TO THE CHEROKEE TRIBE OF INDIANS EAST OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER.

MY FRIENDS: I have long viewed your condition with great interest. For many years I have been acquainted with your people, and under all variety of circumstances, in peace and war. Your fathers were well known to me, and the regard which I cherished for them has caused me to feel a solicitude for your situation. To these feelings, growing out of former recollections, have been added the sanction of official duty, and the relation in which, by the Constitution and laws, I am placed towards you. Listen to me, therefore, as your fathers have listened, while I communicate to you my sentiments on the critical state of your affairs.

You are now placed in the midst of a white population. Your peculiar customs, which regulated your intercourse with one another, have been abrogated by the great political community among which you live; and you are now subject to the same laws which govern the citizens of Georgia and Alabama. You are liable to prosecutions for offenses, and to civil actions for a breach of any of your contracts. Most of your people are unacquainted with the law, and are liable to be brought into collision at all times with their white neighbors. Your young men are acquiring habits of intoxication. With strong passions, and without those habits of restraint which our laws inculcate and render necessary, they are frequently driven to excesses which must eventually terminate in their ruin. The government disappears among you, and you must depend upon agriculture and the mechanic arts for support. And, yet, a large portion of your people have acquired little or no property in the soil itself, or any article of personal property which can be useful to them. How, under these circumstances, can you live in the country you now occupy? Your condition must become worse and worse, and you will ultimately disappear, as so many tribes have done before you.

Of all this I warned your people, when I met them in council eighteen years ago. I then advised them to sell out their possessions east of the Mississippi and to remove to the country west of that river. This advice I have continued to give you at various times from that period down to the present day, and can you now look back and doubt the wisdom of this counsel? Had you then removed, you would have gone with all the means necessary to establish yourselves in a fertile country, sufficiently extensive for your subsistence, and beyond the reach of the moral evils which are hastening your destruction.

Instead of being a divided people as you now are, arrayed into parties bitterly opposed to each other, you would have been a prosperous and a united community. Your farms would have been opened and cultivated, comfortable homes would have been erected, the means of subsistence abundant, and you would have been governed by your own customs and laws and removed from the effects of a white population. Where you now are, you are encompassed by evils, moral and physical, and these are fearfully increasing.

Look even at the experience of the last few years. What have you gained by adhering to the pernicious counsels which have led you to reject the liberal offers made for your removal? They promised you an improvement in your condition. But instead of that, every year has brought increasing difficulties. Have, then, can you place confidence in the advice of men who are misleading you for their own purposes, and whose assurances have proved, from the experience of every year, to be utterly unfounded?

I have no motive, my friends, to deceive you. I am sincerely desirous to promote your welfare. Listen to me, therefore, while I tell you that you cannot remain where you now are. Circumstances that cannot be controlled, and which are beyond the reach of human laws, render it impossible that you can flourish in the midst of a civilized community. You have but one remedy within your reach. And that is, to remove to the West and join your countrymen, who are already established there. And the sooner you do this, the sooner you will commence your career of improvement and prosperity.

A number of your brethren, who have been delegated by that portion of your people favorable to emigration, have repaired to this place, in the hope of being able to make some arrangement, which would be acceptable to the government of the United States, and which would meet your approbation. They do not claim the right of making any arrangement which would be binding upon you; but have expressly stated, that whatever they did would be utterly void unless submitted to and approved by you.

The whole subject has been taken into consideration, and an arrangement has been made, which ought to be, and I trust will be, entirely satisfactory to you. The Senate of the United States have given their opinion of the value of your
possessions. And this value is insured to you in the arrangement which has
been prepared. Mr. John Ross, and the party who were with him, expressed their
determination to accept, so far as they were concerned, such a sum as the Senate
might consider just, and promised to recommend and support the same in your
general council. The stipulations con-
tained in this instrument are designed
to afford due protection to private rights,
to make adequate provision for the
power class of your people, to provide
for the removal of all, and to lay the
foundation of such social and political
establishments in your new country as
will render you a happy and prosperous
people. Why, then, should any honest
man among you object to removal? The
United States have assigned to you a
fertile and extensive country, with a
very fine climate adapted to your habits,
and with all the other natural advan-
tages which you ought to desire or expect.
I shall, in the course of a short time,
appoint commissioners for the purpose
of meeting the whole body of your peo-
ple in council. They will explain to
you, more fully, my views, and the
nature of the stipulations which are
offered to you.

These stipulations provide:

1st. For an addition to the country
already assigned to you west of the
Mississippi, and for the convey-
anee of the whole of it, by patent,
in fee simple. And also for the
security of the necessary political
rights, and for preventing white
persons from trespassing upon you.
2d. For the payment of the full value
to each individual, of his posses-
sion in Georgia, Alabama, North
Carolina and Tennessee.
3d. For the removal, at the expense of
the United States, of your whole
people; for their subsistence for a
year after their arrival in their new
country, and for a gratuity of one
hundred and fifty dollars to each
person.
4th. For the usual supply of rifles,
blankets, and kettles.
5th. For the investment of the sum of
four hundred thousand dollars, in
order to secure a permanent annuity.
6th. For adequate provision for
schools, agricultural instruments,
domestic animals, missionary estab-
lishments, the support of orphans,
&c.
7th. For the payment of claims.
8th. For granting pensions to such of
your people as may have been disabled
in the service of the United States.

These are the general provisions con-
tained in the arrangement. But there are
many other details favorable to you which
I do not stop here to enumerate, as they
will be placed before you in the arrange-
ment itself.

Their total amount is four
millions five hundred thousand dollars,
which added to the sum of five hundred
dollars, estimated as the value of the
additional land granted you, makes
five millions of dollars. A sum, which if
equally divided among all your people
cast of the Mississippi, estimating them
at ten thousand, which I believe is
their full number, would give five hun-
dred dollars to every man, woman
and child in your nation. There are
few separate communities, whose prop-
erty, if divided, would give to the per-
sons composing them, such an amount.
It is enough to establish you all in
the most comfortable manner; and it
is to be observed, that besides this,
there are thirteen millions of acres con-
voyed to the western Cherokees and
yourselves by former treaties, and which
are destined for your and their perma-
nent residence. So that your whole coun-
try, west of the Mississippi, will contain
not less than thirteen millions eight
hundred thousand acres.

The choice now is before you. May
the Great Spirit teach you how to choose.
The fate of your women and children,
the fate of your people, to the remotest
generation, depend upon the issue.
Delude yourselves no longer. Do not
cherish the belief that you can ever re-
sume your former political situation,
while you continue in your present resi-
dence. As certain as the sun shines to
guide you in your path, so certain is it
that you cannot drive back the laws of
Georgia from among you. Every year
will increase your difficulties. Look at
the conditions of the Creeks. See the
collisions which are taking place with
them. See how their young men are
committing depredations upon the pro-
erty of our citizens, and are shedding
their blood. This cannot and will not
be allowed. Punishment will follow,
and all who are engaged in these offences
must suffer. Your young men will com-
mit the same acts, and the same con-
sequences must ensue.

Think then of all these things. Shut
your ears to bad counsels. Look at your
condition as it now is, and then consider
what it will be if you follow the advice
I give you.

Your friend,

Signed, ANDREW JACKSON.

Washington, March 16th, 1833.