

PRESIDENT M'KINLEY'S LETTER ACCEPTING THE

PRESIDENT M'KINLEY'S letter of acceptance is probably the most important unofficial document issued in this country in a quarter of a century. The President takes the country into his confidence and throws a new light upon the history of the past two years. Irrespective of its caustic arraignment of the critics of the administration and its forceful enjoining of the fact that Bryanism means the "immediate" destruction of the gold standard and substitution thereof of free silver coinage at the ratio of 16 to 1, the letter is important in the historic sense because it gives the American people their first knowledge of the statesmanship and conditions connected with recent epoch-making events.

The President, although by nature a mild and conciliatory man, can be aroused to a point of dangerous combativeness, and when the mood is on him he becomes one of the most effective debaters we have had in this country for many years. In his letter he wastes no time in what might be called preliminary sparring, but, having definitely located the enemy's vital spot, which is the free silver heresy, he strikes at it with force and precision. The financial question, he says, may not be the paramount issue, but it is the immediate issue. "It will admit of no delay and will suffer no postponement."

For has not the Democratic party declared for the "immediate" coinage of silver at a ratio of 16 to 1? And is there any doubt that Mr. Bryan, who insisted upon the insertion of the silver plank in the platform, against the advice of the best men in the party, will use every means, if he is elected, to carry his principles into practice?

After paying the tribute of his regret that the Democratic party by its nominee and its reiteration of the free silver plank of 1896 has made it necessary for the voters to reaffirm their decision of four years ago in favor of the existing gold standard, President McKinley boldly picks up the gage of battle on the issue of imperialism. What that issue is he states most happily in a single paragraph near the end of his letter. After he has marshaled the facts which place the whole controversy in the clearest possible historical light before the reader, he says:

The American question is between duty and desertion—the American verdict will be for duty and against desertion, for the Republic against both anarchy and imperialism.

As a campaign document the letter is regarded as phenomenally strong. But it is more than a campaign document. It is a contribution to history. The President deals candidly with the American people. He is not afraid to tell them what he has done or why he did it. He deals in facts rather than in arguments.

TEXT OF THE LETTER.

President's Views on Free Silver and the Philippine Question.
Executive Mansion, Washington, D. C., Sept. 8.—To the Hon. Henry Cabot Lodge, Chairman Notification Committee—My Dear Sir: The nomination of the Republican national convention of June 19, 1900, for the office of President of the United States, which, as the official representative of the convention, you have conveyed to me, is accepted. I have carefully examined the platform adopted and give it my hearty approval.

Upon the great issue of the last national election it is clear. It upholds the gold standard and indorses the legislation of the present Congress by which that standard has been effectively strengthened. The stability of our national currency is, therefore, secure so long as those who adhere to this platform are kept in control of the government.

Some Issues Involved.
In the first battle, that of 1896, the friends of the gold standard and of sound currency were triumphant and the country is enjoying the fruits of that victory. Our antagonists, however, are not satisfied. They compel us to a second battle upon the same lines on which the first was fought and won.

While regretting the reopening of this question, which can only disturb the present satisfactory financial condition of the government and risk uncertainty upon our great business enterprises, we accept the issue and again invite the sound money forces to join in winning another and we hope a permanent triumph for an honest financial system which will continue inviolable the public faith.

All Loyal to Silver.
As in 1896, the three silver parties are united under the same leader, who, immediately after the election of that year, in an address to the bimetallicists, said: "The friends of bimetallicism have not been vanquished; they have simply been overcome. They believe that the gold standard is a conspiracy of the money changers against the welfare of the human race—and they will continue the warfare against it."

Turning to the other associated parties, we find in the Populist national platform adopted at Sioux Falls, S. D., May 10, 1900, the following declaration: "We pledge anew the People's party never to cease the agitation until this financial conspiracy is blotted from the statute book, the Lincoln greenback restored, the bonds all paid and all corporation money forever retired. We reaffirm the demand for the reopening of the mints of the United States for the free and unlimited coinage of silver and gold at the present legal ratio of 16 to 1. The immediate increase in the volume of silver coins and certificates thus created to be substituted, dollar for dollar, for the bank notes issued by private corporations under special privilege, granted by law of March 14, 1900, and prior national banking laws."

