

## ORAN MILO ROBERTS: A Vicious White Supremacist – Ed Sebesta 10/24/2018

Oran Milo Roberts was a central figure in the secessionist movement in 1860.<sup>1</sup>

The journal of the Texas secession convention in is chronology of the events leading to secession has Roberts as a significant historical actor in the chain of events leading to secession. From the entries in the journal.

1860

Dec. 1 O.M. Roberts made a public address at Austin.

Dec. 3 O.M. Roberts prepared a call for a convention.

1861

Feb. 10 O.M. Roberts issued an address advocating the adoption of the ordinance of secession by the people.<sup>2</sup>

Roberts' 1860 call for a convention to decide for secession, titled "The Impending Crisis," is reprinted as chapter, in his book, "Our Federal Relations from a Southern View of Them," published in 1892. The Internet Archive, [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org), has copies which you can read and download. You can reflect upon the fact that in 1892 Roberts felt that reprinting this call would reflect well on him.

Robert's makes it clear that he considered the need for secession is driven by the issue of slavery. An extract from the "Impending Crisis":

The great question before the American people is, shall the institution of slavery be put upon a sure basis of gradual extinction. The Northern controlling majorities say it shall. The South say it shall not. And that is the issue. This is our institution,—not theirs. It is a part of our political government, and so recognized in the Constitution of the United States and of the States. It is a part of our social organization. Our industrial pursuits are largely based upon it. It constitutes a great portion of our capital. It is, in its results, the controlling influence that characterizes the civilization peculiar to the Southern States. It composes one-third of our population (about 4,000,000). It is beneficial to both races, the white and the black. Its tendency is to prevent the conflict between capital and labor. There is no conflict between free and slave labor here, one being an advantage to the other. It tends to the perpetuation of

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<sup>1</sup> Dixon, Ford, "Roberts, Oran Milo," Texas State Historical Handbook online, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fro18>, printed out 10/24/2018.

<sup>2</sup> "Journal of the Secession Convention of Texas 1861," Texas Library and Historical Commission, Edited from the Original in the Department of State by Ernest William Winkler, State Librarian, Austin, 1912, pp. 7-8.

our republican institutions, by establishing an inferior class, fixed by law, and known by color; and by promoting the equality of the superior white race. Nor is this a legalized fiction. For the African race is indeed the inferior, intellectually, and for that reason the better fitted for its' position of servitude. Domestic servitude of some sort, is a necessary consequence of any social organization, elevated above barbarism, by its wealth and refinement. Although African slavery is established by power, it is equally true, that, in its absence, the servitude of the weaker and poorer portions of the white race would be forced upon them by the laws which protect property. It is not a matter of choice ever. Being a necessity of society, that same society finds the means directly or indirectly, through the body politic, to force it upon some one. We prefer the enslavement of the African race, because we believe it is right,—morally and politically right,—that it is sanctioned by revelation, and by the immemorial custom of mankind, and was never questioned until lately,—very lately,—when British interest and religious bigotry made the discovery, that it was exceedingly sinful. We think it better to make servants of the black race than of the white. We do not complain of those who differ with us in opinion. The difference between the North and the South, in procuring menial services required by society, is simply in the mode of applying the force of the body politic, and not in the principle, except that we apply the force to an inferior race, and they to a part of their own, the sons and daughters of their white neighbors.

This crisis involves a great social matter, as well as political. If we were disposed to yield the point, we cannot do so without ruin. What would we do with our slaves? We have no place to send them to, as did the Northern people. They, under the operation of their gradual emancipation laws, did not free their slaves, but floated them down upon us, and got the money for them. We cannot turn them loose amongst us. It would be an act of inhumanity to them. They would have no one to protect them. They would descend to the vilest barbarism. A war of races would ensue, and if they were not exterminated, they would hang upon our society, a demoralizing, degrading element, dragging us down in the scale of civilization.

