CHILI.

Mr. Nelson to Mr. Seward.

No. 117.] LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Santiago de Chili, December 16, 1863.

SIR: It becomes my painful duty to report the total destruction by fire of the church of the Compañia, of this city, on the 8th instant, involving a loss of nearly two thousand five hundred lives.

It has been customary for some years past to celebrate the "month of May" with great pomp. Upon the 8th of December, the anniversary of the "immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary," the festivities always close with a grand illumination of the church, and appropriate ceremonies.

On Tuesday evening, the 8th instant, crowds flocked from every quarter of the city to the church, and by 7 o'clock every portion of the immense edifice was filled with a densely packed crowd, nearly all females, and the steps of the building and the street in front were also thronged.

The number of lights with which the church was illuminated is variously estimated at from ten to twenty thousand, the greater portion of them being paraffine lamps and chandeliers, many of which were suspended from the ceiling by cords.

As the last of the lamps upon the great altar was being lighted, a jet of flame was seen to proceed from an illuminated crescent, at the foot of a colossal statue of the Virgin. The assistant threw his poncho over the flame, with the hope of extinguishing it, but the highly inflammable liquid defied his efforts, and soon reaching the garlands of flowers profusely adorning the altar, shot upward towards the already overheated wood-work of the ceiling. In a few moments the lofty dome was wrapped in flames, the lamps and chandeliers being detached by hundreds, as the cords were burned, and, as they fell, scattered their burning contents upon the compact mass of people below.

It is well ascertained that at this moment but one of the main doors and two small side doors were open.

The terrified crowd, composed almost exclusively of females, as before stated, rushed frantically towards the doors. There being no pews or seats in the churches in this country, the congregation kneel in close proximity, so that rapid exit in case of alarm is difficult, if not impossible. Each one is kneeling upon the dress of her immediate neighbor, and innumerable skirts and crinolines are so involved as to prevent the possibility of quick and systematic movement. Very few succeeded in escaping, and these few bruised, scorched, and naked. The throngs which had succeeded in reaching the very thresholds of the doors became compact, immovable masses of human beings, and the flames, leaping with amazing rapidity along the arches and ceiling, darted down and enveloped them in a sea of fire.

As soon as the alarm was given I hastened to the spot, which is but two squares distant from this legation. The scene presented was horrible beyond description or conception. Within the scope of my vision were more than a thousand persons, manifesting by shrieks, groans, and actions, every conceivable form of human agony. Some were writhing in the embrace of the flames, stretching out their eager hands for that help which it was impossible to give, some standing with uplifted arms, some prostrate and insensible, some kneeling, with clasped hands, evidently commending themselves to Him into whose presence they would soon be precipitated.

Aided by Dr. Silvey, United States vice-consul for Valparaiso, and by others, chiefly Americans, we succeeded in dragging some of the victims from the doorways, and continued our efforts until the increasing flames and prostrate bodies showed that all hope of further assistance was gone. Among those prominent in rescuing the sufferers were Henry Meiggs, of California, Henry M. Keith, of New York, George Colton, of Rhode Island, A. Andrews, of California, C. T. Pearce, of Rhode Island, and W. Eaton, of New York.

At a little after 8 o'clock the last tower, containing a chime of bells, fell with a tremendous crash, and it became no longer possible to give the least aid to the burning victims.

There are but three fire-engines in the city, and they are small, inefficient, and badly served. They arrived at the scene some half hour after the beginning of the fire; but were so utterly worthless as to afford no assistance whatever. The flames subsided about midnight, from mere want of material on which to feed.

I visited the interior of the church the next morning, and nothing can exceed in horror the spectacle there presented. The whole pavement of the building was strewn with the swollen and disfigured corpses of the victims, while near the door were heaps of charred objects, only distinguishable by the shape as having been once human beings. They were rapidly removed to the cemetery, where one general grave was dug for their reception.

The official statistics have not yet been published; but from the secretary of the church, and the records of the hospitals, I gather that more than two thousand persons perished within the walls of the church, and that several hundred more died after removal.

The entire city is shrouded in gloom. The best, and some of the aristocratic families in the city, are the greatest sufferers. Many of the most elegant and accomplished ladies of the city perished. Youth and beauty, and old age, were overwhelmed in one common ruin. In several instances whole families were swept away, and their unoccupied houses are in the custody of the civil authorities.

Upon the 11th instant I addressed a note to his excellency the secretary of foreign relations, expressing on behalf of my fellow-citizens, and on my own, our profound sympathy in the distressing calamity which has overwhelmed the community, (see enclosure A,) to which his excellency replied, upon the 12th, informing me that he had been expressly charged by the president to signify to me the profound gratitude of the people and government of Chili for the exertions of the American residents upon the night of the catastrophe, and for their sympathy in the general mourning. (See enclosure B and translation C.)

These notes have been published in the papers of this city and Valparaiso by the government. The editorial articles in the Mercurio of the 14th, and in the Voz de Chili of the 15th, introducing the official correspondence, breathe so warm a spirit of kindness toward Americans that I deem it proper to enclose herein (marked D and E) copies and translations thereof.

Upon the 14th instant the president issued a decree ordering the demolition of the walls of the ruined church, and in spite of an opposition from the clergy, which at one time threatened to become serious and even bloody, the work is being quietly executed.

I have the honor to remain, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

THOMAS H. NELSON.

Hon. WILLIAM H. SEWARD,
Secretary of State of the United States.

A.

Mr. Nelson to Mr. Tocornal.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Santiago de Chili, December 11, 1863.

SIR: I have the honor to address myself to your excellency, to express, on behalf of the American citizens resident in Chili, and on my own, our profound and earnest sympathy in the terrible misfortune which upon Tuesday last befell this city, bringing desolation and grief into so many families, and mourning into the hearts of the entire community. The government and people whom I represent will be stricken with the deepest sorrow when the sad intelligence reaches them.

A calamity so appalling and horrible has no parallel in the world's history. May He who "tempers the wind to the shorn lamb" in mercy console the bereaved and afflicted, and may this awful dispensation of His providence ever remind us of the uncertainty of life, and the necessity of constant preparation to obey His summons.

I have the honor to renew to your excellency the assurances of the high estimation and respect with which I remain your excellency's obedient servant,

THOMAS H. NELSON.

His Excellency the SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
of the Republic of Chili.

Mr. Tocornal to Mr. Nelson.

[Translation.]

SANTIAGO, *December* 12, 1863.

SIR: I have had the honor to receive the note which your excellency was pleased to address to me yesterday, to signify to me the profound regret caused in the mind of your excellency, and in that of your fellow-citizens residing in Chili, for the terrible misfortune occurring in this city on Tuesday, the 8th instant, which has carried grief into the minds of many families, and has covered the entire community with mourning. Your excellency likewise informs me that the government and people represented by your excellency will feel the deepest sorrow upon receiving the news of this catastrophe; and your excellency concludes, expressing to me your trust that the Lord may grant consolation to the afflicted and unprotected, and cause us all, in view of the uncertainty of life, to be ever prepared to obey the decrees of Providence.

My government has learned the foregoing with lively gratitude, and has discovered in your excellency's communication an alleviation to the grief with which it has been afflicted by this public calamity, as well as a new evidence of the fraternal sentiments which animate your excellency and your worthy fellow-citizens in favor of our republic. The generous and active efforts which your excellency and they displayed on Tuesday to save the interesting victims from the frightful fire had already won the gratitude of my government, which has been revived by the present manifestation.

In communicating the foregoing to your excellency, I comply with a special charge of his excellency the president of the republic to assure the honorable representative and the citizens of the United States who have taken part in our public mourning that the noble conduct observed by them upon this sad occasion will be ever gratefully remembered by the Chilian people and government.