Declare Their Hostility.
The platform of the silver party adopted at Kansas City, July 6, 1900, makes the following announcement: "We declare it to be our intention to lend our efforts to the repeal of this currency law, which not only repudiates the ancient and time-honored principles of the American people before the Constitution was adopted, but is violative of the principles of the Constitution itself; and we shall not cease our efforts until there has been established in its place a monetary system based upon the free and unlimited coinage of silver and gold into money at the present legal ratio of 16 to 1 by the independent action of the United States, under which system all paper money shall be issued by the government, and all such money coined or issued shall be a full legal tender in payment of all debts, public and private, without exception."

Combine Against Gold.
In all three platforms these parties announce that their efforts shall be unceasing until the gold act shall be blotted from the statute books and the free and unlimited coinage of silver at 16 to 1, shall take its place. The relative importance of the issues I do not stop to discuss. All of them are important. Whichever party is successful will be bound in conscience to carry into administration and legislation its several declarations and doctrines. One declaration will be as obligatory as another, but all are not immaterial.

It is not possible that these parties would treat the doctrine of 16 to 1, the immediate realization of which is demanded by their several platforms, as void and inoperative in the event that they should be clothed with power. Otherwise their profession of faith is insincere. It is therefore the imperative business of those opposed to this financial heresy to prevent the triumph of the parties whose union is only assured by adherence to the silver issue.

Facing Grave Peril.
Will the American people, through indifference or fancied security, hazard the overthrow of the wise financial legislation of the last year and revive the danger of the silver standard, with all of the inevitable evils of shattered confidence and general disaster which justly alarmed and aroused them in 1896?

The Chicago platform of 1896 is reaffirmed in its entirety by the Kansas City convention. Nothing has been omitted or recalled; so that all the perils then foreseen are presented anew with the added force of a deliberate reaffirmation. Four years ago the people refused to place the seal of their approval upon these dangerous and revolutionary policies, and this year they will not fall to record again their earnest dissent.

Faithful to Pledges.
The Republican party remains faithful to its principle of a tariff which supplies sufficient revenues for the government and adequate protection to our enterprises and producers, and of reciprocity, which opens foreign markets to the fruits of American labor and furnishes new channels through which to market the surplus of American farms. The time-honored principles of protection and reciprocity were the first pledges of Republican victory to be written into public law.

The present Congress has given to Alaska a territorial government for which it had waited more than a quarter of a century; has established a representative government in Hawaii; has enacted bills for the most liberal treatment of the pensioners and their widows; has revived the free homestead policy.

ports for the year 1900 over those of the exceptionally prosperous year of 1899 was about half a million dollars for every day of the year, and these sums have gone into the homes and enterprises of the people. There has been an increase of over \$50,000,000 in the exports of agricultural products, \$92,602,220 in manufactures and in the products of the mines of over \$10,000,000.

Big Gains in Trade.
Our trade balances cannot fail to give satisfaction to the people of the country. In 1898 we sold abroad \$615,432,676 of products more than we bought abroad, in 1899 \$529,874,913 and in 1900 \$544,471,701, making during the three years a total balance in our favor of \$1,690,779,190—nearly five times the balance of trade in our favor for the whole period of 108 years from 1790 to June 30, 1897 inclusive.

Government Saving Money.
The ordinary receipts of the government for the fiscal year 1900 were \$79,527,000 in excess of its expenditures.

Need of the Canal.
"We shall fall 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."

Kept Faith with Cuba.
We have been in possession of Cuba since the first of January, 1899. We have restored order and established domestic tranquility. We have fed the starving, clothed the naked, and ministered to the sick. We have improved the sanitary condition of the island. We have stimulated industry, introduced public education, and taken a full and comprehensive enumeration of the inhabitants.

Plans for Porto Rico.
We hold Porto Rico by the same title as the Philippines. The treaty of peace which ceded us the one conveyed to us the other. Congress has given to this island a government in which the inhabitants participate, elect their own legislature, enact their own laws, provide their own system of taxation, and in these respects have the same powers and privileges enjoyed by other territories belonging to the United States and a much larger measure of self-government than was given to the inhabitants of Louisiana under Jefferson. A district court of the United States for Porto Rico has been established and local courts have been inaugurated, all of which are in operation.