Our industrial pursuits would also be ruined. The resources of this country cannot be developed, and its prosperity continued without slave labor. In fine, it would make us a different people, in all our leading characteristics, moral, social, domestic, industrial and political. That is simply revolution. And that is what Northern majorities are seeking to force upon us. To us, it is in its final results, a matter of life and death, — politically, socially, and economically. To them, it is speculative experiment, for their and our good, if nothing worse. If we yield to their endeavor to spread their order of civilization over us, it will be a failure. For the mass of free-negro element amongst us, would inevitably prevent it. The nominal freedom of the slave would be purchased at the price of the degradation of the great mass of both races. We cannot,

and will not yield. Our domestic institutions belong to our guardianship. No authority has been delegated to any power to circumvent and destroy them. We have reserved the right to control our own destiny on that subject. It is humiliating to have to discuss the propriety of maintaining our reserved rights, with those whom they do not properly concern, and who are intermeddling with them. This aggressive party do not deny our right to maintain slavery within the Southern States where it exists; but they do claim to have the right, derived from their connection with us in the same general government, to use such means as will eventually so act upon us, as to eradicate slavery within the States. And now, the position which I assume is, that the measures they have adopted, and have put in operation, and those which must follow in the same tram, constitute a character of aggression, that cannot be successfully opposed, or averted, except by prompt State action, and that we are justified in pursuing that remedy to any extremity that may be necessary to secure our endangered rights.

I think that this extract is long enough to make it clear the general tenor of this speech. Much of the rest of the speech is about the threat to slavery by the public opinion and politics of the non-slave states, and what Robert's belief as to what course of action is needed to preserve slave society.

Roberts asserts that the non-slave state menace to the slave states derives from this core idea.

At last it has found an object, which fastens itself upon the great mass of Northern mind, and is being infused as an element of action, into the government. That element is the *universal freedom of man*, without distinction of color.<sup>3</sup> [Italics in the original.]

The advocacy by Roberts for the secession of Texas is ultimately based on the fear of racial equality.

He was unanimously elected president of the Secession Convention in Austin.<sup>4</sup>

When Roberts was elected president of the Secession Convention he gave this speech:

*"I bow to the sovereignty of the people of my State. All political power is inherent in the people. That power, I assert, you now represent. We have been congregated in obedience to the public*

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<sup>3</sup> Roberts, Oran Milo, chapter 2, "The Impending Crisis," in "Our Federal Relations from a Southern View of Them," Eugene Von Boeckmann Printer, Austin, 1892, pp. 21-49, slavery extract from pp. 25-27, universal freedom comment, pp. 40.

<sup>4</sup> Dixon, Ford, "Roberts, Oran Milo," Texas State Historical Handbook online, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fro18>, printed out 10/24/2018.

will, by the spontaneous and voluntary concert of the people of this State, to consider and dispose of questions equally as momentous and more varied than those that were solved by our revolutionary forefathers of '76! The crisis upon us involves not only the right of self government, **but the maintenance of a great principle in the law of nations—the immemorial recognition of the institution of slavery wherever it is not locally prohibited**—and also the true theory of our general government as an association of sovereignties, and not a blended mass of people in one social compact. However grave the issues now presented may be, I trust this body will be fully adequate to their solution, in such manner as to preserve the rights of the State. While not insensible to the great honor conferred upon me by this body of distinguished citizens, I am aware that my selection is attributable more to my position in the judiciary of the State than to my experience or knowledge of parliamentary deliberations. It is an indication to the world that this movement of the people of Texas has not originated in any revolutionary spirit of social disorder, and I doubt not that the moderation and wisdom of your deliberations and acts will demonstrate it.” [Italics in the original, boldface added.]<sup>5</sup>

Roberts was one of the signers of the Texas Ordinance of Secession.<sup>6</sup>

At the secession convention Roberts is listed as having voted for, “A declaration of the causes which impel the State of Texas to secede from the Federal Union,” Feb. 2, 1861.

