

THE RALEIGH STAR AND NORTH CAROLINA GAZETTE.

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"NORTH CAROLINA—POWERFUL IN MORAL, INTELLECTUAL AND PHYSICAL RESOURCES—THE LAND OF OUR BIRTH AND THE HOME OF OUR AFFECTIONS"

[THREE DOLLARS A YEAR—IN ADVANCE]

VOL. 35.

RALEIGH, N. C., WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 1844.

No. 19.

MR. CLAY ON THE TEXAS QUESTION.

To the Editors of the 'National Intelligencer.'

RALEIGH, April 17, 1844.

Gentlemen: Subsequent to my departure from Ashland, in December, last, I received various communications from popular assemblies and private individuals, requesting an expression of my opinion upon the question of the Annexation of Texas to the U. States. I have forborne to reply to them, because it was not very convenient, during the progress of my journey, to do so, and for other reasons. I did not think it proper, unnecessarily, to introduce at present a new element among the other exciting subjects which agitate and engross the public mind. The rejection of the overture of Texas, some years ago, to become annexed to the United States, had met with general acquiescence. Nothing had since occurred materially to vary the question. I had seen no evidence of a desire being entertained on the part of any considerable portion of the American people, that Texas should become an integral part of the United States. During my sojourn in New Orleans, I had, indeed, been greatly surprised, by information which I received from Texas, that, in the course of last fall, a voluntary overture had proceeded from the Executive of the United States to the Authorities of Texas to conclude a treaty of Annexation; and that, in order to overcome the repugnance felt by any of them to a negotiation upon the subject, strong, and, as I believed, erroneous representations had been made to them of a state of opinion in the Senate of the United States favorable to the ratification of such a treaty. According to these representations, it had been ascertained that a number of Senators, varying from thirty-five to forty-two, were ready to sanction such a treaty. I was aware, too, that holders of Texas lands and Texas scrip, and speculators in them, were actively engaged in promoting the object of annexation. Still, I did not believe that any Executive of the United States would venture upon so grave and momentous a proceeding, not only without any general manifestation of public opinion in favor of it, but in direct opposition to strong and decided expressions of public disapprobation. But it appears that I was mistaken. To the astonishment of the whole nation, we are now informed that a treaty of annexation has been actually concluded, & is to be submitted to the Senate for its consideration. The motives for my silence, therefore, no longer remain, and I feel it to be my duty to present an exposition of my views and opinions upon the question, for what they may be worth, to the public consideration. I adopt this method as being more convenient than several replies to their respective communications which I have received.

I regret that I have not the advantage of a view of the treaty itself, so as to enable me to adapt an expression of my opinion to the actual conditions and stipulations which it contains. Not possessing that opportunity, I am constrained to treat the question according to what I presume to be the terms of the treaty. If, without the loss of national character, without the hazard of foreign war, with general concurrence of the nation, without any danger to the integrity of the Union, and without giving an unreasonable price for Texas, the question of annexation were presented, it would appear in quite a different light from that in which, I apprehend, it is now to be regarded.

The United States acquired a title to Texas, extending, as I believe, to the Rio del Norte, by the treaty of Louisiana. They ceded and relinquished that title to Spain by the treaty of 1819, by which the Sabine was substituted for the Rio del Norte as our western boundary. This treaty was negotiated under the Administration of Mr. Monroe, and with the concurrence of his Cabinet, of which Messrs. Crawford, Calhoun and Writ, being a majority, all Southern gentlemen, composed a part. When the treaty was laid before the House of Representatives, being a member of that body, I expressed the opinion, which I then entertained, and still hold, that Texas was sacrificed to the acquisition of Florida. We wanted Florida; but I thought it more, from its position, inevitably fall into our possession; that the point of a few years, sooner or later, was of no sort of consequence, and that in giving five millions of dollars and Texas for it, we gave more than a just equivalent. But, if we made a great sacrifice in the surrender of Texas, we ought to take care not to make too great a sacrifice in the attempt to re-acquire it.

