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Lobbyists for Commercial Empire: Jane Cazneau, William Cazneau, and U.S. Caribbean Policy, 1846–1878

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ALTHOUGH AMERICAN TERRITORIAL expansionism from the Revolution to the Civil War is usually portrayed as westward in direction and intent, continental empire encompassed far more than territorial growth to the Pacific. When the acquisitions of the Floridas, the southern Louisiana territories, Texas, and the Gadsden region are considered in conjunction with American interest in annexing northern Mexico and Yucatán during the Mexican War plus Cuba in subsequent years, it becomes evident that “manifest destiny” involved the tropics as well as the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean.

In recent years scholars have devoted considerable attention to why American territorial expansionism in all directions slowed during and after the Civil War. While there were some acquisitions during this period—most notably the purchase of

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Alaska—territorial expansion was far less an issue of public concern, and the federal government was less willing to commit military force or threaten the use of force to achieve expansionist ends. A number of studies have concluded that this development represented more a reorientation of expansionist ideology than a lessened interest in expansionism. Less interested in assimilating foreign lands and their inhabitants into the American domain than formerly, the State Department and the American public sought commercial expansion, which has been often designated as the “new empire” or “informal empire.” This “new empire,” backed by American naval power, stressed markets for American goods, investment opportunities abroad for American businessmen, and diplomatic influence as the fundamental objectives of American foreign policy. Even American annexation of Hawaii and the Philippine Islands at the century’s end, it has been argued, signalled as much a search for Asian—particularly Chinese—markets as a revival of the once vibrant American expansionist spirit.¹

While most of these studies emphasize American industrial and agricultural surpluses in the late nineteenth century as the causal influence upon the transformation in American diplomacy, the change preceded the Civil War, and in the early stages it related in great part to racial and sectional complications. The countries most vulnerable to American absorption at the time were located in the tropics, and they included peoples

¹Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion 1860–1898* (Ithaca, 1963); Thomas David Schoonover, *Dollars Over Dominion: The Triumph of Liberalism in Mexican-United States Relations, 1861–1867* (Baton Rouge, 1978); Ernest N. Paolino, *The Foundations of the American Empire: William Henry Seward and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Ithaca, 1973); William A. Williams, *The Roots of the Modern American Empire: A Study of the Growth and Shaping of Social Consciousness in a Marketplace Society* (New York, 1969); Thomas J. McCormick, *China Market: America’s Quest for Informal Empire, 1893–1901* (Chicago, 1967); Kenneth J. Hagan, *American Gunboat Diplomacy and the Old Navy, 1877–1889* (Westport, Conn., 1973); and Peter Karsten, *The Naval Aristocracy: The Golden Age of Annapolis and the Emergence of Modern American Navalism* (New York, 1972). The commercial empire hypothesis has been questioned in a number of studies, including J. A. Thompson, “William Appleman Williams and the ‘American Empire,’” *Journal of American Studies*, VII (April, 1973), 91–104; Paul A. Varg, “The Myth of the China Market, 1890–1914,” *American Historical Review*, LXXIII (February, 1968), 742–758; and Paul S. Holbo, “Economics, Emotion, and Expansion: An Emerging Foreign Policy,” in H. Wayne Morgan, ed., *The Gilded Age* (Rev. ed., Syracuse, 1970), 199–221. Charles S. Campbell, *The Transformation of American Foreign Relations, 1865–1900* (New York, 1976) does a fine job of integrating commercial expansionism into the broad context of late nineteenth-century American diplomacy.

of racial and ethnic compositions whom many Americans deemed undesirable. The remarkable pace of American territorial growth, moreover, stalled after the Texas annexation, the Wilmot Proviso controversy, and the struggle in Kansas demonstrated the disruptive effects of expansion upon the American body politic. Such developments probably dampened American interest in Canada; they certainly restrained Americans who might otherwise have been enthusiastic about movement into the Gulf-Caribbean region. Although Southern proslavery imperialists and expansionist Northern Democrats fought vigorously for further territorial annexations southward after the Mexican War, the national consensus for such growth had dissipated and their efforts proved futile.²

This article focuses upon the reorientation of American expansionism vis-à-vis the Caribbean during the Civil War era by looking closely at the efforts of a remarkable husband-wife team which was active in influencing the shift in American foreign policy from territorial imperialism to commercial expansionism. The entrepreneurial and diplomatic activities of Jane and William Cazneau regarding Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic show clearly how some American exponents of "manifest destiny" were induced after the Mexican War to redirect their thinking toward commercial expansionism. The policies the Cazneaus advocated, although unsuccessful in their day, presaged later American exploitation of the Gulf-Caribbean region and the transformation of the

²Some of the above studies acknowledge that the transformation of territorial expansionism into commercial expansionism predated the Civil War. The following studies also should be consulted on this point: Howard I. Kushner, "Visions of the Northwest Coast: Gwin and Seward in the 1850s," *Western Historical Quarterly*, IV (July, 1973), 295–306; Charles Vevier, "American Continentalism: An Idea of Expansion, 1845–1910," *American Historical Review*, LXV (January, 1960), 323–335; Norman A. Graebner, *Empire on the Pacific: A Study in American Continental Expansion* (New York, 1955); Roy F. Nichols, *Advance Agents of American Destiny* (Philadelphia, 1956); and Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* (New York, 1950), 20–37. For the impact of sectionalism and race upon "manifest destiny" toward the tropics in the 1850s, see Frederick Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History* (New York, 1963), 202–214 and Robert E. May, *The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire, 1854–1861* (Baton Rouge, 1973). The impact of sectionalism on American interest in Canada needs further study. For some comment on this topic, see Charles C. Tansill, *The Canadian Reciprocity Treaty of 1854* (Baltimore, 1922), 76–77 and Donald F. Warner, *The Idea of Continental Union: Agitation for the Annexation of Canada to the United States, 1849–1893* (Lexington, Ky., 1960), 27n.

Caribbean into an “American lake” in the early twentieth century. In addition, a study of Jane Cazneau’s career bears significance because of her departure from accepted norms of female behavior. Usually remembered only for her Mexican War mission for President James K. Polk, when she accompanied Moses Beach to Mexico City in an abortive attempt to arrange preliminary peace terms with Mexican authorities,³ she was deeply involved in American diplomatic affairs for most of her life. A dynamic, visible public figure during an age when the “cult of domesticity” prevailed for women, she influenced policy makers from Presidents to legation secretaries.

To gain a full understanding of the Cazneaus’ contribution to the American commercial empire, some familiarity with Jane’s career prior to her marriage to William is necessary. She was born Jane McManus in 1807, the daughter of a New York lawyer who later became a congressman. Perhaps because of her familiarity with political life, she rarely showed deference in later years to American legislators and diplomatic personnel. She always felt that she merited direct access to the corridors of power, and she had unwavering confidence in her abilities and judgment. Once after the Civil War, she commented about Cuban affairs: “By an odd combination I know better than the State Department itself many of the most important and controlling facts. . . .”⁴

³Edward Wallace, *Destiny and Glory* (New York, 1957), 244–275; Anna Kasten Nelson, “Mission to Mexico—Moses Y. Beach, Secret Agent,” *New-York Historical Society Quarterly*, LIX (1975), 227–245; William H. Goetzmann, *When the Eagle Screamed: The Romantic Horizon in American Diplomacy, 1800–1860* (New York, 1966), 68–71; Merk, *Manifest Destiny*, 132–134. The Mexican War mission occurred during the winter of 1846–1847. Jane Cazneau, then Jane McManus Storms, was a converted Catholic who spoke Spanish. Apparently the plan called for Beach to make contact with the Catholic hierarchy in Mexico City and to influence the clergy to agitate for peace with the United States.

