THE LARGEST CIRCULATION.

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FAIR AT THE CASINO

Mayor W. A. Post Opens the Elks' Bazaar.

HALL A SCENE OF GAIETY

Even Jupiter Pluvius Could Not Keep the People Away Last Night. Everything from Music Down to a Fortune Wheel.

The Elk's fair.

The doors of the Casino were thrown open to the public last night at 8 o'clock. Mayor W. A. Post delivered a short address, after which the orchestra struck up a lively air, and then the bazaar, given under the auspices of Newport News Lodge, No. 315, B. P. O Elks, for the benefit of the charity fund, was inaugurated to run eight nights.

Inside the scene was one of gayety. There was a throng of humanity surging from place to place. From the gallery resounded sweet strains of music, while from a corner came the chatter of the "fakirs" urging by-standers to try their luck on the fortune wheel, which, instead of having number on the red, white and blue and the lucky star green that paid five for one, there were the names of the various candidates for the municipal offices and "Little Cuba." Then there were the booths, the room being divided into a great department store, where anything might be purchased from a paper of pins to a lot in East End. And there is a post-office, too, at which a fellow can get a letter from his beg girl. The decorations, which were described in Sunday's Daily Press, make the hall a fairy land of beauty. There are but three colors—red, white and blue. These are gracefully and artistically entwined about the booths and pillars.

The ceremony that attended the opening was simple. Mr. J. A. Hershberg, acting as chairman, rapped the crowd to order and then introduced Mayor W. A. Post. When the applause died away his excellency, in a brief address lauding the order of Elks for its deeds of charity, declared the bazaar opened for business and pleasure. There was a round of applause, and then the fair was on in earnest. From that hour until late in the night, notwithstanding the fact that Jupiter Pluvius was in an ugly mood and occasionally let loose a handful of elements just to show that he was doing business at the old stand, a stream of people poured in and out of the building, showing that the public is interested in the fair that is being held for a worthy cause.

Here is a list of the booths, together with the ladies in charge of each:

ICE CREAM—Mrs G. W. Nelms, assisted by Mrs. Manson Curtis, Mrs. L. B. Reynolds, Misses Nan Cooke, Clemence Cooke, Hattie Sinton, Callie Sinton, Orelia Binns, Vivian Binns, Florence Lindsey, Lulu Braxton, Fannie Dacis; Miss Trolinger, Fannie Willock, Mary Jiser, Lulu Edmonds, Katie Gault.

FLOWERS—Mrs. E. C. Hillyer, assisted by Mrs. H. B. Bailey, Mrs. J. L. Street, Miss Florence Jennings.

ART GALLERY—Mrs. M. W. Tenant, assisted by Mrs. John Lowery and Mrs. Mitchell.

TEA, COFFEE AND CHOCOLATE—Mrs. Jessie Elliott, assisted by Mrs. Norton and Mrs. Drew.

POST OFFICE—Mrs. J. K. Cross and Mrs. Brumley, assisted by Misses Annie Newton and Bessie Springfield.

FANCY TABLE—Mrs. C. H. Bryan, assisted by Mrs. T. P. Sammons, Mrs. J. M. Saunders, Misses Nannie Smith, Mamie Rowbottom, Laura Gildner, Jennie Eastman, Ida Gildner, Nellie Widgeon, Goode Anderson, Annie Fleury, Lena and Gertie Diblake.

CONFECTIONERY—Mrs. Al Gildner, assisted by Mrs. Jas. Rowbottom, Mrs. Tilde Rowbottom, Mrs. Wm. Caskey, Mrs. Wm. Stow, Mrs. Wm. Quigley, Mrs. M. T. V. Doughty, Mrs. Earnest Bachman.

FISH POND—Mrs. G. McClinedinst and Miss Ida Crossley, assisted by Misses Lizzie Read, Emma Rowbottom.

LEMONADE—Mrs. A. V. Dillon, Miss Carrie Davis.

CIGARS—Mrs. M. N. Righter, assisted by Mrs. John Roberts and Miss Nellie Richter.

LUNCH—Mrs. Jas. Hughes, Mrs. Haley, Mrs. Carruthers, Mrs. Walton.

COUNTRY STORE—Mrs. Jas. T. Moyer and Mrs. R. C. Drew, assisted by Misses Annie Joo and Louise Golden.

Following are the nights the various organizations will attend in bodies:

Tuesday—Commanche Tribe, No. 73, Independent Order of Red Men.

