THE MESSAGE.

President Harrison Discusses National Affairs.

In His Annual Communication to Congress

He Urges the Passage of the Lodge Election Bill

And Says the McKinley Tariff Law Must Be Given a Fair Trial.

Our Foreign Relations in a Satisfactory Condition.

The State of the Nation's Finances Discussed—Reciprocity Indorsed.

FOREIGN RELATIONS.

They Are Friendly.

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

The reports of the several executive departments, which will be laid before Congress in the usual course, will exhibit in detail the operations of the Government for the last fiscal year. Only the more important incidents and results, and chiefly such as may be the foundation of the recommendations I shall submit, will be referred to in this annual message.

The vast and increasing business of the Government has been transacted by the several departments during the year with faithfulness, energy and success. The revenues, amounting to above four hundred and fifty million dollars, have been collected and disbursed without revenue loss, so far as I can ascertain, a single case of defalcation or embezzlement. An earnest effort has been made to stimulate a sense of responsibility and public duty in all officers and employes of every grade, and the work done by them has almost wholly escaped unfavorable criticism. I speak of these matters with freedom, because the credit of this good work is not mine, but is shared by the heads of the several departments with the great body of faithful officers and employes who serve under them. The closest scrutiny of Congress is invited to all methods of administration and to every item of expenditure.

The friendly relations of our country with the nations of Europe and the East have been undisturbed, while the ties of good-will and common interest that bind us to the States of the western hemisphere have been notably strengthened by the conference held in this capital to consider measures for the general welfare. Pursuant to the invitation authorized by Congress, the representatives of every independent state of the American Continent and of Hayti met in conference in this capital in October, 1889, and continued in session until the 19th of last April. This important convocation marks a most interesting and influential epoch in the history of the western hemisphere. It is noteworthy that Brazil, invited while under an imperial form of government, started as a Republic in the deliberations and results of the conference. The recommendations of this conference were all transmitted to Congress at the last session.

Divers Foreign Matters.

The communications of the Chinese Minister have brought into view the whole subject of our conventional relations with his country, and at the same time this Government and that of its legation at Pekin, have sought to arrange various matters and complaints touching the interests and protection of our citizens in China.

In pursuance of the concurrent resolution of Oct. 1, 1890, I have proposed to the Governments of Mexico and Great Britain to consider a conventional regulation of the passage of Chinese laborers across our southern and northern frontiers.

On the 22d day of August last Sir Edmund Monson, the arbitrator, selected under the treaty of December, 1888, rendered an award to the effect that no compensation was due from the Danish Government to the United States on account of what is commonly known as the Carlos Butterfield claim.

Our relations with the French republic continue to be entirely cordial. Our representative at that court has very diligently urged the removal of the restrictions placed upon our meat products, and it is believed that substantial progress has been made toward a just settlement.

The Samoan treaty, signed last year at Berlin by the representatives of the United States, Germany and Great Britain, after due ratification and exchange, has begun to produce salutary effects. The formation of the government agreed upon will soon replace the disorder of the past by a stable administration, alike just to the natives and equitable to the three powers most concerned in trade and intercourse with the Samoan Islands. The Chief Justice has been chosen by the King of Sweden and Norway on the invitation of the three powers, and will soon be installed. The Land Commission and the Municipal Council are in process of organization. A rational and evenly distributed scheme of taxation, both municipal and upon imports, is in operation. Malietoa is respected as king.

The new treaty of extradition with Great Britain, after due ratification, was proclaimed on the 25th of last March. Its beneficent working is already apparent.

The Seal Question.

The difference between the two governments touching the fur seal question in the Behring Sea is not yet adjusted, as will be seen by the correspondence which will soon be laid before Congress. The offer to submit the question to arbitration, as proposed by her Majesty's Government, has not been accepted, for the reason that the form of submission proposed is not thought to be calculated to assure a conclusion satisfactory to either party. It is sincerely hoped that before the opening of another sealing season some arrangement may be effected which will assure to the United States a property right, derived from Russia, which was not disregarded by any nation for more than eighty years preceding the outbreak of the existing trouble.

In the tariff act a wrong was done to the Kingdom of Hawaii which I am bound to presume was wholly unintentional. Duties were levied on certain commodities which are included in the reciprocity treaty now existing between the United States and the Kingdom of Hawaii, without indicating necessary exception in favor of that Kingdom. I hope Congress will repair what might otherwise seem to be a breach of faith on the part of this Government.

An award in favor of the United States in the matter of the claim of Mr. Van Bokkelen against Hayti was rendered on the 4th of December, 1888, but owing to disorders then and afterward prevailing in Hayti, the terms of payment were not observed. A new agreement as to the time of payment has been approved and is now in force. Other just claims of citizens of the United States for redress of wrongs suffered during the late political conflict in Hayti will, it is hoped, speedily yield to friendly treatment.

Propositions for the amendment of the treaty of extradition between the United States and Italy are now under consideration.

