

# JUDGE PARKER'S LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE

Sept. 26, 1904.

To the Hon. Champ Clark and Others,  
Committee, Etc.

Gentlemen—In my response to your committee at the formal notification proceedings I referred to some matters not mentioned in this letter. I desire that these be considered as incorporated herein, and regret that lack of space prevents specific reference to them all. I wish here, however, again to refer to my views there expressed as to the gold standard, to declare again my unqualified belief in said standard and to express my appreciation of the action of the convention in reply to my communication upon that subject.

Grave public questions are pressing for decision. The Democratic party appeals to the people with confidence that its position on these questions will be accepted and endorsed at the polls. While the issues involved are numerous, some stand forth pre-eminent in the public mind. Among these are tariff reform, imperialism, economical administration and honesty in the public service. I shall briefly consider these and some others within the necessarily prescribed limits of this letter.

Imperialism. While I presented my views at the notification proceedings concerning this vital issue, the overshadowing importance of this question impels me to refer to it again. The issue is oftentimes referred to as constitutionalism versus imperialism.

If we would retain our liberties and constitutional rights unimpaired we cannot permit or tolerate at any time or for any purpose the arrogation of unconstitutional powers by the executive branch of our government. We should be ever mindful of the words of Webster, "Liberty is only to be preserved by maintaining constitutional restraints and a just division of political powers."

Already the national government has become centralized beyond any point contemplated or imagined by the founders of the constitution. How tremendously all this has added to the power of the president! It has developed from year to year until it almost equals that of many monarchs. While the growth of our country and the magnitude of interstate interests may seem to furnish a plausible reason for this centralization of power, yet these same facts afford the most potent reason why the executive should not be permitted to encroach upon the other departments of the government and assume legislative or other powers not expressly conferred by the constitution.

The magnitude of the country and its diversity of interests and population would enable a determined, ambitious and able executive, unimpaired by constitutional limitations and freed with the lust of power, to go far in the usurpation of authority and the aggrandizement of personal power before the situation could be fully appreciated or the people be aroused.

The issue of imperialism which has been thrust upon the country involves a decision whether the law of the land or the rule of individual caprice shall govern. The principle of imperialism may give rise to brilliant, startling, dazzling results, but the principle of democracy holds in check the brilliant executive and subjects him to the sober, conservative control of the people.

The people of the United States stand at the parting of the ways. Shall we follow the footsteps of our fathers along the paths of peace, prosperity and contentment, guided by the ever living spirit of the constitution which they framed for us, or shall we go along other and untrodden paths hitherto shunned by all, following blindly new ideals which, though appealing with brilliancy to the imagination and ambition, may prove a will-o'-the-wisp, leading us into difficulties from which it may be impossible to extricate ourselves without lasting injury to our national character and institutions?

The Tariff and Trusts. Tariff reform is one of the cardinal principles of the Democratic faith and the necessity for it was never greater than at the present time. It should be undertaken at once in the interest of all our people.

The Dingley tariff is excessive in many of its rates and, as to them at least, unjustly and oppressively burdens the people. It secures to domestic manufacturers, singly or in combination, the privilege of exacting excessive prices at home and prices far above the level of sales made regularly by them abroad with profit, thus giving a bounty to foreigners at the expense of our own people. It levies oppressive and unjust taxes upon many articles forming in whole or part the so called raw material of many of our manufactured products, not only burdening the consumer, but also closing to the manufacturer the markets he needs and seeks abroad. Its unjust taxation burdens the people generally, forcing them to pay excessive prices for food, fuel, clothing and other necessities of life. It levies duties on many articles not normally imported in any considerable amount which are made extensively at home, for which the most extreme protectionist would hardly justify protective taxes, and which in large amounts are exported. Such duties have been and will continue to be a direct incentive to the formation of huge industrial combinations, which, secure from foreign competition, are enabled to stifle domestic competition and practically to monopolize the home market.

It contains many duties imposed for

the express purpose only, as was openly avowed, of furnishing a basis for reduction by means of reciprocal trade treaties, which the Republican administration, implicitly at least, promised to negotiate. Having on this promise secured the increased duties, the Republican party leaders, spurred on by protected interests, defeated the treaties negotiated by the executive, and now these same interests cling to the benefit of these duties which the people never intended they should have and to which they have no moral right.

