

be expected to relieve with paternal care; the distress of citizens and communities, and that from the fullness of its treasury it should, upon the slightest possible pretext of promoting the general good, apply public funds to the benefit of localities and individuals. Nor can it be denied that there is a growing assumption that, as against the government and in favor of private claims and interests, the usual rules and limitations of business principles and just dealings should be waived. These ideas have been unhappily much encouraged by legislative acquiescence. Relief from contracts made with the government is too easily accorded in favor of the citizen; the failure to support claims against the government by proof, is often supplied by no better consideration than the wealth of the government and the poverty of the claimant. Gratitudes in the form of pensions are granted upon no other real ground than the needy condition of the applicant, or for reasons less valid; and large sums are expended for public buildings and other improvements, upon representations scarcely claimed to be related to the public needs and necessities. The extent to which the consideration of such matters subordinates and postpones action upon subjects of great public importance, but involving no special private or partisan interest, should arrest attention, and lead to reformation.

A few of the numerous illustrations of this condition may be stated. The crowded condition of the calendar of the supreme court, and the delay to suitors and denial of justice resulting therefrom, has been strongly urged upon the attention of Congress, with a plan for the relief of the situation, approved by those well able to judge of its merits. While this subject remains without effective consideration, many laws have been passed, providing for the holding of terms of inferior courts at places to suit the convenience of localities, or to lay the foundation of an application for the erection of a new public building.

#### PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC LANDS.

Repeated recommendations have been submitted for the amendment and change of the laws relating to our public lands, so that their spoliation and diversion to other uses than for homes of honest settlers might be prevented. While a measure to meet this conceded necessity of reform remains awaiting the action of Congress, many claims to the public lands, and applications for their donation in favor of states and individuals, have been allowed.

#### INDIAN MANAGEMENT.

A plan in aid of Indian management and recommended by those well informed as containing valuable features in furtherance of the solution of the Indian problem has thus far failed of legislative sanction, while grants of doubtful expediency to railroad corporations permitting them to pass through Indian reservations have greatly multiplied.

#### IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED IN WASHINGTON.

The propriety and necessity of the erection of one or more prisons for the confinement of United States convicts, and a postoffice building, in the National Capital, are not disputed, but this need yet remains unanswered, while scores of public buildings have been erected where their necessity for public purposes is not apparent.

#### REVISION OF THE PENSION LAWS.

Revisions of our pension laws could be easily made which would rest upon just principles and provide for every worthy applicant; but while our general pension laws remain confused and imperfect, hundreds of private pension laws are annually passed which are the sources of unjust discrimination and popular demoralization.

#### APPROPRIATION BILLS

for the support of the government, are defaced by items and provisions to meet private ends, and it is freely asserted by responsible and experienced parties, that a bill appropriating money for public internal improvement would fail to meet with favor, unless it contained more for local and private advantage than for public benefit. These statements can be much emphasized by an ascertainment of the proportion of federal legislation which either bears upon its face its private character, or which upon examination, develops such a motive power. And yet the people wait, and expect from their chosen representatives, such patriotic protection as will advance the welfare of the entire country; and this expectation can only be answered by the performance of public duty with unselfish purpose. Our mission among the nations of the earth, and our success in accomplishing good, has given the American people the right to require of those entrusted with the making and execution of our laws, perfect devotion above all things to the public good.

This devotion will lead us to strongly resist all impatience of constitutional limitations of federal power, and to persistently check the increasing tendency to extend the scope of federal legislation into the dominion of state and local jurisdiction, upon the plea of subserving the public welfare. The preservation of the partitions between proper subjects of federal and local care and regulation is of such importance under the constitu-

tion, which is the law of our very existence, that no consideration of expediency or sentiment should tempt us to enter upon doubtful ground. Having undertaken to discover and proclaim the richest blessings of a free government, with the constitution as our guide, let us follow the way it points out. Let us hope it will not mislead us, and surely no one who has taken upon himself the solemn obligation to support and preserve the constitution can find satisfaction or solace for disloyalty in the excuse that he wandered and disobeyed in search of a better way to reach the public welfare than the constitution afforded. What has been said is deemed not inappropriate at a time when from

#### A CENTURY'S HEIGHT

we view the way already trod by the American people, and attempt to discover their future path. The seventh President of the United States, the soldier and statesman of all time; the firm and brave friend of the people, in vindication of his course as the protector of popular rights and the champion of true American citizenship, declared: "The ambition which leads me on is an anxious desire and a fixed determination to restore to the people unimpaired the sacred trust they have confided to my charge; to heal the wounds of the constitution and to preserve it from further violation; to persuade my countrymen, so far as I may, that it is not in splendid government supported by powerful monopolies and aristocratical establishments that they will find happiness, or their liberties protection; but in a plain system, void of pomp, protecting all and granting favors to none, dispensing its blessings like the dews of heaven, unseen and unfeigned save in the freshness and beauty, they contribute to produce. That the genius of our people requires; such an one only, under which our states may remain for ages to come, united, prosperous and free."

