Mr. Blaine to Mr. Comly.

No. 113.]

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Washington, December 1, 1881.

SIR: My late instructions, and especially that of the 19th ultimo, will have shown you the deep interest with which the United States observes the course of events in the Hawaiian Islands. The apparent disposition to extend other influences there in lines parallel to or offsetting our own must be watched with care, and met with considerate firmness.

The intelligent and suggestive character of your recent dispatches naturally leads me to a review of the relationship of the Hawaiian Kingdom to the United States at somewhat greater length than was practicable in the limited scope of my instruction of November 19. That dispatch was necessarily confined to a consideration of the immediate question of a possible treaty engagement with Great Britain which would give to that power in Hawaii a degree of extraterritoriality of jurisdiction inconsistent with the relations of the Islands to the other powers, and especially to the United States.

With the abandonment of feudal government by King Kamehameha III in 1839, and the inauguration of constitutional methods, the history of the political relation of Hawaii to the world at large may very properly be said to begin. The recognition of independent sovereignty by the great powers took place soon after that act on the part of the United States, dating from 1844. Even at that early day, before the United States had become a power on the Pacific coast, the commercial activity of our people was manifested in their intercourse with the islands of Oceanica, of which the Hawaiian group is the northern extremity. In 1848 the treaty of Guadelupe Hidalgo confirmed the territorial extension of the United States to the Pacific, and gave to the Union a coast line on that ocean little inferior in extent and superior in natural wealth to the Atlantic seaboard of the original thirteen States. In 1848-49 the discoveries of gold in California laid the foundation for the marvelous development of the Western coast, and, in that same year, the necessities of our altered relationship to the Pacific Ocean found expression in a comprehensive treaty of friendship, commerce, and navigation with the sovereign Kingdom of Hawaii.

The material connection between the Hawaiian Islands and the Pacific coast of the Union was natural and inevitable. But lately admitted to the family of separate states, Hawaii was necessarily drawn into close kinship with California, then just entering on a path of prosperity and greatness whose rapidity of development the world has never seen equalled. Hence the movements toward intimate commercial relations between the two countries which, after the progressive negotiations of 1856, 1867, and 1869, culminated in the existing reciprocity treaty of January 30, 1875, which gave to the United States in Hawaii, and to Hawaii in the United States, trading rights and privileges in terms denied to other countries.

I have spoken of the Pacific coast line given to the American Union by the cession of California in 1848 as little inferior in extent and superior in natural wealth to the Atlantic seaboard of the original Union. Since that time our domain on the Pacific has been vastly increased by the purchase of Alaska. Taking San Francisco as the commercial center on the Western slope, a line drawn northwardly to the Alentian group marks our Pacific border almost to the confines of Asia. A corresponding line drawn southwestwardly from San Fran-