

to have "*the man*," as he is called, declared dictator—a measure which they know would be an empty farce as regards any real power which it could confer upon him; whilst it would be a most substantial reality as to the subversion of the government. The storm thus brewing would have been brought to a head, and been made to burst before now, probably, but for the respite afforded them by my recall. This, which inspired universal joy among them, (a joy that has frankly been expressed to myself personally,) has lulled their apprehensions—which down to that moment were most vivid—in regard to the early negotiation of a peace; and they are now proceeding more deliberately, relying upon the time which must elapse before negotiations can be resumed, and counting with almost equal confidence upon our government sending no more commissioners, and upon the impossibility that any such step can be ventured upon by theirs without greatly weakening its already feeble powers of defence, and greatly advantaging its adversaries. In a word, they know full well that the only way in which a treaty can be possible is by its being made so suddenly that nothing shall be known of its existence until it shall be presented for ratification; and that the means which it will afford to the government for self-defence shall be in its hands so soon almost as it is presented—a condition which is absolutely indispensable to its obtaining ratification. Feeling certain on this point, and considering the danger of a treaty as being entirely over for the present, they are comparatively supine. In this particular, the news of my recall—notwithstanding the depressing influence upon the peace party, and the exhilarating effects upon their antagonists, with which it was immediately attended—is advantageous to the former, and to their cause.

But, although thus rendered comparatively inactive, they are not the less steady in the determination which weds them to their purpose; and, as I have said before, nothing can prevent its accomplishment, unless the peace party shall speedily acquire the power of permanent resistance, which nothing but the fulfilment of the end for which they have striven to obtain possession of the government can give. Every day that this is delayed adds to the difficulties of their position, by far the greatest of which is the want of pecuniary means; which want is so great, that they find it impossible to meet even the most trivial daily exigencies of a government. This state of things can continue but a very little while longer. It cannot but bring on the early overthrow of the government, and with it the entire dissolution of the peace party, and death to the sentiment of peace in every bosom that has cherished it.

The chaotic condition which the country will then exhibit, and the nondescript character which this war will then bear, are just as manifest now as they can become after the catastrophe shall have occurred. The purpose of the party whose immediate object is to render a peace *impossible*, will, so far as regards this object, have been completely fulfilled; for this country will then be without a head, with whom a treaty of any kind can be made. It will

then consist of a collection of separate States, considering themselves as forming together one nation, but without a central government—without a common organ of any sort. The military occupation of the country will then go on. But to what end? For what purpose? What will be the object in view? Certainly not a treaty of peace, when no government will be in existence with which to treat on any subject. The only assignable or conceivable purpose for which the occupation of the country can then be persisted in will be one of these two: either the conquest of the country, involving the subjugation of its inhabitants, by establishing over them a government such as we shall see fit to subject them to, or the use of our military power in directing and protecting the inhabitants in establishing a government for themselves. These are the *only two conceivable ends*, with a view to which "occupation" can then continue; and the only conceivable alternatives to the explicit adoption of the one or the other of these two purposes will be, on the one hand, to act without any assignable object whatever; to continue to pour out the blood and treasure of our country, without being able to assign a single reason why they are poured out; on the other hand, to bring occupation to a close, by withdrawing to such boundary as we may see fit to select.

This is the position in which our country will find herself, if the government which the peace party have succeeded in rearing be allowed to go down; as go down it must and will, unless that peace be promptly made with a view to which alone this government has been built up.

And should "occupation" continue after it shall have put on the *objectless* character which—except upon the supposition that the one or the other of the two ends above mentioned is adopted—cannot but invest it so soon as the treaty of peace shall have been rendered impossible by the destruction of the government, what then will be the character of this war? I mean as to its *concomitants*; for it would be a contradiction in terms to talk in any other sense of the character of a nondescript. In previous despatches I have stated my conviction that a single word from our country is all that is requisite to raise up, or rather to bring out, a party here which would render the permanent occupation of Mexico a matter of very easy accomplishment, and at once convert it almost entirely into a *peaceful* occupation. But for any such effect to be produced, this word *must be pronounced*. Unless this be done, the occupation must continue to bear the character of a hostile invasion—an invasion persisted in for the mere purpose of inflicting injury, or with a view to subjugating and enslaving the people. In this light must it be viewed by every Mexican, and his conduct must, ostensibly at least, square with the duty of the citizen of a country towards such an enemy. Even mere passiveness will, to a great extent, be impossible on the part of those most deeply interested in, and most thoroughly devoted to, the cause of annexation. Everything done by them must be, or seem, compatible with the relation in which the citizen of a country finds himself towards her invader; and they cannot, except to a limited extent, evade even