My opinions of the expediency of the treaty of 1819 did not prevail. The country and Congress were satisfied with it, appropriations were made to carry it into effect, the line of the Sabine was recognized by us as our boundary, in negotiations both with Spain and Mexico, after Mexico became independent, and measures have been in actual progress to mark the line, from the Sabine to Red river, and thence to the Pacific ocean. We have thus fairly alienated our title to Texas, by solemn national compact, to the fulfilment of which we stand bound by good faith and national honor. It is, therefore, perfectly idle and ridiculous if not dishonorable, to talk, of resuming or title to Texas, as if we had never parted with it. We can no more do that than Spain can resume Florida, France, Louisiana, or Great Britain, the thirteen colonies, now composing a part of the United States.

During the administration of Mr. Adams,

Mr. Poinsell, Minister of the United States at Mexico, was instructed by me, with the President's authority, to propose a re-purchase of Texas; but he forbore even to make an overture for that purpose. Upon his return to the United States, he informed me, at New Orleans, that his reason for not making it was, that he knew the purchase was wholly impracticable, and that he was persuaded that, if he made the overture, it would have no other effect than to aggravate irritations, already existing, upon matters of difference between the two countries.

The events which have since transpired in Texas are well known. She revolted against the Government of Mexico, flew to arms, and finally fought and won the memorable battle of San Jacinto, annihilating a Mexican army and making a captive of the Mexican President. The signal success of that Revolution was greatly aided, if not wholly achieved, by citizens of the United States who had immigrated to Texas. These succors, if they could not always be prevented by the Government of the United States, were furnished in a manner and to an extent which brought upon us some national reproach in the eyes of an impartial world. And, in my opinion, they impose on us the obligation of scrupulously avoiding the imputation of having instigated and aided the Revolution with the ultimate view of territorial aggrandizement. After the battle of San Jacinto, the United States recognised the independence of Texas, in conformity with the principle and practice which have always prevailed in their councils of recognizing the Government *de facto*, without regarding the question *de jure*.

That recognition did not affect or impair the rights of Mexico, or change the relation which existed between her and Texas. She, on the contrary, has preserved all her rights and has continued to assert, and so far as I know yet asserts, her right to reduce Texas to obedience, as a part of the Republic of Mexico. According to late intelligence, it is probable that she has agreed upon a temporary suspension of hostilities, but if that has been done, I presume it is with the purpose, upon the termination of the armistice, of renewing the war and enforcing her rights, as she considers them.

This narrative shows the present actual condition of Texas, so far as I have information about it. If it be correct, Mexico has not abandoned, but perseveres in the assertion of her rights by actual force of arms, which, if suspended, are intended to be renewed. Under these circumstances, if the Government of the United States were to acquire Texas, it would acquire along with it all the incumbrances which Texas is under, and among them the actual or suspended war between Mexico and Texas. Of that consequence there cannot be a doubt. Annexation and war with Mexico are identical. Now, for one, I certainly am not willing to involve this country in a foreign war for the object of acquiring Texas. I know there are those who regard such a war with indifference and as a trifling affair, on account of the weakness of Mexico, and her inability to inflict serious injury upon this country. But I do not look upon it thus lightly. I regard all wars as great calamities, to be avoided, if possible, and honorable peace as the wisest and truest policy of this country. What the United States most need are union, peace, and patience. Nor do I think that the weakness of a Power should form a motive, in any case, for inducing us to engage in or to depreciate the evils of war. Honor and good faith and justice are equally due from his country towards the weak as towards the strong. And, if an act of injustice were to be perpetrated towards any Power, it would be more compatible with the dignity of the nation, and, in my judgment, less dishonorable, to inflict it upon a powerful instead of a weak foreign nation.

But are we perfectly sure that we should be free from injury in a state of war with Mexico? Have we any security that countless numbers of foreign vessels, under the authority and flag of Mexico, would not prey upon our defenceless commerce in the Mexican gulf, on the Pacific ocean, and on every other sea and ocean? What commerce, on the other hand, does Mexico offer, as an indemnity for our losses, to the gallantry and enterprise of our countrymen? This view of the subject supposes that the war would be confined to the United States and Mexico as the only belligerents. But have we any certain guaranty that Mexico would obtain no allies among the great European Powers? Suppose any such Powers, jealous of our increasing greatness, and disposed to check our growth and empire, were to take part in behalf of Mexico in the war, how would the different belligerents present themselves to Christendom and the enlightened world? We have been seriously charged with an inopportune spirit of territorial aggrandizement; and, without admitting the justice of the charge, it must be owned that we have made vast acquisitions of territory within the last forty years. Suppose Great Britain and France, or one of them, were to take part with Mexico, and by manifest, were to proclaim that their objects were to assist a weak and helpless ally to check the spirit of encroachment and ambition of an already overgrown Republic seeking still further acquisitions of territory; to maintain the independence of Texas, disconnected with the United States, and to prevent the further propagation of slavery from the United States, what would be the effect of such allegations upon the judgment of an impartial and enlightened world?

