

Important News from Nicaragua.

THE TRANSIT ROUTE IN POSSESSION OF THE COSTA RICANS.

Successive Defeats of Walker's Forces at Hipp's Point, Castillo Rapids, and Fort San Carlos.

LATEST POSITION OF WALKER.

In the *Panama Star and Herald*, we find the following deeply interesting account of the state of affairs in Nicaragua, at the latest date :

The Costa Rican Government, in addition to the army it had sent to co-operate with the allied forces against Walker in Nicaragua, resolved upon organizing an expeditionary force for the purpose of possessing itself of the river San Juan, wisely judging that the efforts made to dislodge Walker would be prolonged, if not rendered futile, as long as he possessed facilities for receiving supplies and reinforcements by every steamer from the United States. On the 10th of December this force set out, not by the Serapiqui river, as was publicly reported and believed, but by the San Carlos, another tributary of the San Juan, which enters that river about half way between the lake and San Juan del Norte. This was done for the purpose of misleading a detachment of Walker's forces, who were posted at Hipp's Point, at the mouth of the Serapiqui.

As the route is very little, if ever used, the Costa Ricans experienced great difficulty in advancing, having to cut their way through the forest along a track where mules could not be used, and along which all the provisions and munitions of war had to be borne on men's shoulders. Six days were spent on the march, during which the rain fell almost incessantly. At last the "embarradero" was reached, and a few canoes were hastily constructed, and rafts made of trunks of trees rudely lashed together with vines and twigs.

Thus these enterprising men, most of whom had never before beheld a boat on a navigable river, boldly embarked on the 16th Dec., to float down an unknown stream, to its confluence with the river San Juan, and thence to Greytown itself. It was indeed a perilous undertaking. Had these frail rafts, upon which 120 men had ventured, met one of Walker's steamers coming up or going down the river, the slightest contact would have been fatal to them.

On the morning of the 23d, the expedition was hauled into a creek near Hipp's Point, to refresh the men previous to attacking Walker's post of 50 men and 2 cannon. At that moment a steamer was heard coming down the river. The men were made to lie down upon the raft. It was a moment of peril. The steamer passed without any one on board having seen or suspected the lurking danger. A road or track was cut towards the flank and rear of Walker's post, which they silently reached. The signal (a single shot) was given. The Costa Ricans rushed with the bayonet with horrid yells upon their surprised foes, and in half a minute resistance was at an end. A panic had seized them. A number were bayoneted—the rest sprang off the bank into the deep and rapid river. One brave officer, (Capt. Thompson) did all that mortal man could do, to rally the men, but in vain—the onslaught was too sudden and overpowering to admit of a resistance. Capt. Thompson only ceased his exertions after he received a second severe bayonet wound. His very enemies, admiring his signal gallantry, liberated him subsequently at Greytown, where also they did all in their power to alleviate his sufferings. One man besides Captain T. was saved from the river, and five escaped into the forest. The rest are said to have perished.

A sufficient force having been left to guard Hipp's Point, the rest of the adventurous band again committed their lives to the precarious chances of the river upon the same rafts, which had now become rickety and insecure. They arrived close to Greytown, about 2 o'clock on the morning of the 24th. Here again fortune favored them; for a steamer was just getting up her steam to ascend the river. She was immediately taken, with three others. Had the expedition been delayed an hour later in its descent, it must have perished. It would indeed have been "touch and go;" the slightest touch from the steamer would have separated the slightly bound pieces of the rafts, and sent the Costa Ricans instantaneously to a watery grave.

By dawn of day the steamers were taken, without loss, and the Costa Ricans also in possession of Punta

Castilla (or Punta Arenas), which they have always claimed as belonging to their country.

At the same time, the inhabitants of Greytown became aware of the presence of this unexpected invasion. The place was soon in confusion and commotion; one party, the most numerous, threatening violence to the foreigners in the place, (mostly Americans,) under the cry of "Viva Costa Rica." However, the officers commanding the expedition discountenanced any and every hostile attempt against the inhabitants of Greytown, and left the place next morning in the captured vessels.

In the meantime, the United States Consul made an application to the officer commanding the British squadron at Greytown, "to protect the property of Captain Joseph N. Scott, agent for Messrs. Charles Morgan & Son, of New York, from a forcible seizure by a force of Costa Ricans, under the command of Col. Joaquin Fernandez.

