

HARRISON'S MESSAGE.

THE PRESIDENT'S FIRST COMMUNICATION TO CONGRESS.

Each Department of the Government Treated in Detail—Reduction of the Surplus—Tariff Legislation—Public Land Laws—Pension Legislation—The Civil Service—Other Matters.

The first annual message of President Harrison, read in the Fifty-first Congress, on the 3d inst., is as follows: To the Senate and House of Representatives: There are few transactions in the administration of the Government which have so temporarily held in the confidence of those charged with the conduct of the public business. Every step taken is under the observation of an intelligent and watchful people. The state of the Union is known from day to day, and suggestions as to needed legislation find an earlier voice than that which speaks in these annual communications of the President to Congress. Good-will and cordiality have characterized our relations and correspondence with other governments, and the year just closed leaves few international questions of importance remaining unadjusted. No obstacle is believed to exist that can long postpone the consideration and adjustment of the still pending questions upon satisfactory and honorable terms. The debt of this Government with other states have been and should always be marked by frankness and sincerity, our purposes avowed, and our methods free from intrigue. This course has borne rich fruit, and the people of our country as a nation to preserve the heritage of good repudiate a century of right dealing with foreign governments has secured to us.

The Pan-American Congress.

It is a matter of high significance, and no less of congratulation, that the first year of the second century of our constitutional existence finds, as honored guests within our borders, the representatives of all the independent States of North and South America met together in earnest conference touching the best methods of perpetuating and expanding the relations of mutual interest and friendship existing among them. That the opportunity thus afforded for promoting closer international relations and the increased prosperity of the States represented will be for the mutual good of all, I cannot permit myself to doubt. Our people will await with interest the conference results to flow from a auspicious meeting of allied and, in large part, identical interests.

The recommendations of this international conference of enlightened statesmen will doubtless have the considerate attention of Congress, and the consideration of the conference will be for the mutual good of all, I cannot permit myself to doubt. Our people will await with interest the conference results to flow from a auspicious meeting of allied and, in large part, identical interests.

The Maritime Conference.

Another international conference, having great possibilities for good, has lately assembled, and is now in session in this capital. An invitation was extended by the Government, under the act of Congress of July 9, 1888, to all maritime nations to send delegates to confer touching the revision and amendment of the rules and regulations governing vessels at sea, and to adopt a uniform system of marine signals. The response to this invitation has been very general and very cordial. Delegates from twenty-five nations are present in the conference, and they have entered upon their usual work with great zeal, and with an evident appreciation of its importance. So far as the agreement to be reached may require legislation to give it effect, our co-operation is ready and prompt.

It is an interesting, if not indeed an unprecedented, fact that the two international conferences have brought together here the accredited representatives of thirty-three nations. Bolivia, Ecuador, and Honduras are now represented by resident envoys of the plenipotentiary grade. All the States of the American system now maintain diplomatic representation at this capital.

In this connection it may be noted that all the nations of the Western Hemisphere, with the exception, sent to Washington Envoys Extraordinary and Ministers Plenipotentiary, being the highest grade accredited to this Government. The United States, on the contrary, sends Envoys of the lower grade to some of our sister republics. Our own representative in Uruguay is a Minister resident, while to Bolivia we send a Minister resident and Consul General. In view of the importance of our relations with the States of the American system, our diplomatic agents in the Western Hemisphere should be of uniform rank of Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary. Certain missions were so elevated by the last Congress with happy effect. I recommend the completion of the reform, which will include the inclusion also of Hawaii and Hayti in view of their relations to the American system of States.

I also recommend that timely provision be made for extending Hawaii an invitation to be represented at the International Conference now sitting at this capital.

Our Relations with China.

Our relations with China have the attentive consideration which they require, and interest demand. The failure of the treaty negotiated under the administration of my predecessor for the further and more complete restriction of Chinese labor immigration, and with it, the legislation of the last session of Congress dependent thereon, leave some questions open which Congress should now approach in that wise and just spirit which should characterize the relations of two great and friendly powers. While our supreme interests demand the exclusion of Chinese labor, which experience has shown to be incompatible with our social life, all steps to compass this imperative need should be accompanied with a recognition of the claim of those strangers not only among us to humanity and just treatment. The accession of the young Emperor of China marks, we may hope, an era of progress and prosperity for the great country over which he is called to rule.

The present state of affairs in respect to the Samoan Islands is encouraging. The conference which was held in this city in the summer of 1887 between the representatives of the United States, Germany, and Great Britain having been adjourned because of the persistent divergence of views which was developed in the deliberations, the subsequent course of events in the islands gave rise to questions of a serious character. On the 4th of February last, the German Minister at this capital, in behalf of this Government, proposed a meeting of the conference at Berlin. This proposition was accepted, as Congress, in February last, was informed.