Even now the argument most frequently urged in behalf of the Dingley tariff and against tariff reform generally is the necessity of caring for our infant industries. Many of these industries after a hundred years of hasty growth are looming up as industrial giants. In their case at least the Dingley tariff invites combination and monopoly and gives justification to the expression that the tariff is the mother of trusts.

For the above mentioned reasons, among many others, the people demand reform of these abuses, and such reform demands and should receive immediate attention.

The two leading parties have always differed as to the principle of customs taxation. Our party has always advanced the theory that the object is the raising of revenue for support of the government whatever other results may incidentally flow therefrom. The Republican party, on the other hand, contends that customs duties should be levied primarily for protection, so called, with revenue as the subordinate purpose, thus using the power of taxation to build up the business and property of the few at the expense of the many.

This difference of principle still subsists, but our party appreciates that the long continued policy of the country, as manifested in its statutes, makes it necessary that tariff reform should be prudently and sagaciously undertaken on scientific principles, to the end that there should not be an immediate revolution in existing conditions.

In the words of our platform we demand "a revision and a gradual reduction of the tariff by the friends of the masses, and for the common weal, and not by the friends of its abuses, its extortions and discriminations."

It is true that the Republicans, who do not admit in their platform that the Dingley tariff needs the slightest alteration, are likely to retain a majority of the federal senate throughout the next presidential term and could, therefore, if they chose, block every attempt at legislative relief. But it should be remembered that the Republican party includes many revisionists, and I believe it will shrink from defying the popular will expressed unmistakably and peremptorily at the ballot box.

The people demand reform of existing conditions. Since the last Democratic administration the cost of living has grievously increased. Those having fixed incomes have suffered keenly; those living on wages, if there has been any increase, know that such increase has not kept pace with the advance in the cost of living, including rent and the necessities of life. Many today are out of work, unable to secure any wages at all. To alleviate these conditions in so far as is in our power should be our earnest endeavor.

Trust Remedies.

I pointed out in my earlier response the remedy which, in my judgment, can effectively be applied against monopolies, and the assurance was then given that if existing laws, including both statute and common law, proved inadequate, contrary to my expectations, I favor such further legislation within constitutional limitations as will best promote and safeguard the interests of all the people.

Whether there is any common law which can be applied and enforced by the federal courts cannot be determined by the president or by a candidate for the presidency.

The determination of this question was left by the people in framing the constitution to the judiciary and not to the executive. The supreme court of the United States has recently considered this question, and, in the case of the Western Union Telegraph company versus the Call Publishing company, to be found in the one hundred and eighty-first volume of the United States supreme court reports, at page 92, it decided that common law principles could be applied by United States courts in cases involving interstate commerce in the absence of United States statutes specifically covering the case. Such is the law of the land.

Reciprocity.

In my address to the notification committee I said that tariff reform "is demanded by the best interests of both manufacturer and consumer." With equal truth it can be said that the benefits of reciprocal trade treaties would ensue to both. That the consumer would be helped is unquestionable. That the manufacturer would receive great benefit by extending his markets abroad hardly needs demonstration. His productive capacity has outgrown the home market. The very term "home market" has changed in its significance. Once, from the manufacturer's point of view, it meant expansion; today the marvelous growth of our manufacturing industries has far exceeded the consumptive capacity of our domestic markets, and the term "home market" implies contraction rather than expansion. If we would run our mills to their full capacity thus giving steady employment to our workmen and securing to them and to the manufacturer the profits accruing from increased production, other markets must be found. Furthermore, when our manufacturers are dependent on raw materials in whole or part imported, it is vital to the extension of their markets abroad that they secure

their materials on the most favorable terms.

Our martyred president, William McKinley, appreciated this situation. He pointed out in his last address to the people that we must make sensible trade arrangements if "we shall extend the outlets for our increasing surplus." He said: "A system which provides a mutual exchange of commodities is manifestly essential to the continued and healthful growth of our export trade. \* \* \* The period of exclusiveness is past. The expansion of our trade and commerce is the pressing problem. Commercial wars are unprofitable. A policy of good will and friendly relations will prevent reprisals. Reciprocity treaties are in harmony with the spirit of the times; measures of retaliation are not."

