SPEECH OF

HON. THOMAS H. BENTON,

ON THE THREE MILLION BILL.

Mr. President: The senator from South Carolina [Mr. Calhoun] has boldly made the issue as to the authorship of this war, and as boldly thrown the blame of it upon the present administration. On the contrary, I believe himself to be the author of it, and will give a part of my reasons for believing so. In saying this, I do not consider the march to the Rio Grande to have been the cause of the war, any more than I consider the British march upon Concord and Lexington to have been the cause of the American revolution, or the crossing of the Rubicon by Cæsar to have been the cause of the civil war in Rome. In all these cases, I consider the causes of war as pre-existing and the marches as only the effect of these causes. I consider the march upon the Rio Grande as being unfortunate, and certainly should have advised against it if I had been consulted, and that without the least fear of diminishing my influence in the settlement of the Oregon question. My opinion of Mr. Polk—and experience in that very Oregon case has confirmed it—did not authorize me to conjecture that any one would lose influence with him by giving him honest opinions; so I would have advised against the march to the Rio Grande if I had been consulted. Nor do I see how any opinion adverse to the President's was to have the effect of lessening his influence in the settlement of the Oregon question. That question was settled by us, not the President. Half the democratic senators went contrary to the President's opinion, and none of them lost influence with him on that account; and so I can see no possible connexion between the facts of the case and the senator's reason for not interfering to save his country from the war which, he says, he saw. His reason is to me unintelligible, incomprehensible, unconnectible with the facts of the case. But the march on the Rio Grande was not the cause of the war; but the causes of this event, like the causes of our own revolutionary war, were in progress long before hostilities broke out. The causes of this Mexican war were long anterior to this march; and, in fact, every circumstance of war then existed, except the actual collision of arms. Diplomatic intercourse had ceased: commerce was destroyed: fleets and armies confronted each other: treaties were declared to be broken: the contingency had occurred in which Mexico had denounced the existence of war: the incorporation of Texas, with a Mexican war on her hands, had produced, in legal contemplation, the *status belli* between the two countries: and all this had occurred before the march upon the Rio Grande, and before the commencement of this administration, and had produced a state of things which it was impossible to continue, and which could only receive their solution from arms or negotiation. The march to the Rio Grande brought on the collision of arms; but, so far from being the cause of the war, it was itself the effect of these causes. The senator from South Carolina is the author of those causes, and therefore the author of this war; and this I propose to show, at present, by evidence drawn from himself—from his public official acts—leaving all the evidence derived from other sources, from private and unofficial acts, for future production, if deemed necessary.

The senator from South Carolina, in his effort to throw the blame of the war upon the President, goes no farther back in his search for causes than to this march upon the Rio Grande: upon the same principle, if he wrote a history of the American revolution, he would begin at the march upon Lexington and Concord, leaving out of view the ten years work of Lord North's administration. No, the march upon the Rio Grande was not the cause of the war: had it not been for pre-existing causes, the arrival of the American army on the Mexican frontier would have been saluted with military courtesy, according to the usage of all civilized nations, and with none so much as with the Spaniards. Complimentary visits, dinners, and fandangos, balls—not cannon balls—would have been the salutation. The causes of the war are long anterior; and I begin with the beginning, and show the senator from South Carolina an actor from the first. In doing this, I am acting in defence of the country, for the President represents the country. The senator from South Carolina charges the war upon the President: the whole opposition follow him: the bill under discussion is forgotten; crimination of the President is now the object; and, in that crimination, the country is injured by being made to appear the aggressor in the war. This is my justification for defending the President, and showing the truth that the senator, in his manner of acquiring Texas, is the true cause of the war.

The cession of Texas to Spain in 1819 is the beginning point in the chain of causes which have led to this war; for unless the country had been ceded away, there could have been no quarrel with any power in getting it back. For a long time the negotiator of that treaty of cession (Mr. J. Q. Adams) bore all the blame of the loss of Texas; and his motives for giving it away were set down to hostility to the south and west, and a desire to clip the wings of the slaveholding States. At last the truth of history has vindicated itself, and has shown who was the true author of that mischief to the south and west. Mr. Adams has made a public declaration, which no one controverts, that that cession was made in conformity to the decision of Mr. Monroe's cabinet, a majority of which was slaveholding, and among them the present senator of South Carolina, and now the only survivor of that majority. He does not contradict the statement of Mr. Adams: he, therefore, stands admitted the co-author of that mischief to the south and west which the cession of Texas involved, and to escape from which it became necessary, in the opinion of the senator from South Carolina, to get back Texas at the expense of war with Mexico. This conduct of the senator in giving away Texas when we had her, and then making war to get her back, is an enigma which he has never yet condescended to explain, and which, un il explained, leaves him in a state of self contradiction, which, whether it impairs his own confidence in himself or not, must have the effect of destroying the confidence of others in him, and wholly disqualifies him for the office of champion of the slaveholding States. It was the heaviest blow they had ever received, and put an end, in conjunction with the Missouri compromise, and the permanent location of the Indians west of the Mississippi, to their future growth or extension as slave States. The compromise, which was then in full progress, and established at the next session of Congress, cut off the slave States from all territory north and west of Missouri, and south of 36½ degrees of north latitude; the treaty of 1819 ceded nearly all south of that degree, comprising not only all Texas, but a larger part of the valley of the Mississippi on the Red river and the Arkansas, to a foreign power, and brought a non-slaveholding empire to the confines of Louisiana and Arkansas: the permanent appropriation of the rest of the territory for the abode of civilized Indians swept the little slaveholding territory west of the Arkansas, and lying between the compromise line and the cession line; and left the slave States without one inch of ground for their future growth. Nothing was left. Even the then Territory of Arkansas was encroached upon. A breadth of forty miles wide, and three hundred long was cut off from her, and given to the Cherokees; and there was not as much slave territory left west of the Mississippi as a dove could have rested the sole of her foot upon. It was not merely a curtailment, but a total extinction of slaveholding territory; and done at a time when the Missouri controversy was raging, and every effort made by northern abolitionists to stop the growth of slave States. The senator from South Carolina, in his support of the cession of Texas, and ceded a part of the valley of the Mississippi, was then the most efficient ally of the restrictionists at that time, and deprives him of the right of setting up as the champion of the slave States now. I denounced the sacrifice of Texas then, believing Mr. Adams to have been the author of it: I denounce it now, knowing the senator from South Carolina to be its author: and for this—his flagrant recreancy to the slave interest in their hour of utmost peril—I hold him disqualified for the office of champion of the fourteen slave States, and shall certainly require him to keep out of Missouri, and to confine himself to his own bailwick.

