

ERRATA.—In the Royal Order inserted in our exterior N^{o.} for "Madrid, 1845," read, Madrid, 1825.

THE SOUTHERN STATES,

CUBA AND THE JOURNAL OF COMMERCE.

(End of the article commenced in No. 45.)

Although reasons bringing home full conviction ought to satisfy all, yet in order to forestall every motive for cavilling and malicious interpretations of what we have asserted, on account of the circumstance of our being Americans, born in Cuba, we prefer in the subject matter under discussion, adducing arguments and opinions used by others, confounding ourselves with some slight observations, that may necessarily be thrown in for a better understanding of the same by the readers, and therefore continue following the thread of the article of the correspondent of the *Journal of Commerce*, "Mr. A. S."

With this view we will here below insert one of the few articles which throw most light on the question of the annexation of Cuba to these United States, its political and mercantile importance, and the consequences to arise in that two-fold aspect of the question for the whole of this American Union, and to the States of the South and South-west in particular. And in introducing that interesting composition, we beg to be permitted to ask its enlightened author, to favor the public with a continuation of his exact and judicious observations, as he in that article offers to do.

In order not to fatigue the reader, we will hastily glide over some peculiarities in the article of "Mr. A. S." as not presenting much of interest, such as venturing upon the belief, "that the papers of the South do not occupy themselves with the question of annexation," while almost in the same breath, he admits having neglected reading newspapers for the last 3 months; [It is some three months since I left my home in Texas, during which time I have seen the Southern newspapers only occasionally. They are, I believe, silent on the annexation of Cuba]; and further, when he attempts determining and fashioning public opinion in the States of the South, from some conversations he had on the subject with some gentlemen coming from those states, in the Astor-house here; [But so far, as I have conversed with Southern gentlemen—Astor-house—I find them very generally opposed to the measure.] The mere mention of this will suffice, and we turn our attention to the points of higher importance.

"That Cuba being slave-holding," says "Mr. A. S." would add to the political strength of the South, is less than the dust of the balance."

To show that to be an error, it will be sufficient for us to throw ourselves on views and opinions, which have been pronounced by statesmen of all parties from John Q. Adams down to our own time, in official documents as well as in speeches delivered in Congress, or promulgated by the public press; but here we come opportunely, as if called for, the opinion of the editors of the *Times of London*, propounded in that public print on an occasion, when speaking of the importance of the Island of Cuba in the words following: "Commanding [Cuba] the entrance to the Gulf of Mexico, and possessing one of the noblest harbors in the world, Cuba crowns by her political importance, the commercial advantages of a rich soil, a varied and teeming productiveness, and a climate which enjoys the genial warmth, but escapes the fiercer heats of the tropics. The occupation of such an island must give strength and wealth to any nation." "The possession of it by Great Britain would crush slavery in the slave-trade immediately in the Western coast. In the hands of the American republic, it would aggravate the causes of dissension between the abolitionists and their opponents, and by the menace of a rupture, assure a compromise in favor of the slaves."

Will "Mr. A. S." deny these truths? We wait for an answer from the *Journal of Commerce*. We besides direct the attention of both to that, which the author of the article to which we refer above, has to say on the subject, and which they will find here below.

"Mr. A. S." further on says again: "the addition of a couple of senators, and a few representatives will not materially strengthen us. If it seem to be given at first, it will prove in the end utter weakness." We may in this point be in error, but we do seriously believe quite the contrary will be the result. In the first place, that few men versed in the politics of this country, and at all acquainted with the interests of the South will think so of "Mr. A. S." The equilibrium of representation in the Senate and House is a

question of vital importance for the States of the South, as between them and those of the North. The latter would suffer but passing prejudice, if at all, in their interests, if in Congress really existed a majority in favor of the slave states; and in the whole such a prejudicial position would be no more than momentary. For the former could never think of establishing laws affecting the interests of the latter for three generations, nor cause a relaxation of strength in the ties of the Union, as might be the case if the non-slave-holding states were to be in a decided majority. Do we not see opposition manifesting itself in the thinking-men of the South against an annexation of Canada, and against the admission of California as a state into the Union for no other reason, and on no other ground, than because the realization of either would augment the preponderance of the North by a couple of senators, and some representatives?

Further we observe the embarrassment of the South, arising from their ill sources of obtaining a greater working force in the representation, and how much alarm is spreading among its most illustrious defenders contemplating what immense preponderance the North is wielding, threatening the present and future interests of the Southern States, and all this, notwithstanding, that during the last presidential periods, the presidency has always been in the keeping of a man from the slave-holding states, and is so at present. This equilibrium of representation, we repeat it once more, is of vital importance to the States of the South, and at the same time to the whole Union. If this equipose be destroyed, and the balance of power incline yet more decidedly towards the North, the evil will become endurable, at least in the state the slave-question is at present, and the South will be degraded into little more than a mere colony of the North, or it will have to recede from the Union, if they can do so.

