SUPPLEMENT.

President's Message.

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

A GLANCE BACKWARD.

In submitting my eighth and last annual message to Congress, it seems proper that it should refer to and in some degree recapitulate the events and official acts of the past eight years. It was my fortune, or misfortune, to be called to the office of Chief Executive without any previous political training. From the age of seventeen I had never witnessed the excitement attending a Presidential campaign but twice antecedent to my own candidacy, and at but one of them was I eligible as a voter. Under such circumstances it is but reasonable to suppose that errors of judgment must have occurred. Even had they not, differences of opinion between the Executive, bound by an oath to the strict performance of his duties, and writers and debaters must have arisen. It is not necessary evidence of blunder on the part of the Executive because there are these differences of views. Mistakes have been made as all can see, and I admit, but it seems to me oftenest in selections made of assistants appointed to aid in carrying out the official duties of administering the government, in nearly every case selected without a personal acquaintance with the appointees, but upon recommendations of Representatives chosen thereby by the people. It is impossible, where so many trusts are allotted, that right parties should be chosen in every instance. History shows that no administrations from the time of Washington to the present, has been free from mistakes.

I LEAVE COMPARISONS TO HISTORY,

claiming only that I have acted in every instance from a conscientious desire to do what was right and constitutional within the law and for the very best interest of the whole people. Failures have been errors of judgment, not of intent. My civil career commenced at the utmost critical and difficult time; less than four years before, the country had emerged from a conflict such as no other nation had ever survived. Nearly one half of the States had revolted against the government, and in those remaining faithful to the Union a large percentage of the population sympathized with the rebellion and made an enemy in the rear almost as dangerous as the more terrible enemy in the front. The latter committed errors of judgment, but they maintained them openly and courageously. The former received the protection of the government they would see destroyed and reaped all the pecuniary advantage to be gained out of the then existing status of affairs, many of them by obtaining contracts and by swindling the Government in the delivery of their goods. Immediately on the cessation of hostilities the then noble President who had carried the country so far through its perils fell a martyr to his patriotism at the hands of an assassin. The intervening time to my first inauguration was filled up with wranglings between Congress and the new executive as to the best mode of reconstruction, or, to speak plainly, as to whether the control of the Government should be thrown immediately into the hands of those who had recently and persistently attempted to destroy it, or whether the victors should continue to have an equal voice with them in this control. Reconstruction as finally agreed upon, means this, and only this, except that the late slave was enfranchised, giving an increase, as was supposed, to the Union loving and Union supporting votes of the free, in the full sense of the word. Hence at the beginning of my first administration the work of reconstruction, much embarrassed by long delay, virtually commenced. It was the work of the legislative branch of the government. My province was wholly in approving their acts, which I did most heartily, urging that the Legislatures of States that had not done so, ratify the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution. The country was laboring under an enormous debt, contracted in the suppression of the rebellion, and taxation was so oppressive as to discourage production. Another danger also threatened us, a foreign war. The last difficulty had to be adjusted, and was adjusted without war, in a manner highly honorable to all parties concerned.

THE TAXES HAVE BEEN REDUCED

within the last seven years nearly $300,000,000, and the national debt has been reduced in the same time over $435,000,000. By refunding the six per cent. bonded debt for bonds bearing five and four and one-half per cent. interest respectively, the annual interest has been reduced from over $130,000,000 in 1869, to but little over $100,000,000 in 1876.

THE BALANCE OF TRADE HAS BEEN CHANGED

from over $130,000,000 against the United States in 1869 to more than $120,000,000 in our favor in 1876. It is confidently believed that the balance of trade in favor of the United States will increase, not diminish, and that the pledge of Congress to resume specie payments in 1879 will be readily accomplished, even in advance of the much desired further legislation on the subject.

THE INDIAN QUESTION.

