

THE GREAT SOUTHERN MOVEMENT.

It is the M. P. Manly and the objects of the Memphis Convention.

NATIONAL OBSERVATORY, Washington, April 25, 1853.

Sir:—In complying with your request, I reply to the objects of the Memphis convention at length, I select the Pacific railway and the Amazon, because they are pre-eminently national. I do not select the...

Without the aid of a mere looker-on, you have the energy and the will to carry out all these great works of internal improvement among the States...

I look with astonishment and behold with amazement, the great spirit of internal improvement that is abroad, and the achievements which it is accomplishing in the South and West. It is vast and mighty...

I therefore turn to the mighty Amazon and its waters, and have had the benefit of some valuable information with regard to it. They may not amount to much, but such as they are, I offer you the result of them.

To me the favor to pick up the first school atlas you may see, and turn to the map of North and South America, if it have one; if not, to the map of the world. You will there see that our continent has, as it were, been stretched out into a long narrow...

The point to which the convention should address itself is the great river of the Amazon, and the establishment of a line of mail steamers between Para, at the mouth of that river, and Norfolk or Charleston, or some other Atlantic port of the southern States.

The Mississippi valley is the great place of consumption for her coffee, and she the great consumer of the productions of the States represented in the convention.

And how is it, do you suppose, that our business men are away to the west—look at the number and extent of our rivers, and how they water the whole Atlantic slope of that country; and you will see that, literally and truly, it is destined to be a great home of plenty. Its mouth is turned right towards us, and it is open to us, as if it were the vast abundance of its waters, it will empty and whenever it does pour these out, it will empty into our commercial lap—that vast and magnificent Mediterranean Sea of America.

Turn to the commerce, with their influences, upon that watershed, and you will make of it one vast plantation, which will produce for us all that the climate of India affords; and being at our own doors, we will want from us in return every article that we can produce, and we will have a new settlers in a new country to want:

New York, at great cost of time and money, by means of her Erie canal and other works of internal improvement, has made the sea and the river outside down. She has taken one of its commercial mouths at least from the Belize and placed it at Sandy Hook. The Rio de la Plata is nearly as large as the Mississippi; the valley it drains is proportionally as great; and the sea is nearly as tropical; and a canal of a few steps in length, by comparison, will turn that Mississippi of the South completely upside down, bringing its mouth into the practical use of the Atlantic, and pouring its waters into the Amazon; and the two will then, for many other great purposes of State, be taken by the physical agents of the Creator—the winds of heaven and the currents of the sea—and brought to the Straits of Florida, and there, by the aid of the Gulf Stream, will pour into the high seas with the mouth of our own Mississippi. What a focus!

The Amazon, as it now exists, gives drainage to six nations: it is national to the Atlantic coast of Brazil, of most of Bolivia, of Ecuador, and of large provinces in New Granada and Venezuela.

But the empire has the strength and the position; she holds the mouth, and will not let the Republic go up or come down with their steamboats. They are our sisters; they want our sympathy and need our assistance in their noble efforts to introduce the principles of free trade into the Amazon; and their republican hands out over their Amazon tributaries, proclaiming for the waters of that river the freedom of the seas, and inviting the world to come up the stream, and to trade with the Republic, and to emigrate, and open commerce and navigation with their Amazonian provinces—the richest piedmont country in the world.

A spirit has gone abroad there, and it is upon the waters of the Amazon. A little more than two years ago the federal government selected a gallant officer of the navy, who was at that time serving in the Pacific, detached him from his ship, first for special duty in Lima, and then for the purpose of exploring the Amazon from its sources to its mouth; to sound its depths; and to gauge its capacities, present and prospective, for navigation, trade, and commerce.

This expedition has returned; and Lieutenant Hurdon, the officer in charge of it, appreciating the importance of placing the information collected by him before the public without delay, has already transmitted his report to Congress, and that body, rightly conceiving it to possess a high degree of interest, has ordered a large number of extra copies.

The party consisted of but two officers. One of them, a Frenchman, and one who, when engaged on an expedition of the same region, had been murdered but a short time before; yet, notwithstanding this, the American officer, when he arrived in sight of the great river, was determined to divide the land of his country, and to divide the river, to send his companion, accompanied by a young American sailor, whom he had enlisted in Lima, into Bolivia, and down the Madeira; while he himself, with no other aid than that of the natives as he might pick up by the way, to accompany him, resolved to undertake the main stream itself. This accomplished, he descended that river on raft, and in a few days, by a distance of three hundred fifty miles, he had reached the mouth of the great river, and was enabled to send a message to the United States, and to the Republic, and to the world, that the Amazon was open to the commerce of the world; that he had proclaimed the freedom of the seas for her Amazonian water courses; that he was organizing territories there, and had placed in the hands of the executive \$200,000 for the purpose of encouraging immigration and settlement.

Ecuador, too, is moving in the same direction, and I expect the next mail to bring me good news from her and from New Granada also.

Sir, of Mississippi, is in Bolivia; Oshing, of Louisiana, is in Ecuador; and the most accomplished diplomatists that have honor to represent this government at any court, is in Lima. These functionaries are alive to the importance of this subject, and they regard the opening up of the Amazon to navigation, trade, and commerce, as one of the great questions of the age; and we may rely upon it, they will do their duty there, if we will do ours here.