the *active* obligations which this relation imposes. In this way, thousands will find themselves compelled to take a more or less active part in resistance, who, upon a declaration from us that the occupation is to be permanent, would at once come out and avow themselves on our side, and actively co-operate with us. The same is true, and to a greater extent, of all those who, without being prepared to take such a step now, would be drawn in by the examples set by the others. Without such a declaration, the whole peace party must, exactly in proportion to the patriotism which has excited them to efforts in favor of peace, become—and it will be for the first time since the war began—actively and energetically devoted to the cause of resistance. It will be manifest to all, that the war is not waged against the government, whose misconduct produced it, but against the country, against the people, with conquest and subjugation for its end; and this being manifest, the war will become, for the first time, *national*—national in the best and highest sense of the word—for every heart capable of a throb at seeing a yoke held up for its country will then be fired with the fire of desperation.

The character of the war thus far has been the reverse of this. The only spirit infused into it has been such as could emanate from the calculating soul of Santa Anna, with no other object in view than to bring it to a close, so soon as this could be done in a manner favorable to himself. Whatever he has done—and he has accomplished things truly wonderful—has been done against the grain of the country. Every honest man in the country was his enemy, and ardently desired his downfall. Every man who had a single feeling for his country, whether from patriotism or from calculation, was his enemy, and desired his downfall. The same hatred, and the same desire, animated thousands of bosoms, altogether devoid of honesty, and devoid of patriotism. Under their influence, added to the apprehension that peace would extend and confirm his power, the wish for peace lay hushed and dormant. Even in those who had been bold enough to avow it, it gave no other sign of life. Everything done by him was done in spite of all this, in spite of all the obstacles which such causes could produce. All the resources of the country which it was possible to withhold from him were withheld. But, let the feeling of national desperation once be aroused, and things will present a very different aspect from any they have heretofore borne. This country cannot effectually resist the power of ours; but such resistance as she is still capable of—partial as this may be, and ineffectual as it may prove—will be of a new complexion quite. *By far the best fighting done in this valley, on the Mexican side, was done by the newly formed corps of militia.*

If, then, the occupation is to be permanent, no time should be lost by our country in making a declaration to that effect. This is due alike to her own material interests, to regard for her own character, to justice and humanity towards the inhabitants of this country. That her position and theirs should at once be defined, is demanded by every consideration which can make a country

otherwise than absolutely indifferent, for her own children as well as for those of another country, to the prolongation and the aggravation of the evils of war.

3. "*Thirdly*, that this (the boundary proposed by me) is the utmost point to which the Mexican government can, by any possibility venture."

Under this head, I can do but little else than state my perfect conviction, resulting from the best use I am capable of making of the opportunities afforded by my position, that such is the fact. The nature of the subject scarcely admits of my doing more. I will, however, call attention to the fact, that, independently of Texas, this boundary takes from Mexico about *one half of her whole territory*; and upon this fact remark, that, however helpless a nation may feel, there is necessarily a point beyond which she cannot be expected to go, under any circumstances, in surrendering her territory as the price of peace. This point is, I believe, here reached. I entertain not the shadow of a doubt upon the subject. Earnest as is their desire for peace, and for the preservation of their nationality, the peace party will not go a hair's breadth further. If this does not suffice, they will let matters take their course, be this what it may. They *cannot* go further. It would be utterly impossible to obtain the ratification of any such treaty.

I will also state my belief that they cannot maintain themselves long, after making the treaty now in question. Although they will derive from it the means of carrying on the government, and although these means will, I am convinced, be used both conscientiously and wisely, it will, at the same time, furnish to their adversaries a weapon by whose force they can scarcely fail to be prostrated. The great object for which they have formed themselves being once accomplished, the mere loss of power would, I believe, affect them but little, and not at all except through their desire further to benefit their country by the use of that power. But the respect and esteem which they have inspired cause me to entertain serious fears that something worse than a mere political downfall is the fate which awaits them. The same respect and esteem I feel also for the leading men of the opposite party, whose motive and whose object are such as could not fail to command my warm sympathy. I do sympathise with them strongly, and the wish is ardent and steady that the object which they aim at, as the only possible means of rescuing their country from anarchy and oppression, were of possible attainment. But this very wish serves but to strengthen my confidence in the soundness of the conviction—which has become more and more deep and intense, in proportion as my knowledge of the condition of this country has extended—that the thing is altogether impossible. The more the subject has unfolded itself to my view, the more thoroughly persuaded have I become, that, immense as would be the benefit which this country would derive from such a connexion, it would be fraught with evil to ours, immeasurably greater; even in the eyes of the most disinterested and impartial philanthropist, the former could constitute no sort of compensation for the latter. And such,

