### The Vienna Exhibition.

In executing the will of Congress, as expressed in its joint resolution of the 14th of February last, and in accordance with the provisions of the resolution, a number of practical artisans, of scientific men, and of honorary commission, were authorized to attend the Exposition at Vienna, as commissioners on the part of the U. S. It is believed that we have obtained the object which Congress had in view when it passed the joint resolution in order to enable the people of the U. S. to participate in the advantages of an international exhibition of the products of agriculture, manufactures, and the fine arts, to be held in Vienna. I take pleasure in adding that the American exhibitors have received a gratifying number of diplomas and of medals. During the exhibition a conference was held in Vienna for the purpose of consultation on the systems prevailing in different countries for the perfection of inventions. I authorized a representative from the Patent Office to be present at Vienna at the time when this conference was to take place, in order to aid, as far as he might, in securing any possible additional protection to American inventors in Europe. The report of this agent will be laid before Congress.

### China—The Coolie Traffic.

It is my pleasant duty to announce to Congress that the Emperor of China, on attaining his

majority, received the diplomatic representatives of the western powers in person. An account of these ceremonies and of the interesting discussion which preceded them will be found in the documents transmitted herewith.

The accompanying papers show that some advance, although slight, has been made during the past year towards the suppression of the infamous Chinese coolie trade. I recommend Congress to inquire whether additional legislation be needed on this subject.

### The Geneva Award.

The money awarded to the U. S. by the Tribunal of Arbitration at Geneva was paid by Her Majesty's government a few days in advance of the time when it would have become payable according to the terms of the treaty. In compliance with the provisions of the act of March 3rd, 1873, it was at once paid into the treasury, and used to redeem, so far as it might, the public debt of the U. S., and the amount so redeemed was invested in five per cent. registered bonds of the U. S. for fifteen millions five hundred thousand dollars, which is now held by the Secretary of State, subject to the future disposition of Congress.

I renew my recommendation, made at the assembling of the last session of Congress, that a commission be created for the purpose of auditing and determining the amounts of the several direct losses growing out of the destruction of vessels and their cargoes by the *Alabama* and the *Shenandoah* after leaving Melbourne, for which the sufferers have received no equivalent or compensation, and of ascertaining the names of persons entitled to receive compensation for the same, making the computations on the basis indicated by the Tribunal of Arbitration at Geneva, and that the payment of such losses be authorized to an extent not to exceed the award of the Tribunal at Geneva.

### The Boundary Question.

By the act approved on the 14th day of February last, Congress made provision for completing, jointly with an officer or commissioner to be named by her Britannic Majesty, the determination of so much of the boundary line between the territory of Great Britain as was left incomplete by the commissioners appointed under the act of Congress of August 11th, 1856. Under the provisions of this act the northwest water boundary of the U. S. has been determined, and marked in accordance with the award of the Emperor of Germany. A protocol and a copy of the map upon which the line was thus marked are contained in the paper submitted here. I also transmit a copy of the report of the commission for making the boundary between the U. S. and the British possessions west of the Lake of the Woods, and of the operations of the commissioners during the past season's surveys, which have been made to a point 497 miles west of the Lake of the Woods, leaving about 350 miles to be surveyed, the field work of which can be completed during the next season.

### British Claims Commission.

The commission organized under the provisions of the treaty of Washington for the settlement and determining of the claims of citizens of either power against the other, arising out of the acts committed against their persons or property during the period between April 13th, 1861, and April 9th, 1865, made its final award on the 10th day of September last. It was awarded that the government of the U. S. should pay to the government of her Britannic Majesty, within twelve months from the date of the award, the sum of \$1,929,819 in gold. The commission disallowed or dismissed all other claims of British subjects against the U. S. The amount of the claims presented by the British government, but disallowed or dismissed, were understood to be about ninety-three millions of dollars. It also disallowed all the claims of the U. S. against Great Britain which were referred to in it. I recommend the

early passing of an act appropriating the amount necessary to pay this award against the U. S. I have caused to be communicated to the government of the King of Italy the thanks of this government for the eminent services rendered by Count Contas, the third commissioner on this commission, for the dignity, learning and impartiality with which he discharged duties requiring great labor and constant patience, to the satisfaction, I believe, of both governments.

