

monetary union among themselves, President Harrison sent invitations to the American Republics for such Commission. The Commission had eight meetings in Washington from January 7 to April 4, 1891, I representing Mexico, having been honored with the appointment of presiding officer of the Commission, notwithstanding that it is the universal rule that the president of an international conference should be a delegate of the inviting nation.<sup>1</sup> The Minutes of this Commission were published in English and Spanish in a book of 123 pages entitled *Minutes of the American International Monetary Commission of 1891*. It was of course impossible to come to any satisfactory conclusion in that Commission, as had been the case before in the Pan-American Conference, and the only way to overcome the difficulty was to agree upon a recommendation to the Government of the United States that it should propose to all nations of the world the meeting of an International Monetary Conference.<sup>2</sup> This recommendation led to the meeting of a monetary conference at Brussels from November 22 to December 17, 1892, which, as is well known, did not produce any satisfactory result, but rather was a setback to the idea of arriving at an

<sup>1</sup> The following is a list of the delegates to the American International Monetary Commission:

Argentine Republic, Señor Don Miguel Tedin; Bolivia, Señor Don Melchor Obarrio; Brazil, Señor Don Salvador de Mendonça; Colombia, Señors Don Julio Rengifo and Don Clímaco Calderón; Chile, Señor Don Prudencio Lazcano; the United States, the Hon. N. P. Hill, the Hon. Lambert Tree, and the Hon. W. A. Russell; Hawaii, the Hon. H. A. P. Carter; Hayti, the Hon. Hannibal Price; Honduras, the Hon. Rowan W. Stevens; Mexico, Señor Don Matías Romero; Nicaragua, Señor Don Horacio Guzmán; Uruguay, Señor Don José Martí; Peru, Señor Don Felix Cipriano C. Zagarra; Costa Rica, Señor Don Joaquin B. Calvo; Venezuela, Señor Don Estanislao Vetancourt Rendón.

<sup>2</sup> The following is a copy of a resolution introduced by Señor Mendonça, recommending the meeting of an International Monetary Commission, reported favorably by the committee to which it was referred, and approved by the Commission on April 3, 1891:

WHEREAS, first, in the opinion of the Commission the establishment of a fixed ratio between gold and silver, the adoption of coins of both metals and of a common monetary unit would be of great benefit to the commerce of the world;

Secondly, these ends could be accomplished by means of an international agreement entered into by all the commercial nations of the world; and

Thirdly, in view of the efforts recently made in this behalf it does not appear probable that under present circumstances the desired ends can be obtained; be it therefore

*Resolved*, That this Commission bring its sessions to a close, expressing the wish that before long another Commission may meet which shall reach an agreement that will secure the adoption of a uniform monetary system between the nations of America, advantageous to each and all.

M. ROMERO,	JULIO RENGIFO,
SALVADOR DE MENDONÇA,	JOSÉ MARTI,
MIGUEL TEDIN,	H. GUZMÁN.

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 3, 1891.

international agreement on some proposition intended to restore silver as a money metal by the commercial nations of the world.

The report of the Commissioners of the United States to the Brussels Conference, dated at Washington February 14, 1893, together with the Minutes of the ten meetings of the Conference, were printed, with the President's Message to Congress of February 21, 1893, in a volume of 384 pages.

*Bureau of American Republics*.—Another lasting result of the Pan-American Conference was the establishment in the city of Washington, supported by all the American countries, with a quota in proportion to their population, of an American Commercial Bureau for the purpose of disseminating commercial information among the American nations and so to increase their mercantile relations. Although that bureau has not done all that was expected of it, with the experience already gained it could be hereafter a very useful institution to promote trade between the American nations.

Mr. Curtis was at the head of the Bureau during President Harrison's administration. When Mr. Cleveland entered into his second term Mr. Clinton Furbish was appointed Director, and he remained as such all through that administration. On the inauguration of President McKinley, Mr. Joseph P. Smith was appointed Director, and he greatly exerted himself to fulfil the duties of his office and make his mark, but unfortunately he contracted a disease which, much to the regret of all, resulted in his premature death.