You will be asked to provide the means of accepting the invitation of the Italian Government to take part in an approaching conference to consider the adoption of a universal prime meridian from which to reckon longitude and time. As this proposal follows in the track of the reform sought to be initiated by the meridian conference at Washington, held on the invitation of this Government, the United States should manifest a friendly interest in the Italian proposal.

In this connection I may refer with approval to the suggestion of my predecessors that standing provision be made for accepting, whenever deemed advisable, the frequent invitations of foreign governments to share in conferences looking to the advancement of international reforms in regard to science, sanitation, commercial law, and procedure, and other matters affecting the intercourse and progress of modern communities.

The Country's Finances—Receipts and Expenditures.

The revenues of the Government from all sources for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1890, were $163,953,080.55, and the total expenditures for the same period were $358,618,564.52. The postal receipts have not heretofore been included in the statement of these aggregates, and for the purpose of comparison the sum of $60,882,097.92 should be deducted from both sides of the account. The surplus for the year, including the amount applied to the sinking fund, was $105,944,496.03. The receipts for 1890 were $16,030,923.79, and the expenditures $15,759,871 in excess of those of 1889. The customs receipts increased $8,835,842.88, and the receipts from internal revenue $11,725,191.89, while, on the side of expenditures, that for pensions was $19,312,075.96 in excess of the preceding year.

The Treasury statement for the current fiscal year, partly actual and partly estimated, is as follows: Receipts from all sources, $406,000,000; total expenditures, $354,000,000, leaving a surplus of $52,000,000—not taking the postal receipts into account on either side. The loss of revenue from customs for the last quarter is estimated at $25,000,000, but from this is deducted a gain of about $16,000,000, realized during the first four months of the year.

For the year 1892, the local estimated receipts are $373,000,000, and the estimated expenditures $357,852,209.42, leaving an estimated surplus of $15,147,790.58, which, with a cash balance of $52,000,000 at the beginning of the year, will give $67,147,790.58 as the sum available for the redemption of outstanding bonds or other uses. The estimates of receipts and expenditures for the Post Office Department being equal, are not included in this statement on either side.

I notice with great pleasure the statement of the Secretary that the receipts from internal revenues have increased during the last fiscal year nearly $12,000,000, and that the cost of collecting this larger revenue was less by $90,617 than for the same purpose in the preceding year. The percentage of cost of collecting the customs revenue was less for the last fiscal year than ever before.

The Silver Question.

The act "directing the purchase of silver bullion and issue of Treasury notes thereon," approved July, 14, 1890, has been administered by the Secretary of the Treasury with an earnest purpose to get into circulation at the earliest possible dates the full monthly amount of notes contemplated by its provisions and at the same time to give to the market for silver bullion such support as the law contemplates. The recent depreciation in the price of silver has been observed with regret. The rapid rise in price which anticipated and followed the passage of the act was influenced in some degree by speculation, and the recent reaction is in part the result of the same cause and in part of the recent monetary disturbances.

Some months of further trial will be necessary to determine the permanent effect of the recent legislation upon silver values, but it is gratifying to know that the increased circulation secured by the act has exerted and will continue to exert a most beneficial influence upon business and upon general values.

While it has not been thought best to renew formally the suggestion of an international conference looking to an agreement touching the full use of silver for coinage at a uniform ratio, care has been taken to observe closely any change in the situation abroad, and no favorable opportunity will be lost to promote a result which it is confidently believed would confer very large benefits upon the commerce of the world.

The recent monetary disturbances in England are not unlikely to suggest a re-examination of opinions upon this subject. Our very large supply of gold will, if not lost by impulsive legislation in the supposed interest of silver, give us a position of advantage in promoting a permanent and safe international agreement for the free use of silver as a coin metal.

About Circulation.

The efforts of the Secretary to increase the volume of money in circulation by keeping down the Treasury surplus to the lowest practicable limit have been unremitting and in a very high degree successful. The tables presented by him, showing the increase during the nineteen months he has administered the affairs of the department, are interesting and instructive. The increase of money in circulation during the nineteen months has been in the aggregate $33,866,813, or about $1.50 per capita, and of this increase only $7,100,000 was due to the recent silver legislation. That this substantial and needed aid given to commerce resulted in an enormous reduction of the public debt and of the annual interest charge is matter of increased satisfaction. There have been purchased and redeemed since March 4, 1890, 4 and 4½ per cent bonds to the amount of $211,832,450, at a cost of $.46,620,741, resulting in the reduction of the annual interest charge of $8,957,669, and a total saving of interest of $51,576,706.

The Customs Service.

The Customs Administration Board provided for by the act of June 10, 1890, was selected with great care and is composed in part of men whose previous experience in the administration of the old customs regulations had made them familiar with the evils to be remedied, and in part of men whose legal and judicial acquirements and experience seemed to fit them for the work of interpreting and applying the new statute. The chief aim of the law is to secure honest valuations of all dutiable merchandise, and to make these valuations uniform at all our ports of entry. It has been made manifest by Congressional investigation that a system of undervaluation had been long in use by certain classes of importers, resulting not only in a great loss of revenue but in a most intolerable discrimination against honesty. It is not seen how this legislation, when it is understood, can be regarded by the citizens of any country having commercial dealings with us as unfriendly. If any duty is supposed to be excessive let the complaint be lodged there. It will surely not be claimed by any well-disposed people that a remedy may be sought and allowed in a system of quasi smuggling.