I come now to the direct proofs of the senator's authorship of the war; and begin with the year 1836, and with the month of May of that year, and with the 27th day of that month, and with the first rumors of the victory of San Jacinto. The Congress of the United States was then in session: the senator from South Carolina was then a member of this body; and, without even waiting for the official confirmation of that great event, he proposed at once the immediate recognition of the independence of Texas, and her immediate admission into the Union. He put the two propositions together—recognition and admission: and allowed us no further time for the double vote than the few days which were to intervene before the official intelligence of the victory should arrive. Here are some extracts from his speech on that occasion, and which verify what I say, and show that he was then ready to plunge the country into the Texan war with Mexico, without the slightest regard to its treaties, its commerce, its duties, or its character:

"Mr. Calhoun was of opinion that it would add more strength to the cause of Texas to wait for a few days until they received official confirmation of the victory and capture of Santa Anna, in order to obtain a more unanimous vote in favor of the recognition of Texas. * * * He had made up his mind not only to recognise the independence of Texas, but for her admission into the Union; and if the Texans managed their affairs prudently, they would soon be called upon to decide that question. There were powerful reasons why Texas should be a part of this Union. The southern states owning a slave population, were deeply interested in preventing that country from having the power to annoy them; and the navigation and manufacturing interests of the north and east were equally interested in making it a part of the Union. He thought they would soon be called on to decide these questions; and when they did act on it, he was for acting on both together—for recognising the independence of Texas and for admitting her into the Union. * * If events should go on as they had done, he could not but hope that before the close of the present session of Congress they would not only acknowledge the independence of Texas, but admit her into the Union. He hoped there would be no unnecessary delay—for in such cases delays were dangerous—but that they would act with unanimity and act promptly."

"Here, then, is the proof of the fact, that ten years ago, and without a word of explanation with Mexico, or any request from Texas—without the least notice the people of the United States, or time for deliberation among ourselves, or any regard to existing commerce—he was for plunging us into instant war with Mexico. I say instant war; for Mexico and Texas were then in open war; and to incorporate Texas, was to incorporate the war at the same time. All this the Senator was then for immediately after his own gratuitous cession of Texas, and long before the invention of the London abolition plot came so opportunely to his aid. Promptness and unanimity were then his watchwords. Immediate action—action before Congress adjourned—was his demand. No delay. Delays were dangerous. We must vote, and vote unanimously and promptly. I well remember the senator's look and attitude on that occasion—the fixedness of his look, and the magisteriality of his attitude. It was such as he often favors us with, especially when he is in a crisis, and brings forward something which ought to be instantly and unanimously rejected—as when he brought in his string of abstractions on Thursday last. So it was in 1836—prompt and unanimous action, and a look to put down opposition. But the senate were not looked down in 1836. They promptly and unanimously refused the senator's motion! and the crises and the danger—good natured souls!—immediately postponed themselves until wanted for another occasion.

The peace of the country was then saved; but it was a respite only, and a speech of the senator from South Carolina, brief as it was, becomes momentous as forshadowing everything that has subsequently taken place in relation to the admission of Texas. In this brief speech we have the shadows of all future movements, coming in procession—in advance of the events. In the significant intimation, qualified with the if——"*the Texans prudently managed their affairs, they (the Senate) might soon be called upon to decide the question of admission:*" in that pregnant and qualified intimation, there was a visible doubt that the Texans might *not* be prudent enough to manage their own affairs and might require help; and also a visible feeling of that paternal guardianship which afterward assumed the management of their affairs for them.— In the admonitions to unanimity, there was that denunciation of any difference of opinion which afterwards displayed itself in the ferocious hunting down of all who opposed the Texas treaty. In reference to southern slavery, and annoyance to slave property from Texas, we have the germ of the "*self-defence*" letter, and the first glimpse of the abolition plot of John Andrews, Ashbel Smith, Lord Aberdeen—I beg pardon of Lord Aberdeen for naming him in such a connection—and the World's Convention, with which Texas, Mexico and the United States were mystified and bamboozled in April, 1844. And, in the interests of the manufacturing and navigating states of the north and east, as connec ed with Texas admission, we have the text of all the communications to the agent, Murphy, and of all the letters and speeches to which the Texas question, seven years afterwards gave rise. We have all these subsequent events here shadowed forth. And now, the wonder is, why all these things were not forseen a little while before, when Texas was being ceded to a non slave-holding empire? and why, after being so imminent and deadly in May, 1836, all these dangers suddenly went to sleep, and never waked up again till 1844? These are wonders: but let us not anticipate questions, and let us proceed with the narrative.

The Congress of 1830 would not admit Texas. The senator from South Carolina became patient: the Texas question went to sleep; and for seven good years it made no disturbance. It then woke up, and with a suddenness and violence proportioned to its long repose. Mr. Tyler was then President: the senator from South Carolina was potent under his administration, and soon became his Secretary of State. All the springs of intrigue and diplomacy were immediately set in motion to resuscitate the Texas question, and to re-invest it with all the dangers and alarms which it had worn in 1836. Passing over all the dangers of annoyance from Texas as possibly non-slaveholding, *foreseen* by the senator in 1836, and not foreseen by him in 1819, with all the need for guardianship then foreshadowed, and all the arguments then suggested: all these immediately developed themselves, and intriguing agents traversed earth and sea, from Washington to Texas, and from London to Mexico:—passing over all this, as belonging to a class of evidence not now to be used, I come at once to the letter of the 17th of January, from the Mexan minister to Mr. Upshur, the American Secretary of State; and the answer to that letter by Mr. Calhoun, of April 11th of the same year. They are both vital in this case; and the first is in these words:

"*Mr. Van Zandt to Mr. Upshur.*

"Legation of Texas,
"Washington, January 17, 1844.

