

THE MESSAGE IN FULL

Finance and Foreign Affairs the
Sole Topic.

STANDS FIRM ON ONE POINT

The President Evidently Endorses the
Monroe Doctrine, but is Silent
on Annexation.

Washington, D. C., Dec. 3.—The President's annual message, as transmitted to both houses of congress today, is given below in its entirety:

To the Congress of the United States:

The present assemblage of the legislative branch of our government occurs at a time when the interests of our people and the needs of the country give especial prominence to the condition of our foreign relations and the exigencies of our national finances. The reports of the different departments of government fully and plainly exhibit what has been accomplished within the scope of their respective duties and present such recommendations for the betterment of our country's condition as a result of patriotic and intelligent labor and observation.

I therefore deem it my executive duty adequately performed at this time by presenting to congress the important phases of our situation, as related to our intercourse with foreign nations, and a statement of the financial problems which confront us, omitting, except as they are related to these topics, any reference to departmental operations. I earnestly invite, however, not only the careful consideration, but the severely critical scrutiny, of the congress and my fellow countrymen, to the various matters concerning these departmental operations. I justly and fairly examined them will furnish proof of assiduous and painstaking care for the public welfare.

I press the recommendations they contain upon the respectful attention of those charged with the duty of legislation, because their adoption would promote the people's good. My commendatory tariff legislation of January last, the Argentine republic, recognizing the value of the large market opened to the free importation of its wools under our last tariff act, has permitted certain products of the United States to enter at reduced duties. It is pleasing to note that the efforts we have made to enlarge the exchanges of trade on a sound basis of mutual benefit are in this instance appreciated by the country from which our woolen factories obtain their needful supplies of raw material.

BOUNDARY DISPUTE.

The Missions boundary dispute between the Argentine Republic and Brazil referred to the president of the United States as arbitrator during the term of my predecessor, and which was submitted to me for determination, resulted in an award in favor of Brazil, upon the historical and documentary evidence presented, thus settling a long protracted controversy, and again demonstrating the wisdom and desirability of settling international boundary disputes by recourse to friendly arbitration.

Negotiations progressing for a revival of the United States and Chilean claims commission, whose work was abruptly terminated last year by the expiration of the stipulated time within which the commission was to report.

The resumption of specie payments by Chile is a step of great interest and importance both in its direct consequences upon her own welfare and as evidencing the soundness of a domestic condition in one of the most influential of the South American republics.

THE ORIENTAL WAR.

The close of the momentous struggle between China and Japan, while relieving the diplomatic agents of this government from the delicate task of mediating at the request of both countries of entering such service to the subjects of either belligerent within the territorial limits of the other, as our neutral position permitted, developed a domestic condition in the Chinese empire which has caused much anxiety and called for prompt and careful attention. Either as a result of a weak control by the central government over the provincial administrations, following the disruption of traditional governmental authority under the stress of an overwhelming national disaster or as a manifestation upon good opportunity of the avowed Chinese desire to break the old fanatical spirit against foreigners which, unchecked by the local authorities, had been so long a source of trouble, have culminated in attacks on foreign missionary stations, causing much destruction of property and attended with personal injuries as well as loss of life. Although but one American citizen was reported to have been actually wounded, and although the destruction of property may have fallen more heavily upon the missionaries of other countries, the government of our own, it plainly behooves this government to take the most prompt and decided action to guard against similar or perhaps more dreadful calamities befalling hundreds of our countrymen.