In pursuance of a constitutional provision requiring the President from time to time to give to Congress information of

#### THE STATE OF THE UNION.

I have satisfaction to announce that the close of the year finds the United States in the enjoyment of domestic tranquility and at peace with all the nations. Since my annual message our foreign relations have been strengthened and improved by the performance of international good offices and by new and renewed treaties of amity, commerce and reciprocal extradition of criminals.

Those international questions which still await settlement, are all reasonably within the domain of amicable negotiation, and there is no existing subject of dispute between the United States and any foreign power that is not susceptible of satisfactory adjustment by frank diplomatic treatment. The questions between Great Britain and the United States and relating to the rights of American fishermen under treaty and international comity in the territorial waters of Canada and Newfoundland, I regret to say are not satisfactorily adjusted. These matters were fully treated in my message to the Senate of February 30, 1888, together with which a convention, concluded under my authority with Her Majesty's government, on the 15th of February last, for the removal of all causes of misunderstanding, was submitted by me for the approval of the Senate. This

#### TREATY HAVING BEEN REJECTED

by the Senate, I transmitted a message to the Congress on the 23rd of August last, reviewing the transactions and submitting for consideration certain recommendations for legislation concerning the important questions involved. Afterward, on the 12th of September, in response to a resolution of the Senate, I again communicated fully all the information in my possession, as to the action of the government of Canada, affecting the commercial relations between the Dominion and the United States, including the treatment of American fishing vessels in the ports and waters of British North America. The communications have all been published, and are therefore open to the knowledge of both houses of Congress, although two were addressed to the Senate alone. Comment upon, or repetition of their contents would be superfluous, and I am not aware anything has since occurred which should be added to the facts therein stated. Therefore, I merely repeat as applicable to the present time the statement which will be found in my message to the Senate on Sept. 12th last: That since March 1st, 1887, no case has been reported to the Department of State where complaint has been made of unfriendly or unlawful treatment of American fishing vessels on the part of Canadian authorities, in which reparation was not promptly and satisfactorily obtained by the United States consul general at Halifax.

Having essayed in the discharge of my duty to secure by negotiation the settlement of a long standing cause of disputes and to remove a constant menace to the good relations of the two countries, and continuing to be of opinion that the treaty of February last, which failed to receive the approval of the Senate, did supply a satisfactory, practical and final adjustment upon a basis honorable and just to both parties, of the difficult and vexed question to which it related, and

having subsequently and unavailingly recommended other legislation to Congress which I hoped would suffice to meet the exigency created by the rejection of the treaty, I now again invoke the earnest and immediate attention of the Congress to the condition of this important question as it now stands before them and the country, and for the settlement of which I am deeply solicitous.

#### THE SACKVILLE MATTER.

Near the close of the month of October last, occurrences of a deeply regrettable nature were brought to my knowledge, which made it my painful but imperative duty to obtain, with as little delay as possible, a new personal channel of diplomatic intercourse in this country with the government of Great Britain. The correspondence in relation to this incident will, indeed, course, be laid before you, and will disclose the unpardonable conduct of the official referred to in his interference, by advice and counsel, with the suffrages of American citizens in the very crisis of the presidential election, then near at hand; also, in his subsequent public declarations to justify his action, superseding impugment of the Executive and Senate of the United States, in connection with important questions now pending in controversy between the two governments.

The offense thus committed was most grave, involving disastrous possibilities to the good relations of the United States and Great Britain, and constituting a gross breach of diplomatic privilege and invasion of the purely domestic affairs and essential sovereignty of the government to which the envoy was accredited. Having first fulfilled the just demands of internal comity by offering a full opportunity for Her Majesty's government to act in relief of the situation, I considered a prolongation of discussion to be unwarranted, and thereupon declined to further recognize the diplomatic character of the person whose continuance of such functions would destroy that mutual confidence which is essential to the good understanding of the two governments, and was inconsistent with the welfare and self-respect of the government of the United States. The usual interchange of communication has since continued through Her Majesty's legation in this city.

#### FUR SEAL FISHERIES.

My endeavors to establish by international co-operation, measures for the prevention of the extermination of fur seals in Behring Sea have not been relaxed, and I have hopes of being enabled shortly to submit one effective and satisfactory conventional project with the maritime powers for the approval of the Senate.