Wednesday—Warwick Lodge, No. 72, Knights of Pythias, and Newport News Lodge, No. 92, Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

Thursday—This is the night set aside for the Elks and the lodges from Norfolk, Portsmouth, Berkley and Hampton will be in attendance.

Friday—Ancient Order of Hibernians.

Saturday—There will be a musical entertainment.

Monday—Royal Arcanum, Huntington Rifles and Peninsula Guards.

Tuesday—Liberty Fire Company, No. 1, and local hose companies.

Following are the officers of the ladies' committee to whose efforts the success of the fair is in a large measure due:

Mrs. Fred Read, president; Mrs. William T. Hopkins, secretary; Mrs. D. C. Asby, treasurer.

The Elks' committee is made up as follows:

W. T. Hopkins, P. E. R., chairman; H. W. Barnes, E. R., treasurer; C. R. Williams, E. L. K., secretary; D. C. Ashby, C. H. Bryan, A. V. Dillon, T. J. Fitzpatrick, M. A. Hickey, D. V. Iseman, W. H. L. Kent, R. J. Mackey, A. A. Meyers, V. B. Barclay, J. A. Neeley, Leon Strause, J. E. Williams, A. E. G. Klor, P. J. Mugler.

One of the most attractive places is the art gallery, which is in charge of Mrs. W. W. Tennant. Here for a dime one is permitted to gaze on living pictures, life-size and life-like.

Several voting contests were opened last night. To the most popular Elk a handsome gold emblem of the order will be awarded. So far the leading candidates are Mr. D. C. Ashby and Mr. J. G. Latimer.

To the most popular lady an Eclipse bicycle, donated by Mr. F. G. Kipper, will be given. The leading candidates are Mrs. R. J. Mackey and Miss Righter.

To the most popular girl a Stormer bicycle, donated by Mr. P. P. Maguire, will be presented. Among the candidates are Misses Bessie Hughes, Bessie Walton and Annie Brooks.

One of the most interesting contests will be over the mayoralty candidates. There are three—Dr. Joseph Charles, Dr. Carter Perkins and Mr. A. A. Moss—and the one receiving the highest number of votes will be presented with a handsome combination cane and umbrella.

It will also be determined who is the most popular fireman and the "laddie" who receives the highest number of ballots will be awarded a combination umbrella and cane.

The boys in the Huntington Rifles will have an opportunity to "blow" themselves, for a prize—silver mounted cane—is offered for the most popular member of that organization.

The Casino is brilliantly illuminated by electricity. On the front facing West avenue electric bulbs have been arranged so as to form the letters "E L K S," and the sign can be read from any section of the city. This sign was arranged as a surprise for the Elks by the Peninsula Electric Light and Power Company.

There are many things at the Casino to allure the public. It is just the place for the fellow who was born under a lucky star or for the fellow who has had a black cat to cross his path on a dark night, for he is likely to draw almost anything.

There is but one thing lacking at the fair—red lemonade.

SPANISH SHIP IN PORT.

Captain of the Vessel Talks Against War With This Country.

There was a Spanish steamship in port yesterday. It was the Palentino, of which Captain Allabucoe is the master, and she came here from Galveston to replenish her coal bunkers before starting on her voyage to Liverpool with a cargo of grain and cotton.

The Palentino arrived early Sunday morning and was moored alongside coal pier No. 2. When the ship passed the flying squadron at Old Point Captain Allabucoe dipped his colors to Commodore Schley's flag and the salute was returned. "That's a formidable fleet of ships," said the skipper of the Spanish merchantman to a reporter for the Daily Press in speaking of the Hampton Roads squadron, "and they seem to be ready for a fight. But there should be no war. Why let a few politicians in this country and Espanla precipitate the two government's in war? It is a speculative scheme with them. See the millions of dollars that have been made in the last few weeks. By whom? Why, the politicians who are crying for war.

"War is a dreadful thing. The poor have to bear the brunt of it while the the rich continue their money-making. Who but the poor men go to the front and bare their breasts to the fury of shot and shell? I tell you war is awful, and the Christianity that is unable to prevent it is unworthy of the name.

"I know that there are persons in this country who want war, and I know that there is an element in Espanla who want war, but I don't think bloodthirsty desires will be gratified, for there are too many conservative people in both countries to prevent it.

The Palentino weighed anchor yesterday morning at 11 o'clock and steamed down Hampton Roads. Yesterday afternoon a report became current that the freighter collided with the battleship Massachusetts, but it was without foundation.

