

and sailors and their dependents, on the ground that they deserve liberal treatment. It pledges by its platform adequate legislation to that end. But it denies the right of the executive to usurp the power of congress to legislate on that subject. Such usurpation was attempted by pension order No. 87, and effect has been given to it by a congress that dared not resent the usurpation. It is said that "this order was made in the performance of a duty imposed upon the president by act of congress," but the provision making the imposition is not pointed out. The act to which the order refers, which is the one relating to pensions of civil war veterans, does not authorize pensions on the ground of age. It does grant pensions to those "suffering from any mental or physical disability, or disabilities, of a permanent character, not the result of their own vicious habits, which so incapacitates them from the performance of manual labor as to render them unable to earn a support." This specified requirement of incapacity is in effect set aside by order No. 78 as to all persons over 62.

The war closed nearly forty years ago. In the meantime many of our soldiers and sailors long survived the age of 62, and passed away without receiving any pension. Skillful pension attorneys hunting through the statute failed to find there a provision giving a pension to all who had reached 62. Many prominent veterans urged the justice of congressional action giving a service pension to all veterans. Bills to that effect were introduced in congress. And not until March of this year did any one ever claim to have made the discovery that the president had power to treat the statute as if it read that when a claimant had passed the age of 62 years he is necessarily disabled one-half in ability to perform manual labor and therefore entitled to a pension.

The present pension commissioner indicated his view of the order when in a recent address he thanked the president for what he had done, and advised his hearers to use their influence that a law might be passed to the same effect. Full confidence after all seems not to have been placed on the defense of justification, for it is pleaded in mitigation that a former democratic president did something looking in that direction. Even if that were so—which is not admitted—our present duty would be none the less plain and imperative. Our people must never tolerate the citation of one act of usurpation of power as an excuse for another. The first may possibly be due to mistake; the second, being based on the first, can not be. In explanation, however, it should be said that the order relied on simply provided that the age of 75 years should be regarded as evidence of inability to perform manual labor. Few men are able to perform manual labor at that age, but nearly all men are at 62. The first order is based on a fact that experience teaches, the other is based on the assertion of that which is not true as a general rule.

The old inquiry, "What are you going to do about it?" is now stated in a new form. It is said by the administration in reply to the public criticism of this order, that "It is easy to test our opponents' sincerity in this matter. The order in question is revocable at the pleasure of the executive. If our opponents come into power they can revoke this order and announce that they will treat the veterans of 62 and 70 as presumably in full bodily vigor and not entitled to pension. Will they authoritatively state that they intend to do this? If so, we accept the issue."

This suggests the suspicion, at least, that the order was made to create an issue—that it was supposed to present a strong strategic position in the battle of the ballots. But as the making of that order was, in my judgement, an

attempted, though perhaps unwitting encroachment upon the legislative power, and, therefore, unwarranted by the constitution, the challenge is accepted. If elected, I will revoke that order. But I go further and say that that being done, I will contribute my effort toward the enactment of a law to be passed by both houses of congress and approved by the executive that will give an age pension, without reference to disability to the surviving heroes of the civil war; and under the provisions of which a pension may be accepted with dignity because of the consciousness that it comes as a just due from the people, through their chosen representatives, and not as largess distributed by the chief executive.

The foreign relations of the government have in late years assumed special importance. Prior to the acquisition of the Philippines, we were practically invulnerable against attacks by foreign states. These tropical possessions, however, 7,000 miles from our shores, have changed all this, and have, in effect, put us under bonds to keep the peace. The new conditions call for a management of foreign affairs the more circumspect in that the recent American invasion of foreign markets in all parts of the world has excited the serious apprehension of all the great industrial people. It is essential, therefore, more than ever, to adhere strictly to the traditional policy of the country as formulated by its first president and never, in my judgment, wisely departed from—to invite friendly relations with all nations while avoiding entangling alliances with any. Such a policy means the cultivation of peace instead of the glorification of war, and the minding of our own business in lieu of spectacular intermeddling with the affairs of other nations. It means strict observance of the principles of international law and condemns the doctrine that a great state, by reason of its strength may rightfully appropriate the sovereignty or territory of a small state on account of its weakness. It means for other American states that we claim no rights and will assume no functions save those of a friend and of an ally and defender as against European aggressions. It means that we repudiate the role of the American continental policeman; that we refuse to act as debt collector for foreign states or their citizens; that we respect the independent sovereignty of each American state and its right to preserve order and otherwise regulate its own internal affairs in its own way; and that any intervention in its affairs by us is limited to the single office of enabling its people to work out their own political destiny for themselves, free from the coercion of any European state.