#### THE ALASKAN BOUNDARY.

The subject of the coast and boundary between our Alaskan possessions and British Columbia, I regret to say, has not received the attention demanded by its importance, and which on several occasions heretofore I had the honor to recommend to the Congress. The admitted impracticability, if not impossibility of making an accurate and precise survey and demarcation of the boundary line, as it is recited in the treaty with Russia, under which Alaska was ceded to the United States, renders it absolutely requisite for prevention of international jurisdiction complication, that adequate appropriation for reconnaissance and survey to obtain proper knowledge of the locality and geographical features of the boundary should be authorized by Congress, with as little delay as possible. Knowledge to be only thus obtained is an essential pre-requisite for negotiation for ascertaining a common boundary or as preliminary to any other mode of settlement.

#### LIFE SAVING SERVICE ON THE LAKES.

It is much to be desired that some agreement should be reached with Her Majesty's government by which damages to life and property on the great lakes may be alleviated by removing or humanely regulating the obstacles to reciprocal assistance to wrecked or stranded vessels. The act of June 19, 1878, which offers to Canadian vessels access to our island waters in aid of wrecked or disabled vessels, has not yet become effective through concurrent action by the Canadian government.

#### CITIZENS OF FRENCH EXTRACTION.

The due protection of our citizens of French origin or descent from the claim of military service in the event of their returning to or visiting France, has called forth correspondence which was laid before you at the last session. In advance of the conventional agreement as to naturalization, which is greatly to be desired, this government sees no occasion to recede from the sound position it has maintained, not only with regard to France, but as to all countries with which the United States have not concluded special treaties.

#### ROYAL DEATHS IN GERMANY.

Twice within the last year has the imperial household of Germany been visited by death, and I have hastened to express the sorrow of this people and their appreciation of the lofty character of the late aged Emperor William, and their sympathy with the heroism and suffering of his son, the late Emperor Frederick.

#### ILLEGAL TONNAGE DUES.

I renew my recommendation of two

years ago for the passage of a Bill for the refunding to certain German lines of the interest upon tonnage duties illegally exacted.

#### SAMOA.

On the 12th of April last I laid before the House of Representatives full information respecting our interests in Samoa, and in the subsequent correspondence on the same subject, which will be laid before you in due course of time, the history of events in those islands will be found.

#### THE CHINESE.

In a message accompanying my approval, on the first day of October last, of a bill for the exclusion of Chinese laborers, I laid before Congress full information and all correspondence touching the negotiations of the treaty with China, concluded at this capital on the 13th day of March, 1888, and which having been confirmed by the Senate with certain amendments, was rejected by the Chinese government. This message contained a recommendation that a sum of money be appropriated as compensation to Chinese subjects, who had suffered injuries at the hands of lawless men, within our jurisdiction; such appropriation having been duly made, the fund awaits reception by the Chinese government.

It is sincerely hoped that by the cessation of the influx of this class of Chinese subjects in accordance with the expressed wishes of both governments, a cause of unkind feeling has been permanently removed.

#### JAPAN'S REVISION.

On the 8th of August, 1887, notification was given by the Japanese minister at this capital of the adjournment of the conference for the revision of the treaties of Japan with foreign powers, owing to the objection of his government to the provision in the draft of the jurisdictional convention which required the submission of the criminal code of the empire to the powers in advance of its becoming operative. This notification, was, however, accompanied with an assurance of Japan's intention to continue the work of revision. Notwithstanding this temporary interruption of negotiations, it is hoped that improvements may soon be secured in the jurisdictional system, as respects foreigners in Japan, and relief afforded to that country from the present undue and oppressive foreign control in matters of commerce.

I earnestly recommend that relief be provided for the injuries accidentally caused to Japanese subjects in the island of Iki, by the target practice of one of our vessels.

#### KOREA AND PERSIA.

A diplomatic mission from Korea has been received. The formal intercourse between the two countries contemplated by the treaty of 1882, is now established. Legislative provision is hereby recommended to organize and equip consular courts in Korea and Persia. The latter has established diplomatic representation at this capital and has evinced a very great interest in the enterprise and achievements of our citizens. I am therefore hopeful that beneficial commercial relations between the two countries may be brought about.

#### HAYTI.

I announce with sincere regret that Hayti has again become the theatre of insurrection, disorder and bloodshed. The titular government of President Salomon has been forcibly overthrown and he driven out of the country to France, where he has since died. The tenure of power has been so unstable amid the war of factions that has ensued since the expulsion of President Salomon that no government constituted by the will of the Haytian people has been recognized as administering responsibly the affairs of that country. Our representation has been instructed to abstain from interference between the warring factions and a vessel of our navy has been sent to Haytian waters to sustain our minister and for the protection of the persons and property of American citizens. Ample precautions have been taken to enforce our neutrality laws and prevent our territory from becoming the base of military supplies for either of the warring factions. Under color of a blockade, of which no reasonable notice had been given, and which does not appear to have been efficiently maintained, a seizure of vessels under the American flag has been reported and in consequence measures to prevent and redress any molestation of any of our innocent merchantmen have been adopted.