The demands of the United States and other powers for the degradation and punishment of the responsible officials of the respective cities and provinces who by neglect or otherwise have permitted uprisings, and the adoption of stern measures by the emperor's government for the protection of the life and property of foreigners were followed by the arrest and dismissal of certain provincial officials found derelict in duty and the punishment by death of a number of those adjudged guilty of participating in the outrages. This government insisted that a special American commission should visit the province where the first disturbance occurred for the purpose of investigating. This latter commission, formed after much opposition, has gone overseas from Tien Tsin, accompanied by a suitable Chinese escort, and by its demonstration of our government's readiness and ability of our government to protect its citizens, will act, it is believed, as a most influential deterrent of any similar outbreaks. The energetic steps we have thus taken are all the more likely to result in future safety to our citizens in China, because the imperial government is, I am persuaded, entirely convinced that we desire only the liberty and protection of our own citizens and redress for any wrongs they may have suffered, and that we have no ulterior design or objects, political or otherwise. China will not forget either our kindly service to her citizens during the late war, nor the further fact that, while furnishing all the facilities at our command to further the negotiations of peace between her and Japan, we sought no advantages and have thus taken no advantage of both China and Japan have in special dispatches transmitted through their respective diplomatic representatives expressed in a most pleasing manner their grateful appreciation of our assistance and of the value of our aid in paying the way to their resumption of peaceful relations.

WALKER INCIDENT.

The customary cordial relations between

this country and France have been undisturbed, with the exception that a full explanation of the treatment of John L. Walker by the expeditionary military authorities of France still remains to be given. Mr. Walker, formerly United States consul at Tamatave, remained in Madagascar, his term of office having expired, and was apparently successful in procuring business concessions from the Hovas of greater or less value. After the occupation of Tamatave and the declaration of martial law by the French, he was arrested upon various charges, among them that of communicating military information to the enemies of France, was tried and convicted by military tribunal and sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment. Following the course justified by abundant precedents, this government requested from that of France the record of the proceedings of the French tribunal which resulted in Mr. Walker's condemnation. This request has been complied with to the extent of supplying a copy of the official records from which appear the constitution and organization of the court, the charges as formulated and the general course and result of the trial, and by which it is shown that the accused was tried in open court and defended by counsel. But the evidence adduced in support of the charges, which was not received by the French minister for foreign affairs till the first week in October, has thus far been withheld, the French government taking the ground that its production in response to our demand would establish a bad precedent. The efforts of our ambassador to procure it, however, though impeded by recent changes in the French ministry, have not been relaxed and it is confidently expected that some satisfactory resolution of the matter will shortly be reached. Meanwhile it appears that Mr. Walker's confinement has been alleviated, and that the state of his health and all the other circumstances of the case demand or permit. An agreeable contrast to the difference above noted respecting a matter of common concern, which nothing is sought except such a mutually satisfactory outcome as the true merits of the case require, is the solution of the French chambers favoring the conclusion of a permanent treaty of arbitration between the two countries.

An invitation has been extended by France to the government and people of the United States to participate in a great international exposition to be held at Paris as a suitable commemoration of the close of this, the world's marvelous century of progress. I heartily recommend its acceptance, together with such legislation as may be necessary to provide for a due representation of this government and its people on the occasion.

RETALIATION NOT A GOOD SYSTEM

Other Means Advised to Perfect Protection of our Markets.

Our relations with the states of the German empire are, in some aspects, typical of a condition of things elsewhere found in countries whose productions and trade are similar to our own. The close rivalries of competing industries, the influence of the delusive doctrine that the internal development of a nation is promoted and its wealth increased by a policy which undertakes to reserve its home markets for the exclusive use of its own producers, necessarily obstructs their sale in foreign markets and prevents free access to the products of the world; the desire to retain trade in time-worn ruts regardless of the inexorable laws of demand and supply, and our own halting attitude in inviting a free exchange of commodities, and by this means impeding our footing in the external markets naturally open to us, have created a situation somewhat injurious to American interests. Not only in Germany, where they are perhaps most noticeable, but in adjacent countries.

