dating the dispute between His Hawaiian Majesty's Government and that of France.

The desire which you express in behalf of His Hawaiian Majesty that the United States should become a party to an arrangement with Great Britain and France to secure His Majesty's neutrality in all wars and provide for the settlement of any future difficulty which may arise between the Hawaiian Islands and either of the three powers, by a reference to the other two, shall be taken into respectful consideration.

I avail myself of the occasion, gentlemen, to offer to you the assurance of my very high regard.

JOHN M. CLAYTON.

Mr. Clayton to Mr. Rives.

No. 15.]

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, July 5, 1850.

To WILLIAM C. RIVES, Esq., etc.:

SIR: I transmit a copy of a note and of the accompanying papers addressed to this Department, under date the 30th of May last, by Messrs. G. P. Judd and James Jackson Jarves, accredited to this Government as special commissioners of His Hawaiian Majesty, requesting the friendly interposition of the United States towards a satisfactory settlement of the differences between the Hawaiian Government and that of France. A copy of my answer to the application is also enclosed.

It certainly is very desirable that the relations between France and the Hawaiian Islands should be of an amicable character. We desire that those islands should maintain their independence. We believe that their existing government is competent to discharge the duties of a sovereign state, and that if any of its acts or omissions with reference to other governments, or to the citizens or subjects owing them allegiance, have been of questionable propriety, this should be imputed to the inexperience of the Hawaiian functionaries, and to the difficulties arising from the peculiarities of their position.

It undoubtedly behooves the governments of older and more powerful states who hold official intercourse with the Hawaiian Government to view with indulgence any delinquencies which they may commit clearly resulting from the causes just indicated. The occasion is not considered to call for an expression of an opinion by this Department in regard to the merits of the controversy between the French and the Hawaiian authorities. The Department, however, will not hesitate to express its belief that whatever may have been the convictions of the French officers as to the justice of their cause, the measures adopted to obtain redress were unnecessarily harsh. It is hoped that this will ultimately be the conclusion of the French Government itself; and that, in that event, it will make such amends to the Hawaiian Government as a great and magnanimous nation can not fail to consider as due in such case to a feeble and injured state.

The Department will be slow to believe that the French have any intention to adopt, with reference to the Sandwich Islands, the same policy which they have pursued in regard to Tahiti. If, however, in your judgment it should be warranted by circumstances, you may take a proper opportunity to intimate to the minister for foreign affairs of