The declaration is burning with racism, cruelty, and arrogance. I supply the text here:

The government of the United States, by certain joint resolutions bearing date the 1st day of March, in the year A.D. 1845, proposed to the Republic of Texas, then a free sovereign and independent nation, the annexation of the latter to the former, as one of the co-equal States thereof,

The people of Texas, by deputies in convention assembled on the fourth day of July of the same year, assented to and accepted said proposals and formed a constitution for the proposed State, upon which on the 29th day of December in the same year, said State was formally admitted into the Confederate Union.

Texas abandoned her separate national existence and consented to become one of the Confederate States to promote her welfare, insure her domestic tranquility and secure more substantially the blessings of peace and liberty to her people. She was received into the confederacy with her own constitution, under the guarantee of the federal constitution and the compact of annexation, that she should enjoy these blessings. She was received as a commonwealth holding, maintaining and protecting the institution known as negro slavery — the servitude of the African to the white race

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<sup>5</sup> “Journal of the Secession Convention of Texas 1861,” Texas Library and Historical Commission, Edited from the Original in the Department of State by Ernest William Winkler, State Librarian, Austin, 1912, pp. 16-17.

<sup>6</sup> “Journal of the Secession Convention of Texas 1861,” Texas Library and Historical Commission, Edited from the Original in the Department of State by Ernest William Winkler, State Librarian, Austin, 1912, pp. 54.

within her limits — a relation that had existed from the first settlement of her wilderness by the white race, and which her people intended should exist in all future time. Her institutions and geographical position established the strongest ties between her and other slave-holding States of the confederacy. Those ties have been strengthened by association. But what has been the course of the government of the United States and of the people and authorities of the non-slave-holding States, since our connections with them?

The controlling majority of the Federal Government, under various pretences and disguises, has so administered the same as to exclude the citizens of the Southern States, unless under odious and unconstitutional restrictions, from all the immense territory owned in common by all the States on the Pacific Ocean, for the avowed purpose of acquiring sufficient power in the common government to use it as a means of destroying the institutions of Texas and her sister slaveholding States.

By the disloyalty of the Northern States and their citizens and the imbecility of the Federal Government, infamous combinations of incendiaries and outlaws have been permitted in those States and the common territory of Kansas to trample upon the federal laws, to war upon the lives and property of Southern citizens in that territory, and finally, by violence and mob law, to usurp the possession of the same as exclusively the property of the Northern States.

The Federal Government, while but partially under the control of these our unnatural and sectional enemies, has for years almost entirely failed to protect the lives and property of the people of Texas against the Indian savages on our border, and more recently against the murderous forays of banditti from the neighboring territory of Mexico; and when our State government has expended large amounts for such purpose, the Federal Government has refused reimbursement therefor, thus rendering our condition more insecure and harassing than it was during the existence of the Republic of Texas.

These and other wrongs we have patiently borne in the vain hope that a returning sense of justice and humanity would induce a different course of administration.

When we advert to the course of individual non-slave-holding States, and that a majority of their citizens, our grievances assume far greater magnitude. The States of Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Wisconsin, Michigan and Iowa, by solemn legislative enactments, have deliberately, directly or indirectly violated the 3rd clause of the 2nd section of the 4th article of the federal constitution, and laws passed in pursuance thereof; thereby annulling a material provision of the compact, designed by its framers to perpetuate amity between the members of the confederacy and to secure the rights of the slave-holding States in their domestic institutions—a provision founded in justice and wisdom, and without the enforcement of which the compact fails to accomplish the object of its creation. Some of those States have imposed high fines and degrading

penalties upon any of their citizens or officers who may carry out in good faith that provision of the compact, or the federal laws enacted in accordance therewith.

