

## COLONEL WALKER.

A Pen Picture of the Famous Filibuster by C. W. Doubleday, of This City.

The following interesting letter was sent recently by Mr. C. W. Doubleday, of this city, to the San Francisco Chronicle:—

To the Editor of the Chronicle.—

Sir: I find in the *Chronicle's* notice of my book, "Reminiscences of the 'Filibuster' War in Nicaragua," a suggestion that more of the personal traits of that remarkable man, Colonel William Walker, would have been acceptable. Though not assuming to be his biographer, it is nevertheless pleasant to be able to testify in favor of the man who, though, as the poet justly says,

He died in all disgrace,

could nevertheless exercise such control and fascination over men—not all of whom were "desperate adventurers," but some of whom were men of character and intelligence—that they willingly threw themselves in the deadly breach and died for him or at his beck, satisfied that an approving nod would be accorded their memories.

Men like Walker have their faults. They are accented when they fail of the accomplishment of their tasks, and their virtues are rarely known. His great exemplar, the first Napoleon, though equally remorseless and conscienceless in the path of ambition, was vain, egotistical, and sensuous, but he conquered nearly all of Europe, and the memory of his glory is everywhere preserved, while his crimes are but dimly remembered.

Colonel Walker was a man of constitutionally temperate habits, mild of speech and demeanor, though lacking in the personal grace that adds a charm to the culture and innate refinement which he unquestionably possessed. His expression of approval or the announcement of a death sentence was equally calm of tone and enunciation, but men would leap into a fiery blast of shot and shell for the former, and suffer more than the mere pangs of death at the latter. He was a visionary and yet a man of action, a by no means uncommon combination of character. A certain intellectuality, hard and insensible as polished steel, marked his actions and impulses, and yet he exercised a magnetic power over more sensitive organizations such as is rarely witnessed.

But the cohesive power by which he attracted individuals did not hold good for masses of men not directly under his influence. He was a soldier rather in the sense of a fighter than as an organizer, and as he failed to bind men to him by permanently consulting their interests in connection with his own, the results of success won by indomitable valor and energy did not inhere for any lasting benefit.

As a Southern man his love for the institution of slavery came as near being a pronounced sentiment as anything in his unsentimental nature, and on this rock his fortunes and his life were wrecked. The native chiefs, military and political, of Nicaragua would have condoned almost any act of oppression from the stranger rather than either faction would have submitted to be governed by the other. But a limit was reached when the colored blood, which runs in the veins of nine-tenths of the population, was decreed a barrier to civil rights.

To Walker their hostile attitude on this question was as the clarion to the war charger. Even the withdrawal of Northern capital and the clamor of the sentiment of the world, as expressed through the press, failed to dismay him. The Southern States stood by him in sentiment, though not in men or means, and his indomitable spirit sought to overcome a world in moral and physical opposition. He failed, as in this day all must who attempt the suppression of popular ideas. Nicaragua has profited by the lesson he taught her.

Who would be free,

Themselves must strike the blow.

C. W. DOUBLEDAY.

Cleveland, O., October 25, 1876.