

The latest news from Central America is given in the following letter from our correspondent at Panama:

[Special Correspondence of the Picayune.]

PANAMA, Aug. 19, 1857.

The Panama Railroad Company's steamer Columbus arrived here on the 9th inst. from San Jose de Guatemala and intermediate ports. She brings eighteen passengers, and the following cargo; 3400 hides, 100 arrobes cochineal, 33 hhds. sugar, 33 packages coffee, 53 packages deorekias, and 50 pkgs. sundries.

Among the passengers by the Columbus were Lieut. Jeffers, U. S. Navy, now attached to the Honduras Railroad survey, and his assistants. Lieutenant Jeffers having completed the hydrographical survey of the terminus of the railroad at Fonseca Bay, was returning to New York, but letters received from the company require him to return, and he will go back in the Columbus. Lieut. Jeffers says the result of his part of the survey has been most satisfactory. A correspondent of the Star and Herald does not write very favorably of the route. I enclose you his letter; the writer says he has lived fourteen years in the country:

July 21, 1857.

* Editor Star and Herald:

Gentlemen—A few days since I returned from the State of Honduras, and am consequently enabled to resume my correspondence. The route taken by me on my departure from this city was by way of Esquipulas, crossing the frontier towards Ocotepeque.

Throughout the main route between this latter place and Comayagua the smallpox was raging fearfully, carrying off large numbers of the inhabitants, whilst a famine also existed in many places. At Evandique, the district of the opal mines, there was scarcely a family not afflicted with smallpox, whilst the poorer people were suffering from want of corn. Several of the large Indian pueblos were almost entirely abandoned. The inhabitants seeking food in the mountains, or migrating to places where abundance existed. Two causes have led to the famine in this part of Honduras: the first, a most severe frost that cut off the crops, and secondly, the small amount of land planted out, owing to the want of hands, a large number of the laboring population having been drafted for military service. This section of the State of Honduras, comprising the department of Gracias, is very thinly populated, the lands are to a great extent barren, though affording ample pasturage for cattle, at the same time that mines of silver, lead, opal, quicksilver and copper are found in great abundance. Nearly all these valuable mines, however, are laying unworked from the want of laborers and sufficient capital to commence operations with.

The corps of engineers for the survey of the Honduras Interoceanic Railway, were at Comayagua, making preparations for fulfilling their duties, and it is said that upon their report the work will either be commenced or altogether abandoned. Your correspondent does not wish to hazard an opinion as to its feasibility, knowing that good engineers and ample funds can accomplish a great deal—but knowing as I do, and perfectly, the intended route, my word for it that the amount required to construct the road will be *double* the present estimated expense; whilst many thousands of unacclimated laborers will find an untimely grave, particularly upon the coasts, before the work is completed. No doubt interested parties will scoff at this statement, but let such come here and spend fourteen years on these unhealthy coasts, as your correspondent has done, and see the ravages made by sickness among new comers, and justice will compel them to admit the truth of this statement.

The government of President Guardiola appears to be prospering, and whatever opposition may have existed prior to his advent to power, appears now to be silenced, and all parties seem united and in peace."

GUATEMALA.—The cholera, which was brought to this place by the troops returned from Nicaragua, owing to the precaution taken by President Carrera, had caused but few deaths; only thirty have died of the disease, in a month, in a population of forty thousand.

SALVADOR.—The cholera had raged with greater severity in the Republic than in Guatemala. The fairs of San Juan Degollado and San Vicente had been postponed in consequence. The yield of indigo this year would be unusually large, 20,000 baños.

NICARAGUA.—From Managua we have received the *Gaceta Oficial* of July 25. A Government decree calls upon all citizens to give up the national arms in their possession, under a penalty of ten days' imprisonment. An advertisement from the Supreme Government states that 25,000 lbs. (1000 arrobas) of F^o powder is wanted, and also 100 quintals (1000 lbs.) of lead. The unofficial part contains a translation of Walker's speech at New Orleans.

COSTA RICA.—Our files of the *Cronica de Costa Rica* are to the 1st inst. The Weekly Album has ceased to exist since the departure of its editor, Capt. Cauty.

The 6th of September has been named for the reunion of Congress.

The coffee crop for the year is said to have been 110,000 quintals. It is expected that next year's crop will be larger.

The Government has reduced the duties on the following articles to the amounts stated: the law came into operation on the 1st inst.

Cottons, in blankets, unbleached, plain, serge and canvas, 5 cents per pound; prepared calf, 20 cents; blacking, 5 cents; Matches, 7 cents; wool, without being manufactured, 2 cents; wick, 6 cents; sandpaper, 2 cents; Perfumery, in oils and scented waters, small soaps, pastilles, powders, pomades, or any other such articles, 10 cents; calf skins or tanned leather, of all colors, in dressed sheep skins and morocco leather, 11 cents; powder, manufactured in crackers and artificial fireworks, 10 cents; writing ink, in earthen or glass inkstands, 5 cents.