

CHAPTER VI.

Effect of the news of Austin's imprisonment upon the colonists—Santa Anna, the president of the Mexican republic, dissolves the National Congress by force—establishes a military government—Texas prepares to resist—Austin returns to Texas—extracts from his address.

IN the meantime, the affairs of Texas had been highly prosperous at home, and the people, free from the insolence and rapacity of the military bands which infested other portions of the republic, and being too far removed to participate in the inciting topics which distracted the capital, were tranquil in their present condition, and happy in the prospect of a bright future; as the cloud which foretold the storm was yet invisible to them.

The news of Austin's arrest and imprisonment aroused them from their dream of security. Several of the most influential citizens met at San Felipe, to consult upon the expediency of adopting some measure for his relief. Various propositions were submitted and discussed; but prudent counsels prevailed, and the members separated, without having adopted any resolution upon the subject. The colonists in general were sufficiently indignant at the contempt with which their just claims and pretensions had been treated, and could not but feel that the imprisonment of Austin was an outrage upon their own rights, through the person of their agent. There was no remedy within their reach; and it was thought, besides, that any open expression of their feelings might still more endanger his safety.

Some there were, who then looked upon this apparently small matter as the precursor of the great events which now belong to the history of Texas, and were unwilling to afford the slightest pretext for bringing on prematurely a contest which they foresaw was inevitable, but which it was the duty of Texas to await, and husband all her resources to meet manfully when it should come.

In the meantime, every additional arrival from Mexico tended to strengthen these anticipations.

In the beginning of 1834, Santa Anna threw off the mask, and openly appeared as the champion of the aristocracy and the church. The liberal congress was dissolved by force, when the

term of its election had but half expired. To save appearances, a new election was ordered; when care was taken to post the military so as to overawe the suffrages, and procure the return of the creatures of the executive. This Congress, which was convened only to register the decrees of a military despot, very quietly performed that duty.

From the date of the forcible dissolution of the National Congress, in May, 1824, most of the states in the Mexican confederacy had submitted to military government; though the decree terminating their existence as states was not registered until the following year.

Then followed the boody drama of Zacatecas, the catastrophe of which is well known; and this terminated the reign of the constitution and civil law in Mexico. Texas alone remained without the presence of the new authorities which had been adopted to supply their place: a military governor, with his tribunals for administering justice, composed of the officers of his regiment, with a thousand bayonets ready to execute its decrees, had not yet entered Texas. They were without government. *That*, to which they *lately* owed allegiance, had been forcibly dissolved, without their agency. It would seem, therefore, that they were now at liberty to choose for themselves; and to deny them the right to resist with *force* an attempt to *force* upon them a system of government to which they were utter strangers, and to which their assent, either expressed or implied, had never been given, must certainly appear unreasonable. Yet for this they have been reproached in no gentle terms. The banner under which they fought has been called the banner of slavery, while that of their invaders has been pronounced the banner of freedom.

With the fall of Zacatecas before the arms of the supreme chief, which happened in May, 1835, ended all resistance to his authority in the old territories of Mexico. In Texas alone, it remained unacknowledged; neither had it been resisted, as yet: no attempt had been made to establish it there. The wide space of uncultivated land between the settlements in Texas and those of the other states of Mexico, and the want of any exchangeable commodities to create an intercourse by water, rendered Mexican news slow in reaching Texas. This difficulty was still increased by a difference of language, which rendered the press of Mexico a sealed book to most of the people of Texas. In this case, too, great precaution had been used by Santa Anna to disguise the character of his late movements, and suppress all accounts of their true character; so that the late events in Mexico were not fully known and understood by the people of Texas, until a very few days before the arrival of an armed force of Mexicans upon their borders. The danger could no longer be concealed;

nor could the remedy be longer delayed. Nothing but a resort to arms could save them from a bondage which to them appeared worse than death.

Sprung from a race, which in every age has poured out its blood in resisting the exactions of arbitrary power, and born and nurtured in a land where liberty is looked upon as an inheritance, to be lost only with life; both the past and the future now met in their path, to forbid a compromise with tyranny. Yet, a contest with such stupendous odds against them, was indeed fearful; and rash as the undertaking would certainly be pronounced, could they hope for succor, or even sympathy, from their kindred in "father-land."

