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"It is most providential, my Lord, that Mr. MacLane's suggestions did not succeed either in England, in deterring Lord Aberdeen from making his offer, according to his original intention, or here, in inducing the American Government to stand out for some modification of that offer when it was made, for, in either case, all would have been spoiled.

"The President's Message, transmitting the proposition of Her Majesty's Government for the consideration of the Senate is very guarded,—upon the whole, rather deprecating than encouraging the acceptance of the offer; but in this course the President ran no risk and incurred no responsibility whatever, for every one in Washington, at all acquainted with the disposition of the Senate, knew that such a proposition would be accepted by that body, by a large majority.

"I have, &c.

(Signed) "R. PAKENHAM."

(No. 106.)

"My Lord,

"Washington, August 13, 1846.

"The injunction of secrecy having been removed by a Resolution of the Senate, I have the honour herewith to transmit three numbers of the 'Union' official newspaper, containing, in an authentic form ('Union' of 7th August), the papers relative to the conclusion of the Oregon negotiation which I had the honour to transmit in an unauthorized form with my despatch No. 100, and also ('Unions' of 8th and 10th August) two Messages from the President to the Senate, the first communicating for approval the Treaty signed here on the 15th of June, the second communicating documents not before communicated to the Senate relative to the Oregon Territory in answer to a Resolution of the Senate of the 17th June last.

"Amongst the papers thus made public, the one which I should most particularly recommend to your Lordship's attention, is a despatch from Mr. Buchanan to Mr. MacLane dated the 12th of July, 1845 ('Union' of 8th August), setting forth the terms on which the President was willing, at that time, to settle the Oregon Question, but evidently with little or no expectation that those terms would be accepted by Great Britain, I might almost say with an expectation scarcely concealed that they would be rejected, when, to use Mr. Buchanan's own words, the President would 'be relieved from the embarrassment in which he has been involved by the acts, offers, and declarations of his predecessors' and be justified in going to war for the whole territory.

"The remarkable thing in this despatch is the confidence which it betrays that, in the course which the President had made up his mind to follow with reference to the Oregon question, he would receive the countenance and support of the Senate and the country, even to the extremity of a war with England. The result has shown that, in this expectation, he did not do justice either to the wisdom and integrity of the Senate, or to the intelligence and good sense of the American people.

"Within a few days after the opening of the late Session of Congress it became evident that Mr. Polk's policy respecting Oregon was viewed with no favour by a large majority of the Senate, nor was the war cry raised by the more ardent partisans of the Administration responded to in any of the country.

"In process of time this conclusion forced itself on the mind of the President and his advisers, and hence your Lordship will find in the ulterior despatches of Mr. Buchanan to Mr. MacLane a far more moderate and subdued tone, until at last they exhibit a positive and conciliatory desire to settle the question by compromise, the title of the United States to 'the whole of Oregon' having apparently been forgotten.

"If further proof were wanted of the anxiety of this Government to be extricated from the mistaken position in which they had placed themselves, it would be found in the alacrity in which the terms last proposed by Her Majesty's Government for the settlement of the controversy were accepted.

"Sufficient time has now elapsed since the promulgation of the Treaty to enable us to judge of the light in which the transaction has been viewed throughout the country, and it is gratifying to say that it has been everywhere received with satisfaction and applause.

"No evidence whatever of a contrary feeling has come within my observation, except it be among the disappointed advocates of a war policy, who had staked their political fortune upon the adoption of extreme measures, and even in these quarters, I am bound in truth to say that the irritation is rather against the President and his Ministers for having, as they say, deceived and betrayed them, than from any express condemnation of the Treaty itself.

"I have, &c.

(Signed) "R. PAKENHAM."

Historical Note.

1846.