

[CONFIDENTIAL CIRCULAR.]

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, May 14, 1846.

Sir :

I transmit to you, herewith, a proclamation of the President, of yesterday's date, declaring that war exists between the United States and Mexico. Congress adopted the measure with unprecedented unanimity. On the passage of the "Act providing for the prosecution of the existing war between the United States and Mexico," there were but fourteen dissenting voices in the House, and two in the Senate. The truth is that we had endured so many insults and grievous wrongs from Mexico, with such unexampled patience, that at the last she must have mistaken our forbearance for pusillanimity. Encouraged, probably, by this misapprehension, her army has at length passed the Del Norte,—has invaded the territory of our country,—and has shed American blood upon the American soil.

The vote in Congress will serve to convince the world, that, in this country, at a crisis, when it becomes necessary to assert the national rights, and vindicate the national honor, all party distinctions vanish.

You will observe from the President's message, a copy of which is enclosed, the extreme reluctance with which the United States have engaged in this war. It is our interest, as it has ever been our inclination, that Mexico should be an independent and powerful Republic, and that our relations with her should be of the most friendly character. The successive revolutions by which she has been afflicted, and the avaricious and unprincipled men who have placed themselves at the head of her Government, have brought her to the brink of ruin. We feel deeply interested that she should establish a stable Government sufficiently powerful and pacific to prevent and punish aggressions upon her neighbors. For some years, in our intercourse with her, we have incurred much of the expense, and suffered many of the inconveniences of war, whilst nominally at peace. This state of things had at last become intolerable.

We go to war with Mexico solely for the purpose of conquering an honorable and permanent peace. Whilst we intend to prosecute the war with vigor, both by land and by sea, we shall bear the olive branch in one hand, and the sword in the other; and whenever she will accept the former, we shall sheath the latter.

A strict blockade of the ports of Mexico, both on the Atlantic and Pacific, will be immediately established.

In conversing on the objects and purposes of the war, you will be guided by the sentiments expressed in the President's message and this despatch.

I am, Sir, respectfully,

Your obedient servant,