The recommendation approved by the Pan-American Conference in regard to the Bureau entrusted the direction of the same to the Secretary of State of the United States; but while Mr. Olney held that office he desired that the American republics should have more direct participation in the control of the Bureau, and he summoned a meeting of their representatives in Washington, who appointed a committee to propose some regulations with the view of establishing civil service for the Bureau, and so having more stability in its employees, avoiding the rotation of other offices in this country, the personnel of which changes almost with every new administration. On the 4th of June, 1896, new regulations were approved at a meeting of the American representatives in Washington, establishing an Executive Committee of four representatives, each of them to serve for four years in the alphabetical order of their country, under the presidency of the Secretary of State, to decide all matters pertaining to the Bureau, and providing that appointments of its employees should be made by the Secretary of State after examination by a Board of Examiners, composed of five members, three appointed by the Latin-American members of the Executive Committee and two by the Secretary of State.

The Bureau is supported by the contributions of all the American republics who accepted the agreement apportioned *pro rata* to their population, and with a view to diminish the respective quota the Director of the Bureau was authorized to publish advertisements in the *Monthly Bulletin*, a source which was expected would yield some revenue.

The Bureau of American Republics has made several publications, to some of which I have especially referred, and the others are the following: It edits a *Monthly Bulletin*, or magazine of 150 pages, containing current information of interest relating to the various countries represented by the Bureau, printed in the four languages spoken by the American nations, and besides it has published handbooks of all the American Republics, and also of Hawaii and Alaska; it has printed a Newspaper Directory of Latin-America, a Commercial Directory of most of the American Republics, and especially a general *Commercial Directory* in two large volumes, and the *Commercial Nomenclature* to which I shall presently allude. All the regular publications issued by the Bureau amount to ninety, up to March 1, 1898.

There has been from time to time in the Congress of the United States some opposition to the Bureau, but whenever the respective committees have investigated the subject, they have decided to support the Bureau, and there is no doubt that it will stand for the ten years agreed upon, and possibly that it will be extended for a similar period.

*The Montevideo Treaties.*—The part which the Montevidean treaties played in the Conference ought not to be omitted. It is known that the principal nations of South America met in congress in Montevideo in 1888, and recommended the conclusion of treaties on international civil law, international commercial law, international law of penal procedure, patents, trade-marks, copyright, extradition, etc., etc. The extended scope and details of the provisions therein contained have prevented some of the nations which attended that congress, and whose plenipotentiaries signed the treaties, from accepting them all. The Mexican Government, which, at the request of the Argentine Republic, had been studying those treaties for more than a year, had not then come to any conclusion about them. The rules accepted in those treaties are the same as those prevailing in the nations which follow the Roman law, and as the United States is governed generally by the common law of England, and subjects of municipal law in the several states do not fall under the federal jurisdiction, it is very difficult for this country to accept said treaties in all their details, since that would be equivalent to changing the basis of their legislation. This explains the opposition of the United States delegation to these treaties. Notwithstanding all this, three of them—those relating to copyrights, trade-marks, and patents—were accepted by the United States delegate who was a mem-

ber of the committee, and, finally by the delegation when the matter was brought to a vote before the Conference.

The Conference also agreed to recommend the study by all the American nations of the Montevideo Treaties, with a view to their final adoption.

*Commercial Nomenclature.*—There is an incident which, although not of serious consequence, shows how easy it is to misunderstand the plainest enactment, even in case that all pains are taken to make its object perfectly clear. I will briefly mention that incident before ending this paper.

I always thought it would be very advisable for the American nations to agree upon a common nomenclature in their tariff laws, each of them reserving, of course, the right to tax foreign goods according to their own views and convenience. If this idea were carried out, a central bureau, located, for instance, in Washington, could publish from time to time the tariffs of all American countries, in a single book having several columns, one set apart for each country, showing the rate of duty that each levied upon a given commodity. It would, of course, be very difficult to agree on a common nomenclature, and that ought to be the work of experts, one from each of the interested nations. This could be done, accepting, for instance, the United States tariff, or such other as might be advisable, as the basis of the work, and then adding to it such merchandise as is quoted in the tariffs of the other countries and not mentioned in the United States tariff. In this case, such commodities, if not taxed in the United States, would be left blank in the column belonging to the United States, and also in the columns of the countries that did not levy any duty upon them. While such tariff book containing all the data would be rather cumbersome, as it would have to be in the four languages spoken by the American nations, it would have the advantage of showing the exact amount of duties levied by each one, upon every specific imported commodity.