"Sir: It is known to you that an armistice has been proclaimed between Mexico and Texas; that that armistice has been obtained through the intervention of several great powers, mutually friendly; and that negotiations are now pending, having for their object a settlement of the difficulties heretofore existing between the two countries. A proposition, likewise, having been submitted by the President of the United States, through you, for the annexation of Texas to this country, therefore (without indicating the nature of the reply which the President of Texas may direct to be made to this proposition) I beg leave to suggest that it may be opprehended, should a treaty of annexation be concluded, Mexico may think proper to at once terminate the armistice, break off all negotiations for peace, and again threaten or commence hostilities against Texas; and that some of the other governments who have been instrumental in obtaining their cession, if they do not throw their influence into the Mexican scale, may altogether withdraw their good offices of mediation, thus losing to Texas their friendship, and exposing her to the unrestrained menaces of Mexico. In view, then, of these things, I desire to submit, through you, to his excellency the President of the United States, this inquiry: should the President of Texas accede to the proposition of annexation, would the President of the United States, after the signing of the treaty, and before it shall be ratified and receive the final action of the other branches of both governments, in case Texas should desire it, or with her consent, order such number of the military and naval forces of the United States to such necessary points or places upon the territory, or borders of Texas, or the Gulf of Mexico, as shall be sufficient to protect her against aggression?

"This communication, as well as the reply which you may make, will be considered by me as entirely confidential, not to be embraced in my regular official correspondence to my government, but enclosed direct to the President of Texas for his information.

"With assurances of my great regard, I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
"ISAAC VAN ZANDT.
"Hon. A. P. Upshur, &c."

This letter reveals the true state of the Texas question in January, 1844, and the conduct of all parties in relation to it. Texas and Mexico, weary of the war, reposing under an armistice, and treating for peace. Great Britain and France acting the noble part of mediators, and endeavoring to make peace. Our own government secretly intriguing for annexation, acting the wicked part of mischief-makers, and trying to renew the war; and the issue of its machinations to be unsuccessful unless the United States should be involved in the renewed hostilities. That was the question; and the letter openly puts it to the American Secretary of State. The answer to that question, in my opinion, should have been, that the President of the United States did not know of the armistice and the peace negotiations at the time that he proposed to Texas to do an act which would be a perfidious violation of those sacred engagements, and bring upon herself the scourge of renewed invasion and the stigma of perfidy—that he would would not have made such a proposal for the whole round world, if he had known of the armistice and the peace negotiations—that he wishes success to the peace-makers, both for the sake of Mexico and Texas, and because Texas could then come into the Union without the least interruption to our friendly, commercial, and social relations with our sister republic of Mexico; and that, as to secretly lending the army and navy of the United States to Texas to fight Mexico while we were at peace with her, it would be a crime against God, and man, and our own constitution, for which heads might be brought to the block, if presidents and their secretaries, like constitutional kings and ministers, should be held capitally responsible for capital crimes. This, in my opinion, should have been the answer. But the first part of it—that of the *scienter* upon the point of the armistice and the peace negotiations—could not be given in point of fact; for the Department of State was full of communications giving that information—one of them from the agent, (Murphy,) in these words:

"The powers to be given to General Henderson are to be of the fullest and most complete character, so that no impediment shall be found requiring further or other powers, or further or other instructions. But, inasmuch as the commissioners of Texas now in Mexico, in treaty or negotiation, touching an armistice, are supposed not to have concluded their labors, and is clear to the President of Texas that so soon as this negotiation in relation to annexation is known to the government of Mexico, all negotiation on that and all other questions between Texas and Mexico will cease, and that the President of Mexico will instantly commence active hostilities against Texas, which Texas is wholly unprepared, by sea or land, to resist,—it is understood that the government of the United States, having invited Texas to this negotiation, will at once, and before any negotiation is set on foot, place a sufficient naval force in the Gulf to protect the coast of Texas, and hold a sufficient force of cavalry, or other description of mounted troops, on the southwestern border of the United States, in readiness to protect or aid in the protection of Texas pending the proposed negotiation for annexation. I trust my government will at once see the propriety of this course of policy; for I found it impossible to induce this government to enter heartily into the measure of annexation without an assurance that my government would not fail to guard Texas against all the evils which were likely to assail Texas in consequence of her meeting and complying with the wishes of the United States."

Denial of the knowledge of the existence of the armistice, and of the opening of negotiations, was, therefore, impossible. Mr. Upshur, to whom the letter of the 17th of January was addressed, gave it no answer at all. During the forty days that his life was spared, he answered not; and I mention this particularly in justice to the memory of a gentleman who is no more. Mr. Nelson, the attorney general, his temporary successor in the Department of State, did not answer it to the Texan minister in Washington, but he did to Mr. Murphy in Texas, in reply to his communication to the same effect with the letter. Mr. Nelson's letter is dated the 11th of March, and is in these words:

"Of the anxiety of the President to provide for the annexation of the territory of Texas to that of the United States, you have been heretofore apprized; and of his readiness, by negotiation, promptly to effectuate this desire, you are well aware. He regards the measure as one of vital importance to both parties, and as recommended by the highest considerations of a sound public policy.

"Entertaining these views, the President is gratified to perceive, in the course you have pursed in your intercourse with the authorities of Texas, the evidences of a cordial co operation in this cherished object of his policy; but instructs me to say, that whilst approving the general tone and tenor of that intercourse, he regrets to perceive, in the pledges given by you in your communication to the Hon. Anson Jones of the 14th February, that you have suffered your zeal to carry you beyond the line of your instructions, and to commit the President to measures for which he has no constitutional authority to stipulate.

"The employment of the army or navy against a foreign power, with which the United States are at peace, is not within the competency of the President; and whilst he is not indisposed, as a measure of prudent precaution, and as preliminary to the proposed negotiation, to concentrate in the Gulf of Mexico, and on the southern borders of the United States, a naval and military force to be directed to the defence of the inhabitants and territory of Texas *at a proper time*, he cannot permit the authorities of that government or yourself to labor under the misapprehension that he has power to employ them at the period indicated by your stipulations.