Pursuant to the understanding thus reached, commissioners were appointed by me, who proceeded to Berlin, where the conference was renewed. The deliberations extended through several weeks, and resulted in the conclusion of a treaty which will be submitted to the Senate for its approval. I trust that the efforts which have been made to effect the settlement of this question will be productive of the permanent establishment of law and order in Samoa upon the basis of the maintenance of the rights and interests of the natives, as well as of the treaty powers.

The Canadian Fisheries.

The questions which have arisen during the last few years between Great Britain and the United States are in abeyance or in course of amicable adjustment.

On the part of the Government of the Dominion of Canada, an effort has been apparent during the season just ended to administer the laws and regulations applicable to the fisheries with as little occasion for friction as was possible, and the temperate representations of this Government in respect of cases of undue hardship or of harsh interpretations have been in most cases met with measures of relief. It is trusted that the attainment of our just rights under existing treaties, and in virtue of the concurrent legislation of the two contiguous countries, will not be long deferred, and that all existing causes of difference may be equitably adjusted.

I recommend that provision be made by an international agreement for visibly marking the water boundary between the United States and Canada in the narrow channels that join the great lakes. The conventional line being traced by the Northern boundary survey years ago, is not in all cases readily ascertain-

able for the settlement of jurisdictional questions.

A just and acceptable enlargement of the list of offenses for which extradition is claimed and granted is most desirable between this country and Great Britain. The territory of neither should become a sure harbor for the evil-doers of the other through any avoidable shortcoming in respect to extradition. This subject between the two powers has been recently negotiated, and will soon be laid before the Senate.

With Other Powers.

The importance of the commerce of Cuba and Porto Rico with the United States, their nearest and principal markets, has long been recognized, and the existing relations may be beneficially expanded. The impediments resulting from varying dues on navigation, and from vexatious treatment of our vessels, on merely technical grounds, as in the case of West India ports, should be removed.

The progress toward an adjustment of pending claims between the United States and Spain is not as rapid as could be desired. Questions affecting American interests in connection with railways constructed and operated by our citizens in Peru have claimed the attention of this government. It is urged that other governments, in pressing Peru to the paying of the claims, have disregarded the property rights of American citizens. The matter will be carefully investigated, with a view to securing a proper and equitable adjustment.

A similar issue is now pending with Portugal. The Delagoa Bay Railroad in Africa was constructed under the contract to an American citizen. When nearly completed, the road was seized by the agents of the Portuguese Government. Formal protests have been made through our minister at Lisbon against this act, and to proper effort will be spared to secure proper relief.

In pursuance of the charter granted by Congress, and under the terms of its contract with the Government of Nicaragua, the Inter-oceanic Canal Company has begun the construction of the important water-way between the two oceans which its organization contemplates. This Government has held itself ready to promote in every proper way the adjustment of all questions that might present obstacles to the completion of a work of such transcendent importance to the commerce of this country and, indeed, to the commercial interests of the world.

The Paris Exposition.

The traditional good feeling between this country and the French republic has received additional impetus from the participation of our Government and people in the international exhibition at Paris during the past summer. The success of our exhibitors has been gratifying. The report of the commission will be laid before Congress in due season.

This Government has held itself ready to reserve as to its policy in foreign territory, the invitation of the Government of Belgium to take part in an international congress, which opened at Brussels on the 16th of November, for the purpose of devising measures for the abolition of the slave trade in Africa, and to prevent the shipment of slaves by sea. Our interest in the extinction of this crime against humanity, in the regions where it yet survives, has been increased by the results of emancipation within our own borders.

With Germany the most cordial relations continue. The questions arising from the return to the Empire of Germans naturalized in this country are considered and disposed of in a temperate spirit, to the entire satisfaction of both Governments.

It is a source of great satisfaction that the internal disturbances of the Republic of Hayti are at last happily ended, and that an apparently stable government has been constituted. It has been duly recognized by the United States.

Affairs at Home.

Within our own borders a general condition of prosperity prevails. The harvests of the last summer were exceptionally abundant, and the trade conditions now prevailing seem to promise a successful season to the merchant and the manufacturer, and general employment to our working people.

The report of the Secretary of the Treasury has been prepared and will be presented to Congress. It presents with clearness the fiscal operations of the Government, and I avail myself of the opportunity to state some facts for your information. The aggregate receipts from all sources for the year were \$387,050,584.84, derived as follows: From customs, \$223,592,741.69; from internal revenue, \$130,881,932.92; from miscellaneous sources, \$32,575,910.23.

The aggregate expenditures for the same period were \$281,906,615.60, and the total expenditures, including the sinking fund, were \$320,579,920.25. The excess of receipts over expenditures was, after providing for the sinking fund, \$57,470,964.64.

