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THE

CONQUEST OF MEXICO!

AN APPEAL

TO THE

CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES,

ON THE

JUSTICE AND EXPEDIENCY

OF THE

CONQUEST OF MEXICO;

WITH HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION RESPECTING THAT COUNTRY.

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The Conquest of Mexico.

After pacific relations with foreign powers for more than thirty years, the tocsin of war again sounds through the land, and the young manhood of the country is rushing to arms. An enthusiasm which, in a just cause, would be considered a striking example of national virtue, has inflamed the public mind, and is extending every hour. A once magnificent but now dissolving state, to which the cabinets of Europe have been looking with solicitude as a prize for their intrigues, is considered by many to be providentially offered to us. Amidst the general excitement, no small number of scrupulous and good men are asking, Whither will these things tend? Is this war right? If right, is it expedient? Be assured that an exigency has come upon us which will require the support of the national conscience, and this can be secured only by the solution of these questions. It is proposed in the following pages to attempt to answer them.

Would the invasion and conquest of Mexico by the United States, in the present instance, be right? Our difficulties with that power have arisen from our new relations with Texas; the question therefore presupposes the prior inquiry, Was the annexation of Texas right? (We inquire not now about its expediency, but its rightfulness.) And this implies a still prior question, Was the revolt and independence of Texas right? If Texas had no right to revolt, we
had no right to annex her; and if her annexation was unrighteous, then our present conflict with Mexico for her boundary is unrighteous. The whole question is then frankly presented — let us frankly confront it.

Was the revolution of Texas right? Upon few subjects have we (especially in the North) more vague and contradictory views than on the history of that revolution. Local politics, and especially local views of slavery have been mixed with it, until the whole subject has become distorted. Even foreign writers are more candid and truthful than our own respecting it. That event is ascribed by many to the intrigues of land speculators and slaveholders. Nothing could be more false. Doubtless a variety of personal and sordid motives affected the individual actors in the movement; but the public and ostensible causes were unquestionably more urgent and justificatory than those of our own revolution. The English author of “Texas and Mexico,” says, “No country has been more calumniated and misrepresented than Texas. The greater part of the misstatements that have appeared in England concerning Texas are said to have been circulated by the Mexican bond-holders, and others interested in the prosperity of Mexico. The Americans, however, have been far more bitter in their attacks upon the unoffending republic. It appears to me, that few people have ever had more just cause than the Texans for throwing off an oppressive yoke, and separating themselves from a nation which had so long proved its incapacity even for self-government. Previous to Texas declaring her independence, the Mexican republic had been constantly a prey to internal dissensions; and civil war, in all its horrors had desolated the country. Her political institutions had been changed or overthrown according to the interest or caprice of each successive military chief. The rule of these political leaders was invariably marked by bloodshed, cruelty, and oppression, and the country was in a constant state of anarchy and revolution.”

* Mr. Kennedy (member of the suite of the late Lord Durham, in Canada) has written an able work, defending the Texans and describing their country. Von Ranner speaks emphatically in their favor. One of the cleverest English works on the country is “Texas and Mexico; or Yachting in the New World.” This author particularly narrates and vindicates the Texan revolution.
We condense from this same writer a view of the causes of the Texan revolution:

Under the constitution of 1824, Mexico was a confederated republic, somewhat similar to the United States, having a President, Vice President, Senate, and a House of Representatives, as a central government. Each State had, however, its separate independent government. The Mexican government, having found itself obliged, for its own security, to encourage colonization in Texas, declared by a decree of the Cortes, dated 7th May, 1824:

"That Texas is to be annexed to the Mexican province of Cohahuila, until it is of sufficient importance to form a separate State, when it is to become an independent State of the Mexican republic, equal to the other States of which the same is composed, free, sovereign, and independent, in whatever exclusively relates to its internal government and administration."

This decree was declared "inviolable," and the act says, "can never be reformed."

It was then, on the faith of this decree, that new settlers were constantly arriving in Texas, from all countries, and this state of things continued until 1830, when the hitherto increasing prosperity of the country received its first check.

Bustamente, an adventurer, who by intrigue or bloodshed had contrived to possess himself of the first office in the Mexican republic, prohibited the further ingress of foreigners, and issued several decrees inimical to the interests of Texas. The Mexican government, apparently jealous of its rising influence and prosperity, seems now to have made several enactments, at variance with the constitution of 1824. To effect these, it was necessary to introduce a considerable force of Mexican soldiers into the country; thus, it eventually ended in Texas being placed almost entirely under military rule. It would be difficult to give an adequate idea of the numerous acts of injustice and oppression to which the settlers were subjected at this period.

The oppressive rule of Bustamente, was fortunately brought to a conclusion in the year 1842. His object had been to establish a central government, instead of the federal constitution, but finding himself unable to cope with the superior mental powers and military conduct of Santa Anna, he resigned his office in favor of General Pedraza, and early in 1833, Santa Anna was proclaimed President.

The Texans having now had sufficient experience of the bad effects arising from their being under the administration of the State of Cohahuila, resolved to petition the supreme government for a separation of the provinces, and demanded that Texas should be granted an independent State government, in conformity with the federal compact, and Act of Cortes, of 1824.

The memorial set forth, that Texas was virtually without any government at all; that the language of the people was different; that Cohahuila and Texas were altogether different in soil, climate, and natural productions; that owing to the numerical inequality of their respective representatives, the enactment of laws beneficial to Texas could only emanate from the "generous courtesy" of her constitutional partner, and that legislative advantages to the one, might, from incompatibility of interests, be ruinous to the other.

Protection from Indian depredations they declared to be of vital importance to Texas, which protection Cohahuila was unable to render. The Indians in their immediate neighborhood had been denied justice, which would be granted by independent Texas. Finally, Texas possessed the necessary elements for a state government, and for her attach-
ment to the federal constitution and to the republic they pledged their lives and honors.

Stephen Austin was the person selected by the people to proceed to Mexico and to submit their petition to the consideration of the Cortes. Austin, after waiting nearly a year in the capital, and being able to gain no reply to the petition with which he had been charged, wrote to the authorities in Texas, recommending them at once to organize a State, de facto, without waiting for the decision of Congress.

This was considered by the government as a treasonable proceeding, and shortly afterwards Austin was arrested at Saltillo, whilst on his return to Texas. Being brought back to the capital, he was imprisoned for upwards of a year. He did not return to Texas till more than two years had elapsed from the date of his departure, not till Santa Anna had overthrown the federal constitution of the republic, and established in its place a Central Consolidated government, rendering him wholly independent of the States of the Confederacy, and thus, in fact, becoming military dictator of Mexico.

Several of the States were of course opposed to this change. Some, indeed, resorted to arms, but were unable to resist the power of the dictator. The constitutional authorities of Coahuila and Texas assembled at Mondova, and solemnly protested against this change of government. They were, however, driven from office by a military force under General Cos. The government was then dissolved, and the Governor and other members of the State legislature were imprisoned. Thus the central government was established—in opposition to the will of the States and of the people—by the forcible and unconstitutional destruction of the social compact which they had sworn to support.

Committees of safety and vigilance were now formed in Texas, and resolutions passed, to insist on their rights, under the federal constitution of 1824. Troops were organized, and every preparation made to resist the Mexicans, which were expected to be sent against them. In these anticipations they were not disappointed; General Cos soon after arrived at Copano, and marched thence to Bexar.

The first meeting of the hostile troops was at Gonzales. The Mexicans, in an attack upon the town, were repulsed with great bravery, and suffered considerable loss, both in killed and wounded. Shortly after this, a more important victory was gained, in the capture of the town and garrison of Goliad, containing a great quantity of military stores, besides three hundred stand of arms, and two brass cannon. This was followed by the election of General Austin as Commander-in-Chief of the Texan army; and the new leader, under the banner of the Mexican federal constitution, immediately marched upon Bexar, a town strongly garrisoned by the Mexican troops under General Cos.

After several engagements in the neighborhood, which invariably resulted in favor of the colonists, the town of Bexar was stormed and taken by a party of three hundred volunteers.

