

# International Affairs

## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

The Chief Executive's Annual Document to Congress and the People.

A State Paper that Deserves and Should Receive Public Attention.

Grover's Suggestions and Recommendations.

In Memory of Honors.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 8.—To the Congress of the United States: Your assembling is clouded by a sense of public bereavement caused by the recent and sudden death of Thomas A. Hendricks, vice-president of the United States. His distinguished public services, his complete integrity and devotion to every duty and his personal virtues will find favorable record in his country's history. Ample and repeated proofs of the esteem and confidence with which he was held by his countrymen were manifested by his election to an office of the most important and highest dignity, and at length, full of years and honors, he has been laid at rest amidst general sorrow and benediction.

He Makes His Bow.

The constitution, which requires those chosen to legislate for the people to annually meet in the discharge of their solemn trust, also requires the president to give to congress information of the state of the union, and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall deem necessary and expedient. At the threshold of a compliance with these constitutional directions, it is well for us to bear in mind that our usefulness to the people's interests will be promoted by a constant appreciation of the scope and character of our respective duties as they relate to federal legislation. While the executive may recommend such measures as he shall deem expedient, the responsibility for legislative action must and should rest upon those selected by the people to make their laws. A contemplation of the grave and responsible functions assigned to the executive branches of the government under the constitution will disclose the partitions of power between our respective departments and their necessary independence, and also the need for the exercise of the power entrusted to each in that spirit of comity and co-operation which is essential to the proper fulfillment of the patriotic obligations which rest upon us as faithful servants of the people. The jealous watching of the prerogatives of great and small, supplements their suffrage, and by the tribunal thus established every public servant will be judged.

Our Peaceable Foreign Relations.

It is gratifying to announce that the relations of the United States with all foreign powers continue to be friendly—our position after nearly a century of successful constitutional government. Maintenance of good faith in all our engagements, the avoidance of complications with other nations, and a consistent and amicable attitude toward the strong and weak alike, furnish proof of a political disposition which renders profuse and great will unnecessary. There are no questions of difficulty pending with any foreign government.

The Argentine question has revived the long dormant question of the island of Juan Fernandez, claimed by the United States under a treaty of 1773, and by the United Kingdom under a treaty of 1804. The United States, in breaking up a piratical colony on the islands in 1810, and their subsequent occupation by Great Britain, in view of the ample justification for the act of the "Lexington" and the better condition of the island before and after the alleged occupation by Argentine colonies, this government has consistently maintained its claim as wholly groundless.

A question arisen with the government of Austria-Hungary touching the representation of the United States at Vienna. Having made my constitutional prerogative appointed, estimable citizen of only reached probity and competence as minister at that court, the government of Austria-Hungary invited this government to disregard of certain exceptions based upon allegations against the personal acceptability of Mr. Kelley, the appointed envoy, asking that, in view thereof, the appointment should be withdrawn. The reasons advanced were such as could not be acquiesced in without violation of my constitutional prerogatives, since they necessarily involved a limitation in favor of a foreign government upon the right of selection by the executive, and required such an appointment of a religious test as a qualification for office contrary to the United States as would have resulted in the practical disfranchisement of a large class of our citizens and the abandonment of a vital principle of our government. The Austria-Hungary government finally decided not to receive Mr. Kelley as the envoy of the United States, and that gentleman has since resigned his commission, leaving the post vacant. I have made no new nomination, and the interests of the United States at Vienna are now in the care of the secretary of legation as Charge d' Affaires ad interim.

Early in March last war broke out in Central America, caused by the attempt of Guatemala to annex the Central states into a single government. In the contest between our neighboring states the United States forbore to interfere actively, but lent the aid of their friendly offices in depression of war and to promote peace among contending belligerents, and by such counsel contributed importantly to the restoration of tranquility in that locality.

Emergencies growing out of the civil war in the United States of Colombia, demanded of this administration the employment of an armed force to fulfill its guarantee under the thirty-fifth article of the treaty of 1846. In order to keep the transit open across the Isthmus of Panama, desecrated by the various belligerents expressly reserved to us by the treaty, and to protect the rights of Colombia, the forces sent to the isthmus were instructed to confine their action to "positively and efficiently prevent the transit of arms and munitions, and to interrupt or embarrass." The execution of this delicate and responsible task necessarily involved police control where the local authority was temporarily powerless, but always in aid of the sovereignty of Colombia. Its powerful and successful fulfillment of its duty by this government was highly appreciated by the government of Colombia, and has been followed by expressions of its satisfaction, and of high praise of the officers and men engaged in this service. The restoration of peace on the isthmus by the re-establishment of the constituted civil government there, being thus accomplished, the forces of the United States were withdrawn.

