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POLICY OF ENGLAND AND FRANCE

IN REFERENCE TO

THE ANNEXATION OF TEXAS

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CHAPTER XVIII OF THE ANNEXATION OF TEXAS

BY

JUSTIN H. SMITH

*Author of The Troubadours at Home, Our Struggle for the Fourteenth Colony,
Arnold's March from Cambridge to Quebec, etc.*

Recently Professor of Modern History in Dartmouth College

NEW YORK
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JUSTIN H. SMITH

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By JUSTIN H. SMITH

1911

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TO THE MEMORY OF

DR. GEORGE PIERCE GARRISON

AND TO

ALL THOSE OTHER SCHOLARS WHOSE INVESTIGATIONS HAVE
THROWN LIGHT UPON THE HISTORY OF TEXAS

THIS VOLUME IS WITH GREAT RESPECT

INSCRIBED

PREFACE.

The annexation of Texas, it can justly be said, was a very interesting, important, complicated and critical affair. It involved issues and consequences of no little moment in our domestic politics. It gave us an area greater than England and France together, with a port that ranks very near the head of our list, and paved the way for the acquisition of San Francisco and our far Southwest. It led to our greatest and most brilliant foreign war. It extinguished a nation that might have become a strong and unfriendly rival and might have caused the disruption of the Union. It removed an excellent opportunity for certain leading European powers to interpose in the affairs of this continent and in particular to embarrass the development of the United States. It presented a field of battle on which our diplomats and those of England, France, Mexico and Texas waged a long and intricate struggle with all their skill and with a full determination to succeed; and it brought these five nations to the verge of war. Such an episode would appear to merit a detailed study, especially since very different opinions regarding it still prevail; and as the author, while gathering data for a history of our Mexican War, found many essential materials for a thorough treatment of the subject, he has felt under obligation to complete and present them.

As the footnotes indicate, the monograph is based almost exclusively (with the exception of certain preliminary matters) on first-hand sources, though all previous works of any importance on the subject have been fully examined. Use has been made of substantially all the diplomatic papers—American, British, French, Mexican and Texan—bearing upon the question, and also, as may be seen by the account of the Sources in the Appendix, a rather large amount of other valuable material both manuscript and printed, such as executive and legislative documents, letters, speeches, diaries and periodicals. All discoverable sources of information, indeed, have been examined. In this way a closer approach to completeness has been attainable, and at the same time it has been possible to avoid errors into which a writer depending upon a portion of the data would not infrequently fall without even suspecting danger.

Secondly, by making a painstaking study of public opinion in the countries chiefly concerned it has been feasible to ascertain the causes which controlled or influenced official action in certain important cases. Thirdly, attention has been paid to a number of subsidiary topics which throw a strong light upon the subject. Such are the British designs with reference to slavery in Texas and the United States, the political condition of northern Mexico at this period, the possibilities before Texas as an independent nation, the danger to the United States involved in her permanent nationality, the scheme of a new confederacy, the status and influence of the annexation issue in the politics of this country, and several others. Fourthly, the desire has been to avoid leaving the matter, as it is easy to do when using first-hand sources, in such a condition that the reader could not see the forest for the trees. And finally a strong and long-continued effort has been made to secure not only completeness but accuracy. Of course perfection has not been reached, however, and it is hoped that all mistakes may be pointed out. The truth of history is surely more important than a writer's dream of an impossible inerrancy, and serious criticism, based upon knowledge, is co-operation of a most useful kind.

Those who were pleased to commend the style of the author's latest work, *Our Struggle for the Fourteenth Colony*, may feel surprised that the present volume is so different. It seems to him clear, however, that one's manner of writing should depend on one's subject and object. In the former case his dominant theme was the early, impulsive stage of a popular revolution in the name of Liberty, and his principal business was to recount the out-door proceedings—often peculiarly dramatic and exciting—of ardent and frequently somewhat crude young men; whereas at present his concern is with diplomats and statesmen pursuing with dignity and deliberation their profoundly studied lines of policy. The earlier book, in order to make the extraordinary facts entirely comprehensible to minds quite unfamiliar with such a state of things, endeavored to place its readers in the thick of events and impart in some degree a sense of the agitation and enthusiasm of the time, to which end a vivid and rather highly colored style, answering to the character of the persons and events presented, seemed appropriate and even necessary; but now one is occupied with complicated intellectual efforts of a high order, which are best viewed from an

elevation and a distance; and these require only to be made known as clearly, calmly and unobtrusively as possible.

The footnotes cover all the statements of the text except a few matters of common knowledge, but of course a fact once proved is not proved again. To some readers the number of references will seem unnecessarily great, and so they appear to the author himself. But as almost every foot of the ground is controversial, the percentage that could safely be omitted is rather small, and the saving would hardly justify the abandonment of a complete and logical system for one of the opposite character. In order not to fill the page with annoying figures, the references—standing in the order of the statements they support—are grouped by paragraphs, and an indication of the bearing of the reference is given when this is not obvious. Naturally in some cases a citation confirms more than a single sentence, and it should be remembered, too, that for reasons of convenience the first page of a document is the one specified unless there is a particular occasion for doing otherwise. To carry such a body of figures with perfect accuracy through the processes of compiling, revising, copying and printing is extremely difficult, especially as the author's attention is liable to be diverted momentarily from the mathematics to the meaning of the citation; but it can be said that unsparing pains have been taken to ensure correctness, and that a trained historical worker has gone over the entire work of verification independently.

While engaged on this investigation at the Public Record Office, London, the author was so fortunate as to have for neighbor Dr. Ephraim Douglass Adams, the fruit of whose researches, covering to a small extent the same ground as this volume, has recently been offered to the public. As it fell to the present writer in another place to view that monograph, *British Interests and Activities in Texas*, in the manner which it invited by describing itself as "purely technical," he will only say here—though it does not need to be said—that anything coming from such a source deserves very careful attention, and express the hope that all concerned with Texan history will read the book. One cannot help wishing that Professor Adams's investigations had extended to the Texan, Mexican and American archives. Mention must also be made of an interesting and valuable work by Dr. Jesse S. Reeves, entitled *American Diplomacy under Tyler and Polk*, based largely on documents which he as well as the present writer was permitted to examine at the State

Department, Washington. Neither of these volumes, it is proper to add, was read by the author of *The Annexation of Texas* until after the completion of his own manuscript. In this place, too, the important investigations conducted by a number of Texan scholars and made known to the public in various learned periodicals, notably the *Quarterly* of their State Historical Association, are entitled to a grateful and very respectful recognition.

Finally the author desires to acknowledge with the highest appreciation the indispensable assistance of President Roosevelt, President Diaz, Secretary of State Root, Minister of Foreign Relations Mariscal, Senator Lodge, and Ambassadors Reid at London, White at Paris and Clayton at Mexico; and to express a warm sense of obligation to his distinguished friends Dr. J. Franklin Jameson, Mr. Worthington C. Ford and Mr. Gaillard Hunt for aid in his search for documents. To the many others who have kindly co-operated in minor yet important ways, particularly by granting permission to examine the MSS. in their custody, his thanks are likewise very cordially tendered.

J. H. S.

BOSTON, July 26, 1911.

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XVIII

THE POLICY OF ENGLAND AND FRANCE IN REFERENCE TO THE ANNEXATION OF TEXAS

As early as April, 1830, Mexico drew England's attention to Texas, and mentioned in particular the desire of the United States to obtain it. Gorostiza, her minister at London, had a formal interview with Aberdeen, declared that his country "would never voluntarily consent" to the cession of the province, and expressed a wish to know the feeling of Great Britain on the subject. His Lordship, indeed, had already said that "the severing of a part of the Mexican territory would be of general significance, and could not suit the interests of England," but Mexico now desired something more explicit. To this Aberdeen replied that Great Britain felt deeply concerned about the matter. He did not believe the United States, however anxious to possess this important region, entertained hostile intentions against the owners of it; but he asked Gorostiza to call at any hour when he should have cause to suspect the existence of such designs.¹

As it has already been suggested, there were ample reasons why Great Britain should oppose our acquiring Texas. The area, wealth and population of the United States would be increased; the danger of our absorbing also the Mexican republic, where England had large interests, would become more imminent; and our hold upon the Gulf of Mexico would be strengthened. At the same time Great Britain would lose the priceless advantage of possessing a source of cotton supply outside of the United States and the profitable opportunity to land merchandise at Galveston, under a low rate of duties, not only for the Texas market but for illicit introduction into the adjacent portions of two high tariff countries. There was also another ground of objection probably. Besides extending American slavery, annexation would reinforce it; and both of these results were contrary to British policy.²

¹ See General Note, p. 1. Gorostiza to Relac., No. 10 (res.). April 22, 1830: Sria. Relac.

² According to the best English opinion, the annexation of Texas to the United States was quite liable to be followed by the annexation of Mexico. Pakenham, long minister to Mexico, wrote to the British Foreign Office (No. 22, April 14,

In October, 1843, Elliot was shown the despatch from Van Zandt which announced that the American government had informally but earnestly suggested union to Texas; and in December Fox, the quiet but watchful British minister at Washington, called the attention of the Foreign Office to portions of Tyler's annual Message which he thought pointed in that direction. Lord Aberdeen, believing that Houston desired the maintenance of nationality seems to have been confident that no favor would be shown to such a proposal by his administration, and therefore had seen little danger; but the President's Message and the report from Elliot aroused him considerably, it is probable, for on the ninth of January, 1844, he addressed a note on the subject to Pakenham, who had now been transferred from Mexico to Washington. At about this time Ashbel Smith, the Texan chargé, was in Paris. There he discussed with Guizot the interests of his nation; and then, going to London, he conferred with Aberdeen. As a result of these interviews—if Guizot was right in what he stated to the Chamber of Deputies—His Lordship addressed a letter on the twelfth of January to the British ambassador at Paris. In this he said that it appeared "sufficiently evident [from Tyler's remarks] that the future annexation of Texas" to the United States was "contemplated by the President"; that the government of Louis Philippe had recognized the new republic, and "the Interests of the two Countries [England and France] in that part of America were, in all respects, the same"; and that consequently he presumed that France, like England, "would not . . . look with indifference upon any measure, by which Texas should cease to exist as a separate and independent State." He therefore instructed Cowley to ascertain whether the cabinet of His Majesty shared these views, and in that case to "propose that the Representatives of the two Governments at Washington and in Texas, should be instructed to hold the same Language; deprecating all interference on the part of the United States in the affairs of Texas, or the adoption of any measure tending to the destruction of the separate existence of that State; at the same time, warning the Texian Government not to furnish the United States with any just cause of Complaint, and encouraging them to look to the preservation of their independence, as the best security for their ultimate prosperity, both political and commercial."³

1844: F. O., America, cdiv.): "it may be feared that if the present project [the annexation of Texas] should unfortunately take effect, the Independence of Mexico will cease to be worth many years purchase."