### Claims of Aliens.

I recommend legislation to create a special court, to consist of three judges, who shall be empowered to hear the claims of aliens upon the United States, arising out of acts committed against their persons or property during the insurrection. The recent conference under the treaty of Washington was confined to the claims of British subjects arising during the period named in the treaty, but it is understood that there are other British claims of a similar nature, arising after the 9th of April, 1865, and it is known that other claims of a like nature are advanced by the citizens or subjects of other powers. It is desirable to have these claims also examined and disposed of. The distinguished representative of her Britannic Majesty at Washington, has kindly consented, with the approval of his government, to assume the arduous and responsible duties of umpire, and to lend the weight of his character and name to such decisions as may not receive the acquiescence of the arbitrators appointed by the respective governments.

### The Acheen War.

Official information has been received from the Dutch government of a state of war between the King of the Netherlands and the Sultan of Acheen. The officers of the U. S. who were near the seat of war were instructed to observe an impartial neutrality, and it is believed that they have done so.

### Mexican Commission.

The joint commission of 1868, under the convention with Mexico, having again been legally prolonged, has resumed its business, which it is hoped may be brought to an early conclusion.

### Raid into Texas.

The commissioner appointed, pursuant to the authority of Congress, to examine the nature and extent of forays by trespassers from Mexico upon the herds of Texas, have made a report, which will be handed you for your consideration.

### Venezuela.

The Venezuela government has been apprised of the sense of Congress in regard to the award of the joint commissioners under the convention of the 25th of April, 1863, as expressed in the act of the 25th of February last. It is apprehended that that government does not realize the character of its obligations under the convention. There is reason to believe, however, that its hesitancy in recognizing the same springs, in part at least, from real difficulty in discharging its obligations to other governments. The expediency of further forbearance on our part is believed to be worthy of your consideration.

### Judicial Power of Foreign Consuls.

The Ottoman government and that of Egypt have latterly shown a disposition to relieve foreign Consuls of the judicial powers which, heretofore, they have exercised in the Turkish dominions, by organizing other tribunals. As Congress, however, has by law provided for the discharge of judicial functions by the Consuls of the United States in that quarter, under the treaty of 1830, I have not felt at liberty, formally, to accept the present change without the assent of Congress, whose decision upon the subject, at as early a period as may be convenient, is earnestly requested.

### Dominican Protectorate.

I transmit, for the consideration and determination of Congress, an application of the Republic of Santo Domingo to this government to exercise a protectorate over that republic.

### Treaties.

Since the adjournment of Congress the following treaties with foreign powers have been proclaimed: A naturalization convention with Denmark; a convention with Mexico for renewing the Claims commission, a convention of friendship, commerce and extradition with the Orange Free States, and a naturalization convention with Ecuador.

### Postal Commissions.

I renew the recommendation made in my message of December, 1870, that Congress authorize the Postmaster General to issue all commissions to officials appointed through his department.

### Extradition and Naturalization.

I invite the earnest attention of Congress to the existing laws of the United States respecting extraditions and the eligibility for nationality by individuals. Many citizens of the United States reside permanently abroad with their families. Under the provisions of an act approved February 10th, 1855, "the children of such persons are to be deemed and taken to be citizens of the United States; but the rights of citizenship are not to descend to persons whose fathers never resided in the United States. It thus happens that persons who have never resided within the United States have been enabled to put forward pretensions to the protection of the United States against the claims of military service of the Government under whose protection they were born and have been reared. In some cases unnaturalized citizens of the United States have returned to the land of their birth to remain there, and their children, the issue of a marriage contracted there after their return, and who have never been in the United States, have laid claim to our protection when the elapse of many years has imposed upon them the duty of military service to the only government which had ever known them personally. Until the year 1868 this mission was left embarrassed by the conflicting opinions of courts and of jurists to determine how far the doctrine of perpetual allegiance, derived from our former colonial relations with Great Britain, was applicable to American citizens. Congress then wisely swept the doubts away by electing that any declaration, instruction, opinion, order or decision of any officers of the government which denies, restricts, impairs or questions the right of expatriation, is inconsistent with the fundamental principle of this government. But Congress did not indicate in that statute, nor has it since done so, what acts are to be deemed to work expatriation. For my own guidance in determining such questions, I have required, under the provisions of the constitution, the opinion in writing of the principal officer in each of the executive departments on certain questions relating to this subject. The result satisfies me that further legislation has become necessary. I therefore commend the subject to the careful consideration of Congress, and I transmit herewith copies of the several opinions of the principal officers of the executive departments, together with other correspondence and information on the same subject. The United States, which led the way in the overthrow of the feudal doctrine of perpetual allegiance, are among the last to indicate how their own citizens may elect another nationality. These papers, submitted herewith, indicate what is necessary to place us on a par with other leading nations in the liberty of legislation on this international question. We have already in our treaties assented to principles which would need to be embodied in laws intended to accomplish such results; we have agreed that citizens of the United States may cease to be citizens, and may voluntarily render allegiance to other Powers; we have agreed that residence in a foreign land, without intent to return, shall of itself work expatriation; we have agreed, in some instances, upon the length of time necessary for such intent. I invite Congress now to mark out