In all the non-slave-holding States, in violation of that good faith and comity which should exist between entirely distinct nations, the people have formed themselves into a great sectional party, now strong enough in numbers to control the affairs of each of those States, based upon the unnatural feeling of hostility to these Southern States and their beneficent and patriarchal system of African slavery, proclaiming the debasing doctrine of the equality of all men, irrespective of race or color—a doctrine at war with nature, in opposition to the experience of mankind, and in violation of the plainest revelations of the Divine Law. They demand the abolition of negro slavery throughout the confederacy, the recognition of political equality between the white and the negro races, and avow their determination to press on their crusade against us, so long as a negro slave remains in these States.

For years past this abolition organization has been actively sowing the seeds of discord through the Union, and has rendered the federal congress the arena for spreading firebrands and hatred between the slave-holding and non-slave-holding States.

By consolidating their strength, they have placed the slave-holding States in a hopeless minority in the federal congress, and rendered representation of no avail in protecting Southern rights against their exactions and encroachments.

They have proclaimed, and at the ballot box sustained, the revolutionary doctrine that there is a “higher law” than the constitution and laws of our Federal Union, and virtually that they will disregard their oaths and trample upon our rights.

They have for years past encouraged and sustained lawless organizations to steal our slaves and prevent their recapture, and have repeatedly murdered Southern citizens while lawfully seeking their rendition.

They have invaded Southern soil and murdered unoffending citizens, and through the press their leading men and a fanatical pulpit have bestowed praise upon the actors and assassins in these crimes, while the governors of several of their States have refused to deliver parties implicated and indicted for participation in such offenses, upon the legal demands of the States aggrieved.

They have, through the mails and hired emissaries, sent seditious pamphlets and papers among us to stir up servile insurrection and bring blood and carnage to our firesides.

They have sent hired emissaries among us to burn our towns and distribute arms and poison to our slaves for the same purpose.

They have impoverished the slave-holding States by unequal and partial legislation, thereby enriching themselves by draining our substance.

They have refused to vote appropriations for protecting Texas against ruthless savages, for the sole reason that she is a slave-holding State.

And, finally, by the combined sectional vote of the seventeen non-slave-holding States, they have elected as president and vice-president of the whole confederacy two men whose chief claims to such high positions are their approval of these long continued wrongs, and their pledges to continue them to the final consummation of these schemes for the ruin of the slave-holding States.

In view of these and many other facts, it is meet that our own views should be distinctly proclaimed.

We hold as undeniable truths that the governments of the various States, and of the confederacy itself, were established exclusively by the white race, for themselves and their posterity; that the African race had no agency in their establishment; that they were rightfully held and regarded as an inferior and dependent race, and in that condition only could their existence in this country be rendered beneficial or tolerable.

That in this free government all white men are and of right ought to be entitled to equal civil and political rights; that the servitude of the African race, as existing in these States, is mutually beneficial to both bond and free, and is abundantly authorized and justified by the experience of mankind, and the revealed will of the Almighty Creator, as recognized by all Christian nations; while the destruction of the existing relations between the two races, as advocated by our sectional enemies, would bring inevitable calamities upon both and desolation upon the fifteen slave-holding States.

By the secession of six of the slave-holding States, and the certainty that others will speedily do likewise, Texas has no alternative but to remain in an isolated connection with the North, or unite her destinies with the South.

For these and other reasons, solemnly asserting that the federal constitution has been violated and virtually abrogated by the several States named, seeing that the federal government is now passing under the control of our enemies to be diverted from the exalted objects of its creation to those of oppression and wrong, and realizing that our own State can no longer look for protection, but to God and her own sons—We the delegates of the people of Texas, in Convention assembled, have passed an ordinance dissolving all political connection with the government of the United States of America and the people thereof and confidently appeal to the intelligence and patriotism of the freemen of Texas to ratify the same at the ballot box, on the 23rd day of the present month.

Adopted in Convention on the 2nd day of Feby, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-one and of the independence of Texas the twenty-fifth.<sup>7</sup>

After the Civil War Roberts worked to defeat the multi-racial democracy of Reconstruction. He joined the Conservative Union Caucus, 1866 to oppose the efforts to defeat and hinder the efforts of the Constitutional Convention of 1866. Both sources in the footnotes can be found at [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org).

