

Congress—The President's Message.

The second session of the fifty-first Congress convened on Monday at noon, and immediately proceeded to business. Among the very first acts was that of a Democrat who introduced a bill to cripple the new tariff bill. It is safe to say, however, that that measure will not become a law at this session. The President's Message was read and attentively listened to throughout. The document is pronounced by many to be the ablest state paper presented to Congress for many years. The Pittsburgh Commonwealth thus reviews it:

No one can peruse the message which President Harrison transmitted to Congress yesterday without gathering from it much information of a gratifying and assuring character. Passing over all matters bearing upon our relations with foreign Nations, and coming to those of a domestic nature, we find the National finances in a very satisfactory condition. The silver act has been disappointing in the fluctuating price of that metal, but the hope is entertained that some months of further trial will demonstrate its capacity to bring the value of the two metals closer together. There has been a gratifying increase in the money circulation, but a small proportion of which is due to silver legislation.

That there has been a marked improvement during the year in the agricultural industries is apparent from the figures furnished by the Secretary of Agriculture. The advances in the prices of wheat, corn, oats, meats and other products have been most substantial, and the exportations of cattle and hogs, beef, pork and poultry, have been largely increased. In a word, there has been a marked improvement in the general trade and industrial conditions of the country during the past year. The balance of foreign trade is again in our favor, and the bank clearings show that the increase in the volume of business was very general throughout the country. The value of domestic exports exceeded those of the preceding year by \$115,000,000, and about \$100,000,000 of this excess was in agricultural products. Labor is everywhere fully employed, strikes and lockouts are diminishing in numbers, the depression in agriculture has been greatly relieved, and an abundant and hopeful tone was prevailing when the foreign money stringency developed and made its influence felt here. The President expresses the belief that the disturbance will be of short duration, being unable to withstand "the strong, safe and wholesome influences which are operating to give the people profitable returns in all branches of legitimate trade and industry."

The effects of the new tariff are discussed in a frank and sensible manner. "There is neither wisdom nor justice," says the President, "in the suggestion that the subject of tariff revision shall be opened before this law has had a fair trial." While the law is not defended as faultless in every respect, the President believes "in its general scope and effect it will justify the support of those who believe that American legislation should conserve and defend American trade and the wages of American workmen." Time will correct the misinformation so widely disseminated at home and abroad respecting its effects. Already the reports of our custom-houses are disproving the charge that certain duties are prohibitory. The imports at New York for the first three weeks of November were nearly 8 per cent. greater than for the same period in 1889, or 29 per cent. greater than in the same period in 1888.

The President has a good word for reciprocity and anticipates great results from the reciprocity clause in the new tariff bill. It is a distinct and definite offer of free entry to our ports of specific articles. When the countries which send us sugar, coffee, tea and hides have placed on their free lists such of our products as shall be agreed upon as an equivalent for our concession a proclamation to that effect completes the transaction—and in the meantime our people have tea, coffee, sugar and hides free of duty.

Congress is admonished of the duty and importance of passing certain measures, among them those relating to the development of American steamship lines; the incorporation of an International American Bank; the bill for the relief of the Supreme Court of the United States; a National bankrupt law; the engrafting of a postal telegraph system upon the mail service, and some other bills of minor importance. Last, but not least in importance, is the potent argument in favor of the passage of a Federal Election law, which, while being absolutely non-partisan and impartial, will make free and safe the path of the elector to the ballot-box and the count so true and open that none can gild it.

The document throughout is calm and dignified in manner, hopeful and patriotic in tone, and cannot fail to exert an assuring and strengthening influence among all classes. It is ardently to be hoped that Congress will be able to accomplish the important work committed to its hands within the limited time at its disposal.

