

powers to negotiate for the union of the Hawaiian Islands to the United States.

On the 4th instant the commissioners were accorded an interview with the undersigned, at the request of the regularly accredited Hawaiian minister, Mr. J. Mott Smith, and submitted their credentials, accompanied by a statement of events leading up to and connected with the overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of the Provisional Government. At a second conference on the same day the commissioners submitted to the undersigned the proposition of the Provisional Government, containing the terms upon which that Government desired the annexation of the Hawaiian Islands to the United States. A copy of this proposition is inclosed. Frequent conferences have since been held at the Department of State, and all questions connected with the subject have been carefully examined and discussed, until a concurrence of views on the part of the negotiating parties was reached on the 14th instant.

In drafting and agreeing upon the treaty now transmitted, the undersigned has sought, under your direction, to effect thereby the annexation of the Hawaiian Islands to the United States with as few conditions as possible and with a full reservation to Congress of its legislative prerogatives. An examination of the provisions of this treaty will show that to Congress is reserved the determination of all questions affecting the form of government of the annexed territory, the citizenship and elective franchise of its inhabitants, the manner and terms under which the revenue and navigation laws of the United States are to be extended thereto, and all other questions relating to the economic and political status of the islands. As there is no provision in the existing legislation of Congress whereby the Executive power can provide an organized form of government for new territory annexed to the Union, or extend over it the laws of the United States and cause the same to be executed, it was deemed necessary to continue the existing government and laws of the Hawaiian Islands until Congress should have an opportunity to legislate on the subject; but a provision has been inserted in the treaty for the exercise by the Executive of the United States of a veto power upon the acts of that government during the interregnum. The temporary maintenance of the existing political institutions of the islands seems the more appropriate in view of the fact that the Hawaiian constitution, of which a copy is inclosed herewith, and the Hawaiian laws are based upon principles similar to those contained in our own organic law and the principles of the common law.

It is to be noted that, according to a recognized principle of international law, the obligations of treaties, even when some of their stipulations are in terms perpetual, expire in case either of the contracting parties loses its existence as an independent state. The foreign treaties of the Hawaiian Islands therefore terminate, upon annexation, with the competence of the government thereof to hold diplomatic relations. An examination of these treaties shows, however, that they contain no stipulations which would embarrass either the Hawaiian Islands or the United States by their termination.

Accompanying the treaty are tables giving full details as to the area of the territory annexed, the public debt, the public lands, the annual allowances to and revenue of the late royal household, and statistics as to the population, revenues, commerce, and other economic matters relating to the islands.

It is gratifying to be able to state that pending the negotiations leading up to the treaty herewith submitted the undersigned has received