"Private Secretary."

Mr. William Gillette is now without doubt America's most successful playwright. He has written more genuine successes than any other man alive. His "Secret Service" is the reigning success of two continents, and his "The Private Secretary" has occupied the proud distinction for sixteen years of being the finest comedy ever written. "The Private Secretary" is Mr. Gillette's masterpiece. It was a number of years ago since the weak and sanctimonious secretary first appeared with his nourishment, his galoshes and his goats and chattles. Today, or any other day, people continue to flock to the theatre everywhere "The Private Secretary" is presented to see the same meek individual, with his same nourishment, his galoshes and his goods and chattles, and listen to and laugh at his "Do you know?"

The gifted comedian, Edwin Travers, surrounded by an admirable company of artists, will present this comedy at the opera house next Thursday night. Mr. Travers is the only one possessing the exclusive rights to the original Gillette version. The company this season is the strongest he has ever carried during the sixteen years he has been playing the piece.

BRIEF ITEMS.

A marriage license was issued yesterday to Mr. Chas. E. Gildersleeve and Miss Cora Miller.

Miss Louise Munyon, of Berkley, is visiting the Misses Carpenter in East End.

Mr. J. L. Trede and family left yesterday morning for Portsmouth, where they will reside in the future.

Miss Sadie Cruikshank, of Ashland, is the guest of Miss Maynard, on Twenty-eighth street.

Misses Bonnie and Bessie Keeth, of Manchester, are visiting Miss Bertha Bonner, on West avenue.

Mrs. W. H. Cooke returned last evening from Staunton, whither she was called last week by the illness of a relative.

Miss Mary Fultz, daughter of Mayor A. H. Fultz, of Staunton, Va., is the guest of Mrs. W. H. Cooke, on West avenue.

Professor A. W. Hawks addressed the men's meeting at the Y. M. C. A. at 4 o'clock Sunday afternoon. His subject was "Intemperance."

The Business Men's Association will meet in regular session in the Braxton building tonight, when the election of a secretary will take place.

Mr. Peter Skinner, of Chester, Pa., is the guest of Mr. H. D. Carney, in North End. Mr. Skinner will soon accept a position in the shipyard.

Mr. and Mrs. John Thompson, who have been visiting Mrs. Henry Little for the past two weeks, left Sunday night for their home in Washington.

Patrolman R. J. Charles returned Sunday from Grove, York county, where he went last Monday to attend the funeral of his mother, who died there last Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. John W. Foreman, of Lynchburg, who have been visiting Mr. and Mrs. Clark, on Thirty-fourth street, left yesterday for Norfolk where they will visit relatives.

Mr. Harry Westlcott received a telegram Sunday announcing the death of his father at his old home in Camden, N. J. He left last night to be present at the funeral.

Dr. H. M. Smith left yesterday afternoon to attend the funeral of his grandmother, Mrs. Margaret Lockhame, who died Sunday evening at Ashland. He will be absent until Wednesday.

Mr. F. J. McDonald, private secretary to Mr. Sommers N. Smith, formerly superintendent of the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, will leave this morning for Philadelphia. Mr. McDonald will continue in the capacity of private secretary to Mr. Smith at the Neafie & Levy shipyard, in which Mr. Smith now owns the controlling interest. The office employes of the shipyard presented Mr. McDonald with a handsomely bound set of Dickens' Works.

Twenty dollars for one. Call on Perkins, Duncan & Co. Now is the time to invest. apr-5-2w

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EASTER SUNDAY.

How the Great Church Festival Was Observed in Newport News.

Sunday was a typical April day. The fickle month sustained its reputation for fickleness, but after all it was a pretty Easter. Old Sol unfolded himself with the radiance of a bursting sunflower. Then clouds swept across his beaming face and for awhile it looked as if they would be marred by the elements. There was a light shower about 11 o'clock, but after that the curtain that hid the sun rolled aside and an ideal day was had. As "all the world's a stage" the ladies had the opportunity Sunday to scrutinize each other's finery and criticize the tastes displayed.

Large congregations attended the services held at the churches and in song and carol the story of the risen Lord was heralded. From the pulpit, in eloquent language, the story was also told. The predominant thought, life after death, was appropriately symbolized in the flowers which adorned the altar and the sanctuary, lending their pure fragrance and beauty to make the festival truly the echo of the shout of victory issuing from the tomb as the triumphant Savior, after his agony and suffering, to sunder the veil separating man from his maker.