The exports affected are largely American cattle and other food products, the case assigned for the unfavorable discrimination being that their consumption is deleterious to the public health. This is all the more irritating, in view of the fact that no European state is as jealous of the excellence and wholesomeness of its exported food supplies as the United States, nor so easily able on account of inherent soundness to guarantee these qualities. Nor are these difficulties confined to our food products designed for export. Our great insurance companies, for example, having built up a vast business abroad and invested a large share of their gains in foreign countries, in compliance with the local laws and regulations, have been subjected to losses which have lately been in Prussia. It is not to be forgotten that international trade can not be one-sided. Its currents are alternating and its movement should be honestly reciprocal. Without this it almost necessarily degenerates into a device to gain advantage or a contrivance to secure benefits with only the semblance of a return. In our dealings with other nations we ought to be open-handed and scrupulously fair.

This should be our policy as a producing nation, and it plainly becomes us as a people who love generosity and the moral aspect of national good will to extend to other nations the same consideration. These considerations should not, however, constrain us to submit to unfair discrimination nor to silently acquiesce in vexatious hindrances to the enjoyment of our people, and because the notable enlargement of area of legitimate advantages of proper trade relations. If an examination of the situation suggests such measures on our part as would involve restrictions similar to those from which we suffered, the way to such a measure is easy. It should, however, by no means be lightly entered upon, since the necessity for the inauguration of such a policy would be regretted by the best sentiment of our people, and because it is naturally and logically a right to the consequences of the gravest character.

I take pleasure in calling to your attention the encomiums bestowed on these vessels of our new navy, which took part in the notable ceremony of the opening of the Kiel canal. It was fitting that this extraordinary achievement of the newer German nationality should be celebrated in the progress of American exposition to the latest developments of the world's naval energy.

RELATIONS WITH GREAT BRITAIN

Equal Patrol—Alaskan Boundary and the Venezuelan Dispute.

Our relations with Great Britain, always intimate and important, have demanded during the past year a greater share of consideration than is usual. Several vexatious questions were left undetermined by the decision of the Bering Sea arbitration tribunal. The application of the principles laid down by that august body has not been followed by the results they were intended to accomplish, either because the principles themselves lacked in breadth and definiteness, or because their execution has been more or less imperfect. Much correspondence has been exchanged between the two governments on the subject of preventing the exterminating slaughter of seals. The insufficiency of British patrol of Bering sea under the regulations agreed on by the two governments has been pointed out and yet only two British ships have been on police during this season in these waters. The need of a more effective enforcement of existing regulations, as well as the adoption of such additional regulations as experience has shown to be absolutely necessary urged upon the British government, but thus far without effective results. In the meantime the de-

pletion of the seal herds, by means of pelagic hunting, has so harmfully progressed that unless their slaughter is at once checked their extinction within a few years is to be a matter of absolute certainty.

The understanding by which the United States was to pay and Great Britain to receive a lump sum of \$450,000 in full settlement of all British claims for damages arising from our seizure of British sealing vessels unauthorized under the award of the Paris tribunal of arbitration, was not confirmed by the last congress, which declined to make the necessary appropriation. I am still of the opinion that this arrangement was a judicious and advantageous one for the government, and I earnestly recommend that it be again considered and sanctioned. However, this does not meet with the favor of congress, it certainly will hardly dissent from the proposition that the government is bound by every consideration of honor and good faith to provide for the satisfaction of these claims by arbitration as the only other alternative. A treaty of arbitration has therefore been agreed upon and will be immediately laid before congress, and the mode suggested by the treaty a final settlement may be reached.

Notwithstanding that Great Britain originated the proposal that there be enforced international rules for the protection of the seal herds, based on the recommendations of the maritime conference of Washington and concurred in, suggesting March 1, 1895, as the date to be set by proclamation for carrying these rules into general effect, her majesty's government, having encountered opposition on the part of British shipping interests, announced its inability to accept the findings of the conference, which was a serious matter. The British government is still in abeyance, without prospect of a better condition in the near future.

ALASKAN SURVEY.

The completion of the preliminary survey of the Alaskan boundary which follows the contour of the coast from the southernmost point of Prince of Wales island until it strikes the 141st meridian at or near the summit of Mount St. Elias, awarded further recommendations, which are being earnestly recommended.

