

Stephen Grover Cleveland (1837-1908)

## **First Annual Message (first term)**

*given on December 8, 1885*

**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  
5 to every duty, and his personal virtues will find honorable record in his country's history.

Ample and repeated proofs of the esteem and confidence in which he was held by his fellow-countrymen were manifested by his election to offices of the most important trust and highest dignity; and at length, full of years and honors, he has been laid at rest amid universal sorrow and benediction.

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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  
15 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.

Contemplation of the grave and responsible functions assigned to the respective branches of the Government under  
20 the Constitution will disclose the partitions of power between our respective departments and their necessary independence, and also the need for the exercise of all the power intrusted to each in that spirit of comity and cooperation which is essential to the proper fulfillment of the patriotic obligations which rest upon us as faithful servants of the people.

25 The jealous watchfulness of our constituencies, great and small, supplements their suffrages, and before the tribunal they establish every public servant should be judged.

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  
30 engagements, the avoidance of complications with other nations, and our consistent and amicable attitude toward the strong and weak alike furnish proof of a political disposition which renders professions of good will unnecessary. There are no questions of difficulty pending with any foreign government.

The Argentine Government has revived the long dormant question of the Falkland Islands by claiming from the  
35 United States indemnity for their loss, attributed to the action of the commander of the sloop of war Lexington in breaking up a piratical colony on those islands in 1831, and their subsequent occupation by Great Britain. In view of the ample justification for the act of the Lexington and the derelict condition of the islands before and after their alleged occupation by Argentine colonists, this Government considers the claim as wholly groundless.

40 Question has arisen with the Government of Austria-Hungary touching the representation of the United States at Vienna. Having under my constitutional prerogative appointed an estimable citizen of unimpeached probity and competence as minister at that court, the Government of Austria-Hungary invited this Government to take cognizance of certain exceptions, based upon allegations against the personal acceptability of Mr. Keiley, the appointed envoy, asking that in view thereof the appointment should be withdrawn. The reasons advanced were such as could not be  
45 acquiesced in without violation of my oath of office and the precepts of the Constitution, since they necessarily involved a limitation in favor of a foreign government upon the right of selection by the Executive and required such an application of a religious test as a qualification for office under 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 in our Government. The Austro-Hungarian Government finally decided not to receive Mr. Keiley as the envoy of the United States, and  
50 that gentleman has since resigned his commission, leaving the post vacant. I have made no new nomination, and the interests of this Government at Vienna are now in the care of the secretary of legation, acting as charge' d'affaires ad interim.

Early in March last war broke out in Central America, caused by the attempt of Guatemala to consolidate the several  
55 States into a single government. In these contests between our neighboring States the United States forebore to interfere actively, but lent the aid of their friendly offices in deprecation of war and to promote peace and concord among the belligerents, and by such counsel contributed importantly to the restoration of tranquillity in that locality.

Emergencies growing out of civil war in the United States of Colombia demanded of the Government at the beginning  
60 of this Administration the employment of armed forces to fulfill its guaranties under the thirty-fifth article of the treaty of 1846, in order to keep the transit open across the Isthmus of Panama. Desirous of exercising only the powers expressly reserved to us by the treaty, and mindful of the rights of Colombia, the forces sent to the Isthmus were instructed to confine their action to "positively and efficaciously" preventing the transit and its accessories from being "interrupted or embarrassed."

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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.

The prompt and successful fulfillment of its duty by this Government was highly appreciated by the Government of  
70 Colombia, and has been followed by expressions of its satisfaction.

High praise is due to the officers and men engaged in this service. The restoration of peace on the Isthmus by the reestablishment of the constituted Government there being thus accomplished, the forces of the United States were withdrawn.

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Pending these occurrences a question of much importance was presented by decrees of the Colombian Government proclaiming the closure of certain ports then in the hands of insurgents and declaring vessels held by the revolutionists to be piratical 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 hostile partisans, could not be  
80 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 law 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.

85 The Colombian Government has expressed its willingness to negotiate 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.

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.

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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 laid it before the Senate. Pending the action of that body thereon, I withdrew the treaty for reexamination. Attentive consideration of its provisions leads me to withhold it from resubmission to the Senate.

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Maintaining, as I do, the tenets of a line of precedents from Washington's day, which proscribe 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.

100 The laws of progress are vital and organic, and we must be conscious of that irresistible tide of commercial expansion which, as the concomitant of our active 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; but our duty in the present instructs us to 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 own borders, though jealously alert in preventing  
105 the American hemisphere from being involved in the political problems and complications of distant governments. Therefore I am unable to recommend propositions involving paramount privileges of ownership or right outside 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 encouraged, I am of opinion that any scheme to that end to be considered with favor should be free from the features  
110 alluded to.

The Tehuantepec route is declared by engineers of the highest repute and by competent scientists to afford an entirely practicable transit for vessels and cargoes, by means of a ship railway, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The obvious advantages of such a route, if feasible, over others more remote from the axial lines of traffic between Europe and the  
115 pacific, and particularly between the Valley of the Mississippi and the western coast of North and South America, are deserving of consideration.

Whatever highway may be constructed across the barrier dividing the two greatest maritime areas of the world must be for the world's benefit--a trust for mankind, to be removed from the chance of domination by any single power, nor  
120 become a point of invitation for hostilities or a prize for warlike ambition. 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 state whose responsibilities and rights we would share is, in my judgment, inconsistent with such dedication to universal and neutral use, and would, moreover, entail measures for its realization beyond the scope of our national polity or present means.

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The lapse of years has abundantly confirmed 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 need of interoceanic transit across the American Isthmus and consecrated it in advance to the common use of mankind by their positive declarations and through the formal obligation of treaties. Toward such realization the  
130 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 1858, announced that "what the United States want in Central America, next to the happiness of its people, is the security and neutrality of the interoceanic routes which lead through it."

135 The construction of three transcontinental lines of railway, all in successful operation, wholly within our territory, and uniting the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans, has been accompanied by results of a most interesting and impressive nature, and has created new conditions, not in the routes of commerce only, but in political geography, which powerfully affect our relations toward and necessarily increase our interests in any transisthmian route which may be opened and employed for the ends of peace and traffic, or, in other contingencies, for uses inimical to both.

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Transportation is a factor in the cost of commodities scarcely second to that of their production, and weighs as heavily upon the consumer.

Our experience already has proven the great importance of having the competition between land carriage and water  
145 carriage fully developed, each acting as a protection to the public against the tendencies to monopoly which are inherent in the consolidation of 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 interoceanic transit; and this can only be accomplished by making the uses of the route open to all nations and

150 subject to the ambitions and warlike necessities of none.

The drawings and report of a recent survey of the Nicaragua Canal route, made by Chief Engineer Menocal, will be communicated for your information.

155 The claims of citizens of the United States for losses by reason of the late military operations of Chile in Peru and 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  
160 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 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 unoffending Chinamen,  
165 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 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 demonstrations. All the power of this Government should be exerted to maintain the amplest good faith toward China in the treatment of these men, and the inflexible sternness of the law in bringing the wrongdoers to  
170 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 these outrages; and it is but just to say that they are traceable to the lawlessness of men not citizens of the United States engaged in competition with Chinese laborers.

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Race prejudice is the chief factor in originating these disturbances, and it exists in a large part of our domain, jeopardizing our domestic peace and the good relationship we strive to maintain with China.

The admitted right of a government to prevent the influx of elements hostile to its internal peace and security may not  
180 be questioned, even where there is no treaty stipulation on the subject. That the exclusion of Chinese labor is demanded in other countries where like conditions prevail is strongly evidenced in the Dominion of Canada, where Chinese immigration is now regulated by laws more exclusive than our own. If existing laws are inadequate to compass the end in view, I shall be prepared to give earnest consideration to any further remedial measures, within the treaty limits, which the wisdom of Congress may devise.

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The independent State of the Kongo has been organized as a government under the sovereignty of His Majesty the King of the Belgians, who assumes its chief magistracy in his personal character only, without making the new State a dependency of Belgium. It is fortunate that a benighted region, owing all it has of quickening civilization to the beneficence and philanthropic spirit of this monarch, should have the advantage and security of his benevolent  
190 supervision.

The action taken by this Government last year in being the first to recognize the flag of the International Association of the Kongo has been followed by formal recognition of the new nationality which succeeds to its sovereign powers.

195 A conference of delegates of the principal commercial nations was held at Berlin last winter to discuss methods whereby the Kongo basin might be kept open to the world's trade. Delegates attended on behalf of the United States on the understanding that their part should be merely deliberative, without imparting to the results any binding character so far as the United States were concerned. This reserve was due to the indisposition of this Government to

share in any disposal by an international congress of jurisdictional questions in remote foreign territories. The results  
200 of the conference were embodied in a formal act of the nature of an international convention, which laid down certain obligations purporting to be binding on the signatories, subject to ratification within one year. Notwithstanding the reservation under which the delegates of the United States attended, their signatures were attached to the general act in the same manner as those of the plenipotentiaries of other governments, thus making the United States appear, without reserve or qualification, as signatories to a joint international engagement imposing on the signers the conservation of  
205 the territorial integrity of distant regions where we have no established interests or control.

This Government does not, however, regard its reservation of liberty of action in the premises as at all impaired; and holding that an engagement to share in the obligation of enforcing neutrality in the remote valley of the Kongo would be an alliance whose responsibilities we are not in a position to assume, I abstain from asking the sanction of the  
210 Senate to that general act.

The correspondence will be laid before you, and the instructive and interesting report of the agent sent by this Government to the Kongo country and his recommendations for the establishment of commercial agencies on the African coast are also submitted for your consideration.

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The commission appointed by my predecessor last winter to visit the Central and South American countries and report on the methods of enlarging the commercial relations of the United States therewith has submitted reports, which will be laid before you.

220 No opportunity has been omitted to testify the friendliness of this Government toward Korea, whose entrance into the family of treaty powers the United States were the first to recognize. I regard with favor the application made by the Korean Government to be allowed to employ American officers as military instructors, to which the assent of Congress becomes necessary, and I am happy to say this request has the concurrent sanction of China and Japan.

