

THE PRESIDENT SPEAKS.

New York, March 4.—President McKinley was the guest of honor at the fourteenth annual dinner of the Ohio Society of New York, last night, at the Waldorf Astoria, at which upwards of 400 covers were laid. Responding to the toast, "The President," which was drunk standing, President McKinley said:

The President's Speech.

"Mr. Toastmaster and Gentlemen:—I appreciate your welcome and thank you for this renewed expression of good will. It is proper that I should say that the managing board of the society has kept the promises made to me that I would not be expected or required to speak at this banquet. I shall not be guilty of reflecting on their resolution not to speak if I indulge in some observations while expressing in the briefest manner the pleasure which I have in greeting my old friends of the Ohio colony in New York. There is a bond of fellowship which unites Ohio people. Wherever they journey, or wherever they dwell they cherish the tenderest sentiment for their mother state, and she in turn never fails of affectionate interests in her widely-scattered children. The statement which has been so often made is not far from the truth, 'Once in Ohio, always an Ohioan.'

"It has been some years since I was your guest. Much has happened in the meantime. We have had our blessings and our burdens, and still have both. We will soon have legislative assurance of the continuance of the gold standard, with which we measure our exchanges, and we have the open door in the far east through which to market our products. We are neither in alliance nor antagonism nor entanglement with any foreign power, but on terms of amity and cordiality with all.

A Prosperous Country.

"We buy from all of them and sell to all of them, and our sales exceeded our purchases in the past two years by over \$1,000,000,000. Markets have been increased and mortgages have been reduced. Interest rates have fallen and wages have advanced. The public debt is decreasing. The country is well to do. Its people for the most part are happy and contented. They have good times, and are on good terms with the nations of the world. There are unfortunately

those among us, few in number, I am sure, who seem to thrive best under bad times, and who, when good times overtake them in the United States; feel constrained to put us on bad terms with the rest of mankind. With them I can have no sympathy. I would rather give expression to what I believe to be the nobler and almost universal sentiment of my countrymen in the wish, not only for our peace and prosperity of all the nations and peoples on earth.

"After thirty-three years of unbroken peace came an unavoidable war. Happily the conclusion was quickly reached, without a suspicion of unworthy motive of practice or purpose on our part and with fadeless honor to our arms. I cannot forget the quick response of the people to the country's need and the quarter of a million men who frequently offered their lives to their country's service. It was an impressive spectacle of national strength. It demonstrated our mighty reserve power, and taught us that large standing armies are unnecessary when every citizen is a 'minuteman' ready to join the ranks for national defense.

Issues arising from the War

"Out of the recent events have come to the United States grave trials and responsibilities. As it was the nation's war, so are the results the nation's problem. Its solution rests upon us all. It is too serious to strifle. It is too earnest for repose. No phrase or catchword can cancel the sacred obligation it involves. No use of epithets; no aspersion of motives by those who differ will contribute to that sober judgment so essential to right conclusions. No political outcry can abrogate our treaty of peace with Spain, or absolve us from its solemn engagements. It is the people's question and will be until its determination is written out in their enlightened verdict.

"We must choose between manly doing and base desertion. It will never be the latter. It must be soberly settled in justice and good conscience, and will be. Righteousness, which exalteth a nation, must control in its solution. No great emergency has arisen in this nation's history and progress which has not been met by the sovereign people with high capacity, with ample strength and with unflinching fidelity to every honorable obligation. Partisanship can hold few of us against solemn public duty. We have seen

this so often demonstrated in the past as to mark unerringly what it will be in the future.

"The national sentiment and the national conscience was never stronger or higher than now. There has been a reunion of the people around the holy altar consecrated to the country, newly sanctified by common sacrifices. The followers of Grant and Lee have fought under the same flag and fallen from the same faith. Party lines have loosened and the ties of union have been rooted in the hearts of the American people. Political passion has altogether subsided and patriotism glows inextinguishable fervor in every home in the land. The flag has been sustained on distant seas and islands by the men of all parties and sections and creeds and races and nationalities, and its stars are only those of radiant hope to the remote peoples over whom it floats.

No Imperialism.

"There can be no imperialism. Those who fear are against it. Those who have faith in the republic are against it. So that there is universal abhorrence for it and unanimous opposition to it.

"Our only difference is that those who do not agree with us have no confidence in the virtue or capacity or high purpose or good faith of this free people as a civilizing agency, while we believe that the century of free government which the American people have enjoyed has not rendered them faithless and irresolute, but has fitted them for the great task of lifting up and assisting to better conditions those distant peoples who have, through the issues of battle, become our wards.

"Let us fear not. There is no occasion for faint hearts no excuse for regrets. Nations do not grow in strength and the cause of liberty and law is not advanced by the doing of easy things. The harder the task the greater will be the result, the benefit and the honor. To doubt our power to accomplish it is to lose faith in the soundness and strength of our popular institutions. The liberators will never become the oppressors. A self-governed people will never permit despotism in any government which they foster and defend.

"Gentlemen, we have the new care and cannot shift it. And, breaking up the camp of ease and isolation, let us bravely and hopefully, and soberly continue the march of faithful service and fal-

(Continued on next page)

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