Pending these occurrences, a question of much importance was presented by despatch of the Colombian government proclaiming the closure of the Panama Canal in the hands of insurgents, and declaring vessels held by the revolutionists

to be partial and liable to capture by any power. To neither of these propositions could the United States assent. An effective closure of ports not in the possession of the government, but held by a hostile power, could not be recognized. Neither could the vessels of insurgents against the legitimate sovereignty be deemed *hostes humani generis* within the precepts of international law, whatever might be the definition and penalty of their acts under the municipal laws of the state against whose authority they were in revolt. The denial by this government of the Colombian propositions did not, however, imply the admission of a belligerent status on the part of the insurgents. The Colombian government has expressed its willingness to attend negotiation conventions for the adjustment by arbitration of claims by foreign citizens arising out of the destruction of the city of Aspinwall by the insurrectionary forces.

Inter-Oceanic Transportation.

The interest of the United States in a practicable transit for ships across the strip of land separating the Atlantic from the Pacific has been repeatedly manifested during the last half century. My immediate predecessor caused to be negotiated with Nicaragua a treaty for the construction by, and at the sole cost of the United States, of a canal through Nicaraguan territory and was laid before the senate. Pending the action of that body thereon, I withdrew the treaty for re-examination. Attentive consideration of its provisions leads me to withhold it from re-submission to the senate. Maintaining, as I do, position in a line of presidents from Washington's day, who have prescribed enlarging and entangling alliances with foreign states, I do not favor a policy of acquisition of new and distant territory, or the incorporation of remote interests with our own. The laws of progress are vital and organic, and we must be conscious of that irresistible and commercial expansion which, as the concomitant of our civilization day by day is being urged onward by those increasing facilities of production, transportation and communication to which steam and electricity have given birth. Our day in the present struggle must address ourselves mainly to the development of the vast resources of the great area committed to our charge, and to the cultivation of the arts of peace within our borders. We should be jealously alert in avoiding any compromise which might place the flag of the international association of the world, and complications of distant governments, therefore I am unable to recommend propositions involving paramount privileges of ownership or control of our own territory, when coupled with absolute and unlimited engagements to defend the territorial integrity of the state where such interests lie. While the general project of connecting the two oceans by means of a canal is to be desired, the question of its location, and any scheme to that end to be considered with favor should be free from the features alluded to. The Tehuantepec route is declared by engineers of the highest repute and by competent scientific bodies to be the most practical route for vessels and cargo by means of a ship railway from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The obvious advantages of such a route, if feasible, over others further removed from the lines of traffic between England and the Pacific, and the great maritime artery of the world, must be weighed against the world's benefit, a trust for mankind, to be removed from the chance of domination by any single power. It must not become a point of irritation of hostilities or a source of foreign contention. An engagement combining the construction, ownership and operation of such a work by this government with an offensive and defensive alliance for its protection with the foreign states whose responsibility it would share, is, in my judgment, inconsistent with such dedication to universal and neutral use, and would moreover entail responsibilities for its location beyond the scope of our national policy or present means.