³ Elliot, secret, Oct. 31, 1843. Fox, Dec. 13, 1843. (Believing) Smith, No. 55. June 2, 1844. To Pak., No. 1, Jan. 9, 1844. (Guizot) *Le Nat.*, Feb. 2, 1846

Three days later Cowley replied that on a recent visit at the Tuileries, before these instructions had reached him, the King himself had broached the subject, remarking that it appeared from the President's Message as if the United States intended to bring about annexation, a point of no slight importance; that the scheme ought to be opposed; and that Guizot had been desired to open negotiations on the matter with Her Majesty's government. It was therefore not surprising that when the despatch of January 12 was made known to Guizot, he entirely concurred in its views, replied that Sainte Aulaire, the French ambassador at London, would be instructed at once to confer with Aberdeen, and Pageot, the minister at Washington, to act in strict concert with Pakenham, and remarked further that he personally thought it of importance to oppose the designs of the United States in this matter. On the twenty-ninth of the month the instructions to Saint Aulaire were actually issued, and in them Guizot went so far as to say, "It would not suit us under any consideration to accept without protest such a change" as the absorption of Texas. The instructions to Pageot were dated February 10, and he was told to inform the government of the United States clearly that even should the people of that republic wish to be annexed, France "could not view such an event (*fait*) with indifference." Thus the concert of the two powers on the subject was inaugurated.⁴

To understand why Louis Philippe embarked upon this course, it is necessary to study the matter somewhat carefully. In July, 1836, Cuevas, the Mexican minister at Paris, reporting that a war between Mexico and the American Union was generally believed there to have begun, said he did not doubt "for a moment" that his country would receive from France and England "all the support which their commerce with Mexico, their ardent desire to check the aggressive (*invasora*) policy of the United States and the justice of the Mexican cause demanded"; and from this it may be inferred what ideas he was endeavoring to inculcate. Two months later the Mexican department of foreign relations instructed him "to secure by all possible means the rectification of public opinion" in France, which it was feared that accounts of the atrocities perpetrated in Texas would affect. Cuevas had anticipated this order. In July

(This trip to London does not appear in Smith's reports). To Cowley, No. 16, Jan. 12, 1844. A copy of this despatch was sent to Elliot, Jan. 31, 1844.

⁴Cowley, Jan. 15, 1844. To Ste. Aulaire, Jan. 29, 1844: *Le Const.*, Jan. 12, 1846. To Pageot, Feb. 10, 1844: *ib.*

La Presse of Paris had contained an article, the basis of which had been furnished by him, declaring that the United States had "inherited the ancient Punic faith of England," and that in the eyes of the great American republic "all means were good." Cuevas had already enlisted the *Journal des Débats* also in his campaign, and in July that paper had printed an article on the United States especially designed to bring odium upon this country for tolerating slavery. After receiving his orders to influence public opinion it may be assumed that the minister did not relax his efforts; and his successor brought out and distributed the following year large numbers of the pamphlet prepared by Gorostiza, which attributed to the United States an improper and encroaching policy in the Texas affair. Diplomats, journalists and government officials were the persons he endeavored to instruct in this way, and he believed that his exertions were not without success.⁵

By these methods very likely the French government were somewhat stimulated to regard the aims of the United States as ambitious and aggressive; and, in addition to such promptings, Louis Philippe had ample reasons for desiring to prevent the annexation of Texas. As a monarch, he could not look with favor upon the development of a powerful republic. Royalty was his trade. The time had gone by when he had thought it for his interest to flatter democrats, and now he feared and detested them. He was "every inch a King," said our representative at his court in suggesting this explanation of his conduct. Moreover, as a sovereign by the right of revolution he found himself isolated in Europe, his government, said the American minister, having "never been viewed with a favorable eye by the great continental monarchies." It was England that had taken the lead in acknowledging him, and England, he felt, was still his "main stay." Threatened every moment, not only by this legitimist ill-will but by the strong revolutionary tendencies of France and Europe, it was upon British support that he counted to maintain that peace among the nations and the peoples which he deemed essential to the security of his dynasty and the prosperity of France; and, besides wishing to oblige his almost indispensable neighbor, he could see that the two countries, having somewhat similar interests in the Texas affair, would naturally be drawn together by joint action

⁵ Cuevas to Relac., No. 67, July 13, 1836; Sría. Relac. Relac. to Cuevas, No. 102, Sept. 12, 1836. *La Presse*, July 5, 1836. *Débats*, July 12, 1836. Mangino to Relac., No. 28, July 13, 1837; Sría. Relac.

regarding it. Moreover he desired in particular to earn the assent of England to the marriage of Montpensier and the Infanta.⁶

As a Latin, too, the King could not rejoice in the upbuilding of a great "Anglo-Saxon" power in America. As a Bourbon he was peculiarly tenacious of the family compact idea, and he well understood that in case of the failure of the direct line the French branch would inherit a claim to Spain and all Spanish America. As a member of the Orléans house, if *Le National* of Paris was right, he had inherited the policy of favoring England. As a believer in the balance of power, he felt opposed to the existence of any greatly preponderant nation in the western hemisphere; and in particular he was keenly alive to the danger that our neighbor on the south might suffer from American encroachments. Indeed, he told the Mexican minister explicitly in July, 1844, that the ambition of the United States would not be satisfied with Texas, but "would follow its aggressive system at the expense of Mexico unless a strong barrier were immediately established between the two countries"; and he dwelt on the same point in his conversation with Cowley.⁷

Moreover, France had recognized Texas in the expectation of securing commercial benefits; and while as yet almost nothing had been accomplished—two vessels carrying all the trade in 1845—there were still opportunities and hopes, especially as a former French colonist in Texas felt able to say that the French-speaking element there was the strongest except the American, and that the tastes and habits of the people made them like French goods. It was, besides, a point of pride to save a power which His Majesty had acknowledged as independent from being swallowed up by another nation. In fact, after recognizing Texas the King had logically desired from the first that her nationality become real, and as early as May, 1841, the following curious dialogue had occurred between him and the Mexican representative at his court.

"Have you news from Mexico?" inquired His Majesty.

"I have recently received quite satisfactory news," replied Garro.

"The country is at peace? You believe, Monsieur Garro, that there will be no war?"

"That is my hope, Sire."

"I am glad, for you know that I do not like war, which is a great evil."

⁶ King, No. 9, Dec. 31, 1844; No. 21, Jan. 1, 1846. Martin, No. 17, Aug. 15, 1845. Bancroft to Polk, Nov. 3, 1846: Bancroft Pap.

⁷ (Claim) London *Atlas*, Aug. 16, 1845. *Le Nat.*, Jan. 27, 1845. Garro, No. 15 (res.), July 4, 1844. Cowley, Jan. 15, 1844.

"Certainly, Sire."

"So there will be no war? That is best. Still, you have not made a treaty of peace yet."

"Sire, I misunderstood Your Majesty and thought you spoke of civil war. Our war with Texas the Republic is resolved to continue."

"The Spanish pronounce the name *Tecas* and not *Tecsas*, do they not?"

"Certainly."⁸

Guizot shared most of these ideas more or less strongly, no doubt. The new republic, he said later in the Chamber of Deputies, had been recognized in order to obtain raw materials on better terms than the United States would give, to secure lower duties than the American rates, to acquire valuable markets, and to avoid the annoyance of sending French merchandise to Galveston by way of New York. Still more strongly he dwelt upon the idea of a balance of power in America, and his letter to Pageot urged the value of Texas as a barrier against us. In the same despatch he insisted that it was due to the dignity of France that the national standing of that country be respected; and for commercial as well as political interests he considered it an important principle that independent states remain separate.⁹

There were also other reasons. Naturally he was under an obligation to comply with His Majesty's wishes. He felt, said Edward Everett, that "without the good will of the present British Government his own would sink." In particular there was no little dissatisfaction in France on account of the right of search that had been conceded to English cruisers with a view to the suppression of the slave trade; the minister desired to have the great credit of securing a modification of the agreement, as he actually did in 1845; and Everett, like many French politicians, believed that he was disposed to gratify his neighbor in the Texas matter in order to secure this favor in return. Indeed, Thiers asserted flatly in the Chamber of Deputies that France adopted the English policy in this business in order to buy back the right of visit.¹⁰

It is very likely, too, that Guizot thought the matter a small one.

⁸ King, No. 1, July 13, 1844. (Vessels) Billault in Chamber of Deputies: *Le Nat.*, Jan. 22, 1846. *Revue de Paris*, March 18, 1845. Garro, No. 7 (res.), May 10, 1845.

⁹ Everett, No. 331, June 17, 1845. *Débats*, Jan. 23, 1846. To Pageot, Feb. 10, 1844: *Le Const.*, Jan. 12, 1846.

¹⁰ Everett, private, Feb. 26, 1845. *London Journ. Com.*, June 7, 1845. *Revue de Paris*, Feb. 15, 1845. (Thiers) *Débats*, Jan. 21, 1846.

Pageot had written about it in at least three despatches during 1843, asserted Berryer, without rousing any particular interest in the French foreign office. Probably the chief minister did not imagine that anything more than diplomatic operations would be called for. His expectation was, our representative thought, that Clay would be elected President in 1844, and the question of annexation be dropped. The reports of his agents that the Texan people did not wish to be absorbed, drew him in the same direction; and in his despatch to Pageot he stated that the opposition against the annexation of that country was based primarily upon the supposed unwillingness of her citizens to join the United States. In short, for all these reasons he believed that no harm could result from meddling, that he could thus accumulate merit with England, that he could please his master, and that he could strengthen both his own administration and the national interests. Accordingly, though the French government cared intrinsically much less about the matter than did the English, it was determined to protest formally against the absorption of Texas, and after some delay instructions to that effect were received by Pageot.¹¹

They arrived at about the time Calhoun signed the annexation treaty, and the ministers of England and France, who had already conferred on the subject, again took counsel together. Pakenham, though not authorized to go as far as his colleague, had already remonstrated against the project in plain terms, and he would have felt justified now in uniting with Pageot in a formal protest, had he thought such a step would have "the effect of arresting the progress of the mischief"; but, he reported, "I agreed with M. Pageot in the opinion that a simple protest on our part, unsupported by an intimation of more decisive measures of resistance—and this intimation neither of us were authorized to make—would have been quite insufficient to arrest the evil intentions of this Government." On the other hand, by arousing a popular outcry it might weaken the anti-annexation strength in the Senate, and would certainly—should the measure be consummated—render the position of England and France as passive witnesses the more "unpleasant." Consequently it was agreed by the two diplomats that no protest should be made.¹²

¹¹ (Pageot) Berryer: *Débats*, Jan. 31, 1846. King, No. 9, Dec. 31, 1844. To Pageot: Note 9. King, No. 25, Jan. 30, 1846. Smith, No. 55. June 2, 1844. (Cared less) Id., July 1, 1844: Jones, Memor., 369. (Instructions) Pak., No. 22, April 14, 1844. The truth about the protest was studiously concealed, and all kinds of assertions and conjectures in reference to it are to be met with.