225 The arrest and imprisonment of Julio R. Santos, a citizen of the United States, by the authorities of Ecuador gave rise to a contention with that Government, in which his right to be released or to have a speedy and impartial trial on announced charges and with all guaranties of defense stipulated by treaty was insisted upon by us. After an elaborate correspondence and repeated and earnest representations on our part Mr. Santos was, after an alleged trial and conviction, eventually included in a general decree of amnesty and pardoned by the Ecuadorian Executive and  
230 released, leaving the question of his American citizenship denied by the Ecuadorian Government, but insisted upon by our own.

The amount adjudged by the late French and American Claims Commission to be due from the United States to French claimants on account of injuries suffered by them during the War of Secession, having been appropriated by  
235 the last Congress, has been duly paid to the French Government.

The act of February 25, 1885, provided for a preliminary search of the records of French prize courts for evidence bearing on the claims of American citizens against France for spoliations committed prior to 1801. The duty has been performed, and the report of the agent will be laid before you.

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I regret to say that the restrictions upon the importation of our pork into France continue, notwithstanding the abundant demonstration of the absence of sanitary danger in its use; but I entertain strong hopes that with a better understanding of the matter this vexatious prohibition will be removed. It would be pleasing to be able to say as much with respect to Germany, Austria, and other countries, where such food products are absolutely excluded, without  
245 present prospect of reasonable change.

The interpretation of our existing treaties of naturalization by Germany during the past year has attracted attention by reason of an apparent tendency on the part of the Imperial Government to extend the scope of the residential restrictions to which returning naturalized citizens of German origin are asserted to be liable under the laws of the

250 Empire. The temperate and just attitude taken by this Government with regard to this class of questions will doubtless lead to a satisfactory understanding.

The dispute of Germany and Spain relative to the domination of the Caroline Islands has attracted the attention of this Government by reason of extensive interests of American citizens having grown up in those parts during the past  
255 thirty years, and because the question of ownership involves jurisdiction of matters affecting the status of our citizens under civil and criminal law. While standing wholly aloof from the proprietary issues raised between powers to both of which the United States are friendly, this Government expects that nothing in the present contention shall unfavorably affect our citizens carrying on a peaceful commerce or there domiciled, and has so informed the Governments of Spain and Germany.

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The marked good will between the United States and Great Britain has been maintained during the past year.

The termination of the fishing clauses of the treaty of Washington, in pursuance of the joint resolution of March 3, 1883, must have resulted in the abrupt cessation on the 1st of July of this year, in the midst of their ventures, of the  
265 operations of citizens of the United States engaged in fishing in British American waters but for a diplomatic understanding reached with Her Majesty's Government in June last, whereby assurance was obtained that no interruption of those operations should take place during the current fishing season.

In the interest of good neighborhood and of the commercial intercourse of adjacent communities, the question of the  
270 North American fisheries is one of much importance. Following out the intimation given by me when the extensory arrangement above described was negotiated, I recommend that the Congress provide for the appointment of a commission in which the Governments of the United States and Great Britain shall be respectively represented, charged with the consideration and settlement, upon a just, equitable, and honorable basis, of the entire question of the fishing rights of the two Governments and their respective citizens on the coasts of the United States and British North  
275 America. The fishing interests being intimately related to other general questions dependent upon contiguity and intercourse, consideration thereof in all their equities might also properly come within the purview of such a commission, and the fullest latitude of expression on both sides should be permitted.

The correspondence in relation to the fishing rights will be submitted. The arctic exploring steamer Alert, which was  
280 generously given by Her Majesty's Government to aid in the relief of the Greely expedition, was, after the successful attainment of that humane purpose, returned to Great Britain, in pursuance of the authority conferred by the act of March 3, 1885.

The inadequacy of the existing engagements for extradition between the United States and Great Britain has been long  
285 apparent. The tenth article of the treaty of 1842, one of the earliest compacts in this regard entered into by us, stipulated for surrender in respect of a limited number of offenses. Other crimes no less inimical to the social welfare should be embraced and the procedure of extradition brought in harmony with present international practice. Negotiations with Her Majesty's Government for an enlarged treaty of extradition have been pending since 1870, and I entertain strong hopes that a satisfactory result may be soon attained.

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The frontier line between Alaska and British Columbia, as defined by the treaty of cession with Russia, follows the demarcation assigned in a prior treaty between Great Britain and Russia. Modern exploration discloses that this ancient boundary is impracticable as a geographical fact. In the unsettled condition of that region the question has lacked importance, but the discovery of mineral wealth in the territory the line is supposed to traverse admonishes that  
295 the time has come when an accurate knowledge of the boundary is needful to avert jurisdictional complications. I recommend, therefore, that provision be made for a preliminary reconnoissance by officers of the United States, to the end of acquiring more precise information on the subject. I have invited Her Majesty's Government to consider with us the adoption of a more convenient line, to be established by meridian observations or by known geographical features without the necessity of an expensive survey of the whole.

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The late insurrectionary movements in Hayti having been quelled, the Government 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.

305 The long-pending claims of two citizens of the United States, Pelletier and Lazare, have been disposed of by arbitration, and an award in favor of each claimant has been made, which by 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 by reason of the exceptional treatment of an American citizen, Mr. Van Bokkelen, a resident of Port-au-Prince, who, on suit by creditors residing in the United States, was sentenced to imprisonment, and, under the operation of a Haytian statute, was denied relief secured to 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, which, however, while still professing to maintain the ground taken against Mr. Van Bokkelen's right, terminated the controversy by setting him at liberty without explanation.

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An international conference to consider the means of arresting the spread of cholera and other epidemic diseases was held at Rome in May last, and adjourned to meet again on further notice. An expert delegate on behalf of the United States has attended its sessions and will submit a report.

320 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 natural and growing consequence of our similarity of institutions and geographical propinquity.

The relocation of the boundary line between the United States and Mexico westward of the Rio Grande, under the convention of July 29, 1882, has been unavoidably delayed, but I apprehend no difficulty in securing a prolongation of the period for its accomplishment.

The lately concluded commercial treaty with Mexico still awaits the stipulated legislation to carry its provisions into effect, for which one year's additional time has been secured by a supplementary article signed in February last and since ratified on both sides.

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As this convention, so important to the commercial welfare of the two adjoining countries, has been constitutionally confirmed by the treaty-making branch, I express the hope that legislation needed to make it effective may not be long delayed.

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The large influx of capital and enterprise to Mexico from the United States continues to aid in the development of the resources and in augmenting the material well-being of our sister Republic. Lines of railway, penetrating to the heart and capital of the country, bring the two peoples into mutually beneficial intercourse, and enlarged facilities of transit add to profitable commerce, create new markets, and furnish avenues to otherwise isolated communities.

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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 distracted country, it is hoped that pending war claims of our citizens will be adjusted.

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In conformity with notification given by the Government of Peru, the existing treaties of commerce and extradition between the United States and that country will terminate March 31, 1886.

350 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.

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The long-pending claim of the owners of the ship *Masonic* for loss suffered through the admitted dereliction of the Spanish authorities in the Philippine Islands has been adjusted by arbitration and an indemnity awarded. The principle of arbitration in such cases, to which the United States have long and consistently adhered, thus receives a fresh and gratifying confirmation.

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Other questions with Spain have been disposed of or are under diplomatic consideration with a view to just and honorable settlement.

365 The operation of the commercial agreement with Spain of January 2--February 13, 1884, has been found inadequate to the commercial needs of the United States and the Spanish Antilles, and the terms of the agreement are subjected to conflicting interpretations in those islands.

370 Negotiations have been instituted at Madrid for a full treaty not open to these objections and in the line of the general policy touching the neighborly 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.

375 An international copyright conference was held at Berne in September, on the invitation of the Swiss Government. The envoy of the United States attended as a delegate, but refrained from committing this Government to the results, even 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 while there may be question as to the relative advantage of treating it by legislation or by specific treaty, the matured views of the Berne conference can not fail to aid your consideration of the subject.

380 The termination of the commercial treaty of 1862 between the United States and Turkey has been sought by that Government. While there is question as to the sufficiency of the notice of termination given, yet as the commercial rights of our citizens in Turkey come under the favored-nation guaranties 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 revision of the Ottoman tariffs, in which the treaty powers have been invited to join.

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390 Questions concerning our citizens in Turkey may be affected by the Porte's nonacquiescence in the right of expatriation and by the imposition of religious tests as a condition of residence, in which this Government can not concur. The United States must hold in their intercourse with every power that the status of their citizens is to be respected and equal civil privileges accorded to them without regard to creed, and affected by no considerations save those growing out of domiciliary return to the land of original allegiance or of unfulfilled personal obligations which may survive, under municipal laws, after such voluntary return.

395 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 envoy in the principal point advanced by this Government, that the effects of the old treaty could only be set aside by the operation of a new convention. A result in substantial accord with the advisory suggestions contained in the joint resolution of March 3, 1883, 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 the 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 procurable stocks paying so high a rate of interest, the letter of the statute is at present inapplicable, but its spirit is subserved by continuing to make investments of this nature in current stocks bearing the highest interest now paid. The statute, however, makes no provision for the disposal of such accretions. It being contrary to the general rule of this Government to allow interest on claims, I recommend the repeal of the provision in question and the disposition, under a uniform rule, of the present accumulations from investment of trust funds.

The inadequacy of existing legislation touching citizenship and naturalization demands your consideration.

While recognizing the right of expatriation, no statutory provision exists providing means for renouncing citizenship by an American citizen, native born or naturalized, nor for terminating and vacating an improper acquisition of citizenship. Even a fraudulent decree of naturalization can not now be canceled. The privilege and franchise of American citizenship should be granted with care, and extended to those only who intend in good faith to assume its duties and responsibilities when attaining its privileges and benefits. It should be withheld from those who merely go through the forms of naturalization with the intent of escaping the duties of their original allegiance without taking upon themselves those of their new status, or who may acquire the rights of American citizenship for no other than a hostile purpose toward their original governments. These evils have had many flagrant illustrations.

I regard with favor the suggestion put forth by one of my predecessors that provision be made for a central bureau of record of the decrees of naturalization granted by the various courts throughout the United States now invested with that power.

The rights which spring from domicile in the United States, especially when coupled with a declaration of intention to become a citizen, are worthy of definition by statute. The stranger coming hither with intent to remain, establishing his residence in our midst, contributing to the general welfare, and by his voluntary act declaring his purpose to assume the responsibilities of citizenship, thereby gains an inchoate status which legislation may properly define. The laws of certain States and Territories admit a domiciled alien to the local franchise, conferring on him the rights of citizenship to a degree which places him in the anomalous position of being a citizen of a State and yet not of the United States within the purview of Federal and international law.