This caucus published the following letter from which this extract of it explains its concern to preserve white supremacy.

To HON. J. W. THROCKMORTON AND HON. GEO. W. JONES :

GENTLEMEN: The undersigned representing, as they believe, the views of the people in various portions of the State, without distinction as to past party affiliations, desire permission to use your names for the positions of Governor and Lieutenant-Governor of the State of Texas at the next election.

Knowing you to be opposed to the radicalism of the day, which is persistently sought to be imposed upon the people of Texas, **and being fully satisfied of your opposition to negro suffrage, and the hasty and inconsiderate elevation of the negro to political equality;** knowing also that you indorse the good faith of the people of Texas, in their professions of loyalty to the general government, and appreciating their earnest desire for our State to be restored to her former Federal relations at the earliest practicable period. <sup>8</sup>

The reader should note that Throckmorton did accept.

Later governor O.M. Roberts had published the book, "A Description of Texas: Its Advantages and Resources," in 1881. It can be viewed and downloaded from [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org) and his dismissive attitudes towards Mexicans can be read. Roberts believes that since the Mexicans did not displace Native Americans from the state that it is an indication of a failure of their manhood. The genocidal campaign of elimination of Native Americans by American settlers is attributed to white racial superiority.

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<sup>7</sup> There are two sources for this. Winkler, William, "Journal of the Secession Convention," Austin: State Library, 1912, pp. 61-65. See also, "Platforms of Political Parties in Texas," edited by Ernest William Winkler, in the Bulletin of the University of Texas, 1916, Sept. 20, 1916. The declaration is on pages 89-93, the reference to Ireland having voted for the declaration is on page 93.

<sup>8</sup> "Platforms of Political Parties in Texas," edited by Ernest William Winkler, in the Bulletin of the University of Texas, 1916, Sept. 20, 1916, pp. 98-99.



The following are some extracts:

For centuries Texas was the home of the roving Comanches, and other savage tribes of Indians. They neither plowed nor built, and perpetuated no labor for their posterity. The grand-sire and grand-son went through the same round of undivided labor, which was mainly to hunt something to eat, steal horses, and to kill their enemies. Being expelled, they have left behind them no vestige of their long occupation, except that which is to be found in the names of a few mountain peaks and water-courses. They are careful, however, to keep us reminded of their existence, by their savage depredations upon our frontier people. This, however, can not last long ; **for this very savage nature, which causes them to strike back as they recede before a superior race, draws upon them their gradual, though ultimate, extermination.** This is simply one of the processes at work, by which the higher order of man is, and \*will continue to be, forced in self-defence, willing or not, to take possession of, and use the earth everywhere, **carrying out the inexorable and perpetually operating law of races,** and of nations, to elevate or die. Give the Comanche his horse, his bow, his buffalo meat, and his pecans, and all else, clothes, houses, farms, cattle, rail roads, factories, ships, cannons, are to him but “Vanity and vexation of Spirit.”<sup>9</sup> [Boldface added.]

When you at the art work at Fair Park in Dallas, Texas the meaning of the ubiquitous art work referencing pioneer settlers should be seen in light of this passage in Roberts book. This attitude concerning the pioneer settlers and their role in Texas history is by no means unique to Roberts. In this historical view they are tough pioneers since they are to wage a war of extermination. This interpretation of the art is further reinforced by Roberts’ racially deterministic description of Mexican settlement in Texas.