⁴Wallace, *Destiny and Glory*, 251–252; Nelson, “Mission to Mexico,” 230–231; Jane Cazneau to Moses S. Beach, Aug. 25, 1865, Jane McManus Cazneau Papers, New York Historical Society. All references to manuscripts in the Cazneau collection are to copies of originals owned by Brewster Y. Beach of Greenwich, Connecticut. Wallace describes Jane Cazneau around the time of the Mexican War as a “shapely . . . brunette with snapping black eyes in *Destiny and Glory*, p. 246. Her father had known William Marcy, but as late as May, 1853, it seems that Marcy either did not know her or had not kept up with her activities. Wallace, *Destiny and Glory*, 251; William Marcy to Alfred Conkling, May 5, 1853, in William R. Manning, ed., *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States: Inter-American Affairs, 1831–1860* (12 vols., Washington, D.C., 1932–1939, IX, 130–131.

Her early life revealed a flair for adventure, intrigue, and behavior atypical of women of her time. She married and then was divorced in 1831. Soon afterwards she conducted a party of settlers to Texas to colonize a land grant which she secured from ruling Mexican officials. In the end the enterprise was unsuccessful, but she settled in Matagorda, Texas, for several months. She was accused of having an intimate relationship with Aaron Burr in the early 1830s. Her early activities also included editorial writing for Moses Beach's *New York Sun*. Recent research has shown that the Mexican War mission with Beach was almost certainly her idea. She traveled at least twice from New York City to Washington, D.C., in 1846, to urge the scheme upon the Polk administration, and she corresponded with Secretary of the Navy George Bancroft about Mexican affairs. Her escapades in Mexico included posing as a British citizen and a dangerous solo trip from Mexico City to Vera Cruz on the National Highway.⁵

As a writer for the *Sun*, Jane Cazneau had been a vocal proponent of Texas annexation. But the Mexican war heightened her involvement in foreign policy questions. The Beach mission included stops at Matanzas and Havana in Cuba; while on the island she could have easily contacted elements favoring the liberation of Cuba from Spanish rule and possible annexation to the United States. American interest in acquiring Cuba was running very high. Disparate visions of trade and slavery expansion, sentimental convictions that annexation would extend the American democratic system to an oppressed people, and thoughts of forestalling European influence in the Caribbean all converged to make the Cuba movement in the United States a popular cause, with public meetings and demonstrations, fiery pro-Cuba articles in the press, and other trappings of a mass movement. From 1848 to 1859 the United States government initiated diplomatic efforts to achieve annexation, and groups of adventurers (known as filibusters) departed American shores for Cuba in the expectation of

⁵Wallace, *Destiny and Glory*, 252–257; Ethel Mary Franklin, ed., “Memoirs of Mrs. Annie P. Harris,” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XL (1937), 239; Nelson, “Mission to Mexico,” 230–231. Jane had a son by her first marriage, but little is known about him. Her marriage was to William F. Storms, and for many years she went as Jane McManus Storms.

inciting a revolution which would terminate Spanish authority by force. New York City was a focal point for this agitation, and Jane committed herself to the cause. In July 1847, she published articles in the *New York Sun* on Cuba, using the pen name "Cora Montgomery." Her editorials reassured Americans that Cubans were not as backward as commonly believed, described the island's beauty, and asserted that the Cubans wanted annexation to the Union as a means of averting a slave revolt. Then she had a stint on *La Verdad*, the organ of Cuban exiles in New York City. This semi-monthly bilingual newspaper bore Cora Montgomery's name on its masthead for a while as sole editor, and it continued the expansionist thrust of the *Sun's* editorials. She also served as a contact between Cuban filibuster elements and the Polk administration and members of Congress.⁶

Jane hoped to reach beyond the New York reading public, however, and in 1850 she published, again as Cora Montgomery, a work called *The Queen of Islands and the King of Rivers*. The first half pertained to Cuba, which was commonly called the "Queen of the Antilles," and it is a useful guide to her expansionist philosophy. Sensitive to the political atmosphere in 1848 which had seen Europe rent by liberal revolutions against established monarchies, she embraced the romantic revolutionary fervor of the age. Her tract's first sentence observed the same spirit arising in the Spanish colony of Cuba:

An oppressed nation stands in the gates of our confederation and pleads with God and man for liberty. Borne down by foreign soldiers, for whose support she is taxed, until almost the necessities of life are doubled in price, deprived of freedom of speech, of press, and of conscience . . . Cuba has reached that point of suffering in which it becomes suicide and crime to remain passive.⁷

Despite the romantic language, which remained constant throughout her published works, Jane's outlook was primarily

⁶Basil Rauch, *American Interest in Cuba, 1848-1855* (New York, 1948), 58-62; May, *Southern Dream*, 46-76, 163-189; Jane M. Storms to James K. Polk, Aug. 26, 1847; Jane M. Storms to Senator Daniel Dickinson, Jan. 4, 1849, both in James K. Polk Papers, Library of Congress.

⁷Cora Montgomery, *The Queen of Islands and the King of Rivers* (New York, 1850), 3. The second half of the book is about the Mississippi River.

that of a businesswoman, for she conceived American expansion in economic terms. Cuba's soil teemed with "the choicest productions"; its forests had "the most precious woods"; its harbors were "magnificent and commanding." The "finger of a kindly Providence" gave it a location that would serve as an ideal trade center for enriching American merchants, who could exchange American bread and clothing for Cuban sugar and coffee in the absence of Spanish import tariffs. Its resources made it ripe for exploitation.

To rally national support for the Cuba crusade, Jane had to surmount serious sectional complications. Cuba's entrenched slavery system meant that annexation of the island would help the slave states keep a balance of power in Washington and also provide new land for southern slaveholders to purchase and exploit. Well aware that free soil reservations had limited land acquisitions during the Mexican War, she sought to disarm antislavery opposition to the acquisition of Cuba. She carefully suggested to antislavery readers that the United States would more effectively suppress the African slave trade to Cuba than had Spain, and she maintained that American planters were more humane than Cuban planters; thus annexation would lighten the burden on Cuba's slaves.

She further claimed that although the amount of land committed to slavery would increase with the addition of a new slave state, the ultimate impact would be to undermine the institution. Slavery was already flowing southward to the tropics, and this flow had left in its wake areas in the upper South which were likely to become free states in the future. She supplemented this theory of the tropics as a "safety valve" for slavery with the conviction that popular sovereignty would ultimately resolve the territorial dilemma and create free states. *The Queen of Islands* also appealed to southern prejudices by citing circulating rumors that England intended to pressure Spain into converting Cuba into a black republic.⁸ But her effort to reconcile free soil with slavery expansion was contrived: slavery was not dying out in the upper South, though it had weakened in some areas. She hoped that the "people"

⁸*Ibid.*, 5-27.

would ultimately see the overriding importance of expansion despite the tide of sectionalism.⁹ In expressing such priorities, she reflected an ideology shared by other nationalistic expansionists of the day, such as Stephen A. Douglas and Robert J. Walker.

Jane's expansionist advocacy, however, gradually evolved from Cuban annexation to commercial exploitation of other tropical areas. Her changing emphasis was, in part, a rational adjustment to sectional realities. But her shift primarily reflected her marriage to entrepreneur William Lesley Cazneau, whom she had first met in Matagorda. A Bostonian by birth, Cazneau had cast his fate with the Lone Star Republic through land speculation, participation in the Texas Revolution, and activity in public affairs during the republic era.¹⁰

Jane and William were well matched: they both welcomed travel; both were speculators at heart; and both believed in the overseas thrust of American commerce. Soon after their marriage the Cazneaus participated in another Texas colonization effort, this time at Eagle Pass on the Rio Grande border with Mexico, a border alive with Comanche raids. It is unclear how long Jane actually was there since she never severed ties with New York filibuster elements. But her frontier experience resulted in 1852 in a new promotional tract by "Cora Montgomery," this one entitled *Eagle Pass*. Most of the work was a diatribe against Mexican peonage, particularly the Mexican practice of invading Texas to capture escaped peons, many of whom had become domestic servants in Texas. She downplayed the hazards of Texas living, emphasizing instead excellent weather and the region's land, fish, and grazing

⁹For her nationalist ideology and her conviction that antislavery agitators were threatening the nation's future, see Jane Cazneau to Jeremiah Black, Nov. 6, 1860, Jeremiah Black Papers, Library of Congress; Natchez (Mississippi) *Free Trader*, Jan. 12, 1853.