A policy has been adopted toward the Indian tribes, inhabiting a large portion of the territory of the United States, which has been humane, and has substantially ended the Indian hostilities in the whole land, except in a portion of Nebraska, Dakota, Wyoming and Montana territories, the Black Hills region and approaches thereto. Hostilities there have grown out of the avarice of the white man who has violated our treaty stipulations in his search for gold. The question might be asked why the Government has not enforced obedience to the terms of the treaty prohibiting the occupation of the Black Hills region by whites? The answer is simply: The first emigrants to the Black Hills were removed by troops, but rumors and fresh discoveries of gold took into that region increased numbers. Gold had actually been found in paying quantities, and the effort to remove the miners would only result in the destruction of the bulk of troops that might be sent there to remove them. All difficulties in this matter have, however, been removed, subject to the approval of Congress by a treaty ceding the Black Hills and approaches to settlement by citizens. The subject of the Indian policy and treatment is so fully set forth by the Secretary of the Interior and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and my views are so fully expressed by them that I refer to their reports and recommendations as my own.

FOREIGN RELATIONS.

The relations of the United States with foreign powers continue on a friendly footing. Questions have arisen from time to time in the foreign relations of the government, but the United States have been happily free, during the past year, from the complications and embarassments which have surrounded some of the foreign Powers. The diplomatic correspondence submitted herewith contains information as to certain of the matters which have occupied the government. The cordiality which attends our relations with the Powers of the earth has been plainly shown by the general participation of foreign nations in the exhibition which has just ceased, and by exertions made by distant Powers to show their interest and friendly feeling toward the United States in commemoration of the centennial of the nation. The government and people of the United States have not only fully appreciated this exhibition of kindly feeling, but it may be justly and fairly expected that no small benefits will result, both to ourselves and other nations, from a better acquaintance and a better appreciation of our mutual advantages and mutual benefits.

FALSE ECONOMY.

Congress, at the last session, saw fit to reduce the amount usually appropriated for foreign intercourse by withholding appropriations for representatives of the United States in certain consular offices, and by reducing the amounts usually appropriated for certain other diplomatic posts, and thus necessitating a change in the grade of representatives. For these reasons, immediately upon the passage of the bill making appropriations for diplomatic and consular service for the present force instructions were issued to the representatives of the United States at Bolivia, Ecuador and Colombia, and to the consular officers for whom no appropriations had been made, to close their respective legations and consulates and cease from the performance of their duties, and in like manner steps were immediately taken to substitute *charge d'affaires* for ministers resident in Portugal, Denmark, Greece, Switzerland and Paraguay. While thoroughly impressed with the wisdom of sound economy in the foreign service as in other branches of the Government, I cannot escape the conclusion that in some instances the withholding of the appropriations will prove an expensive economy, and that the small retrenchment gained by a change of grade in certain diplomatic posts is not an adequate consideration for the loss of influence and importance which will attend our foreign representatives under the reduction. I am of the opinion that a re examination of the subject will cause a change in some instances in the conclusion reached on these subjects at the last session of Congress.

ALABAMA CLAIMS.

The Court of Commissioners of Alabama claims, whose functions were continued by an act of the last session of Congress, until the first day of January, 1877, has carried on its labors with diligence and to general satisfaction. By a report from the clerk of the court, transmitted herewith, bearing date November 14, 1876, it appears that during the time now allowed by law the court will have disposed of all the claims presented for adjudication. This report also contains a statement of the general results of the labors of the court to date thereof. It is a cause of satisfaction that the method adopted for the satisfaction of the classes of claims admitted to the court which are of long standing and justly entitled to consideration, should have proved successful and acceptable.

BOUNDARY COMMISSIONERS.

It is with satisfaction that I am enabled to state that the work of the joint commission for determining the boundary line between the United States and the British possessions from the northwest angle of the Lake of the Woods to the Rocky Mountains, commenced in 1872, has been completed. The final arrangements of the Commissioners has been duly signed, and the work of the commissioners is complete. The fixing of the boundary upon the Pacific coast by the protocol of March 10, 1873, pursuant to the award of the Emperor of Germany, by article thirty-fourth of the Treaty of Washington, with the termination of the work of this commission, adjusts and fixes the entire boundary between the United States and the British possessions, except as to the portion of the territory ceded by Russia to the United States by the treaty of 1867. The work entrusted to the officers of the army attached to the commission has been well and satisfactorily performed. The original of the final agreement of the commission signed upon the 29th of May, 1876, with the original list of astronomical stations observed and the original official list of monuments marked, and international boundary lines, maps and records and general reports relating to the commission have been deposited in the Department of State. The official report of the Commissioner on the part of the United States, with the report of the chief astronomer of the United States, will be submitted to Congress within a short time.