Will your excellency be pleased to accept the sentiments of my most distinguished consideration and regard with which I am your excellency's most obedient servant,

MANUEL A. TOCORNAL.

[From the Mercury.—Translation.]

THE NORTH AMERICANS AT THE FIRE OF THE COMPAÑA.

VALPARAISO, *December* 14, 1863.

Not in vain do nations become reconciled and love one another. Not in vain do peoples give generous hospitality to people of good heart and elevated soul. There are solemn occasions in which the hand of God makes evident these noble bonds of fraternity, and one of these occasions have we witnessed, upon the scorching steps of the Compañia, arrive for our brothers the citizens of the free and magnanimous Union of the north on the horrible night of the 8th of December, 1863.

But a few years since the name of *North American* was for us only a source of suspicion, of antipathy, or threat. But when the question of *filibusterism*, which had its den among the slaveocracy of the south, and which met only opprobrium and reprobation in the free States of the north, was made clear, the reaction of justice began to be felt in our people. And when we saw this entire nation of the north rise as one man for the purpose of putting down the audacity of the defenders of William Walker and of the sacrificers of John Brown, that reaction was converted into sincere sympathy, which has been strengthened by the victories as well as by the reverses of the Union.

This conduct of ours has met the most cordial reciprocity on the part of the North Americans resident among us. Their representative, the worthy, courteous, and popular Thomas H. Nelson, has been the first to place himself in the midst of the Chilian people, participating in all their national festivities and public demonstrations, making us hear his eloquence not only in the official despatches addressed by him to this government, but in all the discourses delivered by him at our popular banquets. The conduct of Mr. Meiggs, especially towards the working and needy classes, is too well known to require us to refer to it here as an eulogium, as is that which, following his example, has been manifested by his subordinates. Let us only recall that to the enthusiasm of one of them is due the erection of the expiatory monument to Manuel Rodrigues in the valley of Til-til, and the sumptuous popular feast with which it was inaugurated.

But the cordiality of the Americans and Chilians was not only to manifest itself in draining joyous libations at the festive board. The hour of the catastrophe arrived and they were among the earliest to hasten to offer the generous aid of their strength and unselfishness.

Among the first to arrive at the doors of the Compañia, already a prey to the flames were Mr. Nelson himself and the consul of the United States at Valparaiso, Mr. Silvey, who, residing in the immediate vicinity of the church, worked in person from the beginning, exposing their own lives in order to save some victims. The same was done by Messrs. Meiggs, Keith, and some ex-employés of the Valparaiso railroad, who at that hour were met together in the house of the former, two-thirds of a mile from the scene of the catastrophe. We ourselves met Messrs. Meiggs and Keith on that terrible night, with grief upon their countenances, their clothing torn and soaked with water, and with voices so hoarse they could hardly speak; and having asked the former if he thought any had perished within the church, he replied, in a voice which froze our blood, *thousands*. Alas! he was one of the few, the only one perhaps, who had not been mistaken in that hour of terrible confusion. We are assured that Mr. Meiggs caused himself to be wet through on purpose, so as to enter into the midst of the flames. This is not humanity only, it is heroism.

We are happy that these sentiments are not the expressions of individual appreciation alone. The two public documents which we publish below, and which the minister of the (foreign) department has authorized us to give to the

press, place in high relief all that we have said upon the confraternity of the two nations.

May these eloquent documents and these weak lines bear to the citizens of the Union, not only in Chili, but in the entire universe, the expression of the profound gratitude due them for their noble conduct from the Chilenos.

E.

[From "The Voice of Chili."—Translation.]

THE NOTE OF THE MINISTER OF THE UNITED STATES.

SANTIAGO, *December* 15, 1863.

Mr. Nelson, sympathizing in the grief which weighs down our community in consequence of the catastrophe of the 8th, has addressed the following note to our government:

(Here follows Mr. Nelson's note of the 11th instant to Mr. Tocornal.)

We have read with profound sympathy and a lively sentiment of gratitude the above note, and we warmly grasp that generous hand which our brothers stretch out to us in our misfortune. They fraternize with us in the moments of our grief, proving to us that grief knows no nationality. Bound to the sons of the great republic of the north by the instincts of liberty, by the grandeur of the traditions of America, by the noble examples she has given us in her political life, by our common hopes for the future, by glory and danger, by the ties of humanity, they now come forward, in the person of their worthy representative, to place a solemn seal upon the union of ideas and sentiments.

Mr. Nelson, who has known how to conquer the sympathies of our society, by the frankness and chivalry of his character, comes now to augment and give deep root to those sympathies, sealing them with the inspiring of sincere gratitude. His note is not one of those diplomatic compliments, one of those official documents, cold as a reason of state, and calculated as an interest; it is not the obligatory condolence of a mere relation. It is the true cry of a feeling heart; of a soul profoundly moved by a brother's grief; it is the embrace of an entire people to another people in distress, confounding itself with that people to console it; bringing in all sincerity, under the mantle of fraternity, the noble sentiments which give resignation. These are his feeling words, words which can only issue from a wounded spirit, which sustains its life in hope and faith, looking towards "*Him who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb*," and bowing in conscious resignation before the mysterious designs of Providence.

Mr. Nelson first offered the aid of his arm to the victims; exposing, repeatedly, his life to save that of others perishing in that fiery furnace. He and many of his compatriots, with the most heroic forgetfulness of self, were there at the post of danger, braving it nobly; lending their powerful aid to the unfortunate who implored salvation. He did his duty, and did it like a man.

He now takes the voice of a people, of an immense and generous people, and brings to us the aid of that sweet consolation which so greatly relieves the suffering heart. We accept the manifestation of these sentiments, assuring Mr. Nelson that his words have fallen as a gentle balm into the wounds yet open in the vitals of our society, and that from every lip come forth sincere words, adorning his name with a crown of gratitude.

Our government has also received these words with profound gratitude; and in the name of the people it represents, has replied to Mr. Nelson in the following note:

(Here follows Mr. Tocornal's note of the 12th instant, in reply to that of Mr. Nelson of the 11th.)

These are the words of speaking conviction; this is an embrace of humanity; two sister nations embracing in the hour of misfortune, which is also the hour of duty; who, together, elevate their prayers and lamentations to mingle in one sole idea, and aspire to the union of souls before the Divine presence.

If we have found words of grief, and sympathy to mourn over the misfortunes of that disastrous war which is tearing the vitals of the great republic, her sons turn away from that beloved horizon, and towards us, opening in their hearts a new asylum for the grief of their brethren.

Let Mr. Nelson receive for himself and his fellow-countrymen, in the name of our people, the assurances of our most sincere gratitude.

Mr. Seward to Mr. Nelson.

No. 58.] DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, January 20, 1864.

SIR: I have to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 16th of December, No. 117, which brings us your account of the fearful destruction of the Church of the Compañia at Santiago, on the 8th instant.

You were right in hastening, without awaiting for instructions, to tender to the President of the republic the condolence and the sympathies of the American people on the occasion of that afflicting visitation of Divine Providence. The sentiments you expressed in that communication are heartily approved by the President and by the whole American people; and their grateful appreciation is hereby tendered to the heroic conduct of yourself, Doctor Silvey, Mr. Meiggs, Mr. Keith, Mr. Colton, Mr. Andrews, Mr. Pearce, Mr. Eaton, and to the other Americans to whom you refer as a class, without mentioning their names individually, in endeavoring to rescue as many victims as possible from the inextinguishable conflagration.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

THOMAS H. NELSON, Esq., *&c., &c., &c.*

Mr. Nelson to Mr. Seward.

