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President McKinley's Message.

The United States Congress met on Monday, the 4th inst. As usual the President's message is a voluminous document and deals with a number of questions of importance from a national or international point of view. In industrial and fiscal conditions the President finds much matter for favorable comment. In exports both of agricultural products and of manufactured goods there has been a remarkable increase. In the fiscal year ending June 30, 1899, the government revenue from all sources was \$611,000,000, but this did not equal the expenditure, which amounted to over \$700,000,000, leaving a deficit of \$89,000,000. For the current year, however, it is expected that the revenue will be some \$30,000,000 greater and the expenditure nearly \$100,000,000 less, which will make a balance of about \$40,000,000 on the other side. Mr. McKinley finds the present condition of the treasury most gratifying. The available cash balance on December 1st being \$278,000,000, of which \$229,000,000 was in gold and bullion. All fears of a gold famine in the treasury are for the present quite removed. The large increase in exportation has had the effect of bringing much gold into the country, and it has come into more general use in commercial transactions. The President, however, dwells upon the importance of taking advantage of the present favorable conditions to establish the gold standard on a firm basis. He urges that the duty be imposed upon the Secretary of the Treasury to uphold the gold standard and to preserve a parity of value between gold and silver coins of the same denomination. And to this end he repeats a former recommendation that a portion of the gold holdings shall be placed in a trust fund, from which greenbacks shall be redeemed upon presentation, but when once redeemed shall not be paid out again except for gold. Some attention is given to the subject of Trusts, and in this connection Mr. McKinley says: "It is universally conceded that combinations which engross or control the market of any particular kind of merchandise or commodity necessary to the general community, by suppressing natural and ordinary competition, whereby prices are unduly enhanced to the general consumer, are obnoxious, not only to the common law, but also to the public welfare. There must be a remedy for the evils involved in such organization. If the present law can be extended more certainly to control or check these monopolies or trusts it should be done without delay. Whatever power the Congress possesses over this most important subject should be promptly ascertained and asserted."

In connection with the Foreign relations of his country President McKinley asks Congress to assist in measures looking to the construction of a canal across the Isthmus, and says that a Canal Commission is making good progress in its endeavors to settle the question of the most practicable route. What is said in reference to China indicates that the United States Government is taking an active interest in the development of affairs in that part of the world. American trade with China, the President says, continues to grow, and the commercial interests of the United States under existing treaties have been and will be maintained. The Samoan question receives consideration and the President says that he will shortly submit to the Senate the contract in reference thereto between Great Britain, Germany and the United States. Mr. McKinley expresses satisfaction over the outcome of the Peace Congress held at the Hague, and hopes for beneficial results from its permanent tribunal of arbitration. He also calls attention to the fact that in signing the Convention the representative of the United States carefully guarded the historic position of his country in reference to the Monroe doctrine. From which it may be inferred that in President McKinley's opinion the appearance of the United States as an imperial and conquering power in the eastern world does not constitute any reason why his Government should admit the right of European powers to interference of a similar character in the affairs of the Western Hemisphere. Concerning Cuba the President recalls the fact that the United States, on April 19, 1898, by the joint action of

Congress, disclaimed any disposition or purpose to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction or control over Cuba except for the pacification of the island, and when that was accomplished to leave its government and control to its own people, and he says that this pledge must be sacredly kept. But from what the message further contains on this subject, as well as from the facts of the case generally, it may fairly be inferred that there is no probability that Cuba will at any early day attain to that degree of pacification which in the judgment of the United States Government would fit its people to undertake with any good prospect of success the very serious business of self-government. Mr. McKinley proceeds to a lengthy discussion of the Philippine war, justifying the course of his government in the matter. He contends that the war was thrust upon the nation by the action of the Filipino leaders. "Our obligations to other nations and to the friendly Filipinos and to ourselves and our flag," says the President, "demand that force should be met by force. Whatever the future of the Philippines may be there is no course open to us now except the prosecution of the war until the insurgents are reduced to submission. The commission is of the opinion that there has been no time since the destruction of the Spanish squadron by Admiral Dewey, when it was possible to withdraw our forces from the island, either with honor to ourselves or with safety to the inhabitants." A speedy completion of the war is anticipated. The message of course alludes to the relations of the United States with Great Britain and, apart from certain questions "growing out of our relations to our northern neighbors," the most friendly disposition and ready agreement are said to have marked the vast and intimate intercourse of the two governments. The work of the joint commission in its efforts to settle these questions is referred to and also its failure to complete its work on account of irreconcilable views of the commissioners in respect to the Alaska boundary question. The President alludes to the *modus vivendi* and expresses the hope that negotiations now in progress between the two Governments will end in an agreement for the establishment and delimitation of a permanent boundary. Mr. McKinley has nothing to say, however, as to the propriety of applying in this particular case the principle of arbitration which, in a theoretical sense, he so warmly approves.