Remember the sailor and, when Herndon picks up in Lima to accompany his expedition, and that that part of it which, as I have said, was sent into Bolivia. It visited Cuzco, and passed through the Inca country, the classic land of South America.

Richard had been armed Cape Horn among the Antisacas. He visited the great quicksilver mines of Huancavelica, and walked through their magnificent galleries, roofed and floored with cinnabar, and supported by pink-stained columns of the same mineral. He stood upon the shores of Lake Titicaca, and saw the Desaguadero river, which sometimes sways into that lake, and sometimes runs from it. He ascended the snow-capped peaks of that mountain range from whose base more than two thousand miles of rivers have their origin. He saw the llama, the vicuña, and the alpaca tamed on one hand, and feeding wild in their mountain fastnesses on the other. He descended into that glorious piedmont country, which has been called the cradle of the tribes of the Americas, and passed through the diamond districts and the auriferous regions of Brazil, and the desert from the Andes, the vegetable garden, from the whole range of the snow on the Andes to the fields of everlasting summer in the tropical plains below. He travelled through a country where the fruit of the fig, the orange, the guava, the mango, the banana, the milk tree; where another produces a nut that he

uses as a candle, and another yields him at the same time food, raiment, fuel, and shelter.

These scenes—such development of mineral wealth, such progress of agriculture, her magnificent trade, her regular forces in that tropical country, were well calculated to strike the mind of any untravelling youth, especially one like the young sailor Richards, who had been brought up in the plain, and in the great valley of Virginia, with wonder and amazement.

He had seen the sun at high noon standing in the north, and casting shadows to the south. He had seen the great corny and dark, and his eyes were dazzled by the longest meteor of a long night. He had seen a river that turns about at times and runs up stream. He had taken in at one view the vegetation of the three zones; and, I therefore, I mention, when he next appeared, to him the most curious, and the other day—"Pray, Mr. Richards, what, during this interesting trip of yours in the valley of the Amazon, struck you with the most force, and among the most curious, or remarkable circumstances, met with in all your travels?"

"The most remarkable thing, sir? Why, that such a country as that of the Amazon should, in the middle of the nineteenth century, be a wilderness."

"What a commentary! I think that noble young man with all his heart for this most glorious description of a glorious country. Language of greater force and energy, and of more power, is not to be found anywhere. That the rest of the world, the statesmen of Europe and America, the spirit of commercial enterprise and adventure which marks the times, should have ignored such a country, such a country, and going on trading voyages with the caravans, Ecuador for gold dust, cochineal, indigo, and other dyes, more brilliant by far even than the Tyrian."

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"There is one just turning into the landing at Memphis, and more advanced, and do not you know, the most brilliant, crimson, scarlet and purple, with the richest assortment of spices and gums that ever crossed the sea."

"New Orleans and Para, Tabatinga and Wheeling, St. Louis and Natchez would each and all be in the position of regular lines of steamboats. The upper countries of the Amazon, and the people on the headwaters of the Mississippi, and the Missouri, and their tributaries, would be in closer and more constant communication than the people of Tennessee or Ohio were with New Orleans when we were boys. You recollect the custom was for our young men in those days, after gathering their crops in the fall, to build their canoes, and to take them down the river, and their crop, and drift down the river to New Orleans and a market. Arrived there, they sold both boat and cargo and walked back. This brought their return so late in the spring, that seed time and already past, and they were obliged to go back to their country to get it to market."

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of some powerful magician, by the touch of which India, and all the lands of the East, with their inhabitants, commerce, productions, and former wealth could be lifted up, transported across the seas, and set down in the great valley of the Amazon, just as they are, what should we have, and what would be the effect upon the business relations of this country?

India would be at our doors; and all nations, in the Indian Archipelago, would have to pass them; for to all, either going or coming, they occupy the position of half-way houses. We should see steamboats at the wharves of New Orleans, and the great valley of the Amazon, and the Amazonian boats as they pass and repass, and hourly from, and departing as constantly to, this new country. We may imagine one of our children standing on the last of the Chickasaw bluffs, counting the Amazonian boats as they pass and repass, and telling their cargoes. There goes one, we may suppose him to say, deeply laden, from the Rocky Mountains; she is to discharge her cargo at the foot of the great falls, where the Amazon takes its last form from the Andes; she exchanges salutations with one just coming up the river from Eastern Peru. Her cargo is an assorted one of great value—fine wool, precious metals, spices, coconuts, Peruvian bark, and great variety of tropical fruits, both rich and rare, make up the rich assortment.

There is one from Bolivia. She has a cargo of coffee and tobacco, as superior to that of Mocha and Havana as the coffee of Brazil is to Jack Tar's best 'cockle.'

"That one coming down the river there is from Pittsburg, with a shipment of glass, hardware, and fancy articles. She is bound for the markets of Caracas, and is going on trading voyages with the caravans. Ecuador for gold dust, cochineal, indigo, and other dyes, more brilliant by far even than the Tyrian."

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