No. 123.] SANTIAGO DE CHILI,
March 27, 1864.

SIR: In my despatch No. 99, of July 17, 1863, I had the honor to inform you of the conditional declaration of war made by Bolivia against Chili, founded upon the alleged wrongful appropriation by the latter of some three degrees of latitude belonging to the former republic.

In view of the evident determination of both republics to adhere to their claims to the disputed territory, and of the apparent impossibility of deciding by negotiation the questions involved, and in view of the interest held by our government in the settlement of the "Alsop & Co." and "Sportsman" claims, both dependent, principally, upon the decision of the questions involved in the discussion between the aforesaid republics, I ventured to suggest in my despatch No. 102, of August 1, 1863, that I be instructed to propose the reference of all the points in dispute to the arbitration of some friendly power.

In your despatch No. 48, of September 16, 1863, acknowledging the receipt of my last named communication, you stated "that it would be preferable for

those republics to refer their respective territorial pretensions to the arbitrament of a third power."

At the date of the receipt of this despatch, Doctor Thomas Frias, the minister plenipotentiary of Bolivia, had arrived in Santiago charged with the special mission of endeavoring to settle the question of territorial jurisdiction pending between that republic and Chili.

Doctor Frias had been especially charged by his government to consult with me upon the objects of his mission; and, after a number of conferences, I deemed it most decorous to defer the presentation of my proposition of arbitration until he had had an opportunity of presenting the views of his government, and of arranging, if possible, the question of limits, without the interference of a third party, intending to reserve my appeal until a time when every other resource had been exhausted, and when its effect would, perhaps, be more salutary.

A very voluminous correspondence ensued between the minister of Bolivia and the secretary of foreign relations. The latter insisted upon the withdrawal of the conditional declaration of war issued at Oruro June 5, 1863, by the Congress of Bolivia, and upon indemnity being granted to Don Matias Torres, a Chilian citizen, alleged to have been imprisoned and otherwise ill-treated by the Bolivian authorities, for exporting guano from the disputed territory, under license from the Chilian authorities. Mr. Frias, on the other hand, asked the sequestration of the disputed territory until the question should be definitely settled.

These demands were regarded by the respective ministers as conditions precedent to the discussion of the main question; but Mr. Frias finally desisted from his demand of sequestration, and simply asked that orders be given to prohibit further exportation of guano from the disputed territory pending the question of jurisdiction, but declined, at the same time, to accede to the demands of Chili, alleging that the conditional declaration of war by Bolivia was purely a domestic act, and that the criminal prosecution against Torres had been already suspended.

M. Tocornal having peremptorily declined to order such prohibition, M. Frias, upon the 24th ultimo, requested his passports, and upon the 2d instant sailed for Bolivia, diplomatic relations being thus entirely suspended between the two countries.

Upon the 25th ultimo, upon being apprised of these facts, I addressed a note (see enclosure A) to the secretary of foreign relations, deprecating the cessation of friendly relations between the two republics, and earnestly advising a reference of *all* the questions in dispute to arbitration.

To add force to my suggestion, the concluding paragraphs of my note were in language almost identical with that of M. Tocornal's own note of December 30, 1863, addressed to the cabinets of Quito and Bogota, imploring those republics to refrain from fratricidal strife, and giving up, each one, some portion of its pretensions, to submit the questions involved to the arbitration of some friendly power.

Upon the 7th instant the secretary of foreign relations addressed me, in reply, a communication, a copy and translation of which form enclosures B and C, wherein, after expressing the gratitude of his government for the friendly interest taken in the affair by my government and by this legation, he stated that the question of boundary had never been reached in the discussion between himself and the representative of Bolivia; that the honor and dignity of Chili demanded that, before entering upon the discussion of the main question, Bolivia should withdraw the threat implied in the conditional declaration of war, and should indemnify Torres; that the minister of Bolivia had distinctly refused compliance with the demands of Chili; that, while Chili was loyally anxious to enter upon the discussion of the main question, this refusal of Bolivia rendered it impossible; that Peru had tendered its good offices and friendly mediation for the settlement

of the boundary question, and that the government of Chili had hastened to inform it that, under these circumstances, it was with great regret obliged to decline availing itself at present of so generous an offer; that from that time to the present the state of affairs having undergone no change whatever favorable to mediation, he found himself compelled to give to this legation the same reply as that given to Peru.

Expressing a determination to avoid as far as possible the painful consequences which might result from this rupture, and a hope that Bolivia may yet return upon her steps and offer to Chili the reparation she demands as a condition precedent to all discussion, his excellency concluded by stating that in such an event it would be very grateful to Chili to recur, if necessary, to the friendly offices of the United States.

It will be observed that while my suggestion of arbitration embraced all the points in dispute between the two republics, the secretary of foreign relations, in his reply, has deemed proper to consider the boundary question as alone referred to.

It is my opinion that Chili will avoid a reference to arbitration of the questions in dispute, and that she will maintain her claim to jurisdiction over the desert of Atacama, especially since Bolivia is not in a position to recur to other arguments than those of diplomacy.

M. Tocornal having expressed a desire to publish the notes exchanged between this legation and the department of foreign relations upon the Chili-Bolivian question, I gave my consent thereto, and, upon the 19th instant, the correspondence appeared in the "Arancano," the official organ of the government. It was very generally copied into the newspapers of the country, and commented upon by them in a spirit of cordial good-feeling towards the United States. (See enclosure D.)

While the instructions given me upon this subject were of a character more general than specific, I have thought it my duty to do all in my power to avert the disastrous consequences of a war between two sister republics of America, deeming it important not only to cultivate the most friendly relations between our own country and that to which I have the honor to be accredited, but also to interpose the good offices of our government to prevent the severance of those friendly bonds between the country of my residence and neighboring republics. I trust that my action in the premises may be approved.

I have the honor to remain, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

THOMAS H. NELSON.

Hon. WILLIAM H. SEWARD,
Secretary of State of the United States.

Mr. Nelson to Mr. Tocornal.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Santiago de Chili, February 12, 1864.

SIR: I have perused with the deepest interest the various arguments presented by the republics of Chili and Bolivia in behalf of their respective claims to jurisdiction over the desert of Atacama, and have most carefully studied the antecedents of the discussion so far as published.

It has appeared to me while Chili upon the one hand, maintains unhesitatingly her right of dominion over the territory in dispute, and Bolivia, upon the other, as persistently denies that right, that further discussion would but lead to the reiteration of opinions heretofore expressed, and not tend to the solution of the question of sovereignty.

These views were transmitted by me to the honorable Secretary of State of

the United States, who, in a recent despatch, has communicated to me his opinion and instructions upon the subject.

My government has observed with deep concern the gradual progress of events tending to weaken the fraternal relations heretofore existing between the neighboring states of Chili and Bolivia, and is ardently desirous that these relations be strengthened and maintained, and that the possibility of present or future misunderstanding be averted by a timely appeal to the calmer judgment and patriotism of the two republics.

It has been the custom of friendly nations, when amicable discussion has proven ineffectual, and when all the resources of diplomacy have failed to bring about a satisfactory settlement of questions pending between them, to refer the points of law and fact involved to the arbitral decision of some friendly power, whose award is invariably respected as final and conclusive.

The fact that claims, whose decision principally depends upon the settlement of the question of territorial jurisdiction now pending between Chili and Bolivia, have been presented by this legation in behalf of citizens of the United States for the consideration of your excellency's government, would of itself have furnished a motive for the suggestion of a reference of that question to arbitration; but even had such claims not existed, the profound interest felt by my government in the welfare of the sister republics of this continent, and its earnest desire for the preservation of the peace and harmony of the different nations of America, would alone have been sufficient to authorize this appeal.