A SINNER AND HIS PRAYER.

Rev. Thomas J. MacKay, pastor of the Second Baptist church, selected his evening text from Luke 18:13—"God be merciful to me a sinner." Mr. MacKay said, in part:

"The surroundings of the text were in the city of Jerusalem. The scene was in the temple, the pride of the Jews, and the wonder of the world. I have no doubt that Jesus, when he saw the throng going into the temple trusting only in the performance of the act of sacrifice for their justification before God, that He pictured the two men going into the temple.

"The poor publican standing afar off would not so much as lift his eyes heavenward, but smote his breast saying: 'Lord, be merciful to me a sinner.' I tell you that humble prayer moved all heaven. I think I see the gates of heaven and a poor sinner standing knocking and crying: 'God, be merciful to me a sinner,' and the reecho of that voice for mercy rings through the chambers of heaven. I hear a voice within: 'I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance,' and the redeemed of God tune their harps anew, and the gates swing back—mercy pleaded, a sinner saved.

"We shall be judged for the sins done in the body. Very well. Can sin enter heaven? No. Then what is the difference? You spend two-thirds of your life doing all the good you can and one-third in sin. Will you not need the blood of Christ? See a prison.

At the Washington Avenue Methodist church, Rev. Bernard F. Lipscomb preached an interesting sermon on the "Resurrection." Special Easter music was rendered by the well trained choir at both services. In the evening the feature of the musical program was a solo by Mrs. Wentworth, with violin obligato by Professor Anderson.

Rev. Father Charles E. Donahoe, pastor of St. Vincent's Catholic church, preached on the "Resurrection" at 10:30 o'clock Sunday morning. Special music was rendered.

At the First Baptist church, Rev. C. C. Cox took as his subject, "If a Man Die, Shall He Live Again?" and preached a sermon appropriate to the occasion.

Rev. E. T. Wellford preached on the subject "Easter and Calvary" at the First Presbyterian church in the morning and "Shall There Be a Resurrection" in the the evening. The special Easter program of music will be repeated next Sunday morning and evening.

"The Relation of Christ's Resurrection to Immortality," was the subject of Rev. W. R. Motley's sermon at the Thirteenth Street Christian church Sunday morning.

Rev. J. Francis Ribble, pastor of St. Paul's Episcopal church, preached on "Resurrection" in the morning. In the evening Rev. Mr. Ribble conducted services at Morrison's.

Rev. M. S. Coleman, Jr., preached a special Easter sermon at the Chestnut Avenue Methodist church Sunday morning. Prof. A. W. Hawks conducted the evening service, delivering a lecture on "Happiness."

Rev. J. E. Shenk, the Lutheran divine of Norfolk, conducted Easter services at the Thirteenth Street Christian church Sunday afternoon at 4 o'clock.

RELIGIOUS MEETING THIS WEEK

Protracted meetings will be held every night this week at the Washington Avenue Methodist Church, Rev. Bernard F. Lipscomb, pastor.

Rev. Mr. Lipscomb will be assisted by Rev. E. T. Dudmund, pastor of the High Street Methodist church, Petersburg, Va.

Protracted meetings at the Washington Avenue church are always attended by overflowing congregations and the services to be held this week will be no exception to the rule.

The electric lights were out for a few minutes early last evening, caused by an entanglement of the telephone wires with the wire carrying the current from the power-house.

Burglars Frightened Off.

An attempt was made at 12 o'clock last night by burglars to effect an entrance into Mr. Jacob's store, at the corner of Lafayette avenue and Twenty-fourth street, but Mr. Jacob heard the noise and gave the alarm, which frightened the thieves off. Sanitary Officer C. J. Padgett inspected the store and premises, but could discover no clue to the burglars.

Sent on to the Grand Jury.

E. Matthews was in the police court yesterday morning on the charge of assaulting Robert Carter on coal pier No. 3 yesterday.

Carter accused Matthews of hitting him in the head with an iron pin, inflicting an ugly wound in his head.

The scrap was caused by a heated argument about a quarter which Matthews said Carter owed him. Both men were arrested by Mr. J. G. Latimer.

Justice Brown, after hearing the evidence in the case, sent Matthews to jail to await the action of the grand jury of the Corporation Court next Monday.

Police Court.

The following cases were disposed of by Justice Brown in the police court yesterday morning:

Daniel McGinniam, Sam Carter and John Tinsley, each charged with drunkenness, fined $2 and costs.

