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# NORTH STAR AND WEEKLY

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HENRY DIMOCK,

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

"BE JUST, AND FEAR NOT! LET ALL THE ENDS THOU AIM'ST AT, BE THY COUNTRY'S, THY GOD'S AND TRUTH'S."

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## GEN. THOMPSON'S LETTER ON TEXAS.

We lay before our readers, in today's paper, the letter of the Hon. WADY THOMPSON, late Minister of the United States to Mexico, on the subject of the Annexation of Texas to this Union. This letter is calculated to produce a very decided effect, in dispelling the Locofoco humbug of Annexation. The letter is addressed to the Editors of the National Intelligencer, who make the following editorial remarks in regard to it.

"Of all the articles of which the Texas question has been so fertile for the press, no one has appeared to us more likely to be universally read, i. e., all the South especially, than the letter from Gen. Waddy Thompson, (late Minister of the United States at Mexico,) which appears in the preceding page."

The position of General Thompson, is of itself such as to attract great attention to any thing he says on the subject of Texas. A Southern man by birth, education, feeling and interest; the first man to propose in the House of Representatives of the United States, the recognition of the independence of Texas; himself personally interested in that country; a resident for the last three years in the city of Mexico, in a station which necessarily has made him familiarly acquainted with the concerns of both Texas and Mexico—their physical and social relations to the United States, to each other, and to the rest of the world; and with every consideration that can possibly connect itself with the 'Annexation' question—his letter cannot but be read with avidity by all classes of citizens. It will reward the closest attention which they may bestow upon it."

From the National Intelligencer.

## TO THE EDITORS.

MESRS. GALE AND SEATON.

In an address which I recently made to the Whigs of Albany, I made some remarks in relation to the late treaty for the annexation of Texas to the United States. A misrepresentation (no doubt resulting from a misunderstanding) of those remarks make it proper, in my judgment, that I should no longer withhold the public expression of my opinions upon that subject, and it is due to myself that I should at the same time give the reasons for those opinions. In the speech which I made at Albany I expressed no opinion upon the question of ultimate annexation, not because I thought that my views of that subject would be disagreeable to the audience which I was addressing, but for exactly the opposite reason. I preferred to discuss this subject before a Southern audience, where different opinions were entertained, and where it was possible that some good might be done. No individual in the United States has more motives of a personal character than I have to advocate the immediate annexation of Texas to this country. I was the first man who, on the floor of Congress, expressed his sympathy in the Revolution of Texas. It was an amendment offered by me to the appropriation bill in March, 1837, which secured the recognition of Texas by our Government—a measure at that of vital importance to the young Republic. Circumstances have since placed it in my power to give many other and substantial proofs of my friendly feelings both to Texas and the Texans; and I am proud to know that no living man has a stronger hold upon the gratitude and affection of the people of Texas than I have; and I will add, that there are pecuniary considerations (to me not unimportant) which would make the annexation of Texas an eminently desirable to me; yet, with all these motives to a different conclusion, I have not been able to change my opinions upon the subject. These opinions have not been hastily formed, but have been ripened into fixed and settled convictions.

I am opposed to the annexation, because, in the language of Judge Upshur, "it would injure their chief agricultural interest (that of the South) by raising up a powerful competitor;" and it would cheapen the price of cotton, the principal raw material.' Now these considerations may have great weight with the manufacturers of the North; they have exactly the opposite effect with me, as a Southern man and a cotton planter. Will such be the effect of that measure? That it will be, no one can doubt who is acquainted with the unequalled advantages of Texas as a cotton growing country. I do not hesitate to say—and I do so on no light authority—that if the most skillful cotton planter were to ask of Heaven a country for the growing of that staple, that he would ask no single advantage which is not found in Texas. There are millions of acres there which will produce from 2500 to 4000 pounds of cotton to the acre. As a provision country it is at least equal to any portion of our Western country, and it is more healthy than any other cotton growing region in the world. It is true that some portions of the United States where, in favorable years a hand can make as much cotton as he can gather, but here presents itself an appreciable advantage which Texas possesses, which is this. From the month of February, when the cotton is planted, until the middle of July, when it is matured, there are constant showers; and from July until the middle of December, in ordinary years, there is no rain at all; thus affording five months of uninterrupted good weather for gathering the crop. The cotton is therefore unstained, and its staple is also better than that of American cotton. I am perfectly satisfied that a judicious investment in a cotton plantation in Texas will yield, besides all necessaries for family consumption, from eight to ten per cent. profit per annum, at the price of three cents per pound for the cotton.

