

LOOKING TOWARD ANNEXATION.

Annexation sentiment is growing as the people look into the conditions that surround the fertile islands in the tropics that are now begging at our doors. The president is informing himself on the subject with great diligence. Each day adds new facts to his array of points for and against annexation. Thus far, most of the information that he has secured warrants immediate acquirement of the group, and it seems safe to prophesy that when Mr. Cleveland sends a treaty on the subject to the senate, it will embody annexation as the proper means of offering protection to this lusty young child of the Pacific.

Information comes from Washington that the president is already considering well known men as commissioners of investigation to the islands. Judge Martin V. Montgomery, late of the supreme court of the District of Columbia, is spoken of for the chairmanship of the commission. He is a man of ripe experience in matters of state, and his selection would insure an early and comprehensive review of the exact situation in Hawaii.

The president has ordered Admiral Brown of the Pacific squadron to Washington for thirty days in order that he may be at hand to advise the chief executive and the secretary of state when any question about the islands arises. He is familiar with every peculiarity of the country, and aside from the fact that his is but individual opinion, he is almost as valuable as a commission would be.

Secretary Gresham is desirous of submitting the question of annexation to a vote of the people of Hawaii. The secretary is doubtless right as to principle, but when he considers that the opponents to annexation would doubtless, with foreign assistance, defeat the measure, he will probably favor the adoption or rejection of Hawaii on the report of the commissioners. The gentlemen whom Mr. Cleveland will name will speedily find out whether the sentiment of those who have a right to sentiment in the matter is for or

a right to sentiment in the matter is for or against annexation. No vote will be necessary to make the fact clear to their experienced minds.

In England, the ever chatty *Daily News* of London says that this country should by all means annex the islands so that we might get a touch of the entangling colony questions that are driving English statesmen to metaphorical drink. It says:

Small as the proposed annexation is in this instance, the president may well pause before he gives his sanction to the radical change of policy which it involves. Our own example has shown that while the march of empire has a first step it has no last. A sort of fatal necessity compels the seizure of new posts to guard the old. At one time we thought that the line of the Himalayas would be our last word on the subject in India. Now we want, or some of us want, outposts to guard the Himalayas. If the United States establish themselves in the Pacific they will need a more powerful fleet than ever to keep themselves

in touch with their possessions. It will be easy to do it, but easier to let it alone, as no foreign power raises the slightest objection to the proceeding. Resist beginnings, said the sage.

This is the veriest bosh. Had the little American republic of a century ago resisted beginnings we would today be only a narrow coast line nation, with French, Spanish and English possessions harassing us at our back. The record that the United States has made in extending her domains should make the statesmen and diplomats of England blush. No mistake has been made. This is a good reason that Mr. Cleveland should be careful in his contemplated move with reference to Hawaii. We can not now afford to make mistakes at this late day.

When men or nations say that the acquisition of the Sandwich islands will necessitate an immediate doubling of our navy they display woeful ignorance or a lamentable disregard for the truth. At nearly all times from one to six United States ships are in the harbors of Hawaii. With ownership of the islands no more than this would be needed except in case of war. In that event, this government would of necessity have many ships stationed there whether it owned the islands or not.

The great question as to Hawaii is that of its self supporting or profitable condition. The convict labor and pauper classes present another problem that will need careful investigation. There is no ground for the assertion that our navy would have to be centered there even in peaceful times.

Hawaii is a sort of modern paradise, where the half clothed native who would rather lie in the tropic's sun or dive in the pellucid waters of the bay drags lazily through modern streets peopled by busy Americans. It is a land of fruit and honey, of rich lands and grand scenery and wondrous lore of the passing natives whose grandfathers were the slayers of men when missionaries sought the cannibal's soul. The tawny skinned aborigine is going ahead of the white man from the east, and with the Indian of America he will soon sleep under the clay where his fathers trod; his canoe will rot under the sun and rain of Oahu and his paddle and spear will no more be touched by the master hand.

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