THE WAR DEPARTMENT.

Desertions Decreasing.

The report of the Secretary of War exhibits several gratifying results attained during the year by wise and unostentatious methods. The percentage of desertions from the army (an evil for which both Congress and the department have long been seeking a remedy) has been reduced during the past year 24 per cent. and for the months of August and September, during which time the favorable effects of the act of June 15 were felt, 33 per cent. as compared with the same months of 1889.

The results attained by a reorganization and consolidation of the divisions having charge of the hospital service records of the volunteer service are very remarkable. This change was effected in July, 1889, and at that time there were 40,654 cases awaiting attention, more than half of these being calls from the Pension Office for information necessary to the adjudication of pension claims. On the 30th day of June last, though over 300,000 new calls had come in, there was not a single case that had not been examined and answered.

Coast Defenses.

I concur in the recommendations of the Secretary that adequate and regular appropriations be continued for coast-defense and ordnance. Plans have been practically agreed upon, and there can be no good reason for delaying the execution of them; while the defenseless state of our great seaports furnishes an urgent reason for wise expedition.

The Militia.

The encouragement that has been extended to the militia of the States, generally and most appropriately designated the "National Guard," should be continued and enlarged. These military organizations constitute, in a large sense, the army of the United States, while about five-sixths of the annual cost of their maintenance is defrayed by the States.

THE NATIONAL LAWS.

Satisfactorily Administered.

The report of the Attorney General is under the law submitted directly to Congress, but, as the Department of Justice is one of the executive departments, some reference to the work done is appropriate here.

A vigorous and in the main an effective effort has been made to bring to trial and punishment all violators of the law; but, at the same time, care has been taken that frivolous and technical offenses should not be used to swell the fees of officers or to harass well-disposed citizens. Especial attention is called to the facts connected with the prosecution of violations of the election laws and of offenses against United States officers. The number of convictions secured, very many of them upon pleas of guilty, will, it is hoped, have a salutary restraining influence. There have been several cases where Postmasters appointed by me have been subjected to violent interference in the discharge of their official duties, and to persecutions and personal violence of the most extreme character. Some of these cases have been dealt with through the Department of Justice, and in some cases the postoffices have been abolished or suspended. I have directed the Postmaster General to pursue this course in all cases where other efforts have failed to secure for any Postmaster, not himself in fault, an opportunity peacefully to exercise the duties of his office. But such action will not supplant the efforts of the Department of Justice to bring the particular offenders to punishment.

Fraudulent Naturalization.

The vacation by judicial decrees of fraudulent certificates of naturalization, upon bills in equity filed by the Attorney General in the Circuit Court of the United States, is a new application of a familiar equity jurisdiction. Nearly one hundred decrees have been taken during the year, the evidence disclosing that a very large number of fraudulent certificates of naturalization have been issued. And in this connection I beg to renew my recommendation that the laws be so amended as to require a more full and searching inquiry into all the facts necessary to naturalization before any certificates are granted. It certainly is not too much to require that an application for American citizenship shall be heard with as much care and recorded with as much formality as are given to cases involving the pettiest property right.

POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

Methods Greatly Improved.

The report of the Postmaster General shows the most gratifying progress in the important work committed to his direction. The business methods have been greatly improved. A large economy in expenditures and an increase of four and three-quarters millions in receipts have been realized. The deficiency this year is $5,786,300 as against $6,350,183 last year, notwithstanding the great enlargement of the service. Mail routes have been extended and quickened, and greater accuracy and dispatch in distribution and delivery have been attained. The report will be found to be full of interest and suggestion, not only to Congress but to those thoughtful citizens who may be interested to know what business methods can do for that department of public administration which most nearly touches all our people.

The Anti-Lottery Act.

The passage of the act to amend certain sections of the Revised Statutes relating to lotteries, approved September 19, 1890, has been received with great and deserved popular favor. The Postoffice Department and the Department of Justice at once entered upon the enforcement of the law with sympathetic vigor, and already the public mails have been largely freed from the fraudulent and demoralizing appeals and literature emanating from the lottery companies.

THE NAVY.

Splendid New Vessels.

The construction and equipment of the new ships for the navy have made very satisfactory progress. Since March 4, 1889, nine new vessels have been put in commission, and during this winter four more, including one monitor will be added. The construction of the other vessels authorized is being pushed, both in the Government and private yards, with energy and watched with most scrupulous care.

Valuable Experiments.

