

1803, Apr. 13

91

I presume nothing in the enclosed which should be of service
 requires alteration. Perhaps something might be added.
 The important aspects of affairs may, we may, under it necessary that
 we should, by having immediate possession, prevent G. B. from
 doing the same. Hence a perfect knowledge of the ports, establishments & force
 left by Spain in those countries, and also of the most proper station to
 occupy for the purpose of preventing effectually the occupying of any part
 of the Mexican country by G. B., seems important. With this view the
 former communications of the British with the Mexicans, either from
 the Mississippi river, which is still some in point from the waters emptying
 in Lake Winnipeg & generally in the country, should be well examined
 to well as the mode in which a small but sufficient force could best
 be conveyed to the most proper point from whence to prevent
 any attempt from Lake Winnipeg.

But except whatever may be the force of the present
 difficulties, the future dominion of the Mexican country as a
 point of importance to the United States, it being perhaps
 the only large tract of country, and certainly the first
 which lay out of the boundaries of the Union will be settled
 by the people of the U. States. The present cabinet, therefore,
 of the country drained by all the waters emptying into that
 river, and consequently the length & direction of all the
 principal branches ought to be, as far as practicable,
 ascertained as well as the particular track which
 may be followed for the purpose of examining the communication