¹⁰For William Cazneau's involvement in the Texas Revolution, see Charles Willson to Governor Henry Smith, Dec. 16, 1835; Charles Willson to R. R. Royall, Dec. 24, 1835; S. Rhoads Fisher to the People of Texas, Jan. 11, 1835 (actually 1836); and T. Jefferson Chambers to Col. Ira R. Lewis, June 10, 1836, in John H. Jenkins, ed., *The Papers of the Texas Revolution, 1835-1836* (10 vols., Austin, 1973), III, 217, 310-311; IV, 211-223; VII, 312-313. See also Homer S. Thrall, *A Pictorial History of Texas from the Earliest Visit of European Adventurers to A. D. 1879* (St. Louis, 1879), 525; M. K. Wisehart, *Sam Houston: American Giant* (Washington, D.C., 1962), 279-282, 432; Annie Middleton, "The Texas Convention of 1845," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XXV (1921), 29, 32. Cazneau was usually referred to as "General" in his later years because of his Texas military career.

potential. She predicted a brilliant future for the production of melon sugar in the Rio Grande area. To facilitate this exploitation, more federal troops were needed in the border area for protection against Mexican and Indian raids and the construction of a transcontinental railroad which would cross northern Mexico was imperative. She expected northern Mexico to secede soon from Mexico proper, and she [hoped the United States would capitalize on the situation by negotiating with its prospective rulers for a right of way across the area.¹¹

The Cazneaus apparently hoped to profit from across-the-border trade, and they may have anticipated mining possibilities in Chihuahua. Jane reported in *The Queen of Islands* that her husband was leading a pioneer merchant train of eighty wagons into northern Mexico via the Gulf of Mexico. A member of that expedition informed his brother from Corpus Christi in July 1849 that he was serving as Cazneau's interpreter: "If the expedition succeeds I will realize money and may be able to lay the basis of a fortune. . . . Genl. Cazneau, is a gentleman of distinguished reputation in the early history of the country, and is a man of energy, capacity and integrity; he is associated with several capitalists of N.O. [New Orleans]."¹²

Not long after publication of *Eagle Pass* the Cazneaus became more directly involved in foreign affairs. The period following the Mexican War saw European nations rendering little respect to the Monroe Doctrine, which had warned against new colonization efforts in the Western Hemisphere.¹³ France ignored the doctrine during the American Civil War

¹¹Cora Montgomery, *Eagle Pass; or Life on the Border* (New York, 1852), 10, 11–13, 21, 34–39, 50–52, 59, 80, 95, 102–103, 118–120, 179–182, and *passim*. Frederick Law Olmsted criticized *Eagle Pass* in his own *A Journey Through Texas Or, A Saddle-Trip on the Southwestern Frontier* (Reprint ed., New York, 1969), 111, 334. Olmsted's complaint was that *Eagle Pass* exaggerated the extent of forced return to Mexican peonage. Jane's advocacy of a transcontinental railroad across a southern route predated *Eagle Pass*. In 1849, for instance, she urged the *New York Sun* to support the construction of a railroad to the Pacific by way of Corpus Christi. Jane M. Storms to Moses S. Beach, Feb. 25, 1849, Cazneau Papers. The peonage question continued to trouble her after the book was written. In May 1853, Secretary of State Marcy requested the American minister to Mexico to investigate the abduction of one Manuel Rios after the Secretary had received a letter of complaint from Jane. William L. Marcy to Alfred Conkling, May 5, 1853, in Manning, ed., *Diplomatic Correspondence*, IX, 130–131.

¹²James Reed to Thomas Reed, July 15, 1849, Thomas Reed Papers, Louisiana State University Department of Archives and History; Montgomery, *Queen of Islands*, 15.

¹³Dexter Perkins, *The Monroe Doctrine, 1826–1867* (2d ed., Gloucester, Mass., 1965), 253.

by establishing its puppet Maximilian regime in Mexico. A parallel situation developed in the Dominican Republic, and the Cazneaus became embroiled in its affairs.

The Dominican Republic, the eastern two thirds of the island of Hispaniola, was a former Spanish colony which had gained independence in 1821, but soon thereafter it had been conquered by the black republic of Haiti from the western third of the same island. Independence had been reestablished in 1944, but the Dominicans led a precarious existence, always in danger of another Haitian takeover. Dominican regimes rose and fell in a climate of civil strife and political insecurity, and national leaders frequently turned in despair to foreign powers as sources of protection and stability. The United States, however, had forfeited its chance of playing the dominant outside role because it had refrained, primarily for racial reasons, from recognizing the Dominican Republic.¹⁴ Although many Dominicans considered their country primarily white, or at least administered by white officials, the U.S. State Department perceived it as a mulatto and black satellite of Haiti.¹⁵ To recognize a nation with black or mulatto leaders would raise sensitive questions, particularly in the American South.

The United States had, nonetheless, become increasingly alarmed over the threat of European intervention in the Dominican Republic. American agents were sent to interfere clandestinely with potential European challenges to Dominican sovereignty. Employing executive agents enabled American Presidents to evade the necessity of confirmation of diplomatic appointments by the Senate, and it was also a means of establishing informal relations with countries which the United States did not recognize and to which legitimate missions could not be authorized.¹⁶ In November 1853, William Cazneau received such an appointment as special agent of the Department of State to the Dominican Republic.¹⁷

¹⁴Charles Callan Tansill, *The United States and Santo Domingo, 1798-1873* (Baltimore, 1938), 125-175.

¹⁵Perkins, *Monroe Doctrine*, 253-260; Rayford W. Logan, *The Diplomatic Relations of the United States with Haiti, 1776-1891* (Reprint ed., New York, 1969), 237-239.

¹⁶Perkins, *Monroe Doctrine*, 260, 263-266; Henry Merritt Wriston, *Executive Agents in American Foreign Relations* (Baltimore, 1929), 3, 107, 177-179, 443-453.

¹⁷William Marcy to William Cazneau, Nov. 2, 1853, Record Group 59, Records of the U.S. Dept. of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Special Missions, National Archives.

Jane Cazneau arrived in Santo Domingo, the capital city, before her husband, and soon was boasting, according to the British consul, that an influx of Americans would arrive in the Dominican Republic in the near future. The mission was as much her's as William's. William Cazneau was hindered by the nature of his secret appointment, which granted him only investigatory powers and no authority to make a treaty recognizing the Dominican Republic. General Pedro Santana, the incumbent Dominican leader, was unwilling to make major concessions to the United States without recognition and was leaning toward an accommodation with Britain and France for protection against Haiti. In February 1854, Jane implored Secretary of State William Marcy to provide her husband with the credentials to draft a treaty. She also wrote an antiexpansionist member of the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee, Hamilton Fish of New York, in support of her husband's mission.¹⁸ Her letter to Secretary Marcy is significant, as she explicitly talked about incorporating the Dominican Republic into "Gen. Pierce's American system." She and her husband envisioned the Dominican Republic primarily as a place for American business to penetrate rather than as a future state in the Union. With authority to negotiate a treaty, "Gen. Cazneau" could possibly get the United States most-favored-nation status in a port on the Dominican boundary line with Haiti, and the "rich resources" of the whole island could be opened to American settlers. General Santana would allow American "citizens and their children the *fullest rights of nationality* to hold lands and mines, without losing their nationality." Jane also labored to set up a pro-American press in Santo Domingo and posted the *New York Sun* on her husband's mission, urging it to give "folks at Washington a lecture if they are slow, and credit if they are right."¹⁹

Secretary Marcy responded to the Cazneaus' appeal and promoted William to full commissioner to the Dominican Republic. Recognition of that nation was to be exchanged for a

¹⁸Allan Nevins, *Hamilton Fish: The Inner History of the Grant Administration* (New York, 1937), 252; Logan *Diplomatic Relations of the United States with Haiti*, 285.