Twenty-eight years have passed since the democratic party of the state of New York, in convention assembled, recommended to the national democracy the nomination of Samuel J. Tilden as its candidate for the presidency, and declared it to be "their settled conviction that a return to the constitutional principles, frugal expenses and administrative purity of the founders of the republic is the first and most imperious duty of the times—the commanding issue now before the people of the union." This strong expression was called forth by the national expenditures for the year 1875, which amounted to \$274,000,000—a situation which, in the opinion of a majority of our people, justified an imperative demand for reform in the administration of public affairs. As the expenditure of the last fiscal year amounted to the enormous total of \$582,000,000, it is evident that a thorough investigation of the public service and the immediate abandonment of useless and extravagant expenditures are more necessary now than they were then. This astonishing increase is out of all proportion to the increase of our population,

and finds no excuse from whatever aspect we view the situation. The national democratic platform declares that "large reductions can easily be made in the annual expenditures of the government without impairing the efficiency of any branch of the public service." Can there be any doubt of the accuracy of this statement? Between the expenditures of the year 1886, amounting to \$242,000,000, and those of the last fiscal year—the seventh after Grover Cleveland ceased to be president—aggregating \$582,000,000, there is a difference so great as to excite alarm in the breasts of all thoughtful men. Even excluding the sum of \$50,000,000 paid for the Panama canal rights and to the state of Panama, the expenditures of the last fiscal year exceeded the sum of \$532,000,000, being more than double the expenditures of the government for all purposes during the first year of Mr. Cleveland's administration.

The expenses of the first four years succeeding the last democratic administration amounted to the enormous average of \$511,000,000 per year. This large expenditure was due to a considerable extent to the cost of the Spanish-American war, which occurred during that period; but the termination of that war brought no relief to the treasury, for the average annual expenses of the government, during the three subsequent years ending June 30, 1904, were about \$519,000,000, which is the largest sum hitherto reached, during a like period, since the close of the civil war.

This draft upon the revenues of the country has had the effect which might have been anticipated, and now we have presented the reverse of the situation, which led to the famous observation, "It is a condition, and not a theory, which confronts us;" for, although the present incumbent found at the close of the first fiscal year, during which he assumed control of the administration, a surplus of receipts over expenditures of more than \$91,000,000, there was an excess of expenditures over receipts at the close of the last fiscal year of \$42,000,000, and the official monthly reports made by the treasury department show that the expenditures are continuously and rapidly increasing, while the receipts are diminishing.

In this connection it is interesting to note the recent administrative orders forbidding government officers from making public any statement of estimates on which future appropriations are to be based.

If a man of ordinary intelligence and prudence should find in the operating expenses of his business such a tremendous percentage of increase, would he not promptly set on foot an inquiry for the cause of the waste, and take immediate measures to stop it, especially when trusted employes have been found dishonest and convicted, and a widespread impression exists that a thorough investigation may discover other cases of malfeasance? When the chief executive reported to congress that, "through frauds, forgeries and perjuries, and by shameless bribes the laws relating to the proper conduct of the public service in general, and to the due administration of the postoffice department have been notoriously violated" . . . there was a general popular demand for a rigid, sweeping investigation by congress, in addition to that undertaken by the executive himself. Such an investigation the republican majority in congress would not permit, although the minority insisted that the interests of good government demanded it. And the minority was right. The liberty, patriotism and national pride of the people should not be made an excuse for waste of the public funds. Official extravagance is official crime.

There is not a sentence in the republican platform recommending a reduction in the expenditures of the gov-

ernment; not a line suggesting that the increase in the cost of the war department from \$34,000,000 in 1886 to \$115,000,000 in 1904 should be inquired into; and not a paragraph calling for a thorough investigation of those departments of the government in which dishonesty has been recently disclosed.

The people, however, can by their votes, if they desire it, order such an investigation and inaugurate a policy of economy and retrenchment. It is safe to say that this will not be accomplished by indorsing at the polls the republican majority of the house of representatives, which refused the investigation and made the appropriations, nor by continuing in power the administration which made the disbursements.

Reform in expenditures must be had in both the civil, military and naval establishments in order that the national expenditures may be brought to a basis of peace and the government maintained without recourse to the taxes of war.

I have put aside a congenial work, to which I had expected to devote my life, in order to assume, as best I can, the responsibilities your convention put upon me.

I solicit the cordial co-operation and generous assistance of every man who believes that a change of measures and of men at this time would be wise, and urge harmony of endeavor as well as vigorous action on the part of all so minded.

The issues are joined and the people must render the verdict.

Shall economy of administration be demanded or shall extravagance be encouraged?

Shall the wrongdoer be brought to bay by the people, or must justice wait upon political oligarchy?

Shall our government stand for equal opportunity or for special privilege?

Shall it remain a government of law or become one of individual caprice?

Shall we cling to the rule of the people, or shall we embrace beneficent despotism?

With calmness and confidence, we await the people's verdict.

If called to the office of president, I shall consider myself the chief magistrate of all the people and not of any faction, and shall ever be mindful of the fact that on many questions of national policy there are honest differences of opinion. I believe in the patriotism, good sense and absolute sincerity of all the people. I shall strive to remember that he may serve his party best who serves his country best.

If it be the wish of the people that I undertake the duties of the presidency, I pledge myself, with God's help, to devote all my powers and energy to the duties of this exalted office.

Very truly yours,
ALTON B. PARKER.

The Solace of Silence

"You're forever trying to give the impression that you're a martyr," snapped Mrs. Henpeck. "I suppose you want everybody to think that you suffer in silence?"

"No," replied Mr. Henpeck, "I suffer in the perpetual absence of silence. A little silence would be a positive pleasure to me."—New York Tribune.

Terrible Revenge

Orpheus was boasting that he could make the rocks sing to his music.

"Perhaps," retorted Aeolus, "but I'll bet you can't make the furnace draw!"

Smarting under the insult, the god of music invented the cornet player by way of retaliation.—Colliers Weekly.

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