

#### PHASES OF HAWAIIAN ANNEXATION.

The loudest critics of the policy of the administration in the treatment of Hawaiian complication are the so-called "annexationists."

These people are composed of two classes. The speculators who have interests in Hawaii—chiefly real estate—and who hope by the boom consequent upon the new order of things to make fortunes. Most of these people are citizens of this country, and they seem to be perfectly willing to plunge the United States into interminable difficulties and bring into our politics complex problems which might ultimately change the very fundamental principles upon which the Republic was founded—all for the sake of private gain.

The other class are well meaning citizens; men whose patriotism, pride of country and thirst for national glory have outrun their serious sober reason. They are uninformed upon the facts and have not given the question careful consideration with reference to the constitutional problems involved and to the dangers connected with launching this country upon a foreign policy which is contrary to the spirit of our institutions and subversive of the constitution, and consequently fraught with menace to the future welfare of the Republic.

In this connection it is well to review this question from the time of the announcement that the royal government in the Hawaiian Islands had been overthrown by the revolution, and that a provisional government had been set up.

In the first place, what is this provisional government? Of whom is it composed and what did it propose to do?

It was a self-constituted *de facto* government. It was a government for an emergency set up simply to preserve order until there should be time and opportunity for the creation of a permanent government.

It is generally—and was especially in this case—established without direct authority of the people over which it is placed. It is not a representative government and its powers are or should be limited simply to the sphere of preserving the peace.

It was in the present case without a constitution defining its authority. It had never taken any vote of its people or used any means of ascertaining what the desire of the people was as to what should be the future character of the government, and the position of the nation. It was composed chiefly of persons of foreign birth, resident in the islands, many of whom did not even consider themselves citizens. They had simply assumed authority under the protection of the United States troops and had overturned the real government of Hawaii, giving as their sole excuse the fact that "the Queen's government was retrogressive;" nevertheless, before they had been twenty-four hours in authority, and while relying upon the arms and influence of the United States for their protection and for their power to administer the law and preserve order, they proceeded immediately to tender the islands to a foreign nation. This they did without asking the people

in the premises.

Their tender could not have been more absolute and unconditional had they been possessed of a title deed to the entire territory and its inhabitants.

They assumed to make a treaty with the United States, binding the Hawaiian nation to terms which completely deprived the majority of its people of freedom of action and fixed their status by laws which, had the treaty been accepted by this government, could not have been changed except by revolution.

For instance, in the proposed treaty was a provision which prohibited any members of the Chinese colony resident upon the islands from passing into the United States. In case of ultimate statehood of the islands, therefore, we might have the extraordinary situation of certain citizens or residents of one state being precluded from passing freely into the other States! What would become of our constitutional guarantees according equal privileges to citizens of different States? The President and Senate in the exercise of the treaty-making power might thus change or subvert the constitution without consulting the people.

As annexation under such conditions and on such terms could only be accomplished by the power and arms of the United States, it would virtually amount to nothing less than a wilful seizure and forcible annexation by this government.

Annexation under terms of a treaty presupposes the free will and independence of both parties to the contract. But under the circumstances surrounding the establishment of the provisional government, and its subsequent acts, such a supposition as to the action of the Hawaiian people would be absurd.

The United States Minister, as soon as the native government was overthrown, immediately and without authority declared a United States protectorate of the islands. Under this guise the authority of the provisional government was maintained against local opposition. This act was so glaring a usurpation that it was repudiated by President Harrison, as soon as the information of the action was conveyed to Washington. Notwithstanding its disavowal, the moral in-

fluence of this government was used to the same purpose, for the support of the provisional government.

It might be well in this connection to inquire why it was necessary for the provisional government to protect itself by force against the opposition of the people of the islands if it was in power by and through the will of the people?

All these things became necessary matters of investigation by this nation before it could honorably treat for annexation, even if there had been no constitutional objections to such a course.

This inquiry was undertaken by President Cleveland, through Special Envoy Blount, and it was found that the facts had been misrepresented and that the United States had been entrapped into committing a great wrong, which it was about inconsiderately to supplement with a great blunder.

The more the question was studied, with reference to its constitutional bearings, the more apparent did it become that we must recede from the hasty and illy considered policy which had been advocated by designing and thoughtless politicians for private and selfish purposes; and the more certain became the conclusion that the annexation of Hawaii by the United States, was a diplomatic farce, a political absurdity and a constitutional impossibility.

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