In confirmation of these views it is only necessary to say, that even now, with all the insecurity of property in Texas, many of the best planters in the Southwest are removing their property there. I know myself that two gentlemen, who own the very best plantations which I have seen in Alabama and Florida, have abandoned in a great degree their estates and removed their hands to Texas. A distinguished advocate of the measure estimates that in a very short time two hundred thousand negroes will be removed to Texas. The most of these will be taken from the exhausted lands of the old States, where they do not produce one thousand pounds of cotton to the hand, and carried to Texas, where they will average five thousand pounds to the hand. To which may be added a large number of slaves and white laborers now employed in other branches of agriculture, which will still more increase the production of cotton. Is it wise in us thus to stimulate the production of our great staple now, when the adjustment of the demand and supply is trembling in the balance, and when all the indications are that this adjustment will be most disastrous to the cotton, and not the cotton planter alone, but to the value of slave labor and of necessary consequence to the existence of slavery? I presume that no one wily cotton cannot continue to be raised in the old States at three or four cents the pound, and I know of nothing else that can be substituted for it. Slaves will then become an incubance which we shall be glad to be rid of, and I confess that it will afford me very little consolation, in riding over my fields, grown up in broom-sedge and washed into gullies, to be told that the institution of slavery still exists and is prosperous in Texas. I believe that slavery is in no sense an evil, that the African is not only more contented and happy, enjoys more physical comfort, and is more moral, religious, and virtuous in his condition of domestic slavery than in any other, but I do most confidently believe that the only alternative of that condition is vice, idleness, and debauchery, ultimately leading to barbarism; but I confess that my philanthropy is not so expensive as to sacrifice every thing to its perpetuation elsewhere, even if such would be the effect, which I do not believe. My patriotism is in some degree geographical, and the first object of my solicitude, love, and devotion is the country in which I was born.

It may be said that if all this is true, Texas will supercede us in the production of cotton, whether annexed or not, and that we should avail ourselves of the present and only opportunity of acquiring it. To which I reply, that if Texas is settled without any adventitious stimulus being given to such

settlement, the increased demand for cotton may keep pace with the increasing supply. Cotton, in large quantities, can only be made by slave labor; all experience proves this. These slaves can only be carried to Texas from the United States, and as long as Texas is a separate Government, although individuals may remove there, a feeling of pride in and affection for his country, in the heart of every American, will prevent most of our people from yielding to the temptations which are held out to them to abandon their country. But once make Texas a portion of that country, and extend our glorious flag over it, and such a tide of emigration has never before been witnessed as will set in that direction. It seems to me, therefore, that to stimulate the production of cotton beyond the possibility of consumption, because the supply may possibly, without such stimulus, exceed the demand, would be as unwise as it would be to give half an ounce of arsenic to a friend, because we supposed that we had discovered the signs of incipient consumption.

I have never yet heard any satisfactory answer to these views. I have anxiously sought to have them answered; for it is painful to me to find myself opposed to an almost universal popular opinion in the South upon this subject. It is still more painful to me to oppose, almost solitary and alone, the opinion of the patriotic and honored State to which it is my pride to belong. Nothing would have been more agreeable to me than to find myself once more agreeing in opinion upon great questions of public policy with the majority of that State. During an angry and excited party conflict for the last seven years, I have been treated by that majority with so much of kindness that I would gladly have made and sacrifice to the general opinion of the State, which I could have done consistently with a sense of duty. Although I am not one of those 'whose thoughts keep the roadway' only because it is the roadway, I trust that I am just as far above the paltry vanity of an ostentatious independence of the general public opinion of those amongst whom my lot has been cast. I have been told that all these views may be correct, but that there are important political considerations which outweigh them. When I have asked that these might be stated, I have only been answered with such broad generalities, cabalistic phrases, and party catchwords as this: 'That it is a question of security and existence to the South.' It was not converted to the defunct Treasury humbug by being told that it was a question of 'deliverance and liberty,' when I thought that I saw, as all must now see, that the ruin and desolation which it caused every where were greatest at the South. Every where else the agony is over; at the South it is scarcely begun. Nor can I support another measure, even more disastrous, without more intelligible or more sufficient reasons. I am firmly persuaded that the certain and inevitable tendencies of the annexation of Texas are to promote the abolition of slavery; more so, indeed, than any other measure which has heretofore been proposed. Nor am I without support in this opinion from distinguished advocates of the measure.