and define when and how expatriation can be accomplished, to regulate by law the condition of American women marrying foreigners, to fix the status of children born, in a foreign country, of American parents residing more or less permanently abroad, and to make rules for determining such other kindred points as may seem best to Congress.

### The Spanish Republic.

In compliance with the request of Congress, I transmitted to the American Minister at Madrid, with instruction to present it to the Spanish Government, the joint resolution approved on the 3rd of March last, tendering to the people of Spain, in the name and on behalf of the American people, the congratulations of Congress upon the efforts to consolidate, in Spain, the principles of universal liberty in a republican form of government. The existence of this new republic was inaugurated by striking the fetters from the slaves in Porto Rico. This beneficent measure was followed by the release of several thousands of persons illegally held as slaves in Cuba. Next the Captain was deprived of power to set aside the letters of his superiors at Madrid, which had pertained to his office since 1825, the sequestration of the estates of American citizens, which had been the cause of long and frequent correspondence, were ordered to be restored to their owners. All these liberal steps were taken in the face of violent opposition directed by the reactionary slave-holders of Havana, who are vainly striving to stay the march of ideas. This has terminated slavery in Christendom, Cuba only excepted. Unhappily, however, this baneful influence has thus far succeeded in defeating the efforts of all liberal minded men in Spain to abolish slavery in Cuba, and in preventing the promised reform in that island. The struggle for political supremacy continues. The pro-slavery aristocracy in Cuba is gradually arraying itself more and more in open hostility to and in defiance of the home government, while it still maintains a political connection with the republic in the peninsula, and although usurping and defying the authority of the home government, whenever such usurpation or defiance tends in the direction of oppression, or of the maintenance of abuses, it is still a power in Madrid and recognized by the government. This is an element more dangerous to continued colonial relations between Cuba and Spain, than that which inspired the insurrection, it is an element opposed to granting any relief from misrule and abuse, with no aspiration after freedom, commanding no sympathies in generous breasts, aiming to rivet stronger the shackles of oppressive power in Cuba, and, under professions of loyalty to the mother country, it is exhausting the resources of the Island, and is doing acts which are at variance with those principles of justice, liberality and of right which give nobility of character to a republic. In the interests of humanity, of civilization and of progress it is to be hoped that this evil influence may soon be averted.

### The "Virginus."

The steamer *Virginus* was, on the 26th day of Sept., 1870, duly registered at the port of New York as a part of the commercial marine of the U. S. On the 4th of October, 1870, having the certificate of her register in the usual legal form, she sailed from the port of New York, and has not since been within the territorial jurisdiction of the U. S. On the 31st of October last, while sailing under the flag of the U. S., on the high seas, she was forcibly seized by the Spanish gunboat *Tornado*, and was carried into the port of Santiago de Cuba, where many of her passengers and crew were inhumanly and, at least as related to those who were citizens of the U. S., without due process of law put to death. It is a well established principle, asserted by the U. S. from the beginning of our national independence, and recognized by Great Britain and other maritime powers, and stated by the Senate in a resolution passed unanimously on the 16th of June, 1853,