The American-Hungary convention affirmed the wisdom and foresight of those earlier administrations which, long before the conditions of maritime intercourse were changed and enlarged by the progress of the age, proclaimed the vital importance of free traffic across the commercial isthmus and consecrated it in advance to the common use of mankind by their positive declarations, and through their formal obligations to the world. In such realization the efforts of my administration will be applied, ever bearing in mind the principles on which it must rest, and which were declared in no uncertain tones by Mr. Cass, who, while secretary of state in 1850, announced that "What the United States want is Central America next to the happiness of its people is the security and neutrality of the inter-oceanic routes which lead through it." The construction of three ship railways, all under the same successful operation, wholly within our territory, and uniting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, has been accompanied by results of a most interesting and impressive nature, and has created new and important commercial centers, which, in political geography, which powerfully affect our relations toward and necessarily increase our interests in, any trans-isthmian route which may be opened and employed for the ends of peace and commerce, and which, in consequence, for uses inimical to both. Transportation is a factor in the cost of commodities scarcely second to that of their production and weighs as heavily upon the consumer. Our existence already has proven the great importance of having the competition between land-carriage and water-carriage fully developed, each acting as a protection to the public against the tendencies of monopoly, which would otherwise have monopolized wealth and power in the hands of vast corporations. These suggestions may serve to emphasize what I have already said on the score of the necessity of a neutralization of any inter-oceanic transit and this can be accomplished by making the use of the route open to all nations and subject to the ambition and warlike necessities of none. The drawings and report of a recent survey of the Nicaragua canal route made by Chief Engineer Meade will be communicated for your information.

Foreign Affairs Resumed.

The claims of citizens of the United States for losses by reason of the late military operations of Chile in Peru and in Bolivia are the subject of negotiation for a claims convention with Chile, providing for their submission to arbitration.

The harmony of our relations with China is fully sustained in the application of the acts lately passed to execute the treaty of 1880, restrictive of the immigration of Chinese laborers into the United States. Individual cases of hardship have occurred beyond the power of the executive to remedy, and calling for judicial determination.

The Chinese in the United States.

The condition of the Chinese question in the western states and territories is, despite this restrictive legislation, far from being satisfactory. The recent outbreak in Wyoming territory, where numbers of offending Chinamen indisputably within the protection of the treaties and the law were murdered by a mob, and the still more recent threatened outbreak of the same character in Washington territory, are still fresh in the minds of all, and there is apprehension lest the bitterness of feeling against the Mongolian race on the Pacific slope may find vent in similar lawless demonstration. All the power of this government should be exerted to maintain the amicable good faith toward China in the treatment of these men, and the inflexible sternness of the law in bringing the wrong-doers to justice should be insisted upon. Every effort has been made by this government to prevent these violent outbreaks, and to aid the representatives of China in their investigation of the outrages, and it is but just to say that they are traceable to the subject of the extradition of the United States, engaged in competition with Chinese laborers. Race prejudice is the chief factor in originating these disturbances, and it exists in a large part of our domain, jeopardizing our peace and our good faith toward the United States, engaged in competition with Chinese laborers. Race prejudice is the chief factor in originating these disturbances, and it exists in a large part of our domain, jeopardizing our peace and our good faith toward the United States, engaged in competition with Chinese laborers. Race prejudice is the chief factor in originating these disturbances, and it exists in a large part of our domain, jeopardizing our peace and our good faith toward the United States, engaged in competition with Chinese laborers.

The dispute of Germany and Spain, relating to the domination of the Caroline Islands, has attracted the attention of this government by reason of extensive interests of American citizens having been set up in that country. It is hoped that pending war claims of our citizens will be adjusted.

In conformity with notification given by the government of Peru, the existing treaties of commerce and extradition between us and that country will terminate March 31, 1885.

Our good relationship with Russia continues. An officer of the navy detailed for the purpose is now on his way to Siberia, bearing the testimonials voted by congress to those who generously succored the survivors of the unfortunate "Jeannette" expedition.

It is gratifying to advert to the cordiality of our intercourse with Spain. The long pending claim of the owners of the large revenue cutter, captured through the admitted dereliction of the Spanish authorities in the Philippine Islands, has been adjusted by arbitration and an indemnity awarded. The principles of arbitration in such cases to which our people have long and consistently adhered, thus receive a fresh and gratifying confirmation. Other questions with Spain have been disposed of or are under diplomatic consideration with a view to just and honorable settlement.

The operations of the commercial agreement with Spain of January 24 and February 13, 1884, has been found inadequate to the commercial need of the United States and the Spanish Antilles, and the terms of the agreement have been extended to cover the interpretation in those islands. Negotiations have been instituted at Madrid for a full treaty not open to the objections, and in the line of the general policy touching the neighboring intercourse of proximate communities, to which I elsewhere advert, and aiming, moreover, at the removal of existing burdens and annoying restrictions; and although a satisfactory termination is promised I am compelled to delay its announcement.