The country was now freed for the present from Mexican troops, and a general convention of delegates, from the different municipalities of Texas, was forthwith held at San Filipe de Austin. On the 3d of November, 1835, a state government was organized for Texas, and their motives and principles proclaimed in a manifesto. It declares,

"Whereas, General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, and other military chieftains, have, by force of arms, overthrown the federal institutions of Mexico, and dissolved the social compact which existed between Texas and the other members of the Mexican confederacy; now, the good people of Texas, availing themselves of their natural rights, solemnly declare, "That they have taken up arms in defence of their rights and liberties, which are threatened by the encroachments of military despots, and in defence of the republican principles of the federal constitution of Mexico.
“That Texas is no longer morally or civilly bound by the compact of Union; yet stimulated by the generosity and sympathy common to a free people, they offer their support and assistance to such of the members of the Mexican confederacy as will take up arms against military despotism. “That they do not acknowledge that the present authorities of the nominal Mexican republic have the right to govern within the limits of Texas. “That they hold it to be their right, during the disorganization of the Federal system, and the reign of despotism, to withdraw from the Union, to establish an independent government, or to adopt such measures as they may deem best calculated to protect their rights and liberties; but that they will continue faithful to the Mexican government so long as that nation is governed by the constitution and laws that were formed for the government of the political association.”

The Dictator now invaded the country in person. He took the garrison of the Alamo, and giving no quarter, put every man to the sword. He met Fanning’s small force, and, after an honorable capitulation broke his word and ordered them all to be massacred.

On the 11th of March a convention was held, and Texan independence declared. Santa Anna was soon after overthrown at San Jacinto, and acknowledged the new republic. This is the history of Texan independence. The first few settlers had endured patiently the caprices of Mexican government, until the constitution of 1824 pledged them security. Most of the population had entered the country under the protection of that constitution. They maintained their fidelity to it while it existed. It had guaranteed to them a government like that to which they had been accustomed in the United States. When Santa Anna overthrew it, they rose against the usurper, and insisted on the Federal constitution. They declared, in their manifesto of Nov. 3d, 1835, that they “have taken up arms in defence of the republican principles of the Federal government of Mexico,” and pledged themselves that “they will continue faithful to the Mexican government, so long as that nation is governed by the constitution and laws that were formed for the government of its political association.” Austin led his troops under the Mexican Federal flag, to meet Cos, and not until the hope of restoring the constitution was gone and their territory invaded by the dictator did they declare their independence.

Besides the overthrow of the constitution, oppressive edicts had been issued against them, which rendered resistance absolutely necessary for the protection of their lives. One prohibited the erection of churches; another ordered the Texans to give up their arms,
except one gun for every five plantations. Many of the plantations were fifteen and twenty miles apart, and the whole country was beset with hostile Indians. Such an edict would even now depopulate two-thirds of Texas. It was manifestly a pass for the destruction of the settlers. Thus the preservation of the Mexican constitution and the protection of their religion and lives were the reasons of the revolution of Texas; and where is the generous or candid mind that will not approve the motives and applaud the gallantry which sustained their struggle? American citizens who would not have done likewise under like circumstances, would have been recreant to the principles of their fathers and to the moral instincts of the Anglo-Saxon mind. The subject of slavery did not appear in the revolutionary movement; it was an after consideration, forced upon the State by the influence of Southern men who, during the struggle, had entered the country. The German historian, Von Raumer, says:

If we turn our attention to the new republic of Texas, we find the most opposite opinions maintained with regard to it. Its violent assailants, both in America and in Europe, assert that it owes its origin to a most unrighteous insurrection, is inhabited by a worthless rabble of every sect, and polluted by the curse of slavery. What says history? The Spaniards founded their claims on the discovery of some points of this unknown territory; but for centuries they did absolutely nothing of consequence to acquire a knowledge of it and to settle it, and it was not till quite recent times that the government treated with people who wished to emigrate thither from the United States. Plans of this kind were interrupted by the revolt of Mexico from the mother country, and Texas declared herself ready to enter as a separate state into the new great confederation. This condition was at first accepted, but afterwards declined; and then, instead of being governed by a genuine federal constitution, it was alternately the prey of military and priestly tyranny or of wild anarchy. Worthless persons did certainly take advantage of these times of confusion to make their way into Texas; but it would be great injustice thus to designate all the inhabitants of Texas, or to maintain that the revolt of Mexico from Spain was glorious, but that that of Texas was execrable. A country said to be three times as large as Great Britain and Ireland, and in fact without a master, a perfect use munitas, had forsooth no right to a separate existence, and was condemned to be an appendance of Mexico, or rather of her soldiery, for all time to come! Independence," says a thoroughly well informed man, "produced in Mexico an intoxication of freedom, which caused the people to seek their liberty in the most unbounded licentiousness, their sovereignty in contempt of law and morality and in impunity for crime; each one thought he had a right to do and to leave undone whatever he saw fit, and not only to utter his opinions, but to carry them out by violence." Mexico has indeed adopted many of the public institutions of the United States, and also a similar constitution law, as far as its letter is concerned; but through the overpowering influence of the priests or the army, it rarely comes into play. Besides, there is no such thing as an im-
mediate-free choice of representatives; and public trials by jury, or legal
toleration in religious matters are never thought of.

Texas very naturally would not allow its fate to be determined by such
a people. The Saxon-Germanic element of American civilization came
again into conflict with the Romance stock; and it conquered, as it had
done before in Canada, Louisiana, and Florida. On the 21st of April,
1836, the Texans under Houston defeated the Mexican president Santa
Anna at San Jacinto, took him prisoner, dispersed his entire army, and
captured all his warlike stores. This determined the independence of
Texas; Jackson acknowledged it on the last day of his Presidency, and
the powers of Europe followed the example.

These victors of San Jacinto were far from being a rabble which by ac-
cident once shows a warlike spirit, but men who felt the value both of
civil order and of public right, and who strove to found a genuine re-
public.

Notwithstanding the universal though vague and unproved charges of
the immorality of its inhabitants, Texas has made astonishing progress
since its declaration of independence; and has kept free from the tyran-
ny and anarchy of Mexico, to which shallow theorists and the envious
would gladly chain her.

The independence of Texas was right. Was her annexation
right? She had fought gallantly against intolerable wrongs; had
won her independence. The dictator Santa Anna, who himself
was the Mexican government, had acknowledged her independ-
ence, and the Rio Grande as her boundary. She sent her minis-
ters to the United States, to France, to England, and to Holland,
and all these powers had acknowledged her independence, and
formed treaties of amity and commerce with her. She thus
stood confessedly before the world as a sovereign State, with liberty
to dispose of her own destiny. She offered herself to us and we
accepted her. What other power had a right to say nay? Eng-
land and France had, least of all, that right. By previously ac-
knowledging her independence, they deprived themselves of all
power to interfere. They used persuasion and intrigue against the
union, but dared not go farther, and the outcry of "robbery of
Mexico," so rife in transatlantic journals since, but scarcely heard
before, applies as much to their own governments as to ours; for
whatever robbery had been committed they had consecrated by an-
knowledging and treating with the young republic. It would be a
waste of words to discuss this point farther. Texas had a right to
offer herself to us; we had a right to receive her. It is time, fel-
low-citizens, to look more coolly at these actual facts of the case,
and for our national honor insist that they be no longer distorted by
partizan prejudices.
The annexation of Texas was right; and the question of right is the only one involved in this discussion. It might not have been expedient. The writer of these pages did not deem it politic; he used his utmost power to prevent it. But he contends we had a right to do it. A measure may be right without being expedient; though it can never be expedient without being right. Expedient or inexpedient, the deed has been done and cannot be undone, and the only question now is, Had we a right to do it, and can we now by consequence honestly meet the results?

There is but one further ground of doubt, viz., Does our rightful relation to Texas extend to the Rio Grande? It has been alleged that the Nueces is the true boundary of Texas, and that by claiming the Rio Grande as her limit we are usurping additional territory. We reply, First—That the Rio Grande is the natural demarcation between the two countries. It is the only large and important natural barrier between them. Second. It was acknowledged by Santa Anna, who was Dictator and therefore the government of Mexico, in his treaty at San Jacinto, by which he saved his troops and his life. The public treaty declares:

Article 3. The Mexican troops will vacate the territory of Texas, passing to the other side of the Rio Grande del Norte.

The secret treaty reads:

Article 4. A treaty of commerce, amity and limits will be established between Mexico and Texas. The territory of the latter not to extend beyond the Rio Bravo del Norte.

Third. This had been the ancient boundary of Texas.

