

Annexation Policy of the United States.

A leading London journal has been commenting, it appears, on the policy of annexation by the United States, and, in its usual patronizing way, moralizes on the subject from a British point of view. It assumes that we have adopted this as a definitive policy, and adds that England, though indifferent, is astounded at the case of Dominica, which is merely adding other negro communities to those so difficult to manage now. It is amusing to see how England, which swallows everything that it can grab in the way of territory in any part of the world, with negroes, Hottentots, Indians, Chinese, Australian savages and cannibals, manifests such particular anxiety about the United States being embarrassed by the annexation of territory with a few more negroes. England is astounded that this country should wish to annex Dominica, though we cannot discover anything surprising in it; but she will remain indifferent, and for this, we suppose, the people of the United States are expected to be profoundly thankful.

But where did this British writer find out that the negro communities we have are so difficult to manage? While slavery existed no people in the world were more easily managed than our negroes, and that not by the lash, as the British and our own abolitionists falsely represented. There were no such chronic disturbances among them as in Ireland, and no such rebellions as in India, Canada or among the Caffres of the Cape of Good Hope. Since the stupendous domestic, social and political revolution which the war brought about in the South—a revolution that in almost any other country and among any other people would have caused long years of disorder—the negroes have been peaceful, tractable and industrious. Though ignorant for the most part, though suddenly invested with freedom and political rights, and though they have been tempted to disorder by Northern radical and carpet-bag politicians as well as by the firebrand scalawags of the South, they have conducted themselves peaceably. The extraordinary recuperation of the South and the abundance of profitable crops, where the greater part of the laborers are negroes, prove beyond all question how docile and easily managed these people are, and how well they have behaved. This shows, too, that the negroes, under the instruction and guidance of the American people—under such a people as are the greater part of the Southerners—are not a dangerous class, and can be made useful in the development and increase of the national wealth and prosperity. These are facts perfectly well understood here, but the English cannot comprehend them.

Our British contemporary need not be so much exercised about an imaginary danger to the United States from the annexation of Dominica or any other country where there are negroes. The part of the island of which annexation is spoken contains not more than a hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, probably, and only a part are negroes. The whole island, including both St. Domingo and Hayti, has not more, perhaps, than half a million of people. It would not take long to cure the disorders of that country and to make the people useful under the American government and with American enterprise. We should have no apprehension of difficulty from the annexation of a part or of the whole of the island, and if annexed its development would be profitable both to us and to the inhabitants, as well as a benefit to the world. Still we think our government could now annex a territory much nearer home and of far greater value. Cuba is worth a hundred St. Domingos, or more than all the other Antilles put together. It has all the elements of civilization, an immense production, about a third of the sugar production of the world, besides tobacco and other valuable products; has railroads and telegraphs, large and flourishing cities, great acquired wealth, a million and a half inhabitants, over eight hundred thousand of whom are white; is almost within sight of the United States; has many of the finest harbors in the world; has an area of twenty-five millions of acres, and it commands the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean Sea and all the important channels of the Antilles. This magnificent island is within our grasp if the government at Washington has sense enough to seize the opportunity afforded by present circumstances for annexation. Why should we go fifteen hundred miles away, to the outer verge of the Antilles, for territory that is a wilderness, comparatively, when the cultivated, rich and important island of Cuba can be ours by only saying the word? The time is not far off when the whole of the West Indies will undoubtedly become portions of the United States; but it would be wise to take the best and nearest first whenever an opportunity is afforded.

Annexation is the natural result of our growth and institutions and the law of our destiny. The great Napoleon, with his wonderful statesmanlike foresight, sold Louisiana, which embraced nearly a fourth of our present territory, to the United States, because he comprehended the inevitable destiny of this country, and because he wanted to checkmate the British in this hemisphere. That was the first and most important acquisition of territory the United States made. There were prominent public men in that day who opposed annexation, who could not comprehend the destiny of the country, and who would have circumscribed the republic within its first narrow limits. Then came the acquisition of Florida from Spain, with the same shortsighted opposition on the part of men who had the reputation of being statesmen. So it was with Texas, when a little empire in itself was added to the republic. Even the acquisition of California, that splendid country which came in as a consequence of the war with Mexico, found objectors. The purchase of Arizona, and recently the purchase of Russian America, were objected to by a similar class of local narrow-minded politicians, who could not understand the inevitable progress and future of this mighty republic. Yet what American now would return to the original and comparatively narrow limits of the country?

The overshadowing power and growth of the United States, as well as the events that are occurring all round us, point out the policy the government ought to follow with regard to contiguous or bordering territory. The revolution in Cuba, the insurrection in the Winnipeg country, the application of the people in

British Columbia for annexation, the chronic disorders of Mexico, the growing disposition of the Canadians and other British American colonists to be united with us, and the condition of the West Indies generally, show that our republican empire must become continental. Our public men who cannot see this are behind the times. Manifest destiny is not a mere sentiment, but a fact. And who will be injured by this wonderful growth and expansion of the United States? The English, who are most jealous of us, will be largely benefited, for by our enterprise and the development of the countries we annex their trade is increased. Indeed, the same may be said with regard to all the commercial nations of Europe. The progress and expansion of the United States are a great blessing to mankind and increase vastly the commerce of the world. Instead of being envious or jealous of us the British and all other nations should hail with pleasure our astonishing growth. They ought to be glad to see annexation by a people who make the wilderness blossom as the rose where ever they go, and who add thereby to the commerce and wealth of the world. But, whatever may be thought of our progress abroad, American statesmen ought to comprehend the future before us and seize every opportunity for promoting the destiny of the republic.