For the current fiscal year the total revenues, actual and estimated, are \$335,000,000, and the ordinary expenditures, actual and estimated, are \$293,000,000, making, with the sinking fund, a total expenditure of \$341,321,116.90, leaving an estimated surplus of \$93,678,883.10.

The revenues for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1891, are estimated by the Treasury Department at \$335,000,000, and the expenditures for the same period, including the sinking fund, at \$341,321,116.90, leaving a surplus of \$93,678,883.10, which is more likely to be increased than reduced when the actual transactions are written up.

The existence of so large an actual and anticipated surplus should have the immediate attention of Congress, and the needs of the Government. The collection of moneys not needed for public uses imposes an unnecessary burden upon our people, and the presence of so large a surplus of moneys in the Treasury is an element in the conduct of private business. We should not collect revenue for the purpose of anticipating our bonds, beyond the requirements of the sinking fund, but any unappropriated surplus of the Treasury should be so used, as there is no other lawful way of getting the money to circulation, and the profit realized by the Government offers a substantial advantage.

The loaning of public funds to the banks without interest, upon the security of Government bonds, has relations to other things, a dangerous expedient. It results in a temporary and unnatural increase of the banking capital of favored localities, and compels a cautious and gradual recall of the deposits to avoid injury to the banks and the public. No further use should be made of this method of getting the surplus into circulation, and the deposits now outstanding should be gradually withdrawn and applied to the purchase of bonds. The circulation of Government bonds should be promptly, but very considerably, increased.

Tariff Revision Recommended.

I recommend a revision of our tariff law, both in its administrative features, and in the schedules. The need of the former is generally conceded, and an agreement upon the evils and inconveniences to be remedied, and the best methods for their correction, will probably not be difficult. Uniformity of valuation at all our ports is essential, and effective measures should be taken to secure it. It is equally desirable that questions affecting sales and classifications should be promptly decided.

The proposed uniformity of valuation of customs duties is a matter of great delicacy, because of its direct effect upon the business of the country. Some disturbances of business may perhaps result from the consideration of this subject by Congress, but this temporary ill effect will be reduced by the minimum prompt action and by the assurance which the country already enjoys that any necessary changes will be so made as to impair the just and reasonable protection of our home industries. The inequalities of the law should be adjusted, but the protective principle should be maintained and fairly applied to the products of our farms as well as of our shops. These duties necessarily have relations to other things, besides the public revenues. We cannot limit their effects by fixing our eyes on the public treasury alone. They have a direct relation to home production, to work to wages, and to the commercial independence of this country, and the wise and patriotic legislator should enlarge the field of his vision to include all of these.

The necessary reduction in our public revenues can, I am sure, be made without making the smaller burden more onerous than the larger by reason of the discrimination and limitation which the reduction puts upon both capital and labor.

The free list can very safely be extended by placing therein articles that do not offer injurious competition to such domestic products as our home labor can supply.

The Tobacco and Liquor Tax.

The removal of the internal tax upon tobacco would relieve an important agricultural product from a burden which it can support only by our revenue from customs duties was insufficient for public needs. If safe provision against fraud can be devised the removal of the tax upon spirits used in the arts and in manufactures would also offer a more objectionable method of reducing the surplus.

A table presented by the Secretary of the Treasury, showing the amount of money of all kinds in circulation each year from 1878 to the present time, is of interest. It appears that the amount of national bank notes in circulation has decreased, during that period \$11,410,729, of which \$37,799,229 is chargeable to the last year. But while this withdrawal of bank notes has been going on, there has been a large increase in the amount of gold and silver coin in circulation and in the issues of gold and silver certificates.

The total amount of money of all kinds in circulation on March 1, 1878, was \$805,793,807, while on Oct. 1, 1889, the total was \$1,405,018,000. There was an increase of \$283,417,552 in gold coin, of \$57,554,109 in standard silver dollars, of \$72,311,249 in gold certificates, of \$276,619,715 in silver certificates and of \$14,073,787 in United States notes, making a total of \$713,976,408. There was during the same period a decrease of \$14,200,729 in bank circulation, and of \$642,481 in subsidiary silver. The net increase was \$322,294,193. The circulation per capita has increased about \$5 during the time covered by the table referred to.

The Coinage of Silver.

The total coinage of silver dollars was, on November 1, 1889, \$344,535,001, of which \$235,539,521 were in circulation. Of the amount in the vaults, \$277,319,944 were represented by outstanding silver certificates, leaving \$6,215,577 not in circulation and not represented by certificates. The last year the coinage of silver by the Treasury of \$2,000,000 worth of silver bullion each month, to be coined into silver dollars, has been observed by the department; but neither the present Secretary or any of his predecessors have been able to increase the monthly purchases given by law to increase the monthly purchases to \$4,000,000. The evil anticipations which have accompanied the coinage and use of the silver dollar have not been realized. As a coin it is in general use, and the public treasury has been benefited by its use.