The lower Del Norte was always the boundary of ancient Texas, as a part of Louisiana, ceded to us by the treaty of 1803. Such has been the opinion of our distinguished statesmen and Presidents, ever since 1803. Mr. Jefferson distinctly announced, in repeated communications, and especially on the 8th July, 1804, his fixed opposition to the "relinquishment of any territory whatever eastward of the Rio Bravo."

Mr. Madison, in his letter of the 31st March, 1804, says, our boundary "extended westwardly to Rio Bravo;" and he declares that the French commissioner delivered us the possession of Texas with the "Del Norte

* The only ground of its inexpediency was the addition which it made to the slave-holding representation of our government. Had there, however, been at the time any clear probability of the annexation of Mexico also, this objection would have lost much of its importance, as will be shewn bye and bye.

* The reader will remember that Rio Grande, Rio Del Norte, and Rio Bravo are names for the same river.
as its true boundary." On the 8th November, 1803, James Monroe de­
clared that "incontestibly" the boundary of Louisiana is "the Rio Bravo
to the west;" and Mr. Pinkney unites in the declaration. Mr. Monroe,
in his letter of 19th January, 1816, and June 10, 1816, says, none could
dispute "our title to Texas;" and he adds, "that our title to the Del Norte
was as clear as to the island of New Orleans." In his letter of the 12th
March, 1814, John Quincy Adams proves our title to Texas, and says,
"well might Messrs. Pinkney and Monroe write to M. Cevallos, in 1805,
that the claim of the United States to the boundary of the Rio Bravo was
as clear as their right to the island of New Orleans." Henry Clay, in
his speech of 1830, in Congress, quotes and repeats the same opinion; and
in his celebrated anti-Texas letter of the 17th April, 1844, Mr. Clay
says, "The United States acquired a title to Texas, extending, as I be­
lieve, to the Rio Del Norte, by the treaty of Louisiana."

That Texas was ours by the treaty of 1803, and that its boundary ex­
tended to the Del Norte, is proved by the concurrent authority of Jeffer­
son, Madison, Monroe, Adams, Pinkney, Benton, and Clay. It was the
boundary fixed by Texas in her organic law of 1836, and beyond which
the Mexicans were then driven. And if Texas had no other claim to
the country between the Neuse, and the Del Norte, that by conquest
and occupation would be complete. — Union.

Fourth, the new republic, soon after the treaty with Santa Anna,
declared in its constitution this to be its southern boundary, thus:

Beginning at the mouth of the Sabine river, and running west along
the Gulf of Mexico, three leagues from land, to the mouth of the Rio
Grande; then up the principal stream of said river to its source; thence
due north to the forty-second degree of north latitude; thence along
the boundary line, as defined in the treaty between the United States and
Spain, to the beginning.

Fifth. It was made a representative district and represented in
her Congress. Sixth. The United States and the powers of Europe
recognized her with this constitution and this boundary. Seventh.
It was distinctly referred to in the Senate of the United States,
when she was admitted into the Union, and as the adjacent territory
had been represented in the Congress of Texas, so "it is now in
the United States. A port of delivery beyond the Neuse was au­
thorized by a law of our Congress, unanimously passed in Decem­
ber last, and our revenue laws are now in full operation there." —

Union.

* A reference has been made, by Mr. Severance, of Maine, to the confusion of the
revenue question, in respect to Santa Fe. It must be borne in mind that every thing
is in confusion that relates to us and Mexico. Santa Fe is an "out of the way" city,
or rather village, some 1,500 miles from the city of Mexico, and some 600 from the
nearest point of the Gulf coast. The intermediate space is a wilderness—the range
of Indians. Its relation to either country is scarcely more than nominal, and the
state of our laws towards it can scarcely affect the question in dispute.
Is it replied, that though the treaty of Santa Anna specifies the Rio Grande as the boundary, the Mexican government has since refused to recognize this fact? But how? Why, by refusing to recognize any boundary whatever,—by disallowing an inch of territory to the new State. If her refusal invalidates our title to the Rio Grande, it equally invalidates it to a foot of land beyond the Sabine. Her obstinacy in this respect no more affects the question than does the continued refusal of Spain to acknowledge her own independence affect her right to it. Texas, for as good reasons as ever sanctioned a revolution, fought for and gallantly won her independence; she looked abroad for a boundary, and fixed upon the one which nature indicated. The Dictator of Mexico acknowledged it—it was the ancient boundary of the country—the nations of Europe recognized her with this boundary—she was admitted into the Union with it—our revenue laws are extended to it—even the common Geographies, Atlases, Gazetteers and, Commercial Dictionaries take it for granted;* and yet as soon as our troops take a position on it, the outcry of national robbery is raised. The charge is absurd. Let us not dishonor our country by acknowledging an imputation so preposterous.?

We must here be permitted to say that there is a species of small quibbling in the assertion that the Nueces, not the Rio Grande, is our appropriate boundary, and that it is a usurpation to claim the latter, but not the former. Mexico makes no such assertion. Our

* Even Dr. Morse, in his Universal Gazetteer, 23 years ago, speaks of Texas as follows:

“Texas, (pronounced Te-as,) country, North America, bounded East by Louisiana, South-east by the Gulf of Mexico; West and South-west by the Rio del Norte; North and North-east by Red River. Its greatest length is 900 miles; its greatest breadth 500; and its area 240,000 square miles. According to the late treaty, it is wholly included in the Spanish dominions.—(New Haven edition, 1833.

* Mr. Webster, in his reply to Bocanegra, maintains substantially our position. He declares that “from the time of the battle of San Jacinto, in April, 1836, to the present moment, Texas has exhibited the same external signs of national independence as Mexico herself, and with quite as much stability of government—practically free and independent, acknowledged as a political sovereignty by the principal powers of the world, no hostile foot finding rest within her territory for six or seven years, and Mexico herself refraining for all that period from any further attempt to re-establish her own authority over that territory.” And he rightly reasons, that under these circumstances the peace and commerce of the world justified the nations in sanctioning her claims to independence.
dispute with her is not about which shall be the boundary, but for any boundary whatever. If we have no right to the Rio Grande, we have none to the Nueces. The Rio Grande, as we have said, is the old and the natural boundary. Do those who contend so magnanimously for the Nueces, know that it is but about forty or fifty miles this side of the Rio Grande, on the coast, and that the intermediate space, in a few miles inland, contracts to but about 10 miles, and is a sandy desert, except a margin on each of the two rivers? Mexico is not fighting against our claim to this narrow interval, but against our claim to an acre beyond the Sabine.

The main question occurs, Is the present war with Mexico right? Texas had a right, as we have shown, to her independence;—we had a right to receive her, with her legitimate and acknowledged territory. We have rightfully planted our flag on that territory; thousand of semi-barbarian troops have invaded it; they have insulted our banner and massacred our citizens. These outrages have been committed, too, under circumstances peculiarly aggravating. Notwithstanding our clear claims to the invaded country, our government had taken every conciliatory measure to satisfy Mexico, and save the necessity of peremptory proceedings. It was understood that Mr. Shannon was authorized to offer her a valuable bonus; but our overtures were treated with insult. Time passed; insult was added to insult; and yet our government repeats its conciliatory efforts. Our consul at Matamoras is instructed to inquire if Mexico will receive an envoy to negotiate and settle the disputed question. The proposition is accepted. Our naval force at Vera Cruz is removed by her request, that she may not seem to be forced into the negotiation. Our minister arrives, but is immediately refused a reception by Herrera, who had consented to the arrangement. In a few days after, Paredes overthrows the government; he likewise refuses our envoy, in terms strongly offensive to our country. "Thus," says President Polk in his late message, "the government of Mexico, though solemnly pledged by official acts in October last to receive and accredit an American envoy, violated their plighted faith, and refused the offer of a peaceful adjustment of our difficulties. Not only was the offer rejected, but the indignity of its rejection was enhanced by the manifest breach of faith in refusing to admit the envoy who came, because they had bound
themselves to receive him. Nor can it be said that the offer was fruitless from the want of opportunity for discussing it; our envoy was present on their own soil. Nor can it be ascribed to a want of sufficient powers: our envoy had full powers to adjust every question of difference. Nor was there room for complaint that propositions for settlement were unreasonable: permission was not even given our envoy to make any proposition whatever. Nor can it be objected that we, on our part, would not listen to any reasonable terms of their suggestion: the Mexican government refused all negotiation, and have made no proposition of any kind."