OTHER FOREIGN MATTERS.

I reserve for a separate communication to Congress a statement of the condition of the questions which lately arose with Great Britain respecting the surrender of fugitive criminals, under the treaty of 1842. The Ottoman government gave notice, under date of January 15, 1874, of its desire to terminate the treaty of 1862, concerning commerce and navigation, pursuant to the provisions of the twenty-second article thereof. Under this notice the treaty terminated on the 5th day of June, 1876. That government has invited negotiations toward the conclusion of a new treaty. By the act of Congress of March 23, 1874, the President was authorized, when he should receive satisfactory information that the Ottoman government or that of Egypt had organized new tribunals likely to secure to the citizens of the United States the same impartial justice employed under the exercise of judicial functions by diplomatic and consular officers of the United States, to suspend the operation of the act of June 22, 1860, and to accept for citizens of the United States the jurisdiction of the new tribunals. Satisfactory information having been received of the organization of such new tribunals in Egypt, I caused a proclamation to be issued on the 27th of March last, suspending the operation of the act of June 22, 1860, in Egypt, according to the provisions of the act. A copy of the proclamation accompanies this message. The United States has united with the other powers in the organization of these courts. It is hoped that the jurisdiction questions which have arisen may be readily adjusted. Legislation to carry into effect the convention respecting commerce and reciprocity concluded with the Hawaiian islands in 1875 having been had, the proclamation to carry into effect the convention as provided by the act approved August 15, 1876, was duly issued upon the — Tuesday of September last. A copy thereof accompanies this message.

OUR RELATIONS WITH MEXICO.

The commotions which have been prevalent in Mexico for some time past, and which unhappily seem to be not wholly quieted yet, have led to complaints of the citizens of the United States of injuries by persons in authority. It is hoped, however, that these will ultimately be adjusted to the satisfaction of both Governments. The frontier of the United States in that quarter has not been exempt from acts of violence by the citizens of one Republic on those of the other. The frequency of these is supposed to be increased, and their adjustment made more difficult, by the change in the course of the lower part of the Rio Grande river, which river is a part of the boundary between the two countries. These changes have placed on either side of that river portions of land which by existing conventions belong to the jurisdiction of the government on the opposite side of the river. The subject of adjustment of this cause of difficulty is under consideration between the two Republics.

The Government of the United States of Colombia has paid the award in the case of the steamer Montijo, seized by the authorities of that government some years since, and the amount has been transferred to the claimants.

MEXICAN CLAIMS COMMISSION.

It is with satisfaction that I am able to announce that the joint commission for the adjustment of claims between the United States and Mexico, under the convention of 1868, the duration of which has been several times extended, has brought its labors to a close. From the report of the agent of the United States, which accompanies the papers transmitted herewith, it will be seen that within the time limited by the commission 1,017 claims on the part of our citizens against Mexico were referred to the commission. Of these claims 831 were dismissed or disallowed; in 186 cases awards were made in favor of claimants against the Mexican Republic, amounting to $4,035,633 20. Within the same period 998 claims on the part of citizens of the Mexican Republic against the United States were referred to the commission. Of these 831 were dismissed or disallowed, and in 167 cases awards were made in favor of claimants against the United States, amounting in the aggregate to $1,504,984. By the terms of the convention the amount of these awards is to be deducted from the amount awarded in favor of our citizens against Mexico, and the balance only to be paid by Mexico to the United States, leaving the United States to make provision for their proportion of the awards in favor of its own citizens. I invite your attention to legislation which will be necessary to provide for the payment in this connection. I am prepared to be able to express the acknowledgment due Mr. Thornton, the umpire of the commission, who has given to the consideration of the large number of claims submitted to him much time, unwearied patience and that fairness and intelligence which are well known to belong to the accomplished representative of Great Britain, and which are likewise recognized by the representative in this country of the Republic of Mexico.

VENEZUELA CLAIMS.

Monthly payments of a very small part of the amount due by the government of Venezuela to the citizens of the United States, on account of the claims of the latter against that government, continue to be made with reasonable punctuality. That government has proposed to change the system which it has hitherto pursued in this respect, by issuing bonds for part of the amount of the several claims. The proposition, however, could not, it is supposed, properly be accepted, at least without the consent of the holders of the certificates of indebtedness of Venezuela. These are so much dispersed that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain their disposition on the subject.