¹² Pak., No. 22, April 14, 1844.

At the end of March Pakenham had reported from Washington that he believed an annexation treaty was to be concluded "as soon as a certain General Henderson supposed to be now on his way from Texas" should arrive; and about the middle of the following month he sent word that he was "assured" the treaty had been signed. It then occurred to the British government that perhaps these proceedings could be checked by an appeal to international law, and on May 13 the opinion of Her Majesty's Advocate General was requested. With startling promptness Mr. Dodson replied only two days later. A state recognized as independent has the right, he said, to "divest Itself" of sovereignty by a treaty of annexation although it has made treaties with other nations, unless it has engaged not to do so, and even in that case is at liberty to take such a step if constrained by "an over ruling necessity." Little comfort could be derived from this opinion. In diplomacy therefore appeared to lie the best hope; and three days afterwards Pakenham was informed that immediate and anxious attention would be given to the subject.¹³

This bore fruit within a fortnight in an interview with Murphy, the Mexican representative at London, and in a Memorandum of the conversation drawn up by him in French and modified by Aberdeen in English, the essential part of which ran as follows,—italics representing the modifications:

"Lord Aberdeen expressed a wish to see Mexico acknowledge the independence of Texas. 'If Mexico,' he said, 'will concede this point, England (and I have reason to believe that France will join with her in this determination) will oppose the annexation of Texas and moreover *he would endeavour that* France and England will unite in guaranteeing not only the independence of Texas, but also the boundary of Mexico. On the other hand should Mexico persist in declining to recognize Texas, the intentions of England to prevent the annexation of that country to the United States might not be put in execution.' Upon my remarking that it was not at all probable the American Government would be willing to drop the annexation affair, even should the American Senate reject the Treaty for the present, Lord Aberdeen replied that *provided that England and France were perfectly agreed*, 'it would matter little to England whether the American Government should be willing to drop this question or not, and that, should it be necessary, she would go to the last extremity [jusqu' aux dernières extrémités] in support of her opposition to the annexation; but that for this purpose it was essential that Mexico be disposed to acknowledge the independence

¹³ Pak., No. 16, March 28; No. 22, April 14, 1844. Dodson to Aberdeen, May 15, 1844: F. O., Texas, xi. To Pak., No. 21, May 18, 1844.

of Texas,'” because otherwise an agreement in policy between her and England would be impossible.

Such was the fully attested report of this interview. It indicated clearly that war with United States was contemplated, and Murphy was not only authorized but expected to place it before Santa Anna.¹⁴

A few days later a despatch was addressed to the British representative at Paris, and this was followed very shortly by one to Bankhead, accompanied by copies of the Murphy Memorandum and the despatch to Cowley. “You will therein see,” wrote Aberdeen to his agent at Mexico, “that we have submitted a proposition to the French Government for a joint operation on the part of Great Britain and France in order to induce Mexico to acknowledge the independence of Texas, on a guarantee being jointly given by us that that independence shall be respected by other Nations, and that the Mexico-Texian boundary shall be secured from future encroachment. Should France assent to this proposal, we propose to send out forthwith a fit person to Texas, in the unavoidable absence of Captain Elliot,” to ascertain whether on such a basis the people of that country would prefer independence to annexation, as it is believed they would. In case our impression on this point is found to be correct, “we shall then take measures forthwith for operating directly and officially upon the Mexican Government,” which we hope to find “amenable to our views. . . . Should they, however, refuse their assent, or still demur to the acknowledgment of Texas, it will be for England and France to take such further measures for attaining the desired object as they may deem expedient,”—in other words, one may fairly understand His Lordship to mean, the purpose would not be abandoned.¹⁵

Aberdeen learned from Pakenham, soon after the annexation treaty was presented to the Senate, that “the whole strength of Mr. Clay’s party” would be thrown against it, and no doubt he perceived that its rejection was thus ensured; but he felt surprised that Houston, after professing so earnestly to desire the maintenance of a national position, had suddenly taken up that project, and for this or some

¹⁴ Memo.: F. O., Mexico, clxxx. The interview was on May 28 or 29. To Bank., No. 16, conf., June 3, 1844. It should be noted that the Memo. *without* the italicized words represents Aberdeen’s ideas as Murphy understood them, and these words perhaps indicate merely the prudent reserve with which Aberdeen would naturally desire to speak to Mexico regarding the action of France.

¹⁵ To Cowley, May 31, 1844. To Bank., No. 16, conf., June 3, 1844. Aberdeen intimated to Smith (Smith, No. 55, June 2, 1844) that England and France were prepared to use force upon Mexico.

other reason he showed considerable reserve in talking with Ashbel Smith, saying little for a time about his intentions or the moves of the powers, whereas Louis Philippe informed the Texan envoy plainly that France desired a joint and authoritative interposition of the two nations. On the first of June, however, Smith explained to him that public feeling had been too strong for the President, and said it was his own opinion that if Mexico would recognize his country and Spain would enable her to trade with Cuba by making a commercial treaty, her people might not care to join the United States. Partially reassured, Aberdeen intimated that perhaps the recognition could be brought about, but he still felt much anxiety regarding the attitude of Texas.¹⁶

Three weeks later, however, he laid aside his reserve, and announced that when the annexation treaty should have been rejected, England and France would be willing to unite with Texas, the United States and Mexico in a Diplomatic Act. This Act was to be equivalent to a perpetual treaty, securing to Texas recognition and peace, but preventing her from ever acquiring territory beyond the Rio Grande or joining the American Union. Mexico, he said, would be forced into acquiescence in case she should be unwilling to join, and it was not expected that the United States would take part. Later Ashbel Smith said of this plan: "The terms, effect and possible consequences to the several parties to it [including, of course, a possible war], were maturely considered, fully discussed and clearly understood between Lord Aberdeen and the minister of Texas." Both Louis Philippe and Guizot stated that France would join in the Act; and President Houston, on learning of the proposition, not only directed Jones verbally several times to accept it, but finally wrote to him with his own hand this order: "Let our representatives be instructed to complete the proposed arrangement for the settlement of our Mexican difficulties, as soon as possible—giving the necessary pledges [that Texas would never consent to join the United States, explains Jones in a note], as suggested in the late dispatch of Dr. Smith on this subject."¹⁷

¹⁶ Pak., No. 36, April 28, 1844. Smith, No. 55, June 2, 1844.

¹⁷ England and France dared make no move toward settling the Texan affair while the treaty was pending, lest it should become known and cause an inflamed public sentiment in the United States to insist upon the ratification of the treaty (Jones to Miller, May 3, 1844: Miller Pap.). Smith, Nos. 55, 57, June 2, 24, 1844. Id., *Remin.*, 61, 62. The Act contemplated war not only with Mexico but with the United States, for a demand to bring Texas by force into the Union would certainly have arisen here, and it would have been incumbent upon England and France to protect her independence against us if force were

Now it is quite certain that Great Britain desired to be on friendly terms with this country. As far back as 1828 her minister in Mexico had been expressly notified of this wish, and ordered to "entirely abstain from professing or inculcating a hostile feeling" toward us. In 1836, while Mexico was extremely angry with her neighbor on the north, care was taken by the British minister at that post, under instructions from his government, to avoid encouraging the idea that any aid against us could be expected from England, or that she "might be induced from a feeling of good will towards Mexico to take any step of a nature to give umbrage to the Government of the United States"; and in June, 1842, referring to rumors that Great Britain was encouraging Mexico, Pakenham wrote that "So far from acting in a sense so little likely to be approved by Her Majesty's Government," he had urged the Mexican authorities to satisfy our just demands.¹⁸

In fact, England could not afford to fight this country, and she knew it. The amount of her capital engaged in commerce with the United States was described by Aberdeen himself as "vast." The value of British exports to the American market can be seen from the fact that three years later, according to Lord Bentinck, twenty out of the twenty-eight million dollars of the United States customs revenue were derived from British goods; while an article in the *New York Journal of Commerce* showed that England purchased \$16,000,000 worth of our products more than we received from her. Moreover, said the *London Mercantile Journal* in 1844, the only American import that England could do without was to-

used. Note what Pakenham and Pageot said (paragraph 23) about the action that would be taken by the United States in case England and France should undertake to ensure the independence of Texas. (Verbally) Jones, Memor., 43. Houston to Jones, Sept. 23, 1844: *Niles.*, lxxiv., 413. Jones (Memor., 59) says that under the Diplomatic Act France would have been willing to fight in order to prevent annexation. By July 19, Calhoun received information, in which he placed the most implicit confidence, that England, aided (it was said) by France, intended to force Mexico to recognize Texas on the condition that Texas would remain independent (Lewis to Jackson, July 19, 1844: Jackson Pap., Knoxville Coll.). How Houston reconciled his order with his hopes of Texan expansion is a mystery. Possibly, feeling that he had better make sure of the essential, he decided to sacrifice those hopes; but more probably he had some scheme in mind. It is noticeable that whereas England and France intended to prevent Texas from either joining the U. S. or crossing the Rio Grande, his order contemplated (according to Jones) only the first of these limitations. The order as printed mentions Smith and Daingerfield as the Texas representatives, but the names may have been inserted by Jones as explanatory.

