

President's Message.

In the negotiations thus opened and still pending, the United States only claimed that for the future the rights secured to their citizens by treaty should be respected in Cuba, and that as to the past a joint tribunal should be established in the United States with full jurisdiction over all such claims.

THE WAR IN EUROPE.

Soon after the existing war broke out in Europe, the protection of the U. S. minister in Paris was invited to favor the North Germans domiciled on French territory. Instructions were issued to grant the protection. This has been followed by an extension of American protection to citizens of Saxony, Hesse, and Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, Columbia, Portugal, Uruguay, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Chile, Paraguay, and Venezuela, in European wars.

THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.

As soon as I learned that a Republic had been proclaimed in Paris, and that the people of France had chosen a minister of the change, the minister of the United States was directed by telegraph to recognize it, and tender my congratulations and those of the people of the United States.

OUR SOUTH AMERICAN POLICY.

The allied and other republics of Spanish origin on this continent may see in this fact a new proof of our sincere interest in their welfare, of our desire to see them blessed with good governments capable of maintaining order and of preserving their respective territorial integrity, and of our sincere wish to extend our own commercial and social relations with them.

THE SAN DOMINGO TREATY.

During the last session of Congress a treaty for the annexation of the republic of Santo Domingo to the United States failed to receive the requisite two-thirds vote of the Senate. I was thoroughly convinced that the best interests of this country commercially and materially demanded its ratification.

THE INSURRECTION IN CUBA.

It is a well known fact that the insurrection in Cuba has materially changed since the close of the last session of Congress. In an early stage of the contest the authorities of Spain inaugurated a system of arbitrary arrests, close confinement, and military trial and execution of persons suspected of complicity with the insurgents, and of summary seizure of their property and execution of their revenue to executive warrant. Such proceedings, so far as they affected the persons or property of citizens of the United States, were in violation of the provisions of the treaty of 1795 between the United States and Spain.

Mexico, and to the Bahamas and Antilles. We must, as it were, pass through foreign countries to get by from Georgia to the west coast of Florida. San Domingo, with a stable government under which her immense resources can be developed, will give remunerative wages to ten thousand laborers not now upon the island. This labor will take advantage of every available means of transportation to land on the adjacent islands and seek the blessing of freedom and its sequence, each inhabitant receiving the reward of his own labor.

NATURALIZATION TREATIES.

The ratifications of the naturalization convention between Great Britain and the United States have also been exchanged during the recess, and thus a long standing dispute between the two governments has been settled, in accordance with the principles always contended for by the United States.

RECIPIENT OF A BOUNDARY LINE.

In April last, while engaged in locating a military reservation near Pembina, a corps of engineers discovered that the commonly received boundary line between the United States and the British possessions at that place is about forty-seven hundred feet south of the true position of the forty-ninth parallel, and that the line when properly located, would be to the north of the true position of that parallel.

THE ALABAMA CLAIM.

I regret to say that no conclusion has been reached for the adjustment of the claims against Great Britain growing out of the course adopted by that government towards the abolition of the British slave trade, so far as its views have been pressed, does not appear to be willing to concede that her Majesty's government is guilty of negligence, or did or permitted any act during the war for which the United States has just cause of complaint.

THE ZONA LIBRE.

It is to be regretted that our representations in regard to the injurious effects, especially upon the revenue of the United States, of the policy of the Mexican government in exempting from import duties a large tract of its territory on our borders have not only been neglected, but that it is even contended that country to extend the limits in which the privilege advertised to has hitherto been enjoyed.

OUR VENEZUELAN CLAIMS.

The sense of Congress is desired as early as may be convenient upon the proceedings of the commission on claims against Venezuela, sanctioned by Executive message of March 4, 1869, March 1, 1870, and March 31, 1870. It has not been deemed advisable to distribute any of the money which has been received from that government, until Congress shall have acted upon the subject.

THE MASSACRES IN CHINA.

The massacre of French and Russian residents at Tien-Tsin, under circumstances of great barbarity, were supposed to have been perpetrated, and to indicate a purpose among the populace to exterminate foreigners in the Chinese Empire. The evidence fails to establish such a supposition, but shows a complicity by the local authorities with the mob. The government at Peking, however, seems to have been disposed to fulfill its treaty obligations so far as it was able to do so.

OUR DEPRESSED COMMERCE.

It is a subject to which I called your special attention at the last session, and suggested that we try in the future to have more to the countries south of us, and to China and Japan, for its renewal. Our own representatives to all those governments have exerted their influence to encourage trade between the United States and the countries to which they are accredited.

THE NAVIGATION OF THE ST. LAWRENCE.

A like unfriendly disposition has been manifested on the part of Canada in the maintenance of a claim of right to exclude the citizens of the United States from the navigation of the St. Lawrence. This river constitutes a natural outlet to the Great Lakes, and has an aggregate population of about 17,000,000 of inhabitants and with an aggregate tonnage of 661,367 tons upon the waters which discharge into it.

THE FISHERIES QUESTION.

The course pursued by the Canadian authorities towards the fishermen of the United States during the past season has not been marked by a friendly feeling. By the first article of the convention of 1818 between Great Britain and the United States it was agreed that the inhabitants of the United States should have the right of taking fish in certain waters, their right defined in the convention—within three miles of parts of the British coast.

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FINANCIAL ESTIMATES.

The estimates of the expenses of the government for the next fiscal year are \$18,244,346.01 less than for the current year, but exceed the appropriations for the present year for the same items \$8,971,127.56. In this estimate, however, is included \$2,348,278.27 for public works heretofore begun under Congressional provisions, and of which only a small amount has been expended.

SPECIE PAYMENTS.

The average value of gold, as compared with the national currency, for the whole of the year 1870 was about 184, and for seven months of 1871 the same relative value has been maintained. The fact cannot be denied that the instability of the value of our currency is prejudicial to our prosperity, and tends to keep up prices to the detriment of trade.

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