¹⁹Jane Cazneau to William L. Marcy, Feb. 7, 1854, R. G. 59, Misc. Letters; Jane Cazneau to Moses S. Beach, Dec. 28, 1854, Cazneau Papers.

treaty leasing at least part of Samaná Bay on the country's northeastern coast to the United States for no more than \$200 to \$300 per year. The United States would then have a coaling station, and its ships would help protect the Dominican Republic against outside interference.²⁰

The Cazneaus, however, met frustration in their diplomatic efforts. Although a treaty of amity and commerce was achieved in October 1854, the British and French consuls persuaded the Dominicans to amend it in such a way that it could never be ratified by the United States. Particularly abrasive was a provision which would have given Negro Dominican citizens the right to be treated as whites while traveling in the United States.²¹ In December 1854, Marcy cancelled Cazneau's mission, but he delayed returning to the United States and thereby irritated the Secretary.²²

The Cazneaus felt no qualms about pursuing business speculations while engaged in their diplomatic mission. Job loyalty, as they conceived it, did not entail undivided attention to the job description. At about the same time that Marcy had sent William Cazneau the commission to conduct treaty negotiations with the Dominicans, the Cazneaus had been investigating transportation and trade opportunities in the Southwest. The Gadsden Purchase, which the Senate had approved on April 25, 1854, seemed to promise a transcontinental railroad route south of the Gila River through what is now southern New Mexico and Arizona. Furthermore, the Cazneaus anticipated that a lengthy controversy over the right of American entrepreneurs to open a transit route across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in Mexico would soon be resolved by Mexican officials. This opportunistic couple coordinated their Domini-

²⁰William Marcy to William Cazneau, June 17, 1854, R. G. 59, Diplomatic Instructions, Special Missions.

²¹William Cazneau to William Marcy, Oct. 9 and Dec. 6, 1854; William Cazneau to Jonathan Elliott, Nov. 23, 1854; Jonathan Elliott to William Cazneau, Nov. 16, 1854; instructions to Jonathan Elliott, Oct. 5, 1855, all in R. G. 59, Special Agents; William Cazneau to Franklin Pierce, Aug. 30, 1855, R. G. 59, Misc. Letters; Tansill, *United States and Santo Domingo*, 186-190; Roy Nichols, *Franklin Pierce: Young Hickory of the Granite Hills* (Rev. ed., Philadelphia, 1958), 397.

²²William Marcy to William Cazneau, Dec. 18, 1854, Jan. 12 and Feb. 3, 1855, R. G. 59, Diplomatic Instructions, Special Missions.

can diplomacy with Mexican speculations. Jane explained their plans in May 1854:

I am going back to the W. Indies and then to Mexico. . . . [T]he Garay grant or some other will open the Tehuantepec transit. . . . The Atlantic and Pacific Rail Road is taking big steps in these days and we are doubtful in which of these to cast ourselves.

It is subrosa that my husband is off in a few days on this voyage of discovery. . . .²³

The Garay grant referred to a concession from the Mexican government in 1842, which had been annulled by the Mexican Congress in 1851. Competing American interests had claimed for some time that the grant had passed on to them. The Cazneaus had catholic tastes in their expansionism and entrepreneurial activities: the more pots on the fire the better.

Their Mexico plan never materialized. The transcontinental railroad became a victim of sectionalism; it was not authorized by Congress until 1862. The Tehuantepec grant remained tied up until the Mexican government released it under stringent terms several years later to a consortium of primarily Louisiana investors.

While the Cazneaus waited for the Tehuantepec legalities to be resolved and saw their Dominican mission fail, events in Central America provided a new arena for tropical speculations. In 1855 an American filibuster, William Walker, had taken a small group of men from California to Nicaragua to participate in a civil war, and he had surprisingly risen to power. In June 1856 he culminated his ascendancy by winning a shaky claim to the presidency of Nicaragua in an election of questionable legitimacy. There was talk that he might proceed to conquer the rest of Central America. His tenure was never secure, however, partly because the United States government refused to recognize him as Nicaraguan president, a refusal which

²³Jane Cazneau to Moses S. Beach, May 30, 1854, Cazneau Papers. Basil Rauch, in *American Interest in Cuba*, p. 211, identifies Jane Cazneau as a leading promoter of the Tehuantepec route in 1852, but does not explain her involvement. For the Garay grant and its relationship to the negotiation of the Gadsden Treaty, see Paul Neff Gerber, *The Gadsden Treaty* (Philadelphia, 1923).

impaired the flow of reinforcements to him. Opposition from Cornelius Vanderbilt, the powerful American shipping magnate further weakened the filibuster's hold on power. Eventually Walker was expelled from the country, surrendering to United States naval commander Charles H. Davis on May 1, 1857. Walker devoted the rest of his life to regaining control of Nicaragua. A second invasion was broken up in December 1857 by the United States Navy. In September 1860, a Honduran firing squad executed him following another unsuccessful invasion.

Walker's first success in 1855–1856 encouraged the mobile Cazneaus. The Tennessean's operations appealed to their opportunistic instincts and belief in American commercial penetration of the tropics. On May 23, 1856, William Cazneau endorsed the Nicaraguan filibuster in a letter to participants in a New York public meeting. He argued that the United States should prevent English dominance over isthmian transit and that the neutrality law of 1818 should be suspended to enable reinforcements from the United States to reach Walker.²⁴

Subsequently, the Cazneaus became directly involved in Walker's cause. Nicaragua under the Walker regime, according to the observation of an American resident, became "the rendezvous of all classes of speculators." Certainly the Cazneaus seem to have calculated that the filibuster—a fellow countryman in a vulnerable position—would be amenable to granting concessions in return for aid. By April 1856, Jane was ecstatic about a potential silver speculation "only second to the California gold fever." Although she did not identify the locale, she probably meant Nicaragua since the Cazneaus eventually joined with Joseph Fabens and bought mining property there.²⁵

²⁴*Cincinnati Daily Enquirer*, June 3, 1856.

²⁵Eleanor Ratterman, "With Walker in Nicaragua: Reminiscences," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, I (1915), 316–317; Jane Cazneau to Moses S. Beach, April 14, 1856, Cazneau Papers. A correspondent of Guy M. Bryan of Texas, who had been in Nicaragua, wrote in October 1857 that "valuable mines are said to exist in Chontales and I remember that it was said that Maj. Heiss had purchased one there in company with a man named Fabbins [sic]." William Cazneau wrote to M. B. Lamar a few months later: "I think the government will take energetic measures for the protection of American interests in Nicaragua and if Col. Fabens calls on you on this subject please mention it to him as we are jointly interested in some valuable mines in that country."

In the summer of 1856 William visited Nicaragua, and on August 15 he contracted with Fermin Ferrer, Walker's appointee as minister to the United States, to colonize Nicaragua with Americans. Cazneau would send 1,000 colonists within a year, and the Nicaraguan government agreed to establish them in settlements of at least fifty families and give each settler eighty acres of land.²⁶ He began recruitment and advertising procedures upon his return to New York City, and in December 1856, he sent recruits and \$2,000 worth of provisions for Walker aboard the steamer *Tennessee* from New York. Problems at sea, however, led to the disbanding of the expedition at Norfolk, Virginia.²⁷

By that December, Jane and William Cazneau were in the midst of a transectional, pro-Walker network of entrepreneur-speculators, politicians, and expansionists, operating out of New York and Washington, who hoped to ride Walker's coattails to wealth in Nicaragua and elsewhere in the tropics. All of them were untroubled by Walker's decision the previous September to permit slavery in Nicaragua and to bid for southern support. Most were nationalistic Democrats in ideology, men who eschewed sectional politics as an encumbrance to American progress. A sense of this coterie emerges in a letter written from an informant at the St. Nicholas Hotel in New York to Secretary of State Marcy:

The interest of the "Walker Republic" has a strong nightly representation at this place, comprising such men as R. J. Walker, [Thomas J.] Green of Texas, Cazneau, of the same place, Major Heiss, the minister Ferrer, and many others. . . .²⁸

Unknown writer to Bryan, Oct. 1, 1857, Guy M. Bryan Papers, Barker Texas History Center Archives, University of Texas; William Cazneau to Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar, Jan. 3, 1858, Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar Papers, Texas State Archives and Library. Chontales is on the eastern shore of Lake Nicaragua, and it had gold and silver mines.