¹⁸ To Pak., April 21, 1828. *E. g.* Pak., No. 42, May 27, 1836; No. 49, June 2, 1842.

bacco, and the others amounted to almost \$65,000,000. According to that authority, the United States took about \$4,000,000 in cotton manufactures alone, and nearly \$6,000,000 in woollens. The London *Economist* well described the two countries as commercial complements. Now not only would England lose her trade with us during the period of conflict but, as *Le Correspondant* of Paris remarked, we should be stimulated meanwhile to set up manufacturing establishments of our own, and British mill-owners and merchants, ruined by the suspension of their trade, would be likely to cross the sea and conduct their business here. Early in 1844 the Liverpool *Mercury* declared that a war with the United States, even if successful, "would be a calamity of a most fatal description." In March, 1845, when the danger of trouble over the Oregon question seemed real, the unsentimental *Economist* drew a most vivid and startling picture of the harm that would result; and all of these considerations were equally forcible a little earlier. Moreover, an income tax to meet the deficit in revenue was already necessary.¹⁹

England was hampered also by the complications of her foreign policy in India, China, Africa and Oceanica, and she was even more embarrassed by the condition of Ireland. In May, 1845, the London *Examiner* said, "The popular press [of that country] teems with the worst sort of treason; . . . a treason ready to league with any foreign foe." The same month Peel himself intimated in Parliament that in case of a conflict with the United States the Irish might cause serious difficulties; and the London *Atlas* remarked that some of their journals contemplated, "with a sort of savage satisfaction, not only the prospect of a war, but the probability of Ireland's uniting with the enemies" of Great Britain. Trouble was scented from another source also. The *Atlas* admitted that "the republicans of Canada" plainly indicated "an intention of throwing overboard their allegiance whenever an army of 50,000 repealers [of the union between Ireland and England] should choose to cross the Canadian borders." Moreover the continent was at this time a smouldering volcano preparing for the eruptions of 1848; and the United States consul at Bremen wrote to Calhoun that the Rothschilds would not permit any European power to go to war in

¹⁹ To Elliot, No. 10, July 3, 1845. (Bentinck) London *Times*, Nov. 25, 1847. N. Y. *Journ. Com.: Britannia*, Oct. 19, 1844. *Mercantile Journ.*, Aug. 26, 1844. *Economist*, Sept. 13, 1845. *Le Correspondant*, Jan. 1, 1846. *Mercury: Nat. Intell.*, May 9, 1844. *Economist*, March 28, 1845.

America, since the consequence would be a series of revolutions near home.²⁰

Still further, it would have been absurd to fight the United States on the Texas question, when England was pursuing a course of high-handed aggression abroad. In April, 1844, the *Atlas* protested against the policy of the government as follows :

“It is somewhat far-fetched to ground our operations [against Gwalior] upon an old treaty for the maintenance of a prince, because his regent was obnoxious to us, when that very prince, and his whole army and people, not only declined the assistance of their *soi-disant* allies, but opposed them with their whole force. It is, in fact, the history of all our Indian aggressions. We first enter into a treaty for the support of some particular family or dynasty, in the full certainty that, amidst the intrigues and revolutions which occur in oriental despotisms, we shall be called upon to interfere, and then we claim the whole heritage for ourselves.”

What looked yet worse, England had recently laid herself open to the charge of forcing opium upon the Chinese at the point of her sword. For a power conducting such operations to proclaim that the United States could not absorb a small independent nation quite willing to join us would have been laughable,—if not, as *Le Constitutionnel* termed it, mad. Yet it is perfectly clear that Great Britain was so anxious to prevent annexation that she stood ready, if supported as her minister indicated, to undertake a war in order to establish at the Sabine a perpetual barrier against us. That such was the meaning of the Murphy Memorandum and also of the Diplomatic Act is already evident enough, and the close concert between the two powers makes the French government a full accessory in this design ; but, as if to place the matter beyond question, the British representative in Mexico was instructed in December, 1844, to inform Santa Anna's cabinet that its course would “paralyse the exertions by which Great Britain and France were prepared to uphold the Independence of Texas against the encroachments of the United States, even at the risk of a collision with that Power.”²¹

The Diplomatic Act, however, although the French ambassador had full authority to sign it and everything could have been completed at one sitting, never was passed. When Anson Jones received

²⁰ *Examiner*, May 17, 1845. (Peel) *London Times*, May 5, 1845. *Atlas*, Sept. 2, 1844; Jan. 4, 1845. Mann to Calhoun, Oct. 31, 1844; Jameson, Calhoun Corr., 982.

²¹ *Atlas*, April 6, 1844. *Le Const.*, July 25, 1845. To Bank., No. 49, Dec. 31, 1844. For meaning of the Act see note 17.

written instructions to conclude it, he was already President-elect of the republic; and instead of obeying he sent the representative of Texas in France and England leave of absence to return home. Smith, who was quite friendly to Jones, fully believed that he did this because he thought the project of annexation had been killed or indefinitely postponed, and wished to reserve for his own administration the glory of making peace; and when Smith reached home Jones complacently said to him, "The negotiation shall take place here, and you as Secretary of State shall conduct it for Texas." Before anything was accomplished, however, the time for this measure had entirely passed.²²

No better fared the rest of the programme. The same documents were sent to Pakenham as to Bankhead, and that minister promptly conferred again with Pageot. Little discussion was necessary, and on the twenty-seventh of June Pakenham replied to Aberdeen substantially as follows: The rejection of the late treaty does not settle the question of annexation, and the Presidential election will turn upon it. Should Clay be successful, the project would not be abandoned; but "there would at least be a prospect of its being discussed with the calmness and dignity required by its importance, and by the interest which other Powers are justly entitled to take in it." For this reason England and France should avoid doing anything that would injure Clay's chances, and the plan in view "should not be known in this Country until after the Election." He urged further that any arrangement adopted for such a purpose should allow the United States to be really a party to it; and he

²² Smith, *Remin.*, 62-65. Jones's explanation was somewhat different (*Memor.*, 43, 57, 44, 55, 56). He said that, by an understanding with the President, he had been already vested with "the actual discharge of the Executive functions" (the accuracy of which assertion is directly disproved by the fact that Houston gave him this order) and that obedience would have meant war. But as he stated that annexation itself would have meant war, had France lived up to her agreements, and asserted that he was the architect of annexation, his action does not seem to have been due to fear of a conflict between England and the United States. In another passage of his Memoranda he intimated that obedience to the order might have defeated or delayed annexation and he would have suffered blame in consequence; but in view of his course, as it will appear in the next chapter, to say nothing of other aspects of it, this explanation appears entirely unsatisfactory. In still another place in his book he says, "I felt at liberty to *suspend* the execution of the order." This corresponds quite well with Ashbel Smith's very credible explanation, and is doubtless the truth. Jones's inaction *per se*, however, would probably not have prevented England and France from pursuing their policy. He himself has said that all they wanted was a pretext for interference, and that they would not have cared whether the people of Texas approved of the Diplomatic Act or not; and if England was ready to coerce Mexico, whose good-will it was highly important to retain, it does not seem likely that the Texas Secretary of State could have barred the way.

warned his government that if their plan were executed, "that is to say, if England and France should unite in determining to secure the independence of Texas without the consent and concurrence of this Country previously obtained," that determination would probably be met by the immediate annexation and occupation of Texas, "leaving it to the guaranteeing Powers to carry out the objects of the agreement as best they might"; while should either England or France undertake to put the scheme through alone, "the announcement of such an intention would be met here by measures of the most extreme resistance." In the same sense wrote Pageot to the government of France.²³

England for her part felt the strength of this plea for delay; and on the eighteenth of July Aberdeen informed Cowley that Pakenham's despatch furnished "much ground for serious reflection," and that in view of it England was disposed "to defer, at all events until a more fitting season," the execution of the projected measure. This in all probability, however, did not mean that it had at once been decided, upon hearing from Washington, to abandon a plan so carefully weighed and repeatedly announced. No substantial evidence of such a decision has been found; there was no occasion to determine at this time upon anything more than postponement; and it is practically impossible to believe that the British government, after deliberately adopting a policy that manifestly contemplated the chance of war and after officially stating that it mattered little what the United States might do so long as French support could be reckoned upon, would turn tail at the very first intimation of trouble with this country, and decide to leave the field before knowing what their ally would choose to do. Such ministers could neither demand respect nor respect themselves. "Reflection" was proper in such a case; postponement until after the American election was evidently expedient; and naturally England wished in particular to see how far she would be able to rely upon her associate after that power should have considered fully the advices from Washington.²⁴

Nor can any evidence be discovered that France resolved at once to retire. For her also there was really no occasion as yet to make such a decision. A pause was suggested by the circumstances and

²³ To Pak., No. 24, June 3, 1844. Pak., No. 76, June 27, 1844.

²⁴ To Cowley, No. 202, July 18, 1844. From Aberdeen's language it would seem likely that the idea of a longer postponement occurred to him but was laid aside; but his phraseology may have been used merely to avoid all appearance of applying pressure to France.

recommended by her ally. She therefore replied that she too thought it would be well to make no move until after the close of our Presidential campaign, and then her chargé in Texas was directed to employ all suitable arguments against the sacrifice of nationality. It is likely enough, however, that Guizot now began to think more seriously than before of the policy proposed by England.²⁵

When the course of the French cabinet in this matter finally came into public view, the outcry against it was furious. In the Chamber of Deputies its action was denounced by the eloquent Berryer as an undignified intrigue. Bad faith towards the United States was charged. How can America trust us? demanded *Le Constitutionnel*. It was entirely wrong, said many, to turn against an ancient comrade and valuable customer without the strongest of reasons. Not only was the American Union an ally and friend, but the mere existence of that republic, said Thiers, had prevented the nations of Europe from pointing to France as the only representative of the principles of the revolution; and the development of the United States, causing England anxiety, had compelled her to treat France with more consideration than formerly. It was pronounced a fatal policy to alienate or weaken a people whose aid might any day be needed against Great Britain. "The United States are perhaps the only nation in the world besides France for which I desire greatness," exclaimed Thiers in the Chamber of Deputies with this last point in view.²⁶

Above all, the government were attacked on the ground that Guizot, "the man of England," was not only sacrificing the true interests of his country but promoting those of her ancient enemy. Texas must be either American or English, it was argued. The preponderance that France has to fear is a preponderance on the ocean, not on the continent of America, said Billault in the Chamber. Balance of power indeed! exclaimed *La Revue Indépendante*; England already has half the world, and must we help her to maintain that sort of equilibrium? It is better for us, argued Thiers, that the small states belong to the American Union, for if they remain independent, fear of England will turn them against us. Our trade with Texas, it was suggested, never can be large so long as her growth is checked by Mexican raids; but that country, if incorporated in the United States, would develop as Louisiana has done, and France

²⁵ Cowley, July 22, 1844. To Saligny, Aug. 1, 1844; *Le Const.*, Jan. 12, 1846.