"Of these impressions, Mr. Van Zandt, the charge d'affairs of the Texan government, has been, and General Henderson, who is daily expected here, will be fully advertised. In the mean time, the President desires that you will at once countermand your instructions to Lieutenant Davis, as far as they are in conflict with these views.

"In any emmergency that may occur, care will be taken that the commanders of the naval and military forces of the United States shall be properly instructed. Your request that they may be placed under your control cannot be granted."

This is very constitutional and proper language; and if it had not been reversed, there would have been no war with Mexico. But it was reversed. Soon after it was writ'en, the present senator from South Carolina took the chair of the Department of State. Mr. Pinckney Henderson, whom Mr. Murphy mentions as coming on with full powers, on the faith of the pledge he had given, arrived also; and found that pledge entirely cancelled by Mr Tyler's answer through Mr. Nelson; and he utterly refused to treat. The new secretary was in a strait; for time was short, and Texas must be had; and Messrs. Henderson and Van Zandt would not even begin to treat without a renewal of the pledge given by Mr. Murphy. That had been cancelled in writing, and the cancellation had gone to Texas, and had been made on high constitutional ground. The new secretary was profuse of verbal assurances, and even permitted the ministers to take down his words in writing, and read them over to him, as was shown by the senator from Texas, [General Houston,] when he spoke on this subject on Thursday last. But verbal assurances, or memoranda of conversations, would not do. The instructions under which the ministers acted, required the pledge to be in writing, and properly signed. The then President, present senator from Texas, who had been a lawyer in Tennessee before he went to Texas, seemed to look upon it as a case under the statute of frauds and perjuries—a sixth case added to the five enumerated in that statute—in which the promise is not valid, unless reduced to writing, and signed by the person to be charged therewith, or by some other person duly authorized by him to sign for him. The firmness of the Texan ministers, under the instrustions of President Houston, prevailed; and at last, and after long delay, the secretary wrote and signed the pledge which Mr. Murphy had given, and in all the amplitude of his original promise. That letter was dated on the 11th day of April, 1844, and was in these words:

"*Mr. Calhoun to Messrs. Van Zandt and Henderson.*

"Washington, April 11, 1844.

"Gentlemen: The letter addressed by Mr. Van Zandt to the late Secretary of State, Mr. Upshur, to which you have called my attention, dated Washington, 17th January, 1844, has been laid before the President of the United States.

"In reply to it, I am directed by the President to say that the Secretary of the Navy has been instucted to order a strong naval force to concentrate in the Gulf of Mexico, to meet any emergency; and that similar orders have been issued by the Secretary of War, to move the disposable military forces on our southwestern frontier, for the same purpose. Should the exigency arise to which you refer in your note to Mr. Upshur, I am further directed by the President to say, that, during the pendency of the treaty of annexation, he would deem it his duty to use all the means placed within his power by the constitution to protect Texas from all foreign invasion. I have the honor to be, &c., J. C. CALHOUN.

"Messrs. I. Van Zandt and J. P. Henderson,
"Ministers from the Republic of Texas."

This is the answer given by Mr. Secretary Calhoun to the demand; and, although a little *delphic* in the specification of the *emergencies* and the *exigencies* in which our forces were to fight the Mexicans, yet, taken in connexion with the terms of the letter to which it was an answer, and to which it refers, it is sufficiently explicit to show that it is a clear and absolute promise to do the thing which Murphy had promised, and which President Tyler, through the Attorney General, Mr. Nelson, had refused to do, because it involved a violation of the constitution of the United States. The promise was clear and explicit to lend the army and navy to the President of Texas, to fight the Mexicans while they were at peace with us. That was the point—at peace with us. Mr Calhoun's assumpsit was clear and explicit to that point; and, that no circumstance of contradiction or folly should be wanting to crown this plot of crime and imbecility, it so happened that on the same day that our new secretary here was giving his written assumpsit to lend the army and navy to fight Mexico while we were at peace with her, the agent Murphy was communicating to the Texan government, in Texas, the refusal of Mr. Tyler, through Mr. Nelson, to do so, because of its unconstitutionality. Here is the letter of Mr. Murphy:

"*Mr. Murphy to Mr. Jones.*

"Legation of the United States,
"Galveston, (Texas,) April 12, 1844.

"Sir: The undersigned, charge d'affaires of the United States near the government of the republic of Texas, has the honor of informing Mr. Jones, that while his government approves of the general tone and tenor of his intercourse with the government of the republic of Texas, a regret is felt in perceiving that his zeal for the accomplishment of objects alike beneficial and interesting to both countries had led him beyond the strict line of his instructions; that the President of the United States considers himself restrained by the constitution of the Union from the employment of the army and navy against a foreign power with whom the United States are at peace; and that whilst the President of the United States is not indisposed, as a measure of prudent precaution, and as preliminary to the proposed negotiation, to concentrate in the Gulf of Mexico and on the southern borders of the United States a sufficient naval and military force, to be directed to the defence of the inhabitants and territory of Texas at a proper time, he is unwilling that the authorities of Texas should apprehend that he has power to employ this force at the period indicated in my note to you of the 14th of February last."

In conformity with the Secretary's letter of April 11th, detachments of the army and navy were immediately sent to the frontiers of Texas, and to the coast of Mexico. The senator from South Carolina, in his colloquy with the senator from Texas [Gen. Houston] on Thursday last, seemed anxious to have it understood that these land and naval forces were not to repel invasions, but only to report them to our government, for its report to Congress. The paper read by the senator from Texas, consisting of our Secretary's words, taken down in his presence, and read over to him for his correction by the Texan ministers, establishes the contrary; and shows that the repulse of the invasion was in the mean time to be made. And, in fact, any other course would have been a fraud upon the promise. For if the invasion had to be made known at Washington, and the sense of Congress taken on the question of repelling it, certainly, in the mean time, the mischief would have been done—the invasion would have been made; and, therefore, to be consistent with himself, the President in the mean time was bound to repel the invasion, without waiting to hear what Congress would say about it. And this is what he himself tells us in his two messages to the Senate, of the 15th and 31st of May, doubtless written by his Secretary of State, and both avowing and justifying his intention to fight Mexico, in case of invasion, while the treaty of annexation was depending, without awaiting the action of Congress. Here are extracts from these messages:

Message—15th of May.—Extract.