I am, therefore, instructed by my government to earnestly deprecate any interruption to the hitherto cordial relations subsisting between the republic of Chili and that of Bolivia, and to suggest to the government of your excellency the wisdom and propriety of a reference of the questions now in dispute between the two republics to the arbitral decision of such friendly power as may be mutually agreed upon by the plenipotentiaries of the respective governments.

In thus fulfilling the grateful commission intrusted to me, of proposing an honorable and courteous mode of settlement of the complications which have threatened to disturb those friendly relations between two sister republics, whose welfare has ever been an object of solicitous interest to the United States, I am led to entertain a just confidence in the favorable reception by your excellency's government of this proposition, from the perusal of the eminently patriotic and fraternal notes addressed by your excellency, upon the 30th of December last, to the cabinets of Quito and Bogota, invoking, in eloquent terms, the patriotism and loyalty of those states to prevent fratricidal combat, and obtain by peaceful measures the just and honorable arrangement of their difficulties.

I cannot find words more expressive, or language more appropriate, for the utterance of my sentiments on this subject, than those of the notes abovementioned, and cordially adopt, slightly paraphrasing, the words of your excellency. I am assured that the President of the United States, in view of the present situation of America, has believed that the noble self-denial natural to worthy and free nations, such as Chili and Bolivia, would respond to the word of peace from a common friend, and in that confidence does not waver in the hope that the respective governments, making the patriotic sacrifice of some of their pretensions, will submit themselves to the result of a friendly arbitration.

The great act to which the United States invite the republics of Chili and Bolivia would be, under present circumstances, a lofty instance that the states of America know how to lay aside their differences when the voice of her true interest requires it, and that they can thus unite and consolidate their power to avert all other peril which might threaten them.

And I beg to assure your excellencies most earnestly that if the good offices or friendly mediation of the United States might facilitate the attainment of the object of the present note, your excellency may rely with security that to such an end my government will omit no step whatever, and that nothing would be

more grateful to it than to render to that of Chili, as well as to that of Bolivia, these and any other friendly services.

I have the honor to renew to your excellency the assurances of distinguished consideration and high esteem with which I am your excellency's most obedient servant,

THOMAS H. NELSON.

His Excellency the SECRETARY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS
Of the Republic of Chili.

Mr. Tocornal to Mr. Nelson.

[Translation.]

[L. S.] SANTIAGO, *March* 7, 1864.

SIR: On the 29th of February last I had the honor to receive the note which, under date of the 25th, your excellency was pleased to address to me in regard to the boundary question pending between Chili and Bolivia, and having given an account of its contents to the President of the republic, I have been instructed by his excellency to reply to it in the terms which I am about to use.

Your excellency assures me that you have examined with careful interest the antecedents of that question, so far as published, and that, in your opinion, any further discussion of the same would but lead the high powers interested to a confirmation of their respective opinions, sustained on either hand with equal pertinacity, and would be ineffectual to produce the desired solution.

The government of the United States, to whom your excellency informs me you have stated your views upon the question, has followed, with a solicitude equal to that of your excellency, the gradual progress of events tending to weaken the fraternal relations existing between Chili and Bolivia, and as a means of impeding their interruption, thus contrary to its ardent desire that they be maintained and strengthened, has instructed your excellency to manifest to my government the propriety and wisdom of submitting the differences alluded to to the arbitration of a friendly power, chosen by mutual consent.

In connexion herewith your excellency is pleased to remind me that such is the measure to which it is customary in similar cases, among friendly nations, to appeal for the purpose of settling their controversies by means of a final and conclusive decision; and your excellency adds, that even had not certain claims of that legation in favor of citizens of the United States, whose decision principally depends upon the settlement of these differences, been submitted to the consideration of my government, nor have furnished a sufficient motive for the vindication of the means proposed, the profound interest felt by your government in the prosperity of the sister republics of this continent, and its ardent desire for the preservation of peace and harmony among all the nations of America, would have been sufficient to authorize it.

In an opportune paraphrase which your excellency has made of my note of December 30, last, addressed to the cabinets of Quito and Bogota, your excellency concludes by signifying to me the confidence of your government and your own that Chili and Bolivia would accept the adoption of the arbitration indicated, and by giving me the assurance that the government of the United States would omit no effort whatever to bring about a good understanding, if its good offices or friendly mediation might facilitate it.

In replying to the foregoing it is my duty, before all else, to comply with the first and most grateful of the instructions which to that effect I have received from the President of the republic, expressing to your excellency the lively gratitude of his excellency for the friendly steps taken by the government of

the United States, through your worthy instrumentality. The President recognizes therein an unequivocal proof of the excellent and cordial spirit of fraternity entertained by the government of your excellency towards Chili, and discovers a new motive for drawing closer the good relations which happily she cultivates with the United States. The generous sentiments manifested by the great republic towards the other republics of America are, moreover, in the opinion of my government, a certain promise of future prosperity for our continent, which can only find her well-being and power in peace and liberty, based upon a sincere union of all the American republics.

Such a union has ever been the object of the highest aspirations of Chili, as has been clearly demonstrated by the traditional policy which she has observed in her international relations. Good faith, equity, concord, a spirit serene and open to conciliation—such have ever been the motives of her policy. Ever disposed to make many sacrifices for the preservation of peace, she has never refused, save such as would have sullied her dignity or wronged her legitimate interests.

This policy and none other has my government pursued, in the case to which your excellency is pleased to call my attention in its differences with the government of Bolivia. While it is indeed true, as noted by your excellency, that it has maintained its right to the dominion of the territory in dispute with the energy and decision proper to a righteous cause, it has not thought, as your excellency, that the discussion of these titles, and of those presented and sustained with equal vigor by Bolivia, must be fruitless. On the contrary, it believes that if such discussion could have taken place, a good understanding would have been arrived at, without much difficulty, and even without having recourse to the good offices of a common friend. It would have been all-sufficient for the representative of Bolivia to have brought to the debate sentiments analogous to those of my government—sentiments of conciliation and equity. Unfortunately the Bolivian legation was far from entertaining such sentiments, and, confining itself to an insuperable refusal to make the reparation due to Chili, has made fruitless the preliminary discussion which my government has consented to open for the purpose of smoothing the way toward that which would have turned upon the main question, the question of boundary.

Thus has it been that this question has not even succeeded in entering into debate, notwithstanding the loyal endeavors of my government toward that object, and contrary to what was natural to presume, and to what doubtless was believed, until the recent publication of the correspondence of this department with the Bolivian legation.

How erroneous was such a conjecture has been already manifested by the published correspondence; but perhaps, as is probable, it is not strange that it should have occasioned the friendly action which the government of Peru first, and later your excellency, have taken in the endeavor to bring about a good understanding.

When the government of Peru tendered its good offices and friendly mediation for the arrangement of the boundary question, my government hastened to reply that this question not being in debate, and it being impossible to discuss it until the difficulties opposed thereto were removed, it found itself, with great regret, obliged to decline availing itself at present of so generous an offer, which otherwise it would have been happy to accept.

From that time to the present the state of affairs has undergone no change whatever, favorable to mediation, or to any other means conducive to a friendly and satisfactory solution. The conduct of Bolivia has postponed the possibility of obtaining this result, which my government has sought with so much solicitude. I find myself, therefore, obliged to give to-day to your excellency the same reply which a short time since, as I have manifested to your excellency, I gave to the government of Peru.

