

people of the United States must look back upon the abortive efforts made by the Executive, for a period of more than half a century, to determine, what no nation should suffer long to remain in dispute, the true line which divides its possessions from those of other powers. The nature of the settlements on the borders of the United States, and of the neighboring territory, was for a season such, that this, perhaps, was not indispensable to a faithful performance of the duties of the Federal Government. Time has, however, changed this state of things, and has brought about a condition of affairs, in which the true interests of both countries imperatively require that this question should be put at rest. It is not to be disguised that, with full confidence, often expressed, in the desire of the British Government to terminate it, we are apparently as far from its adjustment as we were at the time of signing the treaty of peace in 1783. The sole result of long pending negotiations, and a perplexing arbitration, appears to be a conviction, on its part, that a conventional line must be adopted, from the impossibility of ascertaining the true one according to the description contained in that treaty. Without coinciding in this opinion, which is not thought to be well founded, my predecessor gave the strongest proof of the earnest desire of the United States to terminate, satisfactorily, this dispute, by proposing the substitution of a conventional line, if the consent of the States interested in the question could be obtained. To this proposition no answer has as yet been received. The attention of the British Government has, however, been urgently invited to the subject, and its reply cannot, I am confident, be much longer delayed. The general relations between Great Britain and the United States are of the most friendly character, and I am well satisfied of the sincere disposition of that Government to maintain them upon their present footing. This disposition has also, I am persuaded, become more general with the people of England than at any previous period. It is scarcely necessary to say to you how cordially it is reciprocated by the Government and people of the United States. The conviction, which must be common to all, of the injurious consequences that result from keeping open this irritating question, and the certainty that its final settlement cannot be much longer deferred, will, I trust, lead to an early and satisfactory adjustment. At your last session, I had before you the recent communications between the two Governments, and between this Government and that of the State of Maine, in whose solitude, concerning a subject in which she has so deep an interest, every portion of the Union participates."

In this, the President manifests that friendship for

Maine, regard for her interests, and mild but firm purpose to maintain them, which has ever characterized his course upon this subject, in the several capacities in which he has been called to act. The London Times, of December 27th, understands the message as we do. In regard to that part of it touching this subject, it holds the following language: "From the tone and spirit of so much of the message now alluded to as is connected with this New Brunswick controversy, it appears natural to predict that it will not be suffered by the present Government of the United States to remain much longer *unsettled*." The President says that no nation should long suffer its boundaries to remain in dispute. Does Congress doubt this? or will they cooperate with him in that action which the truth of such a position demands? He says the true interests of both countries imperatively require that this question should be put at rest. Will Congress say it should be kept open? or will they unite their efforts with those of the Executive to put it to rest? He says he does not coincide in the opinion of the British Government, that this boundary line cannot be run according to the treaty of 1783, and that a conventional line must be adopted. Will Congress sustain him in this? or will they tell us to negotiate and make the best bargain we can? I trust not. The time has arrived when some decisive step should be taken. Let there be union, energy, and firmness among the different branches of the Government upon this subject; let them manifest the determination to submit to nothing wrong, as well as to ask for nothing but what is right, and this long-vexed question will be terminated and settled forthwith.