With this object in view I introduced in the Conference on January 2, 1890, the following resolution, which was referred to the Committee on Customs Regulations, of which I was a member:

"Resolved, That the proper committee of this Conference be requested to examine and report about the convenience and practicability of adopting a common schedule of foreign goods, to be used by the several nations represented in this Conference for the purpose of collecting import duties, making invoices, bills of lading, etc., each country having the exclusive right to fix the amount of duties to be levied on each article, but the schedule of the articles to be common to all.

" M. ROMERO,

" Delegate from Mexico.

" WASHINGTON, January 2, 1890."

My resolution was carefully examined by the committee, and after I explained to them its object it was written over again, to make it man-

datory and plainer, in the following terms, in which it was reported to the Conference, and agreed upon by the same on February 10, 1890.

"Resolved, That the International American Conference recommends to the Governments represented therein the adoption of a common nomenclature which shall designate in alphabetical order in equivalent terms, in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and French, the commodities on which import duties are levied, to be used respectively by all the American nations for the purpose of levying customs imposts which are or may hereafter be established, and also to be used in shipping manifests, consular invoices, entries, clearance petitions, and other customs documents; but not to effect in any manner the right of each nation to levy the import duties now in force, or which may hereafter be established.

" J. ALFONSO.	CHARLES R. FLINT.	M. ROMERO.
" H. G. DAVIS.	SALVADOR DE MENDONÇA.	CLÍMACO CALDERÓN."

When the time to carry this motion into effect arrived, the Bureau of American Republics, misunderstanding completely its object, printed, while Mr. Curtis was Director of the Bureau, a list of commercial terms in the four languages spoken by the American nations, with a parallel blank column. This work was printed for the purpose of submitting it to the respective governments for their remarks, additions, and revisions, and when they all had been heard from, then to give it to the public as an official work; but Mr. Curtis's successor did not quite wait to hear such views, and the book was issued as it finally came out, something like a vocabulary or dictionary of commercial terms used in the American countries, which was published in three volumes under the name of *The Commercial Nomenclature of the American Republics*, and which, while it is a very commendable work and very useful in the mercantile intercourse between the American countries, is by no means what my motion intended or what I had in view.

*Discussion of Other Subjects by the Conference.*—The Conference took up, besides, several other subjects which, although important in themselves, appear in a secondary light when compared with those I have mentioned. I refer to the recommendation favoring a uniform system of weights and measures; and those to adopt uniform and liberal rules for the valuation of merchandise at the custom-houses; to simplify the import and consular dues; to adopt any of the South American conventions for sanitary purposes; to establish railways and lines of steamers among the several nations; to negotiate extradition treaties; to establish an American international bank for the purpose of carrying on the exchanges then made through London. The recommendations of the Conference bearing on those subjects were inserted in the different publications of the Conference, and I therefore deem it unnecessary to say anything more about them.

*Final Results of the Conference.*—The most important result of the Conference—and I mention it in the first place because all the others

depended on the ratification of the respective agreements by the American governments, which generally was not given, while the one I refer to was and is an effective one and likely to exercise great influence for some time to come—was the mutual acquaintance through the representatives of the different nations, which, situated far apart and without easy and close communication among themselves, were almost unknown to each other. The constant intercourse of the delegates for nearly six months, and their daily discussion of important questions affecting the paramount interests of their respective countries, was to many of them quite a surprising revelation of the importance and progress, resources and education of the several states represented in the Conference. There is, therefore, no mistake in regarding as its first and best result the sentiment of mutual respect and consideration with which each delegate was inspired for his colleagues and for the nations represented by them; and so far as the United States is concerned, this result was accepted and acknowledged not only by its delegates, but also by its government and people who from day to day were informed of the doings of the Conference.