Assuming that the annexation of Texas is war with Mexico, is it competent to the treaty-making power to plunge this country into war, not only without the concurrence of, but without deigning to consult Congress, to which, by the Constitution, belongs exclusively the power of declaring war?

I have hitherto considered the question upon the supposition that the annexation is attempted without the assent of Mexico. If she yields her consent, that would materially affect the foreign aspect of the question; if it did not remove all foreign difficulties. On the assumption of that assent, the question would be confined to the domestic considerations which belong to it, embracing the terms and conditions upon which annexation is proposed. I do not think that Texas ought to be received into the Union, as an integral part of it, in decided opposition to the wishes of a considerable and respectable portion of the Confederacy.

I think it far more wise and important to compose and harmonize the present Confederacy, as it now exists, than to introduce a new element of discord and distraction into it. In my humble opinion, it should be the constant and earnest endeavor of American statesmen to eradicate prejudices, to cultivate and foster concord and to produce general contentment among all parts of our Confederacy. And true wisdom, it seems to me, points to the duty of rendering its present members happy, prosperous, and satisfied with each other, rather than to attempt to introduce alien members, against the common consent and with the certainty of deep dissatisfaction. Mr. Jefferson expressed the opinion and others believed, that it never was in the contemplation of the framers of the Constitution to add foreign territory to the Confederacy, out of which new States were to be formed. The acquisitions of Louisiana and Florida may be defended upon the peculiar ground of the relation in which they stood to the States of the Union. After they were admitted we might well pause awhile, people our vast wastes, develop our resources, prepare the means of defence, what we possess, and augment our strength, power and greatness. If hereafter further territory should be wanted for an increased population, we need entertain no apprehensions but that it will be acquired by means, it is to be hoped, fair, honorable, and constitutional.

It is useless to disguise that there are those who espouse and those who oppose the annexation of Texas upon the ground of the influence which it would exert, in the balance of political power, between two great sections of the Union. I conceive that no motive for the acquisition of foreign territory would be more unfortunate, or pregnant with more fatal consequences, than that of obtaining it for the purpose of strengthening one part against another part of the common Confederacy. Such a principle, put into practical operation, would manure the seeds of a dissolution of the Union. It would be to proclaim to the world an insatiable and unquenchable thirst for foreign conquest or acquisition of territory. For if to-day Texas be acquired to strengthen one part of the Confederacy, tomorrow Canada may be required to add strength to another. And after that might have been obtained still other and further acquisitions would become necessary to equalize and adjust the balance of political power. Finally, in the progress of this spirit of universal dominion, the part of the Confederacy which is now weakest, would find itself still weaker from the impossibility of securing new theatres for those peculiar institutions which it is charged with being desirous to extend.

But would Texas, ultimately, really add strength to that which is now considered the weakest part of the Confederacy? If my information be correct, it would not. According to that, the territory of Texas is susceptible of a division into five States of convenient size and form. Of these two only would be adapted to those peculiar institutions to which I have referred, and the other three, lying west and north of San Antonio, being only adapted to farming and grazing purposes, from the nature of their soil, climate, and productions, would not admit of those institutions. In the end, therefore, there would be two slave and three free States probably added to the Union. If this view of the soil and geography of Texas be correct, it might serve to diminish the zeal both of those who oppose and those who are urging annexation.

Should Texas be annexed to the Union, the United States will assume and become responsible for the debt of Texas, be it what it may. What it is, I do not know certainly; but the least I have seen it stated at is thirteen millions of dollars. And this responsibility will exist, whether there be a stipulation in the treaty or not expressly assuming the payment of the debt of Texas. For I suppose it to be undeniable that, if one nation becomes incorporated in another, all the debts and obligations, and incumbrances, and wars of the incorporated nation become the debts, and obligations, and incumbrances, and wars of the common nation created by the incorporation.