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It is important within the scope of national legislation to define this right of alien domicile as distinguished from Federal naturalization.

The commercial relations of the United States with their immediate neighbors and with important areas of traffic near our shores suggest especially liberal intercourse between them and us.

Following the treaty of 1883 with Mexico, which rested on the basis of a reciprocal exemption from customs duties, other similar treaties were initiated by my predecessor.

Recognizing the need of less obstructed traffic with Cuba and Puerto Rico, and met by the desire of Spain to succor languishing interests in the Antilles, steps were taken to attain those ends by a treaty of commerce. A similar treaty was afterwards signed by the Dominican Republic. Subsequently overtures were made by Her Britannic Majesty's Government for a like mutual extension of commercial intercourse with the British West Indian and South American dependencies, but without result.

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On taking office I withdrew for reexamination the treaties signed with Spain and Santo Domingo, then pending before the Senate. The result has been to satisfy me of the inexpediency of entering into engagements of this character not covering the entire traffic.

450 These treaties contemplated the surrender by the United States of large revenues for inadequate considerations. Upon  
sugar alone duties were surrendered to an amount far exceeding all the advantages offered in exchange. Even were it  
intended to relieve our consumers, it was evident that so long as the exemption but partially covered our importation  
such relief would be illusory. To relinquish a revenue so essential seemed highly improvident at a time when new and  
large drains upon the Treasury were contemplated. Moreover, embarrassing questions would have arisen under the  
455 favored-nation clauses of treaties with other nations.

As a further objection, it is evident that tariff regulation by treaty diminishes that independent control over its own  
revenues which is essential for the safety and welfare of any government. Emergency calling for an increase of  
taxation may at any time arise, and no engagement with a foreign power should exist to hamper the action of the  
460 Government.

By the fourteenth section of the shipping act approved June 26, 1884, certain reductions and contingent exemptions  
from tonnage dues were made as to vessels entering ports of the United States from any foreign port in North and  
Central America, the West India Islands, the Bahamas and Bermudas, Mexico, and the Isthmus as far as Aspinwall  
465 and Panama. The Governments of Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Portugal, and Sweden and Norway have asserted,  
under the favored-nation clause in their treaties with the United States, a claim to like treatment in respect of vessels  
coming to the United States from their home ports. This Government, however, holds that the privileges granted by  
the act are purely geographical, inuring to any vessel of any foreign power that may choose to engage in traffic  
between this country and any port within the defined zone, and no warrant exists under the most-favored-nation clause  
470 for the extension of the privileges in question to vessels sailing to this country from ports outside the limitation of the  
act.

Undoubtedly the relations of commerce with our near neighbors, whose territories form so long a frontier line difficult  
to be guarded, and who find in our country, and equally offer to us, natural markets, demand special and considerate  
475 treatment. It rests with Congress to consider what legislative action may increase facilities of intercourse which  
contiguity makes natural and desirable.

I earnestly urge that Congress recast the appropriations for the maintenance of the diplomatic and consular service on  
a footing commensurate with the importance of our national interests. At every post where a representative is  
480 necessary the salary should be so graded as to permit him to live with comfort. With the assignment of adequate  
salaries the so-called notarial extra official fees, which our officers abroad are now permitted to treat as personal  
perquisites, should be done away with. Every act requiring the certification and seal of the officer should be taxable at  
schedule rates and the fee therefor returned to the Treasury. By restoring these revenues to the public use the consular  
service would be self-supporting, even with a liberal increase of the present low salaries.

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In further prevention of abuses a system of consular inspection should be instituted.

The appointment of a limited number of secretaries of legation at large, to be assigned to duty wherever necessary,  
and in particular for temporary service at missions which for any cause may be without a head, should also be  
490 authorized.

I favor also authorization for the detail of officers of the regular service as military or naval attaches at legations.

Some foreign governments do not recognize the union of consular with diplomatic functions. Italy and Venezuela will  
495 only receive the appointee in one of his two capacities, but this does not prevent the requirement of a bond and  
submission to the responsibilities of an office whose duties he can not discharge. The superadded title of consul-  
general should be abandoned at all missions.

I deem it expedient that a well-devised measure for the reorganization of the extraterritorial courts in Oriental countries should replace the present system, which labors under the disadvantage of combining judicial and executive functions in the same office.

In several Oriental countries generous offers have been made of premises for housing the legations of the United States. A grant of land for that purpose was made some years since by Japan, and has been referred to in the annual messages of my predecessor. The Siamese Government has made a gift to the United States of commodious quarters in Bangkok. In Korea the late minister was permitted to purchase a building from the Government for legation use. In China the premises rented for the legation are favored as to local charges. At Tangier the house occupied by our representative has been for many years the property; this Government, having been given for that purpose in 1822 by the Sultan of Morocco. I approve the suggestion heretofore made, that, view of the conditions of life and administration in the Eastern countries, the legation buildings in China, Japan, Korea, Siam, and perhaps Persia, should be owned and furnished by the Government with a view to permanency and security. To this end I recommend that authority be given to accept the gifts adverted to in Japan and Siam, and to purchase in the other countries named, with provision for furniture and repairs. A considerable saving in rentals would result.

The World's Industrial Exposition, held at New Orleans last winter, with the assistance of the Federal Government, attracted a large number of foreign exhibits, and proved of great value in spreading among the concourse of visitors from Mexico and Central and South America a wider knowledge of the varied manufactures and productions of this country and their availability in exchange for the productions of those regions.

Past Congresses have had under consideration the advisability of abolishing the discrimination made by the tariff laws in favor of the works of American artists. The odium of the policy which subjects to a high rate of duty the paintings of foreign artists and exempts the productions of American artists residing abroad, and who receive gratuitously advantages and instruction, is visited upon our citizens engaged in art culture in Europe, and has caused them with practical unanimity to favor the abolition of such an ungracious distinction; and in their interest, and for other obvious reasons, I strongly recommend it.

The report of the Secretary of the Treasury fully exhibits the condition of the public finances and of the several branches of the Government connected with his Department. The suggestions of the Secretary relating to the practical operations of this important Department, and his recommendations in the direction of simplification and economy, particularly in the work of collecting customs duties, are especially urged upon the attention of Congress.

The ordinary receipts from all sources for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1885, were \$322,690,706.38. Of this sum \$181,471,939.34 was received from customs and \$112,498,725.54 from internal revenue. The total receipts, as given above, were \$24,829,163.54 less than those for the year ended June 30, 1884. This diminution embraces a falling off of \$13,595,550.42 in the receipts from customs and \$9,687,346.97 in the receipts from internal revenue.

The total ordinary expenditures of the Government for the fiscal year were \$260,226,935.50, leaving a surplus in the Treasury at the close of the year of \$63,463,771.27. This is \$40,929,854.32 less than the surplus reported at the close of the previous year.

The expenditures are classified as follows:

The amount paid on the public debt during the fiscal year ended June 30, 1885, was \$45,993,235.43, and there has been paid since that date and up to November 1, 1885, the sum of \$369,828, leaving the amount of the debt at the last-named date \$1,514,475,860.47. There was however, at that time in the Treasury, applicable to the general purposes of the Government, the sum of \$66,818,292.38.

The total receipts for the current fiscal year ending June 30, 1886, ascertained to October 1, 1885, and estimated for the remainder of the year, are \$315,000,000. The expenditures ascertained and estimated for the same time are \$245,000,000, leaving a surplus at the close of the year estimated at \$70,000,000.

The value of the exports from the United States to foreign countries during the last fiscal year was as follows:

Some of the principal exports, with their values and the percentage they respectively bear to the total exportation, are given as follows:

Our imports during the year were as follows:

The following are given as prominent articles of import during the year, with their values and the percentage they bear to the total importation:

Of the entire amount of duties collected 70 per cent was collected from the following articles of import:

The fact that our revenues are in excess of the actual needs of all economical administration of the Government justifies a reduction in the amount exacted from the people for its support. Our Government is but the means  
565 established by the will of a free people by which certain principles are applied which they have adopted for their benefit and protection; and it is never better administered and its true spirit is never better observed than when the people's taxation for its support is scrupulously limited to the actual necessity of expenditure and distributed according to a just and equitable plan.

570 The proposition with which we have to deal is the reduction of the revenue received by the Government, and indirectly paid by the people, from customs duties. The question of free trade is not involved, nor is there now any occasion for the general discussion of the wisdom or expediency of a protective system.

Justice and fairness dictate that in any modification of our present laws relating to revenue the industries and interests  
575 which have been encouraged by such laws, and in which our citizens have large investments, should not be ruthlessly injured or destroyed. We should also deal with the subject in such manner as to protect the interests of American labor, which is the capital of our workingmen. Its stability and proper remuneration furnish the most justifiable pretext for a protective policy.

580 Within these limitations a certain reduction should be made in our customs revenue. The amount of such reduction having been determined, the inquiry follows, Where can it best be remitted and what articles can best be released from duty in the interest of our citizens?

I think the reduction should be made in the revenue derived from a tax upon the imported necessities of life. We thus  
585 directly lessen the cost of living in every family of the land and release to the people in every humble home a larger measure of the rewards of frugal industry.

During the year ended November 1, 1885, 145 national banks were organized, with an aggregate capital of \$16,938,000, and circulating notes have been issued to them amounting to \$4,274,910. The whole number of these  
590 banks in existence on the day above mentioned was 2,727.

The very limited amount of circulating notes issued by our national banks, compared with the amount the law permits them to issue upon a deposit of bonds for their redemption, indicates that the volume of our circulating medium may be largely increased through this instrumentality.

Nothing more important than the present condition of our currency and coinage can claim your attention.

Since February, 1878, the Government has, under the compulsory provisions of law, purchased silver bullion and coined the same at the rate of more than \$2,000,000 every month. By this process up to the present date 215,759,431 silver dollars have been coined.

A reasonable appreciation of a delegation of power to the General Government would limit its exercise, without express restrictive words, to the people's needs and the requirements of the public welfare.

Upon this theory the authority to "coin money" given to Congress by the Constitution, if it permits the purchase by the Government of bullion for coinage in any event, does not justify such purchase and coinage to an extent beyond the amount needed for a sufficient circulating medium.