The Mexicans during a hundred years, under the Spanish monarchy, and afterwards under the Mexican Republic, made some progress in settling a small part of Texas, and in disputing its dominion with the Comanches and other tribes. They were, for the most part, a race of native Indians of copper color, slightly intermixed with Spanish blood. They were partial, in their industrial pursuits, to hunting for game, and to the care of herds of cattle, sheep and horses; and their arts were, in the main, confined to a level with their occupations. Their cultivation of the earth was very limited in quantity, and rude in manner. Their mode of developing a new country was by laying off a town with a large tract of land around it for commons, establishing therein a military post and a Catholic church, and inviting settlers to the town, by giving them lots therein, and lands in large tracts in the surrounding country for the establishment of stock farms, that were the abodes of the herdsmen, who, as

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<sup>9</sup> Roberts, Oran Milo, “A Description of Texas, Its Advantages and Resources and Some Account of their Development, Past, Present and Future,” Gilbert Book Co., St. Louis, 1881, pp. 19-22, quote on page 19.

occasion might require, took protection in the town under the military, and also paid their visits there for religious devotion with the priest. And the town was also the center of attraction for their dances, cock and bull-fights, when the town arrived at such proportions as to afford the luxury of these amusements.

With their standard of manhood, and arts of war, the struggle with the wild savages was long, and often doubtful in maintaining their position in the country. That difficulty, perhaps, contributed largely to their invitation of the Anglo-Americans to share with them their lands and dangers; which, commencing formally in 1821, resulted in establishing numerous colonies for the settlement of white men.

The antagonism of races soon commenced, and was kept up from various grounds, until the Anglo-Americans, by the aid of some noble Mexicans, remained masters of the field, and established in Texas an independent Republic in 1836.<sup>10</sup>

The failure to wage a war of extermination is held to be a failure of Mexican “manhood.”

In the book Roberts sees slavery as “bounteous.” An extract:

For fifteen years, from annexation to the commencement of the late civil war in 1861, the material development of Texas was indeed very great. During that period there was a large influx of population and wealth, mostly in the shape of slave-labor. Forests fell, prairies were plowed up, dwellings, gin-houses, mills, sugar-houses, churches, school-houses, villages, towns, and cities, all sprung up, as if by magic; and the lively energy of the new-comer infused increased force and activity in the habits of the old settler, or drove him to the frontier to take care of his vast herds of cattle and horses. **The two races, white and black, worked together in harmony, the relative status being fixed by law, and by traditional custom. The superior directed and took care of the inferior.** Bounteous crops sprang from the virgin soil, and general prosperity gladdened the land, strewing peace and plenty broadcast over the whole country. <sup>11</sup> [Boldface added.]

In the book Roberts wants to assure white readers that African Americans, (A term he would never use), are kept in what he feels is their proper place in society. He writes:

We have now fairly entered upon the experiment of two races of people, as different as white and black, living together in the same country, upon recognized terms of

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<sup>10</sup> Roberts, Oran Milo, “A Description of Texas, Its Advantages and Resources and Some Account of their Development, Past, Present and Future,” Gilbert Book Co., St. Louis, 1881, pp. 19-22, quote on page 19-20.

<sup>11</sup> Roberts, Oran Milo, “A Description of Texas, Its Advantages and Resources and Some Account of their Development, Past, Present and Future,” Gilbert Book Co., St. Louis, 1881, pp. 22-23

legal and political equality, **and with the same inequality, in the personal and social relations, and in all matters outside of the law as it existed formerly, while the blacks were slaves and the whites masters.** It is well that it is so, and is likely so to continue in Texas; not as matter of prejudice, but as matter of humane policy. **No two such distinct races ever did, or ever can be reasonably expected to live together, on terms of perfect equality in every respect,** otherwise than upon the miraculous supposition that they respectively could regard each other as truly and exactly equal in every respect. It is likely to continue as it is here, because hundreds of thousands of white people, from the other states and from Europe, are pouring into Texas, by which the **importance of the blacks, as a class, either for labor or otherwise, is diminishing day by day; and in a few years they will be relatively lost amidst the busy millions of whites** that will spread themselves over our broad domain. We have advanced far enough, in the first ten years since the negroes were freed, to perceive a most marked change in the direction of our industrial pursuits, in our habits of life, and in the general face of society. The industry of the whites has been quickened, and better directed towards comfort and utility -in the country, as well as in the towns.<sup>12</sup> [Boldface added.]