There remained an alternative. To abandon the land now endeared by so many sacrifices, and return, to be strangers in that of their birth. This would avoid a surrender of personal liberty; but at an expense of rights fairly and honorably acquired, and possessions dearly bought. To sacrifice these, without first striking a blow in their defence, was forbidden by *duty*, as well as *pride*.

The incipient measure of organization to prepare for the struggle, was commended to them by the example of their ancestors. The arrival of a large Mexican force at Bexar, was the signal for holding public meetings in all the principal settlements, in which committees of correspondence and public safety were appointed; and the latter invested with such powers as the crisis demanded. No doubt could be entertained of the designs of the dictator, in sending troops into Texas; nevertheless, it was determined not to begin the contest without the clearest necessity; and so long as the troops made no attempt to advance into the American settlements, and indicated no movements in that direction, to leave them quietly in possession of their present position.

It was supposed that the mass of the Mexican people could not be willing slaves; and hopes were entertained that early efforts on their part to recover their lost rights, in which they (the Texians) might co-operate, would lighten the weight of the contest, and render the issue less doubtful.

In the meantime, however, the committees of safety were busy in preparations for the worst; and almost every able-bodied man in the country stood prepared with his rifle and stock of ammunition, to march at a moment's warning. The month of August was a season of gloom and anxiety; but all remained quiet as the silence that precedes the storm.

In the early part of September, Stephen F. Austin, the father of the colony, whose counsel and advice was greatly needed in the present emergency, returned once more to Texas, after an absence of more than two years, a considerable part of which

he had been immured in the former inquisition dungeons of Mexico.

Austin must necessarily have been minutely acquainted with the merits of the controversy between Mexico and Texas; his interest was for peace, as his all must be staked upon the unequal contest. If any error was ever imputed to him, it was that of carrying prudence to an extreme bordering upon timidity. He is now "gone to his account," and left behind him a character which malice dare not assail; we therefore feel it due to the people, a sketch of whose history we have undertaken to pen, to pause in our narrative, while we permit the man, who, of all the world, best knew their affairs, to speak in their behalf. It is due also to the memory of Austin, of whom our limits will not permit a further notice. We therefore extract the following, from an address of the late Stephen F. Austin, delivered at Louisville, Kentucky, on the 7th of March, 1836.

"It is with the most unfeigned and heartfelt gratitude that I appear before this enlightened audience, to thank the citizens of Louisville, as I do in the name of the people of Texas, for the kind and generous sympathy they have manifested in favor of the cause of that struggling country; and to make a plain statement of facts explanatory of the contest in which Texas is engaged with the Mexican Government.

"The public has been informed, through the medium of the newspapers, that war exists between the people of Texas and the present government of Mexico. There are, however, many circumstances connected with this contest, its origin, its principles and objects, which, perhaps, are not so generally known, and are indispensable to a full and proper elucidation of this subject.

"When a people consider themselves compelled by circumstances or by oppression, to appeal to arms and resort to their natural rights, they necessarily submit their cause to the great tribunal of public opinion. The people of Texas, confident in the justice of their cause, fearlessly and cheerfully appeal to this tribunal. In doing this the first step is to show, as I trust I shall be able to do by a succinct statement of facts, that our cause is just, and is the cause of light and liberty;—the same holy cause for which our forefathers fought and bled;—the same that has an advocate in the bosom of every freeman, no matter in what country, or by what people it may be contended for.

"But a few years back Texas was a wilderness, the home of the uncivilized and wandering Comanche and other tribes of Indians, who waged a constant and ruinous warfare against the Spanish settlements. These settlements at that time were limited

to the small towns of Bexar, (commonly called San Antonio) and Goliad, situated on the western limits. The incursions of the Indians also extended beyond the Rio Bravo del Norte, and desolated that part of the country.