Mr. Wilkins, the present Secretary of War, holds the following language in his address to his former constituents:

"The division between the planting and farming districts is marked by the best natural boundaries, and no edict of man can change it. There is neither necessity nor excuse for extending slave labor beyond the alluvial districts bordering on the Gulf and the lower Red river, nor can it ever be so extended by law. The rich lands of this region, running three degree further south than the best sugar lands of Louisiana, must always be settled, if annexed, by a population whose interests will be American."

This section of Texas, which must chiefly be a sugar-growing region, and therefore identified with that portion of Louisiana now engaged in the same culture, will unite in supporting the great principle of extending full and adequate protection to American products and industry. Sugar is a crop which must always look to the home market for the surest sale and most certain return. We shall thus gain in the Southwest a powerful accession of strength upon the great question which so deeply involves the interests of your district. I candidly believe that it will not be long before a majority of the people of the South, when their labor is thus diverted into many different channels, will become convinced of the sound policy of protecting and fostering American industry. This will not only be important and decisive in favor of such policy, but will be eminently calculated to harmonize and perpetuate our institutions—a result to be hailed with gladness by every patriotic breast.

I am no advocate for slavery, nor would I see it introduced into one region unless it were at the same time assured that it would be withdrawn from another, and that without increasing it in the aggregate. The annexation of Texas must soon be followed by the voluntary abolition of the institution of slavery in our neighboring States, Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware, and also, indeed, in Kentucky and Missouri. We can all truly rejoice in its withdrawal from our own immediate vicinity. I am satisfied that the best interests of that class of our fellow beings, originally brought in and forced on these States by British rapacity and injustice, and who must always be a marked and distinguished race as long as they abide among our shores, will be best promoted by securing them the only outlet, the only hope which is independent home, or attaining a position elevated and equal to the people amidst whom they dwell. Such a refuge is offered beyond the Rio Bravo, among the Mexican and South American nations, who have no prejudice either to caste or color."

Mr. C. J. Ingersoll, another leading advocate of the measure, thus speaks on this branch of the question:

Angry protests against Texas, elicited by misrepresentations issued at Washington predicate slavery as the abhorrent evil to be increased by annexation—assuming the egregiously false position that more and aggravated slavery is to follow that event. But three fourths of that fine region are upland, with soil and climate adapted to agriculture and pasturage, where cotton and sugar will not thrive, and slave labor cannot be employed profitably. Three States without slaves, and only one with them, can be formed by the annexation of Texas. The standard, the wish of all the present inhabitants of Texas. Slavery, forbidden by nature, may be interdicted by organic law there; and the annexation, instead of increasing the power or representatives of slavery in the Union, will, on the contrary, certainly and greatly diminish their relative weight. The States of Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia, Carolina, Mississippi, Arkansas, Missouri, and Tennessee, may suffer by the dereliction of their lands and other property. Virginia, Maryland, Kentucky, the Carolinas, and Tennessee, which are the slaveholding States, will have their slaves drawn off to the freer and more fruitful plantations of Southern Texas. In a few years many of them must become free States, and thus Texas prove the means of uniting a large portion of the present slaveholding parts of the Union in interest, sentiments, and action with the North and West, where slavery is unknown and disliked.

"The most important exportable product of the United States, the regulator of their exchanges and bond of union—cotton—cannot be produced without slaves; nor can sugar or rice. Yet looking forward to the presidential era when slavery may exist no longer in parts of the United States, to the diminution of its need, and ultimate extinction, Texas is the only land of promise where philanthropists, who are not zealous, can destroy the theatre of that consumption. Mexico has no slaves, because her population of the white, black, and red races is blended. In her neighborhood, and near, if not with her people, the colored inhabitants of this country may be united eventually in national numbers, with the strength, the character and the institutions of an independent people. This national combination may be accomplished without revolution or commotion. An African nation may arise, the descendants of Moorish, other African, and Indian progenitors, with the improvements of free Governments engrained in their sovereignty. Instead of eternalizing slavery, calm consideration of its connexion with the United States encourages the hope that it may end in Texas—peacefully and gratefully disappear there.—Liberia, Canada, Hayti, abolition of slavery in the slaveholding States, even gradual emancipation in the free States, all relieve us of either uniting whites with blacks, or separating them in the same communities without the degradation of the blacks, often worse than their bondage, have proved abortive. The vision of slavery's euthanasia, by its allocation to the southern parts of Texas and borders of Mexico, may be a delusion. But it promises more to rational humanity than any other project yet suggested. At all events, the annexation of Texas cannot but tend to diminish the alleged evils and powers of slaveholding."