This argument was made in the interest of our manufacturers, whose products, he urged, "have so multiplied that the problem of more markets requires our urgent and immediate attention." He had come to realize that the so called stand pat policy must give way; that there must be a reduction of duties to enable our manufacturers to cultivate foreign markets. The last words of this president, who had won the affection of his countrymen, ought to be studied by every man who has any doubt of the necessity of a reduction in tariff rates in the interest of the manufacturer. They prevent with clearness a situation and a proposed remedy that prompted the provision in our platform which declares that "we favor liberal trade arrangements with Canada and with peoples of other countries where they can be entered into with benefit to American agriculture, manufactures, mining or commerce."

The persistent refusal of the Republican majority in the federal senate to ratify the reciprocity treaties negotiated in pursuance of the policy advocated alike by Mr. Blaine and Mr. McKinley, and expressly sanctioned in the Dingley act itself, is a discouraging exhibition of bad faith. As already mentioned by me, the exorbitant duty imposed on many an imported article by the Dingley tariff was avowedly intended by its author not to be permanent, but to serve temporarily as a maximum, from which the federal government was empowered to offer a reduction in return for an equivalent concession on the part of a foreign country. President McKinley undertook honestly to carry out the purpose of the act. A number of reciprocity agreements were negotiated, which, if ratified, would have had the twofold result of cheapening many imported products for American consumers and of opening and enlarging foreign markets to American producers. Not one of those agreements has met with the approval of the Republican masters of the senate. Indeed they did not even permit their consideration. In view of the attitude of the present executive, no new agreement need be expected from him. Nor does the Republican platform contain a favorable reference to one of the suspended treaties. The reciprocity clauses of the Dingley act seem destined to remain a monument of legislative cozenage and political bad faith unless the people take the matter in their own hands at the ballot box and command a reduction of duties in return for reciprocal concessions.

Independence For the Filipinos.

In some quarters it has been assumed that in the discussion of the Philippine question in my response the phrase "self government" was intended to mean something less than independence. It was not intended that it should be understood to mean no more than I think as used it does mean less than independence. However, to eliminate all possibility for conjecture I now state that I am in hearty accord with that plank in our platform that favors doing for the Filipinos what we have already done for the Cubans, and I favor making the promise to them now that we shall take such action as soon as they are reasonably prepared for it. If independence such as the Cubans enjoy cannot be prudently granted to the Filipinos at this time, the promise that it shall come the moment they are capable of receiving it will tend to stimulate rather than hinder their development. And this should be done not only in justice to the Filipinos, but to preserve our own rights, for a free people cannot withhold freedom from another people and themselves remain free. The toleration of tyranny over others will soon breed contempt for freedom and self government and weaken our power of resistance to insidious usurpation of our constitutional rights.

American Citizenship.

The pledge of the platform to secure to our citizens, without distinction of race or creed, whether native born or naturalized, at home and abroad, the equal protection of the laws and the enjoyment of all the rights and privileges open to them under the covenants of our treaties, as their just due, should be made good to them. In the accomplishment of that result it is essential that a passport issued by the government of the United States to an American citizen shall be accepted the world over as proof of citizenship.

Civil Service.

The statute relating to civil service is the outcome of the efforts of thoughtful, unselfish and public spirited citizens. Operation under it has frequently been of such a character as to offend against the spirit of the statute, but the results achieved, even under a partial enforcement of the law, have been such as to both deserve and command the utterance of the Democratic party that it stands committed to the principle of civil service reform and demands its just and impartial enforcement.

Reclamation of Arid Lands.

A vast expanse of country in the west, portions of which are to be found

in each of the sixteen states and territories, mentioned in the law, is directly affected by the national statute—the outcome of intelligent and persistent efforts of leading citizens, providing for the reclamation of the arid lands for the benefit of home seekers. During the years of the development of the measure which finally received the vote of every member of the upper house of congress it encountered opposition, based to a large extent upon the view that the aim of its promoters was to secure the benefits of irrigation to private owners at government expense. The aim of the statute is, however, to enable this vast territory to reclaim its arid lands without calling upon the taxpayers of the country at large to pay for it. Whether the purposes of the bill will be fully accomplished must depend in large measure upon the ability, sobriety of judgment, independence and honesty of the officers of the interior department having this great work in charge.