"In order to restrain these savages and bring them into subjection, the government opened Texas for settlement. Foreign emigrants were invited and called to that country. American enterprise accepted the invitation and promptly responded to the call. The first colony of Americans or foreigners ever settled in Texas was by myself. It was commenced in 1821, under a permission to my father, Moses Austin, from the Spanish government previous to the independence of Mexico, and has succeeded by surmounting those difficulties and dangers incident to all new and wilderness countries infested with hostile Indians. These difficulties were many and at times appalling, and can only be appreciated by the hardy pioneers of this western country, who have passed through similar scenes.

"The question here naturally occurs, what inducements, what prospects, what hopes could have stimulated us, the pioneers and settlers of Texas, to remove from the midst of civilized society, to expatriate ourselves from this land of liberty, from this our native country, endeared to us as it was, and still is, and ever will be, by the ties of nativity, the reminiscences of childhood and youth and local attachments, of friendship and kindred? Can it for a moment be supposed that we severed all these ties—the ties of nature and education, and went to Texas to grapple with the wilderness and with savage foes, merely from a spirit of wild and visionary adventure, without guarantees of protection for our persons and property and political rights? No, it cannot be believed. No American, no Englishman, no one of any nation who has a knowledge of the people of the United States, or of the prominent characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon race to which we belong—a race that in all ages and in all countries wherever it has appeared, has been marked for a jealous and tenacious watchfulness of its liberties, and for a cautious and calculating view of the probable events of the future—no one who has a knowledge of this race can or will believe that we removed to Texas without such guarantees, as free born and enterprising men naturally expect and require.

"The fact is, we had such guarantees; for, in the first place the government bound itself to protect us by the mere act of admitting us as citizens, on the general and long established principle, even in the dark ages, that *protection* and *allegiance* are reciprocal—a principle which in this enlightened age has been extended much further; for its received interpretation now is, that the object of government is the well being, security, and

happiness of the governed, and that allegiance ceases whenever it is clear, evident, and palpable, that this object is in no respect effected.

"But besides this general guarantee, we had others of a special, definite, and positive character—the colonization laws of 1823, '24, and '25, inviting emigrants generally to that country, especially guaranteed protection for person and property, and the right of citizenship.

"When the federal system and constitution were adopted in 1824, and the former provinces became states, Texas, by her representative in the constituent congress, exercised the right which was claimed and exercised by all the provinces, of retaining within her own control, the rights and powers which appertain to her as one of the *unities* or distinct societies, which confederated together to form the federal republic of Mexico. But not possessing at that time sufficient population to become a state by herself, she was with her own consent, united provisionally with Coahuila, a neighboring province or society, to form the state of COAHUILA AND TEXAS, 'until Texas possessed the necessary elements to form a separate state of herself.' I quote the words of the constitutional or organic act passed by the constituent congress of Mexico, on the 7th of May, 1824, which establishes the state of Coahuila and Texas. This law, and the principles on which the Mexican federal compact was formed, gave to Texas a specific political existence, and vested in her inhabitants the special and well defined rights of self-government as a state of the Mexican confederation, so soon as she '*possessed the necessary elements.*' Texas consented to the provisional union with Coahuila on the faith of this guarantee. It was therefore a solemn compact, which neither the state of Coahuila and Texas, nor the general government of Mexico, can change without the consent of the people of Texas.

"In 1833 the people of Texas, after a full examination of their population and resources, and of the law and constitution, decided, in general convention elected for that purpose, that the period had arrived contemplated by said law and compact of 7th May, 1824, and that the country possessed the necessary elements to form a state separate from Coahuila. A respectful and humble petition was accordingly drawn up by this convention, addressed to the general congress of Mexico, praying for the admission of Texas into the Mexican confederation as a state. I had the honor of being appointed by the convention, the commissioner or agent of Texas, to take this petition to the city of Mexico, and present it to the government. I discharged this duty to the best of my feeble abilities, and, as I believed, in a respectful manner. Many months passed and nothing was done with the

petition, except to refer it to a committee of congress, where it slept and was likely to sleep. I finally urged the just and constitutional claims of Texas to become a state, in the most pressing manner, as I believed it to be my duty to do; representing also the necessity and good policy of this measure, owing to the almost total want of local government of any kind, the absolute want of a judiciary, the evident impossibility of being governed any longer by Coahuila, (for three fourths of the legislature were from there,) and the consequent anarchy and discontent that existed in Texas. It was my misfortune to offend the high authorities of the nation—my frank and honest exposition of the truth was construed into threats.

