

# AFFAIRS OF NICARAGUA.

## Conflicting Views of Various Parties.

### Replies to the Communication of the "Voice of Nicaragua."

To the Editor of the New-York Daily Times:

SIR: I have observed, with much regret, a communication signed "The Voice of Nicaragua," in the columns of your paper, in which that energetic writer expatiates, in no measured terms, upon the course pursued by certain parties in this City (whom he designates "steamboat Commodores") in regard to WALKER's filibustering career in Nicaragua. He charges them with being the authors and cause of the misfortunes and misery attending the persevering attempts to subjugate the people of Nicaragua by extermination; their motive being the coveted profits arising from the transit route, excited by a spirit of rivalry, and the desire of each to monopolize the route, at any cost, even at the expense of the blood of their fellow citizens, and to the total ruin of the people of that country. He charges them with "placing the mere chance of profit in one scale, and the lives of 5,400 human beings (filibusters who have been sacrificed) in the other, and, with a flip of the pen, the chance goes down, and the blood ascends in the other scale, to cry to Heaven for vengeance!" He next charges them, not collectively, but individually, with having "each in his train, and in opposition to the others, aided and abetted WALKER in his career, making his personal ambition and fatuity subservient to their hopes of gain; with having carried free in their steamers the thousands for their holocausts;" with having "used the telegraph for lying victories;" with having "corrupted the sources through which our press draws information;" with having "desolated a generous country (which had granted a right of transit through its territory)—rolled back the tide of American progress there for a dozen years;" and with having "nearly embroiled us in a great foreign war."

Now, these are grave and serious charges. I should be glad if they could be rebutted, or even extenuated. I think the parties implicated ought to be heard, for it is a duty they owe to their fellow-citizens in this country, to their suffering fellow-creatures in Central America, and to humanity in general, to show just cause (if any they can) why the verdict of public opinion against them should be reversed.

Many and bitter are the tears which have been shed by fond parents who have lost their bold, but erring sons, on the blood-stained and pestilential fields of Nicaragua, whilst aiding the usurper in his demonic career of carnage and plunder. More bitter still are the tears of the widows and fatherless children, bereft of their support by those heartless speculators in blood who enticed, cajoled, and led to destruction many a noble heart worthy of a better fate in a better cause. And this, too, on pretence of civilizing Central America; but who have recklessly victimized them as blind instruments in an attempt to subjugate by tyranny, oppression, bloodshed, violation and spoliation, a country, the inhabitants of which had previously regarded the United States as their model for imitation in arts, sciences, legislation and liberty, and who received every North American as a friend and brother republican.

But when your correspondent estimates the loss of WALKER's followers at five thousand four hundred victims to pestilence, famine and the chances of war, why does he not pause to enumerate the losses suffered by the unfortunate natives of Nicaragua, and the sacrifices made by the brave and devoted Costa Ricans in defence of their country and their liberty? They, too, are fellow-creatures, if not fellow-countrymen. Has he not a word of commiseration for the peaceably-inclined, the industrious and moral inhabitants of Costa Rica, who, whilst resting their fondest aspirations upon the stars of the great North American Union, were invaded by American filibusters, with the connivance, if not with the express sanction of the American Government? I say "connivance," for it is evident that the United States Government could as easily have put down enlistments for the filibustering expeditions to Central America, as it prevented and punished the less reprehensible attempts to enlist recruits for the British Army. I repeat, "connivance," for it is clear that the power which could, but would not prevent, is justly chargeable not only with connivance in the nefarious act of invasion and spoliation of a neighboring and friendly country, but is culpable for the consequent bloodshed and misery which have ensued.

"Hear it, ye Senators—hear this truth divine—He who allows oppression, shares the crime."

Is there a conscientious man in this, our great and glorious Republic, or Europe, who would acquit the late Administration from a charge of blame and moral responsibility?

"If the Steamboat Commodores" be guilty, on the showing of your correspondent, and by the verdict of a great majority of the people of these United States, is not the Government equally culpable? Is not a man *particeps criminis* who, having the power to prevent a murder, stands by and allows it to be perpetrated? How much more responsibility must attach to our late Executive for the crimes, the spoliations, the bloodshed which have marked the ruthless, reckless career of the filibusters in Nicaragua! Their own sufferings from pestilence and famine, as well as by bullet and bayonet, and the sufferings they have inflicted by the infection of the cholera upon the brave Costa Ricans, whose only offence is traceable to a gallant determination to defend, like the Swiss, their mountain homes and their liberty from foreign invasion.