An international conference was held at Bern in September, on the invitation of the Swiss government. The envoy of the United States attended as a delegate, but refrained from committing the government to the results, except by signing the recommendatory protocol adopted. The interesting and important subject of international copyright has been before you for several years. Action is certainly desirable to effect the object in view, and the subject has been referred to the relative advantage of treating it by legislation or by specific treaty, the matured views of the Bern conference cannot fail to aid your consideration of the subject.

The termination of the commercial treaty of 1852 between the United States and Turkey has been sought by that government. While there is a question as to the sufficiency of the notice of the termination given, yet as the commercial rights of our citizens in Turkey come under the favored national guarantees of the prior treaty of 1830, and as equal treatment is admitted by the porte, no inconvenience can result from the assent of this government to the revisions of the Ottoman treaty, in which the treaty powers have been invited to join. Questions concerning our citizens in Turkey may be affected by the porte's non-acquiescence in the right of expatriation, and by the imposition of religious tests as a condition of residence, in which this government cannot concur. The United States must hold in their intercourse with their citizens to be respected, and equal civil privileges accorded to them without regard to creed, and affected by no considerations save those growing out of domicile return to the land of original allegiance, or of unfulfilled personal obligations which may survive under municipal laws after such voluntary return.

The negotiation with Venezuela relative to the rehearing of the awards of the mixed commission constituted under the treaty of 1866, was resumed, in view of the recent acquiescence of the Venezuelan government in the principles established by this government, and the settlement of the old treaty could only be set on foot by the operation of a new convention. A result substantially in accord with the advisory suggestions contained in your communication, and which has been agreed upon, and will shortly be submitted to the senate for ratification.

Under section 3659 of the revised statutes, all funds held in trust by the United States, and all annual interest accruing thereon, when not otherwise required by treaty, are to be invested in stocks of the United States bearing a rate of interest not less than 5 per cent per annum. There being now no profitable stocks available, a high rate of interest, the letter of the statute is at present inapplicable, but its spirit is preserved by continuing to make investments of this nature in current stocks.

The late insurrectionary movements in Hayti, and the demand for a convention of that republic has made prompt provision for adjudicating the losses suffered by foreigners because of hostilities there, and the claims of certain citizens of the United States will be in this manner determined.

The long pending claims of the two citizens of the United States, Pelletier and Lazare, have been disposed of by arbitration and an award, in favor of the United States, has been made, the terms of the engagement is final. It remains for congress to provide for the payment of the stipulated moiety of the expenses.

A question arose with Hayti during the past year, in relation to the conventional treatment of an American citizen, Mr. Vanbokkelen, a resident of Port au Prince, who, on suit by creditors residing in the United States, was sentenced to imprisonment, and the operation of Hayti's Gate was denied to the defendant, a native Haytian. This government asserted his treaty right to equal treatment with natives of Hayti in all suits at law. Our contention was denied by the Haytian government, and the defendant still protesting to maintain the ground taken against Mr. Vanbokkelen's right, terminated the controversy by setting him at liberty without explanation.

An international conference to consider the means to be adopted to prevent cholera and other epidemic diseases was held at Rome in May last, and adjourned to meet again on farther notice. An expert delegate on behalf of the United States has attended and will submit reports.

Our relations with Mexico continue to be most cordial as befits those of neighbors between whom the strongest ties of friendship and commercial intimacy exist, as the nature and growing consequences of our similarity in institutions and geographical proximity. The relocation of the boundary line between the United States and Mexico eastward of the Rio Grande under the convention of 1848, has been happily accomplished, but I apprehend no difficulty in securing a prolongation of the period of its accomplishment. The lately concluded commercial treaty with Mexico still awaits the stipulated legislation to give it the force of law, and the one year's additional time has been secured by a supplementary article signed in February last and since ratified on both sides. As this convention, so important to the interests of both countries, was mutually beneficially intercourse, and enlarged facilities of transit, added to profit to both, create new markets, and furnish resources for the industry of both, I have already adverted to the suggested construction of a ship railway across the

narrow formation of the territory of Mexico at Tehuantepec. With the gradual recovery of Peru from the effects of her late disastrous conflict with Chile, and with the restoration of civil authority in that country, it is hoped that pending war claims of our citizens will be adjusted.