²⁶ (Berryer, Thiers, Billault): *Débats*, Jan. 21-23, 31, 1846. *Le Const.*, Jan. 31, 1846. Jollivet. Nouveaux Docs. Amér., 9.

would have her share of the business. "Touching self-abnegation!" sneered the sarcastic; we offend a traditional ally and labor for a traditional foe. Besides, answered the cautious, England is in such a situation at present that she could not fight; and if we allow her to get us into trouble, we may get out of it as best we can.²⁷

Guizot has well been described as largely a man of the closet. He was not very near to the people; but he and his associates were far too shrewd not to foresee all these complaints and charges, when it was found that England and France could not carry the affair through high-handedly without serious opposition. Moreover these ideas, soon to be trumpeted in the newspapers and the tribune, were no doubt already circulating, in the summer of 1844, among the keen and well-informed public men of the country, and probably whisperings had begun to reach him. In fact some expressions of opinion had already been published. During May a writer in *Le Constitutionnel* declared, "the Americans could not without madness allow Texas to become an independent and rival state." At about the same time *Le National* maintained that the struggle in that country was one between Great Britain and the United States. England, though she endeavors to put "a moral sign on the shop door" by raising the slavery question, is trying to injure the United States and increase her own power in the Gulf of Mexico, said *Le Correspondant*. We are told that Guizot has protested against the annexation of Texas, remarked *Le Constitutionnel*, and this does not surprise us: "It is much more in line with the policy of England than with that of France." It is unfortunate for us to be tied to the English cabinet, protested *Le National* about the middle of May. Even the *Journal des Débats*, commonly regarded as an administration paper, felt compelled to say about the first of June: "We believe that France has no occasion to occupy herself with the annexation of Texas to the North American confederation." According to Wilmer and Smith's *European Times*, the agitation over the affair had now created a marked sensation at Paris, and had revived the talk of making common cause with the United States against England in order to throw off the insulting yoke of British supremacy.²⁸

Louis Philippe and Guizot must have begun to understand that

²⁷ *Le Nat.*, May 27, 1844. *Le Const.*, June 13, 1845. *Débats*, Jan. 21-23, 1846. *Revue Independante*, Jan. 25, 1846. Lettre d'un Citoyen de New York, 20-21. *Le Const.*, June 13, 1845. *Le Correspondant*, Jan. 1, 1846.

²⁸ King, No. 9, Dec. 31, 1844. *Le Const.*, May 26, 1844. *Le Nat.*, May 20, 1844. *Le Correspondant*, June, 1844. *Débats: N. Orl. Courier*, June 28, 1844. *European Times*, June 4, 1844.

the consent of Parliament and the country to an Anglo-French war against the United States could not easily be obtained. "Every attempt to enlist France in a diplomatic—still more in an armed—resistance to the views of North America would meet death before the invincible repugnance of the country and the Chamber," declared *La Revue de Paris* a few months later, and this was already becoming probable if not certain. Guizot will blunder if he dare to transform his diplomatic hostility against the United States into real hostility, for the country would not follow him, was a warning from *La Revue Independante* that could easily be foreseen. Public opinion renders Guizot's position weak on account of his English proclivities, reported the American minister at Paris in December, 1844; and to a large extent the head of the cabinet must have understood this much earlier. Besides, the feeling of the nation towards Mexico was by no means cordial. Neither the causes, the events nor the unsatisfactory ending of the recent war had yet been forgotten. A little later Thiers remarked that France owed less deference to that republic than to any other American state. In June, 1844, *Le Siècle* of Paris said, "We wish Texas to be independent . . . as a counterpoise or curb for Mexico." "The annexation of Texas presents the double advantage of augmenting the power of the United States, our natural allies beyond the Atlantic," observed *La Revue de Paris*, "and of dealing a hard blow at that sad government of Mexico, against which we have so many grounds of complaint."²⁹

Meantime King, the American representative, had not been idle. Early in July he dined with Louis Philippe; and after dinner, bringing up the subject of Texas in a familiar conversation, His Majesty asked why the annexation treaty had been rejected. This afforded an opening, and the minister made all he could of it. He expressed his firm belief that a decided majority of the Americans favored the measure; that although temporarily defeated on account of "political considerations of a domestic nature," it "would certainly be consummated at no distant period"; and that the interests of France, being purely commercial and quite distinct from those of England, would actually be promoted by such an arrangement; upon which the King, while frankly admitting his desire to see the young republic remain independent, assured his guest that France "would not proceed to the extent of acts hostile or unfriendly to the United States in reference to the Texas question." Probably, however, the assur-

²⁹ *Revue de Paris*, Feb. 15, 1845. *Revue Independante*, Jan. 25, 1846. King, No. 9, Dec. 31, 1844. (Thiers) *Débats*, Jan. 21, 1846. *Le Siècle*, June 14, 1844.

ance thus reported by the American minister was couched in diplomatic as well as gracious terms, and was expressed in a language which he cannot have used much, if at all, for nearly thirty years; and in view of the concert with England it must be supposed that he was unduly impressed by its apparent cordiality. In real truth it can have indicated nothing more than a politic desire to avoid as far as possible offending the United States. The minister's representations, on the other hand, seem to have been full and explicit. They were probably the earliest information the French government obtained with reference to the depth of feeling on the subject that prevailed in some parts, at least, of this country; and when reinforced soon after by Pageot's and Pakenham's expostulations, they must have appeared well worthy of attention.³⁰

King then proceeded to discuss the matter with Guizot, telling him that intimations of a contemplated joint protest against the annexation of Texas had been received from a source that could not wholly be disregarded. Guizot replied "with considerable animation if not some impatience" that no such step had been taken; that France had acted in this matter for herself; that her interests, being purely commercial, differed from those of England; and that the rejection of the treaty had now banished the subject. King replied that he was gratified by Guizot's assurances; that a movement such as that erroneously imputed to France would have impaired seriously the friendly, indeed almost affectionate, feelings entertained for her by the American people; that the United States would view with great distrust any proceeding calculated to place their weak neighbor under foreign and particularly under British influence; that Texas must be absorbed in order to guard against the danger of England's controlling her; that a conviction of this necessity, though more general in the Democratic party, pervaded a large majority of the American people; and that consequently the project of annexation was by no means dead. Just how much effect these representations had, it is of course impossible to say; but Ashbel Smith, who was well qualified and well situated to form an opinion, believed that King satisfied Guizot as to the umbrage that his proposed course would give in the United States.³¹

Calhoun also endeavored to influence the French government.

³⁰ King, No. 1, July 13, 1844. In early life King was secretary of legation at St. Petersburg.

³¹ King, No. 2, July 31, 1844. The interview took place on July 20. Smith to Jones, Dec. 24, 1844: Jones, Memor., 411.

About the first of September King received a despatch in which, after straining Louis Philippe's cordial assurances to the greatest possible extent and there nailing them with pointed marks of appreciation, the Secretary went on, in what the London *Times* called a magazine article, to argue substantially as follows: It is not for the real interests of France, England or even Mexico to oppose annexation if peace, the extension of commerce, and security "are objects of primary policy with them." The United States and Texas are destined at some day to become one nation, and it is for the general good that this union take place by common consent. Opposition would "not improbably" lead to a war between the United States and Mexico; or, should another power temporarily prevent annexation and an outbreak of hostilities, our people would feel deep resentment, and "be ready to seize the first favorable opportunity to effect" the design "by force." Meanwhile the general peace would be insecure, and Texas, uncertain what to do or expect, would languish. France as well as England desires that country to be independent for commercial reasons; but England hopes also that slavery may be abolished there and, as a consequence, in the United States, and to this scheme the interests of the continental European powers are opposed. The experiment of emancipation has proved enormously costly and disastrous to Great Britain, while the nations that have avoided her example have increased in wealth and power. Therefore she wishes to recover her lost position by destroying or crippling the productivity of her rivals, and now seeks to reach her end by uprooting slavery in America. This would give her a monopoly of tropical commodities, for not only would the output of the United States, Cuba and Brazil decrease like that of Jamaica, but there would be a race war as in San Domingo,—a war that would involve the Indian as well as the negro, "and make the whole one scene of blood and devastation." Is it not better for the continent of Europe, then, to obtain tropical productions at a low price from the American nations, than to be dependent for them upon "one great monopolizing Power" and pay a high price? And is it not for their interest to develop new regions that will become profitable markets for their goods, rather than to buy from old and distant countries, whose population has reached its limit? Here again it is impossible to calculate how much effect was produced. But there must have been some, for the ideas were forcible; and even if the administration rejected their logic, it could easily be seen that their

influence on public sentiment, should they be urged by the opposition, was likely to be considerable.³²

Louis Philippe's general preference was to avoid war. He was a "prudent" monarch, as our minister observed, "and ever solicitous to maintain peace and good will, both for his own sake, and that of France." His avowed policy was described by King as "peace, and non-intervention as the best means of securing peace." Early in November he dwelt upon these, his favorite themes, in an interview with the American minister, expressing opinions and sentiments, "which though not uttered with reference to the United States, Mexico and Texas, were strikingly applicable to the existing relations of the three republics." Recent difficulties between the government of Mexico and the French representative in that country probably had some effect in the same direction, and both domestic uncertainties and the embarrassments growing out of the Algiers and Morocco questions assisted. There were thus a number of deterrent influences at work upon the French cabinet; and accordingly it showed signs of backwardness during the autumn in the matter of co-operating decisively with England.³³

The British administration could not fail to be influenced by this lukewarm disposition, since its policy leaned avowedly on the attitude of France. The New York correspondent of the London *Times* reported that the Locofocos actually desired a war with England, which naturally added to the gravity of the situation; and then Santa Anna adopted a course that had no little effect. In order to score a point against the Mexican Congress he talked openly about Murphy's conversation with Lord Aberdeen, and instead of favoring the recognition of Texas he represented His Lordship's remarks as evidence that England would assist him to reconquer that country. Bankhead regarded this conduct as showing a "total want of good faith," and protested against the President's announced purpose of laying Murphy's Memorandum before the Congress; and his course in so doing was approved by his government. On the twenty-third of October, therefore, Aberdeen instructed him to inform Mexico that since she would not consent to recognize Texas, the proposed concert between England and France "as set forth in the Memorandum" fell to the ground. Great Britain still urged that the

³² *Times: Revue de Paris*, Jan. 9, 1845. To King, No. 14, Aug. 12, 1844: Sen. Doc. 1, 28 Cong., 2 sess., 39.