I trust, nay, I am confident, that a more just and humane policy will animate our present Executive in regard to this phase of the Central American question. We can civilize the people of those countries by the peaceful and profitable intercourse arising from commercial relations, which now appear to tend almost exclusively to this country.

Let the bond of mutual interest bind us together, rather than we should encourage, sanction or allow, such reckless, unchristian, impolitic and criminal expeditions to sail from our ports; or, if they should succeed, by deception and perjury, in evading the laws, let us entreat our Government to take measures, by means of our naval forces on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of Central America, to prevent armed men and munitions of war from being landed from American vessels.

To allege that WALKER is President of Nicaragua is but a shallow and false pretext for the semblance of legality, with which his friends seek to justify, if possible, the advent of the filibusters in Nicaragua. WALKER never was elected by the suffrages of the natives of that country. The alleged votes by ballot were false, and his inauguration a farce. Nor could any but a native be elevated to that dignity by the Constitution and laws of the country. He usurped the Presidential chair. He commands and governs (if he still lives) the limited space occupied by the melancholy remnant of his followers; whilst the Republic still continues to acknowledge the same President RIVAS who was recognized by President PIERCE.

For these reasons, added to the fact of the Transit route by the river San Juan and Lake Nicaragua, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, being once more in the hands of an American Company, unconnected with the Steamboat Commodores, who repaid the confidence of the Central Americans with ingratitude, treachery and injustice, I am induced to hope that a new era of prosperity is dawning upon those countries; that our Government will shield the natives from invasion and spoliation whilst it protects the acquired rights of our peaceable speculators; and that as those countries are already opened to industrious foreigners who may wish to settle amidst the natives to gather their mineral and agricultural riches, that other means than the rifle will be adopted to civilize, christianize, and Americanize, Central America.

I subscribe myself,  
THE VOICE OF COSTA RICA.

Gen. Walker's Position and Col. Lockridge's Success.—A Reply to the "Voice of Nicaragua."

New-York, Tuesday, March 17, 1857.

To the Editor of the New-York Daily Times:

In your edition of this date, I notice an article from "The Voice of Nicaragua," and having been for a number of years a resident of that State, in which "The Voice" informs the public that the "American is unable to resist the influence of plague, pestilence and famine," and though their horrors may have unconsciously weakened my powers of observation, still they are yet of sufficient strength to note the extraordinary geographical knowledge of Nicaragua, and the happy faculty of jumping at conclusions in its affairs, possessed by him who assumes to be its "Voice." I've no doubt but that he is, for we are told that "the tongue is an unruly member," and Nicaragua's must have become exceedingly unmanageable, when he allows it to describe the locality of the "Rapids of Machuca" as being a few miles above those of "Castillo," on the San Juan River. I am afraid her old enemy "Aguadiente" must have been making a recent transit over this member of her mouth, when she permits it to proclaim the "Tauro Rapids as being a point of great natural strength." All this may be so. It will not do for me—once the recipient of,

Nicaragua's hospitality, (no famine about it, either,)—to dispute the veracity of its "Voice;" yet I must say, that when I left her soil, only a month since, the Machuca rapids were a long twelve miles below the "Castillo," and I'll guarantee that if the "Voice" had to foot it through the thickets from Machuca to Castillo, as I did once, he would swear it was a hundred.

The intention which "the Voice" attributes to the Costa Ricans, of placing a gun battery at the Tauro, is very probable; and in my opinion of their judgment in such matters, we may expect to find them attempting to defend the weakest spot on the river—as the Tauro certainly is. The stream at that point is so very wide as to form the long extent of shoal water which custom has incorrectly termed a rapid. The banks are so very low on both sides as to require earthworks of some importance to resist an assault from a party landing below for such purpose.

"The Voice" states that the news recently received from San Juan came through "filibuster agents." This may be so. But when we find this representative of Nicaragua rambling about in such a funny manner, on the banks of her principal stream, surely great allowance should be granted him, when, in his wanderings, he leaves his own soil. Therefore (with a due deference to his veracity still in view) I presume he was aware that the purser of the English steamer *Trent* is not a confirmed filibuster, nor is the editor of the *Aspinwall Courier* noted for his loyal attachment to WALKER and his cause.

But enough of this. Let me add something for the edification of "The Voice," in the hope that hereafter its tone may be improved.