This survey was undertaken under the provisions of the convention entered into by this country and Great Britain July 22, 1882, and the supplementary provisions of the convention of February 22, 1893, to the remaining section of the Alaskan boundary, which follows the 141st meridian northward from Mount St. Elias to the frozen ocean, the settlement of which involves the physical location of the meridian mentioned, no conventional agreement has yet been made.

The ascertainment of a given meridian at a particular point is work requiring much time and careful observations and surveys. Such observations and surveys were undertaken by the United States coast and geodetic survey in 1890 and 1891, while similar work in the same quarters under the respective governments have given nearly coincident results, but these surveys have been independently conducted and no international agreement to mark those or any other parts of the 141st meridian by permanent monuments has yet been made.

In the meantime, the valley of the Yukon is becoming a highway through the hitherto unexplored wilds of Alaska. Abundant mineral wealth is being discovered, and the prospect of a great junction of the boundary meridian with the Yukon and its tributaries. In these circumstances it is expedient, indeed imperative, that the jurisdiction of the respective governments be determined by a joint delimitation of the 141st meridian by an international commission of experts, which, if congress will authorize it and make due provision therefor, can be accomplished with no unreasonable delay.

It is impossible to overlook the vital importance of continuing the work already entered upon and supplementing it by further effective measures to determine the exact location of this entire boundary line.

I call attention to the unsatisfactory delimitation of the respective jurisdictions of the United States and the British empire in the narrow waters that connect them. The waters in question are frequented by fishermen of both nationalities and their nets are here used, owing to the lack of regulations, to the detriment of the boundary waters and the injury to the fisheries of both nations. The true boundary vexatious disputes and injuries to the fisheries of both nations are frequent. By fishermen of both nationalities and their nets are here used, owing to the lack of regulations, to the detriment of the boundary waters and the injury to the fisheries of both nations.

It being apparent that the boundary dispute between Great Britain and the republic of Venezuela concerning the limits of British Guiana was approaching an amicable settlement, and the approach to the narrow waters that connect them. The waters in question are frequented by fishermen of both nationalities and their nets are here used, owing to the lack of regulations, to the detriment of the boundary waters and the injury to the fisheries of both nations.

It being apparent that the boundary dispute between Great Britain and the republic of Venezuela concerning the limits of British Guiana was approaching an amicable settlement, and the approach to the narrow waters that connect them. The waters in question are frequented by fishermen of both nationalities and their nets are here used, owing to the lack of regulations, to the detriment of the boundary waters and the injury to the fisheries of both nations.

It being apparent that the boundary dispute between Great Britain and the republic of Venezuela concerning the limits of British Guiana was approaching an amicable settlement, and the approach to the narrow waters that connect them. The waters in question are frequented by fishermen of both nationalities and their nets are here used, owing to the lack of regulations, to the detriment of the boundary waters and the injury to the fisheries of both nations.

THE LATE UPRISING IN HAWAII

Lives of Men Unjustly Condemned.

Early in January last an uprising against the government of Hawaii was promptly suppressed. Martial law was forthwith proclaimed and numerous arrests were made of persons suspected of being in sympathy with the royalist party. Among these were several citizens of the United States who were either convicted by a military court and sentenced to death, imprisonment or fine, or were deported without trial. The United States, which had previously protested to the Hawaiian government, but thus far without effective results. In the meantime the de-

code justice itself and demand a stay of execution until the proceedings had been submitted to this government and knowledge obtained therefrom that our citizens had received a fair trial. The death sentences were subsequently commuted or were remitted on conditions of leaving the islands. The cases of certain Americans arrested and expelled by arbitrary orders without formal charges or trial has attracted attention and some instances have found to justify remittance and a claim for indemnity which Hawaii has not thus far conceded.

Mr. Thurston, the Hawaiian minister, having furnished this government abundant reason for asking that he be recalled, that course was pursued and his successor has lately been received.

ITALIAN LYNCHING.