But this is manifestly owing to the fact that its paper representative is more convenient. The general acceptance and use of the silver certificate shows that silver has not been otherwise discarded. I think it is clear that if we should make the coinage of silver at the present rate free, we must expect that the difference in the bullion values of the gold and silver dollars will be taken account of in commercial transactions, and the same result would follow the coinage of the two coins in this country. Any considerable increase of the present rate of coinage. Such a result would be disastrous to our financial management and disastrous to all business interests. Any safe legislation upon this subject must secure the equality of the two coins in this country. I have always been an advocate of the use of silver in our currency. We are large producers of that metal, and should not discredit it. The details of a perfect law require further study, but the plan suggested by the Secretary of the Treasury seems to satisfy the purpose—to continue the use of silver in connection with our currency, and at the same time to obviate the danger of which I have spoken. At a later day I may communicate further with Congress upon this subject.

Exclusion of the Chinese.

The enforcement of the Chinese exclusion act has been found difficult on the Northwestern frontier. The Secretary of the Treasury has authorized the employment of additional soldiers, who will be assigned to this duty, and every effort will be made to enforce the law. The Chinese tax of \$30 for each Chinaman, and when these persons are in fraud of our law, cross into our territory and are apprehended, our officers do not know what to do with them, as the Dominion authorities will suffer them to be sent back without a second payment of the tax. An effort will be made to reach an understanding that will remove this difficulty.

Our Coast Defenses.

Judged by modern standards we are practically without coast defenses. Many of the structures we have would enhance rather than diminish the perils of their garrisons if subjected to the first fire of a modern fleet. The security of our coast cities against foreign attack should not be altogether in the friendly disposition of other nations. There should be a second line wholly in our own keeping. I very urgently recommend the appropriation at this session for the construction of the most exposed and most important harbors. I approve the suggestion of the Secretary of War that provision be made for encamping companies of the National Guard in our coast works for a specified time each year and for the maintenance of the use of heavy guns. It is suggested that an increase of the artillery force of the army is desirable as in this connection commended to the consideration of Congress.

River and Harbor Improvement.

The improvement of our important rivers and harbors should be promoted by the necessary appropriations. Cases should be taken that the Government is not committed to the prosecution of works not of public and general advantage, and that the relative usefulness of works of that class is not overlooked. So far as this work is concerned, I am confident that the end would be sooner and more economically reached if fewer separate works were undertaken at the same time, and those selected for their greater general interest were carried out by the Federal Government. A work once considerably begun should not be subjected to the risks and deterioration which interrupted or insufficient appropriations necessarily occasion.

The Law Department.

In view of the assault made by David S. Terry upon the justice of the United States, and the Supreme Court of the United States, at Lathrop, Cal., in August last, and the killing of the assistant by a Deputy United States Marshal, I recommend that more definite provision be made by law, not only for the protection of the judicial officers, but for the protection of the cases in the United States courts. Events which have been brought to my attention, happening in other parts of the country, have also suggested the propriety of extending, by legislation, the protection of the courts of the United States. The investigations of criminal offenses are often rendered futile by the intimidation of witnesses.

The necessity of providing some speedy method for disposing of the cases which come for final adjudication to the Supreme Court becomes every year more apparent and urgent. The plan of providing intermediate courts, having final appellate jurisdiction of such cases, has been suggested. I think, received a more general approval from the bench and bar of the country than any other. I recommend that provision be made for the establishment of such courts.

The salaries of the Justices of the District Courts in many of the districts are, in my judgment, inadequate. I recommend that all such salaries now below \$5,000 be increased to that amount.

Regarding Trusts.

Earnest attention should be given by Congress to a consideration of the law which restrains the trusts of combinations of capital commonly called "trusts" is a matter of federal jurisdiction. When organized, as they often are, to crush out all healthy competition and to extend the evil practices of an article of commerce and general necessity, they are dangerous conspiracies against the public good, and should be made the subject of prohibitory and even penal legislation.

The subject of an international copyright has been frequently commended by the Senate and Congress by my predecessors. The enactment of such a law would be eminently wise and just.

Our naturalization laws should be so revised as to make the entry into the moral character and good disposition toward our Government of the persons applying for citizenship more thorough. This can only be done by taking fuller control of the examination of the applicant, and by requiring the presence of some one who shall represent the Government in the inquiry. Those who are the avowed enemies of social order, or who come to this country to sell the injurious influence and to extend the evil practices of an article of commerce and general necessity, they are dangerous conspiracies against the public good, and should be made the subject of prohibitory and even penal legislation.

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