The desire to utilize the silver product of the country should not lead to a misuse or the perversion of this power.

The necessity for such an addition to the silver currency of the nation as is compelled by the silver-coinage act is negated by the fact that up to the present time only about 50,000,000 of the silver dollars so coined have actually found their way into circulation, leaving more than 165,000,000 in the possession of the Government, the custody of which has entailed a considerable expense for the construction of vaults for its deposit. Against this latter amount there are outstanding silver certificates amounting to about \$93,000,000.

Every month two millions of gold in the public Treasury are paid out for two millions or more of silver dollars, to be added to the idle mass already accumulated.

If continued long enough, this operation will result in the substitution of silver for all the gold the Government owns applicable to its general purposes. It will not do to rely upon the customs receipts of the Government to make good this drain of gold, because the silver thus coined having been made legal tender for all debts and dues, public and private, at times during the last six months 58 per cent of the receipts for duties has been in silver or silver certificates, while the average within that period has been 20 per cent. The proportion of silver and its certificates received by the Government will probably increase as time goes on, for the reason that the nearer the period approaches when it will be obliged to offer silver in payment of its obligations the greater inducement there will be to hoard gold against depreciation in the value of silver or for the purpose of speculating.

This hoarding of gold has already begun.

When the time comes that gold has been withdrawn from circulation, then will be apparent the difference between the real value of the silver dollar and a dollar in gold, and the two coins will part company. Gold, still the standard of value and necessary in our dealings with other countries, will be at a premium over silver; banks which have substituted gold for the deposits of their customers may pay them with silver bought with such gold, thus making a handsome profit; rich speculators will sell their hoarded gold to their neighbors who need it to liquidate their foreign debts, at a ruinous premium over silver, and the laboring men and women of the land, most defenseless of all, will find that the dollar received for the wage of their toil has sadly shrunk in its purchasing power. It may be said that the latter result will be but temporary, and that ultimately the price of labor will be adjusted to the change; but even if this takes place the wage-worker can not possibly gain, but must inevitably lose, since the price he is compelled to pay for his living will not only be measured in a coin heavily depreciated and fluctuating and uncertain in its value, but this uncertainty in the value of the purchasing medium will be made the pretext for an advance in prices beyond that justified by actual depreciation.

The words uttered in 1834 by Daniel Webster in the Senate of the United States are true to-day:

The very man of all others who has the deepest interest in a sound currency, and who suffers most by mischievous legislation in money matters, is the man who earns his daily bread by his daily toil.

The most distinguished advocate of bimetallism, discussing our silver coinage, has lately written:

No American citizen's hand has yet felt the sensation of cheapness, either in receiving or expending the silver-act  
650 dollars.

And those who live by labor or legitimate trade never will feel that sensation of cheapness. However plenty silver dollars may become, they will not be distributed as gifts among the people; and if the laboring man should receive four depreciated dollars where he now receives but two, he will pay in the depreciated coin more than double the price he now pays for all the necessities and comforts of life.

655 Those who do not fear any disastrous consequences arising from the continued compulsory coinage of silver as now directed by law, and who suppose that the addition to the currency of the country intended as its result will be a public benefit, are reminded that history demonstrates that the point is easily reached in the attempt to float at the same time two sorts of money of different excellence when the better will cease to be in general circulation. The hoarding of gold which has already taken place indicates that we shall not escape the usual experience in such cases. So if this silver  
660 coinage be continued we may reasonably expect that gold and its equivalent will abandon the field of circulation to silver alone. This of course must produce a severe contraction of our circulating medium, instead of adding to it.

It will not be disputed that any attempt on the part of the Government to cause the circulation of silver dollars worth 80 cents side by side with gold dollars worth 100 cents, even within the limit that legislation does not run counter to  
665 the laws of trade, to be successful must be seconded by the confidence of the people that both coins will retain the same purchasing power and be interchangeable at will. A special effort has been made by the Secretary of the Treasury to increase the amount of our silver coin in circulation; but the fact that a large share of the limited amount thus put out has soon returned to the public Treasury in payment of duties leads to the belief that the people do not now desire to keep it in hand, and this, with the evident disposition to hoard gold, gives rise to the suspicion that there  
670 already exists a lack of confidence among the people touching our financial processes. There is certainly not enough silver now in circulation to cause uneasiness, and the whole amount coined and now on hand might after a time be absorbed by the people without apprehension; but it is the ceaseless stream that threatens to overflow the land which causes fear and uncertainty.

675 What has been thus far submitted upon this subject relates almost entirely to considerations of a home nature, unconnected with the bearing which the policies of other nations have upon the question. But it is perfectly apparent that a line of action in regard to our currency can not wisely be settled upon or persisted in without considering the attitude on the subject of other countries with whom we maintain intercourse through commerce, trade, and travel. An acknowledgment of this fact is found in the act by virtue of which our silver is compulsorily coined. It provides that--

680

The President shall invite the governments of the countries composing the Latin Union, so called, and of such other European nations as he may deem advisable, to join the United States in a conference to adopt a common ratio between gold and silver for the purpose of establishing internationally the use of bimetallic money and securing fixity of relative value between those metals.

685 This conference absolutely failed, and a similar fate has awaited all subsequent efforts in the same direction. And still we continue our coinage of silver at a ratio different from that of any other nation. The most vital part of the silver-coinage act remains inoperative and unexecuted, and without an ally or friend we battle upon the silver field in an illogical and losing contest.

To give full effect to the design of Congress on this subject I have made careful and earnest endeavor since the  
690 adjournment of the last Congress.

To this end I delegated a gentleman well instructed in fiscal science to proceed to the financial centers of Europe and, in conjunction with our ministers to England, France, and Germany, to obtain a full knowledge of the attitude and intent of those governments in respect of the establishment of such an international ratio as would procure free  
695 coinage of both metals at the mints of those countries and our own. By my direction our consul-general at Paris has given close attention to the proceedings of the congress of the Latin Union, in order to indicate our interest in its objects and report its action.

It may be said in brief, as the result of these efforts, that the attitude of the leading powers remains substantially  
700 unchanged since the monetary conference of 1881, nor is it to be questioned that the views of these governments are  
in each instance supported by the weight of public opinion.

The steps thus taken have therefore only more fully demonstrated the uselessness of further attempts at present to  
arrive at any agreement on the subject with other nations.

705

In the meantime we are accumulating silver coin, based upon our own peculiar ratio, to such an extent, and assuming  
so heavy a burden to be provided for in any international negotiations, as will render us an undesirable party to any  
future monetary conference of nations.

710 It is a significant fact that four of the five countries composing the Latin Union mentioned in our coinage act,  
embarrassed with their silver currency, have just completed an agreement among themselves that no more silver shall  
be coined by their respective Governments and that such as has been already coined and in circulation shall be  
redeemed in gold by the country of its coinage. The resort to this expedient by these countries may well arrest the  
attention of those who suppose that we can succeed without shock or injury in the attempt to circulate upon its merits  
715 all the silver we may coin under the provisions of our silver-coinage act.

The condition in which our Treasury may be placed by a persistence in our present course is a matter of concern to  
every patriotic citizen who does not desire his Government to pay in silver such of its obligations as should be paid in  
gold. Nor should our condition be such as to oblige us, in a prudent management of our affairs, to discontinue the  
720 calling in and payment of interest-bearing obligations which we have the right now to discharge, and thus avoid the  
payment of further interest thereon.

The so-called debtor class, for whose benefit the continued compulsory coinage of silver is insisted upon, are not  
dishonest because they are in debt, and they should not be suspected of a desire to jeopardize the financial safety of  
725 the country in order that they may cancel their present debts by paying the same in depreciated dollars. Nor should it  
be forgotten that it is not the rich nor the money lender alone that must submit to such a readjustment, enforced by the  
Government and their debtors. The pittance of the widow and the orphan and the incomes of helpless beneficiaries of  
all kinds would be disastrously reduced. The depositors in savings banks and in other institutions which hold in trust  
the savings of the poor, when their little accumulations are scaled down to meet the new order of things, would in their  
730 distress painfully realize the delusion of the promise made to them that plentiful money would improve their  
condition.

We have now on hand all the silver dollars necessary to supply the present needs of the people and to satisfy those  
who from sentiment wish to see them in circulation, and if their coinage is suspended they can be readily obtained by  
735 all who desire them. If the need of more is at anytime apparent, their coinage may be renewed.

That disaster has not already overtaken us furnishes no proof that danger does not wait upon a continuation of the  
present silver coinage. We have been saved by the most careful management and unusual expedients, by a  
combination of fortunate conditions, and by a confident expectation that the course of the Government in regard to  
740 silver coinage would be speedily changed by the action of Congress.

Prosperity hesitates upon our threshold because of the dangers and uncertainties surrounding this question. Capital  
timidly shrinks from trade, and investors are unwilling to take the chance of the questionable shape in which their  
money will be returned to them, while enterprise halts at a risk against which care and sagacious management do not  
745 protect.

As a necessary consequence, labor lacks employment and suffering and distress are visited upon a portion of our

fellow-citizens especially entitled to the careful consideration of those charged with the duties of legislation. No interest appeals to us so strongly for a safe and stable currency as the vast army of the unemployed.

750

I recommend the suspension of the compulsory coinage of silver dollars, directed by the law passed in February, 1878.

The Steamboat-Inspection Service on the 30th day of June, 1885, was composed of 140 persons, including officers, clerks, and messengers. The expenses of the service over the receipts were \$138,822.22 during the fiscal year. The  
755 special inspection of foreign steam vessels, organized under a law passed in 1882, was maintained during the year at an expense of \$36,641.63. Since the close of the fiscal year reductions have been made in the force employed which will result in a saving during the current year of \$17,000 without affecting the efficiency of the service.

The Supervising Surgeon-General reports that during the fiscal year 41,714 patients have received relief through the  
760 Marine-Hospital Service, of whom 12,803 were treated in hospitals and 28,911 at the dispensaries.

Active and effective efforts have been made through the medium of this service to protect the country against an invasion of cholera, which has prevailed in Spain and France, and the smallpox, which recently broke out in Canada.