³³ King, No. 1, July 13; No. 4, Oct. 6; No. 6, Nov. 15, 1844. (Backwardness) Smith to Jones, Dec. 24, 1844: Jones, Memor., 411.

annexation of Texas to the United States would be "an evil of the greatest magnitude" to the mother-country, and that it could only be avoided by immediately recognizing the young republic; but the despatch was a formal notice that England no longer held herself under any obligation to Mexico to help avert the evil at the risk of a collision with the United States. This did not signify by any means, however, that her own interests or her engagements elsewhere might not cause her to pursue much the same course as that outlined in the Memorandum, and there is no evidence that she had yet abandoned this policy; but the exasperating conduct of Mexico, the failure of Texas thus far to accept the proposed Diplomatic Act, and still more the lukewarmness exhibited on the other side of the Channel doubtless undermined her resolution, and caused her to show, as Ashbel Smith reported, a certain backwardness herself.³⁴

³⁴ Smith to Jones, Dec. 24, 1844; Jones, Memor., 411. *London Times*, Oct. 17, 1844. Bank., No. 66, Aug. 29, 1844. To Bank., No. 34, Oct. 23, 1844. The despatch of Oct. 23 has been cited as "definite proof of English withdrawal from the project of joint action before the English government had any direct refusal from France to go on with that action"; but the two powers did in fact maintain their joint action in this matter so long as any hope of preventing annexation remained (see Chapter xxi.). Probably, however, what the author of this passage had in mind was the project of acting jointly in the particular manner contemplated in June, 1844; but even this view does not seem correct. 1. England could not fairly and honorably withdraw from a plan of joint action with France by sending a note to Mexico, and at this time she was peculiarly anxious to have the confidence and good-will of France. 2. Had England decided upon a new policy, notice of it would almost certainly have been given to Pakenham and Elliot as in other instances. 3. The proposition of the Diplomatic Act, which involved joint action with France on a basis really as positive as did the Murphy Memorandum, was not now cancelled by England as according to this theory it should have been. 4. In his No. 1, May 17, 1845, Smith reported to his government from London that Aberdeen had informed Terrell (who had arrived in that city on Jan. 12, 1845, and was still there) that the British government were even then "willing on their part to enter into a Diplomatic Act embracing the stipulations and guarantees as set forth in the accounts of my interviews with Lord Aberdeen last year, particularly that of the 24th June (I believe), but that the French Government were unwilling to enter into such obligations or to employ any other than *moral* means towards Mexico" (*Tex. Dipl. Corr.*, ii., 1196). This appears virtually to prove that the despatch of Oct. 23, 1844, did not indicate an intention or even a desire to withdraw from the action in concert with France that had been proposed in June. 5. After France declined to incur the risk of war with United States, the British government took four weeks to formulate a new and pacific programme, whereas on the theory discussed they would have been ready and eager to announce such a policy at once. 6. The despatch of Oct. 23 can be explained satisfactorily without encountering these difficulties: (a) England had a plan (Murphy Memorandum) for joint action with France in co-operation with Mexico, and also a plan (Diplomatic Act) for joint action with France and (if necessary) the coercion of Mexico. The former was the only one of which Mexico knew, and therefore the despatch of Oct. 23, intended for Mexico, should be understood as referring to it. Indeed that despatch said that "the proposition set forth in the Memorandum . . . was based entirely on the assumed recognition by Mexico of the independence of Texas," and also that

November 25 the result of the American election was announced by the London newspapers, and the time for England and France to prosecute or to abandon their plan had arrived. About a week later, at an interview with Aberdeen, Smith found the minister counting on Guizot for no decisive action against the United States and, as was inevitable in that situation, unwilling to give a just ground of offence to this country. That very day His Lordship's misgivings were fully justified. In a talk with Cowley the minister of Louis Philippe remarked, as Calhoun and King had urged, that the annexation affair concerned Great Britain more than it did France.

"As both Governments have recognised Texas," answered the British ambassador, "you would no doubt join with England in negotiations to secure recognition from Mexico."

"Undoubtedly" answered Guizot, "we will use our best efforts for that purpose, and will even refuse to recognise the annexation of Texas to the United States; but, as a Question of Peace or War, I am not prepared to say that its junction with the American States is of sufficient importance to us to justify us in having recourse to arms in order to prevent it." This was obviously a diplomatic but distinct negative.³⁵

The British government then pondered anew on the subject, and at length after four weeks of deliberation they informed Elliot what was now their policy. "It is," wrote Aberdeen, "to urge Mexico by every available argument, and in every practicable manner, to recognise without delay the Independence of Texas, as the only rational course to be taken for securing the real Interests of Mexico, to which Country the annexation of Texas to the United States would be ruinous." At the same time a strong desire was manifested by His Lordship to avoid exciting public sentiment in this country. A passive course, "or rather a course of observation," was therefore dictated as under the existing circumstances the most prudent policy;

it was the proposed concert between Great Britain and France "as set forth in the Memorandum" which fell to the ground. Evidently an announcement of the failure of the first plan did not abolish the second, and it should be recalled that the Memorandum itself, instead of saying that in case Mexico would not consent to recognize Texas the plans of England to oppose annexation *would not* be carried out, only said "might not." (b) Aberdeen may very reasonably have believed that such an announcement as that of Oct. 23 was the best way to bring Santa Anna to the point of recognizing Texas, and it may have been made for that purpose. (c) It seemed quite clear that Santa Anna was trying to play fast and loose with England, and the despatch of Oct. 23 was a proper move to stop his game. (d) Under the wording of the Memorandum, self-respect demanded of England such a move. See also Terrell: *Tex. Dipl. Corr.*, ii., 1172.

³⁵ Smith, Dec. 24: note 34. Cowley, No. 568, Dec. 2, 1844.

and Elliot was directly forbidden to involve his government in any active campaign.³⁶

Near the close of the year 1844, among the papers accompanying Tyler's annual Message, was published Calhoun's despatch to King which has already been cited, and in due course the document appeared in Europe. There it made a sensation,—“quite a sensation,” reported the minister,—for Calhoun said that our Executive particularly appreciated “the declaration of the King, that, in no event would any steps be taken by his Government in the slightest degree hostile, or which would give to the United States just cause of complaint.” This, as we have learned, was a liberal exaggeration of Louis Philippe's friendliness, yet—as Calhoun doubtless foresaw—the language imputed to him could not be disavowed. Not only was public sentiment in France very warm towards the United States and far from cordial towards Great Britain, but the election of officers in the Chamber of Deputies had lately revealed a serious break in the administration's forces; its majorities there were small and fluctuating; its fate was uncertain; and nearly all of the charges brought against it amounted to the one heinous offence of subserviency to England.³⁷

The London *Times*, though it demanded with the utmost emphasis to be informed “categorically” whether France had been giving such assurances to the United States while “affecting” to join with England, was therefore unable to extort a reply. Terrell, now the representative of Texas, concluded that France was entirely indifferent to the fate of his country; and although the French ambassador soon made known to Aberdeen a despatch from Guizot which described Calhoun's remarks as misleading and expressed a willingness to unite with England, as had been proposed, in securing the recognition of Texas and guaranteeing her against molestation on the side of Mexico, it was not easy to feel perfectly satisfied as to the attitude of His Majesty's government. In short, while Calhoun's clever—even sharp—course did not destroy the concert of the powers, it evidently had some effect in rendering that concert less harmonious and less reliable. At the same time the publication of the despatch revealed very clearly to Aberdeen, as he admitted, the jealousy of the American annexationists against all foreign interference, and the

³⁶ To Elliot, No. 13, Dec. 31, 1844. To Bank, No. 49, Dec. 31, 1844. Pakenham and Bankhead also were instructed. Naturally Aberdeen tried to make it appear that no change in British policy had occurred.

³⁷ To King, No. 14, Aug. 12, 1844: Sen. Doc. 1, 28 Cong., 2 sess., 39. King, No. 10, Jan. 29, 1845.

danger that any occurrence justifying that state of mind would precipitate the United States into "active measures." In particular, he concluded, a war with Mexico almost necessarily involving the destruction of Texan independence might very easily be kindled; and the importance of extreme caution was brought forcibly home to his mind.³⁸

Up to this time, owing to the peculiar situation already explained, neither an acceptance nor a rejection of the Diplomatic Act had been received from Texas; and that idea, to be embodied in some plan consistent with the now pacific attitude of the two powers, had continued to be entertained by them. Quite soon, however, after assuring England that she was still ready for joint action, France found an opportunity to eliminate that project also. This was in consequence of something which occurred in Mexico. All through the summer and early autumn Santa Anna had continued to talk of war against the Texans; but, soon after November came in, a revolution in the great State of Jalisco produced a change in his language. General Wavell, an Englishman in the Mexican service, had believed all along that he desired to get rid of the Texas difficulty; for some time fear of the designs of the United States had made him uneasy; and now, in the revolutionary conflict forced upon him, he was naturally anxious to have the political support of Great Britain and the financial assistance of the British capitalists doing business in the country. Accordingly his minister, Rejón, stated that Mexico would listen to any propositions coming from England and France with reference to the recognition of Texas; and finally at the end of November Santa Anna definitely proposed to acknowledge the independence of that nation on the basis of an indemnity, a boundary at the Colorado, and a guaranty of the northern frontier of Mexico from England and France. Apparently a step had now been taken toward a solution of the problem, and France made haste to pronounce the Diplomatic Act no longer necessary.³⁹

³⁸ *Times*, Jan. 2, 10, 1845. Terrell, Nos. 1, 2, Jan. 21, 27, 1845. To Elliot, No. 1, Jan. 23, 1845. Apparently Aberdeen took some step to soothe the United States, for about a month later Everett reported (private, Feb. 26, 1845) that, although the subject was not one on which it "could be expected" that he "should receive any official information," he had "good grounds for saying, that the annexation of Texas would not cause a breach of the existing relations between the United States and Great Britain." From the effect of Calhoun's despatch upon Aberdeen one can reasonably infer that it had had considerable influence at Paris.

