intimate to him the deep interest which the United States have in maintaining the independence of the Sandwich Islands, and to employ the other topics of persuasive consideration suggested in those instructions "toward a satisfactory accommodation of the dispute;" all of which was to be done with "prudence," and without entering into the merits of the controversy between the French and Hawaiian authorities, on which the Department of State did not consider "the occasion as calling for the expression of an opinion."

My understanding of these instructions at the time was manifested by my dispatch No. 49, acknowledging their receipt, to which you refer, and in which I say:

I shall, in the exercise of the discretion they commit to me, profit of the first occasion which may seem suitable and proper to bring the views and considerations they suggest to the aid of an amicable adjustment of the difficulties between the Sandwich Islands and this Government without intruding officially or offensively in the controversy between the parties.

These instructions were accordingly fulfilled in my conversations with Gen. de La Hitte, while he was minister of foreign affairs, as stated in my dispatch No. 95, being persuaded that if anything further were deemed necessary, I should receive instructions to that effect as soon as the occasion arose to call for them. I was the more convinced of the propriety of not going beyond the line of my original instructions, until it should plainly become my duty to do so, because I saw evidences of an undue anxiety on the part of the British Government, as represented here, to put us forward in an invidious and delicate office which might compromise our friendly relations with France, when that Government itself was particularly required and called upon by the joint engagement entered into by France and England on the 28th November, 1843, for the mutual respect of the independence of the Sandwich Islands, to take the initiative on the occasion, and also because I had every reason to believe from the declarations of Gen. de La Hitte that there was no design on the part of the French Government to menace or endanger their independence.

I have the honor, etc.,

W. C. RIVES.

Mr. Rives to Mr. Webster.


SIR: After disposing of the particular object of my call, Monsieur Viel-Castel took occasion to remark to me in a friendly, but at the same time very earnest, tone that the Government of the Republic had been very much annoyed by the consequences, as it had been sensibly wounded by the manner of the intervention of the Government of the United States in their difficulties with the Sandwich Islands. He said that since the communication you had addressed to the commissioner of the United States in the islands had been known there, the Hawaiian authorities had refused absolutely to listen to any of the demands of the French Government, and made no other reply to the French consul than that if those demands were pressed they would immediately put themselves under the protectorate of the United States. He further observed that all they asked or wished of the Ha-