The deplorable lynching of several Italian laborers in Colorado was naturally followed by international representations and I am happy to say that the best efforts of the state in which the outrages have been perpetrated have been put forth to punish the authors of this atrocious crime. The dependent families of some of the unfortunate victims invite by their deplorable condition, gracious provision for their needs.

The manifestations against helpless aliens may be traced through successive stages to the vicious patron system, which, unchecked by our immigration and contract labor statutes, control these workers from the moment of landing on our shores and farms them out in distant and often rude regions where their sharpening competition in the fields of bread winning toil brings them into contact with other labor interests. With welcoming as we should those who seek our shores to merge themselves in our body politic and win personal competence by honest effort, we can not regard such an assembly of destitute and alien laborers, hired out to speculators and shipped hither and thither as the prospect of gain may dictate as otherwise than repugnant to the spirit of our civilization, degrading to our individual and national honor, and a hindrance to the building up of stable communities, resting upon the wholesome ambitions of the citizens and constituting the prime factor in the prosperity and progress of our nation. If legislation can reach this growing evil it certainly should be attempted.

RELATIONS WITH JAPAN.

Japan has furnished abundant evidence of her vast gain in every trait and characteristic that constitutes a nation's honor. We have reason for congratulating the nation in the fact that the government of the United States by the exchange of liberal treaty stipulations with the new Japan, was the first to recognize her wonderful advance and to extend to her national enlightenment and progressive character.

The boundary dispute which lately threatened to embroil Guatemala and Mexico has happily yielded to pacific counsels and its determination has by the joint agreement of the parties, been submitted to the sole arbitration of the United States minister to Mexico.

The minister was appointed under the convention of February 13, 1893, to set new monuments along the boundary between the United States and Mexico has completed its task.

As a sequence of the failure of a scheme for the colonization in Mexico of negroes, mostly emigrants from Alabama under contract, a great number of these helpless and suffering people, starving and smitten with contagious disease, were sent to the frontier, where in a wretched plight, they were quarantined by the Texas authorities. Learning of their destitute condition, I directed rations to be furnished them near the Cuban shore, but outside the expiration of the quarantine, they were conveyed by the railway company at comparatively nominal rates to their homes in Alabama upon my assurance in the absence of any legal liability for the cost of the transportation, that I would recommend to congress an appropriation for its payment. I now strongly urge upon congress the propriety of making such an appropriation. It should be remembered that the measures taken were dictated, not only by sympathy and humanity, but by a conviction that it was not compatible with the dignity of this government that so large a body of our citizens should be reduced to the need of relief upon the charity of a neighboring state.

THE TROUBLES OF NICARAGUA.

Great Britain's Bluff and the Subjugation of the Republic.

In last year's message I narrated at some length the jurisdictional questions then freshly arisen in the Mosquito Indian strip of Nicaragua.

Since that time, by the voluntary act of the Mosquito nation, the territory reserved to them has been incorporated with Nicaragua, the Indians formally subjecting themselves to be governed by the general laws and regulations of the republic instead of by their own customs and regulations and thus availing themselves of a privilege secured to them by the treaty between Nicaragua and Great Britain of January 28, 1856.

The case of the British vice consul, Hatch, and of several of his countrymen who had been summarily expelled from Nicaragua by the government with considerable indignity, provoked a claim by Great Britain upon Nicaragua for pecuniary indemnity, which upon Nicaragua's refusal to admit liability was enforced by Great Britain. The case was a serious one, and the jurisdiction of Nicaragua was in no way questioned by Great Britain, the former's arbitrary conduct in regard to British subjects furnishing the ground for this proceeding.

A British naval force occupied without fines imposed on our merchandise by the customs officers of these islands for trifling infractions, which have resulted in such cases in instances where the equity of the complaint was apparent, though the vexatious practice has not been wholly discontinued.

OUR MISSIONARIES IN TURKEY.

American Consuls Have Done Their Utmost to Protect Them.