“At this time (September and October, 1833) a revolution was raging in many parts of the nation, and especially in the vicinity of the city of Mexico. I despaired of obtaining any thing, and wrote to Texas recommending to the people there to organize as a state *de facto* without waiting any longer. This letter may have been imprudent, as respects the injury it might do me personally, but how far it was criminal or treasonable, considering the revolutionary state of the whole nation, and the peculiar claims and necessities of Texas, impartial men must decide. It merely expressed an opinion. This letter found its way from San Antonio de Bexar, (where it was directed,) to the government. I was arrested at Saltillo, two hundred leagues from Mexico, on my way home, taken back to that city and imprisoned one year; three months of the time in solitary confinement, without books or writing materials, in a dark dungeon of the former inquisition prison. At the close of the year I was released from confinement, but detained six months in the city on heavy bail. It was nine months after my arrest before I was officially informed of the charges against me, or furnished with a copy of them. The constitutional requisites were not observed, my constitutional rights as a citizen were violated, the people of Texas were outraged by this treatment of their commissioner, and their respectful, humble and just petition was disregarded.

“These acts of the Mexican government, taken in connexion with many others, and with the general revolutionary situation of the interior of the republic, and the absolute want of local government in Texas would have justified the people of Texas in organizing themselves as a state of the Mexican confederation, and if attacked for so doing, in separating from Mexico. They would have been justifiable in doing this, because such acts were unjust, ruinous and oppressive, and because self-preservation required a local government in Texas suited to the situation and necessities of the country, and the character of its inhabitants. Our forefathers in '76, flew to arms for much less. They resist-

ed a principle, ‘the theory of oppression,’ but in our case it was the reality—it was a denial of justice and of our guaranteed rights—it was oppression itself.

“Texas, however, even under these aggravated circumstances forbore and remained quiet. The constitution, although outraged, and the sport of faction and revolution, still existed in name, and the people of Texas still looked to it with the hope that it would be sustained and executed, and the vested rights of Texas respected. I will now proceed to show how this hope was defeated by the total prostration of the constitution, and the destruction of the federal system, and the dissolution of the federal compact.

“It is well known that Mexico has been in constant revolutions and confusion, with only a few short intervals, ever since its separation from Spain in 1821. This unfortunate state of things has been produced by the efforts of the ecclesiastical and aristocratic party to oppose republicanism, overturn the federal system and constitution, and establish a monarchy, or a consolidated government of some kind.

“In 1834, the president of the republic, Gen. Santa Anna, who heretofore was the leader and champion of the republican party and system, became the head and leader of his former antagonists—the aristocratic and church party. With this accession of strength, this party triumphed. The constitutional general congress of 1834, which was decidedly republican and federal, was dissolved in May of that year, by a military order of the president, before its constitutional term had expired. The council of government composed of half the senate which, agreeably to the constitution, ought to have been installed the day after closing the session of congress, was also dissolved; and a new, revolutionary, and unconstitutional congress was convened by another military order of the president.”

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“For the information of those who are not acquainted with the organization of the Mexican republic under the federal system and constitution of 1824, it may be necessary to state that this constitution is copied, as to its general principles, from that of the United States.”

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“By keeping these facts in view, and then supposing the case that the president and congress of these United States were to do, what the president and congress of Mexico have done, and that one of the states was to resist, and insist on sustaining the federal constitution and state rights, and a parallel case would be presented of the present contest between Texas and the revolutionary government of Mexico.

