among them of very laborious industry. Some of them not only provide an abundant supply of food for their families, by the labor of their own hands, but have a surplus of several hundred bushels of rice with which, and sundry articles of commerce they are in the habit of collecting, they procure their supply of foreign manufactures. And there can be no question that the current is setting more strongly in favor of agriculture and other laborious pursuits now, than at any previous period. Notwithstanding these encouraging appearances, however, there is yet much to be accomplished before this people generally can reach the proper standard of rational and immortal beings.

According to the law of nations, this government holds jurisdiction over a territory, comprising at the lowest computation, over two hundred thousand of the aboriginal inhabitants, who are almost in total ignorance of God, his law, and the plan of salvation; and who are also to be taught nearly all the useful branches of human knowledge.

In this view of the subject—may we not ask ourselves gentlemen, what do we owe them!—and what are our duties in reference to them, in a civil and religous light! This government has assumed the guardianship of these perishing thousands; and they have claims upon us of high importance to them, and to our own character as an enlightened, just, and christian people. In return for what they have yielded to us, they are undoubtedly entitled to expect that we will do all in our power to impart to them the blessings of civilization and religion. They are entitled as citizens of this government, for such they are, to justice in all our dealings with them, to education in the useful arts and sciences, and in the principles and duties of the christian religion. In a word they have a right to expect, and to receive from our civil, and religious communities combined, that sort of education and training which will raise them, ultimately to the enjoyment of all the blessings of civilization; the rights and priviliges of freemen; and make them useful citizens of this Republic. This I conceive to be the precise object of the government. And if we fulfil not these duties, which grow naturally out of our connection with, and relation to them, we cannot avoid the imputations—which, by the way, have already been falsely charged against us—of injustice, unkindness, and unfaithfulness to them.

It cannot be denied that the work of civilization is no easy task, and is exceedingly slow in its progress. But when we look back in the pages of history five or six hundred years, and see what was then the state of the Anglo-Saxon race; and whence sprung the most polished and scientific nations of Europe, we find much to encourage us in our efforts to extend the blessings of civilization; and sufficient to convince the most skeptical of the practicability of civilizing the barbarous tribes of this continent.

Gentlemen, these people sustain a peculiar relation to us, and must be civilized,—and the work is ours. They are not to share the fate of the innumerable tribes of North American indians, which a few centuries since roamed fearlessly in their native forests; but have been swept into oblivion, and are with the generations before the flood—and of others not a trace remains but in tradition, or in the person of some solitary wanderer, the last of his tribe, who hovers like a ghost among the sepulchres of his fathers—a spark still faintly glimmering in the ashes of an extinguished race. But happily the circumstances growing out of our relation and connection with the aborigines of this country, are altogether different, and cannot, possibly, in the nature of things produce such results. They are not only of the same nature, and of one blood with ourselves—but they are our brethren our fellow citizens, and of the same race. And must be raised to a condition to partake with us in all the blessings we enjoy; to participate with us in all the affairs of the government; and to be in all respects on an equal footing with other citizens of this Republic. The best informed and more intelligent of our native population are fully sensible of the evils of their present state, and feel that a change in their situation has become necessary, and are strong in the conviction that we sincerely desire their welfare, and they are steadfastly looking to us to relieve them from their present degradation.

The chiefs of several tribes within our jurisdiction have recently expressed to me an earnest wish to have missionaries and schools established among their people, who they say, are anxious to receive instruction. And there is nothing now to prevent the sending of missionaries and the establishment of schools, except what results from the want of pecuniary means. I sincerely hope the time is not distant when this difficulty will be removed, and that the present generation may have lights kindled in all their borders; and that generations to come may be saved from the darkness and wretchedness of their fathers.

This object is truly worthy of the continued labors and persevering efforts of the government. And I am exceedingly gratified to observe, that there seems to be a most remarkable reciprocity of feeling and union of sentiment on this subject, which plainly indicate that the hand of Heaven is in it—as no power short of this could ever have produced such a state of things. This is for our encouragement, and it is encouragement enough to induce us to persevere. Indeed, in such circumstances we cannot relax our efforts.

Honor, justice, humanity, and all that make man respectable in the sight of God and men imperiously require us to go forward, in full faith till this work, so auspiciously commenced shall be accomplished.

My enthusiasm, gentlemen, on this subject, and I am not ashamed to acknowledge that I possess it, does not blind me to the difficulties and obstacles which are to be overcome; past experience impresses this on me. But I hold that these difficulties are not insurmountable, and if the government will persevere in its duty, the thing, which we so earnestly desire, will be accomplished.

The pecuniary embarrassments of the government, I am aware, presents a serious obstacle to the carrying forward of the work of civilization as rapidly as we could wish. I am also aware that economy in our public expenditures is "the order of the day"—indeed the fashion of the time. This to a certain extent, and in reference to particular objects, is undoubtedly wise and proper. There is, however, a just and politic economy, the result of extended and liberal views; and there is also a false and spurious economy, the offspring of narrow views and little minds. The one is wholesome to the reputation, and to all the true interests of a nation. The other is hollow-hearted and mean, and disgraceful to a nation's character. But gentlemen, I doubt not your discrimination in this matter; and I also feel that you agree with me as to the importance of the subject on which I have been speaking—I, therefore, scarcely need invite your attention to its serious consideration, or impress upon you the necessity of adopting measures which will so increase the public finances as will enable you to spare an allowance sufficient, for the purposes and plans of the government, for the improvement of our native population.

I must also be permitted to remark, gentlemen, that it is absolutely essential to the success of our efforts, for the civilization of the natives, that the legislature speedily adopt measures to increase and preserve the reputation and influence of the government in the estimation of this part of our community, and secure for it full confidence and respect; without which your best concerted plans must fail.

