

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

The reports of the heads of the several executive departments, required by law to be submitted to me, which have been transmitted, and the reports of the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Attorney-General, made directly to Congress, furnish a comprehensive view of the administrative work of the last fiscal year relating to internal affairs.

AMERICAN PORTS IN EUROPE.

The law of the last Congress providing a system of inspection for our vessels intended for export and clothing the President with power to exclude foreign products from our market in case the country sending them should persist in unjust discriminations against any product of the United States, placed this Government in a position to effectually urge the removal of such discriminations against our vessels and to be able to state that Germany, Denmark, Italy, Austria and France, in the order named, have opened their ports to inspection of American ports.

OUR RELATIONS WITH CHINA.

The civil war in China, which began in January last, was continued, but fortunately with infrequent and not important armed collisions, until August 28, when the Chinese imperial forces landed near Valparaiso, and after a bloody engagement captured that city.

THE VALPARAISO INCIDENT.

On the 16th of October an event occurred in Valparaiso so serious and tragic in its circumstances and results as to very justly excite the indignation of our people and to prompt and decided action on the part of this Government. A considerable number of the sailors of the United States steamship Baltimore, then in the harbor, were being upon shore-leave and unarmed, were assaulted by armed men nearly simultaneously in different localities in the city.

DISPOSAL OF THE SURPLUS.

The presence of a large cash surplus in the Treasury has for many years been the subject of much unfavorable criticism, and has furnished an argument to those who have desired to place the tariff upon a purely revenue basis. It was agreed by the withdrawal from circulation of so large an amount of money was an embarrassment to the business of the country and made necessary the intervention of the Treasury.

THE WAR DEPARTMENT.

Progress has been made in securing sites for harbor defenses and in the manufacture of guns for their armament. The Secretary's recommendation for three-battalion formation of infantry regiments is concurred in, as is that for the adoption of smokeless powder. Seven companies of light infantry have been enlisted, and several more are being formed.

THE POSTAL SERVICE.

Revenues of the Postoffice Department have increased over \$5,000,000. Estimated for 1899 show an anticipated surplus of receipts over expenses.

OUR NEW NAVY.

Four vessels, aggregating 11,000 tons, have been placed in commission during the year. Twenty more are in course of construction.

THE INDIAN QUESTION.

Solution of the problem of Governmental dealings with the Indians sought in legislation recommended, which shall have in view the making of the Indian into a citizen.

THE PUBLIC DOMAIN INCREASED.

Since March 4, 1889, about 33,000,000 acres have been separated from Indian reservations and added to the public domain by the use of those who desired to secure free homes under our beneficent laws.

THE TARIFF LAW.

The general interest in the operations of the Treasury Department has been much augmented during the last year by reason of the conflicting resolutions which accompanied and followed the tariff and other legislation of the last Congress affecting the revenues, as to the results of this legislation upon the Treasury and upon the country.

There is certainly nothing in the condition of trade, foreign or domestic, there is certainly nothing in the condition of our people for any class to suggest that the tariff and revenue legislation bears oppressively upon the people or retards the commercial development of the nation.

FREE COINAGE WOULD MEAN DISASTER.

I am still of the opinion that the free coinage of silver under existing conditions would disastrously affect our business interests at home and abroad. We could not hope to maintain an equality in the purchasing power of the gold and silver dollar in our own markets, and in foreign trade the stamp given to the dollar by the market would be equal to nothing.

BIMETALLISM THE OBJECT.

The producers of silver are entitled to just consideration, but they should not forget that the Government is now buying and putting out of the market what is the equivalent of the entire product of our silver mines. This is more than they themselves thought of asking two years ago.

PROTECTING RAILROAD EMPLOYEES.

I have twice before urged that the attention of Congress to the necessity of legislation for the protection of the lives of railroad employees be given the highest priority. During the year ending June 30, 1890, 380 brakemen were killed and 7341 maimed while engaged in coupling cars.

ELECTION OF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORS.

The method of appointment by the States of electors of President and Vice-President has recently attracted renewed interest by reason of a departure by the State of Michigan from the general system.

THE PENSION BUREAU.

The administration of the Pension Bureau has been characterized during the year by great diligence. The total number of pensioners upon the roll on the 30th day of June, 1890, was 678,168.

for that purpose. This legislation was, of course, accompanied by a new Congressional apportionment of the members of the electoral college of the State under the influence of the "gerrymander."

These gerrymanders for Congressional purposes are in most cases business by a general manner of the legislative districts, thus making it impossible for a majority of the legal voters of the State to correct the apportionment and equality of the Congressional districts.