"At the same time, it is due to myself that I should declare it as my opinion, that the United States having, by the treaty of annexation, acquired a title to Texas, which requires only the action of the Senate to perfect it, no other power could be permitted to invade, and, by force of arms, to possess itself of any portion of the territory of Texas, pending your deliberations upon the treaty, without placing itself in a hostile attitude to the United States, and justifying the employment of any military means at our disposal to drive back the invasion."

Message, 31st of May.—Extract.

"In my message to the Senate of the 15th of this month, I adverted to the duty which, in my judgment, the signature of the treaty for the annexation of Texas had imposed upon me, to repel any invasion of that country by a foreign power, while the treaty was under consideration in the Senate; and I transmitted reports from the Secretaries of War and of the Navy, with a copy of the orders which had been issued from those departments for the purpose of enabling me to execute that duty. In those orders, General Taylor was directed to communicate directly with the President of Texas upon the subject, and Captain Conner was instructed to communicate with the charge d'affairs of the United States accredited to that government. No copy of any communication which either of those officers may have made pursuant to those orders has yet been received at the departments from which they emanated."

Here are the avowal of the fact, and the reasons for it—that honor required us to fight for Texas, if we intrigued her into a war. I admit that would be a good reason between individuals, and in a case where a big bully should involve a little fellow in the fight again after he had got himself parted; but not so between nations and under our constitution. The engagement to fight Mexico for Texas, while we were at peace with Mexico, was to make war with Mexico!—a piece of business which belonged to the Congress, and should have been referred to them! and which, on the contrary, was concealed from them, though in session, and present! and the fact only found out after the troops had marched, and then by dint of calls from the Senate.

The proof is complete that the loan of the land and naval forces was to fight Mexico while we were at peace with her! and this becomes a great turning point in the history of this war. Without this pledge given by our Secretary of State—without his reversal of Mr. Tyler's first decision—there could have been no war! Texas and Mexico would have made peace, and then annexation would have followed of itself. The victor of San Jacinto, who had gone forth and recovered by the sword, and erected into a new republic the beautiful domain given away by our Secretary in 1819, was at the head of the Texan government, and was conducting his country to peace and acknowledged independence. If let alone, he would have accomplished his object; for he had already surmounted the great difficulty of the first step—the armistice and the commencement of peace negotiations; and under the powerful mediation of Great Britain and France, the establishment of peace was certain. A heavenly benediction rests upon the labors of the peace-maker; and what is blessed of God must succeed. At all events, it does not lie in the mouth of any man—and least of all, in the mouth of the mischief maker—to say that the peaceful mediation would not have succeeded. It was the part of all men to have aided, and wished, and hoped for success; and had it not been for our Secretary's letter of April 13th, authentic facts warrant the assertion that Texas and Mexico would have made peace in the spring of 1844. Then Texas would have come into this Union as naturally, and as easily, and with as little offence to any body, as Eve went into Adam's bosom in the garden of Eden. There would have been no more need for intriguing politicians to get her in, by plots and tricks, than there was for some old hag of a match-making belle-dame, with her arts and allurements, her philters and her potions, to get Eve into Adam's bosom. And thus, the breaking up of the peace negotiations becomes the great turning point in the problem of the Mexican war.

The treaty of annexation was signed, and in signing it the Secretary knew that he had made war with Mexico. No less than three formal notices were on file in the Department of State, in which the Mexican government solemnly declared that it would consider annexation as equivalent to a declaration of war; and it was in allusion to these notices that the Secretary of State, in his notification to Mexico of the signature of the treaty, said it had been signed IN FULL VIEW OF ALL POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES! meaning war as the consequence! At the same time, he suited the action to the word; he sent off detachments of the army, and placed them under the command of President Houston, and made him the judge of the emergencies and exigencies in which they were to fight. This authority to the President of Texas was continued in full force until after the rejection of the treaty, and then only modified by placing the American diplomatic agent in Texas between President Houston and the naval and military commanders, and making him the medium of communication between a foreign President and our forces; but the forces themselves were not withdrawn. They remained on the Texan and Mexican frontier, waiting for the *exigencies* and *emergencies* in which they were to fight. During all that time a foreign President was commander-in-chief of a large detachment of the army and navy of the United States. He was President General of our land and sea forces, made so by the senator from South Carolina, with authority to fight them against Mexico with whom we were at peace—an office and authority rather above that of a lieutenant general!—and we are indebted to the forbearance and prudence of President Houston for not incurring the war in 1844, which fell upon us in 1846.

The treaty was rejected by the Senate; but so apprehensive was the senator of immediate war, that, besides keeping the detachments of the army and navy at their posts, a messenger was despatched with a deprecatory letter to Mexico, and, as report said, the offer of a large sum of money to purchase peace from her, by inducing her to treat for a boundary which would leave Texas within our limits. This was report; and I would not mention it, if the senator was not present to contradict it if not correct. Report at the time said from five to ten millions of dollars: from one of Mr. Shannon's letters, we may set it down at ten millions. Be it either sum, it will show that the senator was then secretly willing to pay an immense sum to pacify Mexico, although he now declares that he does not know how he will vote in relation to the three millions responsibly asked by Mr. Polk.

The secretary knew that he had made war with Mexico—that in accepting the gage three times laid down, he had joined the issue with that compound of Celtic blood, called Spanish, would redeem. I knew it, and said it on this floor, in secret session—for I did not then choose to say it in public—that if there was but one man of that blood in all Mexico, and he is no bigger than Gen Tom Thumb, he would fight. Senators will recollect it.