I agree in nearly all of the views expressed by the distinguished writer, as to the effects of this measure, which I can understand. But the allocation of the euthanasia requires a key. Are not these startling views? Are they not enough at least to induce Southern men to pause and reflect before they rush headlong into a measure of such portentous importance, with more precipitation and less discussion than were ever before known in a measure of equal magnitude? Mr. Walker, a very distinguished Southernman, has published a letter upon this subject. It is divided into different heads.

## One of which is the following:— 'ADMITTING TEXAS SECURES THE EXTINCTION OF SLAVERY.'

Is slavery, then, never to disappear from the Union? If confined within its present limits, I do not perceive when or how it is to terminate. It is true, Mr. George Tucker, the distinguished Virginian, and professor in the distinguished university, has demonstrated that, in a period not exceeding eighty years, and probably less, from the density of population in all the slaveholding States, hired labor would be as abundant and cheap as slave labor, and that all pecuniary motive for the continuance of slavery would then have ceased. But would it, therefore, then disappear? No, it certainly would not; at the lowest ratio, the slaves would be, number ten millions. Could such a mass be emancipated? And, if so, what would be the result? We have seen, in the census and other proof, that one-third of

the free blacks must be supported at the public expense; and that, at the low rate of \$50 each, it would cost \$80,000,000 per annum to be raised by taxation to support the free blacks then in the South, requiring support, namely, 1,686,686, if manumission were permitted; but as such a tax could not be collected, emancipation would be, as it now is, prohibited by law, and slavery could not disappear in this manner, even when it became unprofitable. No, ten millions of free blacks, permitted to roam at large in the limits of the South, could never be tolerated. Again, then, the question is asked, Is slavery never to disappear from the Union? This is a startling and momentous question; but the answer is easy, and the proof clear, it will certainly disappear if Texas is annexed to the Union; not by abolition, but by a gradual diffusion, as it has already thus nearly receded from several of the more northern of the slaveholding States, and as it will continue thus more rapidly to recede by the reunification of Texas, and finally, in the distant future, without a shock, without abolition, without a convulsion, disappear into and through Texas, into Mexico and Central and southern America. Thus, that same overruling Providence that watched over the landing of the emigrants and pilgrims at Jamestown and Plymouth; that gave us the victory in our struggle for independence; that guided by His inspiration the framers of our wonderful Constitution; that has preserved this great Union from dangers so many and imminent, and is now shielding it from abolition, its most dangerous and internal foe—will open Texas as a valve, into and through which slavery will slowly and gradually recede, and finally disappear into the boundless regions of Mexico and Central and Southern America. Beyond the Del Norte slavery will not pass; not only because it is forbidden by law, but because the colored race there preponderate in the ratio of ten to one over the whites; and holding, as they do, the Government and most of the offices in their own possession, they will never permit the enslavement of any portion of the colored race, which makes and executes the laws of the country."

If I believed, with Mr. Walker, that abolition either was or would become beneficial or necessary for the South, I should certainly be in favor of annexation, as both the most certain and best mode of accomplishing that object. But I do not think so, but believe, on the contrary, that it would be injurious, deeply injurious, and in the end destructive to the slaves themselves, disastrous to the whole Union, and absolutely ruinous to the South. Holding these opinions, my object is, not to postpone this result for a short time, but to prevent it forever. Will any one deny any of those propositions: 1. That the most efficacious measure in favor of abolition would be to destroy the value of slave labor? 2. That the reduction of the price of cotton to three or four cents would destroy the value of slave labor in the old slave States? 3. That any large increase of the quantity of cotton produced would have the effect to reduce its price to that point, or even lower; say, for example, a sudden increase of five hundred thousand bales? and, 4. That the annexation of Texas would cause such an increased production? Much the larger portion of the produce of slave labor is cotton. It is the price of cotton which regulates exclusively the value of slaves, as of almost every other article. Let it be borne in mind, too, that Texas is admirably adapted to the production of sugar, raw staple cotton, and tobacco—the only other articles, with the exception of rice which are produced by slave labor. But, if the pride of cotton is not thus ruinously reduced by over production, it will not be reduced that slave labor can be employed in Texas with at least twice the profit which it yields in the average of the slave States of the Union. Our slaves will then be carried to Texas, by the force of a law as fixed and certain as that by which water finds its level. The slaves will very soon disappear from Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Kentucky, and in a period very short of such an operation, those States will become non-slaveholding States; and whenever that is the case, they will not only no longer have a common interest with the remaining slaveholding States to defend the institution, but will very soon partake of that fanatical spirit of a false philanthropy which is now prevailing the whole world. Thus shall we lose the most important of our allies; most important in numerical strength at the ballot box; still more important if we should be driven to the carthquake box our last defence. And what are the advantages which we are to gain by this measure? I mean we of the slaveholding States. Are we more secure against foreign attack? The question is not whether Louisiana will be more secure with Texas than without it. I think it easy to demonstrate that such would not be the case. But the real question is, will Texas then be more secure than Louisiana now? For Texas will then be a portion of our Union, and we shall be under the same obligation to protect Texas as we now are to protect Louisiana. With our railroads and rivers, we can assemble three hundred thousand men in thirty days in New Orleans, or at any other point in the slaveholding States. Not so with Texas. There would be no means of transporting troops to Texas but by the dangerous navigation of the Gulf; thus encour-