765 The most gratifying results have attended the operations of the Life Saving Service during the last fiscal year. The observance of the provision of law requiring the appointment of the force employed in this service to be made "solely with reference to their fitness, and without reference to their political or party affiliation," has secured the result which may confidently be expected in any branch of public employment where such a rule is applied. As a consequence, this service is composed of men well qualified for the performance of their dangerous and exceptionally important duties

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The number of stations in commission at the close of the year was 203. The number of disasters to vessels and craft of all kinds within their field of action was 371. The number of persons endangered in such disasters was 2,439, of whom 2,428 were saved and only 11 lost. Other lives which were imperiled, though not by disasters to shipping, were also rescued, and a large amount of property was saved through the aid of this service. The cost of its maintenance during  
775 the year was \$828,474.43.

The work of the Coast and Geodetic Survey was during the last fiscal year carried on within the boundaries and off the coasts of thirty-two States, two Territories, and the District of Columbia. In July last certain irregularities were found to exist in the management of this Bureau, which led to a prompt investigation of its methods. The abuses which were  
780 brought to light by this examination and the reckless disregard of duty and the interests of the Government developed on the part of some of those connected with the service made a change of superintendency and a few of its other officers necessary. Since the Bureau has been in new hands an introduction of economies and the application of business methods have produced an important saving to the Government and a promise of more useful results.

785 This service has never been regulated by anything but the most indefinite legal enactments and the most unsatisfactory rules. It was many years ago sanctioned apparently for a purpose regarded as temporary and related to a survey of our coast. Having gained a place in the appropriations made by Congress, it has gradually taken to itself powers and objects not contemplated in its creation and extended its operations until it sadly needs legislative attention.

790 So far as a further survey of our coast is concerned, there seems to be a propriety in transferring that work to the Navy Department. The other duties now in charge of this establishment, if they can not be profitably attached to some existing Department or other bureau, should be prosecuted under a law exactly defining their scope and purpose, and with a careful discrimination between the scientific inquiries which may properly be assumed by the Government and those which should be undertaken by State authority or by individual enterprise.

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It is hoped that the report of the Congressional committee heretofore appointed to investigate this and other like matters will aid in the accomplishment of proper legislation on this subject.



The report of the Secretary of War is herewith submitted. The attention of Congress is invited to the detailed account  
800 which it contains of the administration of his Department, and his recommendations and suggestions for the  
improvement of the service.

The Army consisted, at the date of the last consolidated returns, of 2,154 officers and 24,705 enlisted men.

805 The expenses of the Departments for the fiscal year ended June, 30, 1885, including \$13,164,394.60 for public works  
and river and harbor improvements, were \$45,850,999.54.

Besides the troops which were dispatched in pursuit of the small band of Indians who left their reservation in Arizona  
and committed murders and outrages, two regiments of cavalry and one of infantry were sent last July to the Indian  
810 Territory to prevent an outbreak which seemed imminent. They remained to aid, if necessary, in the expulsion of  
intruders upon the reservation, who seemed to have caused the discontent among the Indians, but the Executive  
proclamation warning them to remove was complied with without their interference.

Troops were also sent to Rock Springs, in Wyoming Territory, after the massacre of Chinese there, to prevent further  
815 disturbance, and afterwards to Seattle, in Washington Territory, to avert a threatened attack upon Chinese laborers and  
domestic violence there. In both cases the mere presence of the troops had the desired effect.

It appears that the number of desertions has diminished, but that during the last fiscal year they numbered 2,927; and  
one instance is given by the Lieutenant-General of six desertions by the same recruit. I am convinced that this number  
820 of desertions can be much diminished by better discipline and treatment; but the punishment should be increased for  
repeated offenses.

These desertions might also be reduced by lessening the term of first enlistments, thus allowing a discontented recruit  
to contemplate a nearer discharge and the Army a profitable riddance. After one term of service a reenlistment would  
825 be quite apt to secure a contented recruit and a good soldier.

The Acting Judge-Advocate-General reports that the number of trials by general courts-martial during the year was  
2,328, and that 11,851 trials took place before garrison and regimental courts-martial. The suggestion that probably  
more than half the Army have been tried for offenses, great and small, in one year may well arrest attention. Of course  
830 many of these trials before garrison and regimental courts-martial were for offenses almost frivolous, and there  
should, I think, be a way devised to dispose of these in a more summary and less inconvenient manner than by court-  
martial.

If some of the proceedings of courts-martial which I have had occasion to examine present the ideas of justice which  
835 generally prevail in these tribunals, I am satisfied that they should be much reformed if the honor and the honesty of  
the Army and Navy are by their instrumentality to be vindicated and protected.

The Board on Fortifications or other defenses, appointed in pursuance of the provisions of the act of Congress  
approved March 3, 1885, will in a short time present their report, and it is hoped that this may greatly aid the  
840 legislation so necessary to remedy the present defenseless condition of our seacoasts.

The work of the Signal Service has been prosecuted during the last year with results of increasing benefit to the  
country. The field of instruction has been enlarged with a view of adding to its usefulness. The number of stations in  
operation June 30, 1885, was 489. Telegraphic reports are received daily from 160 stations. Reports are also received  
845 from 25 Canadian stations, 375 volunteer observers, 52 army surgeons at military posts, and 333 foreign stations. The  
expense of the service during the fiscal year, after deducting receipts from military telegraph lines, was \$792,592.97.

In view of the fact referred to by the Secretary of War, that the work of this service ordinarily is of a scientific nature, and the further fact that it is assuming larger proportions constantly and becoming more and more unsuited to the fixed rules which must govern the Army, I am inclined to agree with him in the opinion that it should be separately  
850 established. If this is done, the scope and extent of its operations should, as nearly as possible, be definitely prescribed by law and always capable of exact ascertainment.

The Military Academy at West Point is reported as being in a high state of efficiency and well equipped for the satisfactory accomplishment of the purposes of its maintenance.

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The fact that the class which graduates next year is an unusually large one has constrained me to decline to make appointments to second lieutenantcies in the Army from civil life, so that such vacancies as exist in these places may be reserved for such graduates; and yet it is not probable that there will be enough vacancies to provide positions for them all when they leave the military school. Under the prevailing law and usage those not thus assigned to duty never  
860 actively enter the military service. It is suggested that the law on this subject be changed so that such of these young men as are not at once assigned to duty after graduation may be retained as second lieutenants in the Army if they desire it, subject to assignment when opportunity occurs, and under proper rules as to priority of selection.

The expenditures on account of the Military Academy for the last fiscal year, exclusive of the sum taken for its  
865 purposes from appropriations for the support of the Army, were \$290,712.07.

The act approved March 3, 1885, designed to compensate officers and enlisted men for loss of private property while in the service of the United States, is so indefinite in its terms and apparently admits so many claims the adjustment of which could not have been contemplated that if it is to remain upon the statute book it needs amendment.

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There should be a general law of Congress prohibiting the construction of bridges over navigable waters in such manner as to obstruct navigation, with provisions for preventing the same. It seems that under existing statutes the Government can not intervene to prevent such a construction when entered upon without its consent, though when such consent is asked and granted upon condition the authority to insist upon such condition is clear. Thus it is  
875 represented that while the officers of the Government are with great care guarding against the obstruction of navigation by a bridge across the Mississippi River at St. Paul a large pier for a bridge has been built just below this place directly in the navigable channel of the river. If such things are to be permitted, a strong argument is presented against the appropriation of large sums of money to improve the navigation of this and other important highways of commerce.

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The report of the Secretary of the Navy gives a history of the operations of his Department and the present condition of the work committed to his charge.

He details in full the course pursued by him to protect the rights of the Government in respect of certain vessels  
885 unfinished at the time of his accession to office, and also concerning the dispatch boat Dolphin, claimed to be completed and awaiting the acceptance of the Department. No one can fail to see from recitals contained in this report that only the application of business principles has been insisted upon in the treatment of these subjects, and that whatever controversy has arisen was caused by the exaction on the part of the Department of contract obligations as they were legally construed. In the case of the Dolphin, with entire justice to the contractor, an agreement has been  
890 entered into providing for the ascertainment by a judicial inquiry of the complete or partial compliance with the contract in her construction, and further providing for the assessment of any damages to which the Government may be entitled on account of a partial failure to perform such contract, or the payment of the sum still remaining unpaid upon her price in case a full performance is adjudged.

895 The contractor, by reason of his failure in business, being unable to complete the other three vessels, they were taken possession of by the Government in their unfinished state under a clause in the contract permitting such a course, and are now in process of completion in the yard of the contractor, but under the supervision of the Navy Department.

Congress at its last session authorized the construction of two additional new cruisers and two gunboats, at a cost not exceeding in the aggregate \$2,995,000. The appropriation for this purpose having become available on the 1st day of July last, steps were at once taken for the procurement of such plans for the construction of these vessels as would be likely to insure their usefulness when completed. These are of the utmost importance, considering the constant advance in the art of building vessels of this character, and the time is not lost which is spent in their careful consideration and selection.

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All must admit the importance of an effective navy to a nation like ours, having such an extended seacoast to protect; and yet we have not a single vessel of war that could keep the seas against a first-class vessel of any important power. Such a condition ought not longer to continue. The nation that can not resist aggression is constantly exposed to it. Its foreign policy is of necessity weak and its negotiations are conducted with disadvantage because it is not in condition to enforce the terms dictated by its sense of right and justice.

Inspired, as I am, by the hope, shared by all patriotic citizens, that the day is not very far distant when our Navy will be such as befits our standing among the nations of the earth, and rejoiced at every step that leads in the direction of such a consummation, I deem it my duty to especially direct the attention of Congress to the close of the report of the Secretary of the Navy, in which the humiliating weakness of the present organization of his Department is exhibited and the startling abuses and waste of its present methods are exposed. The conviction is forced upon us with the certainty of mathematical demonstration that before we proceed further in the restoration of a Navy we need a thoroughly reorganized Navy Department. The fact that within seventeen years more than \$75,000,000 have been spent in the construction, repair, equipment, and armament of vessels, and the further fact that instead of an effective and creditable fleet we have only the discontent and apprehension of a nation undefended by war vessels, added to the disclosures now made, do not permit us to doubt that every attempt to revive our Navy has thus far for the most part been misdirected, and all our efforts in that direction have been little better than blind gropings and expensive, aimless follies.

