

that this proposition has been declined by the British Government upon grounds which in the circumstances seem to me to be far from satisfactory. It is deeply disappointing that such an appeal, actuated by the most friendly feelings toward both nations directly concerned, addressed to the sense of justice and to the magnanimity of one of the great powers of the world, and touching its relations to one comparatively weak and small, should have produced no better results.

"The course to be pursued by this Government in view of the present condition does not appear to admit of serious doubt. Having labored faithfully for many years to induce Great Britain to submit this dispute to impartial arbitration, and having been now finally apprised of her refusal to do so, nothing remains but to accept the situation, to recognize its plain requirements, and deal with it accordingly. Great Britain's present proposition has never thus far been regarded as admissible by Venezuela, though any adjustment of the boundary which that country may deem for her advantage and may enter into of her own free will can not of course be objected to by the United States. Assuming, however, that the attitude of Venezuela will remain unchanged, the dispute has reached such a stage as to make it now incumbent upon the United States to take measures to determine with sufficient certainty for its justification what is the true divisional line between the Republic of Venezuela and British Guiana. The inquiry to that end should of course be conducted carefully and judicially, and due weight should be given to all available evidence, records, and facts in support of the claims of both parties. In order that such an examination should be prosecuted in a thorough and satisfactory manner, I suggest that the Congress make an adequate appropriation for the expenses of a commission, to be appointed by the Executive, who shall make the necessary investigation and report upon the matter with the least possible delay. When such report is made and accepted it will, in my opinion, be the duty of the United States to resist by every means in its power, as a willful aggression upon its rights and interests, the appropriation by Great Britain of any lands or the exercise of governmental jurisdiction over any territory which after investigation we have determined of right belongs to Venezuela.

"In making these recommendations I am fully alive to the responsibility incurred and keenly realize all the consequences that may follow. I am, nevertheless, firm in my conviction that while it is a grievous thing to contemplate the two great English-speaking peoples of the world as being otherwise than friendly competitors in the onward march of civilization and strenuous and worthy rivals in all the arts of peace, there is no calamity which a great nation can invite which equals that which follows a supine submission to wrong and injustice and the consequent loss of national self-respect and honor, beneath which are shielded and defended a people's safety and greatness."—*United States, Message and Documents (Abridgment, 1895-6)*.

The recommendations of the President were acted upon with remarkable unanimity and promptitude in Congress, a bill authorizing the appointment of the proposed commission, and appropriating \$100,000 for the necessary expen-

diture, being passed by the House on the day following the Message (December 17), and by the Senate on the 20th. See (in this vol.) *UNITED STATES OF AM. : A. D. 1895 (DECEMBER)*.

**A. D. 1895-1896 (December—January).—Feeling in England and the United States over the boundary dispute.** See (in this vol.) *UNITED STATES OF AM. : A. D. 1895-1896 (DECEMBER—JANUARY)*.

**A. D. 1896-1899.—Appointment of the United States Commission to investigate the boundary question.—Reopening of negotiations between the United States and Great Britain.—The solution of the main difficulty found.—Arbitration and its result.—The Commission authorized by the Congress of the United States to investigate and report on the true divisional line between British Guiana and Venezuela was named by the President of the United States, on the 1st of January, as follows: David J. Brewer, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States; Richard H. Alvey, Chief Justice of the Court of Appeals in the District of Columbia; Andrew D. White, ex-President of Cornell University, and ex-Minister to Germany and Russia; Daniel C. Gilman, President of Johns Hopkins University; Frederick R. Coudert, of New York. The Commission was organized on the 4th by the election of Justice Brewer to be its President. Mr. S. Mallet Prevost was subsequently appointed Secretary. One of the first proceedings of the Commission was to address a letter to the Secretary of State, suggesting a friendly intimation to the governments of Great Britain and Venezuela that their assistance to it, in procuring unpublished archives and the like evidence, would be highly acceptable, and that "if either should deem it appropriate to designate an agent or attorney, whose duty it would be to see that no such proofs were omitted or overlooked, the Commission would be grateful for such evidence of good will." This overture was well received in England, and had an excellent effect. It was responded to by Lord Salisbury, with an assurance that Her Majesty's government would readily place at the disposal of the President of the United States any information at their command, and would communicate advance copies of documents soon to be published on the subject of the boundary line. Before the close of January the Commission had organized its work, with several experts engaged to assist on special lines. Professor Justin Winsor, Librarian of Harvard University, had undertaken to report on the early maps of the Guiana-Venezuela country, Professor George L. Burr, of Cornell University, was making ready to examine the Dutch archives in Holland, and Professor J. Franklin Jameson, of Brown University, was enlisted for other investigations.**

Before these labors had gone far, however, the two governments, of Great Britain and the United States, were induced to reopen a discussion of the possibility of an arbitration of the dispute. On the 27th of February, Mr. Bayard, the Ambassador of the United States at London, conveyed to Lord Salisbury a proposal from his government "that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Washington should be empowered to discuss the question at that capital with the Secretary of State," and that "a clear definition of the 'settlements' by individuals in the territory in dispute, which it is understood Her Majesty's Govern-