

much pleased and encouraged by the cordiality, promptness and unanimity with which the invitation by this government for an international conference upon this subject was accepted by all the powers. We may not only hope for, but expect highly beneficial results from this conference, which will now soon assemble.

When the result of the conference is known, we shall then be able, intelligently to readjust our financial legislation to any new conditions.

In my last message to Congress I said: "I must yet entertain hope that it is possible to secure calm, patriotic consideration of such constitutional statutory changes as may be necessary to insure a choice of officers of the government to the people by fair apportionments and full elections. I believe it would be possible to constitute a commission non-partisan in membership and composed of patriotic, wise and impartial men to whom the consideration of questions of evils connected with our elections systems and methods might be committed with a good prospect of securing unanimity in some plan for removing and mitigate those evils. The constitution would permit the selection of a committee to be vested in the supreme court, if that method would give the best guarantee of impartiality. This commission should be charged with the duty of inquiring into the whole subject of the law of elections as related to choice of officers of the national government with views requiring for every elector free and unmolested suffrage and as near an approach to equality on each ballot cast as is attainable. The demand that limitations of suffrage should be placed in the ballot and only there is a just demand and no just man should resent or resist it. Every man should be made secure in the right to cast a free ballot and to have that ballot honestly counted.

Our old Republican battle cry, "A free ballot and a fair count," comes back to us not only from Alabama, but from other States, and from men who, differing with us widely in opinions, have come to see that parties and political debate are but a mockery. When the debate ended the judgment of honest majorities is to be reversed by ballot box frauds and tally sheet manipulations in the interest of the party faction in power. These new political movements in the States, and the recent decisions of some of the State courts against unfair apportionment encourage the hope that the arbitrary and partisan election laws and practices which have prevailed may be corrected by the States, the law made equal and non-partisan, and the election free and honest. The Republican party would rejoice at such a solution, as a healthy and patriotic local sentiment is the best assurance of free and honest elections.

I shall again urge upon Congress that provision be made for the appointment of a non-partisan committee to consider the subject of apportionment and elections in their relation to the choice of Federal officers.

#### THE CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM

has been extended and the law enforced with vigor and impartiality. There has been no dallying with the law in any of the departments or bureaus, as has before happened, but

appointments to classified service have been made impartially from the eligible lists. The system now in force in all departments has for the first time placed promotions strictly upon the merit basis, as ascertained by the daily record, and the efficiency of the force is thereby greatly increased.

The approval so heartily given by the convention to all those agencies which contribute to

#### THE EDUCATION OF THE CHILDREN.

of the land was worthy and meets my hearty approval, as does also the declaration as to thought and conscience and the separation of church and state. The increased interest manifest in the States in education, the cheerfulness with which the necessary taxes are paid by all classes, and the renewed interest manifested by the children in the national national flag, are hopeful indications that the coming generation will direct public affairs with increased prudence and patriotism. Our interest in free public schools open to all children of suitable age, is supreme, and our care for them will be zealous and constant. The public school system, however, was not intended to restrain the natural regard of the parent, after contributions to public school fund to choose other educational agencies for his children. I favored aid by the general government to the public schools. It is gratifying to notice that many States are with commendable liberality developing their school system and increasing their school revenues to the great advantage of the children of both races.

The tariff bill of 1890 gives a better protection to farm products subject to foreign competition than they ever had before, and home market for such products have been enlarged by the establishment of new industries and development of other. We may confidently submit to the intelligent and candid judgment of the American farmer how much has been done to promote his interest. And whether in continuance and extension there is not a better prospect offered to him than the invitation of the Democratic party to give our home market to foreign manufacturers and abandon the reciprocity policy and better also than the radical and untried methods of relief proposed by other parties which solicit his support.

I often expressed my strong conviction of the value of the Nicaragua ship canal to our commerce and our navy. The project is not one of commerce, but one of necessity. It is possible, I believe, if the United States will support the enterprise, a speedy completion of the canal without taxing the treasury for any direct contribution and at the same time secure to the United States an influence in its management which is imperative.

It has been the purpose of the administration to make it

#### FOREIGN POLICY

not a matter of partisan politics, but patriotism and national honor, and I have very great gratification in being able to state that the Democratic members of the committee on foreign affairs have responded in true American spirit. I have not hesitated to consult freely with them about the most confidential and delicate affairs, and I frankly confess my obligation for needed co-operation. They did not regard patient

but firm insistence upon American rights and upon immunity from insult injury for our citizens and sailors in foreign ports as a policy of "irritation and bluster." They did not believe, as some others seem to believe, that to be a Democrat one must take the foreign side of every international question if a Republican administration is conducting the American side. I do not believe that same submission to insult by any nation at the hands of any other, can ever form the basis of a lasting friendship. The necessary element of mutual respect will be wanting.

The Chilean incident, now so happily and honorably adjusted, will, I do not doubt, place our relations with that brave people upon a more friendly basis than ever before. This already appears in an agreement since negotiated by Mr. Egan for the settlement by a commission of long unsettled claims between the two governments, which Mr. Egan settled advantageously to the United States. The confidence which I refused to withdraw from him has been abundantly justified.

In our relations with the great European powers, the rights of the United States and our citizens have been insisted upon with firmness. The Samoan and Behring Sea questions, which came over from the preceding administration have been, the one settled and the other submitted to arbitration upon a fair basis. Never before, I think, in a like period have so many important treaties and commercial agreements been concluded, and never before, I am sure, have the influence, national and commercial, of the United States been held in higher estimation on both hemispheres.

#### THERE ARE MANY UNION SOLDIERS

and sailors in this country yet, veterans of an honorable struggle not remote. Increasing infirmity and years give minor tones of sadness and pathos to the mighty appeal of service and suffering, who does not listen with sympathy, and the heart that does not respond with generosity are ear and heart of alien and not of American. Now soon again surviving veterans are to parade upon the great avenue of national capital and every tribute of honor and love should attend their march. Comrade in column of victors in the parade of 1865 I am not less comrade now.

I used every suitable occasion to urge upon the people of all sections the consideration that no good cause can be promoted upon lines of lawlessness. Mobs do not discriminate and punishment inflicted by them have no repressive or salutary influence. On the contrary, they beget revenges and perpetuate feuds. It is especially the duty of the educated and influential to see that the weak and ignorant when accused of crime are fairly tried before a lawful tribunal. The moral sentiment of the country should be aroused and brought to bear for the suppression of these offenses against law and social order.

The necessity for careful

#### DISCRIMINATION AMONG EMIGRANTS

seeking our shores becomes every day more apparent. We don't want and should not receive those who by reason of bad character or habit are not wanted at home. Industrious and self-respecting lovers of law and liberty