Unquestionably if we are content with the maintenance of a Navy Department simply as a shabby ornament to the Government, a constant watchfulness may prevent some of the scandal and abuse which have found their way into our present organization, and its incurable waste may be reduced to the minimum. But if we desire to build ships for present usefulness instead of naval reminders of the days that are past, we must have a Department organized for the work, supplied with all the talent and ingenuity our country affords, prepared to take advantage of the experience of other nations, systematized so that all effort shall unite and lead in one direction, and fully imbued with the conviction that war vessels, though new, are useless unless they combine all that the ingenuity of man has up to this day brought forth relating to their construction.

I earnestly commend the portion of the Secretary's report devoted to this subject to the attention of Congress, in the hope that his suggestions touching the reorganization of his Department may be adopted as the first step toward the reconstruction of our Navy.

The affairs of the postal service are exhibited by the report of the Postmaster-General, which will be laid before you.

The postal revenue, whose ratio of gain upon the rising prosperity of 1882 and 1883 outstripped the increasing expenses of our growing service, was checked by the reduction in the rate of letter postage which took effect with the beginning of October in the latter year, and it diminished during the two past fiscal years \$2,790,000, in about the proportion of \$2,270,000 in 1884 to \$520,000 in 1885. Natural growth and development have meantime increased expenditure, resulting in a deficiency in the revenue to meet the expenses of the Department of five and a quarter million dollars for the year 1884 and eight and a third million in the last fiscal year. The anticipated and natural revival of the revenue has been oppressed and retarded by the unfavorable business condition of the country, of which the postal service is a faithful indicator. The gratifying fact is shown, however, by the report that our returning prosperity is marked by a gain of \$380,000 in the revenue of the latter half of the last year over the corresponding period of the preceding year.

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The change in the weight of first-class matter which may be carried for a single rate of postage from a half ounce to an ounce, and the reduction by one-half of the rate of newspaper postage, which, under recent legislation, began with the current year, will operate to restrain the augmentation of receipts which otherwise might have been expected to such a degree that the scale of expense may gain upon the revenue and cause an increased deficiency to be shown at its close.

955 Yet, after no long period of reawakened prosperity, by proper economy it is confidently anticipated that even the present low rates, now as favorable as any country affords, will be adequate to sustain the cost of the service.

The operation of the Post-Office Department is for the convenience and benefit of the people, and the method by which they pay the charges of this useful arm of their public service, so that it be just and impartial, is of less

960 importance to them than the economical expenditure of the means they provide for its maintenance and the due improvement of its agencies, so that they may enjoy its highest usefulness.

A proper attention has been directed to the prevention of waste or extravagance, and good results appear from the report to have already been accomplished.

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I approve the recommendation of the Postmaster-General to reduce the charges on domestic money orders of \$5 and less from 8 to 5 cents. This change will materially aid those of our people who most of all avail themselves of this instrumentality, but to whom the element of cheapness is of the greatest importance. With this reduction the system would still remain self-supporting.

970

The free-delivery system has been extended to 19 additional cities during the year, and 178 now enjoy its conveniences. Experience has commended it to those who enjoy its benefits, and further enlargement of its facilities is due to other communities to which it is adapted. In the cities where it has been established, taken together the local postage exceeds its maintenance by nearly \$1,300,000. The limit to which this system is now confined by law has

975 been nearly reached, and the reasons given justify its extension, which is proposed.

It was decided, with my approbation, after a sufficient examination, to be inexpedient for the Post-Office Department to contract for carrying our foreign mails under the additional authority given by the last Congress. The amount limited was inadequate to pay all within the purview of the law the full rate of 50 cents per mile, and it would have

980 been unjust and unwise to have given it to some and denied it to others. Nor could contracts have been let under the law to all at a rate to have brought the aggregate within the appropriation without such practical prearrangement of terms as would have violated it.

The rate of sea and inland postage which was proffered under another statute clearly appears to be a fair compensation

985 for the desired service, being three times the price necessary to secure transportation by other vessels upon any route, and much beyond the charges made to private persons for services not less burdensome.

Some of the steamship companies, upon the refusal of the Postmaster-General to attempt, by the means provided, the distribution of the sum appropriated as an extra compensation, withdrew the services of their vessels and thereby

990 occasioned slight inconvenience, though no considerable injury, the mails having been dispatched by other means.

Whatever may be thought of the policy of subsidizing any line of public conveyance or travel, I am satisfied that it should not be done under cover of an expenditure incident to the administration of a Department, nor should there be any uncertainty as to the recipients of the subsidy or any discretion left to an executive officer as to its distribution. If

995 such gifts of the public money are to be made for the purpose of aiding any enterprise in the supposed interest of the public, I can not but think that the amount to be paid and the beneficiary might better be determined by Congress than in any other way.

The international congress of delegates from the Postal Union countries convened at Lisbon, in Portugal, in February

1000 last, and after a session of some weeks the delegates signed a convention amendatory of the present postal-union convention in some particulars designed to advance its purposes. This additional act has had my approval and will be

laid before you with the departmental report.

I approve the recommendation of the postmaster-General that another assistant be provided for his Department. I  
1005 invite your consideration to the several other recommendations contained in his report.

The report of the Attorney-General contains a history of the conduct of the Department of Justice during the last year and a number of valuable suggestions as to needed legislation, and I invite your careful attention to the same.

1010 The condition of business in the courts of the United States is such that there seems to be an imperative necessity for remedial legislation on the subject. Some of these courts are so overburdened with pending causes that the delays in determining litigation amount often to a denial of justice. Among the plans suggested for relief is one submitted by the Attorney-General. Its main features are: The transfer of all the original jurisdiction of the circuit courts to the district courts and an increase of judges for the latter where necessary; an addition of judges to the circuit courts, and  
1015 constituting them exclusively courts of appeal, and reasonably limiting appeals thereto; further restrictions of the right to remove causes from the State to Federal courts; permitting appeals to the Supreme Court from the courts of the District of Columbia and the Territories only in the same cases as they are allowed from State courts, and guarding against an unnecessary number of appeals from the circuit courts.

1020 I approve the plan thus outlined, and recommend the legislation necessary for its application to our judicial system.

The present mode of compensating United States marshals and district attorneys should, in my opinion, be changed. They are allowed to charge against the Government certain fees for services, their income being measured by the amount of such fees within a fixed limit as to their annual aggregate. This is a direct inducement for them to make  
1025 their fees in criminal cases as large as possible in an effort to reach the maximum sum permitted. As an entirely natural consequence, unscrupulous marshals are found encouraging frivolous prosecutions, arresting people on petty charges of crime and transporting them to distant places for examination and trial, for the purpose of earning mileage and other fees; and district attorneys uselessly attend criminal examinations far from their places of residence for the express purpose of swelling their accounts against the Government. The actual expenses incurred in these transactions  
1030 are also charged against the Government.

Thus the rights and freedom of our citizens are outraged and public expenditures increased for the purpose of furnishing public officers pretexts for increasing the measure of their compensation.

1035 I think marshals and district attorneys should be paid salaries, adjusted by a rule which will make them commensurate with services fairly rendered.

In connection with this subject I desire to suggest the advisability, if it be found not obnoxious to constitutional objection, of investing United States commissioners with the power to try and determine certain violations of law  
1040 within the grade of misdemeanors. Such trials might be made to depend upon the option of the accused. The multiplication of small and technical offenses, especially under the provisions of our internal-revenue law, render some change in our present system very desirable in the interests of humanity as well as economy. The district courts are now crowded with petty prosecutions, involving a punishment in case of conviction, of only a slight fine, while the parties accused are harassed by an enforced attendance upon courts held hundreds of miles from their homes. If poor  
1045 and friendless, they are obliged to remain in jail during months, perhaps, that elapse before a session of the court is held, and are finally brought to trial surrounded by strangers and with but little real opportunity for defense. In the meantime frequently the marshal has charged against the Government his fees for an arrest, the transportation of the accused and the expense of the same, and for summoning witnesses before a commissioner, a grand jury, and a court; the witnesses have been paid from the public funds large fees and traveling expenses, and the commissioner and  
1050 district attorney have also made their charges against the Government.

This abuse in the administration of our criminal law should be remedied; and if the plan above suggested is not

practicable, some other should be devised.

1055 The report of the Secretary of the Interior, containing an account of the operations of this important Department and much interesting information, will be submitted for your consideration.

The most intricate and difficult subject in charge of this Department is the treatment and management of the Indians. I am satisfied that some progress may be noted in their condition as a result of a prudent administration of the present  
1060 laws and regulations for their control.

But it is submitted that there is lack of a fixed purpose or policy on this subject, which should be supplied. It is useless to dilate upon the wrongs of the Indians, and as useless to indulge in the heartless belief that because their wrongs are revenged in their own atrocious manner, therefore they should be exterminated.

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They are within the care of our Government, and their rights are, or should be, protected from invasion by the most solemn obligations. They are properly enough called the wards of the Government; and it should be borne in mind that this guardianship involves on our part efforts for the improvement of their condition and the enforcement of their rights. There seems to be general concurrence in the proposition that the ultimate object of their treatment should be  
1070 their civilization and citizenship. Fitted by these to keep pace in the march of progress with the advanced civilization about them, they will readily assimilate with the mass of our population, assuming the responsibilities and receiving the protection incident to this condition.

The difficulty appears to be in the selection of the means to be at present employed toward the attainment of this  
1075 result.

Our Indian population, exclusive of those in Alaska, is reported as numbering 260,000, nearly all being located on lands set apart for their use and occupation, aggregating over 134,000,000 acres. These lands are included in the boundaries of 171 reservations of different dimensions, scattered in 21 States and Territories, presenting great  
1080 variations in climate and in the kind and quality of their soils. Among the Indians upon these several reservations there exist the most marked differences in natural traits and disposition and in their progress toward civilization. While some are lazy, vicious, and stupid, others are industrious, peaceful, and intelligent; while a portion of them are self-supporting and independent, and have so far advanced in civilization that they make their own laws, administered through officers of their own choice, and educate their children in schools of their own establishment and  
1085 maintenance, others still retain, in squalor and dependence, almost the savagery of their natural state.

In dealing with this question the desires manifested by the Indians should not be ignored. Here again we find a great diversity. With some the tribal relation is cherished with the utmost tenacity, while its hold upon others is considerably relaxed; the love of home is strong with all, and yet there are those whose attachment to a particular  
1090 locality is by no means unyielding; the ownership of their lands in severalty is much desired by some, while by others, and sometimes among the most civilized, such a distribution would be bitterly opposed.