²⁶William O. Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers: The Story of William Walker and His Associates* (New York, 1916), 236; Earl W. Fornell, "Texans and Filibusters in the 1850's," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, LIX (1956), 417.

²⁷William Cazneau to Appleton Oaksmith, Sept. 13, 1856, Appleton Oaksmith Papers, William R. Perkins Library, Duke University; Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 238–239.

²⁸T. N. Carr to William Marcy, Dec. 16, 1856, William L. Marcy Papers, Library of Congress.

Some of the "others" included Joseph Fabens and Duff Green. Fabens, the former American commercial agent in Greytown, Nicaragua, had been involved in the events preceding the bombardment of that port by an American ship of war in 1854. He had linked up with a scheme of promoter Henry L. Kinney to colonize part of Nicaragua in 1855, and he had subsequently shifted loyalty to William Walker when the latter booted Kinney out of the country.²⁹ Duff Green gained notoriety as a controversial editor during the Jacksonian political wars of the 1820s and 1830s. Green first aligned with Jackson and was a "Kitchen Cabinet" member, but later he became a Jackson critic. He then went into multiple ventures in canals, railroads, and mines. Both Duff and his brother Benjamin Green ran diplomatic missions for the State Department related to Texan, Mexican, and Dominican affairs.³⁰

What particularly united these entrepreneurs behind Walker was the possibility of exploiting guano deposits under Nicaraguan sovereignty. Guano, or sea bird dung, was used as fertilizer on American farmlands, and it was found in considerable amounts on islands in the Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Sea. Congress, in August 1856, had passed an act allowing discoverers of guano deposits on uninhabited islands to register their claims with the federal government. If no other country had legitimate title to the guano, then the federal government could grant permission to American interests to market the guano at a set price.³¹

In May 1857, Fabens, Duff Green, and Charles Stearns created the Atlantic and Pacific Guano Company. William Cazneau probably owned stock in the company. In any event, Duff Green's correspondence shows that Cazneau was deeply

²⁹For Fabens and the Greytown bombardment, see David I. Folkman, Jr., *The Nicaragua Route* (Salt Lake City, 1972), 57–68; Ivor Debenham Spencer, *The Victor and the Spoils: A Life of William L. Marcy* (Providence, 1959), 76–78. For Fabens's involvement in Kinney's scheme, see John P. Heiss Scrapbook, Tennessee State Library and Archives; shares of stock are in the William Sidney Thayer Papers (microfilm), University of Virginia.

³⁰For Green's entrepreneurial and expansionist background, see Fletcher M. Green, "Duff Green: Industrial Promoter," in J. Isaac Copeland, ed., *Democracy in the Old South and Other Essays by Fletcher Melvin Green* (Nashville, 1969), 50–64; Frederick Merk, *The Monroe Doctrine and American Expansionism* (New York, 1966), 108–110.

³¹Nichols, *Advance Agents*, 157–220.

involved in the company's affairs. Their hope was to develop guano deposits and to take advantage of the federal government's desire to promote development of the fertilizer. There was considerable optimism that the federal government could be persuaded to provide a naval vessel to help them discover guano deposits. Duff Green was expected to use his contacts in Washington to get the vessel. But before anything could be done, Walker was expelled from Central America. Since Britain had helped supply the Central American armies which drove Walker from power, her prestige in the region had increased. The Fabens group feared that future guano claims would be insecure. Duff Green warned Lewis Cass, Secretary of State in the James Buchanan administration which took office in March 1857, that the English planned "control of the Caribbean Sea" and that British agents would soon seize the rich guano deposits, thus defeating the intent of the congressional legislation.³²

The entrepreneurs pondered what could still be done. They claimed the guano discoveries of Captain George V. White on Swan Island about a hundred miles off the coast of Central America in the Caribbean and requested federal recognition of their claims. They envisioned Swan Island also serving as a coaling depot for vessels of the United States Home Squadron, and they offered to contract with the federal government for delivery of coal. Knowing that Walker was planning a return invasion of Nicaragua, they decided to make their tenure more secure by demanding that the United States officially receive Walker's minister, Fermin Ferrer, who was staying with the Cazneaus at the St. Nicholas Hotel in New York. Once Walker's encore commenced, they expected either United States naval protection for this reentry (on the grounds that he was the legitimate ruler of the country) or at least official neutrality by the American government. They also opened negotiations with Charles Frederick Henningsen, Walker's second-in-command, upon his arrival in New York in May 1857. The New York coterie promised to rally public support and financing for

³² Joseph Fabens to Duff Green, May 30, 1857; Duff Green to Lewis Cass, May 29, 1857, Duff Green Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina.

Walker if he agreed to recognize and support their guano claims once he was restored to power in Nicaragua. Fabens wrote Green on June 20, 1857:

Walker is still here. I see him daily. He approves of course of our Guano grant. You spoke in yours of 13th of making 'a very advantageous arrangement with him'—but left me entirely in the dark as to the nature of it.

The State Department, however, rejected their Swan Island claims on the grounds that the affidavits prepared had not conclusively demonstrated the existence of high quality guano deposits.³³ When the United States Navy successfully obstructed Walker's second expedition to Nicaragua in November, most of the entrepreneurs acknowledged that barring an unforeseen change in official governmental policy, their hopes of working through Walker were unrealistic. Some contact was made between Walker and the entrepreneurs following his arrival in the United States. Both Walker and Duff Green were reported at Brown's Hotel in Washington in January 1858, and it can be presumed that negotiations were in progress.³⁴ But the promoters, including the Cazneaus, drifted away from Walker's movement and into other enterprises.

Jane Cazneau reflected an interest in Nicaraguan affairs as early as the publication of *Eagle Pass*, when she ridiculed the pretensions of the Mosquito Kingdom, a British protectorate in eastern Nicaragua which included the mouth of the San Juan River, the eastern terminus of a proposed isthmian canal route.³⁵ Once Walker rose to power and claimed Nicaraguan sovereignty over that region, Jane saw a means of substituting American interests for British commercial supremacy throughout Central America. In May 1856, even before Walker had assumed the Nicaraguan presidency, she pressed the filibuster cause on Moses S. Beach by asking his sponsorship of public lectures on Nicaragua in New York to encourage emigrés to

³³ Joseph Fabens to Duff Green, May 29, June 8, 9, 11, 20, 22, 26, 29, and July 16, 1857; Lewis Cass to Joseph Fabens and Charles Stearns, June 29, 1857, all in Green Papers; Lewis Cass to Jeremiah Black, May 30, 1857, Black Papers.

³⁴ *Cincinnati Enquirer*, Jan. 1, 5, and 9, 1858.

³⁵ Montgomery, *Eagle Pass*, 57.

