

MINUTE MESSAGE

Text of President's Annual Address.

POLICY IN THE PHILIPPINES

Rebellion is Nearly Ended and Makes Recommendation for Future Government—All Governments Are Friendly to the United States—Favors Gold.

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

At the threshold of your deliberations you are called to mourn with your countrymen the death of Vice-President Hobart, who passed from this life on the morning of November 21st last. His great soul now rests in eternal peace. His private life was pure and elevated, while his public career was ever distinguished by large capacity, stainless integrity and exalted motives. He has been removed from the high offices which he honored and dignified, but his lofty character, his devotion to duty, his honesty of purpose and noble virtues remain with us as a priceless legacy and example.

CONDITION OF THE COUNTRY.

Prosperity at Home and Peace With All Governments.

The 56th congress convenes in its first regular session with the country in a condition of unusual prosperity, of unexampled peace and of friendly relations with every government of the world. Our foreign commerce has shown great increase in volume and value. The combined imports and exports for the year are the largest ever shown by a single year in all our history. Our exports for 1899 alone exceeded by more than \$1,000,000 our imports. The total value of our exports in 1899, the imports per capita are 20 per cent less than in 1870, while the exports per capita are 18 per cent more than in 1870, showing the enlarged capacity of the United States to satisfy the wants of its own increasing population, as well as to contribute to those of the peoples of other nations. Exports of agricultural products were \$1,757,412 of which \$1,222,124, being larger than any previous year. It is a noteworthy fact that the only years in all our history when the products of our manufactures and abroad exceeded those bought abroad were 1878 and 1892.

FINANCES OF THE NATION.

Receipts and Disbursements for the Last Fiscal Year.

Government receipts from all sources for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1899, including the fiscal year 1898, aggregated \$2,962,000,000. Of this sum, customs receipts were \$96,128,481.75, and those from internal revenue \$273,477,161.51. For the fiscal year 1898, the receipts were \$2,800,564,022, leaving a deficit of \$151,437,977. The secretary of the treasury estimates that the receipts for the current fiscal year will aggregate \$2,962,000,000, and upon the basis of the present estimate the expenditures will aggregate \$2,962,000,000, leaving a surplus of \$100,000,000.

THE GOLD STANDARD.

A Fitting Time to Make Provision for Its Continuance.

I urgently recommend that, to support the existing gold standard and to maintain the parity in value of the coins of the two metals (gold and silver) and the equal power of every dollar at all times in the market and in the payment of debts, the secretary of the treasury be given additional power and charged with the duty to sell United States bonds and to employ such other effective means as may be necessary to these ends. The authority should include the power to sell bonds on long and short time, as conditions which require an immediate action for a rate of interest lower than that fixed by the act of January 14, 1875. While there is now no commercial fright which withdraws gold from the government, but on the contrary, such widespread confidence that gold seeks the treasury, demanding paper money in exchange, yet the very situation points to the present as the most fitting time to make adequate provision to insure the continuance of the gold standard and of public confidence in the ability and purpose of the government to meet all its obligations in the manner which the civilized world recognizes as the best.

OUR MERCHANT MARINE.

Industrial Greatness Should Be Supplemented by Sea Progress.

The value of an American merchant marine to the extension of our commercial trade and the strengthening of our power upon the sea invites an immediate action of congress. Our national development will be one-sided and unsatisfactory so long as the remarkable growth of our inland industries remains unopposed by progress on the sea. There is no lack of constitutional authority for legislation which shall give to the country maritime strength commensurate with its industrial achievements and with its rank among nations of the earth. The past year has recorded exceptional activity in our shipyards, and the promises of continual prosperity in shipbuilding are abundant. Advanced legislation for the protection of our seamen has been enacted. Our coast trade, under regulations wisely framed at the beginning of this government and since, shows results for the past fiscal year unequalled in our records or those of any other power. We shall fail to realize our opportunities, however, if we complacently regard only matters at home and blind ourselves to the necessity of securing our share in the valuable carrying trade of the world. Last year American vessels transported a smaller share of our exports and imports than during any former year in all our history, and the measure of our dependence upon foreign shipping was painfully manifested to our people. Without any choice of our own, but from necessity, the department of the government charged with military and naval operations in the East and in the West Indies had to obtain from foreign flag merchant vessels essential for these operations.