The variation of their wants, growing out of and connected with the character of their several locations, should be regarded. Some are upon reservations most fit for grazing, but without flocks or herds; and some on arable land, have  
1095 no agricultural implements. While some of the reservations are double the size necessary to maintain the number of Indians now upon them, in a few cases, perhaps, they should be enlarged.

Add to all this the difference in the administration of the agencies. While the same duties are devolved upon all, the disposition of the agents and the manner of their contact with the Indians have much to do with their condition and  
1100 welfare. The agent who perfunctorily performs his duty and slothfully neglects all opportunity to advance their moral and physical improvement and fails to inspire them with a desire for better things will accomplish nothing in the direction of their civilization, while he who feels the burden of an important trust and has an interest in his work will, by consistent example, firm yet considerate treatment, and well-directed aid and encouragement, constantly lead those

under his charge toward the light of their enfranchisement.

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The history of all the progress which has been made in the civilization of the Indian I think will disclose the fact that the beginning has been religious teaching, followed by or accompanying secular education. While the self-sacrificing and pious men and women who have aided in this good work by their independent endeavor have for their reward the beneficent results of their labor and the consciousness of Christian duty well performed, their valuable services should  
1110 be fully acknowledged by all who under the law are charged with the control and management of our Indian wards.

What has been said indicates that in the present condition of the Indians no attempt should be made to apply a fixed and unyielding plan of action to their varied and varying needs and circumstances.

1115 The Indian Bureau, burdened as it is with their general oversight and with the details of the establishment, can hardly possess itself of the minute phases of the particular cases needing treatment; and thus the propriety of creating an instrumentality auxiliary to those already established for the care of the Indians suggests itself.

I recommend the passage of a law authorizing the appointment of six commissioners, three of whom shall be detailed  
1120 from the Army, to be charged with the duty of a careful inspection from time to time of all the Indians upon our reservations or subject to the care and control of the Government, with a view of discovering their exact condition and needs and determining what steps shall be taken on behalf of the Government to improve their situation in the direction of their self-support and complete civilization; that they ascertain from such inspection what, if any, of the reservations may be reduced in area, and in such cases what part not needed for Indian occupation may be purchased  
1125 by the Government from the Indians and disposed of for their benefit; what, if any, Indians may, with their consent, be removed to other reservations, with a view of their concentration and the sale on their behalf of their abandoned reservations; what Indian lands now held in common should be allotted in severalty; in what manner and to what extent the Indians upon the reservations can be placed under the protection of our laws and subjected to their penalties, and which, if any, Indians should be invested with the right of citizenship. The powers and functions of the  
1130 commissioners in regard to these subjects should be clearly defined, though they should, in conjunction with the Secretary of the Interior, be given all the authority to deal definitely with the questions presented deemed safe and consistent.

They should be also charged with the duty of ascertaining the Indians who might properly be furnished with  
1135 implements of agriculture, and of what kind; in what cases the support of the Government should be withdrawn; where the present plan of distributing Indian supplies should be changed; where schools may be established and where discontinued; the conduct, methods, and fitness of agents in charge of reservations; the extent to which such reservations are occupied or intruded upon by unauthorized persons, and generally all matters related to the welfare and improvement of the Indian.

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They should advise with the Secretary of the Interior concerning these matters of detail in management, and he should be given power to deal with them fully, if he is not now invested with such power.

This plan contemplates the selection of persons for commissioners who are interested in the Indian question and who  
1145 have practical ideas upon the subject of their treatment.

The expense of the Indian Bureau during the last fiscal year was more than six and a half million dollars. I believe much of this expenditure might be saved under the plan proposed; that its economical effects would be increased with its continuance; that the safety of our frontier settlers would be subserved under its operation, and that the nation  
1150 would be saved through its results from the imputation of inhumanity, injustice, and mismanagement.

In order to carry out the policy of allotment of Indian lands in severalty, when deemed expedient, it will be necessary to have surveys completed of the reservations, and, I hope that provision will be made for the prosecution of this work.

In May of the present year a small portion of the Chiricahua Apaches on the White Mountain Reservation, in Arizona, left the reservation and committed a number of murders and depredations upon settlers in that neighborhood. Though prompt and energetic action was taken by the military, the renegades eluded capture and escaped into Mexico. The formation of the country through which these Indians passed, their thorough acquaintance with the same, the speed of their escape, and the manner in which they scattered and concealed themselves among the mountains near the scene of their outrages put our soldiers at a great disadvantage in their efforts to capture them, though the expectation is still entertained that they will be ultimately taken and punished for their crimes.

The threatening and disorderly conduct of the Cheyennes in the Indian Territory early last summer caused considerable alarm and uneasiness. Investigation proved that their threatening attitude was due in a great measure to the occupation of the land of their reservation by immense herds of cattle, which their owners claimed were rightfully there under certain leases made by the Indians. Such occupation appearing upon examination to be unlawful notwithstanding these leases, the intruders were ordered to remove with their cattle from the lands of the Indians by Executive proclamation. The enforcement of this proclamation had the effect of restoring peace and order among the Indians, and they are now quiet and well behaved.

By an Executive order issued on February 27, 1885, by my predecessor, a portion of the tract of country in the territory known as the Old Winnebago and Crow Creek reservations was directed to be restored to the public domain and opened to settlement under the land laws of the United States, and a large number of persons entered upon those lands. This action alarmed the Sioux Indians, who claimed the territory as belonging to their reservation under the treaty of 1868. This claim was determined, after careful investigation, to be well founded, and consequently the Executive order referred to was by proclamation of April 17, 1885, declared to be inoperative and of no effect, and all persons upon the land were warned to leave. This warning has been substantially complied with.

The public domain had its origin in cessions of land by the States to the General Government. The first cession was made by the State of New York, and the largest, which in area exceeded all the others, by the State of Virginia. The territory the proprietorship of which became thus vested in the General Government extended from the western line of Pennsylvania to the Mississippi River. These patriotic donations of the States were encumbered with no condition except that they should be held and used "for the common benefit of the United States." By purchase with the common fund of all the people additions were made to this domain until it extended to the northern line of Mexico, the Pacific Ocean, and the Polar Sea. The original trust, "for the common benefit of the United States," attached to all. In the execution of that trust the policy of many homes, rather than large estates, was adopted by the Government. That these might be easily obtained, and be the abode of security and contentment, the laws for their acquisition were few, easily understood, and general in their character. But the pressure of local interests, combined with a speculative spirit, have in many instances procured the passage of laws which marred the harmony of the general plan and encumbered the system with a multitude of general and special enactments which render the land laws complicated, subject the titles to uncertainty, and the purchasers often to oppression and wrong. Laws which were intended for the "common benefit" have been perverted so that large quantities of land are vesting in single ownerships. From the multitude and character of the laws, this consequence seems incapable of correction by mere administration.

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It is not for the "common benefit of the United States" that a large area of the public lands should be acquired, directly or through fraud, in the hands of a single individual. The nation's strength is in the people. The nation's prosperity is in their prosperity. The nation's glory is in the equality of her justice. The nation's perpetuity is in the patriotism of all her people. Hence, as far as practicable, the plan adopted in the disposal of the public lands should have in view the original policy, which encouraged many purchases of these lands for homes and discouraged the massing of large areas. Exclusive of Alaska, about three-fifths of the national domain has been sold or subjected to contract or grant. Of the remaining two-fifths a considerable portion is either mountain or desert. A rapidly increasing population creates a growing demand for homes, and the accumulation of wealth inspires an eager competition to obtain the public land for speculative purposes. In the future this collision of interests will be more marked than in the past, and the execution of the nation's trust in behalf of our settlers will be more difficult. I therefore commend to your attention the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary of the Interior with reference to the repeal and modification of certain of our land laws.



The nation has made princely grants and subsidies to a system of railroads projected as great national highways to connect the Pacific States with the East. It has been charged that these donations from the people have been diverted to private gain and corrupt uses, and thus public indignation has been aroused and suspicion engendered. Our great nation does not begrudge its generosity, but it abhors speculation and fraud; and the favorable regard of our people for the great corporations to which these grants were made can only be revived by a restoration of confidence, to be secured by their constant, unequivocal, and clearly manifested integrity. A faithful application of the undiminished proceeds of the grants to the construction and perfecting of their roads, an honest discharge of their obligations, and entire justice to all the people in the enjoyment of their rights on these highways of travel are all the public asks, and it will be content with no less. To secure these things should be the common purpose of the officers of the Government, as well as of the corporations. With this accomplishment prosperity would be permanently secured to the roads, and national pride would take the place of national complaint.

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It appears from the report of the Commissioner of Pensions that there were on the 1st day of July, 1885, 345,125 persons borne upon the pension rolls, who were classified as follows: Army invalids, 241,456; widows, minor children, and dependent relatives of deceased soldiers, 78,841; navy invalids, 2,745; navy widows, minor children, and dependents, 1,926; survivors of the War of 1812, 2,945; and widows of those who served in that war, 17,212. About one man in ten of all those who enlisted in the late war are reported as receiving pensions, exclusive of the dependents of deceased soldiers. On the 1st of July, 1875, the number of pensioners was 234,821, and the increase within the ten years next thereafter was 110,304.

While there is no expenditure of the public funds which the people more cheerfully approve than that made in recognition of the services of our soldiers living and dead, the sentiment underlying the subject should not be vitiated by the introduction of any fraudulent practices. Therefore it is fully as important that the rolls should be cleansed of all those who by fraud have secured a place thereon as that meritorious claims should be speedily examined and adjusted. The reforms in the methods of doing the business of this Bureau which have lately been inaugurated promise better results in both these directions.

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The operations of the Patent Office demonstrate the activity of the inventive genius of the country. For the year ended June 30, 1885, the applications for patents, including reissues, and for the registration of trade-marks and labels, numbered 35,688. During the same period there were 22,928 patents granted and reissued and 1,429 trade-marks and labels registered. The number of patents issued in the year 1875 was 14,387. The receipts during the last fiscal year were \$ 1,074,974.35, and the total expenditures, not including contingent expenses, \$934,123.11.

There were 9,788 applications for patents pending on the 1st day of July, 1884, and 5,786 on the same date in the year 1885. There has been considerable improvement made in the prompt determination of applications and a consequent relief to expectant inventors.

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A number of suggestions and recommendations are contained in the report of the Commissioner of patents which are well entitled to the consideration of Congress.