“In further elucidation of this subject, I will present an ex-

tract from a report made by me to the provisional government of Texas on the 30th of November last, communicating the said decree of 3d October. :—

“That every people have the right to change their government, is unquestionable; but it is equally certain and true, that this change, to be morally or politically obligatory, must be effected by the free expression of the community, and by legal and constitutional means; for otherwise, the stability of governments and the rights of the people, would be at the mercy of fortunate revolutionists, of violence, or faction.

“Admitting, therefore, that a central and despotic, or strong government, is best adapted to the education and habits of a portion of the Mexican people, and that they wish it; this does not, and cannot, give to them the right to dictate, by unconstitutional means and force, to the other portion who have equal rights, and differ in opinion.

“Had the change been effected by constitutional means, or had a national convention been convened, and every member of the confederacy been fairly represented, and a majority agreed to the change, it would have placed the matter on different ground; but, even then, it would be monstrous to admit the principle, that a majority have the right to destroy the minority, for the reason, that self-preservation is superior to all political obligations. That such a government as is contemplated by the before-mentioned decree of the 3d of October, would destroy the people of Texas, must be evident to all, when they consider its geographical situation, so remote from the contemplated centre of legislation and power; populated as it is, by a people who are so different in education, habits, customs, language, and local wants, from all the rest of the nation; and especially when a portion of the central party have manifested violent religious and other prejudices and jealousies against them. But no national convention was convened, and the constitution has been, and now is, violated and disregarded. The constitutional authorities of the state of Coahuila and Texas, solemnly protested against the change of government, for which act they were driven by military force from office, and imprisoned.* The people of Texas protested against it, as they had a right to do, for which they have been declared rebels by the government of Mexico.

*“The legislature of the state of Coahuila and Texas of 1835, which made this protest, was dissolved by a military force acting under the orders of Gen. Cos, and the governor, Don Augustin Viesca, the secretary of state, and several of the members of the legislature were imprisoned. Col. Benjamin R. Milam, who fell at San Antonio de Bexar, and several other Texans, were at Monclova, the capital of the state, when these events took place—they took a decided stand in support of the state au-

“However necessary, then, the basis established by the decree of the 3d of October, may be to prevent civil wars and anarchy in other parts of Mexico, it is attempted to be effected by force and unconstitutional means. However beneficial it may be to some parts of Mexico, it would be ruinous to Texas. This view presents the whole subject to the people. If they submit to a forcible and unconstitutional destruction of the social compact, which they have sworn to support, they violate their oaths. If they submit to be tamely destroyed, they disregard their duty to themselves, and violate the first law which God stamped upon the heart of man, civilized or savage; which is the law of the right of self-preservation.

“The decree of the 3d October, therefore, if carried into effect, evidently leaves no remedy for Texas but resistance, secession from Mexico, and a direct resort to natural rights.”

“These revolutionary measures of the party who had usurped the government in Mexico, were resisted by the people in the states of Puebla, Oaxaca, Mexico, Jalisco, and other parts of the nation. The state of Zacatecas took up arms, but its efforts were crushed by an army, headed by the president, Gen. Santa Anna, in person; and the people of that state were disarmed, and subjected to a military government. In October last, a military force was sent to Texas, under Gen. Cos, for the purpose of enforcing these unconstitutional and revolutionary measures, as had been done in Zacatecas, and other parts of the nation. This act roused the people of Texas, and the war commenced.

“Without exhausting the patience by a detail of numerous other vexatious circumstances, and violations of our rights, I trust that what I have said on this point, is sufficient to show that the federal social compact of Mexico is dissolved; that we have just and sufficient cause to take up arms against the revolutionary government which has been established; that we have forborne until the cup was full to overflowing; and that further forbearance or submission on our part would have been both ruinous and degrading; and that it was due to the great cause of liberty, to ourselves, to our posterity, and to the free blood which I am proud to say, fills our veins, to resist and proclaim *war* against such acts of usurpation and oppression.