Advices from Turkey have continued to excite the people concerning the reported massacres of Christians in Armenia and the development there and in other districts of a spirit of fanatical hostility to Christian influences naturally excited apprehension for the safety of the devoted foreign missionary societies in the United States, reside in Turkey under the guarantee of law and usage and in the legitimate performance of their educational and religious mission. No efforts have been spared in their behalf, and their protection in person and property has been earnestly and vigorously enforced by every means within our power. I regret, however, that an attempt on our part to obtain better information concerning the true condition of affairs in the disturbed quarters of the Ottoman empire by sending thither the United States consul at Sivas to make investigation and the report was thwarted by the objections of the Turkish government.

This government on our part was in no sense meant as a gratuitous entanglement of the United States in the so-called eastern question, nor as an officious interference with the right and duty which belong by treaty to the great European powers, who are called for their intervention in political matters affecting the good government and religious freedom of the non-Muslim subjects of the sultan, but it arose

north of the 35th parallel.

It is especially noticeable that Russia favors prohibition of the use of the firearms in seal hunting throughout the proposed area and a longer closed season for pelagic sealing.

AS TO SAMOA.

In my last two annual messages I called the attention of the congress to the position we occupy as one of the parties to a treaty or agreement by which we became jointly bound with England and Germany to so interfere with the government of Samoa as in effect to assume the management of its affairs. On the 9th of May, 1894, I transmitted to the senate a special message with accompanying documents giving information on the subject and emphasizing the opinion I have at all time entertained that our situation in this matter was inconsistent with the mission and traditions of our government, in violation of the principles we profess and in all its phases, mischievous and vexatious. I again press this subject upon the attention of congress and ask for such legislation as will lead the way to our relief from obligations both irksome and unnatural.

AN INSURRECTION ON CUBAN SOIL.

Neutrality Laws Must Be Observed, No Matter What Grievance There is.

Cuba is again gravely disturbed. An insurrection, in one respect, more active than the last preceding revolt which commenced in 1895, now exists in a large part of the eastern interior of the island, menacing even some of the population on the coast. Besides deranging the commercial exchanges of the island, which our country takes the predominant part in, this flagrant condition of hostilities, by arousing sentimental sympathies and inciting adventurous support among our people, has entailed earnest effort on the part of this government to enforce obedience to our neutrality laws and prevent the territory of the United States from being abused as a vantage ground from which to aid those bearing arms against Spanish sovereignty.

Whatever may be the traditional sympathy of our countrymen as individuals with a people who seem to be struggling for larger autonomy and greater freedom, and depend, as such sympathy naturally does, on the behalf of our neighbors, the plain duty of our government is to observe in good faith the recognized obligations of international relationship. The performance of this duty should not be made more difficult by the sympathy of our citizens of the obligations growing out of their allegiance to their country, which should restrain them from violating as individuals the neutrality which the nation of which they are members is bound to observe in its relations to friendly sovereign states. Though neither the warmth of our people's sympathy with the Cuban insurgents, nor the loss of material damage consequent upon the insurrection, nor the desire to restore peace and order, or any shock our humane sensibility may have received from the cruelties which appear to especially characterize this sanguinary and senseless civil war, have in the least shaken the determination of the government to honestly fulfill every international obligation, yet it is to be earnestly hoped on every ground that the devastation of actual conflict may speedily be stayed and order and quiet restored to the stricken island, bringing into their train the activity and thrift of peaceful pursuits.

ALLIANCE INCIDENT.

One notable instance of interference by Spain with passing American ships has occurred. On March 8, last, the Alliance, while bound from Colon to New York, and following the customary track for vessels near the Cuban shore, but outside the three-mile limit, was fired upon by a Spanish gunboat. Protest was promptly made by the United States against this act as not being justified by a state of war, nor by the right of self-defense, and the usual paths of commerce, nor tolerable in view of the wanton peril occasioned to innocent life and property. The act was disavowed, with full expression of regret and assurance of the readiness of such just cause of complaint, while the offending officer was relieved of his command.