FRAUDULENT NATURALIZATION.

In another message I have called the attention of Congress to the necessity of legislation with regard to fraudulent naturalization, and to the subject of expatriation and election of nationality. Numbers of persons of foreign birth, are seeking a home in the United States, and the ease and facility with which the honest emigrant after the lapse of a reasonable time becomes possessed of all the priveleges of citizenship of the United States, and the frequent occasions which induce such adopted citizens to return to the country of their birth, render the subject of naturalization and the safeguards which experience has proved necessary for the protection of the honest naturalized citizen of paramount importance. The very simplicity in the requirements of the law on this question affords opportunity for fraud, and the want of uniformity in the proceedings and records of the various courts, and in the forms of the certificates of naturalization issued, afford a constant source of difficulty. I suggest no additional requirments to the acquisition of citizenship beyond those now existing, but I invite the earnest attention of congress to the necessity and wisdom of some provisions regarding uniformity in the records and certificates and providing against the frauds which frequently take place, and for the vacating of records of naturalization obtained by fraud. These provisions are needed in aid of, and for the protection of the honest citizen of foreign birth, and for the want of which he is made to suffer not unfrequently. The United States has insisted upon the right of expatriation and has obtained after a long struggle an admission of the principle contended for by acquiescence therein on the part of many foreign Powers and by the conclusion of treaties on that subject. It is, however, but justice to the government to which such naturalized citizens have formerly owed allegiance as well as to the United States, that certain fixed and and definite rules should be adopted governing such cases and providing how expatriation may be accomplished. While emigrants in large numbers become citizens of the United States, it is also true that persons, both native born and naturalized, once citizens of the United States, either by formal act or as the effect of a series of facts and circumstances, abandon their citizenship and cease to be entitled to the protection of the United States, but continue on certain occasions to assert their claim to protection in defiance of treaty provisions, and in this connection I again invite your attention to the necessity of legislation concerning marriages of American citizens contracted abroad, and concerning the status of American women who marry foreigners, and of children born of American parents in foreign countries. The delicate and complicated questions continually occurring with reference to expatriation and the status of such persons as I have referred to, induce me to earnestly direct your attention again to the subject.

CLAIMS OF ALIENS.

In like manner I repeat the recommendation that some means be provided for hearing determinations of the just and existing claims of aliens upon the government of the United States within a reasonable limitation, and of such as may hereafter arise. While by existing provisions of law the Court of Claims may, in certain cases, be resorted to by an alien claimant, the absence of any general provisions governing all such cases, and the want of a tribunal skilled in the disposition of such cases upon recognized, fixed and settled principles, either provides no remedy in many deserving cases, or compels the consideration of such claims by Congress or the executive department of the government. It is believed that other governments are in advance of us upon this question, and that the practice now adopted is entirely satisfactory.

ADMISSION OF COLORADO.

Congress, by an act approved the 3d of March, 1875, authorized the inhabitants of the Territory of Colorado to form a State government, in the name of the State of Colorado, and therein provided for the admission of said State when formed into the Union upon an equal footing with the original States. A constitution having been adopted and ratified by the people of the State, and an acting Governor having certified to me the facts, as provided by said act, together with a copy of such constitution and ordinances, as provided for in said act, and the provisions of said act of Congress having been complied with, I issued my proclamation on the 1st day of August, 1876, a copy of which is hereto annexed.

THE WAR DEPARTMENT.