Madeline Jones, charged with larceny, was sentenced to serve three months in jail.

Sue Cunningham, disorderly conduct, fined $3 and costs.

Tom Williams, disorderly, continued.

Robert Carter, disorderly, continued.

E. Matthews, assault, sent to the grand jury.

For Easter dinner desert you can find nothing better than fresh Strawberry Ice Cream made by the Newport News Bakery and Confectionery Co., 3020 Washington avenue. apr9-1t.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

History of the Cuban War Reviewed at Length.

IMMEDIATE ACTION OPPOSED

Waiting Policy of the Administration to Continue a Little Longer.

POSITION ON THE MAINE DISASTER

Spain Indirectly, if Not Directly, Responsible for the Explosion.

Executive Asks for Authority to Use the Forces of the United States in His Discretion. His Reasons for Opposing the Recognition of Cuban Independence.

(By Telegraph.)

WASHINGTON, April 11.—The President today sent the following message to the Congress of the United States:

"Obedient to that precept of the constitution which commands the President to give from time to time to the Congress information of the state of the union, and to recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient, it becomes my duty now to address your body with regard to the grave crisis that has arisen in the relations of the United States to Spain by reason of the warfare that for more than three years has raged in the neighboring island of Cuba. I do so because of the intimate connection of the Cuban question with the state of our own union and the grave relation the course which it is now incumbent upon the nation to adopt must needs bear to the traditional policy of our government if it is to accord with the precepts laid down by the founders of the republic and religiously observed by succeeding administrations to the present day.

"The present revolution is but the successor of other similar insurrections which have occurred in Cuba against the dominion of Spain, extending over a period of nearly half a century, each of which, during its progress, has subjected the United States to great effort and expense in enforcing its neutrality laws, caused enormous losses to American trade and commerce, caused irritation, annoyance and disturbance among our citizens and by the exercise of cruel, barbarous and uncivilized practices of warfare, shocked the sensibilities and offended the humane sympathies of our people.

OUR TRADE INJURED.

"Since the present revolution began in February, 1895, this country has seen the fertile domain at our threshold ravaged by fire and sword in the course of a struggle unequalled in the history of the island and really unparalleled as to the number of the combatants and the bitterness of the contest by any revolution of modern times where a dependent people, striving to be free, have been opposed by the power of the sovereign state. Our people have beheld a once prosperous community reduced to comparative want, its lucrative commerce virtually paralyzed, its exceptional productiveness diminished, its fields laid waste, its mills in ruins and its people perishing by tens of thousands from hunger and destitution. We have found ourselves constrained, in the observance of that strict neutrality which our laws enjoin and which the law of nations command, to police our own waters and watch our own seaports in prevention of any unlawful act in aid of the Cubans. Our trade has suffered; the capital invested by our citizens in Cuba has been largely lost and the temper and forbearance of our people have been so sorely tried as to beget a perilous unrest among our citizens, which has inevitably found its expression from time to time in the national legislature, so that issues wholly external to our own body politic engross attention and stand in the way of that close devotion to domestic advancement that becomes a self-contained commonwealth whose primal maxim has been the avoidance of all foreign entanglements. All this must needs awaken and has indeed aroused the utmost concern on the part of this government, as well during my predecessor's term as in my own.

BARBAROUS WARFARE.

"In April, 1896, the evils from which our country suffered through the Cuban war became so onerous that my predecessor made an effort to bring about a peace through the mediation of this government in any way that might tend to an honorable adjustment of the contest between Spain and her revolted colony, on the basis of some effective scheme of self-government for Cuba under the flag and sovereignty of Spain. It failed through the refusal of the Spanish government then in power to consider any form of mediation or indeed any plan of settlement which did not begin with the actual submission of the insurgents to the mother country, and then only on such terms as Spain herself might see fit to grant. The war continued unabated. The resistance of the insurgents was in nowise diminished. The efforts of Spain were increased, both by the dispatch of fresh levies to Cuba and by the addition to the horrors of the strife of a new and inhuman phase happily unprecedented in the modern history of civilized Christian peoples. The policy of devastation and concentration, inaugurated by the captain general's band of October 21, 1896, in the province of Pinar del Rio, was thence extended to embrace all of the island to which the power of the Spanish arms was able to reach by occupation or by military operation. The peasantry, including all dwelling in the open agricultural interior, were driven into the garrison towns or isolated places held by the troops. The raising and movement of provisions of all kinds were interdicted. The fields were laid waste, dwellings unroofed and fired, mills destroyed, and in short everything that could desolate the land and render it unfit for human habitation or support, was commanded by one or the other of the contending parties, and executed by all the powers at their disposal.