Under these aggravating circumstances, the Mexican forces are found butchering our troops within our own territory. Have we a right to redress ourselves, and take suitable measures to prevent a recurrence of such wrongs? We submit the question, assured that we must do it or incur the contempt of the nations, and invite upon ourselves endless impositions.

There is a second and independent justification of a war with Mexico on the part of the United States, viz., the injuries she has inflicted on our commerce—juries which she has acknowledged, and the reparation of which she has pledged in solemn but violated treaties. The President of the United States, in his late Message says:

"The grievous wrongs perpetrated by Mexico upon our citizens through a long period of years, remain unredressed; and solemn treaties, pledging her public faith for this redress, have been disregarded. A government either unable or unwilling to enforce the execution of such treaties, fails to perform one of its plainest duties. Our commerce with Mexico has been almost annihilated. It was formerly highly beneficial to both nations; but our merchants have been deterred from prosecuting it from the system of outrage and extortion which the Mexican authorities have pursued against them; whilst their appeals through their own government for indemnity have been made in vain. Our forbearance has gone to such an extreme as to be mistaken in its character. Had we acted with vigor in repelling the insults and redressing the injuries inflicted by Mexico, at the commencement, we should doubtless have escaped all the difficulties in which we are involved."

Very true! The history of diplomacy scarcely affords an instance of more egregious duplicity on the one part and complaisance on the other than is found in connection with this question of commercial wrongs perpetrated by Mexico for more than twenty years. "Had we acted with vigor" it would have been mercy to Mexico as well as justice to ourselves. France set us the example; she
stormed St. Juan d'Uloa, shot off the leg of Santa Anna, and obtained redress. We have forborne till our indulgence has brought the barbarous offenders upon our soil, to shed the blood of our citizens, and involve the continent in war. In his December message, President Polk says:

Serious causes of misunderstanding between the two countries continue to exist, growing out of unredressed injuries inflicted by the Mexican authorities and people on the persons and property of citizens of the United States, through a long series of years. Mexico has admitted these injuries, but has neglected and refused to repair them. Such was the character of the wrongs, and such the insults repeatedly offered to American citizens and the American flag by Mexico, in palpable violation of the laws of nations and the treaty between the two countries of the 5th of April, 1831, that they have been repeatedly brought to the notice of Congress by my predecessors. As early as the eighth of February, 1837, the President of the United States declared, in a message to Congress, that "the length of time since some of the injuries have been committed, the repeated and unavailing applications for redress, the wanton character of some of the outrages upon the persons and property of our citizens, upon the officers and flag of the United States, independent of recent insults to this government and people by the late extraordinary Mexican minister, would justify in the eyes of all nations immediate war." Since then, more than eight years have elapsed, during which, in addition to the wrong then complained of, others of an aggravated character have been committed on the persons and property of our citizens. A special agent was sent to Mexico, in the summer of 1838, with full authority to make another and final demand for redress. The demand was made; the Mexican government promised to repair the wrongs of which we complained; and after much delay, a treaty of indemnity with that view was concluded between the two powers on the eleventh of April, 1839, and was duly ratified by both governments. By this treaty a joint commission was created to adjudicate and decide on the claims of American citizens on the government of Mexico. The commission was organized at Washington on the twenty-fifth day of August, 1840. Their time was limited to eighteen months; at the expiration of which they had adjudicated and decided claims amounting to two millions, twenty-six thousand one hundred and thirty-nine dollars and sixty-eight cents in favor of citizens of the United States against the Mexican government, leaving a large amount of claims undecided. The sum of two millions twenty-six thousand one hundred and thirty-nine dollars and sixty-eight cents, decided by the board, was a liquidated and ascertained debt due by Mexico to the claimants, and there was no justifiable reason for delaying its payment according to the terms of the treaty. It was not, however, paid. Mexico applied for further indulgence. The request was granted; and, on the thirtieth of January, 1834, a new treaty was concluded. By this treaty it was provided, that the interest due on the awards in favor of claimants under the convention of the eleventh of April, 1839, should be paid on the thirtieth of April, 1843; and that "the principal of the said awards, and the interest arising thereon, shall be paid in five years, in equal instalments every three months; the said term of five years to commence on the thirtieth day of April, 1843, as aforesaid." The interest due on the thirtieth day of April, 1843, and the first three of the twenty instalments, have been paid. Seventeen of these instalments remain unpaid, seven of which are due...
ing to more than three millions of dollars, together with other claims for
apologies on the property of our citizens, were subsequently presented
to the Mexican government for payment, and were so far recognized, that
a treaty, providing for their examination and settlement by a joint com-
mission, was concluded and signed at Mexico on the twentieth day of
November, 1843. The treaty was ratified by the United States, with
certain amendments, to which no just exception could have been taken;
but it has not yet received the ratification of the Mexican government.
In the mean time, our citizens who suffered great losses, and some of
whom had been reduced from affluence to bankruptcy, are without rem-
edy, unless their rights be enforced by their government. Such a con-
tinued and unprovoked series of wrongs could never have been tolerated
by the United States, had they been committed by any of the principal
nations of Europe.

The claims presented by our citizens against that republic, amount
between six and seven millions. Every consideration which obliges a government to protect the interests of its citizens
has been trifled with in this forbearance with Mexican treachery.
It was justly said by our President in 1837, that these "outrages"
would "justify in the eyes of all nations immediate war," and yet a in-
nearly ten years of continued insult have been allowed to elapse judged,
since, without the reparation of these wrongs. Our suffering citi-
zens have looked in vain to their country for redress. Our comm-
merce with Mexico has been nearly destroyed: and, in addition, our
territory is invaded and our citizens slaughtered. The story is one
for us to blush at. Now that other and intolerable injuries have
been inflicted, we can forbear no more without forfeiting our self-
respect and the respect of all enlightened communities. It is due
to the nations as well as to ourselves, that we at once repress these
national outrages, and secure ourselves against them in the future,
and there is no mode of doing this but that of invasion and conquest.
The Mexican republic is politically, socially and morally dissolute.
This is not the language of abuse but of truth. Treaties and pledges
can be of no avail with it. Its revolutions are nearly as frequent as
the months. The acts of one chief are abrogated by the acts of
another. Anarchy is its only domestic rule; treachery its only foreign policy. It is financially exhausted, and if we would obtain
indemnity at all, it must be in its territory. In retribution for its
corruptions, divine providence has allowed it to create an unavoids-
able necessity for its invasion. Let us unfurl our banners and march:
We shall redeem its people in indemnifying ourselves.

* The Hon. Waddy Thompson ("Recollections of Mexico") estimates he
at $100,000,000.
In addition to these reasons, relating to Mexico and ourselves alone, there is a more general consideration in justification of a war of invasion and conquest against her, viz., Her utter demoralization, her incapacity to govern herself and discharge her duties to other nations. In such a case, it is at once an act of beneficence and duty for other powers to dispose of her in such manner as shall best indemnify their own claims upon her, disable her from future offences, and promote her improvement. The right of conquering and appropriating a state, though a question requiring the utmost caution, is fully provided for by the Law of Nations. The appropriation of a conquered people as slaves, as in ancient conquests, is justly pronounced by Vattel, "monstrous," but he declares that,

"Among nations, the right of conquest has been deemed a lawful title, and has seldom if ever been disputed, unless owing to a war not only unjust but even void of pretences."—(Book 3, chap. xiii., sect. 196.)

"If he [the sovereign] has to do with a peridious, restless and dangerous enemy, he will, by way of penalty deprive him of some of his towns or provinces, and keep them as a barrier."—(Ibid., sect. 194.

Vattel, notwithstanding his usual scrupulosity, goes farther in favor of the conqueror than we should like to admit. He says:

"A conqueror who has taken arms, not only against a sovereign, but against a nation itself, whose intent was to subdue a lawless people, and once for all reduce an obstinate enemy, this conqueror may with justice lay burdens on the conquered, both as a compensation for the expense of the war and as a penalty. He may, according to the degree of idiocility, govern them with firmness and rigor, for dispiriting and weakening them; and, if necessary, keep them some time in a state of slavery."—(Book 3, chap. xiii. sect. 201.

In stating the principles of a just war, he says:

"In short, the offended has a right to provide for his security for the future, and to punish the offender, by inflicting upon him a pain capable of deterring him afterwards from the like attempts, and of intimidating those who shall be tempted to imitate him. He may even, if necessary, put the aggressor out of the condition to injure him. He makes use of his right in all these measures, when guided by reason; and if any evil results from it to him who lays him under the necessity of acting thus, he can accuse none but his own injustice.