Further on "Mr. A. S." assures us, "annexation would furnish us a new occasion for abolition and anti-slavery excitements." We on the contrary believe, that quite a different effect has to be the natural result, if, as we cannot doubt, the abolition party are moved on by desires only for the good of humanity; for no other thing would more powerfully contribute to realizing so desirable an object, as the annexation of Cuba, which, without in the least aggravating the present evils, accompanying the condition of slave-lands, and without increasing the present number of slaves by one individual, would be the surest means for raising an effectual barrier against the further augmentation of the victims of that horrible trade, if not in the whole world, at least in the Island of Cuba, as under the laws of the United States, it could not receive a single slave from Africa.

Let us not forget what the editor of the *Times* above recited has to say in support of this point, who, although allowing that annexation might cause some more exasperation among the abolitionist-party, is yet convinced that the ultimate result will be a satisfactory compromise, the extinction of the last vestiges of the slave-trade and favorable reforms in the social condition of slavery as it exists, which, without doubt is desired, and will be applauded by all parties.

Subsequently "Mr. A. S." says: "But I return to the simple question of the annexation of Cuba. It would turn out to the advantage of the Greeks." We cannot help presuming, that the correspondent of the *Journal of Commerce*, convinced the unfortunate idea under the influence of a disordered digestion, which sending up the vapors of a fatigued stomach, could not but offuscate his powers of thinking clearly. Cuba, indeed, which incorporated in the Union, would turn the Gulf of Mexico into an inland sea, that leaving the coasts of the States of the great West, serves as a reservoir and high road for all the productions of almost the whole territory, comprised between the two great oceans, the Pacific and the Atlantic. Cuba, which exposed to fall into the claws of Great Britain, which emancipating the slaves there, would nearly touch the great goal of its ambition of establishing an African empire there, for the purpose of giving new life to her colonies in the two Indies, and a stunning death-blow to her rivals of Cuba, Brazil and Port Rico—and which would raise to the horizon of the South a black cloud, menacing calamity and annihilation. Cuba, which besides being the key of the Gulf of Mexico, may just as correctly be considered, that also of the States of the South-west, or speak more properly the great market of the Americas, and which would put into the hands of the English, a Gibraltar a thousand times more important and precious than that arid rock in the South of Europe, by its numerous and excellent harbors, capable safely to shelter the fleets of all nations all united together, by the increasing luxury, and its soil its boundless productiveness of every kind to reproduce, but might be necessary for the sup-

ply of her navy, and finally by its battery, which would almost sweep the coasts of this union. Cuba, which in the day of the great struggle that threatens to arise out of the conflicting interests of the North and South, will be magnified through the exaltation of the abolitionists, would be the sheet anchor of the slave-holding states. Cuba with all this political, military, and mercantile importance, Cuba, indeed, says "Mr. A. S." giving vent to his bad humors, and perpetrating at the same time, an allusion to the classic fable of Demetrius—"that same Cuba like the present of the Greeks, would be fatal to the States of the South." But "Mr. A. S." ought to have taken into consideration, that the States of the South will not burn like Hercules, though they accept of the present; for they will not permit her to be metamorphosed into Bellerophon, or even into an English Nessus-like might procure the fatal concoction for the poisoning of that nation. But enough of classic mythology! We leave "Mr. A. S." in his spleen, and to the people of the States of the South we leave the care of deciding on this vitally interesting question, concluding our article with what we stated in the beginning of it in No. 45, and which was, that "liberty to Cuba is the principal object which we consecrate our efforts, and though, if we conceive our country free of the yoke of Spain, the best for her would be to annex herself to the American Union, and the latter would gain by annexation, as much as the former; nevertheless, we shall not obstinately insist on combining the two aims together at once. We will not content with our freedom, which with the aid of the American people, we have to conquer in spite of the counter-machinations of the whole world—and as for the rest, we will consider that afterwards!"

Cuba and her Destiny.

"Cuba has the power as well as the will and wisdom, to be free. She cannot be kept forever in bonds, endowed as she is with a population of 1,200,000; with a revenue of twenty millions; with the intercourse and light attending forty five millions, of outward and inward trade; with a territory equal to our noblest States; with a soil teeming with the choicest productions; with her forests of the most precious woods; with her magnificent and commanding harbors; with her unmatched position as the wrarder of the Mexican Gulf, and the guardian of the communication with the Pacific. Cuba the peerless, Cuba the desired, Cuba the Queen of the American islands, will not consent to remain always a manacled slave to her third lord; when her chains are to break, the echo will be felt, whether we choose or not, on our interests. The United States can no more say, "Cuba is ought to us," than Cuba can detach herself from her anchorage in the portals of our American sea or her sentinels over against the entrance of the thousand armed Mississippi."

When the inevitable day arrives in which the key of the Gulf falls from the hand of its European master, it must take one of these three positions; and either of them will involve great considerations for this republic:—

1. Cuba, by itself or with Porto Rico, may sustain an independent attitude.

2. United to St. Domingo and other islands under the crown of England, she may head a "Republic of the Antilles," subject to a preponderant negro population, and obedient to the British policy of creating a colored empire in the lap of the twin continent of America.