The steamer *Texas* on Feb. 12 was at San Juan del Norte, ready at 8 A. M. for sea, but on the evening previous, a courier came down the river from Col. LOCKRIDGE, asking that the *Texas* might be detained until 2 P. M. of the 12th, as he was about to attack the position of the enemy at Serapiqui, and consequently desired to forward accounts of the result. The *Texas* waited until 3 P. M., and left without any further intelligence. At 6 P. M., same day, dispatches came from LOCKRIDGE. Serapiqui was in his possession; also a large quantity of rifles, ammunition, provisions, clothing ("The Voice" to the contrary notwithstanding) and dispatches which Gen. MORA had sent down that day, to be forwarded into Costa Rica by the Serapiqui, (the most expeditious route,) and in which he begged for immediate reinforcements and represented his position as very critical. These documents were written some time after the battle of St. George, and they show conclusively that engagements must have taken place to change so suddenly the tenor of his dispatches.

On the 18th the *Rescue* came to San Juan, bringing an account of LOCKRIDGE's ascent up the river to Castillo, where he drove the enemy from their barricade on the road below the fort. The steamers *Scott* and *Machuca* were lying at the foot of the rapids—the latter on fire. LOCKRIDGE's men made a rush for the *Scott*, (which had not yet commenced to burn,) cut her fastenings, and the strong current soon carried her out of harm's way.

They had, evidently, set fire to the *Machuca*, thinking it would soon extend to the *Scott*. As to the boats being smeared with tar and resin, I can only say that of the former article there had been but one barrel in the country for months, and that was at Punta Arenas after the event described. So also with the resin; the last importation was used in the process of binding the copper pipes, &c., when engines were placed in the *Rescue*, at Punta Arenas.

A small force of the enemy occupied the fort, which is not large enough to hold many, and which every resident of the country knows is perched on a high and very steep hill. Through the side running into the river the railroad was cut, and such a slice taken off, that one hundred men could stand upright on the road, entirely out of sight of those in the fort above, and affording every opportunity to mine under the hill. In the rear, not two hundred yards distant, is a hill completely commanding this fort, *a la Serapiqui*, with the earthworks still standing which the English, under LOCKE; threw up, and with the small-boat guns, were able to render the place too warm for the Spaniards, although the latter had five large brass pieces mounted on the walls.

The steamer *Scott* was taken in good condition, with the exception that one of her engines had a broken *side valve*. A new one was being made at Punta Arenas to replace it. No cannon-shot reached her. Her wood-work was only scathed with rifle shots.

The *Scott* and *Wheeler* were the two best boats on the river. The latter was at first supposed to have been blown up by the Costa Ricans, but is ascertained to have been the one sunk below Serapiqui; and when she is raised, a matter easily accomplished, the most valuable of the steamers will be ready for use.

The *Morgan* was going over the Castillo Rapids when the *Rescue* came in sight below. The *Bulwer*, a long time ago, was towed up the Serapiqui in a disabled condition by the enemy.

If "The Voice's" Costa Rican veterans (I expect he is one himself—and if he isn't, he ought to be) have any strong desire to return to Hipps' Point from their excursion in the woods at Serapiqui, they will meet at that place a good reception—a noisy one, at least. If "The Voice" knew Col. LOCKRIDGE, he would never have any fears of his leaving his work undone, nor as to his capabilities of carrying out contracts for clearing a dozen such rivers.

No! No! Mr. "Voice," if your friends only left for a tramp in the woods, intending soon to return, surely such veterans would have taken with them at least their blankets, for, I suppose you know, Nicaragua is a little damp, now and then—rains occasionally, used to when I was there—their pantaloons too; they must need them. Perhaps all such things slipped their memories.

As I happen to have run over the Castillo Rapids, in the dead of night, in this same *Rescue*, and when she had not as much power as she has now, I would not be surprised to learn that Col. LOCKRIDGE did the same identical thing. And the Costa Rican, sleeping quietly on board the lake steamer, at anchor off Virgin Bay, or under Ometepe's lee, must not be surprised if, on some fine, quiet night, he finds the little *Rescue* close alongside, popping his sides with three or four brass pieces. This might make "The Voice" grow rather faint, but might all be done, nevertheless.

As to WALKER's position on the Transit, I have only to say that the problem can be solved by the simple rule of three, for if WALKER, with less than 800 men, has twice defeated and dispersed two armies of 3,000 men in fortified cities, how long will it take him to defeat a force 1,500 strong, with the advantage, this time, of being himself in the fortress?