"If then there is any where a nation of a restless and mischievous disposition, always ready to injure others, to traverse their designs, and to raise domestic troubles, it is not to be doubted that all have a right to join, in order to repress, chastise, and put it ever after out of its power to injure them. Such should be the just fruits of the policy which Machiavel praises in Cesar Borgia. The conduct followed by Philip II., king of Spain was adapted to unite all Europe against him; and it was from just reasons that Henry the Great formed the design of humbling a power
formidable by its forces, and pernicious by its maxims."—(Book 2, chap. iv., sects. 52, 53.

He says of the conqueror, that

"He may, in imitation of the kings of France, unite and incorporate them with his state. This was the way of the Romans, but they proceeded differently, according to cases and junctures. At a time when Rome stood in need of augmentation, she destroyed the city of Alba, as a rival, but received the inhabitants into her bosom, and thereby procured herself so many citizens. Afterwards, the conquered cities were left standing, and the freedom of Rome was given to the conquered. Victory could not have been of so much advantage to those people as a defeat."—(Book 3, chap. xiii., sect. 201.

Who doubts that such a conquest and use of Mexico by the United States, would be of more advantage to her than victory?

Mexico is about one-third as large as Europe. From its variety of elevation, it enjoys all varieties of climate and possesses inestimable resources for agriculture. Humboldt says:

"There is scarcely a plant in the rest of the world which is not susceptible of cultivation in one or other part of Mexico; nor would it be an easy matter for the botanist to obtain even a tolerable acquaintance with the multitudes of plants scattered over the mountains, or crowded together in the vast forests at the foot of the Cordilleras."—(Essai, tom. ii., p. 370.

It abounds in mineral wealth, having no less than 3,000 mines of gold and silver, and affords more silver than all the mines of Europe. It stands mid-way between the two great continents of the new world, looking to Europe on the east, and to Asia on the west. Its position and resources are unquestionably the best on the globe for commercial enterprise. And yet what is the actual condition of this finest section of our continent? Abject in morals, degraded in intelligence, ruined in business, and anarchical in government, it is second only to the savages of our wilderness. McCulloch says:

`Every thing appears to be falling into a state of apathy and languor; and idleness, with its necessary accompaniments of poverty, ignorance, and pride, bid fair to be, for a lengthened period, the distinguishing characteristics of the Mexicans.

On the whole, it might be fairly concluded, on general grounds, that agriculture in Mexico must have retrograded since the revolution. And such, in point of fact, has been the case, and to an extent that we should hardly have conceived possible. This is evident from the following statement by M. Chevalier, who visited Mexico in 1836. "Agriculture," says he, "is neglected. No law, indeed, prevents the planting of the vine and olive tree; not only, however, has no advantage been taken of this change, but the very lands which were cultivated in the time of the Spaniards are now lying fallow. In a circle of a few leagues round Mexico, I have seen large villages almost abandoned. In this delightful climate,
the only manure which the land ever requires, is water. This is rather scarce, yet many of the hydraulic constructions raised by the Spaniards at a great cost, are in ruins, and seem likely to remain so. The lands which, by means of this artificial irrigation, were the most fertile in the world, are gradually becoming completely sterile. Their ploughs and other agricultural implements are of the rudest description. No one troubles himself to introduce European improvements, or even to import better tools from the United States."

Before the war of independence, there were, in the 37 mining districts of New Spain, somewhat more than 3,000 mines, producing annually about 31,000,000 dollars in silver, and about 2,000,000 in gold. Towards the close of the struggle, many of the mines had been deserted, and their produce had declined a half, and does not yet materially exceed that amount. . . . Had the Mexican government been able and willing to repress disorder, and to enforce the observance of contracts, it is probable that the produce of the mines would have been very different at this moment from what it really is. Unluckily, however, no government has yet been established in Mexico with power, even if it had the desire, sufficient to put down disturbances or to enforce engagements. . . . The following statement of M. Chevalier, as to the insecurity of the miners, in 1835, discovers a state of things disgraceful to the government, and such indeed as could scarcely have been credited upon any inferior authority. "How," asks he, "can the mines be worked with any feeling of security, when it requires a little army to escort the smallest portion of the precious metal to its place of destination? Between the mine of Real del Monte and the village of Tezeyuco is a mountain pass, where a grand battle was fought between the miners and the banditti of the country. The former were defeated, overpowered by numbers; but not without having sold their lives as dearly as possible. The mine is now guarded by artillery and grape shot, and the Englishmen employed there are regularly drilled in the use of the musket." In such a state of things, the wonder is, not that the produce of the mines has declined, but that it continues to be so great as we find it to be. The mineral riches of the country are, however, inexhaustible; and there wants only a government able and willing to afford security, to make the produce of the mines greater than ever. . . . The ignorance of the miners is only equalled by their obstinate adherence to old, and elsewhere long exploded, practices. But this should not be matter of surprise, if the testimony of M. Chevalier respecting the education of engineers may be depended on. The school of mines, (mineria,) the mere building of which cost £120,000, is at present in the most pitiable condition, although the learned Andres del Rio is still one of the professors. It is unprovided with the means even of the most elementary instruction. It contains a vast chemical laboratory, but without the instruments requisite for the most simple experiments. The collection of minerals is in disorder, badly classed, and very incomplete; the library and the mechanical cabinet are deplorable. The school seems also to have shared the fate of the public treasury—of having been pillaged three or four times over. The very building seems on the point of falling to pieces—an appropriate emblem of the Mexican republic. But it cannot surely be supposed that the anarchy which has led to such deplorable results is to continue for ever. If nothing may be hoped for from within, it is to be wished that foreign interference may rescue this fine country from the barbarism in which it is now involved. . . . Many of the mines have been very imperfectly wrought; and by far the larger part of the richest veins are yet unexplored."

* Hon. Waddy Thompson ("Recollections of Mexico,"') says that not one-fiftieth of the veins are worked.
"One might," says M. Chevalier, "have supposed that when the ports were thrown open to the commerce of Europe, manufactories would soon have been established in a country where manual labor is cheap, where the workmen are submissive and skilful at imitation, where the soil produces the raw cotton, where the Spaniards had multiplied their flocks of sheep to a great extent, and where the rearing of the silkworm might be carried on with astonishing facility. The natives; however, destitute of all spirit of enterprise, and strangers cannot attempt any permanent establishment in a country from which, during every session of Congress, they are periodically threatened with expulsion. A more than ordinary display of industry would excite the jealousy of the natives; for nothing exasperates a Mexican more than to see Europeans and North Americans growing rich before his face. A flourishing factory, established by a foreigner, would be very likely to be pillaged during the first popular tumult. Instances of the kind have already occurred. The only European manufactury at Mexico, is one founded by M. Duport, a French merchant, for making mantas, a coarse cotton stuff much worn in the country. The looms were made at Patterson, near New York. When the Mexicans had achieved their independence, and were organizing their government, they created a fund for the encouragement of national industry, (banco de avis) and endowed it with an additional duty of 2 1/2 per cent. on foreign importations. In this way, a few hundred thousand piastres were soon procured, which were expended in the vain attempt to establish manufactories. At present, the receipts for this fund are thrown into the abyss of the national deficit, which every year increases in depth, and where they are lost like a drop of water in the sea."

No doubt an efficient government and an industrious people would specify, in a great measure, overcome obstacles to an extensive intercourse with foreigners. But Mexico has neither the one nor the other; and, at present, her trade is confined within the narrowest limits. . . . The roads, too, instead of being improved, have been suffered to fall into a state of almost irreparable decay. In this respect, the evidence of M. Chevalier is decisive. "The splendid road which, during the dominion of the Spaniards, was constructed across deserts and precipices, by the merchants of Vera Cruz, to the summit of the upper country, is a melancholy instance of the carelessness with which the public interests of the country are directed. During the war of independence, this road was cut up in various points; and, down to this day, the enfranchised Mexicans have not replaced a single stone, nor filled up a single trench, nor even cut down one of the trees which, in the absence of any considerable traffic, and under the influence of a tropical sun, are rapidly growing to a magnificent size in the very middle of the road. In the upper country, nothing would be more easy than to open noble means of communication. But even where there are roads, the Mexicans make but little use of them. They carry to a yet more extravagant length the inconceivable predilection of the Spanish race in favor of transporting their goods on the backs of animals. The price of every bulky article is thus increased to an enormous degree. The interior districts are as inaccessible as if they were cut off by an enemy's army, and famine frequently ensues."