The New Soudan. The recent battle between the Anglo-Egyptian forces, under the command of General Wingate, and the Dervishes, was of a decisive character, resulting in the complete defeat of the latter, with the death of the Khalifa and several among his followers who were men of note, including two sons of the Khalifa and a son of the late Mahdi. The Khalifa Abdullah, the fallen leader, followed the lead of his predecessor, the Mahdi, and sought with no small success to unite the Dervishes in his service by assuming the role of prophet, appealing to their religious passions and arousing their fanatical zeal by predictions of wide conquest over the unbelievers. Perhaps he was to a degree honest in his fanaticism. At all events he was a man of great force, and within a certain range a very successful leader. He disregarded, however, the line between the possible and the impossible. It required very severe argument to convince him and his followers that the utmost force with which fanatical bravery could inspire Arab horsemen of the desert could accomplish nothing against modern armor and military science. If the lesson is now well learned it will make for peace in the Upper Nile country, and certainly the outlook for peace and civilization in that wide land seems highly favorable. The journey from Kairo to Khartoum can now be made in three days and nights, and the whole great Soudan country, having an area of some 950,000 square miles and a population estimated to be from 7 to 10 millions, is now open to the trade and commerce of the world. The country being now delivered from fanatical misrule, policed by Anglo-Egyptian soldiery and its government administered by the firm hand of an English governor like Lord Kitchener, the conditions for its development will be such as it has never enjoyed before.

The Representative from Utah.

Mr. Brigham H. Roberts, member elect from Utah to the United States House of Representatives, is a Mormon and a polygamist. There has been a very strenuous popular protest against Mr. Roberts being allowed to take his seat in Congress, and apparently the protest has not been without effect. When the House of Representatives met last week a resolution, moved by Mr. Taylor, of Ohio, asking for a special committee to investigate the charges against Mr. Roberts was adopted, the House having previously rejected a substitute resolution permitting Mr. Roberts to be sworn in and sending the whole case to the judiciary committee. After a debate of three hours, Mr. Taylor's resolution was carried by a vote of 302 to 36. Much popular interest was shown in the debate, the galleries of the House being crowded with people, mostly women. The polygamist defended himself with a good deal of oratorical ability and on several occasions during his speech drew applause from the galleries. By the terms of the resolution adopted Mr. Roberts is not only excluded from all participation in the proceedings of the House until the committee reports and the House passes on the case, but he is also denied a seat in the Hall. There is little doubt that the result will be the exclusion of Mr. Roberts, since it does not seem possible that a man who is living in open and confessed violation of the laws of the land can be permitted to occupy a place among its legislators.

The War.

The past week has been, generally speaking, one of preparation on the part of the British commanders in South Africa rather than of offensive work. General Methuen at Modder River, has been engaged in getting his forces in position on the northern bank of the river. His delay in respect to any advance movement is said to be due, in part, to the necessity of waiting for the arrival of a number of howitzers and their ammunition which have only just reached him. The advance for the relief of Ladysmith has also been delayed, it is believed, for a like reason. Now that the British forces east and west have been strengthened by the arrival of this artillery, advance movements for the relief of Kimberley and Ladysmith will probably be undertaken at once. By means of heliographic communication the British commanders are now kept informed of the condition of affairs in the two beleaguered towns. There are reports that an assault of the Boers upon Kimberley has been repulsed, but no details are given. It is known, however, that a large force of Boers occupy a very strong position between Modder River and Kimberley, and a great battle will likely take place there within a few days. There is news from Ladysmith of a brilliant and successful sortie on Saturday, under General Hunter, resulting in driving the Boers from a strong position on Lombard Kop, four miles from the town, destroying two heavy pieces of artillery and capturing a maxim gun. The force employed consisted of 500 Natal volunteers and 100 of the Imperial Light Horse. The British loss was one man killed and one officer wounded. A British force under General Gatacre, has however met with a severe repulse near Stormberg, in Central Cape Colony. This is a part of the Colony lying on the southern border of the Orange Free State. The Dutch element is strong there, and the people have shown active sympathy with the Boers. General Gatacre appears to have been led into difficulty by treacherous guides and misinformation as to position and strength of the enemy. After a rapid night march from Molteno with a force of 2000 men, he found himself at 4.15 on Sunday morning, in the presence of a strongly posted Boer force which poured a murderous fire into the front and right flank of the British. After maintaining an unequal fight for three hours, General Gatacre fell back to Molteno, having lost heavily. He reports 9 officers and 596 men missing, besides 2 men killed and 9 officers and 17 men wounded. This report of casualties is incomplete, and what has become of the missing, whether or not they are prisoners, is not yet known. This reverse is all the more to be regretted because it will, of course, increase the boldness of the disaffected Colonists.