The report of the Secretary shows that the army has been actively employed during the year in subduing, at the request of the Indian Bureau, certain wild bands of the Sioux Indian nation, and in preserving peace at the South during the election. The commissioners constituted under the act of July 24, 1876, to consider and report on the whole subject of the reform and reorganization of the whole army, met in August last, and has collected a large mass of statistics on points bearing on the subject before it. These are now under consideration, and their report is progressing. I am advised, though, by the President of the Commission, that it will be impracticable to comply with the clause of the act requiring a report to be presented through me to Congress on the first day of the session, as there has not been time for that mature deliberation which the importance of the subject demands; therefore, I ask that the time of making the report be extended to the 29th day of January, 1877. In accordance with the resolution of August, 15, 1876, the army regulations prepared under the act of March 1st, 1875, have not been promulgated, but are held until after the report of the above mentioned commission shall have been received and acted upon. By the act of August 15, 1876, the cavalry force of the army was increased by 2,500 men, with a proviso that they should be discharged at the expiration of hostilities. Under this authority the cavalry regiments have been strengthened and a portion of them are now in the field pursuing the remnants of the Indians with whom they have been engaged during the summer. The estimates of the War Department are made up on the basis of the number of men authorized by law, and their requirements as shown by years of experience, and also with the purpose of, on the part of the bureau officers, providing for all contingencies that may arise during the time for which the estimates are made. The estimates for service and estimates for improvements in various locations, now presented, are about six millions in excess of the appropriations for the years 1874 75-76. This increase is asked in order to provide for an increased cavalry force, should their services be necessary; to prosecute, economically, work on important public buildings; to provide for the armament of fortifications and manufacturies of small arms, and to replenish working stock in the supply depots. The appropriations of these last named have for the past few years been so limited that the accumulation of stores will be entirely exhausted during the present year and it will be necessary to at once begin to replenish them.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

I invite your special attention to the following recomendations of the Secretary of War. First. That the claims under the act of July 4, 1864, for supplies taken by the army during the war be be removed from the offices of Quarter master and Commissary Generals, and transferred to the Southern Claims Commission. These claims are of a precisely similar nature to those now before the Southern Claims Commission, and the War Department bureaus have not the clerical force for their examination, nor the proper machinery for investigating the legality of the claims. Second. That Congress sanction the scheme of an annuity fund for the benefit of the families of deceased officers, and that it also provide for the permanent organization of the regular service, both of which were recommended in my last annual message. Third. That the manufacturing operations of the ordnance department be concentrated at three arsenals and armories, and that the remaining arsenals be sold and the proceeds be applied to this object by the ordnance department.

The appropriations for river and harbor improvements for the current year were $5,015,000. With my approval the Secretary of War directed that of this amount $2,000,000 should be expended and no new works should be begun and none prosecuted which were not of national importance. Subsequently this amount was increased to $2,237,000 and works are now progressing on this base.

CAPT. EADS' JETTIES.

The improvement of the South Pass of the Mississippi river, under J. B. Eads and his associates, is progressing favorably. At the present time there is a channel of 20 3 10 feet in depth between the jetties at the mouth of the pass, and 18½ feet at the head of the pass. Neither channel, however, has the width required before payment shall be made by the United States. A commission of engineers and officers is now examining these works and their reports will be presented as soon as received.

THE NAVY DEPARTMENT.

The report of the Secretary of the Navy shows that he believes the service to be in as effective a condition as it is possible to keep it with the means appropriated to the Department. It is of course impossible to rival the costly and progressive establishments of the great European powers with the old material of our navy, to which no increase has been authorized since the war except eight small cruisers, built to supply the place of others which had gone to decay, yet the most has been done that was possible with the means at command, and by substantially rebuilding some of our old ships with durable material, and completely repairing and refitting our monitor fleet, the navy has been gradually so brought up that, though it does not maintain its relative position among the progressive nations of the world, it is now in a condition more powerful and effective than it ever has been in time of peace. The complete repairs of our five heavy ironclads are only delayed on account of the inadequacy of the appropriations made last year for the working divisions of the department which were actually less in amount than those made before the war. Notwithstanding the greatly enhanced price of labor and materials, and the increase in the cost of the naval service, growing out of the universal use and great expense of steam machinery, the money necessary for these repairs should be provided for at once that they may be completed without further unnecessary delay and expense. When this is done all the strength that there is in the navy will be developed and useful in its full capacity, and all will be powerful for the purposes of defence, and also for offensive action should a necessity for that arise within a reasonable distance from our shore. The fact that our navy is not more modern and powerful than it is, has been made a cause of complaint against the Secretary of the Navy by persons who, at the same time, criticise and complain of endeavors to bring the navy that we have to its best and most efficient condition, but the good sense of the country will understand that it is really to his practical action that we have at this time any effective naval force at our command,

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

The report of the Postmaster General shows an excess of expenditures, excluding expenditures on account of previous years, over the receipts for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1876, to be $4,151,988.66. The estimated expenditure for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1878, is $36,723,432.43. The estimated revenue for the same period is $30,645,165, leaving an estimated excess of expenditure, to be appropriated as a deficiency, of $6,078,267.43. The Postmaster General, like his predecessor, is convinced that a change in the basis of adjusting the salaries of postmasters of the fourth class is necessary for the good of the service, as well as for the interest of the government, and urgently recommends that the compensation of the class of postmasters above mentioned be based on the business of their respective offices as ascertained from sworn returns to the Auditor of stamps canceled.

