

genuineness of any flag which a suspected vessel might bear; that if in the exercise of this right, either from involuntary error, or in spite of every precaution, loss or injury should be sustained, a prompt reparation would be afforded; but that it should entertain, for a single instant, the notion of abandoning the right itself, would be quite impossible.

That these observations had been rendered necessary by the Message to Congress. That the President is undoubtedly at liberty to address that assembly in any terms which he may think proper; but if the Queen's servants should not deem it expedient to advise Her Majesty also to advert to these topics in her speech from the throne, they desired, nevertheless, to hold themselves perfectly free, when questioned in Parliament, to give all such explanations as they might feel to be consistent with their duty, and necessary for the elucidation of the truth.

The paper having been read, and its contents understood, Mr. Fox was told, in reply, that the subject would be taken into consideration, and that a despatch relative to it would be sent, at an early day, to the American minister in London, who would have instructions to read it to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

DANIEL WEBSTER.

No. 3.—*Mr. Everett to Mr. Webster.*

*Legation of the United States,
London, December 28, 1841.*

(Extract.)

I RECEIVED on the 23rd instant a note from Lord Aberdeen, on the African seizures, in reply to one addressed to him by Mr. Stevenson, in the last hours of his residence in London, and which, as it appears, did not reach Lord Aberdeen's hands till Mr. Stevenson had left London. As some time must elapse before I could give a detailed answer to this communication, I thought it best at once to acknowledge its receipt, to express my satisfaction at its dispassionate tone, and to announce the purpose of replying to it at some future period. The President, I think, will be struck with the marked change in the tone of the present Ministry, as manifested in this note and a former one addressed by Lord Aberdeen to Mr. Stevenson, contrasted with the last communication from Lord Palmerston, on the same subject. The difference is particularly apparent in Lord Aberdeen's letter to me of the 20th instant. Not only is the claim of Great Britain relative to the right of detaining suspicious vessels stated in a far less exceptionable manner than it had been done by Lord Palmerston, but Lord Aberdeen expressly declines being responsible for the language used by his predecessor.

You will observe that Lord Aberdeen disclaims, in a more distinct manner than it has ever been done, all right to search, detain, or in any manner interfere with American vessels, whether engaged in the Slave Trade or not; that he limits the pretensions of this Government to boarding vessels strongly suspected of being those of other nations unwarrantably assuming the American flag; and promises, where this right has been abused to the injury of American vessels, that full and ample reparation shall be made. As the United States have never claimed that their flag should furnish protection to any vessels but their own, and as very strict injunctions have been forwarded to the cruisers on the coast of Africa, not to interfere with American vessels, I am inclined to think that cases of interruption will become much less frequent; and, if this Government should redeem in good faith Lord Aberdeen's promise of reparation where injury has been done, I am disposed to hope that this subject of irritation will in a great measure cease to exist. I shall not engage in the discussion of the general principles as now avowed and explained by this Government, till I hear from you on the subject, and know what the President's views are; but I shall confine myself chiefly to urging the claim for redress in the cases of the *Tigris*, *Sea Mew*, *Jones*, and *William and Francis*, which were the last submitted to my predecessor, and on which no answer has been received from this Government.

Among the reasons for supposing that fewer causes of complaint will hereafter arise, is the circumstance that the seizures of last year took place under the agreement of Commodore Tucker, the British commander on the African station