In 1902 the main canals and ditches in the region affected aggregated more than 50,000 miles, and the work of reclamation is but in its infancy. The total cost of construction of the necessary head gates, dams, main canals, ditches, reservoirs and pumping stations was at that time a little over \$93,000,000, which of itself suggests the hundreds of millions that may eventually be invested in the territory covered by the statute. The magnitude of the conception and the enormous expense its carrying out involves make us realize the overwhelming importance of a broad, capable and honest administration of the work authorized by the statute if effect is to be given to that part of the plan that relieves the country at large from ultimate liability.

Panama Canal.

An isthmian canal has long been the hope of our statesmen and the avowed aim of the two great parties, as their platforms in the past show. The Panama route having been selected, the building of the canal should be pressed to completion with all reasonable expedition.

The methods by which the executive acquired the Panama canal route and rights are a source of regret to many. To them the statement that thereby a great public work was assured to the profit of our people is not a sufficient answer to the charge of violation of national good faith. They appreciate that the principles and healthy convictions which in their working out have made us free and great stand firmly against the argument or suggestion that we shall be blind to the nature of the means employed to promote our welfare. They hold that adherence to principle, whether it works for our good or ill, will have a more beneficial influence on our future destiny than all our material upbuilding, and that we should ever remember that the idea of doing a wrong to a smaller, weaker nation than we, or even all mankind, may have a resultant good is repugnant to the principles upon which our government was founded.

Under the laws of the United States the duty is imposed on the executive to proceed with due diligence in the work of constructing the canal. That duty should be promptly performed.

American Shipping.

Our commerce in American bottoms amounts to but 8 per cent of our total exports and imports. For seventy years prior to 1890, when the Republican party came into power, our merchant marine carried an average of 75 per cent of our foreign commerce. By 1877 it had dwindled to 27 per cent. Now we carry but a contemptibly small fraction of our exports and imports.

American shipping in the foreign trade was greater by over 100,000 tons in 1810, nearly 100 years ago, than it is last year. In the face of the continuous decline in the record of American shipping during the last forty-three years the promise of the Republican party to restore it is without encouragement. The record of the Democratic party gives assurance that the task can be more wisely intrusted to it.

It is an arduous task to undo the effect of forty years of decadence and requires the study and investigation of those best fitted by experience to find the remedy, which surely does not lie in the granting of subsidies wrung from the pockets of all the taxpayers.

Investigation of Government Departments.

Recent disclosures, coupled with the rapid augmentation of government expenditures, show a need of an investigation of every department of the government. The Democrats in congress demanded it. The Republican majority refused the demand. The people can determine by their vote in November whether they wish an honest and thorough investigation. A Democratic congress and executive will assure it.

Army and Navy.

We are justly proud of the officers and men of our army and navy. Both, however, have suffered from the persistent injection of personal and political influence. Promotions and appointments have been frequently based on favoritism instead of merit. Trials and court martials have been set aside under circumstances indicating political interference. These and other abuses should be corrected.

Pensions For Our Soldiers and Sailors.

The national Democracy favors liberal pensions to the surviving soldiers and sailors and their dependents on the ground that they deserve liberal treatment. It pledges by its platform adequate legislation to that end. But it denies the right of the executive to usurp the power of congress to legislate on that subject. Such usurpation was attempted by pension order No. 78, and effect has been given to it by a congress that dared not resent the

usurpation. It is said that "this order was made in the performance of a duty imposed upon the president by act of congress," but the provision making the imposition is not pointed out. The act to which the order refers, which is the one relating to pensions to civil war veterans, does not authorize pensions on the ground of age. It does grant pensions to those "suffering from any mental or physical disability or disabilities of a permanent character, not the result of their own vicious habits, which so incapacitate them from the performance of manual labor as to render them unable to earn a support." This specified requirement of incapacity is in effect set aside by order No. 78 as to all persons over sixty-two.

The war closed nearly forty years ago. In the meantime many of our soldiers and sailors long survived the age of sixty-two and passed away without receiving any pension. Skillful pension attorneys, hunting through the statute, failed to find there a provision giving a pension to all who had reached sixty-two. Many prominent veterans urged the justice of congressional action giving a service pension to all veterans. Bills to that effect were introduced in congress. And not until March of this year did any one ever claim to have made the discovery that the president had power to treat the statute as if it read that when a claimant had passed the age of sixty-two years he is necessarily disabled one-half in ability to perform manual labor and therefore entitled to a pension.