You are not ignorant, gentlemen, of the attempts which have recently been made by some designing, bad men, to create discord and jealousy among the natives, and to incite them to insubordination. And I regret to say, that in one or two instances, they succeeded too well; and at one time created no little concern for the preservation of the Authority and influence of the government.

In reference to the natives, this government unquestionably, should be, in its nature kind and mild, but firm and absolute. Laws and regulations must be formed to meet their advancing state, and which should remove the perplexing and provoking differences which so extensively exist between various tribes.—Which evil, in itself, if not effectually cured will hinder for many years, the progress of every effort which may be made for their benefit.

Another evil, perhaps, equally destructive to the natives, and equally necessary to be provided against, by proper laws and regulations is, their intercourse with unprincipled *civilized*, if I may employ the term, men, who visit them for the purposes of trade. Many of the natives complain, and justly too, that the morals of their youth are corrupted by bad foreigners,—of which we have sad proofs,—as well also as by some of our own people, who trade with them. This is a well known fact, and the cause of incalculable injury to the natives and seriously retards their civilization. As we would hope to promote their welfare, this evil must, in some way, by the wisdom of the Legislature, be removed. It can be done effectually in one way, and in one way only; and that is, as I recommended to the Legislature on a former occasion, "that the government interpose and regulate the manner of conducting trade with the natives."

I am fully sensible of the delicacy of this subject, in the view I am now taking of it, but its importance in order to the attainment of the object of the government, forbids that I should pass it unnoticed: or that the evil should longer continue. Some people are so sordid in their views and affections, that when you come in contact with their pecuniary interests, they loose sight of every other consideration, however high or important; and such doubtless will raise their voice against any measure, which in their opinion, may in any degree, restrict their trading operations. But I dare not be unfaithful to my trust to my conscience, nor to my God.

I therefore, earnestly recommend that in future all trading establishments connected with the natives, shall be made in reference to the influence which these establishments are expected to exert over the natives—and that they be made to bear upon every measure which may be put in operation for the civil, moral, and intellectual improvement of the natives.

Gentlemen, I have endeavored faithfully to spread before you in as concise a manner as I could, the actual condition of a large and very interesting portion of our population.

I have stated, and have aimed to do it faithfully, their just claims upon the government. The plans and measures best adapted to satisfy these claims, have in part been suggested—others, in the course of your deliberations, will doubtless, present themselves to you.

The work is now before you, and the scene it presents is certainly adapted to fill and to delight minds bent on doing good.

The view and contemplation of it by such minds, I am sure will never tire. Do good and communicate to all men as ye have opportunity is a divine command. And every man of real benevolence finds his chief happiness in obeying this command. Therefore to do good and to communicate to those heathen tribes, whom God has placed under our special care, is unquestionably our indispensible duty—a duty than which, I can conceive of none more imperitave upon the christian, the philantropist, and the statesman.

It affords me much pleasure to be able to inform the Legislature that this government has happily succeeded in settling the difficulties which subsisted between Kings Dourwee and Zio—and in terminating the cruel war, which, for the last five years, has completely cut off all communication with the interior tribes of this section; and which has produced incalculable sufferings among the inhabitants of a large portion of the Grand and Little Bassa territories.

Kings Dour-wee and Zio have solemnly pledged themselves never again to make war one upon the other, under any circumstance whatever; and in case any dispute or misunderstanding should hereafter arise between them, it shall be referred to this government for adjustment;—whose decision shall be final. I have great pleasure in stating that King Peter Harris, of Grand Bassa, made himself particularly serviceable to the government in bringing about a reconciliation of the above parties. He was, indeed, unremitting in his exertions, and at one time was absent from his home, on a mission [illegible] as an agent of this government, more than six [illegible]. We are also indebted to King B[illegible] and S[illegible] of Little Bassa, for [illegible] rendered our Commissioners [illegible] negotiations. Nor can I [illegible] my acknowledgements for valuable [illegible] the government, in this [illegible] Stephen A. Benson, and [illegible] Esquire,—whose indefatigable exertions [illegible] the efforts of the [illegible] terminating the war and restoring tranquility [illegible] country. I am gratified in being able to state that the expense incurred by the government, in settling this war, was partly met by the patriotic and liberal minded citizens of Grand Bassa [illegible], by voluntary contributions. The balance was paid from the public Treasury—which amount you will find entered in the Treasurer's accounts.

I regret to have to inform you, gentlemen, that the same success has not attended similar efforts of the government in other quarters. In the latter part of June last, at the earnest solicitation of a number of the Chiefs, Veys, G[illegible] and Deys, I appointed a Commission, consisting of three gentlemen, to visit the Vey Country for the purpose of arranging and settling the disputes existing between the several parties occupying that territory,—and if possible, put an end to the war, which was then, and is still being vigorously prosecuted between a part of the Vey and G[illegible] tribes. But I am sorry to say, after an absence of several weeks, the Commissioners returned without being able to accomplish all that was desired or anticipated. The causes of their failure you will find fully set forth in their report, which will be laid before you. I beg, however, to recommend that further, and immediate efforts be made to settle those disputes and difficulties; and terminate this war.

Knowing as we do, what violent resentments, and inextirable animosities these discords generally generate, and how they are apt to exasperate and inflame the contending parties and prompt them to acts of the greatest cruelty, you are called upon, and required, gentlemen, by indispensible obligations to almighty God, and to your fellow citizens, to use all the means in your power, for stopping the further effusion of blood, and for averting the impending calamities that threaten the inhabitants

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