If any European nation entertains any ambitious design upon Texas, such as that of colonizing her, or in any way subjugating her, I should regard it as the imperative duty of the Government of the United States to oppose to such designs the most firm and determined resistance, to the extent, if ne-

cessary, of appealing to arms to prevent the accomplishment of any such designs.

The Executive of the United States ought to be informed as to the aims and views of foreign Powers with regard to Texas, and I presume that, if there be any of the exceptional character which I have indicated, the Executive will disclose to the co-ordinate departments of the Government, if not to the public, the evidence of them. From what I have seen and heard, I believe that Great Britain has recently formally and solemnly disavowed any such aims or purposes—has declared that she is desirous only of the independence of Texas, and that she has no intention to interfere in her Domestic institutions. If she has made such a disavowal and declaration, I presume they are in the possession of the Executive.

In the future progress of events, it is probable that there will be a voluntary or forcible separation of the British North American possessions from the parent country. I am strongly inclined to think that it will be best for the happiness of all parties that, in that event, they should be erected into a separate and independent Republic. With the Canadian Republic on one side; that of Texas on the other; and the United States, the friend of both, between them, each could advance its own happiness by such constitutions, laws and measures, as were best adapted to its peculiar condition. They would be natural allies, ready, by co-operation, to repel any European or foreign attack upon either. Each would afford a secure refuge to the persecuted and oppressed driven into exile by either of the others. They would emulate each other in improvements, in free institutions, and in the science of self government. Whilst Texas has adopted our Constitution as the model of hers, she has, in several important particulars, greatly improved upon it.

Although I have felt compelled, from the nature of the inquiries addressed to me, to extend this communication to a much greater length, than I could have wished, I could not do justice to the subject, and fairly and fully expose my own opinions in a shorter space. In conclusion, they may be stated in a few words to be, that I consider the annexation of Texas, at this time, without the assent of Mexico, as a measure compromising the national character, involving us certainly in war with Mexico, probably with other foreign Powers, dangerous to the integrity of the Union, inexpedient in the present financial condition of the country, and not called for by any general expression of public opinion.

I am, respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. CLAY.

From the Washington Standard.

TRAVELLING FALSEHOOD.

It is amusing to see how the Locofoco editors all over the country seize upon, hug, nurse, dandle, cherish, and toss along every falsehood and libel manufactured or begotten by brethren of the same kidney, who have more invention or ability in the way of manufacturing fibs than themselves. Start one of these little imps upon his journey, and away he goes to the uttermost parts of the earth, and, like a horse thief, is sure to find friends ready, upon his first appearance at their door, to take him in, portect him from pursuit, and defend him against the assault of truth, who follows hard upon his heels. No matter how much denounced, no matter if proved to be a lie, his friends swear to their neighbors that he is true, and that Truth is a lie. Nay, they will swear this in the face and eyes of the whole world, even though they know two thirds of the world cannot be deceived by their asseverations.

That obscure, unknown men, who have nothing to lose in character by such a course, should pursue it, is nothing strange; but that honorable men—men who are *ex officio* honorable, and, therefore, supposed to have too much regard for truth to kick her out of doors, and hang the harlot falsehood to their bosoms—should be engaged in this business, was hardly to be expected.

We have been led to make these remarks by observing two falsehoods, going the rounds of the Loco Foco press, which have been branded as such upon their foreheads, in a manner that no one can plead the excuse of ignorance of their true character. The first is the forgery made by one Sam. Medary, editor of the Ohio Statesman, which was brought into the house of representatives by Mr. Brown of Indiana, without at first knowing it to be such, and which was then and there branded as a forgery by Mr. White. That falsehood is the following garbled pretended extract from the speech of Mr. Clay in 1842, reading thus:

"Carry out the principles of the Compromise Act. Look to Revenue alone for the support of Government. Do not raise the question of Protection, which I had hoped had been put to rest. THERE IS NO NECESSITY FOR PROTECTION!"

Mr. Clay never uttered the above, nor anything fairly convertible into it. What Mr. Clay did say was, that if we will but return the public land proceeds to the States, and look to duties on imports alone to pay the public debt and support the government, levying those duties by a wisely discriminating tariff, there will be no need of raising the question of Protection for the sake of Protection.