“The justice of our cause being clearly shown, the next important question that naturally presents itself to the intelligent and

authorities and the constitution. Milam was taken prisoner with the governor, the others escaped to Austin's colony, and the local authorities were commanded by a military order from General Cos, to deliver them up to him. This order was not obeyed of course: it was the precursor of the invasion of Texas by this general in October.”

inquiring mind, is, *what are the objects and intentions of the people of Texas?*

"To this we reply, that our object is *freedom*—civil and religious freedom—emancipation from that government, and that people, who, after fifteen years' experiment, since they have been separated from Spain, have shown that they are incapable of self-government, and that all hopes of any thing like stability or rational liberty in their political institutions, at least for many years, are vain and fallacious.

"This object we expect to obtain, by a total separation from Mexico, as an independent community, a new republic, or by becoming a state of the United States. Texas would have been satisfied to have been a state of the Mexican Confederation, and she made every constitutional effort in her power to become one. But that is no longer practicable, for that confederation no longer exists. One of the two alternatives abovementioned, therefore, is the only resource which the revolutionary government of Mexico has left her. Either will secure the liberties and prosperity of Texas, for either will secure to us the right of self-government over a country which we have redeemed from the wilderness, and conquered without any aid or protection whatever from the Mexican government, (for we never received any,) and which is clearly ours. Ours, by every principle on which original titles to countries are, and ever have been founded. We have explored and pioneered it, developed its resources, made it known to the world, and given to it a high and rapidly increasing value. The federal republic of Mexico had a *constitutional* right to participate *generally* in this value, but it had not, and cannot have any other; and this one has evidently been forfeited and destroyed by unconstitutional acts and usurpation, and by the total dissolution of the social compact. Consequently, the true and legal owners of Texas, the only legitimate sovereigns of that country, are the people of Texas.

"It is also asked, *what is the present situation of Texas, and what are our resources to effect our objects, and defend our rights?*

"The present position of Texas is an *absolute Declaration of Independence*—a total separation from Mexico. This declaration was made on the 7th of November last. It is as follows:—

"Whereas Gen. Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, and other military chieftains, have by force of arms, overthrown the federal institutions of Mexico, and dissolved the social compact which existed between Texas and the other members of the Mexican Confederacy, now the good people of Texas, availing themselves of their natural rights, SOLEMNLY DECLARE,

"1st. That they have taken up arms in defence of their rights and liberties, which were threatened by encroachments of mili-

tary despots, and in defence of the republican principles of the federal constitution of Mexico, of 1824.

"2d. That Texas is no longer morally or civilly bound by the compact of union; yet stimulated by the generosity and sympathy common to a free people, they offer their support and assistance to such of the members of the Mexican Confederacy as will take up arms against military despotism.

"3d. That they do not acknowledge that the present authorities of the nominal Mexican Republic have the right to govern within the limits of Texas.

"4th. That they will not cease to carry on war against the said authorities, whilst their troops are within the limits of Texas.

"5th. That they hold it to be their right, during the disorganization of the federal system, and the reign of despotism, to withdraw from the union, to establish an independent government, or to adopt such measures as they may deem best calculated to protect their rights and liberties; but that they will continue faithful to the Mexican government so long as that nation is governed by the constitution and laws, that were framed for the government of the political association.

"6th. That Texas is responsible for the expenses of her armies now in the field.

"7th. That the public faith of Texas is pledged for the payment of any debts contracted by her agents.

"8th. That she will reward by donations in land, all who volunteer their services in her present struggle, and receive them as citizens.

"These declarations we solemnly avow to the world, and call God to witness their truth and sincerity, and invoke defeat and disgrace upon our heads, should we prove guilty of duplicity."

"It is worthy of particular attention that this declaration affords another and unanswerable proof of the forbearance of the Texans, of their firm adherence, even to the last moment, to the constitution which they had sworn to support, and to their political obligations as Mexican citizens. For, although at this very time the federal system and constitution of 1824 had been overturned and trampled under foot by military usurpation, in all other parts of the republic, and although our country was actually invaded by the usurpers for the purpose of subjecting us to military rule, the people of Texas still said to the Mexican nation—'Restore the federal constitution and govern in conformity to the social compact, which we are all bound by our oaths to sustain, and we will continue to be a member of the Mexican Confederation.' This noble and generous act, for such it certainly was, under the circumstances, is of itself sufficient to repel and

silence the false charges which the priests and despots of Mexico have made of the ingratitude of the Texians. In what does this ingratitude consist? I cannot see, unless it be in our enterprise and perseverance, in giving value to a country that the Mexicans considered valueless, and thus exciting their jealousy and cupidity.