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Under section 3659 of the revised statutes, all funds held in trust by the United States, and all annual interest accruing thereon, when not otherwise required by treaty, are to be invested in stocks of the United States bearing a rate of interest not less than 5 per cent per annum. There being now no profitable stocks available, a high rate of interest, the letter of the statute is at present inapplicable, but its spirit is preserved by continuing to make investments of this nature in current stocks.

The late insurrectionary movements in Hayti, and the demand for a convention of that republic has made prompt provision for adjudicating the losses suffered by foreigners because of hostilities there, and the claims of certain citizens of the United States will be in this manner determined.

The long pending claims of the two citizens of the United States, Pelletier and Lazare, have been disposed of by arbitration and an award, in favor of the United States, has been made, the terms of the engagement is final. It remains for congress to provide for the payment of the stipulated moiety of the expenses.

A question arose with Hayti during the past year, in relation to the conventional treatment of an American citizen, Mr. Vanbokkelen, a resident of Port au Prince, who, on suit by creditors residing in the United States, was sentenced to imprisonment, and the operation of Hayti's Gate was denied to the defendant, a native Haytian. This government asserted his treaty right to equal treatment with natives of Hayti in all suits at law. Our contention was denied by the Haytian government, and the defendant still protesting to maintain the ground taken against Mr. Vanbokkelen's right, terminated the controversy by setting him at liberty without explanation.

An international conference to consider the means to be adopted to prevent cholera and other epidemic diseases was held at Rome in May last, and adjourned to meet again on farther notice. An expert delegate on behalf of the United States has attended and will submit reports.

Our relations with Mexico continue to be most cordial as befits those of neighbors between whom the strongest ties of friendship and commercial intimacy exist, as the nature and growing consequences of our similarity in institutions and geographical proximity. The relocation of the boundary line between the United States and Mexico eastward of the Rio Grande under the convention of 1848, has been happily accomplished, but I apprehend no difficulty in securing a prolongation of the period of its accomplishment. The lately concluded commercial treaty with Mexico still awaits the stipulated legislation to give it the force of law, and the one year's additional time has been secured by a supplementary article signed in February last and since ratified on both sides. As this convention, so important to the interests of both countries, was mutually beneficially intercourse, and enlarged facilities of transit, added to profit to both, create new markets, and furnish resources for the industry of both, I have already adverted to the suggested construction of a ship railway across the

narrow formation of the territory of Mexico at Tehuantepec. With the gradual recovery of Peru from the effects of her late disastrous conflict with Chile, and with the restoration of civil authority in that country, it is hoped that pending war claims of our citizens will be adjusted.

In conformity with notification given by the government of Peru, the existing treaties of commerce and extradition between us and that country will terminate March 31, 1885.

Our good relationship with Russia continues. An officer of the navy detailed for the purpose is now on his way to Siberia, bearing the testimonials voted by congress to those who generously succored the survivors of the unfortunate "Jeannette" expedition.

It is gratifying to advert to the cordiality of our intercourse with Spain. The long pending claim of the owners of the large revenue cutter, captured through the admitted dereliction of the Spanish authorities in the Philippine Islands, has been adjusted by arbitration and an indemnity awarded. The principles of arbitration in such cases to which our people have long and consistently adhered, thus receive a fresh and gratifying confirmation. Other questions with Spain have been disposed of or are under diplomatic consideration with a view to just and honorable settlement.

The operations of the commercial agreement with Spain of January 24 and February 13, 1884, has been found inadequate to the commercial need of the United States and the Spanish Antilles, and the terms of the agreement have been extended to cover the interpretation in those islands. Negotiations have been instituted at Madrid for a full treaty not open to the objections, and in the line of the general policy touching the neighboring intercourse of proximate communities, to which I elsewhere advert, and aiming, moreover, at the removal of existing burdens and annoying restrictions; and although a satisfactory termination is promised I am compelled to delay its announcement.

An international conference was held at Bern in September, on the invitation of the Swiss government. The envoy of the United States attended as a delegate, but refrained from committing the government to the results, except by signing the recommendatory protocol adopted. The interesting and important subject of international copyright has been before you for several years. Action is certainly desirable to effect the object in view, and the subject has been referred to the relative advantage of treating it by legislation or by specific treaty, the matured views of the Bern conference cannot fail to aid your consideration of the subject.

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