The second result in importance is the agreement on arbitration, which would have been, if ratified by the various nations, a measure of transcendent importance. This of itself would have been enough to make the Conference highly memorable and fruitful.

The other results of the Conference, although important in themselves, are not so far-reaching as those that I have already mentioned.

At first sight it might appear that the results of the Conference were disappointing; but I think it can be safely said that its success was greater than there was any reason to expect. Almost all of the Latin-American nations came to Washington with a fear that the United States intended to dictate to them by means of its great power and its material superiority, and they went back satisfied that, so far from this being the case, this country had only sentiments of respect and consideration for her sister-republics, and that its aim had simply been to accomplish what was of mutual advantage to all, she acting on the same footing as the smallest of the nations represented.

On the other hand, I believe that the Latin-American Republics have left on the Government and the people of the United States a more lasting and favorable impression than they had before been able to make. The occasion afforded an opportunity to the people of the United States to form a better idea of the civilization and the material progress of the Latin-American countries, and of the worth and patriotism of their sons; and soon afterwards it became an admitted fact that liberality of action, mutual regard, and a good understanding are almost a necessity among the American nations. Remembering that great results in behalf of mankind cannot be reached in a day, and

much less when success depends on the action of several countries affected by different influences and conditions, I have no doubt that the meeting in Washington of an assembly of all the American nations was as greatly advantageous both to the Government and the people who promoted the meeting as to the Governments and countries who participated in the same more for its future than for its present results.

*Conclusion.*—I sincerely hope that the preceding paper will be taken as a proof of my interest in anything affecting closer social, political, and commercial relations between the United States and her sister American Republics, even in case that all the views which I have expressed and I hold in good faith are not accepted as sound or correct.

The documents which are included in the following Appendix, I consider as the complement of this paper.

## APPENDIX.

I now append the most important of the several documents mentioned in the foregoing paper, which I consider useful to form a complete idea of what is stated in the same, namely: 1. Act of May 24, 1888, Convening the American International Conference; 2. List of Delegates, Secretaries, and Attachés; 3. List of Committees; 4. Ex-Senator Henderson and the Arbitration Project; 5. Facsimile Copy of the Amendments made by Mr. Blaine to the Argentine Plan of Arbitration; 6. Arbitration Plan of the Pan-American Conference as reported by the Committee; 7. Right of Conquest; 8. Treaty of Arbitration signed by the Delegates to the Pan-American Conference, recommendation to European Powers to accept Arbitration, and recommendation on the right of conquest; 9. Recommendation of Reciprocity Treaties; 10. Recommendation on Railway Communication; 11. Recommendation of the meeting of an American International Monetary Commission; 12. Censure from Mexican Press and a Mexican Writer because a Mexican Delegate did not follow in the footsteps of the Argentines; 13. My answer to Señor Pierra published in *Las Novedades*, of New York, of July 7, 1890.

## 1. ACT OF MAY 24, 1888, CONVENING THE AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE.

An Act authorizing the President of the United States to arrange a Conference between the United States of America and the Republics of Mexico, Central and South America, Hayti, San Domingo, and the Empire of Brazil.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the President of the United States be, and he is hereby, requested and authorized to invite the several Governments of the Republics of Mexico, Central and South America, Hayti, San Domingo, and the Empire of Brazil, to join the United States in a Conference to be held at Washington, in the United States, at such time as he may deem proper, in the year eighteen hundred and eighty-nine, for the purpose of discussing and recommending for adoption to their respective Governments some plan of arbitration for the settlement of disagreements and disputes that may hereafter arise between them, and for considering questions relating to the improvement of business intercourse and means of direct communication between said countries, and to encourage such reciprocal commercial relations as will be beneficial to all and secure more extensive markets for the products of each of said countries.

SEC. 2. That in forwarding the invitations to the said Governments the President of the United States shall set forth that the conference is called to consider:—

*First.* Measures that shall tend to preserve the peace and promote the prosperity of the several American states.

*Second.* Measures toward the formation of an American customs union, under which the trade of the American nations with each other shall, so far as possible and profitable, be promoted.