I now come to this last act in this tragedy of errors—the alternative resolutions adopted by Congress in the last days of the session of 1844–'5, and in the last moments of Tyler's administration. A resolve, single and absolute, had been made by the House of Representatives; it came to this body; and an alternative resolution was added, subject to the choice of the President, authorizing negotiations for the admission, and appropriating $100,000 to defray the expenses of these negotiations. A senator from North Carolina, and now a member of this body, but who I have the pleasure to see sitting near me, knows all about that alternative resolution, and his country owes him good thanks for his labors about it. It was considered by every body, that the choice between these resolutions belonged to the new President, who had been elected with a special view to the admission of Texas, and who is already in the city, awaiting the morning of the 4th of March to enter upon the execution of his duties, and upon whose administration all the evils of a mistake in the choice of these resolutions were to fall. We all expected the question to be left open to the new President; so strong was that expectation, and so strong the feeling against the decency or propriety of interference on the part of the expiring administration, to snatch this choice out of the hands of Mr. Polk, that, on a mere suggestion of such a proceeding, in a debate on this floor, a senator standing in the relation personally, and politically, and locally, to feel for the honor of the then Secretary of State, declared they would not have the audacity to do it. Audacity was the word: and that was the declaration of a gentleman of honor and of patriotism, no longer a member of this body, but who has the respect and best wishes of all who ever knew him. I speak of Mr. McDuffie, and quote his words as heard at the time, and as since printed and published by others.

Mr. McDuffie was mistaken! They did have the audacity! They did do it! or rather, HE did it, (looking at Mr. Calhoun;) for it is incontestable that Mr. Tyler was nothing, in anything that related to the Texas question, from the time of the arrival of his Secretary of State. His last act in relation to Texas, was the answer which Mr. Nelson gave for him through the agent, Murphy, denying his right to lend our forces to the President of Texas to fight the Mexicans while we were at peace with them: the reversal of that answer by his new secretary was the extinction of his power over the Texas question. He, the then Secretary of State, the present senator from South Carolina, to whom I address myself, did it. On Sunday, the second day of March,—that day which preceded the last day of his authority—and on that day, sacred to peace—the council sat, that acted on the resolutions;—and in the darkness of a night howling with the storm, and battling with the elements, as if Heaven warred upon the audacious act, (for well do I remember it,) the fatal messenger was sent off, which carried the selected resolution to Texas. The act was then done: Texas was admitted: all the consequences of admission were incurred—and especially that consequence Mr. de Bocanegra had denounced, and which our Secretary had accepted—WAR. The state of war was established—the *status belli* was created—and that by the operation of our own constitution, as well as by the filed declaration of Mexico; for Texas then being admitted into the Union, the war with her extended to the whole Union; and the duty of protecting her, devolved upon the President of the United States. The selection of the absolute resolution exhausted our action: the alternative resolution for negotiation was defunct: the only mode of admission was the absolute one, and it made war. The war was made to Mr. Polk's hand: his administration came into existence with war upon its hands; and under the constitutional duty to protect Texas at the expense war with Mexico: and to that point, all events rapidly tended. The Mexican minister, General Almonte, who had returned to Washington city after the rejection of the treaty of annexation, demanded his passports, and left the United States. The land forces which had been advanced to the Sabine, were advanced to Corpus Christi: the Mexican troops moved towards the Rio Grande: the fleet which remained at Vera Cruz, continued there: commerce died out: the citizens of each country left the other, as far as they could: angry denunciations filled the press of each country: and when a minister was sent from the United States, his reception was refused. The state of war existed legally: all the circumstances of war, except the single circumstance of bloodshed, existed at the accession of Mr. Polk; and the two countries, Mexico and the United States, stood in a relation to each other impossible to be continued. The march upon the Rio Grande brought on the conflict—made the collision of arms—but not the war. The war was prepared, organized, established by the Secretary of State, before he left the department. It was his legacy to the democracy, and to the Polk administration—his last gift to them, in the moment of taking a long farewell.— And now he sets up for a man of peace, and throws all the blame of war upon Mr. Polk, to whom he bequeathed it.

Cicero says that Antony, flying from Rome to the camp of Cæsar in Cisalpine Gaul, was the cause of the civil war which followed—as much so as Helen was of the Trojan war. *Ut Helena Trojanis, sic iste huic republicæ causa belli—causa pestis atque exitii fuit.* He says that that flight put an end to all chance of accommodation; closed the door to all conciliation; broke up the plans of all peaceable men; and by inducing Cæsar to break up his camp in Gaul, and march across the Rubicon, lit up the flames of civil war in Italy. In like manner, I say, that the flight of the winged messenger from this capital on the Sunday night before the 3d of March, despatched by the then Secretary of State, in the expiring moment of his power, and bearing his fatal choice to the capital of Texas, was the direct cause of the war with Mexico in which we are now engaged. Like the flight of Antony, it broke up the plans of all peaceable men, slammed the door upon negotiation, put an end to all chance for accommodation, broke up the camp on the Sabine, sent the troops towards Mexico, and lit up the war. Like Antony, and the others, he made the war: unlike Antony, he does not stand to it; but, copying rather the conduct of the paramour of Helen, he flies from the combat he has provoked! and, worse than Paris, he endeavors to draw along with him, in his own unhappy flight, the whole American host. Paris fled alone at the sight of Menelaus; the senator from South Carolina urges us all to fly at the sight of Santa Anna. And, it may be, that worse than Paris again, he may refuse to return to the field. Paris went back under the keen reproach of Hector, and tried to fight.

"*For thee the soldier bleeds, the matron mourns,*
And wasteful war in all its fury burns."

Stung with this just and keen rebuke—this vivid picture of the ruin he had made—Paris returned to the field, and tried to fight; and, now, it remains to be seen whether the senator from South Carolina can do the same: and, if not, whether he cannot, at least, cease to abstruct the arms of others—cease to labor to involve the whole army in his own unmanly retreat.

Upon the evidence now given drawn from his public official acts alone, he stands the undisputed anthor and architect of that calamity. History will so write him down. Inexorable History, with her pen of iron and tablets of brass, will so write him down: and two thousand years hence, and three thousand years hence, the boy at his lesson shall learn it in the book, that as Helen was the cause of the Trojan, and Anthony the cause of the Roman civil war, and Lord North made the war of the revolution, just so certainly is John C. Calhoun the author of the present war between the United States and Mexico.