"The true interpretation of this charge of ingratitude is as follows:—The Mexican government have at last discovered that the enterprising people who were induced to remove to Texas by certain promises and guaranties, have by their labors given value to Texas and its lands. An attempt is therefore now made to take them from us, and to annul all those guaranties; and we are ungrateful because we are not sufficiently 'docile' to submit to this usurpation and injustice, as the 'docile' Mexicans have in other parts of the nation.

"Another interesting question, which naturally occurs to every one, is, what great benefits and advantages are to result to philanthropy and religion, or to the people of these United States, from the emancipation of Texas? To this we reply, that ours is most truly and emphatically the cause of liberty, which is the cause of philanthropy, of religion, of mankind; for in its train follow freedom of conscience, pure morality, enterprise, the arts and sciences, all that is dear to the noble-minded and the free, all that renders life precious. On this principle, the Greeks and the Poles, and all others who have struggled for liberty, have received the sympathies or aid of the people of the United States; on this principle, the liberal party in priest-ridden Spain is now receiving the aid of high-minded and free-born Englishmen; on this same principle, Texas expects to receive the sympathies and aid of their brethren, the people of the United States, and of the freemen of all nations. But the Greeks and the Poles are not parallel cases with ours—they are not the sons and daughters of Anglo-Americans. We are. We look to this happy land, as to a fond mother, from whose bosom we have imbibed those great principles of liberty which are now nerving us, although comparatively few in numbers and weak in resources, to contend against the whole Mexican nation in defence of our rights.

"The emancipation of Texas will extend the principles of self-government over a rich and neighboring country, and open a vast field there for enterprise, wealth and happiness; and for those who wish to escape from the frozen blasts of a northern climate, by removing to a more congenial one. It will promote and accelerate the march of the present age, for it will open a door through which a bright and constant stream of light and intelligence will flow from this great northern fountain, over the benighted regions of Mexico.

"That nation of our continent will be regenerated; freedom of conscience and rational liberty will take root in that distant, and, by nature, much favored land, where for ages past the upas banner of the inquisition, of intolerance, and of despotism, has paralyzed, and sickened, and deadened every effort in favor of civil and religious liberty.

"But apart from these great principles of philanthropy, and narrowing down this question to the contracted limits of cold and prudent political calculation, a view may be taken of it, which doubtless has not escaped the penetration of the sagacious and cautious politicians of the United States. It is the great importance of *Americanizing* Texas, by filling it with a population from this country, who will harmonize in language, in political education, in common origin, in everything, with their neighbors to the east and north. By this means, Texas will become a great outwork on the west, to protect the outlet of this western world, the mouths of the Mississippi, as Alabama and Florida are on the east; and to keep far away from the southwestern frontier—the weakest and most vulnerable in the nation—all enemies who might make Texas a door for invasion, or use it as a theatre from which mistaken philanthropists and wild fanatics might attempt a system of intervention in the domestic concerns of the south, which might lead to a civil war, or at least jeopardize the tranquillity of Louisiana and the neighboring states.

"This view of the subject is a very important one; so much so, that a bare allusion to it is sufficient to direct the mind to the various interests and results, immediate and remote, that are involved.

"To conclude: I have shown that our cause is just and righteous; that it is the great cause of mankind, and, as such, merits the approbation and moral support of this magnanimous and free people; that our object is independence, as a new republic, or to become a state of these United States; that our resources are sufficient to sustain the principles we are defending; that the results will be the promotion of the great cause of liberty, of philanthropy and religion, and the protection of a great and important interest to the people of the United States.

"With these claims to the approbation and moral support of the free of all nations, the people of Texas have taken up arms in self-defence; and they submit their cause to the judgment of an impartial world, and to the protection of a just and omnipotent God."