PROBLEM OF THE TRUSTS.

Need of Early Amendment of the Existing Law.

Combinations of capital, organized into trusts to control the conditions of trade among our citizens, to stifle competition, limit production and determine the prices of products consumed by the people, are provoking public discussion and should early claim the attention of congress. The industrial commission created by act of congress of June 18, 1898, has been engaged in extended hearings

upon the disputed questions involved in the subject of combinations in restraint of trade and competition. They have not yet completed the investigation of the nature and variety of causes and extent of the injuries to the public which may arise from large combinations concentrating more or less numerous enterprises under a single management, or to the formation of the combination were carried on separately. It is universally conceded that combinations which engross or control the market of any particular kind of merchandise are immediately necessary to the general community by suppressing natural and ordinary competition, whereby prices are unduly enhanced to the general consumer, with such benefits not only to the common law, but also to the public welfare. There must be a remedy for the evils involved in such organization of the private law can be extended more certainly to control or check these monopolies or trusts, it should be done without delay. Whatever power the congress possesses over this most important subject should be promptly ascertained and asserted.

FOREIGN RELATIONS.

No Dispute of Serious Character With Any Government.

A review of our relations with foreign nations, which such recommendations as are deemed appropriate. In my last annual message I adverted to the claim of the Austro-Hungarian government for indemnity for the killing of certain Austrian and Hungarian subjects by the authorities of the state of Pennsylvania, at Latimer, while suppressing an unlawful tumult of miners, September 18, 1897. The case was referred to the sheriff and his deputies were tried for murder, and following the established doctrine that the government may be held accountable for injuries suffered by individuals at the hands of the public authorities while acting in the line of duty in suppressing disturbances of the public peace, this government, after due consideration of the facts, advised by the Austro-Hungarian government, was constrained to decline liability to indemnify the sufferers.

THE PHILIPPINE QUESTION.

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NICARAGUA CANAL.

Status of the Negotiations for the Inter-Oceanic Waterway.

The contract of the Maritime Canal Company, of Nicaragua, was declared forfeited by the Nicaragua government on the 15th of August, 1898, on account of non-fulfillment within the 18-year term stipulated in the contract. The Maritime Canal Company has lodged a protest against this action, alleging rights in the territory, and the United States, in consideration, this government expects that Nicaragua will afford the protestants a full and fair hearing upon the merits of the case.

ALASKA BOUNDARY QUESTION.

Other Unsettled Questions.

In my last annual message, I referred to the pending negotiations with Great Britain in respect to the Dominion of Canada. By means of an executive agreement, a joint high commission had been created for the purpose of adjusting all unsettled questions between the United States and Canada, embracing 12 subjects, among which were the questions of the fur seals, the fisheries of the coast and contiguous inland waters, the Alaska boundary, the labor laws, mining rights, reciprocity in trade, revision of the agreement respecting naval vessels in the Great Lakes, a more complete marking of parts of the boundary between the United States and Canada, and for wrecking and salvage. Much progress had been made by the commission toward the adjustment of many of these questions, but it became apparent that an irreconcilable difference of views was entertained respecting the delimitation of the Alaska boundary. In the failure of an agreement to the meaning of the treaty of 1825, the treaty of 1825 between Russia and Great Britain, which defined the boundary between Alaska and Canada, the American commissioner proposed that the subject of the boundary be referred to an arbitration tribunal, which would have the remaining questions of difference be proceeded with, some of which were so far advanced as to assure the probability of a settlement. This being declined by the British commissioner, an adjustment was taken until the boundary should be adjusted by the two governments. The subject has been receiving the careful attention which its importance demands, with the result that an agreed provisional demarcation in the region about the head of Lynn canal has been agreed upon, and it is hoped that the negotiations now in progress between the two governments will end in an agreement for the establishment and delimitation of a permanent boundary.