He now steps up for the character of pacificator—with what justice, let the further fact proclaim which I now expose. Three hundred newspapers, in the summer of 1844, in the pay of the Department of State, spoke the sentiments of the Department of State, and pursued as traitors to the United States all who were for the peaceable annexation of Texas, by settling the boundary line of Texas with Mexico simultaneously with the annexation. Here is the instruction under which the three hundred acted:

"As the conductor of the official journal here, he has requested me to answer it (your letter,) which request I comply with readily.

* * * *

"With regard to the course of your paper, you can take the tone of the administration from the * * * * I think, however, and would recommend that you would confine yourself to attacks upon Benton, showing that he has allied himself with the whigs on the Texas question. Quote Jackson's letter on Texas, where he denounces all those as traitors to the country who oppose the treaty. Apply it to Benton. Proclaim that Benton, by attacking Mr. Tyler and his friends, and driving them from the party, is aiding the election of Mr. Clay: and charge him with doing this to defeat Mr. Polk, and insure him the succession in 1848, and claim that full justice be done to the acts and motives of John Tyler by the leaders. Harp upon these things. 'Do not propose the Union; 'it is the business of the democrats to do this, and arrange it to our perfect satisfaction.' *I quote here* from our leading friend at the south. Such is the course which I recommend, and which you can pursue, or not, according to your real attachment to the administration.

* * * *

"Look out for my leader of to-morrow as an indication, and regard this letter as of the most strict and inviolate confidence of character."

I make no comment on this letter, nor read the other parts of it: a time will come for that. It is an original and will keep and will prove itself.— I merely read a paragraph now to show with what justice the person who was in the Department of State when these 300 newspapers in its pay were thus attacking the men of peace, now sets up for the character of pacificator!

Calhoun. Does he intend to say that I ever wrote such a letter?

Benton. I read it. I say nothing.

Calhoun. I never wrote such a letter as that.

Benton. I have not said so.

Calhoun. I take this occasion to say that I never exercised the slightest influence over that paper. I never had that the slightest connection with it. I never was a subscriber to it and very rarely read it.

Benton. It was the work of one of the organs of the administration, not John Jones; and the instruction was followed by three hundred newspapers in the pay of the Department of State.

I have now finished what I propose to say, at this time, in relation to the authorship of this war. I confine myself to the official words and acts of the senator, and rely upon them to show that he, and not Mr. Polk, is the author of this calamity. But, while thus presenting him as the author of the war, I do not believe that war was his object, but only an incident to his object; and that all his conduct in relation to the admission of Texas refers itself to the periods of our presidential elections, and to some connexion with those elections, and explains his activity and inactivity on those occasions. Thus, in May, 1836, when he was in such hot and violent haste for immediate admission, the election of that year was impending, and Mr. Van Buren the democratic candidate; and if the Texas question could then have been brought up, he might have been shoved aside just as easily as he was afterwards in 1844. This explains his activity in 1836. In 1840, the senator from South Carolina was a sort of a supporter of Mr. Van Buren, and might have thought that one good turn deserves another; and so nothing was said about Texas at that election—dangerous as was the least delay four years before: and this may explain the inactivity of 1840.

The election of 1844 was coming on, and the senator from South Carolina was on the turf himself; and then the Texas question, with all its dangers and alarms, which had so accommodatingly postponed themselves for seven good years, suddenly woke up; and with an activity and vigor proportioned to its long repose. Instant admission, at all hazards, and at the expense of renewing hostilities between Mexico and Texas, and involving the United States in them, became indispensable—necessary to our own salvation—a clear case of self-defence: and then commenced all those machinations which ended in the overthrow of Mr. Van Buren and Mr. Clay for the presidency, and in producing the present war with Mexico; but without making the senator President. And this may explain his activity in 1844. Now, another presidential election is approaching; and, if there is any truth in the rule which interprets certain gentlemen's declarations by their contraries, he will be a candidate again; and this may explain the reason of the production of that string of resolutions which the senator laid upon the table last week; and upon which he has required us to vote instantly, as he did in the sudden Texas movement of 1836, and with the same magisterial look and attitude. The Texas slave question has gone by—the Florida slave question has gone by—there is no chance for it now in any of its old haunts: hence the necessity for a new theatre of agitation, even if we have to go as far as California for it, and before we have got California. And thus, all the senator's conduct in relation to Texas, though involving his country in war, may have had no other object than to govern a presidential election.

Our northern friends have exceeded my hopes and expectations in getting themselves and the Union safe through the Texas and slave questions, and are entitled to a little repose. So far from that, they are now to be plunged into a California slave question, long before it could arise of itself, if ever. The string of resolutions laid on the table by the senator from South Carolina is to raise a new slave question on the borders of the Pacific, which, upon his own principles, cannot soon occur, if ever. He will not take the country by conquest—only by treaty—and that treaty to be got by sitting out the Mexicans on a line of occupation. At the same time he shows that he knows that Spanish blood is good at that game, and shows that they sat it out, and fought it out, for 800 years, against the Moors occupying half their country. By-the-by, it was only 700; but that is enough; 100 years is no object in such a matter. The Spaniards held out 700 years against the Moors, holding half their country, and 300 against half of the other half; and, what is more material, whipped them both out at the end of time. This is a poor chance for California on the senator's principles. His five regiments would be whipped out in a fraction of the time; but no matter; men contend more violently for nothing than for something; and if he can get up a California slave question now, it will answer all the purposes of a reality, even if the question should never arise in point of fact.

The senator from South Carolina has been wrong in all this business, from beginning to ending—wrong in 1819, in giving away Texas—wrong in 1836, in his sudden and hot haste to get her back—wrong in all his machinations for bringing on the Texas question of 1844—wrong in breaking up the armistice and peace negotiations between Mexico and Texas—wrong in secretly sending the army and navy to fight Mexico while we were at peace with her—wrong in secretly appointing the President of Texas president general of the army and navy of the United States, with leave to fight them against a power with whom we were at peace—wrong in writing to Mexico that he took Texas in a view of all possible consequences, meaning war—wrong in secretly offering Mexico, at the same time, ten millions of dollars to hush up the war which he had created—wrong now in refusing Mr. Polk three millions to aid in getting out of the war which he made—wrong in throwing the blame of this war of his own making upon the shoulders of Mr. Polk—wrong in his retreat and occupation line of policy—wrong in expelling old Father Ritchie from the Senate, who worked so hard for him during the Texas annexation; and more wrong now than ever, in that string of resolutions which he has laid upon the table, and in which, as Sylla saw in the Cæsar many Marinses, so do I see in them many nullifications.