In doing so I am instructed to express to your excellency the profound regret of my government at the rupture which has taken place in the relations between Chili and Bolivia, and its firm resolve to avoid, in so far as lies in its power, the painful consequences which may result from this rupture. It entertains the confidence of being able to do so, and even dares to hope that the government of Bolivia, permitting the access of more benevolent and equitable views than it has up to the present manifested, may return upon its steps, and offer to Chili the just reparation necessary to render possible the tranquil and friendly discussion of the pending differences.

Should this opportunity arrive, my government will seize it with satisfaction, and endeavor to profit by it, seeking a proper solution, either in the calm discussion of the titles alleged by the high powers interested, or in the adoption of some other honorable and pacific means. It will then be very grateful to recur, if necessary, to the mediation of the government of the United States, and to thus manifest how highly and gratefully it esteems the solicitous and fraternal interest it has shown in this affair.

I have the honor to reiterate to your excellency the expression of my most distinguished consideration with which I am your excellency's most obedient servant,

MANUEL A. TOCORNAL.

The ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY
of the United States of North America.

Mr. Seward to Mr. Nelson.

No. 63.] DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, May 19, 1864.

SIR: Your despatches to 124 inclusive have been received.

I have to express my cordial approval of your course in the pending controversy between Chili and Bolivia, which I trust is still within the reach of a peaceful and honorable settlement.

The Senate having by resolution called for information on the subject, a copy of your No. 123 and of its enclosures has been communicated to that body by the President.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

THOMAS H. NELSON, Esq., *&c., &c., &c.*

Mr. Nelson to Mr. Seward.

No. 127.] LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Santiago de Chili, May 16, 1864.

SIR: * * * * * * * *

On the 29th ultimo intelligence reached Valparaiso that the Chincha islands, belonging to Peru, had been forcibly seized by her Catholic Majesty's squadron, under the command of Admiral Pinzon. The whole country was immediately thrown into a state of the utmost excitement. Immense public meetings were held in every province of the republic, composed of all classes of the people of every shade of political opinion. The speeches, resolutions, and proceedings of these meetings evince a perfect frenzy of patriotic enthusiasm. Party lines, for the time being, are obliterated in view of the common danger. In this city, particularly, the popular sentiment is manifested in every mode in which an

excited public opinion can find voice. The press teems with inflammatory articles, the public institutions echo their warlike tone, voluntary military organizations are springing up all over the country, and a considerable sum has already been subscribed to aid in the purchase of one or more iron-clad vessels-of-war. Various associations have tendered their services in a body. The veterans of the war of independence, without an exception, have offered themselves to the government to repel the insult to a sister republic, to whose independence they had so materially contributed. Never has the public sentiment of any country been more earnestly and unmistakably manifested. All make common cause against what they conceive to be the common enemy.

Every effort has been made to force the government into a warlike attitude and its position became at once delicate and difficult. In the absence of sufficient facts to form an accurate judgment as to the designs of Spain, it was insisted that measures unfriendly, if not hostile, should be immediately adopted.

For the purpose of allaying the popular excitement, as well as to define the position of the government in this important crisis, Mr. Tocornal, the minister for foreign affairs, published a circular addressed to the "governments of America," dated May 4, 1864, a copy and translation of which I have the honor to enclose herein, marked A.

Although this document is eminently wise and patriotic, and at the same time firm and decided in its tone in regard to the ground that Chili should take in the event that her Catholic Majesty's government mean to exercise the right of "revindication" or reconquest; yet it was not considered by the press or the people, in the heated condition of the public mind, as sufficiently belligerent. Apparently nothing short of immediate unconditional war would answer.

Mr. Tocornal, I am sorry to say, yielded to the popular clamor, and on the 7th instant resigned his position. His resignation, under the circumstances, I regard as a public calamity. The country thus loses, in a most eventful period of its history, the services of one of its ablest and most faithful public servants. I regret it the more as our official and personal relations were most cordial, and because he has ever been a steadfast and outspoken friend of the United States.

Don Alvaro Covarrubias was indicated as his successor, and on the 11th instant I received the official announcement of his appointment, to which I responded the same day. (See enclosures B and C.)

* * * * * * * * *

No active hostilities having taken place since the occupation of the islands by the Spanish squadron, the popular effervescence within the past week has somewhat subsided, only, in my opinion, to break out with increased violence if the conduct of Admiral Pinzon should be approved by his government, or any further hostile acts should be committed. This republic will undoubtedly make common cause with Peru. The government will be irresistibly drawn into the conflict, or a domestic revolution is inevitable.

It is understood that orders have been issued to government officials along the coast to refuse coal and supplies to any Spanish vessel-of-war that may touch at any port in Chili.

* * * * * * * * *

In nearly all the public meetings that have been held, the change of conduct and policy of European powers towards the republics of this continent is attributed to the existence of the rebellion in the United States. But for this, it is thought there would have been no interference in the affairs of Santo Domingo, Mexico, or Peru. They, therefore, most earnestly pray for the speedy suppression of the rebellion and the reassertion of our traditional policy.

A few days ago, at a meeting of the officers, professors, and teachers of the University of Chili, the following resolution was introduced by the rector, the venerable jurisconsult Don Andres Bello, which was adopted by acclamation:

"*Resolved*, That it is our duty in this crisis to solicit with earnestness the powerful influence of the United States of America. We have a well-founded confidence in the stability of the institutions of that grand people, in the policy of her illustrious chiefs, and in the great soul of Lincoln, the hero destined by Providence to complete the work of Washington."

I have the honor to remain, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

THOMAS H. NELSON

Hon. WILLIAM H. SEWARD,
Secretary of State of the United States.

A.

[From the Patria of May 7, 1864.—Translation.]

CIRCULAR TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF AMERICA

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS OF CHILI,
Santiago, May 4, 1864

Mr. MINISTER: The occupation of the Chincha islands by the naval forces of Spain, in the Pacific, has caused in the mind of the government of Chili the most profound and painful impression, and has awakened throughout the whole republic lively alarms, which will make themselves equally felt from one extremity to the other of the American continent.

The commissioner of her Catholic Majesty and the commander-in-chief of her naval forces in the Pacific, under whose immediate responsibility this act appears to have been perpetrated, have not been unaware of its gravity, and have endeavored to justify it, setting forth in the declaration issued from the anchorage of the Chincha islands the reasons which have decided them to take this resolution.

If this measure be considered as an act of reprisal, undertaken for the purpose of obtaining reparation for any injury or offence offered to Spain by Peru, it is necessary to inquire whether the moment had arrived to appeal to an almost extreme resource, when the pacific measures employed among nations to avoid the calamities of war had not yet been exhausted.

The right assumed by sovereign nations to do themselves justice has well-defined proceedings, which the constant practice of nations has erected into tutelar principles of peace and harmony, whereon repose the mutual well-being of societies. To depart from them without a justifying motive would be an offence affecting not only the interests of the people towards whom it was offered, but also involving a deviation from those common and obligatory laws, in whose faithful observance all the members of the great family of sovereign and independent nations should interest themselves.

The declaration issued by the commissioner of her Catholic Majesty and the commander-in-chief of her Pacific squadron, besides being open to just censure under the point of view indicated, involves the sanction of principles which place in doubt the independence of Peru, provoking a conflict for all America. The government of Chili, therefore, cannot otherwise than reprobate, as it does, in the most explicit manner, such doctrines, and protest against them, notwithstanding that it is confident that they will not receive the sanction of the government of her Catholic Majesty.