HORRORS OF CONCENTRATION.

"By the time the present administration took office a year ago, reconcentration, so-called, had been made effective over the better part of the four central and western provinces—Santa Clara, Matanzas, Havana and Pinar del Rio. The agricultural population, to the estimated number of 300,000 or more, was herded within the towns and their immediate vicinage, deprived of the means of support, rendered destitute of shelter, left poorly clad and exposed to the most unsanitary conditions. As the scarcity of food increased with the devastation of the depopulated areas of production, destitution and want became misery and starvation. Month by month the death rate increased in an alarming ratio. By March, 1897, according to coservative estimates from official Spanish sources, the mortality among the reconcentrados, from starvation and the diseases incident thereto, exceeded 50 per centum of their total number. No practical relief was accorded to the destitute. The overburdened towns, already suffering from the general dearth, could give no aid. So-called "zones of cultivation" established within the immediate area of effective military control about the cities and fortified camps proved illusory as a remedy for the suffering. The unfortunates, being for the most part women and children with aged and helpless men, enfeebled by disease and hunger, could not have tilled the soil, without tools, seeds or shelter, for their own support or for the supply of the cities. Reconcentration, adopted avowedly as a war measure in order to cut off the resources of the insurgents, worked its predestined result. As I said in my message of last December, it was not civilized warfare; it was extermination. The only peace it could beget was that of the wilderness and the grave.

CUBANS HOLD THEIR GROUND.

"Meanwhile, the military situation in the island had undergone a noticeable change. The extraordinary activity that characterized the second year of the war, when the insurgents invaded even the hitherto unharmed fields of Pinar del Rio and carried havoc and destruction up to the walls of the city of Havana itself, had relapsed into a dogged struggle in the central and eastern provinces. The Spanish arms regained a measure of control in Pinar del Rio and parts of Havana, but, under the existing conditions of the rural country, without immediate improvement of their productive situation. Even thus partially restricted the revolutionists held their own and their conquest and submission, put forward by Spain as the essential and sole basis of peace, seemed as far distant as at the outset.

"In this state of affairs my administration found itself confronted with the grave problem of its duty. My message of last December reviewed the situation and narrated the steps taken with a view to relieving its acuteness and opening the way to some form of honorable settlement. The assassination of the prime minister, Canovas, led to a change of government in Spain. The former administration, pledged to subjugation without concession, gave place to that of a more liberal party, committed long in advance to a policy of reform involving the wider principle of home rule for Cuba and Puerto Rico. The overtures of this government, made through its new envoy, General Woodford, and looking to an immediate and effective amelioration of the condition of the island, although not accepted to the extent of admitted mediation in any shape, were met by assurances that home rule, in an advanced phase, would be forthwith offered to Cuba, without waiting for the war to end, and that more humane methods should henceforth prevail in the conduct of hostilities. Coincidentally with these declarations the new government of Spain continued and completed the policy already begun by its predecessor of testifying friendly regard for this nation by releasing American citizens held under one charge or another connected with the insurrection, so that, by the end of November, not a single person entitled in any way to our national protection remained in a Spanish prison.

AID FOR RECONCENTRADOS.

"While these negotiations were in progress the increasing destitution of the reconcentrados and the alarming mortality among them claimed earnest attention. The success which had attended the limited measure of relief extended to the suffering American citizens among them by the judicious expenditure through the consular agencies of the money appropriation expressly for their succor by the joint resolution approved May 24, 1897, prompted the humane extension of a similar scheme of aid to the great body of sufferers. A suggestion to this end was acquiesced in by the Spanish authorities. On the 24th of December last, I caused to be issued an appeal to the American people, inviting contributions in money or in kind for the succor of the sufferers in Cuba, following this on the 8th of January by a similar public announcement of the formation of a central Cuban relief committee, with headquarters in New York City, composed of three members representing the American National Red Cross and the religious and business elements of the community. The efforts of that committee have been untiring and have accomplished much. Arrangements for free transportation to Cuba have greatly aided the charitable work. The president of the American Red Cross and representatives of other contributory organizations have generously visited Cuba and co-operated with the consul general and the local authorities to make effective distribution of the relief collected through the efforts of the central committee. Nearly $200,000 in money and supplies has already reached the sufferers and more is forthcoming. The supplies are admitted duty free and transportation to the interior has been arranged so that the relief, at first necessarily confined to Havana and the larger cities, is now extended through most, if not all, the towns where suffering exists. Thousands of lives have already been saved. The necessity for a change in the condition of the reconcentrados is recognized by the Spanish government. Within a few days past the orders of General Weyler have been revoked, the reconcentrados are, it is said, to be permitted to return to their homes and to resume the self-supporting pursuits of peace; public works have been ordered to give them employment and a sum of $300,000 has been appropriated for their relief.