In the Territory of Utah the law of the United States passed for the Suppression of polygamy has been energetically and faithfully executed during the past year, with measurably good results. A number of convictions have been secured for unlawful cohabitation, and in some cases pleas of guilty have been entered and a slight punishment imposed, upon a promise by the accused that they would not again offend against the law, nor advise, counsel, aid, or abet in any way its violation by others.

The Utah commissioners express the opinion, based upon such information as they are able to obtain, that but few polygamous marriages have taken place in the Territory during the last year. They further report that while there can not be found upon the registration lists of voters the name of a man actually guilty of polygamy, and while none of that class are holding office, yet at the last election in the Territory all the officers elected, except in one county, were men who, though not actually living in the practice of polygamy, subscribe to the doctrine of polygamous marriages as a divine revelation and a law unto all higher and more binding upon the conscience than any human law, local or national. Thus is the strange spectacle presented of a community protected by a republican form of government, to

which they owe allegiance, sustaining by their suffrages a principle and a belief which set at naught that obligation of absolute obedience to the law of the land which lies at the foundation of republican institutions.

1265 The strength, the perpetuity, and the destiny of the nation rest upon our homes, established by the law of God, guarded by parental care, regulated by parental authority, and sanctified by parental love.

These are not the homes of polygamy.

The mothers of our land, who rule the nation as they mold the characters and guide the actions of their sons, live  
1270 according to God's holy ordinances, and each, secure and happy in the exclusive love of the father of her children, sheds the warm light of true womanhood, unperverted and unpolluted, upon all within her pure and wholesome family circle.

These are not the cheerless, crushed, and unwomanly mothers of polygamy.

1275 The fathers of our families are the best citizens of the Republic. Wife and children are the sources of patriotism, and conjugal and parental affection beget devotion to the country. The man who, undefiled with plural marriage, is surrounded in his single home with his wife and children has a stake in the country which inspires him with respect for its laws and courage for its defense.

1280 These are not the fathers of polygamous families.

There is no feature of this practice or the system which sanctions it which is not opposed to all that is of value in our institutions.

There should be no relaxation in the firm but just execution of the law now in operation, and I should be glad to  
1285 approve such further discreet legislation as will rid the country of this blot upon its fair fame.

Since the people upholding polygamy in our Territories are reenforced by immigration from other lands, I recommend that a law be passed to prevent the importation of Mormons into the country.

1290 The agricultural interest of the country demands just recognition and liberal encouragement. It sustains with certainty and unfailing strength our nation's prosperity by the products of its steady toil, and bears its full share of the burden of taxation without complaint. Our agriculturists have but slight personal representation in the councils of the nation, and are generally content with the humbler duties of citizenship and willing to trust to the bounty of nature for a reward of their labor. But the magnitude and value of this industry are appreciated when the statement is made that of our total  
1295 annual exports more than three-fourths are the products of agriculture, and of our total population nearly one-half are exclusively engaged in that occupation.

The Department of Agriculture was created for the purpose of acquiring and diffusing among the people useful information respecting the subjects it has in charge, and aiding in the cause of intelligent and progressive farming, by  
1300 the collection of statistics, by testing the value and usefulness of new seeds and plants, and distributing such as are found desirable among agriculturists. This and other powers and duties with which this Department is invested are of the utmost importance, and if wisely exercised must be of great benefit to the country. The aim of our beneficent Government is the improvement of the people in every station and the amelioration of their condition. Surely our agriculturists should not be neglected. The instrumentality established in aid of the farmers of the land should not only  
1305 be well equipped for the accomplishment of its purpose, but those for whose benefit it has been adopted should be encouraged to avail themselves fully of its advantages.

The prohibition of the importation into several countries of certain of our animals and their products, based upon the suspicion that health is endangered in their use and consumption, suggests the importance of such precautions for the  
1310 protection of our stock of all kinds against disease as will disarm suspicion of danger and cause the removal of such an

injurious prohibition.

If the laws now in operation are insufficient to accomplish this protection, I recommend their amendment to meet the necessities of the situation; and I commend to the consideration of Congress the suggestions contained in the report of the Commissioner of Agriculture calculated to increase the value and efficiency of this Department

The report of the Civil Service Commission, which will be submitted, contains an account of the manner in which the civil-service law has been executed during the last year and much valuable information on this important subject.

I am inclined to think that there is no sentiment more general in the minds of the people of our country than a conviction of the correctness of the principle upon which the law enforcing civil-service reform is based. In its present condition the law regulates only a part of the subordinate public positions throughout the country. It applies the test of fitness to applicants for these places by means of a competitive examination, and gives large discretion to the Commissioners as to the character of the examination and many other matters connected with its execution. Thus the rules and regulations adopted by the Commission have much to do with the practical usefulness of the statute and with the results of its application.

The people may well trust the Commission to execute the law with perfect fairness and with as little irritation as is possible. But of course no relaxation of the principle which underlies it and no weakening of the safeguards which surround it can be expected. Experience in its administration will probably suggest amendment of the methods of its execution, but I venture to hope that we shall never again be remitted to the system which distributes public positions purely as rewards for partisan service. Doubts may well be entertained whether our Government could survive the strain of a continuance of this system, which upon every change of Administration inspires an immense army of claimants for office to lay siege to the patronage of Government, engrossing the time of public officers with their importunities, spreading abroad the contagion of their disappointment, and filling the air with the tumult of their discontent.

The allurements of an immense number of offices and places exhibited to the voters of the land, and the promise of their bestowal in recognition of partisan activity; debauch the suffrage and rob political action of its thoughtful and deliberative character. The evil would increase with the multiplication of offices consequent upon our extension, and the mania for office holding, growing from its indulgence, would pervade our population so generally that patriotic purpose, the support of principle, the desire for the public good, and solicitude for the nation's welfare would be nearly banished from the activity of our party contests and cause them to degenerate into ignoble, selfish, and disgraceful struggles for the possession of office and public place.

Civil-service reform enforced by law came none too soon to check the progress of demoralization.

One of its effects, not enough regarded, is the freedom it brings to the political action of those conservative and sober men who, in fear of the confusion and risk attending an arbitrary and sudden change in all the public offices with a change of party rule, cast their ballots against such a chance.

Parties seem to be necessary, and will long continue to exist; nor can it be now denied that there are legitimate advantages, not disconnected with office holding, which follow party supremacy. While partisanship continues bitter and pronounced and supplies so much of motive to sentiment and action, it is not fair to hold public officials in charge of important trusts responsible for the best results in the performance of their duties, and yet insist that they shall rely in confidential and important places upon the work of those not only opposed to them in political affiliation, but so steeped in partisan prejudice and rancor that they have no loyalty to their chiefs and no desire for their success. Civil-service reform does not exact this, nor does it require that those in subordinate positions who fail in yielding their best service or who are incompetent should be retained simply because they are in place. The whining of a clerk discharged for indolence or incompetency, who, though he gained his place by the worst possible operation of the spoils system,

suddenly discovers that he is entitled to protection under the sanction of civil-service reform, represents an idea no less absurd than the clamor of the applicant who claims the vacant position as his compensation for the most questionable party work.

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The civil-service law does not prevent the discharge of the indolent or incompetent clerk, but it does prevent supplying his place with the unfit party worker. Thus in both these phases is seen benefit to the public service. And the people who desire good government, having secured this statute, will not relinquish its benefits without protest. Nor are they unmindful of the fact that its full advantages can only be gained through the complete good faith of those having its execution in charge. And this they will insist upon.

I recommend that the salaries of the Civil Service Commissioners be increased to a sum more nearly commensurate to their important duties.

1375 It is a source of considerable and not unnatural discontent that no adequate provision has yet been made for accommodating the principal library of the Government. Of the vast collection of books and pamphlets gathered at the Capitol, numbering some 700,000, exclusive of manuscripts, maps, and the products of the graphic arts, also of great volume and value, only about 300,000 volumes, or less than half the collection, are provided with shelf room. The others, which are increasing at the rate of from twenty-five to thirty thousand volumes a year, are not only inaccessible  
1380 to the public, but are subject to serious damage and deterioration from other causes in their present situation.

A consideration of the facts that the library of the Capitol has twice been destroyed or damaged by fire, its daily increasing value, and its importance as a place of deposit of books under the law relating to copyright makes manifest the necessity of prompt action to insure its proper accommodation and protection.

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My attention has been called to a controversy which has arisen from the condition of the law relating to railroad facilities in the city of Washington, which has involved the Commissioners of the District in much annoyance and trouble. I hope this difficulty will be promptly settled by appropriate legislation.

1390 The Commissioners represent that enough of the revenues of the District are now on deposit in the Treasury of the United States to repay the sum advanced by the Government for sewer improvements under the act of June 30, 1884. They desire now an advance of the share which ultimately should be borne by the District of the cost of extensive improvements to the streets of the city. The total expense of these contemplated improvements is estimated at \$1,000,000, and they are of the opinion that a considerable sum could be saved if they had all the money in hand, so  
1395 that contracts for the whole work could be made at the same time. They express confidence that if the advance asked for should be made the Government would be reimbursed the same within a reasonable time. I have no doubt that these improvements could be made much cheaper if undertaken together and prosecuted according to a general plan.

The license law now in force within the District is deficient and uncertain in some of its provisions and ought to be amended. The Commissioners urge, with good reason, the necessity of providing a building for the use of the District government which shall better secure the safety and preservation of its valuable books and records.

The present condition of the law relating to the succession to the Presidency in the event of the death, disability, or removal of both the President and Vice-President is such as to require immediate amendment. This subject has  
1405 repeatedly been considered by Congress, but no result has been reached. The recent lamentable death of the Vice-President, and vacancies at the same time in all other offices the incumbents of which might immediately exercise the functions of the presidential office, has caused public anxiety and a just demand that a recurrence of such a condition of affairs should not be permitted.

1410 In conclusion I commend to the wise care and thoughtful attention of Congress the needs, the welfare, and the aspirations of an intelligent and generous nation. To subordinate these to the narrow advantages of partisanship or the accomplishment of selfish aims is to violate the people's trust and betray the people's interests; but an individual sense

of responsibility on the part of each of us and a stern determination to perform our duty well must give us place among those who have added in their day and generation to the glory and prosperity of our beloved land.

1415

GROVER CLEVELAND

*(19754 words)*

*Quelle: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29526>*