Mexico has continued, since the establishment of the federal government, to be little better than a theatre for insurrections. The testimony of M. Chevalier is conclusive with respect to the condition of the country in 1835, and there has been no material improvement in the interval. "I have only been two months in Mexico, and already I have witnessed five attempts at revolution. Insurrections have become quite ordinary occurrences here, and their settled forms been gradually established, from which it is not considered fair to deviate. These seem almost as positive as the laws of backgammon or the recipes of domestic cookery.
The first act of a revolution is called pronunciamiento. An officer of any rank, from a general down to a lieutenant, pronounces himself against the established order, or against an institution which displeases him, or against any thing else. He gets together a detachment, a company, or a regiment, as the case may be, and these generally, without more ado, place themselves at his disposal. The second act is called the grito, or outcry, when two or three articles are drawn up, to state the motive or objects of the insurrection. If the matter is of some importance, the outcry is called a plan. In the third act, the insurgents and the partizans of government are opposed to one another, and mutually examine each other's forces. At the fourth act they come to blows; but, according to the improved system lately introduced, the fighting is carried on in a very distant, moderate, and respectful manner. However, one party is declared victor, and the beaten party dispronounces. The conquerors march to Mexico, and their triumphal entry into the capital constitutes the fifth act of the play; the vanquished meanwhile embark at Vera Cruz or Tampico with all the honors of war."

The laws are alleged to be mild and just, but they are almost powerless; for nothing can be well conceived more appalling than the state of anarchy described by the very intelligent traveller just quoted: "With tranquillity, unfortunately, every thing else is also lost. There is no longer any security. It is a mere chance if the diligence from Mexico to Vera Cruz proceed the whole way without being stopped and robbed. It requires whole regiments to convey the conducta of piastres to Vera Cruz. Travellers who cannot afford to pay for an escort go armed from head to foot, and in little caravans. Here and there, rude crosses, erected by the side of the road, and surrounded by heaps of stones thrown by passers-by, in token of compassion, point out the spot where some wayfarer, and almost always a stranger, has perished by the hand of robbers." The immediate environs of the most populous cities are infested by malefactors, and even in the interior of cities, not excepting the capital, there is no longer any security. There are numerous instances of people being robbed on a Sunday, and at the hour when the greatest number of people are abroad, within a league of Mexico. An English charge d'affaires was lassoed on the Alameda, the public walk, in the middle of the day. In the evening, after sunset, notwithstanding the numerous guards of the night, (serenos,) notwithstanding the videttes of cavalry at every corner of the streets, notwithstanding the law prohibits the riding on horseback through the streets after eight o'clock, in order to prevent the use of the lasse, a man is not safe in Mexico, even in his own house, if in the evening, at eight or nine o'clock, you visit a friend, before the porter will consent to open the enormous gate lined with iron or bronze, there pass as many formalities as if it were a question of letting down the drawbridge of a fortress. Persons on whose words I think I can rely, have assured me that as many as 900 dead bodies are yearly deposited in the morgue of Mexico."

The annual income of the ecclesiastics is valued at about 12,000,000 dollars. The Spanish monks and priests were expelled during the revolution; and their places are filled by creoles, whose morals are at the lowest ebb. Religion has little influence over the white population, and the hold of the church over the Indians, never complete, is now fast lessening; for they are all, more or less, inclined to idolatry.

The necessity of education is recognized by the new constitution, which requires that the priests should teach all persons to read and write; but the regulation has little practical effect. Under the old government, botanical pursuits were much encouraged; chemistry and mineralogy were taught in the school of mines; but the progress of science, literature, and the arts have all been checked by the unsettled state of the country since the revolution. "In fact," says M. Chevalier, "elements.
ry instruction has remained what it was in the time of the Spaniards. The clergy had then the exclusive management of it, and having so still, show but little inclination to enable the poor to read the books published under the regime of a free press. There are even fewer schools than there were, in consequence of the diminution in the number of the clergy. Education of a superior kind is even worse provided for. Under the Spaniards there existed at Mexico a school for the fine arts, richly endowed; but I have been unable to discover its existence now. There is a building called a museum, where I found nothing of interest except a collection of the portraits of the viceroys since the time of Cortez, and a few Azteque manuscripts. Some years ago, the establishment of a polytechnic school was decreed, but the decree has yet to see the commencement of its execution. There is not even a military school, though the attention of government is almost exclusively devoted to the army. There is nothing deserving the name of a school of law or medicine; and it may be well imagined that schools of industry or commerce are wholly unknown."

Texas and California have already separated from the confederacy, and it is probable that their example will be followed by other states. In fact, there can hardly be said to be any thing like regular government. The Centralists are lords of the ascendant to-day; but a successful outcome may dash all their prospects to-morrow. Meanwhile, all the bonds of society are loosened; property has become almost worthless from its insecurity, and life is not safe from assassination and violence. . . . Mexico, as it exists at present, affords one of the most melancholy examples that modern history has presented of an extensive, fertile, and well situated region being reduced, through anarchy and misgovernment, to a state bordering on barbarism.

Such is Mexico. Physically, the paradise of the world; morally, a slander on humanity; politically, a caricature of government. Should not the civilized nations, especially those which by their trade or proximity have suffered from it commercial injury and national insult, reduce it to order? Nations have mutual relations, founded in the highest principles of ethics. When by their vices and degradation they cease to sustain these relations, they are legitimately liable to the interference and discipline of the civilized powers which suffer by their corruptions. The venerable Adams defended the late invasion of China by England. The former had no right to shut itself in from the rest of the nations, refusing to them its commercial resources, its lights of knowledge and international offices: the nations, he contended, had a right to compel her to a better conduct. Shall the finest portion of our continent lie waste, the theatre of unceasing anarchy, its government marring the commerce of its neighbors and violating its treaties with them until no relations with it can any longer command confidence? and must this state of things be quietly endured by those who, by the march of an army, could reduce it to order and henceforward guide it in the career of national advancement and honor?
France has conquered and appropriated Algiers on this principle; on it England and France vindicate their interference on the La Plata. England on the same ground justifies her conquests in India at the rate of a million and a half of population annually, for a hundred years. The Foreign Quarterly Review has proclaimed that "to Great Britain, as to a conquering and civilized caste, the government of all India belongs, not so much from any paltry right derivable from custom, or originating in popular notions, as from that sacred right imparted by providence to intellect and justice, to rule over violence and ignorance." The London Times, which has slandered us so unsparingly in reference to Mexico, speaks as follows of the British policy in India:

"So the fate of the Punjaub is sealed. It is to be taken into subsidiary alliance, and to follow the steps of Hydrabad, and Oude, and Gwalior, and some score other British allies and tributaries, if so they are to be called. Of course the necessity of this movement is undeniable. A state which cannot govern itself must be governed by its neighbors, for the interests of humanity are at stake. Without an efficient government, a territory soon becomes a public nuisance, the harbor of disaffection and outrage, the focus of intrigue, the nursery of revolutions and wars. It is enough that a territory is in so disorderly a condition as to entail on its neighbors the necessity of continual, inconvenient, and expensive precautions."

No philanthropic mind can wish any other disposition to be made of Mexico. McCulloch says, "But it cannot surely be supposed that the anarchy which has led to such deplorable results is to continue for ever. If nothing may be hoped for from within, it is to be wished that foreign interference may rescue this fine country from the barbarism in which it is now involved." A Mexican correspondent of the London Times says, "I cannot help admitting that if Great Britain will not interfere, the general good of this country must be advanced by its annexation to the American Union. . . . The next good to the British occupation of Mexico, is its incorporation with the United States. . . . We must, in short, make up our minds to this result, and happy will it be for the common interests of humanity . . . when it is accomplished."†

Let it not be said that we are recommending the overthrow of a people because of its internal vices. Though this were a just

† Living Age, Jan., 1846, p. 211.
ground of interference, yet we might hesitate, if it were the only one; but it has been proved that on two other and most urgent accounts should this war be prosecuted, and we have presented this additional consideration to show that a high moral propriety strengthens and consecrates the right created by other circumstances.