The present pension commissioner indicated his view of the order when in a recent address he thanked the president for what he had done and advised his hearers to use their influence that a law might be passed to the same effect. Full confidence, after all, seems not to have been placed on the defense of justification, for it is pleaded in mitigation that a former Democratic president did something looking in that direction. Even if that were so, which is not admitted, our present duty would be none the less plain and imperative. Our people must never tolerate the citation of one act of usurpation of power as an excuse for another. The first may possibly be due to mistake; the second, being based on the first, cannot be. In explanation, however, it should be said that the order relied on simply provided that the age of seventy-five years should be regarded as evidence of inability to perform manual labor. Few men are able to perform manual labor at that age, but nearly all men are at sixty-two. The first order is based on a fact that experience teaches; the other is based on the assertion of that which is not true as a general rule.

The old inquiry, "What are you going to do about it?" is now stated in a new form. It is said by the administration, in reply to the public criticism of this order, that "it is easy to test our opponents' sincerity in this matter. The order in question is revocable at the pleasure of the executive. If our opponents come into power they can revoke this order and announce that they will treat the veterans of sixty-two and seventy as presumably in full bodily vigor and not entitled to pension. Will they authoritatively state that they intend to do this? If so, we accept the issue."

This suggests the suspicion at least that the order was made to create an issue; that it was supposed to present a strong strategic position in the battle of the ballots. But as the making of that order was, in my judgment, an attempted though perhaps unwitting encroachment upon the legislative power and therefore unwarranted by the constitution, the challenge is accepted. If elected I will revoke that order. But I go further and say that, that being done, I will contribute my effort toward the enactment of a law to be passed by both houses of congress and approved by the executive that will give an age pension without reference to disability to the surviving heroes of the civil war and under the provisions of which a pension may be accepted with dignity because of the consciousness that it comes as a just due from the people through their chosen representatives and not as largess distributed by the chief executive.

Foreign Relations.

The foreign relations of the government have in late years assumed special importance. Prior to the acquisition of the Philippines we were practically invulnerable against attacks by foreign states. Those tropical possessions, however, 7,000 miles from our shores, have changed all this and have in effect put us under bonds to keep the peace. The new conditions call for a management of foreign affairs the more circumspect in that the recent American invasion of foreign markets in all parts of the world has excited the serious apprehension of all the great industrial peoples. It is essential, therefore, more than ever to adhere strictly to the traditional policy of the country as formulated by its first president and never, in my judgment, wisely departed from—to invite friendly relations with all nations while avoiding entangling alliances with any. Such a policy means the cultivation of peace instead of the glorification of war, and the minding of our own business in lieu of spectacular intermeddling with the affairs of other nations. It means strict observance of the principles of international law and condemns the doctrine that a great state, by reason of its strength, may rightfully appropriate the sovereignty or territory of a small state on account of its weakness. It means for other American states that we claim no rights and will assume no functions save those of a friend and of an ally and defender as against European aggressions. It means that we repudiate the role of the American continental policeman, that we refuse to act as debt collector for foreign states or their citizens, that we respect the independent sovereignty of each American state and its right to preserve order and otherwise regulate its own internal affairs in its own way, and that any intervention in its

affairs by us is limited to the single office of enabling it to put out its own political and national destiny for themselves free from the coercion of any European state.

Reform in Governmental Expenditures.

Twenty-eight years have passed since the Democratic party of the state of New York in convention assembled recommended to the national Democracy the nomination of Samuel J. Tilden as its candidate for the presidency and declared it to be "their settled conviction that a return to the constitutional principles, frugal expenses and administrative purity of the founders of the republic is the first and most imperative duty of the times of the commanding issue now before the people of the Union." This strong expression was called forth by the national expenditures for the year 1876, which amounted to \$24,000,000—a situation which, in the opinion of a majority of the people, justified an imperative demand for reform in the administration of public affairs. As the expenditures of the last fiscal year amounted to the enormous total of \$52,000,000, it is evident that a thorough investigation and a widespread and immediate abandonment of useless and extravagant expenditures are more necessary now than they were then. This astounding increase is out of all proportion to the increase of our population and finds no excuse from whatever aspect we view the situation. The national Democratic platform declares that "large reductions can easily be made in the annual expenditures of the government without impairing the efficiency of any branch of the public service." Can there be any doubt of the accuracy of this statement? Between the expenditures of the year 1880, amounting to \$242,000,000 and those of the last fiscal year, the seventh after Cleveland's accession to the presidency—amounting to \$52,000,000, there is a difference so great as to excite alarm in the breasts of all thoughtful men. Even excluding the sum of \$50,000,000 paid for the Panama canal rights and to the state of Panama, the expenditures of the last fiscal year exceeded the sum of \$32,000,000, being more than double the expenditures of the government for all purposes during the first year of Mr. Cleveland's administration.