AGRICULTURE.

If the establishment of the Department of Agriculture was regarded by any one as a mere cloak for a protectionist scheme, the impression has been most effectively removed by the great results already attained.

The inspection by this Department of cattle and pork products intended for shipment to foreign markets has attracted much attention which has tended our efforts to secure the removal of the restrictions maintained by the European Government.

Nothing just now is more important than to provide every guaranty for the absolutely fair and free choice by an equal suffrage of electors by the people of the National Government, whether that suffrage is applied directly, as in the choice of Members of the House of Representatives, or indirectly, as in the choice of Senators and electors of President.

I have alluded to the "gerrymander" as affecting the President by Congressional districts, but the primary intent and effect of this form of political robbery have been to deprive the members of the House of Representatives of the power of Congress to deal with this question in an honorable and equitable manner.

I believe it would be patriotic in its membership, and composed of patriotic men and women, to whom the duties of citizenship are so clearly defined, and the interests of the country so clearly defined, that they would be able to secure to the people a fair and free choice by an equal suffrage of electors by the people.

I have been greatly rejoiced to notice many of the evidences of the increasing intelligence of our people and of a revived national spirit. The vista that now opens up is wider and more glorious than ever before.

Executive Mansion, Dec. 4, 1891.

FIFTY-SECOND CONGRESS.

TUESDAY.—At the hour of noon clerk McPherson called the House to order, and the Journal of yesterday's proceedings was read.

The clerk then announced that he was ready to receive any motion, whereupon Mr. Holman of Indiana, moved that the House proceed to the election of Speaker.

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THE CONDITION OF BUSINESS.

REPORTS FROM THE SOUTHERN STATES.

The Southern cities all report some embarrassment, and at Little Rock trade is dull. At Nashville money is scarce, all signs indicate a large volume of business at the present with growing confidence of improvement in the future, except in parts of the South, where the unusual accumulation of cotton and its low prices have a depressing influence.

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TWELVE PERSONS PERISH.

In the Flames, Two Destructive Fires at Louisville, Dec. 12.—Six people, maybe more, were burned to death in a disastrous fire which destroyed Frank A. Menne & Co.'s candy and Christmas store.

The business block on the north side of Main street, between Sixth and Seventh, was also burned this morning. In the early evening the store and stock of the Boone paper company were destroyed, containing a loss of \$65,000.

This morning an explosion occurred in the adjoining building occupied by Bamberg, Streng & Co. The shaky walls crumbled and another fire began, which in comparison made the other insignificant.

The loss will fall far short of \$500,000. Four firemen were killed by a falling wall when the explosion occurred. Their names are Tony Schlicht, Tom Moore, Will Davis and Baker. They were missing and it is almost certain they are killed.

The "Grip" Again Abroad.—New York—La Grippe has a grasp on New York again—not in epidemic form as yet, but sufficiently widespread to create some alarm as to what may develop after the first big snowstorm.

Milwaukee, Wis.—Lemuel Richards committed suicide by hanging himself on Wednesday. Three weeks ago he had a severe attack of La Grippe. Mr. Richards was seventy years of age.

A special from Plainfield, Conn., says: Ninety-six of the population here are afflicted with the grip. Ten deaths from the grip have occurred in this place and twenty in the neighborhood.

Massachusetts, Ill.—La Grippe is prevailing to an alarming extent in this section of the State. There are many serious cases of the disease in this city and in the country east and north of here. It has become almost epidemic.

Killed by Her Grandfather.—Witchita, Dec. 14.—Almost tragic in its surroundings was the death of Lena Bronson, teacher of a country school about 30 miles west of here. The young woman got the grip a short time ago. She lived with her father and grandfather, the latter nearly 90 years of age, who practiced medicine in his youth in some Eastern village.

An Insane Man's Work.—Mount Olive, Ill., Dec. 14.—As the result of a probable insane man's horrible work, John Miller, aged 68 years, lies in a coffin by his own hand, after a life which was perhaps fatally wounded. The tragedy was evidently premeditated by Miller, as he a few days before made his will and settled up his business affairs. Mrs. Miller went down town and during her absence he became intoxicated, to nerve himself. On her return he threatened her life. When she ran out of the house he followed her and fired at her as she ran. A bullet passed entirely through her body. She fell as friends came to her help. Miller, after the shooting went into the back room, put the muzzle of a gun in his mouth and discharged the remaining load, killing himself instantly.