The independence of Peru and her existence as a free and sovereign nation is a fixed fact, and it would be necessary to efface the history of half a century to even place it in doubt, converting into a simple truce that which has been and is a peace of indefinite duration, universally accepted and recognized, in

fact, by Spain herself in a long series of public and official acts. The government of her Catholic Majesty for many years has not ceased to call republic that which was formerly her colony; it repeats the same in the credential of the commissioner which it has sent to Lima; it has admitted her consuls, and consented that her ships frequent the ports of the Peninsula; a reciprocal and uninterrupted commerce has been maintained between the two countries, and finally Peruvians have been considered as foreigners on the Peninsula, precisely as the Spaniards have been considered in Peru. As a sovereign state Peru has entered into treaties of peace, friendship, and commerce with nations of both continents; and in presence of these facts, known to the government of her Catholic Majesty, can the absence of a solemn recognition have any importance in the eyes of truth and international law so as to found thereon a state of truce? Every truce supposes a state of incommunication, and it may be even said that this characterizes it. Nor is a close made to an armistice of long and indefinite duration without previous notice of the intention to renew hostilities, an essential formality, as we are taught by the constant practice of ancient and modern nations.

In the opinion of the commissioner of her Catholic Majesty and of the commander-in-chief of her squadron in the Pacific, the crown of Castile is disposed to revindicate the proprietorship of the Chincha islands, and appears to derive this right as a legitimate corollary of the supposed state of truce. A nation constituted for forty years, exercising with independence rights belonging to sovereignty within the entire precinct of its territory, is not, nor can it be, subject to the right of revindication. The seizing of the Chincha islands by the Spanish squadron in such case becomes a material act, consummated by force, and, wanting in the proper characteristics of a legitimate act, the right of vindication would become a true right of conquest.

The armies of Chili fought together with those of Peru in the war of independence; the two republics were one in a common cause, as were also all the American sections. Were hostilities again to break out, there having been nothing but a truce *de hecho*, (*de facto*,) what is the situation in which the ancient belligerents and their allies would find themselves forcibly placed throughout the entire continent?

The government of Chili, in presence of so grave an event, considers it its undeniable duty to deny in the most public and solemn manner the principles which serve as a base to the declaration, protests against the occupation of the Chincha islands by the naval forces of her Catholic Majesty, and does not recognize, and will not recognize, as the legitimate owner of the said islands, any other power than the republic of Peru.

I feel convinced, nevertheless, that the government of her Catholic Majesty will not approve the principles proclaimed in that declaration, since, if the principle of revindication be sanctioned, that of reconquest would be approved by implication, and the American republics would find themselves obliged to unite their forces in order to maintain the integrity of the territory of a sister and independent republic. It would be painful that the rapid and inevitable development of events should cause complications to arise, either retarding the settlement of an international question, to which the government of Peru manifests itself disposed to lend due attention, so as to arrange in a stable and permanent manner its differences with Spain, or preparing new difficulties which considerations of a supreme order would counsel the American governments to avoid opportunely.

The manifestation which I have just made, in compliance with the orders which I have received from the President of the republic, will be deemed, I trust, by the government of your excellency as the faithful expression of sentiments common to all America. The government of ——, abounding in the same sentiments, will be pleased doubtless to know the views of that of Chili,

and her disposition to act in accord and prevent a conflict which might disturb the peace of this continent, interrupting the friendly relations which happily she has cultivated, and earnestly desires to cultivate, with the Spanish nation.

I have the honor to offer to your excellency the testimony of my highest consideration with which I subscribe myself your excellency's most obedient servant,

MANUEL A. TOCORNAL.

The Most Excellent MINISTER OF FOREIGN RELATIONS of ———.

B.

Mr. Covarrubias to Mr. Nelson.

[Translation.]

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN RELATIONS, REPUBLIC OF CHILI,
Santiago, May 11, 1864.

SIR: The honorable Señor Don Manuel A. Tocornal has placed in the hands of the President of the republic his resignation from the charge of minister of foreign relations, and his excellency having deigned to accept the same, has been pleased to honor me with his high confidence, calling me to occupy the post left vacant by that distinguished citizen.

In beginning my official relations with your excellency, I am flattered with the hope that they may be ever animated by the same spirit of cordiality and good understanding which presided over those which existed between your excellency and my illustrious predecessor.

I have the honor to offer to your excellency the assurance of my most perfect consideration with which I subscribe myself your excellency's most obedient servant,

ALVARO COVARRUBIAS.

The ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY AND MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY
of the United States of North America.

C.

Mr. Nelson to Señor Don A. Covarrubias.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Santiago de Chili, May 11, 1864.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a note from your excellency, dated this day, informing me that his excellency the President of the republic, having accepted the resignation of the honorable Señor Don Manuel A. Tocornal as minister of foreign relations, has been pleased to appoint your excellency to that high and honorable position.

Allow me to respond cordially to the hopes expressed by your excellency, and to manifest the earnest desire that our official relations may be such as may tend to strengthen the friendly relations happily subsisting between the United States and the republic of Chili.

In tendering to your excellency my earnest congratulations upon your elevation to a position so responsible, I have the honor to offer to your excellency the assurances of most distinguised consideration with which I am your excellency's most obedient servant,

THOMAS H. NELSON.

Señor Don ALVARO COVARRUBIAS,
Minister of Foreign Relations of the Republic of Chili.

Mr. Seward to Mr. Nelson.

No. 65.] DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, June 15, 1864.

SIR: I thank you for the information you have given me in your No. 127 concerning what has occurred in Chili in relation to the seizure of the Chincha islands by the admiral of the Spanish fleet in Peruvian waters.

Very full accounts of that controversy have been received here from Mr. Robinson, our representative at Lima. At an early day Mr. Koerner, our minister at Madrid, was instructed to use his good offices to arrest a serious conflict, and effect a reconciliation between Spain and Peru. Thus far we have no advices from Mr. Koerner upon the subject, but we are now daily expecting his reply. Some incidents have occurred at Madrid which enable us to hope that Spain will not proceed further in the direction of hostilities. On the other hand we learn from Peru that the admiral and the late commissioner of Spain have disavowed any design or purpose to assail the sovereignty of Peru, and have defined the seizure of the Chincha islands as an act of mere reprisal, and the commissioner at the same time announced that he had resigned his special trust. Your own proceedings in regard to the matter are fully approved.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

THOMAS H. NELSON, Esq., *&c., &c., &c.*

Mr. Nelson to Mr. Seward.

No. 140.] LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Santiago de Chili, July 11, 1864.

SIR: The 88th anniversary of our independence was celebrated in this city by all ranks and classes of the people and by all political parties with a cordiality and unanimity almost, if not entirely, unprecedented. The whole population seemed to join in the demonstration, and with a patriotic enthusiasm rarely surpassed in similar celebrations in our own country, and certainly unparalleled elsewhere.

At daylight on the 4th instant the bands of the different military organizations played "Hail Columbia" in front of their barracks instead of the customary reveillé, and at sunrise and at noon salutes were fired by an American citizen who had obtained permission from the government for the purpose.

At 7 o'clock the band of the artillery regiment appeared beneath the windows of the legation and played our national airs. At noon, by order of the President, every military band in the city, numbering over 200 performers, assembled in front of my residence, and in unison played "Hail Columbia," the "Star Spangled Banner," and the national hymn of Chili, while an aide-de-camp of his excellency called to tender the congratulations of the President.

At the same hour, in obedience to a public call, a large mass meeting was held upon the "Alameda," or public walk, at the foot of the statue of General San Martin, where enthusiastic and patriotic addresses appropriate to the day were delivered by the members of the Society of the American Union and others; after which, forming a procession, the members of the Union bearing the flags of all the American republics, with that of the United States at the head, marched to the legation.