Military arrests of citizens of the United States in Cuba have occasioned frequent reclamations. Where held on criminal charges their delivery to the ordinary civil jurisdiction for trial has been demanded and obtained in conformity with treaty provisions and where merely by way of military precaution under a proclaimed state of siege without formulated accusation their release or trial has been insisted upon. The right of American consular officers on the island to demand and secure the removal of cases having been questioned by the insular authorities, their enjoyment of the privilege stipulated by treaty for the consuls of Germany was claimed under the favored nation provision of our convention and was promptly recognized.

MORA CLAIM.

The long standing demand of Antonio Maximo Mora against Spain has at last been settled by the payment, on the 26th of September last, of the sum originally agreed upon in liquidation of the claim. Its distribution among the parties entitled to receive it has proceeded as rapidly as the rights of those claiming the fund could be safely determined.

The enforcement of differential duties against products of this country exported to Cuba and Puerto Rico prompted the immediate claim on our part to the benefit of the minimum tariff of Spain in return for the most favorable treatment permitted by our laws as regards to production of Spanish territories. A commercial arrangement was concluded in January last securing the treatment so claimed.

Vigorous protests against excessive fines imposed on our merchandise by the customs officers of these islands for trifling infractions, which have resulted in such cases in instances where the equity of the complaint was apparent, though the vexatious practice has not been wholly discontinued.

OUR MISSIONARIES IN TURKEY.

American Consuls Have Done Their Utmost to Protect Them.

Advices from Turkey have continued to excite the people concerning the reported massacres of Christians in Armenia and the development there and in other districts of a spirit of fanatical hostility to Christian influences naturally excited apprehension for the safety of the devoted foreign missionary societies in the United States, reside in Turkey under the guarantee of law and usage and in the legitimate performance of their educational and religious mission. No efforts have been spared in their behalf, and their protection in person and property has been earnestly and vigorously enforced by every means within our power. I regret, however, that an attempt on our part to obtain better information concerning the true condition of affairs in the disturbed quarters of the Ottoman empire by sending thither the United States consul at Sivas to make investigation and the report was thwarted by the objections of the Turkish government.

This government on our part was in no sense meant as a gratuitous entanglement of the United States in the so-called eastern question, nor as an officious interference with the right and duty which belong by treaty to the great European powers, who are called for their intervention in political matters affecting the good government and religious freedom of the non-Muslim subjects of the sultan, but it arose

solely from our desire to have an accurate knowledge of the conditions in our efforts to care for those entitled to our protection. The presence of our naval vessels, which are now in the vicinity of the disturbed districts, affords opportunity to acquire a measure of familiarity with the condition of affairs, and will enable us to take suitable steps for the protection of any interests of our countrymen within reach of our ships that might be found imperiled. The Ottoman government has lately issued an imperial trade exempting forever from taxation any American college for girls at Scutari. Repeated assurances have also been obtained by our envoy at Constantinople that similar institutions maintained and administered by our countrymen shall be secured in the enjoyment of all rights and that our citizens throughout the empire shall be protected.

The government, however, in view of existing facts, is far from relying upon such assurances as the limit of its duty. Our minister has been vigilant and alert in securing all possible protection in individual cases where the life, property or safety was imperiled. We have sent ships as far toward the points of actual disturbance as it is possible for them to go, where they offer refuge to those obliged to flee and we have the property of other powers which have ships in the neighborhood that our citizens, as well as their citizens, will be received and protected on board those ships.

On the demand of our ministers orders have been issued by the sultan that Turkish soldiers shall guard and escort to the coast American refugees. Those orders have been carried out, and our latest intelligence gives assurance of the personal safety of our citizens and missionaries. Though thus far no lives of American citizens have been sacrificed, there can be no doubt that serious loss and destruction of mission property has resulted from riotous conflicts and outrageous attacks.