Attitude in Anglo-Boer War.

As from these questions growing out of our relationship with our northern neighbor, the most friendly disposition and ready agreement have marked the discussion of the numerous matters arising in the vast and intimate intercourse of the United States with Great Britain. This government has maintained an attitude of neutrality in the unfortunate contest between Great Britain and the Boer states of Africa. We have remained faithful to the precept of avoiding entangling alliances as to affairs not of our own direct concern. Had circumstances suggested this, the parties to the quarrel would have welcomed any kind of expression of the hope of the American people that the war might be averted, good offices would have been gladly tendered. The industrial commission created by act of congress was early instructed to see that all neutral American interests be respected by the

Outbreak of the Insurrection.

The prompt accomplishment of this work by the American army and navy gave him other ideas and ambitions, and his insidious suggestions from various quarters perverted the purposes and intentions with which he had taken up arms. No sooner had our army captured Manila than he fled to the interior, and was the object of suspicion and hostility, which the utmost efforts of our officers and troops were unable to disarm or modify. Their kindness and forbearance was taken as a proof of cowardice and aggression of the Filipinos continually increased, until, finally, just before the time set for the senate of the United States to vote upon the treaty, an attack, evidently prepared in advance, was made all along the American lines, which resulted in a terribly destructive and sanguinary rupture of the insurgents.

Obligations to Cuba Must Be Kept.

This nation has assumed before the world a grave responsibility for the future good government of Cuba. We have accepted a trust, the fulfillment of which calls for the exercise of the highest wisdom and the exercise of the highest wisdom. The new Cuba yet to arise from the ashes of the past must needs be bound to us by ties of singular intimacy and strength, if the enduring welfare of the island is to be assured. Whether these ties shall be organic or conventional, the destinies of Cuba are in some rightful form and manner irrevocably linked with our own, but now and how far is for the future to determine in the ripeness of events. Whatever be the outcome, we must see to it that free Cuba be a reality, not a name; a perfect republic, not a hazy ideal; a government within itself the elements of failure. Our mission, to accomplish which we took up the gage of battle, is not to be abandoned, but to be more closely framed commonwealth to face the vicissitudes which too often attend weaker states, whose natural wealth and abundant resources are offset by the discouraging effects of the insurrection, and the recurring occasions for internal rivalries to sap their strength and dissipate their energies. The greatest blessing which can come to Cuba is the maintenance of a peaceful and industrial prosperity, which will give employment to idle men and re-establish the pursuits of peace. This is her chief and immediate need. On the 23rd of March, 1899, was made for the taking of the census in the island, to be completed on the 23rd of November.

What the Commission Found.

This was the unhappy condition of affairs which confronted our commissioners on their arrival in Manila. They had come with the hope and intention of cooperation with Admiral Dewey and Major General Otis to secure peace and order in the archipelago, and the largest measure of self-government compatible with the true welfare of the people. What they actually found can best be set forth in their own words:

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On the 10th of December, 1898, the treaty of peace between the United States and Spain was signed. It provided, among other things, that the Spanish archipelago known as the Philippine Islands, that the United States should pay to Spain the sum of \$20,000,000, and that the civil rights and political status of the inhabitants of the territories thus ceded to the United States should be determined by the congress. The treaty was ratified by the senate on the 21st of February, 1899, and the government of the United States on the 17th of March following. The ratifications were exchanged on the 11th of April, and the treaty publicly proclaimed. On the 23rd of March, the congress passed a resolution to the effect that the amount was paid over to the Spanish government on the 1st of May. In this manner the Philippines came to the United States. The island of Manila, which had been in undisputed possession of them for centuries. They were accepted not merely by our authorized commissioners in Paris, under the direction of the secretary of state, but by the representatives of the people of the United States in both houses of congress.