I have no doubt, is the conclusion to which our country will come, should the question ever be seriously discussed among us. For myself, deep as is my veneration for our Union, and impossible as I have heretofore believed it to be that I should ever cease to consider its dissolution as the greatest of all imaginable evils, I have been brought to look upon this terrible calamity as a great good, when compared with the annexation—the annexation in our day, I mean—of this country to ours, be it by conquest or “occupation,” or be it by compact. That this incorporation is to happen—that, in the fullness of time, it must take place—I have no doubt. But, the hour is not come when it can happen without incalculable danger to every good principle, moral as well as political, which is cherished among us; without almost certain destruction to everything on the preservation of which depends the continued success of our great experiment for the happiness of our race. If this danger is to be brought on, then would it become the most fervent wish of my heart to see a part, at least, of our country preserve itself from it, in the only way in which preservation would be possible. That this might come to pass, and that thus the glorious hope, which has fed itself upon the success of this experiment, should be saved from total extinction, would then be the holiest prayer that could arise from my soul.

There is, however, a question totally distinct from the above, which presents a strong claim upon the immediate attention of our country; a claim founded on considerations of humanity towards this people, as well as on its bearings upon ourselves. It is, whether the very peculiar, the altogether exceptionable nature of the case, as caused by the intimate geographical relation in which this country stands towards ours, would warrant such a departure from established principles, in this regard, as would be involved in a compact that should secure to Mexico the assistance which she needs, and which is all that she needs, for the establishment of a good and stable government. The elements for such a government—although under the pressure of circumstances they have lain dormant and inactive—are by no means entirely wanting in this country; as would seem to be the case, judging merely from the facts exhibited to the eyes of the world by her past history. Protection for a few years, perhaps for a shorter time, from her own enormously overgrown military class, is all that she needs to bring about a state of things strongly contrasting with that which has heretofore existed here. Upon the solution of this question depends her chance for presenting such a contrast; a thing which is indispensable not only to her own happiness, but to the possibility of her being a good neighbor, to the possibility of her preventing the recurrence of such misconduct on the part of her government and local authorities, as will render peace between us always precarious in the extreme. The offer of such aid would, I am sure, be accepted with delight and deep gratitude.

4. “That the determination of my government to withdraw the offer to negotiate, of which I was made the organ, has been taken

with reference to a supposed state of things in this country *entirely the reverse of that which actually exists.*”

Under this head nothing more is requisite than a general reference to what has been stated under the three preceding. I will, however, cursorily examine a few of the many points which properly come under it.

The determination referred to is expressly grounded on the President's belief that the continuance of this mission might “do much harm;” that is to say, as has been shown under the first head, do much harm *in the way of preventing* the restoration of peace. This belief could rest upon no other basis than the supposition that the state of things here, at the time when his order would reach me, would be in the highest degree unfavorable to the cause of peace; far more unfavorable than it had been at the time when I was despatched from Washington. The true state of the case was not only different from this, but the direct reverse of it. For the first time since the war began had a peace party been formed. Santa Anna had always been strongly inclined to peace; but this inclination, like every other feeling of which his bosom is capable, was a purely selfish one, and he had been waiting for an opportunity when peace might be made with advantage to himself and to his own despotic propensities and designs. Such was not the character of the peace party which had formed itself upon that man's downfall. It consisted of the *élite* of the patriotism of the country; men who had the good of the country at heart, and who, in seizing the opportunity at the very instant that it presented itself, and from that moment sparing no toil which could bring them to their object, had been actuated solely by an ardent desire of peace, for the sake of peace and for the sake of their native land. This party had organized itself, and built up a government, and had accomplished all that I have stated under the second head. In a word, the state of things here, in all respects, was such, that if it had been contrived and arranged for the express and sole purpose of giving to the discontinuance of this mission the character of a deadly blow to the cause of peace, at the very moment when that cause was on the point of prevailing, this fatal character could not have been stamped upon it more clearly and manifestly and indubitably than it now is—than it now is to the eye of every human being in this country who ever bestows a glance upon the signs of the times. There is not one single friend to peace here but reeled and staggered under the blow. There is not a single enemy to peace here from whose bosom there did not burst forth the shout of joy and triumph at seeing that blow fall.