The experiments conducted during the year to test the relative resisting power of armor plates have been so valuable as to attract great attention in Europe. The only part of the work upon the new ships that is threatened by unusual delay is the armor plating, and every effort is being made to reduce that to the minimum. It is a source of congratulation that the anticipated influence of these modern vessels upon the esprit de corps of the officers and seamen has been fully realized. Confidence and pride in the ship among the crew are equivalent to a secondary battery. Your favorable consideration is invited to the recommendations of the Secretary.

INTERIOR DEPARTMENT.

Satisfactory Results Attained.

The report of the Secretary of the Interior exhibits, with great fullness and clearness, the vast work of that great department and the satisfactory results attained. The suggestions made by him are earnestly commended to the consideration of Congress, though they cannot all be given particular mention here.

Reduction of Indian Reservations.

The several Acts of Congress looking to the reduction of the larger Indian reservations, to the more rapid settlement of the Indians upon individual allotments, and the restoration to the public domain of lands in excess of their needs, have been largely carried into effect, so far as the work was confided to the Executive. Agreements have been concluded since March 4, 1889, involving the cession to the United States of about 14,726,000 acres of land. These contracts have, as required by law, been submitted to Congress for ratification and for the appropriations necessary to carry them into effect. Those with the Sisseton and Wahpeton, Sac and Fox, Iowa, Pottawatomies and Absentee Shawnees and Cœur d'Alene tribes have not yet received the sanction of Congress. Attention is also called to the fact that the appropriations made in the case of the Sioux Indians have not covered all the stipulated payments. This should be promptly corrected. If an agreement is confirmed, all of its terms should be complied with without delay, and full appropriations should be made.

Affairs in Utah.

The increasing numbers and influence of the non-Mormon population in Utah are observed with satisfaction. The recent letter of Wilford Woodruff, President of the Mormon Church, in which he advised his people "to refrain from contracting any marriage forbidden by the laws of the land," has attracted wide attention, and it is hoped that its influence will be highly beneficial in restraining infractions of the laws of the United States. But the fact should not be overlooked that the doctrine or belief of the church that polygamous marriages are rightful and supported by divine revelation remains unchanged. President Woodruff does not renounce the doctrine, but refrains from teaching it, and advises against the practice of it because the law is against it. Now, it is quite clear that the law should not attempt to deal with the faith or belief of any one; but it is quite another thing, and the only safe thing, so to deal with the Territory of Utah as that those who believe polygamy to be rightful shall not have the power to make it lawful.

Lands for Settlers.

The policy outlined in my last annual message in relation to the patenting of lands to settlers upon the public domain has been carried out in the administration of the Land Office. No general suspicion or imputation of fraud has been allowed to delay the hearing and adjudication of individual cases upon their merits. The law has been so kept that the title of honest settlers with such promptness that the value of the entry might not be swallowed up by the expenses and extortions to which delay subjected the claimant. The average monthly issue of agricultural patents has been increased about six thousand.

The Pension Office.

The disability pension act, which was approved on the 27th of June last, has been put into operation as rapidly as practicable. The increased clerical force provided was selected and assigned to work, and a considerable part of the force engaged in examinations in the field was recalled and added to the working force of the office. The examination and adjudication of claims have, by reason of improved methods, been more rapid than ever before. There is no economy to the Government in delay, while there is much hardship and injustice to the soldiers. The anticipated expenditure, while very large, will not, it is believed, be in excess of the estimates made before the enactment of the law. This liberal general law should suggest a more careful scrutiny of bills for special relief, both as to the cases where relief is granted and as to the amount allowed.

Useless Public Building Bills.

At the last session I had occasion to return with my objections several bills making provisions for the erection of public buildings, for the reason that the expenditures contemplated were, in my opinion, greatly in excess of any public need. No class of legislation is more liable to abuse, or to degenerate into an unseemly scramble about the public treasury, than this. There should be exercised in this matter a wise economy based upon some responsible and impartial examination and report as to each case, under a general law.

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

Farmers Prospering.

The report of the Secretary of Agriculture deserves especial attention in view of the fact that the year has been marked in a very unusual degree by agitation and organization among the farmers looking to an increase in the profits of their business. It will be found that the efforts of the Department have been intelligently and zealously devoted to the promotion of the interests intrusted to its care.

A very substantial improvement in the market prices of the leading farm products during the year seems to have resulted. The price of wheat advanced from 81 cents in October, 1889, to $1.00¾ in October, 1890; corn from 31 cents to 50¼ cents; oats from 19¼ cents to 43 cents, and barley from 63 cents to 78 cents. Meats showed a substantial but not so large an increase. The export trade in live animals and fowls shows a very large increase; the total value in such exports for the year ending June 30, 1890, was $33,000,000, and the increase over the preceding year was over $15,000,000. Nearly 200,000 more cattle and over 45,000 more hogs were exported than in the preceding year. The export trade in beef and pork products and in dairy products was very largely increased, the increase in the articles of butter alone being from 15,504,978 pounds to 29,748,042 pounds, and the total increase in the value of meat and dairy products exported being $34,000,000. This trade, so directly helpful to the farmer, it is believed will be yet further and very largely increased when the system of inspection and sanitary supversion now provided by law is brought fully into operation.

