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## A Digest of Florida Material in Niles' Register

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A DIGEST OF FLORIDA MATERIAL IN  
NILES' REGISTER (1811-1849)

Historians who write of the first half of the last century in the United States should be and are grateful to Hezekiah Niles. His *Niles' Register* with its motto "The Past-The Present-For the Future" has preserved for them much that would otherwise be lost completely, and much else that is all but lost in inaccessible or too voluminous governmental and other records. This is especially true for Florida's history. So little has been preserved in the State relating to, its past, that our historians must usually go elsewhere for their Florida material.

Except scattered here and there through the mountains of United States government records in Washington, there is no source for Florida's history throughout the long period covered by its publication (1811-1849) equal to *Niles' Register*. Though so much relating to Florida was sifted and preserved for us in the Register, even there it is still buried in its seventy-six volumes of small type (much of it 4 pt.).

Historians have long recognized the value, as well as experienced the inaccessibility, of what is in *Niles'*. To make the Florida material available, Mr. T. Frederick Davis has read these seventy-six volumes and made a synopsis of each worthwhile Florida reference, whether it be a paragraph or pages. That is the Digest: two hundred fifty pages of single-space typing.

Any one not familiar with the contents of the Register must be surprised at its exceedingly broad coverage. Here are printed verbatim the most im-

portant state papers relating to the Spanish colony's relations with the United States, to the Territory of Florida, and to Florida's early statehood, including many papers transmitted to Congress by the president during all these periods. There are reports of Army officers and other agents of the government, official and unofficial; extracts sifted from newspapers within and without the State ; contemporaneous official and private letters on all important events and conditions; and notes and news from many sources on relations with the Florida Indians. Very thorough is the coverage of the Seminole War, almost from week to week. Especially important are, editorials from the foremost newspapers of the country on Florida events and topics, which, as are data from various other sources, are spread over every year of the period. There are statistics at regular intervals of all phases of governmental operations in Florida. All Federal and Territorial appointments are noted, as well as the results of all elections, and the enactments of Congress relating to Florida as well as the notable ones of the Territorial Council. In fact, a fair history of the period in Florida might be written almost from *Niles' Register* alone, and the Digest leads one to any phase of it.