³⁹ After Jones became President, he expressed to the British government through Elliot a desire to have the proposition of the Diplomatic Act put in his hands, "duly prepared for execution," to be submitted to the people at a

January 23, 1845, then, Aberdeen prepared new instructions for Elliot. On the one hand he pointed out the gravely delicate state of American public sentiment, and on the other he exhibited the proposition of Santa Anna. No doubt the Mexican terms are unacceptable in their present form, he admitted; but as a "first step" they are "of great importance and value," and of course Texas will avail herself of the good offices of England and France "with a view to the modification" of them. Despite Calhoun the concert of the two powers continues, in proof of which I hand you a copy of the new instructions, very similar to yours, forwarded to Saligny; and "under certain circumstances those Powers would not refuse to take part in an arrangement by which Texas and Mexico should be bound each to respect the Territory of the other"; though, after all, this is mainly an affair which concerns these two particular nations. To such modest terms was the opposition of England at length reduced. The effect of the concert had become a mere contingency, and in reference to the United States defensive instead of aggressive strategy was now in order, with care even "to avoid all unnecessary mention" of our government. The keenest anxiety to prevent the annexation of Texas, however, was still exhibited.⁴⁰

In the afternoon of March 16 the steamer *New York* left New Orleans for Texas, carrying word that the American Congress had voted for annexation, and on the twentieth Galveston had the news. Four days later a British vessel of war brought Elliot the instructions that have just been described. He read them with the deepest interest and of course with the most earnest desire to carry out the wishes of his government. There was, however, a serious difficulty, for it seemed to him impossible even to mention what Santa Anna had proposed and Aberdeen recommended as a basis of negotiation. "Nothing," he replied to the Foreign Office, "that is so much mixed with securities and guarantees upon the part of the European Powers, Great Britain in particular, can be offered to this people with the least hope of success, and the knowledge of these proposals of Mexico at the present moment would be decisive against the possibility of maintaining the Independence of the Country. They would light up a flame from one end of the North American Confederacy

propitious moment (Elliot, No. 17, Dec. 21, 1844); but before this request reached London France had retired from that proposition. Bank., No. 65, Aug. 29; No. 94, Nov. 12, 1844. Wavell, Memoir on Texas, Nov., 1844; F. O., Texas, xi. (Un-easy) Bank., No. 52, July 31, 1844. Id., No. 93, Oct. 30; No. 102, Nov. 29, 1844. Terrell, No. 2, Jan. 27, 1845.

⁴⁰ To Elliot, No. 1, Jan. 23, 1845.

to the other." None the less, if Mexico would but acknowledge Texas on the sole condition of maintaining her nationality, Elliot still saw "little reason to doubt that this question might be speedily and securely adjusted."⁴¹

Saligny, as we have observed, spent most of his time at New Orleans, but he probably had received there somewhat earlier an urgent despatch from Guizot. While directing that as little as possible be said about the United States, the French government now ordered the chargé to exert himself with both the administration and the people of Texas against the project of annexation, as a measure unworthy of an independent nation. The representations of Calhoun regarding the attitude of France made it particularly necessary, he was instructed, to pursue an active policy, and the inclination of Santa Anna to consider the question of recognizing Texas was described as "a decisive reason" why that country should cling to her sovereignty. In concert with Elliot, Saligny was therefore directed to recommend this view, and to urge that "every thought of annexation" be renounced.⁴²

On receiving these orders the chargé naturally sought his post, and he was now at Galveston. Elliot, whose policy it was to counteract the suspicion of British designs by associating closely with his French colleague in this business, soon took him into his counsels; and the next morning they set out for the Texan seat of government, where they were extremely anxious to arrive in advance of authoritative news from the United States. Donelson was liable to appear at any hour, and a copy of the official report of the passage of the annexation resolution was said to be on the way via Red River; but

⁴¹ Arrangoiz, No. 52 (res.), March 17, 1845. Elliot, No. 14, March 22, 1845. The steamer should have reached Galveston on the 18th, and the *Picayune* of March 29 represented that she did; but Elliot and the *Houston Star* of March 23 give the date as March 20. As the *Star* says she brought New Orleans information of the 18th, she would seem to have been delayed near the city. Yell to Polk, March 26, 1845; Polk Pap. Elliot, secret, April 2, 1845. Jones (Memor., 66) said that the ministers of England and France, in feeling that the people (if Texas were recognized by Mexico) would decide for independence, were deceived by "their own over-sanguine hopes." Two points ought, however, to be noted. Jones and Allen, the highest officials of the nation, assured them and appeared to be convinced that such would be the case (*e. g.*, Elliot, No. 17, Dec. 21, 1844; Dec. 28, 1844, secret); and it was not very unreasonable to believe that—assisted by recognition, by an opportunity to obtain favorable commercial arrangements with England, by the efforts to bring the people over to the side of nationality which the government were ready to make (Elliot, No. 17, Dec. 21, 1844), and by the unsatisfactory terms offered by the United States—the strong though cautious minority might convert enough lukewarm annexationists to become the dominant party.

⁴² (At New Orleans) *Journ. Com.: Newark Adv.*, April 30, 1845. To Saligny, Jan. 17, 1845: F. O., Texas, xxi.

the two envoys reached the capital first. They agreed that if Brown's plan had been adopted by the American Executive, the chief immediate danger lay in efforts to have Jones convene the Congress, especially since Elliot regarded the existing body as the least reliable he had yet seen in the country and already "deeply committed" for annexation; while they felt that if Benton's method had been chosen, the commission it contemplated, sitting in Texas with \$100,000 at its command, "would at once overwhelm the whole power and influence of the Constituted Authorities of the land." They decided, therefore, that "every effort consistent with the spirit" of their instructions ought to be exerted to prevent the government of Texas from assembling the Congress or entering upon any negotiations with a view to annexation, until England and France could have time to obtain recognition from Mexico or, failing in that aim, "provide for the emergency in an equally effectual manner" in Europe.⁴³

Jones was away from home in the evening of the envoys' arrival, but they had a "full and frank" conversation with Ashbel Smith, now the Secretary of State, and the next morning, after reading their instructions to him and the President, they urged "every argument that presented itself" to them, "whether founded upon the honour and advantage of the Country, or upon the ruinous consequences of annexation, and the ambiguity and doubtful nature of the [American] resolutions." Elliot was regarded by Donelson, a person well able to gauge politicians and diplomats, as "a shrewd and cunning man," while Saligny was described as Napoleonic in appearance and "astute" in intellect; and it is evident from Elliot's report of the proceedings that both men were now very much in earnest. On the other side, Jones was in favor of independence and probably felt convinced, as he afterwards wrote in his book, that it would benefit the Texans to maintain a separate political existence. In February he had received word by a man just from Mexico that Herrera, the new President, was very favorably disposed toward peace. Furthermore, by taking the ground that the administration desired to continue the national career and that the people would do the same should the independence of the country be promptly acknowledged by Mexico, he had committed himself in a manner that Elliot and Saligny were fully able to take advantage of. As for Smith, he not only preferred independence but was regarded by the American chargé as a greater enemy to annexation than even the

⁴³ Elliot, No. 10, March 6; secret, April 2, 1845.

outspoken Terrell. He was a man of no little ability, as we have noted; and according to the Mexican consul at New Orleans he had a dominating influence over the Executive. The consul believed also that his ambition equalled his talents, and that he not only wished to be President, but felt that in the case of annexation his rôle would be comparatively undistinguished. Under such circumstances, even had Jones desired to stand up for that measure, it would have been extremely difficult to do so. He made no sign of such a preference, however. When the envoys argued for nationality he and Smith replied, "that so far as they were personally concerned it was unnecessary to insist upon these views," and the President declared that he was "sincerely desirous of maintaining the independence of the Country." At the same time he stimulated the envoys by remarking that he saw in himself only the agent of the people, and thought that unless Texas could speedily know she would be recognized on the condition of remaining a nation, "He should feel that it was in vain to resist the tide." As for a course of action he agreed perfectly with his visitors, desiring neither to assemble the Congress nor to have a United States commission sit in the country.⁴⁴

Elliot and Saligny now formally invited the government to accept the good offices of England and France with a view to an early and honorable settlement with Mexico upon the basis of independence. Jones thereupon instructed the Secretary of State with corresponding formality to accept this intervention, and the following "Conditions preliminary to a treaty of peace" between the two countries were then drawn up: "1, Mexico consents to acknowledge the independence of Texas; 2, Texas engages that she will stipulate in the treaty not to annex herself or become subject to any country whatever; 3, Limits and other conditions to be matters of arrangement in the final treaty; 4, Texas to be willing to remit disputed points respecting territory and other matters to the arbitration of umpires." It was then proposed, evidently by the *chargés*, that the following agreement be made; 1, The signature and seal of a duly authorized Mexican minister are to be attached to the preliminary conditions of

⁴⁴ Elliot, secret, April 2, 1845. Don. to Calhoun, Jan. 30, 1845; Jameson. Calhoun Corr., 1023. (Saligny) Smith, Remin., 22; Foote, Remin., 50. Smith, Remin., 81, 82. Jones, Memor., 66. Jones, Letter: *Niles.*, Jan. 15, 1848, p. 308. Jones's best defence of his course is to be found in this letter; but it is too ingenious to be convincing, and there are too many facts against it. Don., No. 21, April 29, 1845. Arrangoiz, No. 55 (res.), March 24, 1845. Early in March Smith had proposed to Elliot that England guarantee to Mexico the abandonment by Texas of all annexation projects, which implied that he believed Texas would bind herself to that policy (Elliot, No. 10, March 6, 1845).

peace, and the government of Texas pledge themselves to issue forthwith, after this acceptance of them shall have been placed in the hands of the President, a proclamation announcing the conclusion of the preliminaries of peace with the republic of Mexico. 2, For a period of ninety days from the date of this Memorandum Texas "agrees not to accept any proposals, nor to enter into any negotiations to annex Herself to any other Country."⁴⁵

At this, however, the President hesitated, for he perceived what Elliot described as "the serious responsibility" that he was desired to incur. During the twenty-eighth he consulted the cabinet twice, and once had the *chargés* present their views before it; but he was only a second-rate man with everything against him, and it was in vain to struggle. From conviction or policy he had represented that the people would choose independence if recognition could soon be obtained from the mother-country; and he could not logically, as their avowed agent, refuse to adopt the one possible course which might place this boon within their reach. At the pressing request of Jones and Saligny, Elliot very reluctantly consented to make a secret journey to Mexico with the utmost despatch, and explain to the British and French ministers there "the extreme difficulty of the President's situation, and the urgency of immediate promptitude, and exact conformity to the preliminary arrangement" submitted; and finally, on his promising this and on the personal assurance of the *chargés* that the Memorandum of the Conference would be made known only to the British and French representatives in Mexico and the United States and to their home governments, Jones accepted the plan on March 29.⁴⁶

Three alternatives were kept in view, it would appear, in these negotiations. The first was to satisfy the people of Texas, by obtaining the assent of Mexico to the preliminary conditions, that peace with independence could be had. The second was to have the affair settled by the European governments with a representative of Texas beyond the Atlantic; and the third was to obtain such a formal declaration on the part of England and France to sustain Texan independence "and prevent further disturbance and complication from Mexico," as would "enable the friends of independence to

⁴⁵ Memo. of Conference; Conditions: F. O., Texas, xiii.