Protecting American Meats.

The efforts of the Secretary to establish the healthfulness of our meats against the disparaging imputations that have been put upon them have not been without substantial progress. Veterinary surgeons sent out by the Department are now allowed to participate in the inspection of the live cattle from this country landed at the English docks, and during the several months they have been on duty no case of contagious pleuro-pneumonia has been reported. This inspection abroad and the domestic inspection of live animals and pork products, provided for by the act of August 30, 1890, will afford as perfect a guaranty for the wholesomeness of our meats offered for foreign consumption as is anywhere given to food product, and its non-acceptance will quite clearly reveal the real motive of any continued restriction for their use; and that having been made clear, the duty of the Executive will be very plain.

Beet Sugar Interests.

The information given by the Secretary of the progress and prospects of the beet sugar industry is full of interest. It has already passed the experimental stage and is a commercial success. The area over which the sugar beet can be successfully cultivated is very large, and another field crop of great value is offered to the choice of the farmers.

The Secretary of the Treasury concurs in the recommendation of the Secretary of Agriculture that the official supervision provided by the tariff law for sugar of domestic production shall be transferred to the Department of Agriculture.

The law relating to the civil service has, so far as I can learn, been executed by those having the power of appointment in the classified service with fidelity and impartiality, and the service has been increasingly satisfactory. The report of the commission shows a large amount of good work done during the year with very limited appropriations.

THE TARIFF AND ITS EFFECTS.

Congress Congratulated.

I congratulate the Congress of the country upon the passage at the first session of the Fifty-first Congress of an unusual number of laws of very high importance. That the results of this legislation will be the quickening and enlargement of our manufacturing industries, larger and better markets for our breadstuffs and provisions both at home and abroad, more constant employment and better wages for our working people, and an increased supply of safe currency for the transaction of business, I do not doubt. Some of these measures were enacted at so late a period that the beneficial effects upon commerce which were in the contemplation of Congress have as yet but partially manifested themselves.

Some Statistics.

The general trade and industrial conditions throughout the country during the year have shown a marked improvement. For many years prior to 1888 the merchandise balances of foreign trade had been largely in our favor, but during that year and the year following they turned against us. It is very gratifying to know that the last fiscal year again shows a balance in our favor of over $68,000,000. The bank clearings which furnish a good test of the volume of business transacted, for the first ten months of the year 1890 show, as compared with the same months of 1889, an increase for the whole country of about 8.4 per cent., while the increase outside the city of New York was over 13 per cent. During the month of October the clearings of the whole country showed an increase of 3.1 per cent. over October, 1889, while outside of New York the increase was 11½ per cent. These figures show that the increase in the volume of business was very general throughout the country. That this larger business was being conducted upon a safe and profitable basis is shown by the fact that there were 300 less failures reported in October, 1890, than in the same month of the preceding year, with liabilities diminished by about $5,000,000.

Increase in Exports.

The value of our exports of domestic merchandise during the last year was over $115,000,000 greater than the preceding year, and was only exceeded once in our history. About $100,000,000 of this excess was in agricultural products. The production of pig iron—always a good gauge of general prosperity—is shown by a recent census bulletin to have been 153 per cent. greater in 1890 than in 1880, and the production of steel 200 per cent. greater. Mining in coal has had no limitation except that resulting from deficient transportation. The general testimony is that labor is everywhere fully employed, and the reports for the last year show a smaller number of employes affected by strikes and lockouts than in any year since 1884. The depression in the prices of agricultural products had been greatly relieved, and a bouyant and hopeful tone was beginning to be felt by all our people.

England's Financial Panic.

These promising influences have been in some degree checked by the surprising and very unfavorable monetary events which have recently taken place in England. It is gratifying to know that these did not grow in any degree out of the financial relations of London with our people, or any discredit attached to our securities held in that market. The return of our bonds and stocks was caused by a money stringency in England, not by any loss of value or credit in the securities themselves. We could not, however, wholly escape the ill effects of a foreign monetary agitation accompanied by such extraordinary incidents as characterized this. It is not believed, however, that these evil incidents, which have for the time unfavorably affected values in this country, can long withstand the strong, safe, and wholesome influences which are operating to give to our people profitable returns in all branches of legitimate trade and industry. The apprehension that our tariff may again and at once be subjected to important general changes would undoubtedly add a depressing influence of the most serious character.

The Late Tariff Act.

The general Tariff act has only partially gone into operation, some of its important provisions being limited to take effect at dates yet in the future. The general provisions of the law have been in force less than sixty days. Its permanent effect upon trade and prices still largely stand in conjecture. It is curious to note that the advance in the prices of articles wholly unaffected by the Tariff act was by many hastily ascribed to that act. Notice was not taken of the fact that the general tendency of the markets was upward, from influences wholly apart from the recent tariff legislation. The enlargement of our currency by the Silver Bill undoubtedly gave an upward tendency to trade and had a marked effect on prices; but this natural and desired effect of the silver legislation was by many erroneously attributed to the Tariff act.