OVERTURES TO SPAIN.

"The war in Cuba is of such a nature that short of subjugation or extermination a final military victory for either side seems impracticable. The alternative lies in the physical exhaustion of the one or the other party, or perhaps both—a condition which in effect ended the ten years' war by the Truce of Zanjon. The prospect of such a protraction and conclusion of the present strife is a contingency hardly to be contemplated with equanimity by the civilized world and least of all by the United States, affected and injured, as we are, deeply and intimately by its very existence.

"Realizing this, it appears to be my duty, in a spirit of true friendliness, no less to Spain than to the Cubans who have so much to lose by the prolongation of the struggle, to seek to bring about as immediate termination of the war. To this end I submitted, on the 27th ultimo, as a result of much representation and correspondence, through the United States minister at Madrid, propositions to the Spanish government looking to an armistice until October 1st, for the negotiation of peace with the good offices of the President.

"In addition I asked the immediate revocation of the order of reconcentration, so as to permit the people to return to their farms and the needy to be relieved with provisions and supplies from the United States, co-operating with the Spanish authorities so as to afford full relief.

"The reply of the Spanish cabinet was received on the night of the 31st ultimo. It offers, as the means to bring about peace in Cuba, to confide the preparation thereof to the insular parliament, inasmuch as the concurrence of that body would be necessary to reach final result, it being, however, understood that the powers reserved by the constitution to the central government are not lessened or diminished. As the Cuban parliament does not meet until the 4th of May next, the Spanish government would not object, for its part, to accept at once a suspension of hostilities if asked for by the insurgents from the general in chief, to whom it would pertain, in such case, to determine the duration and conditions of the armistice.

SPAIN'S ADROIT REPLY.

"The propositions submitted by General Woodford and the reply of the Spanish government were both in the form of brief memoranda, the texts of which are before me, and are substantially in the language above given. The function of the Cuban parliament in the matter of 'preparing' peace and the manner of its doing so are not expressed in the Spanish memorandum, but from General Woodford's explanatory reports of parliamentary discussions preceding the final conference it is understood that the Spanish government stands ready to give the insular congress full powers to settle the terms of peace with the insurgents, whether by direct negotiation or indirectly by means of legislation does not appear.

"With this last overture in the direction of immediate peace, and its disappointing reception by Spain, the executive was brought to the end of his effort.

"In my annual message of December last I said:

"'Of the untried measures there remain only: Recognition of the insurgents as belligerents; recognition of the independence of Cuba; neutral intervention to end the war by imposing a rational compromise between the contestants, and intervention in favor of one or the other party. I speak not of forcible annexation, for that cannot be thought of. That, by our code of morality, would be criminal aggression.'

"Thereupon I reviewed these alternatives, in the light of President Grant's measured words, uttered in 1875, when, after seven years' of sanguinary, destructive and cruel hostilities in Cuba, he reached the conclusion that the recognition of the independence of Cuba was impracticable and indefensible, and that the recognition of belligerency was not warranted by the facts according to the tests of public law. I commented especially upon the latter aspect of the question, pointing out the inconvenience and positive dangers of a recognition of belligerency which, while adding to the already onerous burdens within our jurisdiction, could not in any way extend our influence or effective offices in the territory of hostilities. Nothing has since occurred to change my view in this regard, and I recognize as fully now as then that the issuance of a proclamation of neutrality, by which process the so-called recognition of the belligerency is published, could, of itself and unattended by other action, accomplish nothing toward the one end for which we labor, the instant pacification of Cuba and the cessation of the misery that afflicts the island.

RECOGNITION OF CUBA.