O.M. Roberts is, as mentioned earlier, the author of “Our Federal Relations from a Southern View of Them,” published in 1892. A reader of this book might wonder why anyone would publish such a book indicating that the author of such a book was a raging white supremacist. It needs to be understood that in 1892 Roberts would expect the general approval of white people in Texas. This book is online at [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org) and is word searchable.

The first chapter is about the causes of the Civil War, a term which Roberts doesn't use. It shows that his opinion about secession never changed.

In the Appendix of the book Roberts explains why the expression in the Declaration of Independence “all men are created equal” is not applicable to non-white people. This is from a lecture he gave as a law professor at the University of Texas, Feb. 26, 1892:

This expression that "all men are created equal," is misapplied, when it is understood to pertain to all races of mankind. The red men of America, and the negroes of Africa have made but little improvement in their condition socially during many centuries, whereas the men of Europe in the same time have arisen from a low to a high state of civilization. This difference cannot be attributed entirely to the difference in the localities of the different races. It must have been, to a considerable degree, attributable to a difference in mental and physical organizations. The race in Europe

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<sup>12</sup> Roberts, Oran Milo, “A Description of Texas, Its Advantages and Resources and Some Account of their Development, Past, Present and Future,” Gilbert Book Co., St. Louis, 1881, pp. 23-24.

were endowed with a greater designing and inventive capacity, that enabled them to add improvements upon the first advancements upwards, from age to age, while the social condition of the other races remained stationary, because they did not have that capacity in the same degree. In addition to the difference in the original endowment, it has greatly increased in the reproduction of the white race, during the different stages of its advancement by the effect of heredity. It is not necessary to adopt the whole of the Darwinian theory, to recognize the fact that the natural mental capacity of the white race has been gradually improved by their increasing culture during many centuries. This progression has been produced as a general result, notwithstanding there may have been particular instances, in which the improvement was not exhibited.

Now, the interesting problem is, can the red and black races, with their natural mental and physical organization, be raised to an equal standard with the white race, by education in schools, the same as those attended by the white race. That they can is as yet only a theoretical assumption, upon the belief of the historic account of the original unity of the race of mankind. But is it not more probable, that their peculiar natural organization has been through many centuries, so permanently fixed upon them, that no improvement which they can in time acquire, will prevent them from ultimately disappearing before the power of the white race? That is the inexorable law of races on this earth, however laudable may be the humanitarian efforts to change it, notwithstanding the means and time of its accomplishment cannot now be foreseen. This is the lesson taught by all history of the past.<sup>13</sup>

The rest of the lecture has its racist assertions.

Much of the book are various arguments about law and the Constitution of the United States arguing that Reconstruction was oppressive or wise. However there are some sections of the book particularly outrageous.

In Chapter 2, "Address: On the Crisis in 1860, then imposing a duty on the People of the South, and exhibiting the Wrongs done by the Northern States," Roberts describes the activities of the Ku Klux Klan to both exonerate it and justify it and deny that it had committed any atrocities.

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<sup>13</sup> Roberts, Oran Milo, Appendix No. 1, "LECTURE: In the University of Texas, by O.M. Roberts Law Professor, Feb. 26, 1892, -- On the Use and Misuse of the Principle in the Expression in the Declaration of Independence, written by Thomas Jefferson "All Men are created equal," in "Our Federal Relations from a Southern View of Them," Eugene Von Boeckmann Printer, Austin, 1892, pp. 1-23. The Appendix 1 has its own independent pagination. Quote is from pages 12-13.