Must Have a Fair Trial.

There is neither wisdom nor justice in the suggestion that the subject of tariff revision shall be opened before this law has had a fair trial. It is quite true that every tariff schedule is subject to objections. No bill was ever framed, I suppose, that in all of its rates and classifications had the full approval even of a party caucus, since legislation is always and necessarily the product of compromise as to details, and the present law is no exception. But in its general scope and effect I think it will justify the support of those who believe that American legislation should conserve American trade and the wages of workingmen. The misinformation as to the terms of the act which has been so widely disseminated at home and abroad will be corrected by experience, and the evil auguries as to its results confounded by the market reports, the savings banks, internal trade balances and the general prosperity of our people. Already we begin to hear from abroad and from our custom houses that the prohibitory effect upon importations imputed to the act is not justified. The imports at the port of New York for the first three weeks of November were nearly 8 per cent. greater than for the same period in 1889, and 29 per cent. greater than in same period of 1888. And so far from being an act to limit exports, I confidently believe that under it we shall secure a larger and more profitable participation in foreign trade than we have ever enjoyed, and that we shall recover a proportionate participation in the ocean carrying trade of the world.

Foreign Criticisms of the Bill.

The criticisms of the bill that have come to us from foreign sources may well be rejected for repugnancy. If these critics really believe that the adoption by us of a free-trade policy, or of tariff rates having reference solely to revenue, would diminish the participation of their own countries in the commerce of the world, their advocacy and the promotion by speech and other forms of organized effort of this movement among our people is a rare exhibition of unselfishness in trade. And on the other hand, if they sincerely believe that the adoption of a protective tariff policy by this country inures to their profit and our hurt, it is noticeably strange that they should lead the outcry against the authors of a policy so helpful to their countrymen and crown with their favor those who would snatch from them a substantial share of a trade with other lands, already inadequate to their necessities.

There is no disposition among any of our people to promote prohibitory legislation. Our policies are adopted not to the hurt of others, but to secure for ourselves those advantages that fairly grow out of our favored position as a nation. Our form of government, with its incident of universal suffrage, makes it imperative that we shall save our working people from the agitations and distresses which scant work and wages that leave no margin for comfort always beget. But after all this is done it will be found that our markets are open to friendly commercial exchanges of enormous value to other great powers.

Wages of Working People.

From the time of my induction into office, the duty of using every power and influence given by law to the Executive Department for the development of larger markets for our products, especially our farm products, has been kept constantly in mind, and no effort has been, or will be, spared to promote that end. We are under no disadvantage in any foreign market except that we pay our workingmen and workingwomen better wages than are paid elsewhere—better abstractly, better relatively to the cost of the necessaries of life. I do not doubt that a very largely increased foreign trade is accessible to us without bartering for either our home market for such products of the farm and shop as our own people can supply or the wages of our working-people.

The Reciprocity Feature.

In many of the products of wood and iron, and in meats and breadstuffs, we have advantages that only need better facilities of intercourse and transportation to secure for them large foreign markets. The reciprocity clause of the tariff act wisely and effectively opens the way to secure a large reciprocal trade in exchange for the free admission to our ports of certain products. The right of independent nations to make special reciprocal trade concessions is well established, and does not impair either the comity due to other powers or what is known as the "favored nation clause" so generally found in commercial treaties. What is given the one for an adequate agreed consideration cannot be claimed by another freely. The state of the revenues was such that we could dispense with any import duties upon tea, hides, and the lower grades of sugar and molasses. That the large advantage resulting to the countries producing and exporting these articles by placing them on the free list entitled us to expect a fair return in a way of customs concessions upon articles exported by us to them was so obvious that to have gratuitously abandoned this opportunity to enlarge our trade would have been an unpardonable error.

There were but two methods of maintaining control of this question open to Congress: To place all of these articles upon the dutiable list, subject to such treaty agreements as could be secured, or to place them all presently upon the free list, but subject to the reimposition of specified duties if the countries from which we received them should refuse to give to us suitable reciprocal benefits. This latter method, I think, possesses great advantages. It expresses in advance the consent of Congress to reciprocity arrangements affecting these products, which must otherwise have been delayed and unascertained until each treaty was ratified by the Senate and the necessary legislation enacted by Congress. Experience has shown that some treaties looking to reciprocal trade have failed to secure a two-thirds vote in the Senate for ratification, and others having passed that stage have for years awaited the concurrence of the House and Senate in such modifications of our revenue laws as was necessary to give effect to their provisions. We now have the concurrence of both Houses in advance in a distinct and definite offer of free entry to our ports of specific articles. The Executive is not required to deal in conjecture as to what Congress will accept. Indeed, this reciprocity provision is more than an offer. Our part of the bargain is complete: delivery has been made, and when the countries from which we receive our sugar, coffee, tea and hides have placed on their free lists such of our products as shall be agreed upon, as an equivalent for our concession, a proclamation of that fact completes the transaction, and in the meantime our own people have free sugar, tea, coffee and hides.