Upon their arrival repeated and enthusiastic cheers burst from the multitude for the United States, for American independence, for President Lincoln, &c., &c., &c. Accepting these manifestations as evidencing the cordial good will

existing between the republics of Chili and our own, I briefly addressed the multitude, thanking the government and people of Chili for this hearty expression of sympathy and respect, and invited the Society of the American Union, as representatives of their fellow-citizens, to enter my house, where, during an hour or more, a pleasant interchange of courtesies took place. I have the honor to enclose herein a copy of my remarks. (Enclosure A.)

During the day the minister of foreign affairs, the secretary of the treasury, the President, and secretary of the house, Admiral Blanco, and a large number of officers of the government, members of Congress, officers of the army and navy, municipality, &c., and private citizens, called to pay their respects. The republican members of the diplomatic corps also called, while those of Europe sent their cards, and all hoisted their flags in honor of the day.

In the evening the orchestra of the municipal theatre gave a beautiful serenade at the legation, playing our own national airs and those of Chili and Peru. These spontaneous manifestations by this government and people are, I believe, unexampled.

The recent aggressive attitude of various European nations towards the South American republics has awakened in the latter an interest, and compelled a study of our own affairs, which have tended to convince them that their only safety lies in the success of the Union arms and the reassertion of our integrity and power as a nation. It is a source of profound congratulation that the eminently wise and prudent course of the government of the United States in its foreign relations is fully understood and appreciated by the statesmen, the press, and the people of Chili.

I have the honor to remain, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

THOMAS H. NELSON.

Hon. WILLIAM H. SEWARD,
Secretary of State of the United States.

[Enclosure A.]

Remarks of Hon. Thomas H. Nelson, United States Minister Plenipotentiary at the Legation of the United States in Santiago de Chili, on the 4th of July, 1864.

GENTLEMEN: As the representative of the government and people of the United States, and as an American citizen, I am deeply grateful for this spontaneous and unparalleled demonstration. I thank his excellency the President of the republic for directing all the military bands of the city to come to this legation to play the patriotic airs of both North and South America, and also the leaders and members of those bands for the tasteful manner in which they performed that duty.

Words cannot express the pleasing emotions excited in the hearts of my countrymen and in my own by the thrilling music of our national hymns, "Hail Columbia" and the "Star Spangled Banner," admirably played by more than two hundred instruments. We felt that we were no longer strangers in a distant land, but among friends and brothers, whose patriotic impulses, hopes, and aspirations were in unison with our own.

I am deeply grateful for the spirit and enthusiasm I see here manifested by so many thousands of your patriotic people, and for the hearty *vivas* with which you greet the names of "Washington" and "Lincoln." It tells me in a voice not to be misunderstood—that the great heart of Chili is for the Union and the success of the federal cause. I appreciate the significance of this ovation and its moral effect, both here and elsewhere. It will be most gratefully appreciated by the government and people of the United States, and, above all, it will cheer and encourage the patriotic soldiers who are perilling their lives upon the battle-field for the sacred cause of freedom. It will cheer them to know, that even in the darkest hour of the rebellion, when the life of the nation seemed to be suspended by a thread, the government and people of Chili never for one moment faltered in their devotion to the cause of the Union. Your heartfelt prayers and aspirations have ever been for the triumph of the federal arms, and the restoration of our glorious Union.

And now again, in this most unequivocal manner, you have come to this legation on this the jubilee of American independence, to tender me your congratulations and sympathies, and to renew your devotion to those great principles of liberty which form the basis of all free

governments—principles which, on this day eighty-eight years ago, in the city of Philadelphia, were first promulgated to the world. The causes which inspired the declaration of American independence are stated in the language of its great author, Thomas Jefferson. He and his compatriots declared as self-evident truths, that "all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; and that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that for the security of these rights government was instituted, and that when it violates its trust, the governed might abolish it." Repeating the long list of grievances they had borne, and appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of their intentions, in the name and by the authority of the people, the only fountain of legitimate power, they shook off forever their allegiance to the British crown and proclaimed the United Colonies *a free and independent nation.*

That declaration of independence forms a new era in the history of mankind. It questioned the divine right of kings, shook every throne in Europe to its base, and taught them that there was a power behind the throne greater than the throne itself—that *the voice of the people is the voice of God.*

That sacred declaration received the baptism of blood. Inspired by its principles, and led by the immortal Washington, the patriot army marched forth boldly, and, by the blessing of God, triumphantly.

Our success inaugurated that era of revolutions which resulted in the emancipation of almost the entire western continent from European domination. Emulating our example, the Central and South American republics sprung into existence, and their elder sister, the United States of America, ushered them into the family of nations.

The origin and principles of government of these republics being substantially the same, and all founded upon our system, it is obvious that they must share the same fate, and that they and the system must stand or fall together. If we, who have tried the experiment of a free government and popular institutions, under the most favorable circumstances, fail in the attempt, I shall tremble for the system throughout the world.

I wonder not, therefore, at the deep anxiety you manifest for the success of our cause, because it involves the soundness or fallacy of the principles enunciated in our declaration of independence. It involves the great problem of human society, *whether mankind can be trusted with a purely popular government*—a problem in the solution of which you are as much interested as the people of the United States.

But, gentlemen of the *Union Americana*, you comprehend the magnitude of the contest now progressing in my country, and the mighty issues at stake. You understand that the labors, sacrifices, and blood of the patriot heroes of the Union army have not been expended merely to crush a gigantic rebellion and restore a discordant Union—not merely to destroy the curse of human slavery, the cause of all our troubles, but that we are also struggling for that system of government whose origin we this day commemorate and on which rest the hopes of the good and wise of every land. The fate of the great principles which lie at the foundation of all free republican governments is at stake—man's capacity for self-government. The victorious cannon of Grant will soon solve these questions, finally and forever!

God be praised for the glorious victories in Virginia and Georgia, and the prospect of an early close of the contest!

The fourth of July, 1863, was rendered memorable by the great victories of Gettysburg and Vicksburg. May we not indulge the hope that additional lustre will be thrown upon this glorious day by the capture of Richmond and Atlanta?

When the last mail left New York, millions of exultant voices were rejoicing over the success of the federal arms, and the certain triumph of the great cause! Millions of the sons of liberty throughout the world will soon echo the jubilant shout of Miriam the prophetess: "Jehovah has conquered; His people are free."

Soon will the glorious American Union be redeemed and regenerated! Human slavery is doomed! A wall of living freemen will exclude this fruitful element of strife, as the cherubim of God kept sin out of Eden. Soon will European monarchs cease to interest themselves in American affairs, and learn that two antagonistical systems cannot permanently exist on this continent. *America will be ruled by Americans*, and by its own chosen system of government.

To maintain and enforce these principles, the soldier of Chili and the soldier of the United States may yet march side by side to the battle-field.

The republics of America will be united in strong and indissoluble bonds of friendship, sympathy, and interest, and upon all great international questions they will see and think alike, and act as one people.

Again I return my thanks for this splendid demonstration, and especially to the patriotic and enthusiastic members of the *Union Americana*, whose generous and liberal sentiments, I trust, will soon be practically illustrated.

Mr. Seward to Mr. Nelson.

No. 73.] DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, August 18, 1864.

SIR: I have to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 140, of the 11th ultimo, with your address to the society known as the "Union Americana," in Chili, delivered on the occasion of their visit to the legation of the United States on the 4th of July, 1864.

The report which you transmit of the celebration by the government of Chili and the residents of the city of Santiago of the 88th anniversary of the independence of the United States of America is both gratifying and satisfactory; such a manifestation tending, as it does, to strengthen the bonds of friendship and good will which animate the government and people of Chili towards our government and people, and which, I am sure, are fully shared and cordially reciprocated on their part.