#### HAWAII.

Proclamation was duly made on the 9th day of November, 1887, of the conventional extensions of the treaty of June 3rd, 1875, with Hawaii, under which relations of such special and beneficial intercourse have been created in the vast field of oriental commerce now unfolded from over the Pacific borders. No features present stronger recommendations for congressional action than the establishment of communication by submarine telegraph with Honolulu. The graphic position of the Hawaiian group in relation to our Pacific States creates a natural interdependence of mutual interests which our present treaties were intended to foster and which made close communication a logical and commercial necessity.

#### MEXICAN RECIPROCITY.

The wisdom of concluding a treaty,

of commercial reciprocity with Mexico has been heretofore stated in my messages to Congress and the lapse of time and growth of commerce with that close neighbor and sister republic confirm the judgment so expressed. The precise relocation of our boundary line is needful and an adequate appropriation is now recommended.

It is with sincere satisfaction that I am enabled to advert to the spirit of good neighborhood and friendly co-operation and conciliation that has marked the correspondence and action of the Mexican authorities in their share of the task of maintaining law and order about the line of our common boundary.

#### THE BOUNDARY DISPUTE.

The long pending boundary dispute between Costa Rica and Nicaragua was referred to my arbitration, and by an award made on the 22nd of March last the question has been finally settled to the expressed satisfaction of both the parties interested.

#### BRAZIL.

The Empire of Brazil, in abolishing the last vestige of slavery among the Christian nations, called forth the earnest congratulations of this government in expression of the cordial sympathies of our people.

#### CHILIAN CLAIMS.

The claims of nearly all other countries against Chili, growing out of her late war with Bolivia and Peru have been disposed of, either by arbitration, or by a lump settlement. Similar claims of our citizens will continue to be urged upon the Chilean government and it is hoped will not be subject to further delays.

#### PERU.

A comprehensive treaty of amity and commerce with Peru was proclaimed on November 7th last; and it was expected that under its operation mutual prosperity and good understanding will be promoted in the pursuance of the policy of arbitration.

#### CITIZENS' CLAIMS.

A treaty to settle the claim of Santos, an American citizen, against Ecuador, has been concluded under my authority and will be duly submitted for the approval of the Senate. Like disposition of the claim of Carlos Butterfield against Denmark, and of Van Bokelen against Hayti, will probably be made, and I trust the principle of such settlements may be extended in practice under approval of the Senate. Through unforeseen causes, foreign to the will of both governments, the ratification of the convention of December 8, 1835, with Venezuela, for the rehearing of claims of citizens of the United States under the treaty of 1866, failed to exchange within the term provided, and a supplementary convention, further extending time for the exchange of ratifications and explanatory of an ambiguous provision of the prior convention, now awaits the advice and consent of the Senate. Although this matter is the stage referred to concerns only the concurrent treaty-making power of one branch of Congress, I advert to it in view of the interest repeatedly and conspicuously shown by you in your legislative capacity, in favor of a speedy and equitable adjustment of the questions growing out of the discredited judgments of the previous mixed commission of Caracas. With every desire to do justice to the representation of Venezuela in this regard, the limited time seems to have to end this matter and I trust that their prompt confirmation by both parties of the supplementary action referred to will avert the need of legislative or other action to prevent the longer withholding of such rights of actual claimants as may be shown to exist.

#### THE COMING CONFERENCE.

As authorized by the Congress, preliminary steps have been taken for the assemblage at this capital, during the coming year, of the representatives of South and Central American States, together with those of Mexico, Hayti and San Domingo, to discuss sundry important monetary and commercial topics. Excepting in those cases where, from reasons of contiguity of territory and the expense of a border line incapable of being guarded, reciprocal commercial treaties may be found expedient, it is believed that commercial policies inducing freer mutual exchange of products can be most advantageously arranged by independent but co-operative legislation in the mode last mentioned. The control of our taxation for revenue will be always retained in our own hands, unrestricted by conventional agreements with other governments.

#### MARITIME MATTERS.

In conformity also with congressional authority, the maritime powers have been invited to confer in Washington, in April next, upon the practicability of devising uniform rules and measures for the greater security of life and property at sea. A disposition to accept, on the part of a number of the powers, has already been manifested, and if the co-operation of the nations chiefly interested shall be secured, important results may be confidently anticipated.

#### TONNAGE DUTIES.

The act of June 26, 1884, and the acts amendatory thereof, in relation to

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