Would Restrict Trusts.
Combinations of capital which control the market in commodities necessary to the general use of the people by suppressing natural and ordinary competition, thus enhancing prices to the general consumer, are obnoxious to the common law and the public welfare. They are dangerous conspiracies against the public good, and should be made the subject of prohibitory or penal legislation.

Best Friends of Labor.
The best service which can be rendered to labor is to afford it an opportunity for steady and remunerative employment and secure it every encouragement for advancement. The policy that subserves this end is the true American policy. The past three years have been more satisfactory to American workmen than many preceding years. Any change of the present industrial or financial policy of the government would be disastrous to their highest interests.

Did What We Could.
It is to be observed that while the South African republics made like request of other powers, the United States is the only one which complied. The British government declined to accept the intervention of any power.

Speaks for Good Wages.
The wages of labor should be adequate to keep the home in comfort, educate the children, and, with thrift and economy, lay something by for the days of infirmity and old age.

Value of Merit System.
It is gratifying that the experience of more than a year has vindicated these changes in the marked improvement of the public service.

Some Fortunes of War.
On July 3, 1898, the Spanish fleet in attempting to escape from Santiago harbor was destroyed by the American fleet, and on July 17, 1898, the Spanish garrison in the city of Santiago surrendered to the commander of the American forces.

Forced Into Conflict.
In addressing the peace commission before its departure for Paris, I said: "It is my wish that throughout the negotiations entrusted to the commission the purpose and spirit with which the United States accepted the unwelcome necessity of war should be kept constantly in view. We took up arms only in obedience to the dictates of humanity and the fulfillment of high public and moral obligations. We had no design of aggrandizement and no ambition of conquest."

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Practical civil service reform has always had the support and encouragement of the Republican party. The future of the merit system is safe in its hands.

During the present administration as occasions have arisen for modification or amendment in the existing civil service law and rules, they have been made. Important amendments were promulgated by executive order under date of May 23, 1899, having for their principal purpose the exception from competitive examination of certain places involving fiduciary responsibilities or duties of a strictly confidential, scientific or executive character, which it was thought might better be filled by noncompetitive examination or by other tests of fitness in the discretion of the appointing officer.

It is gratifying that the experience of more than a year has vindicated these changes in the marked improvement of the public service.

The merit system, as far as practicable, is made the basis for appointments to office in our new territory.

The American people are profoundly grateful to the soldiers, sailors and marines who have in every time of conflict fought their country's battles and defended its honor. The survivors and the widows and orphans of those who have fallen are justly entitled to receive the generous and considerate care of the nation.

Few are now left of those who fought in the Mexican war, and while many of the veterans of the Civil War are still spared to us their numbers are rapidly diminishing and age and infirmity are increasing their dependence. These, with the soldiers of the Spanish war, will not be neglected by their grateful countrymen. The pension laws have been liberal. They should be justly administered, and will be. Preference should be given to the soldiers, sailors and marines, their widows and orphans, with respect to employment in the public service.

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PRESIDENT M'KINLEY.



On the 25th day of April, 1898, Congress declared that a state of war existed between Spain and the United States. On May 1, 1898, Admiral Dewey destroyed the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay. On May 10, 1898, Maj. Gen. Merritt, U. S. A., was placed in command of the military expedition to Manila and directed among other things to immediately "publish a proclamation declaring that we come not to make war upon the people of the Philippines nor upon any part of faction among them, but to protect them in their homes, in their employments, and in their persons and religious rights. All persons who, either by active aid or by honest submission, co-operate with the United States in its efforts to give effect to this beneficent purpose will receive the reward of its support and protection."

Following these brilliant victories, on the 12th day of August, 1898, upon the initiative of Spain, hostilities were suspended, and a protocol was signed with a view to arranging terms of peace between the two governments. In pursuance thereof I appointed as commissioners the following distinguished citizens to conduct the negotiations on the part of the United States: Hon. William R. Day of Ohio, Hon. William P. Frye of Minnesota, Hon. George Gray of Delaware and Hon. Whitelaw Reid of New York.

It is my wish that throughout the negotiations entrusted to the commission the purpose and spirit with which the United States accepted the unwelcome necessity of war should be kept constantly in view. We took up arms only in obedience to the dictates of humanity and the fulfillment of high public and moral obligations. We had no design of aggrandizement and no ambition of conquest.