You are therefore instructed to express this satisfaction to the President of Chili in a communication to the minister for foreign affairs of that republic, covering the subject referred to.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

THOMAS H. NELSON, Esq., *&c., &c., &c., Chili.*

Mr. Nelson to Mr. Seward.

No. 152.] LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Santiago de Chili, October 16, 1864.

SIR: On the 7th instant, in obedience to your instruction of the 18th of August, No. 73, I had the honor to address a note to the secretary of foreign relations of the republic of Chili, manifesting the gratification with which my government and the people of the United States had learned the evidences of good will and friendship exhibited by the government and people of Chili, upon the occasion of the late anniversary of the independence of the United States.

I further stated that I had been instructed to express to the government and people of Chili, and to the society of the "Union Americana," the profound satisfaction experienced by the government and people I have the honor to represent at these renewed proofs of friendship and sympathy, and my trust that such sentiments may ever exist between the two nations.

On the 10th instant his excellency replied, in a very cordial note, reiterating similar expressions of earnest good will, and informing me that he had been instructed by the President to express to me the sincere satisfaction with which he had welcomed this new evidence of reciprocal good understanding between the governments and the people of the United States and Chili.

I have the honor to transmit herewith, marked respectively A, B, and C, copies of the correspondence above mentioned, together with a printed copy of the same in Spanish from the official organ the "Americano."

Under date of the 7th instant I also addressed a note to Mr. Covarrubias, (D,) acknowledging the receipt of a communication from him, dated September 29, and transmitting me a copy of the decree of the President of the 27th ultimo, declaring coal to be contraband of war. Copies and translations of these two latter documents accompanied my despatch No. 149, of September 30.

In consequence of certain publications copied into a portion of the press of

Chili, from foreign and prejudiced sources, and reflecting unfairly upon the foreign policy of the government of the United States, I took occasion, in an interview which I had with Mr. Covarrubias on the 8th instant, to explain to him the true position of my government towards foreign powers.

Mr. Covarrubias replied as follows:

"In the present position of the government of the United States, it must be evident to the mind of any statesman of calm reasoning that the position it has assumed in regard to its foreign relations could be none other, in justice to the high and important interests involved in the mighty struggle now in progress. Much as it might desire to intervene in other American affairs, its hands are tied by domestic obligations which it cannot ignore. In my opinion the present policy of the government of the United States is temporary, not fixed and permanent, but born of the very exigencies of the situation, and a natural consequence of the very difficult position of its domestic affairs.

"*The earnest sympathies of Chili are for the cause of the Union, the cause of justice, right, and humanity, and under no circumstances could those sympathies be enlisted in behalf of the cause of the south.*"

This expression of sentiments, on the part of the secretary of foreign relations, was most gratifying to me, and I assured his excellency would be no less so to my government, to which I should take pleasure in communicating it.

I have the honor to remain your obedient servant,

THOMAS H. NELSON.

Hon. WILLIAM H. SEWARD,
Secretary of State of the United States.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Santiago de Chili, October 7, 1864.

SIR: The evidences of good will and friendship exhibited by the government and people of Chili on the occasion of the celebration of the eighty-eighth anniversary of the independence of the United States, on the 4th of July last, were of a character so marked and gratifying that I addressed a special communication to my government descriptive of that patriotic and enthusiastic demonstration.

The government and people of the United States received this intelligence with the utmost satisfaction, and I take great pleasure in complying with the instructions of the honorable Secretary of State of the United States, by manifesting to the government of your excellency, to the members of the "*Union Americana*," and to the people of Chili who participated in that patriotic celebration, the sincere gratification with which the government and people whom I represent have received these renewed proofs of friendship and sympathy, tending, as they do, to strengthen the sentiments of friendship which animate the intercourse between the two republics, and which are shared in and cordially reciprocated by my government as well as by the people of the United States.

I trust that such sentiments may ever continue to exist between Chili and the United States, and that all the republics of this continent may be indissolubly bound together by similar ties of friendship and sympathy.

Availing myself of this occasion, I beg to renew to your excellency the assurances of the high consideration and respect with which I have the honor to remain

Your excellency's obedient servant,

THOMAS H. NELSON.

His Excellency the SECRETARY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS
Of the Republic of Chili.

[Translation.]

SANTIAGO, *October* 10, 1864.

SIR: By the official note which your excellency did me the honor to address me on the 7th instant, I have been made aware of the satisfaction with which your government and the people of the United States have received the manifestations of friendship and sympathy of which they were the object in Chili, upon the occasion of the late anniversary of the independence of that republic, and of the friendly sentiments with which they cordially correspond to those which animate this country.

His excellency the President of the republic, to whom I gave account of the instructions in the premises which your excellency informs me you have received from the most excellent Secretary of State of the United States, has felt highly flattered thereby, and has charged me to signify to your excellency the sincere satisfaction with which he has welcomed this new evidence of the good friendship and reciprocity between the government and the people of the United States and the people and government of Chili.

My government heartily joins in the grateful confidence expressed to me by your excellency, that such sentiments may ever exist between the United States and this republic, and that all those of America may be indissolubly united by these same bonds of friendship and sympathy.

I have the honor to reiterate to your excellency the expression of my most distinguished consideration and esteem, with which I am your excellency's most obedient servant,

ALVARO COVARRUBIAS.

The ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY AND MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY
of the United States.

[Translation.]

[L. S.] SANTIAGO, *September* 29, 1864.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit to your excellency a copy of the declaration issued by his excellency the President of the republic in regard to coal destined for the vessels-of-war of a nation engaged in hostile operations.

Will your excellency be pleased to accept the reiterated expressions of the distinguished consideration with which I am your excellency's most obedient servant,

ALVARO COVARRUBIAS.

The ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY AND MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY
of the United States of America.

[Translation.]

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Santiago de Chili.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHILI.

To all to whom these presents may come, greeting: Considering, 1st, that, according to the principles and rules generally adopted by civilized nations, all coal intended for the public vessels of one nation engaged in hostile operations against another must be considered, and, in fact, has been considered, as an article contraband of war;

2d. That, in view of the late acts and declarations, respectively made by the governments of Peru and of Spain, of the law recently proclaimed in that republic, and of the re-enforcements which the cabinet of Madrid is sending to the squadron occupying the Chincha islands, it is impossible not to consider the two countries mentioned, if not in a state of declared war, at least in hostilities *de facto;*

And 3d. That it is the duty of loyal neutrality to prevent the furnishing of contraband of war, by the taking away from the coasts of Chili coal destined for the vessels of either of the belligerents—

I have set forth the following declaration:

1st. Coal destined for the supplying of the public vessels of a state employed in hostile operations against another state is an article contraband of war.

2d. It is not lawful to take away from the coasts of Chili any quantity of coal whatever destined for the purpose above mentioned.

3. Those authorities of the republic whom it may concern will adopt the necessary measures to prevent the infraction or eluding of the present declaration.

Given in the hall of my office, in Santiago, the 27th of September, in the year of our Lord, 1864.

JOSÉ JOAQUIN PEREZ,
The President of the Republic of Chili.

ALVARO COVARRUBIAS.

A true copy:

DOMINGO ARTEAGA ALEMPARTE,
Acting Chief Clerk.

Mr. Seward to Mr. Nelson.

No. 82.] DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, November 22, 1864.

SIR: I have to acknowledge the receipt of your despatches Nos. 152, 153, and 154, all under date of the 16th of October last.

Your correspondence with Mr. Covarrubias, transmitted with your No. 152, returning thanks for the courtesies extended to you on the 4th of July last, is deemed satisfactory and is approved.

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I am, sir, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

THOMAS H. NELSON, Esq., *&c., &c., &c., Chili.*