Of all this the President knew nothing; and the supposition by which he allowed himself to be governed (under the influence, doubtless, of “*private*” representations from an intriguer who, to the deep disgrace of our country—as she will, ere long, deeply feel, on beholding the picture, faint though it will be, of the unimaginable and incomprehensible baseness of his character—pollutes this glorious army by his presence,) made the state of things in this country “*entirely the reverse of that which actually exists,*”

and which already existed when his determination was formed. Had he known the truth—had he formed the faintest conception of it—had he so much as dreamed of the possibility of a state of things here, approaching in the remotest degree to that which actually existed, he could not have believed that the continuance of this mission could do “much harm:” unless, indeed, the indefinite protraction of the war was the *good* aimed at, and to cut it short would be to do *harm*. On no other supposition than this could he have believed otherwise than that his highest and most solemn duty to his country required that he should *not* discontinue this mission. On no other supposition than this—however great might have been his dissatisfaction, and however extreme his displeasure at the course pursued by me—could he possibly have failed, simultaneously with *my* recall, to clothe some other person with those powers, the existence of which *here* was rendered by that state of things indispensable to the cessation of the war.

Passing from this point, I will take up another. The state of things with reference to which the supposition which governed the President's mind has just been seen to have been the direct reverse of the truth, was contemporaneous with the decision formed by him; and, consequently, it was impossible that he should actually know anything about it. But the unfortunate characteristic is not confined to that particular supposition. It belongs equally to the view taken by him of events which had occurred and which had become known at Washington. Here, also, this unhappy reversal of the truth has taken place. In this view, as in the other, everything was seen upside down.

In the armistice and in the negotiation nothing could be perceived but a *ruse* of Santa Anna, a mere trick to *gain time*. By the “Union,” General Scott and myself have been held up to the country as having been hoodwinked and duped—as having put trust in the good faith of Santa Anna. Such is the complexion of the balderdash with which our country has been edified upon this theme.

The armistice! This was entered into by General Scott *without authority*, and contrary to the intentions of the government. So has the country been given to understand by the “Union.” *Without authority!* And he, the general-in-chief of the armies sent here to *conquer a peace*, sent here—so has our government solemnly asseverated to our country and the world—for the sole purpose of bringing the war to a close, in the only way that events had proved that it could be brought to a close, by beating Mexico into a disposition towards peace. The commander of these armies, sent here for this purpose, was *without authority* to grant a suspension of hostilities, in order that peace might be made! And this, too, at a juncture when he was cut off from all communication with his government, and when he had at his elbow an agent of that government, who found himself there solely in consequence of the earnest desire, the extreme anxiety of the chief magistrate who had despatched him, that peace might be made at the earliest possible moment.

*Without authority!* Unhappy admission! Even if it had been true, most unlucky slip of the tongue! Why, the armistice is the crowning glory of this campaign, of this war, of the life of Winfield Scott. If the war were to last a century, nothing could occur to surpass it; nothing could occur that would approach it in its honor-giving efficacy, in its honor-giving efficacy to our country. A thousand *Cerro Gordos*, with a thousand *Contreros*, could not eclipse it for a moment, could not dim its lustre in the slightest degree. View it under whatever aspect you will, and it shines equally bright. Had it been nothing but a stroke of policy, of *national* policy, in the broadest and most respectable sense of which the word admits, nothing could have occurred so calculated to elevate our country in the eyes of the world, to put her in the right even to those who had before deemed her in the wrong. Had it been nothing but a stroke of mere *party* policy, in the narrowest and least respectable sense of which the word admits, nothing superior to it could have been devised. The whole genius of Talleyrand might have been devoted for a twelve-month to the subject, and then he could not have contrived anything better calculated to rescue the administration, and the party that had brought that administration into power, from the peril which threatened them with quick destruction. In proof of this, see the change which has come over the land! And look at the fact that this change is owing wholly to the armistice, because it is owing wholly to the course which matters took under the armistice. These things together have constituted the medium through which the new view of the war now taken by our country has been taken, and except through which it never would have been taken.

But the armistice was no stroke of policy, of the one kind or of the other. It was something far better, far purer, far loftier. Whatever disposition there may be to repudiate it as an act of the administration, the honor of it is secured to our country. It is hers, and nothing—no chicanery, no nonsense which can be uttered about “want of authority;” no stuff, however gross, or however dexterously absurd, which can be poured out through the “Union,” or through any other channel—nothing can make it otherwise than hers. The fact is unchangeable. The armistice is her work, and the honor of it belongs to her. It was her work, because it was done by a public servant who, in doing it, considered himself merely as doing what her spirit, her will, required that he should do. True, he considered himself also as doing nothing but what was required by due conformity with the intentions and strong desire of another of her public servants, the highest in authority, and the proper organ for the manifestation of her will. But, even although he should have been mistaken on the latter point, this cannot affect the truth in regard to her. It was her work, because it was the honest fruit of her honest desire for peace, operating through the bosom of the servant by whose hand the work was done. And the occasion afforded proof, too, of the high tone of the patriotism which animates that bosom, and of its superiority to the suggestions of party rancor or of party calculation. He knew,