The expenses of the first four years succeeding the last Democratic administration amounted to the enormous average of \$11,000,000 per year. This large expenditure was due to a considerable extent to the cost of the Spanish-American war, which occurred during that period. But the termination of that war brought no relief to the treasury, for the average annual expenses of the government during the three succeeding years—ending June 30, 1904, were about \$19,000,000, which is the largest sum hitherto reached during a like period since the close of the civil war.

This draft upon the revenues of the country has had the effect which might have been anticipated, and now we have presented the reverse of the situation, which led to the famous observation, "It is a condition and not a theory which confronts us." It is a condition which, if not promptly met, will result in a financial crisis at the close of the first fiscal year during which he assumed control of the administration a surplus of receipts over expenditures of more than \$2,000,000, and a projected deficit of expenditures over receipts at the close of the last fiscal year of \$42,000,000, and the official monthly reports made by the treasury department show that the expenditures are continuously and rapidly increasing, while the receipts are diminishing.

In this connection it is interesting to note the recent administrative orders forbidding government officers from making public statements or estimates on which future appropriations are to be based. If a man of ordinary intelligence and prudence should find in the operating expenses of his household such a tremendous percentage of increase as would have promptly set on foot an inquiry for the cause of the waste and take immediate measures to stop it, especially when trusted employees have been found dishonest and convicted and a widespread impression exists that a thorough investigation may discover other cases of malfeasance? When the chief executive reported to congress that "through frauds, misfeasances and misadventures, by whomsoever the laws relating to the proper conduct of the public service in general and to the due administration of the post-office department have been notoriously violated," was there a general popular demand for a rigid, sweeping investigation by congress in addition to that undertaken by the executive himself. Such an investigation the Republican majority in congress would not permit, although the minority insisted that the interests of good government demanded it. And the minority was right. The liberality, patriotism and national pride of the people should not be made an excuse for waste of the public funds. Official extravagance is official crime.

There is not a sentence in the Republican platform recommending a reduction in the expenditures of the government, not a line suggesting that the increase in the cost of the war, amounting to \$24,000,000 in 1880 to \$15,000,000 in 1894 should be liquidated into, and not a paragraph calling for a thorough investigation of those departments of the government in which dishonesty has been recently discovered. The people, however, can by their votes, if they desire it, order such an investigation and inaugurate a policy of economy and retrenchment. It is safe to say that this will not be accomplished by indolence at the polls. The Republican majority of the house of representatives which refused the investigation and made the appropriations, nor by continuing in power the administration which made the disbursements.

Reform in expenditures must be had in both the civil, military and naval establishments in order that the national expenditures may be brought to a basis of sense and that the government maintained without recourse to the taxes of war.

Conclusion.

I have put aside a congenial work, to which I had expected to devote my life, in order to assume as best I can the responsibilities your convention put upon me. I solicit the cordial co-operation and generous assistance of every man who believes that a change of measures and of men at this time would be wise and vigorous action on the part of all so minded.

The issues are joined, and the people must render the verdict. Shall economy of administration be demanded or shall extravagance be encouraged? Shall the wrongdoer be brought to bay by the people or must justice wait upon political oligarchy? Shall our government stand for equal opportunity or for special privilege? Shall it remain a government of law or become one of individual caprice? Shall we cling to the rule of the people, or shall we embrace beneficent despotism? With calmness and confidence we await the people's verdict.

If called to the office of president I shall consider myself the chief magistrate of all the people and not of any faction, and shall ever be mindful of the fact that on many questions of national policy there are honest differences of opinion. I believe in the patriotism, good sense and absolute sincerity of all the people. I shall strive to remember that he may serve his party best who serves his country best.

If it be the wish of the people that I undertake the duties of the presidency I pledge myself, with God's help, to devote all my powers and energy to the duties of this exalted office. Very truly yours, ALTON B. PARKER.