The invasion and conquest of Mexico we conclude to be right. Is it expedient? We have space remaining for only an outline of our views on this part of the subject.

1. It is objected that the inhabitants are a military people, and the country unhealthy, and that therefore the success of an invasion, if not doubtful, must nevertheless be extremely difficult. The whole history of the country disproves the first assertion. Though Mexico is constantly in a state of civil war, few important battles are fought, as we have seen in M. Chevalier’s account of her revolutions, and whenever its people have come into conflict with Anglo-Saxon arms they have signally failed. The Hon. Waddy Thompson (“Recollections of Mexico”) speaks as follows of them:

The Mexican army, and more particularly their cavalry, may do very well to fight each other, but in any conflict with our own or European troops, it would not be a battle but a massacre. The American corps, from the superior size of their horses, would cover twice as much ground, and the obstruction offered by the Mexicans on their small and scrawny ponies would scarcely cause their horses to stumble in riding over them; so say nothing of the greater inequality of the men themselves, five to one at least in individual combats, and more than twice that in battle. The infantry would be found even more impotent. I do not think that the Mexican men have much more physical strength than our women. They are generally of diminutive stature, wholly unaccustomed to labor or exercise of any sort, and as a conclusive proof of their inferiority to our own Indians, I will mention the fact that frequent incursions are made far into the interior of Mexico by marauding bands of Camanches, who levy black mail to an enormous extent upon the northern provinces of Mexico. It is not unusual for bands of a hundred Camanches thus to penetrate several hundred miles into Mexico; there are not less than five thousand Mexicans at this moment slaves of the Camanches. The soldiers of the Mexican army are generally collected by sending out recruiting detachments into the mountains, where they hunt the Indians in their dens and caverns, and bring them in chains to Mexico; there is scarcely a day that droves of these miserable and more than half naked wretches are not seen thus chained together and marching through the streets to the barracks, where they are secured and then dressed in a uniform made of linen cloth or of serge, and are occasionally drilled—which drilling consists mainly in teaching them to march in column through the streets. There is not one in ten of these soldiers who has ever seen a gun, nor one in a hundred who has ever fired one before he enters the barracks. Their arms, too, are generally worthless English muskets which have been condemned and thrown aside, and are purchased for almost nothing and sold to the Mexican government. Their powder, too, is equally bad; in
the last battle between Santa Anna and Bustame, which lasted the whole day, not one cannon ball in a thousand reached the enemy—they generally fell about half-way between the opposing armies. With the disadvantages to which I have adverted, the reader will not be surprised that in all the conflicts with our people, in which they have been more or less engaged for the last thirty years, they have always been defeated.

In the battle at Bexar where General Cos surrendered to Colonel Milam, there were only two hundred and nineteen Texans engaged, and they had no artillery but one six pounder. The Mexican force was fourteen hundred men, with twenty-two pieces of artillery. The Mexicans were in a stone building with walls three or four feet thick, and were protected besides by an outside stone-wall two feet high and six feet thick. The attack was made about midnight. At daylight, General Cos surrendered and gave up his twenty-two pieces of artillery.

The battle of Mier was fought under precisely equal circumstances, so far as defences were concerned—the troops on both sides firing from the flat roofs of the houses. There were two hundred and seventy Texans engaged against twenty-six hundred Mexicans. The battle lasted eighteen hours, and the result was less than thirty Texans killed and wounded, and from five to seven hundred Mexicans. The Mexicans were about to retire and had their horses saddled for that purpose, when the Texans were most unfortunately induced to surrender—their ammunition being nearly exhausted, and hearing that a large reinforcement of the Mexican army was near at hand. When the prisoners who were taken at Mier, rose upon their guard on the march to Mexico, there were less than two hundred Texans, and the Mexican guard consisted of two hundred infantry and one hundred cavalry. The Texans had of course no arms of any sort, and the Mexicans anticipated the attack. Yet in fifteen minutes the Mexicans were defeated. If the main body of the Texans had not returned to Texas and had penetrated further into Mexico, no one can fix a limit to their triumphs.

In respect to the climate, it may be affirmed that, excepting the tierras calientes, or hot lands on the coast, it is remarkable for its healthfulness. Even at Matamoras, the yellow fever has been known but two or three times, and then after extraordinary inundations. Most of the interior of Mexico is, from its elevation, as healthy as Pennsylvania or Ohio.

2. It is objected that if we acquire the country it will be difficult to keep it, because of the insurrectionary character of its people. To this it may be replied, that its anarchy is owing more to military chiefs, who can be displaced by conquest, than to the disposition of the people. The better classes of the population would welcome any power which could afford them the hope of security and peace. Several of the provinces, tired of the conflicts of their generals, have revolted, for the purpose of obtaining a steadier government, and are disposed to favor us. This is well known to be the case with California. Many of our citizens are already there. A letter in the public prints, dated Mazatlan, 10th March, 1846, says:
There is a strong disposition manifested on the part of the Northern departments to separate themselves from the South, by a straight line from San Blas, on the Pacific, to the Rio Panuco, which empties into the Gulf at Tampico. There is also a party in favor of following the example of Texas; this is indeed much the most respectable of either, being composed of rich proprietors and landholders. From the information received by the Juniata from Upper California, which arrived here a few days since, it appears that the Assemblies of that Department at its next session intended to declare itself independent of Mexico. The Assemblies will have to be convoked by the Governor in April.

The last arrival from Yucatan brings the gratifying intelligence that the people of Southern Mexico, in imitation of the patriotic example of Yucatan, were concentrating their efforts, in unison with the Congress of Yucatan, then in session, for a grand revolutionary movement against the military despots of the centre. The Congress of Yucatan had refused to entertain any propositions from Paredes, and a courier, whom he had sent to Merida, to request only three hundred troops to fight against the United States, was refused, and narrowly escaped with his life. Let our forces once be thoroughly in the country, and a strong native party will bid them welcome.

3. It is objected that slavery will be extended by the conquest of Mexico. The writer will not dissemble that it is in view of this perilous evil of our country that he desires the annexation of Mexico. He has before said that it was on the ground of slavery alone that the annexation of Texas was inexpedient. That country is large and mostly unoccupied; it presents therefore an unobstructed field for slavery. But Mexico, with its eight or nine millions of people, many of them emancipated slaves, all of them but little distinguishable in color from the negro, and too poor to be independent of labor, could form a series of States of free laboring men which would stand an impassable barrier to the extension of slavery southward. Slavery cannot exist amidst a vast mass of free laborers. But if not annexed, the declension of Mexico must go on, the slavery of Texas will gradually encroach upon the northern Mexican provinces, and its course be indefinite. Let us be in haste then to reclaim Mexico from her degradation; let us form her into States, giving her, as we must, to a suitable extent, the right of suffrage and representation in our government, and we shall thus save the fairest section of our continent from the curse of sla-
very. We believe this view of the question will be acceptable to southern as well as northern citizens; the former have always declared that they consider slavery a lamentable evil, imposed upon them in a former age, as yet irremediable in its present sphere, but not to be unnecessarily extended.

4. It is affirmed that by an extension of our territory we shall break into pieces. The remark is a common one, perhaps it has a superficial plausibility, but it is denied both by reason and history. The consciousness of self-responsibility is strong in great States; the interests involved in their changes are so vast as to create a profound conviction of the necessity of stability and security. Their rulers and citizens know that their eruption must be with earthquake ruin. Slight questions, instead of disturbing them, as in minor governments, are necessarily merged and lost in grander interests. How do actual facts speak on this subject? What governments are most endangered by discord, the large ones of Brazil and the United States, or the smaller communities of Mexico and South America? And how is it in the old world? The great powers are the permanent powers. Russia, Austria, France, England, suffer far less discord and hazard than the smaller and ever-quarreling states of Portugal, Spain, Italy, Belgium and Holland. England has stood firmly, during several late years, under internal shocks which would have shattered to fragments a minor power. Internal commotions indeed occur in large states, but not more than in small ones. Rome in her infancy had as many of them as in her maturity. Large nations, by their greater extent and multiplicity of functions, afford more room for the occupation of leading and ambitious minds, which, within narrower limits, would ruin the state in plots against each other. The ancient empires of the east were destroyed more frequently by invasion than by internal causes. China still stands, a venerable example of stability, though the largest empire of the world. Rome did not finally fall by her greatness, but by invasion. By extending herself among the barbarians of the North, she saved herself for many years. Had she extended her eagles farther, she might have saved herself longer. The hordes who at last overthrew her, lay at first beyond the Caspian. She paused at that sea; had she passed it, and subdued and civilized
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its tribes, as she had those of central Europe, they would never have overrun the fields of Greece, Italy and Spain. Rome failed in not extending her dominion far enough.