BULLDOZED POSTMASTERS.

A few postmasters in the Southern States they have expressed great apprehensions of their personal safety on account of their connection with the postal service, and have specially requested that their reports of apprehended danger should not be made public lest it should result in the loss of their lives, but no positive testimony of any interference has been submitted except in the case of a mail messenger at Spartansburg, in South Carolina, who reported that he had been violently driven away while in the discharge of his duties, on account of his political affiliations. The Assistant Superintendent of the Railroad Service investigated this case, and reported that the messenger had disappeared from his post, leaving his work to be performed by a substitute. The Postmaster General thinks this case is sufficiently suggestive to justify him in recommending that a more severe punishment should be provided for the offense of assaulting any person in charge of mails, or otherwise obstructing them by threats of personal injury.

A very gratifying result is presented in the fact that the deficiency of this department during the last fiscal year was reduced to $4,081,790.18, as against $6,169,938.88 of the preceding year. The difference can be traced to the large increase in its ordinary receipts, which greatly exceed the estimates therefor, and a slight increase in its expenditures. The ordinary receipts of the Post Office Department for the past seven fiscal years have increased at an average of over eight per cent. per annum, while the increase of expenditures for the same period has been about 5.50 per cent. per annum; and the decrease of the deficiency in the revenues has been at the rate of nearly two per cent. per annum.

The report of the

COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE

accompanying this message will be found one of great interest, marking as it does the great progress of the last century in increase of the produce of the soil, and of knowledge and skill in the labor of producing, saving and manipulating the same to prepare them for the use of man; in the improvement in machinery to aid the agriculturist in his labors, and in the knowledge of those scientific subjects necessary to a thorough system of economy in agricultural productions, namely, chemistry, botany and entomology. This report, by those interested in agriculture and deriving their support from it, will be found of value in pointing out those articles which are raised in greater quantity than the needs of the world require, and must sell therefore for less than the cost of production, and those which command a profit over the cost of production because there is not an over production. I call special attention to the need of the department for a new gallery for the reception of the exhibits returned from the Centennial exhibition, including the exhibits donated by very many foreign nations, and to the recommendations of the Commissioner of Agriculture generally. The reports of District Commissioners and the Board of Health are just received, too late to read them and make recommendations thereon, and are herewith submitted.

THE CENTENNIAL.

The International exhibition held in Philadelphia this year, in commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of American independence, has proven a great success, and will, no doubt, be of enduring advantage the country. It has shown great progress in the arts, sciences and mechanical skill made in a single century and demonstrated that we are but little behind the older nations in any one branch, while in some we scarcely have a rival. It has served to bring the people and products of skill and labor from all parts of the world together, and in bringing together people from all sections of our country, which must prove of great benefit, the information imparted and pride of our country engendered. It has been suggested by scientists interested in, and connected with the Smithsonian Institute, in a communication, that the Government Exhibits be removed to the capital and a suitable building be erected or purchased for its accommodation as

A PERMANENT EXHIBITION.

I earnestly recommend this, and, believing that Congress would second this view, I decided that all the government exhibits at the Centennial exhibition should remain where they are, except such as might be injured by remaining, in a building not intended as a protection in inclement weather, or such as may be wanted by the department furnishing them, until the question of permanent exhibition is acted on. Although the monies appropriated by Congress to enable the participation of the several executive departments in the international exhibition of 1876 were not sufficient to carry out the undertaking to the full extent at first contemplated, it gives me pleasure to refer to the very efficient and creditable manner in which the board appointed from these several departments to provide an exhibition on the part of the government have discharged their duties with the funds placed at their command, without a precedent to guide them in the preparation of such a display. The success of their labors was amply attested by the sustained attention which the contents of the government building attracted during the period of the exhibition, from both foreign and native people. I am strongly impressed with the value of the collection made by the government for purposes of the exhibition, illustrating as it does the general resources of the country; the statistical and practical evidences of our growth as a nation; the uses of the mechanic arts and the applications of applied science in the administration of the affairs of government. Many nations have voluntarily contributed exhibits to the United States to increase the interest in any permanent exhibition Congress may provide for. For this act of generosity they should receive the thanks of the people, and I respectfully suggest that a resolution of Congress to that effect be adopted.

THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE.

The attention of Congress cannot be too earnestly called to the necessity of throwing some greater safeguards in choosing and declaring the election of a President. Under the present system there seems to be no provided remedy for contesting the election in any one State. The remedy is particularly in the enlightenment of the electors. The compulsory support of the free schools and the disfranchisement of all who cannot read and write the English language, after a fixed probation, would meet my hearty approval. I would not make this apply, however, to those already voters, but I would to all becoming so after the expiration of a probation fixed upon. Foreigners coming to this country to become citizens, who are educated in their own language would acquire the requisite knowledge of ours during the necessary residence to obtain naturalization. If they did not take enough interest in our language to acquire sufficient knowledge to enable them to study the institutions and laws of the country intelligently, I would not confer upon them the right to make and enact laws nor to vote for those who do.

I append to this message for convenient reference, a synopsis of the adminstrative events and of all recommendations to Congress by me during this seven years. Time may show that some of those recommendations not to have been wisely conceived, but I believe the larger part will be no discredit to my administration.

SANTO DOMINGO AGAIN.

One of these recommendations met with united opposition of one political party in the Senate, and with a strong opposition in the other, namely: the treaty for the annexation of Santo Domingo to the United States, to which I shall specially refer, maintaining as I do that if my views had been concurred in the country would be in a more prosperous condition to-day, both politically and financially. Santo Domingo is fertile, and upon its soil may be grown just those tropical products of which the United States use so much, and which are produced and prepared for market now by slave labor almost exclusively, namely, sugar, coffee, dye wood, mahogany, tropical fruits, tobacco, etc. About 75 per cent. of the exports of sugar are consumed in the United States. A large percentage of the exports of Brazil find the same market. These are paid for almost exclusively in coin, legislation, particularly in Cuba, being unfavorable to a mutual exchange of the products of each country. Flour shipped from the Mississippi River to Havana can pass by the very entrance to the city on its way to a port in Spain then pays a duty fixed upon articles to be re exported, transferred to a Spanish vessel, and brought back almost to the point of starting, paying a second duty, and still leave a profit over what would be received by direct shipment. All that is produced in Cuba could be produced in Santo Domingo, which, being a part of the United States, commerce between the island and the main land would be free. There would be no export duties on her shipments, nor import duties on those coming here. There would be no import duties upon the supplies of machinery, etc., going from the States. The effect that would have been produced upon Cuban commerce with these advantages to America is observable at a glance. The Cuban question would have been settled long ago in favor of free Cuba. Hundreds of American vessels would now be advantageously used in transporting the valuable woods and other products of the island to market, and in carrying supplies and emigrants to it. The island is but sparsely settled, while it has an area sufficient for the productive employment of several millions of people. The soil would have soon fallen into the hands of United States capitalists. The products are so valuable that emigration there would have been encouraged; the emancipated race of the South would have found there a congenial home where their civil rights could not be disputed, and where their labor would be much sought after. The poorest among them could have found means to go, and thus in case of great oppression and cruelties, such as have been practiced upon them in many places within the last eleven years, whole communities would have sought refuge in Santo Domingo. I do not suppose the whole race would have gone, nor is it desirable that they should go. Their labor is desirable, indispensable almost, where they now are, but the possession of this territory would have left the negro master of the situation, by enabling him to demand his rights at home on pain of seeking them elsewhere. I do not present these views now as a recommendation for the renewal of the subject of annexation, but I do refer to it to vindicate my previous action in regard to it. With the present Congress my official life terminates. It is not probable that public affairs will ever again receive attention from me further than as a citizen of the republic taking a deep interest in the honor, integrity and prosperity of the whole land.

U. S. GRANT.

EXECUTIVE MANSION, Dec. 5, 1876.

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