In Free Trade England, where the blessings of direct taxation prevail, a man cannot keep a dog-cart, light vehicle or carriage without a license. A countryman who drove his wife to market in a farmers' cart in order that

she might mind the horse while he was attending to business was recently summoned before a Magistrate on the charge of "keeping a carriage without a license." The astute Magistrate decided that the poor countryman had no right to drive his wife about and that by such use the cart became a carriage under the law, and was liable to taxation. This is the system which the farmers of America are asked to adopt.

THE hobnobbing of prominent Tammany Hall men with the Maryland Democrats bodes no good to the Cleveland boom. Senator Gorman is known to be opposed to the nomination of the ex-President, and it looks very much like he had formed an alliance with the Tammanyites, who are for Hill. Senator Barbour, of Virginia, who is credited with being able to control his State's delegation to the next National Democratic convention, says that, in his opinion, Mr. Cleveland ought not to be nominated. Against these significant movements among the practical politicians, Mr. Cleveland has so far nothing to put, except the enthusiastic endorsement of Representatives Mills and Springer, both of whom are expecting aid from him in their fight for the Speakership of the next House of Representatives. Mr. Cleveland may receive the Democratic nomination in 1892—we hope he will—rather than beat him than anybody else—but it is already evident that he and his friends will have to fight hard for it, and it is not certain that even the hardest of fighting will get it for him.

THE Democrats of this State, not having much else to do just now, have fallen into a discussion about a candidate for United States Senator. There are eighty some Democratic members of the Legislature who will, of course, vote for somebody, and while they will elect no one the compliment is regarded as worth having. In 1881, at the close of Mr. Wallace's term in the Senate, he was naturally voted for by the minority. Any other action would have been an indignity to him. He was again complimented in 1885, being at that time a member of the State Senate. In 1887 Senator Wolverton was made the Democratic caucus nominee. As it was on all sides conceded that if any accident had given the Democrats the Legislature this time Mr. Wallace would have secured the Senatorship, it has generally been supposed he would receive whatever compliment is implied in the vote of the Democratic members. But within a few days the friends of ex-Lieutenant Governor Black have been showing what an appropriate thing it would be to make him the Senatorial candidate. As he has fallen outside the breast-works, and this is the only thing within immediate reach, the suggestion has proved so popular that it is altogether likely to take hold.

Ready to Swallow the Alliance. The large vote polled by the Farmers' Alliance in the Western States has awakened a desire among Democrats to absorb this organization into their party. One open proposition to this effect has already been made by J. Sterling Morton, the well known Free Trader of Nebraska. In a letter to the Omaha World he suggests a union convention, to be held in Lincoln, Neb., on Jackson's day, January 8, to perfect a combination between the Alliance and the Democracy.

There is nothing unnatural in an effort to this end being made by the Democratic party. That party has always stood ready to gather within its fold any "ism," however chimerical or objectionable it might be, so long as it brought votes along with it. It allied itself with the cause of slavery and continued to defend the evil until that institution disappeared in the blood and flame of war. When the Greenback craze swept over the country the Democracy thought it saw votes in the delusion, and it was mad in its eagerness to surrender its few principles and make a combination with the new party. So now the Democratic party cares nothing for the real or imaginary wrongs of the farmers, but it thinks it sees Congressmen, Governors, and Presidents galore in the Alliance vote, and it is ready to swap its principles for this vote if the farmers can be induced to make the trade.

In the case of Nebraska, however, the Farmers' Alliance does not appear to be in a mood to make the trade. It has begun a contest against the Democrats for the Governorship of that State, and as it has entire control of the Legislature the outlook is not very satisfactory to the Democrats. They see a chance of losing a Governorship and, what is of much more moment, an antagonism to the Democracy which bodes no good for a future union between the two parties. Western Democratic papers are consequently trying to plead with the Alliance and persuade it to withdraw from the contest in Nebraska. It is an unexpected dash of cold water on the hopes of the Democracy.

If the Farmers' Alliance wants to combine with the Democratic party it need only wait and concede nothing, and in a little while the Democracy will march, body and soul, into the Alliance camp.—Phila. Press.

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