Looking Forward.

The indications thus far given are very hopeful of early and favorable action by the countries from which we receive our large imports of coffee and sugar, and it is confidently believed that if steam communication with these countries can be promptly improved and enlarged, the next year will show a most gratifying increase in our exports of breadstuffs and provisions, as well as of some important lines of manufactured goods.

COMING LEGISLATION.

Work that Remains to Be Done.

In addition to the important bills that became laws before the adjournment of the last session, some other bills of the highest importance were well advanced toward a final vote, and now stand upon the calendars of the two houses in favored positions. The present session has a fixed limit, and if those measures are not now brought to a final vote all the work that has been done upon them by this Congress is lost. The proper consideration of these, of an apportionment bill, and of the annual appropriation bills, will require not only that no working day of the session shall be lost, but that measures of minor and local interest shall not be allowed to interrupt or retard the progress of those that are of universal interest. In view of those conditions I refrain from bringing before you at this time some suggestions that would otherwise be made, and most earnestly invoke your attention to the duty of perfecting the important legislation now well advanced. To some of those measures which seem to me most important I now briefly call your attention.

To Develop American Steamship Lines.

I desire to repeat with added urgency the recommendations contained in my last annual message in relation to the development of American steamship lines. The reciprocity clause of the tariff bill will be largely limited, and its benefits retarded and diminished, if provision is not contemporaneously made to encourage the establishment of first-class steam communication between our ports and the ports of such nations as may meet our overtures for enlarged commercial exchanges. The steamship carrying the mails statedly and frequently, and offering to passengers a comfortable, safe, and speedy transit, is the first condition of foreign trade. It carries the order of the buyer, but not all that is ordered or bought. It gives to the sailing vessels such cargoes as are not urgent or perishable, and, indirectly at least, promotes that important adjunct of commerce, There is now both in this country and in the nations of Central and South America a state of expectation and confidence as to increased trade that will give a double value to your prompt action upon this question.

Water for Arid Regions.

The subject of the conservation and equal distribution of the water supply of the arid regions has had much attention from Congress, but has not as yet been put upon a permanent and satisfactory basis. The urgency of the subject does not grow out of any large present demand for the use of these lands for agriculture, but out of the danger that the water supply and the sites for the necessary catch-basins may fall into the hands of individuals or private corporations and be used to render subservient the large areas dependent upon such supply. The owner of the water is the owner of the lands, however the titles may run. All unappropriated natural water sources and all necessary reservoir sites should be held by the Government for the equal use, at fair rates, of the homestead settlers who will eventually take up these lands. The United States should not, in my opinion, undertake the construction of dams or canals, but should limit its work to such surveys and observations as will determine the water supply, both surface and subterranean, the areas capable of irrigation, and the use, location of, and storage capacity of reservoirs. This done, the use of the water and of the reservoir sites might be granted to the respective States or Territories, or to individuals or associations, upon the condition that the necessary works should be constructed and the water furnished at fair rates, without discrimination, the rates to be subject to supervision by the Legislatures or by boards of water commissioners duly constituted. The essential thing to be secured is the common and equal use at fair rates of the accumulated water supply. It were almost better that these lands should remain arid than that those who occupy them should become the slaves of unrestrained monopolies, controlling the essential element of land values and crop results.

Better Election Laws.

If any intelligent and loyal company of American citizens were required to catalogue the essential human conditions of life, I do not doubt that with absolute unanimity it would begin with "free and honest elections." And it is gratifying to know that generally there is a growing and non-partisan demand for better election laws. But against this sign of hope and progress must be set the depressing and undeniable fact that election laws and methods are sometimes cunningly contrived to secure minority control, while violence completes the shortcomings of fraud.

Pass the Election Law.

In my last annual message I suggested that the development of the existing law providing a Federal supervision of Congressional elections offered an effective method of reforming these abuses. The need of such a law has manifested itself in many parts of the country, and its wholesome restraints and penalties will be useful in all. The constitutionality of such legislation has been affirmed by the Supreme Court. Its probable effectiveness is evidenced by the character of the opposition that is made to it. It has been denounced as if it were a new exercise of Federal power and an invasion of the rights of the States. Nothing could be further from the truth. Congress has already fixed the time for the election of members of Congress. It has declared that votes for members of Congress must be by written or printed ballots; it has provided for the appointment by the Circuit Courts in certain cases, and upon the petition of a certain number of citizens, of election supervisors, and made it their duty to supervise the registration of voters conducted by the State officers; to challenge persons offering to register; to personally inspect and scrutinize the registry lists, and to affix their names to the lists for the purpose of identification and the prevention of frauds; to attend at elections and remain with the boxes till the votes have been cast and counted; to attach to the registry list and election returns any statement touching the accuracy and fairness of the registry list and election; and to take and transmit to the Clerk of the House of Representatives any evidence of the fraudulent practices which may be presented to them. The same law provides for the appointment of Deputy United States Marshals to attend at the polls, support the supervisors in the discharge of their duties and to arrest persons violating the election law. The provisions of this familiar title in the Revised Statutes have been put to exercise by both the political parties, and in the North as well as the South, by the long authorities upon the certification which establishes the prima facie right to a seat in the House of Representatives. This defect should be cured. Equality of representation and the parity of the electors must be maintained, or everything that is valuable in our system of government is lost. The quality of electors must be sought in the law, not in the opinions, prejudices, or fears of any class, however powerful. The path of the elector to the ballot-box must be free from the ambush of fear and the enticements of fraud; the count so true and open that none shall gainsay it. Such a law should be absolutely non-partisan and impartial. It should give the certainty to honesty and the control to majorities. Surely there is nothing sectional about this creed, and if it shall happen that the penalties of laws intended to enforce these rights fall here and not there, it is not because the law is sectional, but because, happily, crime is local and not universal. Nor should it be forgotten that every law, whether relating to elections or to any other subject, whether enacted by the State or by the nation, has force behind it. The courts, the marshal or constable, the posse comitatus, the prison, are all and always behind the law.