3. Cuba annexed to this Confederation may make another pillar in our temple of Union, and another balance wheel to the Confederation.

The fate of Cuba, with her million souls and boundless heretofore, may be submitted to the verdict of our people before 1850 has run its last sands, and a just, wise and magnanimous nation would not willingly meet unprepared this momentous question.

Calmly, soberly, and dispassionately, like true and loving children of the Union, reverencing and guarding in their hearts our mighty nursing mother; like republicans and like Christians, ready to admit and perform our whole duty to man, let us candidly examine our future relations with Cuba.

It is more than idle to build upon the conversion of the *status quo*, for even those who affect to stanch it must see that it cannot be maintained amid the reigning powers and crushing throes with which it is entangled, and whenever or however the change comes, it must result in *Cuba annexed* or *Cuba independent*.

The comparative value to the Union of Cuba as a part of ourselves, or Cuba subject to foreign if not hostile influences, has a threshold bearing on our interests, as a nation, in the face of other nations—and as a nation in relation with the other

parts of the earth. In weighing, as we ought, each separate consideration by its own merits, it is desirable to avoid perplexing theories, and bring each phase of the subject to the test of solid facts and indisputable arithmetic.

WILL THE ANNEXATION OF CUBA BENEFIT THE DOMESTIC INTERESTS OF THE UNION?

Cuba seems to be the finger of a kindly Providence, between the Atlantic and the Mexican seas at the crossing point of all the great lines of our immense coasting trade, to serve as the centre of exchange for a domestic commerce as extensive as our territory, and as free as our institutions. It is only after a careful study of the incredible extent and variety of the products of thirty States, with all their grades of climate, and in the whole circumference of their natural and manufactured wealth, and then only with the map of North America distinctly before the eye, that the importance of Cuba as a point of reception and distinction can be fairly understood. If her unmatched harbors were not locked up by foreign jealousies, and our ships could but find themselves always at home for shelter, water, and refreshment, at this commodious halting place, it would be worth a round purchase sum to our traders, independent of the safe keeping of the Gulf, and the command of her precious staples.

From her central throne she sees our long line of coast break away in diverse directions, and in which must yet intercommunicate past her doors to come to value. To the northward she glances along the two thousand miles of seaboard and deep harbors of the "Old Thirteen," all round toward her to receive her sugar and coffee, and supply her with bread and clothing, even though under the limits and disadvantages of European restrictions.

Toward the West, beginning with Florida, which is almost within our grasp, another two thousand miles of bay and inlet, bordering the states on the Mississippi and Gulf of Mexico, those magnificent later acquisitions which have doubled the wealth, power, domain of the Union, and whose cotton bales have been more efficacious teachers of decorum to manufacturing Europe, than cannon balls. Opposite, she looks up the arteries of the mighty king of rivers, who embraces in his very arms an imperial family of sovereignties, before he comes with the tributaries of many climates to seek a reserver for his ten thousand miles of steam navigation.

No one state of the Union is so accessible to all the others as Cuba. Neither does any State command, like her, every direct avenue to our territories on the Pacific. She stands almost midway between the line of transit between the Eastern cities and California, whether we go by the Isthmus of Panama, by lake Nicaragua, by the near, but strangely neglected, Isthmus of Cortez, or by the shortest overland route on our own soil, via Corpus Christi and the Paso del Norte. It is the invaluable resting place and point of interchange for all our commerce to the Gulf coast, to the West India Islands, to the various isthmus routes, and to South America. Under all the vexations and expenses of a foreign and unfriendly system, our merchants can so badly dispense with Cuba for a place of rest, refreshment, and exchange, that they submit in silence to many illegal exactions, and conceal from the American public many important facts to our flag in the cases of the Hecla and Clidge Harold—rather than forego access to the port of Havana. If Cuba was fully and freely our own we would as soon think of casting New York out of our calculations of commercial wealth, as this splendid and necessary mart of all our coasts. As an outpost, vital to American trade and defence, and as a centre of transit and exchange, Cuba must grow in importance to the whole family of the Confederation, in even measure with the growth of the states on the Pacific, and the rising tide of Oriental business which our free and fortunate stars are about to lead from Asia across the Isthmus. She lies exactly in the track of the golden current, and none of the States are, like her, in a position to watch and defend every inlet and outlet.

In the circle of production, essential to a home supply, always sure, and independent of foreign interference, Cuba can fill noble the remaining gap, with her coffee, cocoa and tropical fruits. In this, too, she would serve all her sisters of the Union, for she would sell to every one and buy of every one, which is not true of the special product of any other State. She would also add as much as the Union really needs of sugar lands and would make that henceforth a strong and distinct feature in the national balance of interests.

A new sectional interest always implies another mediator in the councils of the Confederation—proved truth in favor of the permanent, equilibrium of the public which the opponents of annexation