Central America. She later accompanied her husband when he visited Nicaragua. In July, after Walker became president, she wrote from Granada to John Heiss in New York claiming that Walker's regime was stable and likely to survive; she hoped to encourage official recognition by the United States government. Heiss at the time was serving as *chargé d'affaires* of Walker's legation in the United States, and he passed Jane Cazneau's thoughts on to the influential Senator Stephen Douglas, who had been, and continued to be, a Walker advocate. In October 1856, she tried to arrange advertising in the *New York Sun* for Walker's cause.³⁶

In April 1857, when Walker verged on military defeat, she appealed directly to Attorney General Jeremiah Black. She insisted that the government recognize Minister Ferrer and argued that once Walker was in power again, he would protect American transit across the Nicaraguan isthmus and provide duty-free, neutral ports at the eastern and western termini of the transit route. She urged the ratification of the Wheeler treaty between Nicaragua and the United States, which had been arranged by the U.S. Minister to Nicaragua, John Wheeler, prior to the severance of relations between the two countries. The treaty, Jane argued, would enable American citizens to hold lands and work mines in Nicaragua without forfeiting their American citizenship. It would eventuate in Americans colonizing, controlling, and protecting from disruption the vital isthmus route:

To all practical interests the Nicaraguan transit can be made as freely, securely and completely our national highway as if it were

³⁶Jane Cazneau to Moses S. Beach, May 31 and Oct. 7, 1856, Cazneau Papers; John Heiss to Stephen Douglas, Aug. 12, 1856, Stephen Douglas Papers, University of Chicago. The Louisville editor Henry Watterson, who knew Jane Cazneau personally, claimed in his reminiscences that Jane was responsible for dubbing Walker the "grey-eyed man of destiny," a nickname he received in Nicaragua and retained for the last years of his life. (Henry Watterson, *Marse Henry: An Autobiography* [2 vols., New York, 1919], II, 57.) This is unlikely since the nickname first appeared in Walker's newspaper, *El Nicaraguense*, long after the Cazneaus had left the country. (Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 128.) More importantly, Watterson's account of Jane Cazneau is loaded with errors and inaccuracies, including claims that she wrote the peace treaty ending the Mexican War, that she married William Cazneau before the Mexican War, that her husband's name was George, and that she and her husband died before the Civil War in the same shipwreck.

within the territory of the Union—with all the advantages of a direct sovereignty without the endless cares and entanglements incident to the possession of a detached province by a government like the United States.³⁷

Few nineteenth-century statements in behalf of an American “informal empire” were as explicit as this rejection of traditional territorial expansionism.

Although Jane Cazneau accurately pointed out in her letter to Black that many of the “friends” of Walker had boosted James Buchanan’s cause in the recent presidential election,³⁸ there was no change in administration policy. In fact, Walker had already surrendered when Jane penned her next letter to Attorney General Black expressing delight over rumors that the President was intervening to help the filibuster. She believed that Buchanan had dispatched the war sloop *Saratoga* to the Río San Juan to support Walker. The vessel would recapture some river steamers used in the transit route that a military operation organized by the Costa Rican government and agents of Cornelius Vanderbilt had seized. The transit route across Nicaragua was Walker’s source for reinforcements, and Jane knew it.

She also applauded the failure of the recent Dallas-Clarendon convention between the United States and Great Britain (a compromise settlement of Central American affairs which fell short of a total British withdrawal from territory it controlled). Jane felt that the plan’s rejection allowed the United States a free hand in Central America and that it was now time for her government to play its cards vigorously. She still believed American economic expansionism could surmount the challenge of rising sectionalism at home and that a bolder policy in Central America would “give the people a seasonable and curative diversion from the slavery agitation.” Although she justified an American military presence in Nicaragua by invoking those provisions of the 1850 Clayton-Bulwer Treaty with Britain which called for Anglo-American protection of

³⁷Jane Cazneau to Jeremiah Black, April 8, 1857, Black Papers; John H. Wheeler to William Marcy, July 1, 1855, and Sept. 30, 1856, in Manning, ed., *Diplomatic Correspondence*, IV, 470–473, 573–574.

³⁸See, for instance, Duff Green to John A. Quitman, Aug. 11, 1856, John A. Quitman Papers, Harvard University.

any isthmian transit route, her ultimate authority was traditional racist imperialism. American military muscle could overwhelm the disorganized and impotent republics of Central America:

If the President wills it . . . American influence will soon supersede all others throughout the entire American Isthmus. Those semi-barbarians reverence power more than wisdom or justice, and they only need see that Mr. Buchanan is in earnest, to yield whatever he demands.

It was probably during this same period that she traveled to the capital to meet with Buchanan about support for Walker.³⁹

Jane Cazneau wrote again to Attorney General Black on Walker's behalf in the fall of 1857, prior to the filibuster's second expedition. But it is evident that concern about the Cazneaus' investments, rather than fealty to Walker, inspired her pleading. She told Black that the reestablishment of the transit across Nicaragua plus ratification of the Wheeler treaty would cause Americans to go to Nicaragua and "take up their lands and work their mines." She bluntly admitted,

I care very little comparatively about Walker but he does represent an *American* interest, in strong contradistinction to the Anglo Costa Rican policy of hostility. To go back and defend Nicaragua is his right and I cannot see how our Cabinet can forbid any one going with him and taking their arms with them as no one proposes to "make war on a friendly state."⁴⁰

She was acting the traditional role of a lobbyist for special interests—her own.

Once Walker's second expedition was quashed by the U.S. Navy, and it seemed apparent that he would never return to

³⁹Jane Cazneau to Jeremiah Black, May 4, 1857; and Jane Cazneau to Black, "Tuesday morning" at Willard's hotel, Black Papers. A good discussion of the Dallas-Clarendon Convention can be found in Mary W. Williams, *Anglo-American Isthmian Diplomacy, 1815–1915* (Washington, D.C., 1915), 224–269. See also Wilbur Devereux Jones, *The American Problem in British Diplomacy, 1841–1861* (Athens, Georgia, 1974), 115–160; Spencer, *Victor and the Spoils*, 376–387. For the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, see William M. Malloy, comp., *Treaties, Conventions, International Acts, Protocols and Agreements between the United States and Other Powers, 1776–1909* (2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1910), I, 659–663.

⁴⁰Jane Cazneau to Jeremiah Black, Sept. 10 and 26, 1857, Black Papers.

power, she changed her tune. In April 1858, she told Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar, the new American minister to Nicaragua over whom she had considerable influence from earlier acquaintance, that most Americans were “anti-filibuster”. She added that if the Nicaraguan people could be persuaded to invite American citizens to colonize their lands, then friendly Americans could protect Nicaragua from hostile filibuster invasions. And what friendly Americans did Jane Cazneau have in mind to head off subsequent filibuster interventions?

Her [Nicaragua’s] only or at least her best chance is to encourage friendly & peaceful cultivators, like your family and mine, to come in and plant coffee groves and build houses which we will take care to defend from the grasp of filibusters.⁴¹

She specifically asked Lamar and his secretary José Debrin (who was in debt to her for his appointment) to inquire whether the incumbent regime in Nicaragua would grant a concession for some six to twenty Catholic families to settle on the volcanic island of Ometepe, which Walker had used as a hospital base during the wars. She was also willing to help to colonize any area Lamar selected for himself. Lamar, however, perceived an alarming amount of anti-Americanism in the wake of the Walker filibusters and had no intention of settling in Nicaragua. His dispatches do not indicate that he ever broached the subject with the incumbent Nicaraguan government of General Tomas Martínez.⁴²

⁴¹Jane Cazneau to M. B. Lamar, Jan. 20, 1858, Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar Papers, Texas State Library and Archives. Lamar had an illustrious career in Texas, which included heroic action in the battle of San Jacinto, service in the Texas legislature, and a term as second president of the Texas Republic. Lamar and Jane Cazneau were intimate friends, if not intimate. In 1857 Lamar dedicated a collection of his poems, “Verse Memorials,” to Jane Cazneau. Lamar to Jane M. Cazneau, Oct. 4, 1857, in Charles Adams Gulick, Jr., ed., *The Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar* (6 vols., Austin, 1920–1927), VI, 345, 346; Kathryn Sexton, “Hero or Failure? A Political Life of Mirabeau B. Lamar,” *Texana*, XI (1973), 199–241. Lamar’s commission from Buchanan was dated December 23, 1857. His appointment was urged on Buchanan by John Quitman, whom Jane apparently knew and probably pressured on Lamar’s behalf. Jane Cazneau to John A. Quitman, March 12, 1856, John A. Quitman Papers, Mississippi Department of Archives and History; John Quitman and Thomas Rusk to Henry A. Wise, March 6, 1857, in Gulick, ed., *Papers of Lamar*, IV, part 2, p. 38.