⁴⁶ Bancroft, *Pac. States*, xi., 386. Elliot, secret, April 2, 1845. It was distinctly understood at the conference that, should the Texans decide in favor of annexation, their government would be at liberty to execute their will (Jones, *Memor.*, 475). Elliot was informed by Smith that none of the cabinet felt "any good will to the [American] resolutions."

defeat their opponents at the next election." What provision was made for the first and most desired of these alternatives has now been explained. The second and third of them required the presence in Europe of a Texan envoy fully competent and fully authorized for the business. Accordingly Elliot and Saligny urged that Ashbel Smith go there immediately with "full powers to conclude any arrangement which might seem to the Governments and himself to be necessary for the safety of the Country," and Jones cordially consented. Allen was therefore made Secretary of State, and Smith prepared to set off at once for his former post.⁴⁷

Elliot intended to give out that he would sail in the *Electra* to meet his wife at Charleston, South Carolina, but really be landed at Vera Cruz and have the *Electra* reported there by another name; and in returning he proposed to disembark at a point in the United States where he would not be recognized, and gain New Orleans "in some unobserved manner." On reaching Galveston, however, he found that a British war vessel, the *Eurydice*, commanded by his

⁴⁷ Elliot, secret, April 2, 1845. Smith's appointment was asked "as a striking proof of the good dispositions" of the Texan government. All these facts, derived from Elliot's report, are a sufficiently clear indication of the character of Smith's mission; but that gentleman himself had something to say at the time about it. According to the editor of the principal newspaper of Houston, a place through which he doubtless passed on his way to Galveston, he was going to England "with the avowed object of conducting negotiations for the acknowledgment of our independence through British intervention." All the way on his journey from Washington to the coast, after the interviews with Elliot and Saligny, he loudly denounced the annexation resolution of the American Congress at the taverns on the road, it was said, and several of the most respectable men of the county were ready to declare, the editor stated, that his conversation revealed an uncompromising opposition to that resolution (*Houston Telegraph*, April 23, 1845). After he reached the port, Smith wrote to Jones representing the sentiment among the people as intensely strong in favor of annexation, and added that he did not suppose his going abroad would be desired "if likely to produce no beneficial results," which implies clearly that he had been sent to accomplish something against that project (Jones, *Memor.*, 446). Later, attempts were very naturally made to explain all this away. In an open letter dated August 7, 1845, Smith pronounced it "utterly false" that he went to Europe to concert measures with foreign governments to prevent annexation (F. O. Texas, xiv.); but this letter was intended to make the public believe he was not opposed to that measure, which was certainly not correct. In other words the letter cannot be regarded as wholly ingenuous. In his *Reminiscences* he says that Jones sent him to Europe to close the Texas legations there in a becoming manner; but in that case why did the state of public opinion in Texas make him doubtful whether his mission could prove beneficial? Jones, commenting in his book on Smith's letter from Galveston, explained that Smith did not understand his errand; but this is absurd. Smith seems to have had the clearest head in Texas; he was accustomed to deal with the foremost statesmen of Europe and had won their respect; Aberdeen described him as "a man of excellent capacity"; as Secretary of State he was in conference with Elliot and Saligny on three successive days; and he had opportunities to confer with Saligny at will, it is probable, all the way to Galveston, since the two men sailed together for New Orleans (*Memphis Eagle*, April 23, 1845). Jones's explanation is manifestly a pretence.

cousin, George Elliot, had arrived at that port. Writing to Jones that a despatch from Bankhead represented the Mexican government as still ready to negotiate, he went aboard the *Electra*, was transferred to the *Eurydice* out of sight of land, and then sailed away for Vera Cruz. Saligny, meanwhile, after writing from Galveston to the President, "Be cheerful and firm at Washington, and my word for it, everything will soon come out right," sped away for New York City in such haste that when the steamer stopped for wood a few miles below New Orleans, he sprang ashore, it was reported, obtained a horse, and rode on. It was surmised that his purpose was to communicate with Paris in the quickest possible manner, and this appears to be the rational explanation of his course. Ashbel Smith—reluctantly in view of the exhibitions of Texan public opinion observed on his way to the coast—proceeded on his mission; and Jones and Allen remained at the capital to hold the gate.⁴⁸

In short, then, it appears that Great Britain was so anxious to prevent the annexation of Texas that she stood ready, if supported by France, to coerce Mexico and fight the United States; that the French government were at first no less willing than England to agree upon decisive measures; that the determination of the American people to resent vigorously such dictation—a course sure to arouse the many Frenchmen who were against the British, against the King or against Guizot—caused that power to fall back; that in consequence England wavered and then withdrew; and that all this grand effort at international concert resulted only in a sort of conspiracy to divert the people of Texas from the destiny actually preferred by the majority. And it is interesting to note, first, that probably the decisive element in the affair was the readiness of a large number of Americans to plunge into a war for which the nation was wholly unprepared; and, secondly, that after these diplomatic events had been taking place for months, it was loudly asserted by opponents of Tyler's administration, not only that England had no schemes afoot with reference to Texas, but that every idea of a European concert against annexation was transparent moonshine.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Elliot, secret, April 2, 1845. Id. to Jones, April 3, 5, 1845: Jones, Memor., 441, 443. Saligny to Jones, April 3, 1845: ib., 443. (Saligny) N. Orl. *Picayune*: Memphis *Eagle*, April 23, 1845; Wash. *Constitution*: Charleston *Courier*, April 29, 1845. Smith to Jones, April 9, 1845: Jones, Memor., 446.

⁴⁹ E. g., *Nat. Intell.*, Feb. 20, 1845. No doubt many who talked of war believed England would not fight, but even these would not have shrunk from it.

ACCOUNT OF THE SOURCES.

I. MANUSCRIPTS.

- Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris.¹
Archivo de la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, Mexico: Despatches to and from Ministers and Consuls in the United States, Great Britain and France.
Bancroft Collection, New York (Lenox) Public Library.
Bancroft Papers, Mass. Historical Society.
Campbell Papers, Library of Congress.
Clayton Papers, Library of Congress.
Crittenden Papers, Library of Congress.
Ford Collection, New York (Lenox) Public Library.
Jackson Papers, Library of Congress.
Jackson Papers (Knoxville Collection), Library of Congress (partially available).
Jackson Papers, New York (Lenox) Public Library.
Lamar Papers, Texas State Library, Austin.
Mangum Papers belonging to A. W. Graham, Esq.
Markoe and Maxcy Papers, Library of Congress.
Miller Papers, Texas State Library.
Pierce Papers, Library of Congress.
Polk Papers, Library of Congress.
Polk Papers, Chicago Historical Society.²
Public Record Office, London: Foreign Office Papers; Slave Trade Papers; Admiralty Records.
Texas (National) Archives, Austin: Diplomatic Correspondence; Senate Journal (secret); Laws of Eighth Congress.
United States Department of State: Archives of the Texas Legation; Circulars issued to Diplomatic and Consular Agents; Confidential Report Books; Domestic Letter Books; Instructions to

¹The documents bearing directly on the annexation of Texas were not, however, seen in the French archives. This matter is explained in the General Note, p. 1. Information from Mexico as late as 1833 was obtained.

²These have recently been transferred to the Library of Congress, but the author distinguishes between the two collections as a slight acknowledgment of the courtesy of the Chicago Historical Society.

and Despatches from Ministers, Consuls, Special Agents and Confidential Agents; Miscellaneous Letters and Replies; Notes to and from Foreign Legations.

Vau Buren Papers, Library of Congress.

Webster Papers, Library of Congress.

II. CONTEMPORARY PERIODICALS (for details consult the footnotes).³

United States: So far as they could be obtained, one newspaper of each party in each State for 1836, 1840-1844, and less systematically 1845.⁴ In most instances the papers were found; in some of the others the gaps were partially filled. In the cases of Washington and several other important cities use was made of an exceptional number of journals. Many valuable clippings from American papers, sent home by foreign agents, were discovered in the State Department. Contemporary magazines also were studied.

Great Britain: The British Museum collection of newspapers and magazines was examined for the years 1836, 1840-1845.

France: The newspapers and magazines in the Bibliothèque Nationale were examined for the years 1836, 1840-1845.

³ The list of periodicals examined is a very long one. To print it would appear to some pedantic, and as the periodicals used appear in every instance in the footnotes, it seems unnecessary.

⁴ In making use of the newspapers two principal embarrassments have been experienced. In some cases the title of the journal included the name of the city or town where it was published, while in others it did not. It would seem proper to follow the usage in each particular instance: but sometimes the files are not themselves consistent, and a considerable number of papers have been found only through quotations in their contemporaries, which were not always accurate in this particular. To avoid confusion the name of the place is therefore uniformly printed in Roman letters while the proper name of the paper is italicized. The other trouble arose from publication as dailies, tri-weeklies, semi-weeklies and weeklies. There were surprising irregularities in this regard. Certain papers belonged now to one of these classes and now to another: some indicated their class in their titles, and in other cases (particularly when only extracts could be found) the author was unable to ascertain to which class the particular issues from which he quoted actually belonged. Again, to employ the word "Daily" in one case and not in another might lead the reader to suppose that the latter belonged to a different class, whereas perhaps it was merely not the practice in the second instance to make the adjective a part of the name; and still other difficulties under this head might be mentioned. It has therefore seemed best, since the authority of the paper and not the frequency of its issue is the essential point, to omit uniformly "Daily," etc., except in a few special cases. Most of the newspapers cited may be found in the Library of Congress, and nearly all of the others in the Public Libraries of Boston, Nashville and Memphis, or the collection in the City Hall at New Orleans.

Mexico: The collections of newspapers in the Secretaría de Hacienda, Biblioteca Nacional, and Archivo del Ayuntamiento de la Ciudad de México, and fragmentary collections in numerous State and municipal archives were examined for the period treated.

Texas: The author's main reliance was on the many clippings sent home by the representatives of foreign nations in Texas and the United States, quotations in American and British journals, and newspapers preserved in the State Library of Texas.

III. LATER PERIODICALS (see the footnotes).

The historical serials of the countries named above were searched for documents and for articles, and the same course was followed with many not specially historical. Whatever useful material was found is referred to in the footnotes.

IV. BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS.

[To make a critical bibliography would add too much to the bulk and cost of this volume, and, as little use has been made of printed materials (aside from the history of Texas before the revolution) except for the documents they contain (criticised in the text if necessary), it seems uncalled for. This list is included (1) to present fuller titles than it seemed desirable to give in the footnotes, and (2) to indicate useful sources of information.]

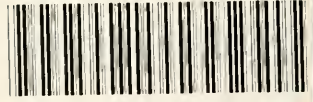
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