In a picture of so many, and such dreadful errors, it is hard to specify the worst, or to dwell upon any one to the exclusion of the rest; but there is one feature in this picture of enormities which seems to demand that distinction: I allude to the pledge upon which the armistice and the peace negotiations between Mexico and Texas were broken up in 1844; and those two countries put back into a state of war, and ourselves involved in the contest. The story is briefly told, and admits of no dispute. The letter of the 17th of January is the accusing record, from which there is no escape. Its awful words cannot be read now, without freezing up the blood. "It is known to you that an armistice exists between Mexico and Texas, and that negotiations for peace are now going on under the mediation of two powerful sovereigns, mutually friendly. If we yield to your solicitation to be annexed to the United States, under these circumstances, we shall draw upon ourselves a fresh invasion from Mexico, incur the imputation of bad faith, and lose the friendship and respect of the two great mediating powers.— Now, will you, in the event of our acceding to your request, step between us and Mexico, and take the war off our hands?" This was the letter, and the terrible question with which it concluded. Mr. Upshur, to whom it was addressed, gave it no answer. In the forty days that his life was spared, he gave it no answer. Mr. Nelson, his temporary successor, gave it an answer; and, speaking for the President of the United States, positively refused to take annexation on the condition proposed.— This answer was sent to Texas, and put an end to all negotiation for annexation.

The senator from South Carolina came into the Department of State, procured the reversal of the President's decision, and gave the pledge to the whole extent that Texas asked it. Without, in the least, denying the knowledge of the armistice, and the negotiations for peace, and all the terrible consequences which were to result from their breach, he accepts the whole, and gives the fatal pledge which his predecessor had refused, and followed it up by sending our troops and ships to fight a people with whom we were at peace—the whole veiled by the mantel of secrecy, and pretexted by motives as unfounded as they were absurd. Now, what says morality and Christianity to this conduct? Certainly if two individuals were engaged in strife, and two others should part them, and put them under an agreement to submit to an amicable settlement; and while the settlement was going on, another man, lying behind a hedge, should secretly instigate one of the parties to break off the agreement and renew the strife, and promise to take the fight off his hands if he did: what would morality and Christianity say to this? Surely the malediction of all good men would fall upon the man who had interfered to renew the strife. And if this would be the voice of all good men in the case of mere individuals, what would it be when the strife was between nations, and when the renewal of it was to involve a third nation in the contest, and such a war as we now have with our sister republic of Mexico. This is the question which now presents itself to the moral sense of the civilized world, in judging the conduct of the senator from South Carolina in writing that letter of the 11th of April, 1844, aggravated by now throwing upon another the blame of a war for which he then contracted.

Married,

This morning by Rev. J. F. M'Claren, Mr. Thomas B. Young to Miss Elizabeth, daughter of Mr. John Rutherford, of Minersville.
March 2, 1847.

Notice to Contractors.

Office of the Monongahela Navigation Co.,
Pittsburgh, March 3d, 1847.

PROPOSALS will be received at this office up to 3 o'clock, P. M., on Monday the 5th day of April next, for the construction of an additional cut stone Lock, at dam No. 1, to be fifty-six by two hundred and fifty feet in the chamber.

Proposals will state the price for Cash payments, also, for payments in Certificates.

Plans and specifications of the work will be exhibited at the office ten days previous to the letting, and information respecting the same, will be given by Sylvanus Lothrop, Esq., Engineer.

PROPOSALS will also be received at the same time and place, for loaning the Company Twenty thousand dollars, upon the bonds and certificates aforesaid.

J. K. MOORHEAD, Pres't.

mar3-dta5 (Gazette and Journal copy.)

Pennsylvania Railroad Company.

LETTERS Patent bearing date the 25th day of February A. D. 1847, having been issued by the Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in pursuance of the provisions of an Act of the General Assembly of said Commonwealth, entitled "An Act to incorporate the Pennsylvania Railroad Company."

Notice is hereby given, That the undersigned being a majority of the acting Commissioners, have and do hereby appoint a meeting of the subscribers to the Capital Stock of said Company to be held on Tuesday, the 30th day of March, A. D. 1847, at ten o'clock A. M., in the Room of the Board of Trade, No. — Philadelphia Exchange, in the City of Philadelphia, in order to organize said Company, and then and there to elect thirteen Directors of said Company agreeably to the provisions of said Act of Assembly, February 26, 1847.

Thomas P Cope	T M Pettit
Robert Toland	George M Stroud
David S Brown	H M Watts
James Magee	Phillip M Price
George W Toland	Robert Flinn, Jr
J Fisher Leaming	Wm Musser
H R Kneass	T C Rockhill
Geo W Carpenter	John S Cash
Elliott Cresson	C G Childs
Robert Allen	Roberts Steen
Charles S Wood	C Macalister
Hugh Campbell	E A Penniman
John B Myers	Alex Fullerton
A G Ralston	Edward Siter
Gideon Scull	Archibald Wright
A S Roberts	Henry Welsh
Wm C Patterson	John M Atwood
B M Hinchman	A J Lewis
John Welsh, Jr	Nathaniel Trotter
Townsend Sharpless	James Martin
Thomas Sparks	John J McCashen
Charles Humphreys	Hugh Catherwood
James Steel	

1m

Monongahela Bridge,

Pittsburgh, March 27, 1847.

The Bonds issued by this Company will be paid in par funds, at the Bank of Pittsburgh, both principal and interest, as they respectively become due.— The holders of said Bonds are requested to present the same for payment, and are notified that the interest will cease and determine on the day the principal is at maturity, after which no interest will be paid thereon.

mar3-w3t* JOHN THAW, Treas.