⁴²Lamar to Lewis Cass, June 24, July 9 and 26, 1858; Lamar to Rosalio Cortez [Nicaraguan minister of Foreign Affairs], Aug. 26, 1858, in Manning, ed., *Diplomatic*

Failure never daunted the optimistic Cazneaus, however. Jane and William again became involved in Dominican affairs. That country still awaited American commercial expansion, and the time was propitious since the anti-U.S. government of Buenaventura Baez had recently been overthrown and replaced by the pro-American General Pedro Santana. The Cazneaus wanted Samaná Bay developed as a free port for the benefit of American trade, and they felt they had the contacts in the Dominican Republic to make the requisite diplomatic arrangements. According to a later account by Jane Cazneau, her husband sold President Buchanan and Secretary of State Lewis Cass on the project in meetings in the White House library. On April 7, 1859, William Cazneau was again appointed a United States special agent to the Dominican Republic.⁴³

Following his arrival, William reported on the country's potential for growing tobacco, cabinet and dye wood production, and silver and copper mining. His early dispatches reflected his desire to obtain a coaling depot and naval base at Samaná Bay, to have American trade accepted on an equal basis with European nations, and to establish a neutral corridor between Haiti and the Dominican Republic, where colonists from other parts of the world could get free homesteads in return for constituting a buffer on the boundary.⁴⁴

But interspersed in William's dispatches were observations that European influence was increasing because of the pervasive fear among Dominicans of an imminent invasion by Haiti and a probable race war. By early 1860 his comments indicated that Spain planned to assume a protectorate over the country. The refusal of the Buchanan administration either to recognize the Santana government or to take decisive naval action meant that Cazneau had to stand by helplessly when President Santana proclaimed his country reannexed to Spain on March 18,

Correspondence, IV, 682–685, 690–691, 692–696, 705–706. For Debrin's appointment, see Lamar to José Debrin, March 29, 1858; José Debrin to Lamar, Oct. 27, 1858, in Gulick, ed., *Papers of Lamar*, IV, part 2, p. 128; VI, 389–390.

⁴³Mrs. William Leslie Cazneau, *Our Winter Eden: Pen Pictures of the Tropics* (New York, 1878), 118–119.

⁴⁴William Cazneau to Lewis Cass, June 19, July 2, Oct. 17, Dec. 13, 1859, and Feb. 22, May 12, 1860, R. G. 59, Special Agents.

1861.⁴⁵ When Abraham Lincoln succeeded Buchanan in March 1861, there was no major shift in U.S. policy. Secretary of State William Seward cancelled Cazneau's mission soon after taking office, considered sending a replacement, but then had second thoughts.⁴⁶

Cazneau, however, did not expect the Spanish to implement effectively their rule. Many Dominicans hated Spanish rule so much, he told Seward, that a people's uprising was inevitable. In May 1861 he reported that towns on the Haitian border were rebelling. The Cazneaus remained at their house and plantations near Santo Domingo City until 1863, when their holdings were destroyed by Spanish authorities. While the American Civil War raged, William Cazneau invested in such Dominican Republic speculations as colonization projects for both ex-slaves and whites, mining, land purchases, banking, cotton, a lease of part of the wharf front of Santo Domingo City, and even a scheme for camel transportation in the country. Most of the enterprises were launched in conjunction with Joseph Fabens. The most ambitious of the speculations came following the restoration of Dominican independence in 1865. An agreement with the Baez regime in July 1868 authorized Fabens to make a geological and mineralogical survey of the Dominican Republic and to receive in return an incredible one-fifth of all the public lands he examined!⁴⁷

The Cazneau investments depended upon maintaining friendly relations with unstable Dominican regimes. Cazneau and Fabens felt that a more visible U.S. presence in the country would enhance internal stability and encourage American

⁴⁵William Cazneau to Lewis Cass, July 30, 1859, and March 4, July 31, Oct. 13, Nov. 17, 1860, *ibid.* For background prior to the Spanish takeover, see Perkins, *Monroe Doctrine*, 279–285.

⁴⁶Perkins, *Monroe Doctrine*, 288–293; William Seward to William Cazneau, March 11, 1861; William Seward to unknown, April 2, 1861, R. G. 59, Diplomatic Instructions, Special Missions.

⁴⁷William Cazneau to William Seward, May 13, June 28, 1861, R. G. 59, Special Agents; Tansill, *United States and Santo Domingo*, 216–220, 344–346, 402n; Nevins, *Fish*, 252–256; Sumner Welles, *Naboth's Vineyard: The Dominican Republic, 1844–1924* (Reprint ed., Mamaroneck, New York, 1966), 311–315. After the destruction of their property the Cazneaus returned to the United States. In 1865 they went back to Santo Domingo. During the American Civil War Cazneau and Fabens's "American West India Company" promoted a scandalous effort to settle former American slaves in the Dominican Republic.

colonists to settle their lands. When the American Civil War ended, Cazneau persuaded the Andrew Johnson administration to recognize the Dominican Republic. He also threw his influence behind an effort by Secretary of State William Seward to secure Samaná Bay as a naval base. The United States was willing to pay \$2 million for the outright cession of Samaná or to obtain a thirty-year lease for \$10,000 down and \$12,000 a year. The Dominican government, however, was unresponsive. The recent Spanish occupation had created a public backlash against cessions to foreign powers. Subsequently Cazneau helped persuade President Ulysses S. Grant to try to annex the entire Dominican Republic. President Buenaventura Baez favored incorporation into the United States because of his insecure hold on power. Cazneau's support of annexation was an expedient adjustment to Baez's predicament rather than a retreat from his earlier commitment to commercial rather than territorial expansionism.⁴⁸

Senator Charles Sumner opposed the annexation plan in the Senate, and it was buried in spite of Cazneau's efforts. Reports of the Cazneau speculation, in fact, were part of the reason the annexation treaty was voted down in June 1870. The Seward-Grant expansionist diplomacy vis-à-vis the Dominican Republic, and the complex reasons why it aborted, have been detailed in numerous studies.⁴⁹ But Jane Cazneau's role in this late phase of her husband's career needs further attention in the context of her consistent pattern of lobbying for her husband's diplomatic and entrepreneurial schemes. Again a joint team effort, similar to the Cazneaus' earlier activities in the tropics, is revealed. In 1861, William Cazneau even had State Department funds paid directly to his wife for traveling costs, office rent, and other expenses.⁵⁰ As might be expected, Jane also used her creative pen to lobby in her husband's behalf.

As usual, Jane was in on the initial stages of the enterprise. She attended the White House library conferences which

⁴⁸Tansill, *United States and Santo Domingo*, 223 ff; Welles, *Naboth's Vineyard*, 315–382.

⁴⁹See particularly Tansill, *United States and Santo Domingo*, 239–280, 343–461; Nevins, *Fish*, 249–278, 309–344, 497–501; Welles, *Naboth's Vineyard*, 392–405; Ernest R. May, *American Imperialism: A Speculative Essay* (New York, 1968), 104–113.