By treaty several of the most powerful European powers have secured a right and have assumed a duty not only in behalf of their own citizens and in furtherance of their own interests, but as agents of the Christian world. Their right is to enforce such conduct of the Turkish government as will restrain fanatical brutality and if this falls their duty is to so interfere as to insure against such dreadful occurrences in Turkey as have lately shocked civilization. The powers desire this right to be exercised in their own behalf, and it is earnestly hoped that prompt and effective action on their part will not be delayed.

The consulates at Erzeroum and agents at Erzeroum and Karpas, for which appropriation was made last session, have been previously filed by trusted employees of the department of state. These appointments, though now in Turkey, have not received their exequaturs.

ARBITRATED CASES.

The arbitration of the claim of the Venezuela steam transportation company under the treaty of January 19, 1892, between the United States and Venezuela resulted in an award in favor of the claimant.

IMPROVE THE CONSULAR SERVICE.

The President Advises That Civil Service Regulations Apply.

In view of the growth of our interests in foreign countries and the encouraging prospects for general expansion of our commerce, the question of the improvement in the consular service has increased in importance and urgency. Though there is no doubt that the great body of consular officers are rendering valuable services to the nation, and that, in many instances, the needs of some plan of appointment and control which would tend to secure a higher average of efficiency can not be denied. The importance of the subject has caused the executive department to take steps which will properly be taken without additional legislation and answer the need of a better system of consular appointments.

The matter having been committed to the consideration of the secretary of state in pursuance of his recommendations an executive order was issued on the 26th of September, 1895, by the terms of which it is provided that after that date any vacancy in consular appointments or commercial agency with an annual salary or compensation from official fees of not more than \$2500 or less than \$1000 should be filled either by transfer or promotion from some other position under the government of a character tending to qualify the incumbent of the position to be filled; or by the appointment of a person not under the department of state, but having been previously served thereunder, and his capacity and fitness for consular duty; or by the appointment of a person who, having been selected by the president and sent to the board for examination is found upon such examination to be qualified for the position. Posts which pay less than \$1000 being usually, on account of their small compensation, filled by selection from residents of the locality, it was not deemed practicable to put them under the new system.

The compensation of \$2500 was adopted as the maximum limit in the classification, for the reason that consular officers receiving more than that sum are often charged with functions and duties of a higher order and importance than those of diplomatic agents and it was therefore thought best to continue their selection in the discretion of the executive without subjecting them to examination before a board. Excluding 71 places with compensation at present less than \$1000 and 53 places above the maximum in compensation, the number of positions remaining within the subject of the order is 196. This number will undoubtedly be increased by the inclusion of consular officers whose remuneration in fees, now less than \$1000, will be augmented with the growth of our foreign commerce and return to more favorable business conditions.

In execution of the executive order referred to, the secretary of state has designated a board to conduct the prescribed examinations of the third assistant secretaries of state, the solicitor of the department of the state, and the chief of the consular bureau, and has specified the subjects to which such examinations shall relate. It is not assumed that the results of such a full measure of consular reform. It is quite probable that actual experience will show particulars in which the order already issued may be amended, and demonstrate that for the best results appropriate legislation by congress is imperatively required.

In any event these efforts to improve the consular service ought to be immediately supplemented by legislation providing for consular inspection. This has frequently been a subject of executive recommendation, and I again urge such action by congress as will permit the frequent and thorough inspection of consulates by officers appointed for that purpose or by persons already in the diplomatic or consular service. The expense attending such a plan would be insignificant compared with its usefulness, and I hope the legislation necessary to set it on foot will be speedily forthcoming.

I am thoroughly convinced that in addition to their salaries our ambassadors and ministers at foreign countries should be provided by the government with official residences. The salaries of these officers are comparatively small and in most cases insufficient to pay, with other necessary expenses, the cost of maintaining household establishments in keeping with their important and delicate functions. The usefulness of a nation's diplomatic representation undeniably depends much upon the appropriateness of the surroundings in which the country is represented, while avoiding unnecessary glit and show, should be certain that it does not suffer in its relations with foreign nations through parsimony and shabbiness.