One can not justly be charged with unfriendliness to any section or class who seeks only to restrain violation of law and of personal right. No community will find lawlessness profitable. No community can afford to have it known that the officers who are charged with the preservation of the public peace and the restraint of the criminal classes are themselves the product of fraud or violence. The magistrate is then without respect and the law without sanction. The floods of lawlessness cannot be kept and made to run in one channel. The killing of a United States Marshal carrying a writ of arrest for an election offense is full of prompting and suggestion to men who are pursued by a City Marshal for a crime against life and property. But it is said that this legislation will revive race animosities, and some have even suggested that when the peaceful methods of fraud are made impossible they may be supplemented by intimidation and violence. If the proposed law gives to any qualified elector, by a hair's weight, more than his equal influence, or detracts by so much from any other qualified elector, it is fatally impeached. But if the law is equal and the animosities it is to evoke grow out of the fact that some electors have been accustomed to exercise the franchise for others as well as for themselves, then these animosities ought not to be confessed without shame and cannot be given any weight in the discussion without dishonor. No choice is left to me but to enforce with vigor all laws intended to secure to the citizen his constitutional rights, and to recommend that the inadequacies of such laws be promptly remedied.

If to promote with zeal and ready interest every project for the development of its material interests, its rivers, harbors, mines and factories, and the intelligence and peace and security under the law of its communities and its homes, is not accepted as sufficient evidence of friendliness to any State or section, I can not add connivance at election practices that not only disturb local results but rob the electors of other States and sections of their most priceless political rights.

Appropriation Bills.

The preparation of the general appropriation bills thould be conducted with the greatest care and closest scrutiny of expeuditures. Appropriations should be adequate to the needs of the public service, but they should be absolutely free from prodigality.

I venture again to remind you that the brief time remaining for the consideration of the important legislation now awaiting your attention offers no margin for waste. If the present duty is discharged with diligence, fidelity and courage, the work of the Fifty-first Congress may be confidently submitted to the considerate judgment of the people.

BENJAMIN HARRISON.

EXECUTIVE MANSION, Dec. 1, 1890.

HOPE OF THE ALLIANCE

FARMERS AMBITIOUS TO CUT A WIDER SWATH IN 1892.

Annual Meeting of the Organization at Ocala, Fla.—Prospect of a Ticket for the Next Presidential Campaign—A Possible Combination of the Farmers with the Workingmen.

[Washington dispatch.]

The annual meeting of the National Farmers' Alliance will be held at Ocala, Fla., beginning Tuesday, Dec. 2. In many respects it will be the most important industrial meeting held in this country in many years, and the action taken there will either clear the political atmosphere wonderfully or complicate matters so that the wisest political guessers will be put to their wits' ends to divine the course of affairs in the next Presidential election. There is a strong possibility that the Farmers' Alliance will bloom out as a full-fledged third party with a full ticket in the field in 1892. This matter will be settled practically at the Ocala convention.

At its recent meeting at Denver, Col., the General Assembly of the Knights of Labor appointed General Master Workman Powderly, A. W. Wright of Canada, and Ralph Beaumont of New York to attend the Alliance Convention as fraternal delegates. These three are clear, forcible speakers and earnest men; and it is altogether likely that the partial combination effected between these two great industrial organizations will be made closer in the matter of political action at all events. The Knights of Labor bear a proposition to the Alliance to join with that order in calling, at as early a date as possible, a convention of all labor and reform organizations to decide the question of independent political action. They are strongly of the opinion that the Alliance will take this action. Such a convention would take in the Patrons of Husbandry, the Grange, the Farmers' Mutual Benefit Association, and the New England Farmers' Organization, all of which are thoroughly in sympathy with the Alliance, but have not as yet joined it. Then the Knights of Labor, the Federation of Railroad Employes, the American Federation of Labor, and the big trades unions would be invited to att