⁵⁰William Cazneau to William Seward, July 1, 1861, R. G. 59, Special Agents.

initiated the 1859 Cazneau mission to the Dominican Republic, though she apparently deferred to her husband in the negotiations. While William corresponded with Secretary of State Cass about his mission, she concentrated on President Buchanan and Attorney General Jeremiah Black. Writing from Santo Domingo City in October 1859, she admonished the administration to abandon its "suicidal course" in Dominican affairs since only formal recognition would facilitate the settlement of outstanding claims and access to the mines of what she portrayed as "another California." Later she predicted that the impending Spanish protectorate would only be a front for a takeover by Napoleon III and that Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Puerto Rico would all be sacrificed to coolie labor and black rule. She urged President Buchanan to protect American "interests" in the island, arguing that even if he was not concerned about the horrors of "Africanization," he should nonetheless intervene. She suggested that U.S. naval vessels be used to enforce American claims against Haiti, thus distracting Haiti from its invasion preparations and lessening the pressure on Dominican leaders to turn to Europe.⁵¹

Simultaneously Jane tried to cultivate public sentiment for her husband's speculative projects. While in Santo Domingo she sent Moses S. Beach sketches on life in the Dominican Republic for publication in the *New York Sun*, hoping that they would encourage emigres for her husband's land holdings. The profit motive now overshadowed the racism of her earlier dispatches; *any* immigrants to the Dominican Republic, even those who would expand the black percentage, would be better than none at all:

You see there is no hint whether the white or black emigrant is most interested in this country. It is open to both and a good country for either but the Haitian Republic is likely to be the most agreeable to a colored man.⁵²

⁵¹Jane Cazneau to James Buchanan, Oct. 17, 1859, *ibid.*; Jane Cazneau to Jeremiah Black, Nov. 6, 1860, Black Papers.

⁵²Jane Cazneau to Moses S. Beach, April 24, 1862, Cazneau Papers. By the end of the Civil War she was advocating the freeing of Cuba's slaves. Jane Cazneau to Moses S. Beach, Aug. 25, 1865, Cazneau Papers.

After the Civil War she played a key role in the Dominican intrigues of Seward and Grant. She may have been responsible for kindling Seward's initial interest in the country. She claimed later that she met with Seward on the subject in the summer of 1865, and in September of that year she sent a letter to Secretary of the Interior James Harlan and asked him to show it to Seward. The letter extolled the Cazneau concept of a neutral belt across the whole island. She also claimed that the Dominican government was ready to cede to the United States a naval station on a northern bay near the Haitian border because an American presence would be a counterweight to Haiti.⁵³ Seward decided to visit Santo Domingo City before endorsing the scheme, and in January 1866 he met with William Cazneau and President Baez (and probably Jane). Shortly thereafter President Johnson recognized the Dominican Republic. In April 1866 Jane Cazneau wrote Seward's son Frederick, praising Baez and stating that Americans were already arriving to develop Dominican mines. When Johnson's nomination of William Cazneau as the United States commissioner and consul-general to the Dominican Republic failed to pass the Senate,⁵⁴ it was Frederick Seward, then Assistant Secretary of State, who received the mission to secure Samaná Bay. Later during the Grant administration, she wrote letters and articles for the *New York Herald* on Dominican affairs.⁵⁵

Finally, in 1878, when she was over seventy years old, Jane Cazneau issued a last tract of Caribbean boosterism, *Our Winter Eden: Pen Pictures of the Tropics*. In this romantic travelog of settlers discovering the wonders of the Dominican Republic, she again called on Americans to take up the mission of developing the tropics. The Dominican Republic was the "Summer Land" where "unfading Fruits and flowers" bloomed all year long, where land was cheap, and where coffee and banana

⁵³Cora Montgomery Cazneau to James Harlan, Sept. 6, 1865, quoted in Tansill, *United States and Santo Domingo*, 224–225.

⁵⁴President Johnson's nomination of Cazneau as U.S. commissioner came in January 1866 in response to a campaign mounted on Cazneau's behalf by New York merchants. Richard B. Kimball to Frederick A. Seward, Dec. 18, 1865; George W. McLean to Henry Raymond, Dec. 18, 1865, R. G. 59, Letters of Application and Recommendation for Appointment to Federal Office; Tansill, *United States and Santo Domingo*, 225–230.

⁵⁵Nevins, *Fish*, 260, 266.

profits could provide a better life than a fifty-acre farm in New York or New England. She still expected the “matchless panorama” of Samaná Bay and the trade of the Dominican Republic to fall under American dominance, and she argued that Seward’s mistake had been to try to lease Samaná Bay rather than establish it as a free port. The book was also more liberal on the race issue than her earlier writings. She praised a free black colony already established near Samaná by ex-Virginia slaves. Jane admitted that she had been wrong in once believing that white labor could not cultivate the tropics and that whites and free blacks could not live together harmoniously.⁵⁶ Jane was widowed in 1876 and died in 1878, the victim of a steamship disaster at sea.⁵⁷

With her death, the diplomatic scene lost a unique figure. Jane Cazneau was hardly a harbinger of the modern women’s liberation movement. She commented in *Eagle Pass*, probably in reference to the groundbreaking Seneca Falls conference in July 1848, that women’s rights conventions in the United States would accomplish more by protesting peonage in Mexico than by agitating for the vote.⁵⁸ Yet she represented a remarkable departure from established norms for feminine behavior in her day. She never doubted her right to participate in diplomatic affairs and journalism; as a result, she accomplished something beyond the expectations or even the consciousness of most women of the period. A lobbyist rather than an idealist or revolutionary, she nonetheless made her mark in political and diplomatic circles. Certainly the British minister to the United States sensed that her input into the formulation of U.S. Caribbean policy was probably as significant as her husband’s. In October 1854, Lord John Crampton reported to the British foreign office that:

... the selection of the Plenipotentiary employed by the American Government in the matter was not calculated to calm any apprehension which might now be felt by the Spanish Government, for General

⁵⁶Cazneau, *Our Winter Eden*, 5–7, 55, 59–65, 107–108, 127–130.

⁵⁷Wallace, *Destiny and Glory*, 274–275. Wallace also mentions that after their Dominican estate was destroyed, the Cazneaus fled to Jamaica, settling for a short while near Kingston.

⁵⁸Montgomery, *Eagle Pass*, 59.

Cazneau's views were well known, and those of his Lady, by whom he was accompanied, were notoriously in favor of the annexation by any means of Cuba to the United States.⁵⁹

Her presence, her self-confidence, and, above all, her pen made her a force to be reckoned with. Like most effective lobbyists, she tried to shape the public mind and to contact governmental figures who could do the most to aid the special interests she represented.

Most of the expansionist causes that Jane and William Cazneau championed ultimately failed. Yet much can be learned about changing U.S. attitudes and policies toward the Caribbean area by studying their writings and activities. The romantic mystique of the tropics that pervaded the American mind permeates Jane's printed narratives. Their policy positions also reflected how concepts of "informal empire" emerged from the mix of sectionalism and "manifest destiny" during the Civil War period. Jane Cazneau's early efforts to reconcile northern and southern attitudes toward territorial expansion mirrored the aspirations of nationalistic Democrats of all sections who were laboring to salvage the American dream from the arena of sectional combat. As sectional strife over the territories mounted in the 1850s, it became evident that such hopes were illusory. Beneficial trade relations and economic opportunity now seemed more significant to many Americans than unrealizable efforts at annexation. Secretary of State Marcy expressed the new reality in 1853 when he told William Cazneau that "a free commercial intercourse between the Dominican Republic and the United States" was the "principal object" behind the Pierce administration's decision to send him on his mission.⁶⁰ Jane Cazneau and her husband William, spurred in part by their own speculations, refined this new orientation into a Whiggish plan for commercial expansion. It is no accident that their outlook was compatible with that of Secretary of State William Seward, a former leader of the Whig party. They did not live to see the American commercial

⁵⁹Quoted in Tansill, *United States and Santo Domingo*, 192–193.

⁶⁰William Marcy to William Cazneau, Nov. 2, 1853, R. G. 59, Diplomatic Instructions, Special Missions.

empire for which they had strived. That development awaited the early twentieth century, when the United States would play an activist role in the Gulf-Caribbean region, and even intervene militarily in a number of countries. Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic—the four countries with which the Cazneaus had been concerned—all experienced the presence of American armed forces and U.S. efforts to influence their economic destinies. The Cazneaus, and other lobbyists with similar views, helped articulate the ideological foundations for later interventionism.