

*Extract from the Speech of the Hon. DANIEL WEBSTER, on a Motion in the Senate of the United States, for the purchase of Catlin's Indian Collection in 1849.*

"Mr. President,—The question is, whether it does not become us, as a useful thing, to possess in the United States this collection of paintings, etc., made amongst the Indian tribes?—whether it is not a case for the exercise of *large liberality*, I will not say *bounty*, but *policy*? These tribes, Sir, that have preceded us, to whose lands we have succeeded, and who have no written memorials of their laws, their habits, and their manners, are all passing away to the land of forgetfulness. Their likeness, manners, and customs, are portrayed with more accuracy and truth in this Collection by Catlin than in all the other drawings and representations on the face of the earth. Somebody in this country ought to possess this Collection,—that is my opinion; and I do not know who there is, or where there is to be found, any society or individual, who or which can with so much propriety possess himself or itself of it as the Government of the United States. For my part, then, I do think that the preservation of Catlin's Indian Collection in this country is an *important public act*. I think it properly belongs to those accumulations of historical matters respecting our predecessors on this continent which it is very proper for the Government of the United States to maintain. As I have said, this race is going into forgetfulness; they track the continuation of mankind in the present age, and call recollection back to them. And here they are better exhibited, in my judgment, better set forth and presented to the mind, and the taste and the curiosity of mankind, than in all other collections in the world. I go for this as an *American* subject, as a thing belonging to us, to our history, to the history of a race whose lands we till, and over whose obscure graves and bones we tread every day. I look upon it as a thing more appropriate for us than the ascertaining of the South Pole, or anything that can be discovered in the Dead Sea or the river Jordan. These are the grounds, Sir, upon which I propose to proceed, and I shall vote for the appropriation with great pleasure."

THE END.