To this Captain John C. Erskine, senior officer, replied from on board the *Orion*, dated 24th Dec., 1856, that "he had taken steps by landing a party of marines from one of Her Majesty's ships, to protect the persons and private property of Captain Joseph Scott, his family, and all citizens of the United States of America; which the officer of the Costa Rica force, now at Punta Arenas, also assured him should be placed in no peril." Then, as regards the capture of the steamers, Captain Erskine, in continuation, very judiciously expressed himself as follows:

"To prevent all misapprehension, I think it however right to state that the steamers and other property belonging to the necessary Transit Company, being at this moment the subject of a dispute between two different companies, the representatives of which are on the spot, and one of them authorizing the seizure, I do not feel justified in taking any steps which may effect the interests of either party.

"With respect to the participation of a force of Costa Ricans in the seizure and transfer of the steamers alluded to, I must observe, that these steamers having been for some months past employed in embarking in this port and conveying to the parties with whom Costa Rica is now carrying on active hostilities, men and munitions of war; it appears that as a non-belligerent, I am prohibited by the law of nations from preventing the execution of such an operation by a belligerent party.

I have the honor, &c.,

JOHN C. ERSKINE,

Capt. and sr. Officer.

To the U. S. Consul at Greytown.
Dec. 24, 1856."

On ascending the river, when off the mouth of the river San Carlos, (which, as before stated, is a tributary of the river San Juan,) one of the steamers was dispatched to ascertain if General José Joaquin Mora, (brother to the President of Costa Rica,) had arrived at the embarcadero with the main body of the expeditionary army; and, if so, to report the success of the expedition to Greytown, so that measures might immediately be taken for carrying promptly into effect the second part of the plan of operations. On proceeding up the San Carlos, five men, placed on a raft as videntes, became so frightened by the noise and appearance of the approaching steamer, (never having before seen or imagined the like,) plunged into the river, and were drowned in the attempt to reach the bank. The steamer then landed two men to cut their way through the forest to the embarcadero, in order that General Mora might receive timely notice that the steamer was no longer an enemy, so that the probability of his firing upon her might be removed. General Mora was found at his post, with 500 men, followed by a rear guard of 200, who have since also arrived. In addition to these, two transport corps of 600 men are alternately employed in carrying provisions, ammunition, &c., from the interior to the embarcadero.

Having now the river steamers at command, the *Castillo Rapido* and the steamers *John Oyden* and *Rush*, they were soon taken by General Mora. He then moved up to Fort San Carlos, which, with the large steamer and detachment of men there, was also taken by stratagem. Then, the lake steamers, not aware of these occurrences, came across the lake with passengers from California, were also taken by Gen. Mora, who generously sent them on to Greytown in the captured steamers.

Thus the second part of the plan of operations was completely successful.

The third and last part of this well-contrived campaign plus follows:

Gen. Mora, having now 1,400 men, exclusive of the land transport corps, expected 500 more at the embarcadero of San Carlos, who, doubtless, have arrived long since. The river was to be occupied by 500 of these, backed by artillery and breastworks, and supported by the steamers, whilst Gen. Mora was to move up to La Virgin, with 1,100 men, and occupy the transit route.

Meanwhile, General Canas, having retired from Rivas upon Masaya, (where the Allied Generals have been mispending both time and opportunity in dissensions,) Rivas was occupied by Walker. His forces are estimated by his friends at 1,200—by his enemies at 800. In either case, it is well known that about 300 are on the sick list. By last official accounts, General Canas was nominated Commander-in-Chief of the allied forces. He was on his march back to Rivas with 1,000 men, (leaving the remaining allied forces to follow as occasion might require,) where he would arrive just about the same time when General Mora would reach La Virgin, near Rivas, with 1,100 men and the steamers.

We add the following proclamation, issued by the President of Costa Rica to Walker's men, in which they are offered most favorable terms; and there is no reason to doubt that Costa Rica will carry them out faithfully and fully:

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA
TO THE SOLDIERS OF WALKER'S ARMY.

Impressed with a well-founded belief, that the greater number of foreigners who are now in the ranks of the usurper, have been deceived, and aware that they are now fighting in a bad cause, against a people who have given no cause of offence, and who are only defending their country, their rights, liberties and their homes, from the criminal attempts of an unprincipled adventurer, to subvert all that freemen revere; and convinced that many, if not all, who are now aiding that scourge of humanity, would willingly quit his discredited service, if only assured of protection and support to reach their native country.

Now, I, the President of the Republic of Costa Rica, pledging my honor, hereby offer to any or all of the officers and soldiers of Walker's army, now in Nicaragua, a free and safe passage to Greytown, and from thence per steamer to the city of New York.

Given at the National Palace at San José, Dec. 10, 1856.

JUAN R. MORA.