WALKER can leave HENNINGSEN in Rivas with 200 men, (his defence at Granada proves this,) and no force the enemy can bring could drive him out. The balance of his force (600) can be ranged over the whole Department, gathering forage of all kinds. If the enemy pursue, they have to do so with their full force, and all WALKER asks is to get them in the open field, where no churches or houses offer shelter, and when this does take place, the veteran Gen. CANAS will have another opportunity to try the bottom and speed of his horse, as he did at the last fight on the transit road, when he and his force were driven through San Juan del Sur on the full run, he himself only escaping from WALKER's rangers by being better mounted.

WALKER cannot be starved out of the Department while he holds the city of Rivas. The enemy will soon ascertain this and will be compelled to do something. If they besiege HENNINGSEN while WALKER is outside, the latter then falls upon their rear, and again an open fight is at hand.

Rivas and its vicinity, according to the last accounts, was very healthy: few men have died from sickness since the headquarters of the army have been located there. Those who have died were nearly all present at the siege of Granada, and suffered from its effects.

If the "Voice" remains still unsatisfied as to the truth of LOCKRIDGE's success, or WALKER's ability to maintain his position, let him keep quiet, until about the 19th inst., when the *Tennessee's* arrival will solve my

Another Answer to the Voice of Nicaragua  
PHILADELPHIA, Tuesday, March 17, 1857.

To the Editor of the New-York Daily Times:

SIR: Though absent from my books and memoranda, and having but a few hours to refute a slander that has probably been for weeks in concoction, I cannot let a post pass with a rejoinder to the gross mis-statements and ignorance which your correspondent, signing himself "The Voice of Nicaragua," has exhibited in his last incendiary appeal, published in your paper of this date.

It is clear to any one who has ever visited Nicaragua, that the writer of this "Voice" is speaking, not from personal observation, but on the report of others—who are probably the fountains from which the malice that filters through his pen is drawn. It would be absurd to deny that there is some truth in these effusions—just enough to leaven the whole mass of falsehood, and make it pass current amongst those who know no better; but when he describes the *John Ogden* as a "mere flat-bottomed scow—top heavy and drawing only 18 inches of water," any one who has the least acquaintance with the subject treated of will know that he is writing of what he has never seen. The *John Ogden* is really one of the finest steamers on the river, and draws at least four feet of water; it would not be prudent, as a general thing,

to cross the Lake in her—but not anything like such a desperate adventure of despairing men as your correspondent would make out. During the Summer months of the year, she would be as safe on the Lake as any of your Fall River floating palaces on the Sound.

I would point out other mistakes as gross as this, but his charges against the "three steamboat Commodores," as he calls them, are of more importance; and it is to the wholly baseless and vindictive character of these I would call your attention.

In all his former letters against WALKER, he made at least some show of facts and documents to support what purported to be his argument. But here we have the bald assertion of an anonymous scribbler on one side, and the character of our most respectable, wealthy and enterprising merchants on the other. Shall we believe that such gentlemen as CHARLES MORGAN, CORNELIUS VANDERBILT, E. K. GARRISON, and Mr. GEORGE LAW, have actually been the promoters of the deplorable scenes that have taken place in Nicaragua, and all from no higher motive than a paltry desire to injure each other, or advance the price of the stocks in which they were respectively interested? The folly of entertaining such a suspicion is all the refutation it requires.

Your correspondent, "The Voice," may have had—and doubtless had—some treacherous information of WALKER's real condition when he wrote the letters that appeared some four or five months ago over the same signature, and which would have been of no importance whatever, but for the answers which gentlemen of great influence and position on WALKER's side saw fit to make to them. But now, when he attempts to invade the quiet sanctity of commercial speculation, and wishes it to be understood that he knows "the secret history of this stock-jobbing in American blood," and holds out a threat that that history, if published, would implicate these gentlemen—as one who has been familiar with all the transactions from their inception, I hurl back the foul slander in his teeth, and dare him to bring forward a single fact or circumstance to show that either Messrs. VANDERBILT, MORGAN or LAW ever infringed the neutrality, or took any part whatever in the struggle by which their interests have suffered—except it was criminal in them to have done their best for peace and the best interests of humanity.

As "The Voice" does not give his name, though repeatedly challenged, he cannot call on me for mine, but I inclose my card for your private information and assurance. Meantime, whenever "The Voice" gives his name to the public, you are at liberty to publish mine; but until then, let me remain your obedient servant,

IMPARTIAL.