

HIGHLY IMPORTANT.

Cession of Russian America by Treaty to the United States.

PAYMENT OF \$7,000,000 FOR THE EOOD.

WASHINGTON, March 30.

A treaty of the greatest importance to the country was concluded last night, at the State Department, between the Secretary of State, on behalf of the President of the United States, and the Russian representative, on behalf of the Emperor of Russia, in which the Russian government agrees to convey to the United States government all its possessions on the American continent, known as Russian America, in consideration of the payment of \$7,000,000.

This important negotiation was fully discussed at the Cabinet Council yesterday, and last evening, at about eight o'clock, the Secretary and Assistant Secretary of State received at the State Department the Representative of Russia, and it was not till two o'clock this morning that the treaty was brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

The treaty will have to be ratified by the Senate, and both houses of Congress must concur in making the appropriation for the payment of the purchase money before the treaty becomes an accomplished fact. The amount of the purchase money is so small, when the size and value of the Territory is considered, that the transfer is regarded as a cession rather than a sale, and suggestive of the sympathy of Russia for America.

It is looked upon as an important step towards the absorption of the whole continent by the United States; and, considering that the possession of Russian America hems in the British American possessions, it is thought by knowing diplomats here that the transaction will probably be regarded as a hostile measure by Great Britain, and may possibly meet with remonstrances on the part of that Power, from its point of view, as a belligerent in case of war.

The purchased territory covers upward of four hundred thousand square miles, and though now containing only one hundred thousand inhabitants, half of whom are Esquimaux, it is believed that under American auspices, it would at a comparatively early period contain a population sufficient to increase the number of States in the Union to fifty. The fisheries are very extensive, but the principal commercial wealth of the country is in its fur trade, which would, henceforth, be altogether controlled by American merchants.

The acquisition of Russian America is viewed here as of far-reaching importance, in a commercial as well as political and strategical point of view. Not the least advantage thus gained would be the entire control of the projected Russo-American Asiatic Telegraph, which promises to link the United States to India and China by the way of Russia.

Russian America comprehends all the north-west coasts on the Pacific and the adjacent islands north of the parallel of 54 degrees 40 minutes north, and the portion of the mainland west of the meridian (about 141 degrees west) of Mount Elias. The area is computed at 481,276 square miles.