

DOMESTIC.

Communication of the Governor of Georgia, in compliance with the request of the House of Representatives, communicating the information in the possession of the Executive, together with his views in relation to the Cherokee Nation, and the immediate survey and occupancy of the Cherokee Lands.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
Willedgeville, Dec. 1, 1831. }

To the House of Representatives :

GENTLEMEN,—Having been called on by your resolution of this date, requesting me to appear before your branch of the General Assembly, any information in my possession, "in relation to the Cherokee nation, and which might have an influence on the policy of the measure of the immediate survey and occupancy of the Cherokee lands, which has not heretofore been communicated, together with any views of the Executive, upon the subject, which that Department may think proper to make known ;"

In answer thereto, I submit the following, as the result of long reflection, on the important subject referred to.

It is believed that a crisis has arrived, in which we cannot permit the course of our policy, in relation to the Cherokee part of Georgia, to remain in its present perplexed and extraordinary condition, without jeopardizing the interest and prosperity, if not the peace and safety of the State.

Circumstances within the recollection of our whole people, imperiously demanded the extension of the laws and jurisdiction of our State, over our entire population and territory. This step has been taken, and cannot be retraced. The State cannot consent to be restricted in the exercise of her constitutional rights. It is now too late for us to theorize on this subject ; we are called upon to act ; the public functionaries of the State stand pledged to their constituents, and the world, to sustain the ground which they have taken.

It is our constitutional right, and moral duty, forthwith to interpose, and save that part of our State from confusion, anarchy, and perhaps from bloodshed.

The question of the right of the State to jurisdiction, seemed for a time to have been settled. Our laws were in regular, unmolested operation over our entire territory : our rights appeared to be no longer controverted ; and the responsibility for existing evils was devolving on ourselves.

But new and unexpected difficulties are arising out of the imbecility of our own measures, and the selfishness of some of our citizens.—

It has been thought that some of our most distinguished citizens have thrown almost insuperable obstacles in the way of a speedy termination of our Indian difficulties. The laws heretofore enacted, for the maintenance of the jurisdiction of the State over that portion of our territory, and for the government of all persons residing therein, it must now be admitted, have failed to accomplish all that was desired and expected, by the friends of these measures. The defects of our laws have been evinced by their practical operation. It is believed, that any attempt to establish a salutary civil government, over a country containing nearly five millions of acres of land, while destitute of the materials to administer the law must from the nature of things, prove in a great measure abortive. A few thousand half civilized men, both indisposed, and incompetent to the faithful discharge of the duties of citizenship, and scattered over a territory so extensive, can never enjoy the inestimable blessings of civil government.

Whatever may be the nominal character of our legislation, we cannot govern the country under consideration, with honor to our character and benefit and humanity to the Indians, until we have a settled, freehold, white population, planted on the unoccupied portion of that territory, under the influence of all the ordinary inducements of society, to maintain a good system of civil government.

Our government over that territory, in its present condition, in order to be efficient, must partake largely of a military character, and consequently must be more or less arbitrary and oppressive in its operations. If the present system be continued, it is important, that ample powers should be afforded to the Executive, to regulate the conduct and control the operations, of the agents employed to administer the government, in that part of the State : but it is doubtful, even with this power, whether any vigilance and energy on the part of the Executive, can wholly prevent injustice and oppression being committed on the Indians, and at the same time maintain the laws inviolate.

If Georgia were at this day to relinquish all right, title and claim, to the Cherokee country, what would be its situation? The impotency and incompetency of the Cherokees to maintain a regular government, even for a few months, perhaps for a few weeks, would at once be demonstrated. The country would speedily be over-run, chiefly by the most abandoned portions of society from all quarters. The gold mines would hold out an irresistible temptation to all such characters. The existence alone of the rich gold mines, utterly forbids the idea of a state of quiescence on this all engrossing subject.

Our true situation and motives on this question are still misunderstood, and often misrepresented, by those at a distance. In order to appreciate our policy, our true situation must be understood. I will not attempt to enumerate the wrongs, embarrassments, and perplexities, which this State has encountered by what I am constrained to deem, the impertinent intermeddling of "busy bodies." Officious persons of various descriptions have unfortunately succeeded, in inducing our Indian people to believe, that we are their enemies and oppressors, and in alienating their affections from us. These various intermeddlings hastened the crisis, which compelled the

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