The other falsehood to which we allude,

is the following pretended extract from a speech of Mr. Clay, alleged and certified by members of Congress to have been found in the report of the proceedings of Congress in the National Intelligencer of the 17th February, 1819:

"If gentlemen will not allow us to have black slaves, they must let us have white ones; for we cannot cut our firewood, and black our shoes, and have our wives and daughters work in the kitchen."

What will honest men think when assured that no such language can be found in the Intelligencer of that date, or any other; and that Mr. Clay never uttered such a sentiment in his life. Who manufactured this falsehood, we know not; but its godfathers, those who are willing to become sponsors for it, are known, and if they have not been so long associated with Locofocism as to have lost all sense of shame, or power to blush, we are sure the time will come, if it have not, when they will be ashamed of their banding, and blush at the sight of their adopted child.

We notice these two libels merely to show how those which fill the Locofoco press are manufactured, stored, cherished, and adhered to. To notice all, would far exceed our limits.

"OMENS."

We scarcely open a Whig paper (says the Ohio State Journal) which does not contain one or more renunciations of Van Burenism by those who were his supporters in 1840. The desertions are so numerous, and the defection in the Loco Foco ranks so general and contagious, that these will be scarcely a corporal's guard left to rally around and comfort the sage or Kinderhook in the second and decisive defeat that awaits him next fall. The very idea of a revival and restoration of the odious policy of his administration is fast alienating from his support those who have hitherto been considered his friends. Never was a sinking ship left in a more forlorn condition, and if the miserable, dismantled old hulk of Loco-focism can with so much difficulty be kept afloat now, what possible chance is there that it will survive a single broadside when brought into fair action? If Mr. Van Buren cannot rely upon the support of those who voted for him when he met with such a tremendous overthrow four years ago, what probability is there of his obtaining the vote of a single State next fall?

A CAUCUS OF THE LOCOFOCO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.

The following letter from the Washington correspondent of the Boston Courier, who seems to write of that he knows, contains some curious information:

WASHINGTON, April 10, 1844.

The democrats of the two houses held a caucus at the Capitol, night before last, of which, in my last letter I would have given some account, but for the desire of ascertaining, with more certainty, the particulars.

The ostensible motive of the gathering was the consideration of the Texas and tariff questions—the real one, the discussion of the political prospects of the party. The meeting during its existence, was stormy, and broke up in most admired disorder. The southern democrats demanded action upon Gen. McKay's tariff bill—which the northern refused, on the ground of such proceeding being likely to injure the cause of Mr. Van Buren. At this southern democracy "fired up"—denounced the blind preference for men, over the principles of the party, and threatened, in round terms, withdrawal from Mr. Van Buren's support, unless they were indulged in their favorite measure.

A large majority of the meeting was opposed in toto to Mr. Van Buren, and though no vote was taken on a proposition submitted to withdraw him, the decided expression of the caucus was averse to his claims.

C. J. Ingersoll, hitherto warm Van Buren man, came out boldly, and unequivocally, for Com. Stewart—gallant "Old Ironsides." For him he promised Pennsylvania, with a brave majority; but he denied that Van Buren could carry the state. The Jersey men were all for Stewart, and the Johnson men promised their support, if Tecumseh could not procure the nomination—tendering thus, to the lovers of military glory, the heroes of war, on land and on water, a ticket of formidable character.

The meeting adjourned without coming to any decision on any subject—some members exasperated, and all discouraged.

[We have had for several days information of a similar import from a correspondent at Washington. Of those most opposed to Mr. Van Buren being the candidates, are mentioned Messrs Hale and Burke, of New Hampshire. They are for Com. Stewart, and say that he can carry Pennsylvania by 5000 majority. Senator Buchanan, who in the event of the withdrawal of Mr. Van Buren wants to take a run himself, says that Com. S. cannot carry the Keystone state. Our correspondent says:—"The Locofoco members are consulting as to the expediency of writing Mr. Van Buren a letter advising him of the state of things. Some think that Silas Wright will be named if Martin is withdrawn." But notwithstanding all these rumors, we believe that Mr. Van Buren has the track he will keep it. He is willing to take the chances, whatever they may be.—Balt. Pat.

WHIG MOVEMENTS.