Through the long course of repeated representations which preceded and aimed to avert the struggle and in the final arbitration of force this country was impelled solely by the purpose of relieving grievous wrongs and removing long existing conditions which disturbed its tranquility, which shocked the moral sense of mankind and which could no longer be endured.

It is my earnest wish that the United States in making peace should follow the same high rule of conduct which guided it in facing war. It should be as scrupulous and magnanimous in the concluding settlement as it was just and humane in its original action. Our aim in the adjustment of peace should be directed to lasting results and to the achievement of the common good under the demands of civilization rather than to ambitious designs.

Without any original thought of conquest or even partial acquisition, the presence and success of our arms at Manila impose upon us obligations which we cannot disregard. The march of events rules and overrules human action. Arising unawares the purpose which has animated all our efforts, and still solicited us to adhere to it, we cannot be unmindful that without any desire or design on our part the war has brought us new duties and responsibilities which we must meet and discharge as becomes a great nation on whose growth and career, from the beginning, the Ruler of Nations has plainly written the high command and pledge of civilization.

On Oct. 28, 1898, while the peace commission was continuing its negotiations in Paris, the following additional instruction was sent: "It is imperative upon us that as victors we should be governed only by motives which will exalt our nation. Territorial expansion should be our least concern; that we shall not shrink the moral obligations of our victory is of the greatest.

It is undisputed that Spain's authority is permanently destroyed in every part of the Philippines. To leave any part in her feeble control now would increase our difficulties and be opposed to the interests of humanity. Nor can we permit Spain to transfer any of the islands to another power. Nor can we invite another power or powers to join the United States in sovereignty over them. We must either hold them or turn them back to Spain.

Consequently, grave as are the responsibilities and unforeseen as are the difficulties which are before us, the President can see but one plain path of duty, the acceptance of the archipelago. Greater difficulties and more serious complications—administrative and international—would follow any other course.

The President has given to the views of the commissioners the fullest consideration, and in reaching the conclusion above announced, in the light of information communicated to the commission and to the President since your departure, he has been influenced by the single consideration of duty and humanity. The President is not unmindful of the distressed financial condition of Spain, and whatever consideration the United States may show must come from its sense of generosity and benevolence rather than from any real or technical obligation.

Again, on Nov. 13, I instructed the commission: "From the standpoint of indemnity, both the archipelagoes (Porto Rico and the Philippines) are insufficient to pay our war expenses, but aside from this, do we not owe an obligation to the people of the Philippines which will not permit us to return them to the sovereignty of Spain? Could we justify ourselves in such a course, or could we permit their barrier to some other power? Willingly or not, we have the responsibility of duty which we cannot escape. The President cannot believe any division of the archipelago can bring us anything but embarrassment in the future. The trade and commercial side, as well as the indemnity for the cost of the war, are questions we might yield. They might be waived or compromised, but the questions of duty and humanity appeal to the President so strongly that he can find no appropriate answer but the one he has here marked out."

The treaty of peace was concluded on Dec. 10, 1898. By its terms the archipelago, known as the Philippine Islands, was ceded by Spain to the United States. It was also provided that "the civil rights and political

conditions of the inhabitants of the Philippines should remain unchanged, and that the United States should guarantee to them the same rights and liberties which they enjoyed under Spanish rule.

The United States military force in the islands has been reduced from 11,000 to 1,500, and native Porto Ricans constitute for the most part the local constabulary.

Under the new law and the inauguration of civil government there has been a gratifying revival of business. The manufactures of Porto Rico are developing; her imports are increasing; her fields are yielding increased returns; her fields are being cultivated; free schools are being established. Notwithstanding the many embarrassments incident to a change of national conditions, she is rapidly showing the good effects of her new relations to this nation.

For the sake of full and intelligent understanding of the Philippine question and to give to the people authentic information of the acts and aims of the administration, I present at some length the events of importance leading up to the present situation. The purposes of the executive are best revealed and can best be judged by what he has done and is doing.

It will be seen that the power of the government has been used for the liberty, the peace and the prosperity of the Philippine people, and that force has been employed only against force which stood in the way of the realization of these ends.

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