

THE NICARAGUA EXPEDITION.

In the subjoined letters, copied from the New York papers, we have some further revelations of the course of the Government in connexion with the late effort to dispatch from New York an unlawful expedition against Nicaragua:

SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK,

U. S. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, Dec. 29, 1855.

SIR: On the 21th day of December instant a complaint under oath was made at this office that you, together with other persons, had, in this district, began, set on foot, provided and prepared the means for a military expedition or enterprise to be carried on from this country against the territory of the Republic of Nicaragua, with whom the United States are at peace. The facts so charged amounting to an offence against the laws of the United States, a Commissioner of the United States thereupon issued his warrant for the arrest of all parties charged in the affidavit with a violation of law. This warrant has been served on all parties therein named with the exception of yourself.

I deem it my duty now to state to you the reasons of the delay in the execution of the warrant. On the 23d instant I had an interview with you, in which I stated to you the information I had received in relation to the proposed departure of large bodies of men in the steamer *Northern Light*, on the 21th instant, for the purpose of invading the territory of Nicaragua. You disclaimed any knowledge of any such movement. In the interview you claimed to be in the United States in a diplomatic character. The Government of the United States has at all times conformed to the practice of the laws of nations, and I felt satisfied that the President would extend to any person claiming that relation such courtesy as in his judgment comported with the dignity of the United States.

From the correspondence, copies of which have since been delivered to you, it appears that you have not been received or acknowledged as a Minister by the Executive of the United States, that you have no right as an accredited Minister. Your position is "simply that of a person coming to this country to present himself as such, and not received by reason of its failing to appear that he represented any lawful Government." The letter of the Attorney General further adds "that under such circumstances any diplomatic privilege awarded to you is of mere transit and courtesy and not of right, and that courtesy would be withdrawn from you so soon as there should be cause to believe that you are engaged in or contemplating any act not consistent with the laws, the peace, or the public honor of the United States."

Having advised the Attorney General of the charge against you, and of the process issued thereon, I am now authorized to say that the President, proceeding in the spirit of the fullest consideration for the diplomatic character, desires me to notify you of the present charge, and that no process will be served upon you, provided you shall not become chargeable with any further offence and shall depart from the country within a reasonable time.

By the Constitution of the United States a privilege of exemption from arrest is awarded to Senators and Representatives. It extends to them the privilege of going to and returning from Congress. Similar exemptions are accorded to members of Legislatures. Witnesses under certain circumstances are exempt from arrest. But in all these cases the exemption is strictly construed by our courts. Whilst it is proper that the agents of the people and witnesses shall be properly protected, it is also just that citizens having claims shall not be deprived of their legal rights by the improper exercise of this exemption. In like manner the courtesy extended to you is that of going to Washington and returning to the foreign country from whence you claim to come as Minister within a reasonable time. In the hope that no further complaint will be made against you, tendering to you my best wishes for your safe return to your own country,

I remain your obedient servant,

JOHN McKEON,

District Attorney United States.

To PARKER H. FRENCH, Esq.

The following letters show that the three custom-house officers who were concerned in the expedition have been dismissed from the public service:

NEW YORK, Dec. 26, 1855.

SIR: Criminal warrants have been issued from this office against George B. Hall, Addison Farnsworth, and John Creighton, who are charged with an offence against the laws of the United States. I call your special attention to these parties, as I am informed that they are officers of the customs of this port. Very respectfully,

JOHN McKEON, U. S. Dist. Attorney.

H. J. REDFIELD, Esq., Collector.

CUSTOM HOUSE, NEW YORK,

Collector's Office, Dec. 29, 1855.

DEAR SIR: Your letter of the 26th instant, informing me of the arrest of George B. Hall, Addison Farnsworth, and John Creighton, on charges of a breach of the neutrality act of Congress of 1818, was received during my absence. I have to inform you that the further services of the persons referred to in the revenue service have been dispensed with. Hall has resigned, Farnsworth has been suspended, and Creighton removed. Yours very truly,

HEMAN J. REDFIELD, Collector.

To the Hon. JOHN McKEON, &c.