aging all the inconveniences of the defence which an invading enemy would have in the attack; and, with a superior hostile naval force in command of the Gulf of Mexico, which is to be anticipated in the event of such an invasion, our troops could not be transported at all. In any event, it would be transferring the conflict from the land, where we should be absolutely impregnable, to the water, where we might be the weaker power. Then, again, instead of the impassable swamps lying between the Mississippi and Texas, a natural and impregnable fortification, we should have an increased starting frontier of several hundred miles, and a land frontier of two thousand miles, through mountains, or swamps, or other natural barriers, unless we could realize the very bright idea of General Cass, of annexing all the contiguous territory. To do which, we must round off our boundaries by going to Cape Horn and the Pacific. I know only one instance of an equally audacious suggestion, as that of General Cass about contiguous territory, and that was of the farmer who said that he discovered that the squirrels destroyed only the outside rows of his corn, and that he would secure himself against future depredations by planting no outside rows. I am descending from the dignity of the subject, it is because ridicule is the only proper reply to such an argument.

It is said that the annexation of Texas will increase the political power of the slaveholding States, and the vote in Congress. Such cannot be the result in the house of Representatives; for the slaves will only be diffused; their number will not be increased that is perfectly clear. But it has been said that Texas will be divided into four or five States, all of which will be slaveholding States, and of course represented in the Senate, and thus give to the South a conservative, a checking power. If I believed that the non-slaveholding States would concede us this, I would disregard all minor objections, and go for the measure. But does any sane man really believe it? Will the non-slaveholding States, having the majority in the Senate, and as a legislative body, surrender that majority, and also the majority in the House, as an alternative electoral body of President? Will they divide Texas into four States, and give to those four States equal power in the election of President with New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Massachusetts? Would we, under like circumstances, consent to the annexation of Canada, and divide it into four or five States? Would we do this too at the risk of a foreign war; and the more especially if our Northern brethren, with a most remarkable frankness, were to announce to us that their great motive in desiring it was to take the political power out of our hands and place it in their own? And are they less sagacious in perceiving their interests, less prompt to pursue them, or more liberal in sacrificing them than we are? Such certainly is not the general estimate of their character. A striking fact in this matter is, that at the very threshold of this question, it has been proposed by two Senators from slaveholding States (Mr. Benton and Mr. Henderson) to divide Texas into an equal number of slaveholding States. What, then, will we have gained in political strength? If Southern Senators begin by making this concession, there must be some show of reason on that side. And it is to be supposed that the members from the non-slaveholding States will yield the point? As to the Missouri compromise, the obvious reply will be, that that compromise was made with reference to the territory which was then included in the Union, and not to future acquisitions by purchase or conquest. In case of such a division, shall we have gained any thing by having non-slaveholding States of the Union on our southwestern border, instead of a foreign non-slaveholding State? I decidedly prefer the latter; for it is not to be denied that our Northern brethren, in this respect, at least, a little more than kin, and a little less than kind, often commit outrages upon our rights which would not be submitted to from a foreign Power; and, besides, if non-slaveholding States of the Union were established there, we should have the dangerous element of political and party feeling, which would not exist in the case of a foreign non-slaveholding State. But the real question is not between Texas, a foreign non-slaveholding State, and Texas divided into an equal number of slaveholding and non-slaveholding States of the Union; but it is between Texas as thus divided, if admitted into the Union, and Texas, if not annexed, an undivided slaveholding country. My life upon it, Texas will not consent; five per cent. of her population can never be brought to consent to the abolition of slavery. And we should thus have a slaveholding Republic on our border, with similar institutions and interests, and which must from necessity be our friend and ally, and which would serve us as