When it is remembered what additional securities we have in modern times, by the ties of commerce, the art of printing, an enlightened religion, popular education, internal communications, &c., the danger is infinitely lessened. Let us not fear our own greatness; the hand of a great destiny beckons us onward. Our march is now in a line from the Mexican gulf to Canada, at the rate of seventeen miles annually upon the falling forests of the West. Cities, civilization, religion, mark our progress. It is the ordination of God that we go forward. Let us be conscious of our mission, and manfully achieve it.

5. It is apprehended that we may involve ourselves in war with Europe, especially with England and France. We have not here room to discuss fully a subject which would be seriously important if it were probable. Its probability however is denied. Intimations were indeed made about the "balance of power," in reference to the annexation of Texas, but when they were found to be unheeded, and the deed was done, they ceased. The old world, notwithstanding its newspaper bluster, cares little about the growth of the American powers. England alone has ground, in her maritime interests, for apprehension, but not a very serious one, as she is well aware. It is obviously for the interests of Europe, as well as America, that Mexico should be reduced to order, and her vast commercial resources opened to the world. Of her public debt of 100 millions, 75 millions are owing to foreigners — much of it to England. Mexico can never pay it in her disorganized condition. Her mines, not one-fiftieth of which are now wrought, produce 24 millions annually; under the management of a better race, they could afford enough to pay her debts, and enrich the country at no distant period. Her English creditors hold lands by mortgage to the amount of 125 millions of acres. These are scarcely available now, but under the government of the United States they would soon be in demand by settlers. The resources of Mexico are abundantly adequate to her liabilities, but they are now latent. All foreigners concerned in these liabilities would be benefitted by their development under a
better government. We cannot presume that with such obvious considerations before them, the governments of England and France will oppose a measure so salutary, for the sake of an irrelevant policy. They have vast commercial interests involved in their relations with us. A rupture must ruin these. Will the sagacious premiers of England and France incur such a disaster for the privilege of intermeddling with a transatlantic quarrel?

If these powers can sacrifice the obvious interests of humanity for a principle of policy never yet recognized in our hemisphere, it is evident that our harmony with them is at an end, and though we might avoid the present ground of quarrel, others must inevitably occur in our future relations. It is time for us to ascertain fully and finally the fact. The Mexican question will be but the beginning; the difficulty will beset us at every step of the future, and is there a citizen of the republic degenerate enough to wish his country to cower before the menace? Without disguising its serious importance, we should nevertheless feel that every consideration of national pride, national hope, and national virtue, summons us to proceed directly onward in our appropriate career, and when the threatened obstacle appears, meet it coolly and intrepidly.

If the growth of our country is a reason for the alarm and interference of European powers, they have already sufficient grounds for hostility; the danger to them from this cause can scarcely be increased. It is the opinion of many that under any circumstances a war with England at least will, sooner or later, be unavoidable. We have but slight fears of it, but should it come, the present contest with Mexico must be considered highly opportune. It will prepare our forces for such an exigency. They cannot fail of success on their present fields, and they will meet the more formidable foe with the discipline of actual service, and the pride and energy of conquerors.

6. The advantages to our commercial and monetary interests which would result from the conquest of Mexico can scarcely be estimated. We but allude to them in passing. Our manufacturers would find a vast and permanent market. Our commerce with that part of the continent now almost annihilated, would not only be restored, but increased a hundred fold. Our commerce in the Pa-
specific, now more than 50 millions in value, without a single port for the refuge of our ships, would be immeasurably accommodated and secured. The monetary circulation of Europe would be put to a great extent under our control, and by the proper use of the Mexican mines, the specie currency of the whole world would be relieved and facilitated. The expense of the war would be a small item compared with these manifold advantages.

7. The conquest and right government of Mexico would be sanctioned by high considerations of philanthropy, as well as patriotism. Who can question whether the extension of our political institutions, our freedom of religion, our educational plans, and our industrial enterprise over that country, would be a blessing to its depressed people? It is in view of this consideration, together with its bearing on slavery, that the subject most impressively commends itself to our interest. The Mexican correspondent of the London Times, already quoted, says, under date of Sept. 27, 1845:

In the opinion of many, the existence of the nation of Mexico, is hastening to its termination; and, as far as I can see, no great man appears who is equal to the regeneration of the Republic. The government is powerless, even in the capital; the departments barely hold on to the central state; there is no population to till the finest soil in the world; and riches, above and below ground, remain unexplored, for want of intelligence and hands to work them. If England will not interfere, the doom of Mexico is sealed, and in the course of a few years it must be incorporated with the United States. The government and people of the United States entertain no doubt on this subject. They say that they do not interfere in the affairs of Europe, and that they are determined no European power shall interfere with them in the affairs of the new world. By aggression, annexation, or conquest, they are resolved on enticing all Mexico, down to the Isthmus, within the Union; and, come what may, that end must sooner or later be accomplished. I am fully aware of the danger to which the monetary circulation of Europe will be exposed, when the silver districts of Mexico are under the control of the American congress, and of the impiudence of our permitting a naval power, like that of the United States, to become the richest nation in the world; but I cannot help admitting, at the same time, that if Great Britain will not interfere, the general good of humanity must be advanced by the annexation of this country to the American Union. The tide of emigration will, instead of flowing directly, take the current of the United States, and even millions of English, Scotch and Irish emigrants can pass through the American ports as settlers in this land of milk and honey. Every European production can be raised; and I may say there is room for all the emigration that can be poured in a quarter of a century from the British Isles. The next good to the British occupation of Mexico, is its incorporation with the United States. We shall find, when it takes place, immediate employment of our poor, a consumption of British manufactures spread over this great continent, the diffusion of the English language and English feelings over an almost boundless territory. We
must, in short, make up our minds to this result, and happy will it be for the common interests of humanity—unless Great Britain should take the matter directly into her own hands, alarmed at the growing power of the United States, and their dominion over the mining districts from which our monetary circulation is furnished—when it is accomplished.

A sensible writer observes: "Mexico alone, peopled as densely as Massachusetts, would contain a population of one hundred and thirty-two millions; instead of which it has but seven! Central America, at the same ratio, capable of containing a population of twenty millions, in fact contains but two! A country which might sustain a population of one hundred and fifty millions, equal to half of the Chinese empire, sustains only nine! God did not lift up these mountains, and spread out these valleys, and create that luxuriant soil, and plant those groves of citrons and oranges, and every delicious fruit, and kindle up the skies, and pour out the breath of everlasting summer over the whole, that these miserable drones might merely vegetate, tyrannize, and fight, while others of his children are condemned to subsist upon train oil and seals, and live in houses excavated in piles of snow, or constructed of blocks of ice, amid the eternal night and frost of the poles. The world was made to be enjoyed, not possessed; to be cultivated, not left a wilderness and a waste; to be inhabited by civilized, intelligent and religious men, not by savages and wild beasts. The mission of the Anglo-Saxons is to disenthrall, civilize, elevate, and regenerate the world; that of our countrymen, no degenerate plant of the same vine, to perform all these offices for the population of North America from ocean to ocean and the isthmus to the pole—a work as glorious as great, and sure to be done."

These are but a few of the considerations which would justify the conquest of Mexico. Texas rightfully obtained her independence; we rightfully received her; the Rio Grande is her rightful boundary; the invasion of that boundary by Mexico affords a rightful ground of war; her debts and insults to us are an independent and equally rightful cause for it; the impossibility of our indemnification and security renders it rightful to appropriate her territory; her disorganization, and the advantages of her conquest to the world add

* Living Age, No. 99.
force to these reasons. Her conquest would be practicable; it would be practicable to control her; her annexation would be a barrier to slavery; it would not endanger the permanency of our Union; it would not probably endanger our relations with Europe, and if it should, we ought not to falter. It would vastly augment our manufactures and commerce, and would be a blessing to the world. Let us then read well the indications of providence; let us march without delay. Let us proclaim in the capital of the Montezumas at once the supremacy of our arms and of our institutions.
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