Notwithstanding the influences continually operating to produce antagonism between the races, there were some things settled between them relating to their intercourse. The whites conceded equality before the law. The blacks conceded their inequality at the white man's home, which prevented their attempting to force a social intercourse with the whites. The point not settled was the equality of the two races, when they met, or were together in public places. Upon this point the antagonism was so extreme as to engender almost continual disturbances, resulting in quarrels, abuse, and physical conflict. It had increased from the time the negroes were set free until the spring of 1868, when there prevailed, in many parts, a most intense apprehension of a hostile outbreak between the two races. Both races had arms and ammunition for defense. White women were afraid for their husbands to leave home at night. The matter was not openly discussed. It was an oppressive dread, that was felt rather than spoken. Just then the Kuklux appeared. No notice of its coming was heralded. As to most persons, it was like some strange thing, that had suddenly arisen out of the ground. In a village in Eastern Texas, about ten o'clock at night, the profound silence of the place was broken by the loud sound of a drum being beat in the graveyard at the edge of the village. The sound at such a time, and in such a place, aroused the attention of the citizens. Very soon there emerged from the graveyard a company on horse back,—ghost horses, and ghost riders in appearance, —and marched in military array through the streets, performing accurately the manoeuvres of soldiers, in silence only occasionally broken by low guttural tones of voice. People looked out of their doors and windows at the strange sight,—horses draped in white, robes with white flowing shrowds and high caps on them. The negroes out visiting fled to their homes, and when intercepted by the march, took refuge under the houses, from which they escaped only after broad daylight the next morning. One house, where it was known there were negroes, was surrounded, when two or three of the riders dismounted, and calling a negro man out to the well, set him to drawing water. One of the riders, standing on the opposite side of the well, drank (or appeared to the negro to drink) three buckets of water, mumbling out a complaint of being very thirsty, not having had a good drink since the battle at Mansfield. This marching was kept up night after night, and was extended on the roads into the country, where it was known there were negroes. From the first ghost march from the grave yard, the point of contention between the races was settled. Every negro, man, woman or child, that met a white man or woman, divided, or gave the whole of the sidewalk, street or road, and the salutation of the old negroes was "good morning, massa," touching or lifting his hat gracefully. The negroes knew very soon that it was white men that were doing this, still the ghost-like appearance, and the military display of such large companies, confounded and overawed them. It struck them all over on their weak points,—their superstition, and their innate sense of inferiority to white people, when brought in contact with them.

At that time there was a squad of fifteen or twenty soldiers, under a sergeant, stationed in the village. When the marches took place, they did not show their heads out of their quarters.

The Kuklux occasionally committed some acts of violence, but it was more pretended than real, for their object was to scare, and not to hurt the negroes.

As soon as its object was accomplished, it disappeared as suddenly as it appeared at first.

It was a thing of the past for more than a year before the halls of Congress were in tribulation about it. How it was conceived, started, and spread, was a sealed secret to most persons, and especially those prominent men, who had been in the habit of leading in public affairs. It was a ground swell, instinctively directed to avert an impending catastrophe, —an internecine struggle between the two races, which was then upon the point of breaking out. It was learned afterwards that it was started in Paduka, and spread like wild-fire over the Southern States.

Although the tribunal of the Freedman's Bureau was in full and active operation during the time the Kuklux were in service, no actions of theirs in regard to the negroes were ever brought before it, so far as heard from. Nor were there any prosecutions in the courts arising out of their conduct. This is sufficient to show what were the enormities of the Kuklux (about which Congress was afterwards so grievously exercised) that were made to grow into frightful proportions, as the news of them traveled to the North.<sup>14</sup>

African Americans in Texas faced murderous rage and violence and knew terror. A website with the reports of this violence by officers of the Freedmen's Bureau is available at this website. <http://freedmensbureau.com/texas/index.htm>.

Oran Milo Roberts entire life involved the vicious denigration and degradation of African Americans. No hall, building, street, school, university, park, room, geographical feature or whatever else might be named by humanity should be named after him.

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<sup>14</sup> Roberts, Oran Milo, Chapter 7, "LECTURE: A Supplement to the two Reconstructions, exhibiting the effects of the action of the Military Authorities, in effort to govern the people," in "Our Federal Relations from a Southern View of Them," Eugene Von Boeckmann Printer, Austin, 1892, pp. 111-127. Quote is from pages 120-122