The Whig Mass Meeting at the Washington Assembly Rooms last Friday night—being the anniversary of the birth of Mr.

Clay—was the largest and most enthusiastic political meeting ever held in Washington. The hall in which the meeting was held, though one of the largest in this city, was filled to over flowing; and many hundreds of persons went away without being able to get a seat, or even entrance into the room. The assemblage was honored by the presence of many ladies, and the intervals between the speaking were enlivened by the singing of spirited Whig songs and anthems, which were led by Mr. Diffield and the members of the Alexandria Glee Club, who added much to the entertainment of the meeting.

Several animated and excellent addresses were made by Mr. Caleb B. Smith, of Indiana, Mr. Morehead, of Kentucky, Mr. Burdinger, of North Carolina, Mr. Starkweather, of New York, and other distinguished gentlemen. The meeting was continued to a late hour, and all its proceedings were characterized by order, harmony, and the most enthusiastic Whig feeling. (Nat. Int.)

From the National Intelligencer. A NEW COALITION. ABOLITIONISTS—ABANDONING THEIR ANTI-SLAVERY GROUND & GOING FOR VAN BUREN.

From the Albany Evening Journal. We alluded briefly the other day to the alacrity and zeal with which the abolition newspapers labored to revive and circulate exploded and malignant calumnies against Mr. Clay. But we had not then, what has come into our possession since, evidence that abolition leaders have become Van Buren partisans. It was apparent from the course of abolition papers that the "Liberty party" was an auxiliary of Van Burenism; but while protesting to stand upon high ground as an independent "third party," we did not suppose them guilty of the duplicity of playing directly and intentionally into the hands of a party that goes with the South against all measures tending to the emancipation of slavery, and in favor of a President who stands pledged to veto any law Congress may pass abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia. But so it is. And here is the evidence:

[CONFIDENTIAL.]

ALBANY, April 10, 1844.

Dear Sir: You will pardon me for sending you the enclosed tract. Believing you to be a philanthropist, dealing in the abolition of dueling and slavery, and opposed (as I hope) to the elevation of a man guilty of both of these crimes to the Presidency, I hope you will favor us with a donation, that we may be enabled to publish a large number and send them broadcast over the land. If you do not see fit to send a donation, will you send an order for a number of the tracts, to be distributed by yourself?

In behalf of the Executive Committee of the Eastern York Anti-Slavery Society.

Very respectfully,

E. W. GOODWIN.

P. S.—You may remit through the mail. N. B.—We publish ten thousand copies of the first edition, and hope to be able to send out 50,000 or more. The price is \$5 a thousand.

These "confidential" circulars, asking for donations, are addressed to Van Buren politicians. The circular from which we now copy was addressed to a leading supporter of Mr. Van Buren. Mr. E. W. Goodwin is the editor of the abolition paper in this city.

HEROD AND PILATE.

The Abolition or "Liberty Party" of this State, through their Central Committee at Albany, are publishing great numbers (first edition 10,000) of a Tract expressly devoted in personal attacks on Mr. Clay, and soliciting contributions from Van Buren politicians to aid in their circulation. There is evidently a complete understanding between the Van Buren and Abolition leaders, who regard the defeat of Mr. Clay as the great object of their mutual efforts. We are confident they will be foiled by a generous and fair minded people who will rebuke so foul a coalition.—N. Y. Tribune.

MR. CALHOUN AND THE PRESIDENCY.

It seems from the following announcement of the Washington Correspondent of the Charleston Mercury, that Mr. Calhoun waives his pretensions for the Presidency for the ensuing term and is placed in nomination for 1848. We should like very much to have an answer to this single interrogatory—an answer by the authority of Mr. Van Buren. Will he, Mr. Van Buren support Mr. Calhoun or Mr. Benton for the Presidency in 1848? Which will the democracy prefer? It is not difficult to give the true answer, but will it be given? No.

"In a few short weeks, Mr. Calhoun's name will again be put up for the Presidency (in 1848) and nailed to the mast, all considerations to the contrary notwithstanding. I don't give this as my opinion, but as fact."

A notorious tall young fellow, employed as a clerk, was told by a wag that his employer did not want him any longer. Much alarmed, he hastened to his employer to demand the reason, when he recalled that he considered him tall enough.