"Turning to the question of recognizing at this time the independence of the present insurgent government in Cuba, we find safe precedents in our history from an early day. They are well summed up in President Jackson's message to Congress, December 21, 1836, on the subject of the recognition of the independence of Texas. He said:

"'In all the contests that have arisen out of the revolutions of France, out of the disputes relating to the crowns of Portugal and Spain, out of the separation of the American possessions of both from the European governments, and out of the numerous and constantly occurring struggles for dominion in Spanish-America, so wisely consistent with our just principles has been the action of our government that we have, under the most critical circumstances, avoided all censures and encountered no other evil than that produced by a transient estrangement of good will in those against whom we have been by force of evidence compelled to decide.

"'It has thus made known to the world that the uniform policy and practice of the United States is to avoid all interference in disputes which merely relate to the internal government of other nations and eventually to recognize the authority of the prevailing party without reference to our particular interests and views or to the merits of the original controversy.

"'But on this, as every other trying occasion, safety is to be found in a rigid adherence to principle.

PRECEDENTS FOR ACTION.

"'In the contest between Spain and the revolted colonies we stood aloof and waited not only until the ability of the new states to protect themselves was fully established, but until the danger of their being again subjugated had entirely passed away. Then, and not until then, were they recognized. Such was our course in regard to Mexico herself. It is true that with regard to Texas the civil authority of Mexico has been expelled, its invading army defeated, the chief of the republic himself captured, and all present power to control the newly organized government of Texas annihilated within its confines. But, on the other hand, there is in appearance, at least, an immense disparity of physical force on the side of Texas. The Mexican republic, under another executive, is rallying its forces under a new leader and menacing a fresh invasion to recover its lost dominion.

"'Upon the issue of this threatened invasion the independence of Texas may be considered as suspended, and were there nothing peculiar in the relative situation of the United States and Texas, our acknowledgement of its independence at such a crisis could be scarcely regarded as consistent with that prudent reserve with which we have hitherto held ourselves bound to treat all similar questions.'

"Thereupon Andrew Jackson proceeded to consider the risk that there might be imputed to the United States' motives of selfish interest in view of the former claim on our part to the territory of Texas, and of the avowed purpose of the Texans in seeking recognition of independence as an incident to the incorporation of Texas in the Union, concluding thus:

"'Prudence, therefore, seems to dictate that we should still stand aloof and maintain our present attitude, if not until Mexico itself, or one of the great foreign powers shall recognize the independence of the new government, at least, until the lapse of time or the course of events shall have proved beyond cavil or dispute the ability of the people of that country to maintain their separate sovereignty and to uphold the government constituted by them. Neither of the contending parties can justly complain of this course. By pursuing it, we are but carrying out the long established policy of our government, a policy which has secured for us respect and influence abroad and inspired confidence at home.'

THE CASE OF TEXAS.

"These are the words of the resolute and patriotic Jackson. They are evidence that the United States, in addition to the test imposed by public law as the condition of the recognition of independence by a neutral state, to-wit: that the revolted state shall 'constitute in fact a body politic, having a government in substance as well as in name, possessed of the elements of stability,' and forming de facto, is left to itself, a state among nations, reasonably capable of discharging the duties of a state, has imposed for its own governance in dealing with cases like these the further condition that recognition of independent statehood is not due to a revolted dependency until the danger of its being again subjugated by the parent state has entirely passed away. This extreme test was in fact applied in the case of Texas. The Congress to whom President Jackson referred the question as one 'probably leading to war,' and therefore a proper subject for 'a previous understanding with that body by whom war can alone be declared and by whom all the provisions for sustaining its perils must be furnished,' left the matter of the reconciliation of Texas to the discretion of the executive, providing merely for the sending of a diplomatic agent when the President should be satisfied that the republic of Texas had become 'an independent state.' It was so recognized by President Van Buren, who commissioned a charge d'affaires, March 7, 1837, after Mexico had abandoned an attempt to reconquer the Texas territory and when there was at the time no bona fide contest going on between the insurgent province and its former sovereign.

FORMER MESSAGE QUOTED.

"I said in my message of December last: 'It is to be seriously considered whether the Cuban insurrection possesses beyond dispute the attributes of statehood which alone can demand the recognition of the belligerency in its favor.' The same requirement must certainly be no less seriously considered when the graver issue of recognition of independence is in question, for no less positive test can be applied to the greater act than to the lesser; while on the other hand the influences and consequences of the struggle upon the international policy of the recognizing state, which form important factors when the recognition of belligerency is concerned, are secondary, if not rightly eliminable factors when the real question is whether the community claiming recognition is or is not independent beyond peradventure.

"Nor from the standpoint of expedience do I think it would be wise or

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