

J. J. BRUNER,
EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

Letter from Gen. Walker to President
 Buchanan.

Washington, January 4.

Sir:—On the 15th of June, last, I had the honor to address you a letter relating the manner in which I emigrated from California to Nicaragua, the events which followed my presence in Central America, and the unjust and illegal acts by which I was forced for a time to abandon my adopted country.

In that letter I stated facts which I defend my enemies in controversy; and I then urged your Excellency would take steps for the punishment of the grievous offenses against right, justice and public law, committed by United States officers, in the seizure of a Nicaraguan vessel in a Nicaraguan port. Commander Davis has however, gone unrebuted, so far as I am informed, for his violation of international law, and of the Constitution of the U. States; and it grieves me to say that I am again obliged to apprise you with a complaint against another and yet higher officer of the United States Navy.

In approaching you as a sufficient for justice, I know that it is necessary for me to remove erroneous impressions which have been made on your mind concerning my conduct in connection with Nicaraguan affairs. Corrupt and malignant persons have surrounded your Excellency, and poured into your ears false stories concerning events in Central America.

And now, to you, the President of the United States, I directly charge, and stand ready to prove what I say, that your officers of the Navy, not only by irresponsible statements through the press, but also in official communications, have misrepresented facts and falsified events. Feeling and believing as I do, that you would not willingly wrong any individual, no matter how humble, I am satisfied that the summary judgment you pass on my conduct in your Annual Message to Congress, is the result of incorrect information; and I trust and confidently expect, that when the truth is placed before you, your judgment will acquit me of the grave charges brought against me.

Permit me, then, if you please, before I proceed to call your attention to the conduct of Commodore Paulding, to do my most unequivocally that I have ever been engaged at any time or in any manner with any unlawful expectation against Nicaragua. In your message to Congress you seem to imply that my first departure from San Francisco was illegal; for you say: "when it was first rendered probable that an attempt would be made to get up another unlawful expedition against Nicaragua." With all deference I beg leave to repeat what I said in a previous letter and to again inform you that I left San Francisco in May 1855, with the sanction and approval of the Federal officers of the port, and that the Captain of the revenue cutter sent his sailors to bind the sails which carried us from California to Central America. Allow me, also, to suggest that the Government of the United States recognized and legalized the immediate results of the emigration from California, in the reception of Padre Vigil as Minister from the Republic of Nicaragua. Not only this, but it was the first expedition, as it has been called, to Nicaragua entirely lawful in its origin, but all its consequences were marked by strict justice. Some have told you, I know, that I am a man "without faith and without money," but from the beginning to the end of my career in Nicaragua, I challenge the world to produce a single violation of public faith—a single deviation from the great principles of public right and public justice. On the contrary, the Americans in Nicaragua have always maintained the faith and honor of their race, in the midst of falsehood and treachery on the part of their enemies—in the face of countless hosts arrayed against them—no less than in the presence of famine and of pestilence.—Our conduct in the midst of trials and of dangers is sufficient answer to the epithets which have been hurled against us; and when the passions and prejudices of the present have died away we calmly await the judgment of posterity on our conduct.

But an officer of the United States Navy forced us to become exiles from Nicaragua; and let me remind you of the fact that from the moment we touched our native soil, we protested against the illegality and injustice of the act, and declared our intention to return to the land whence we had been wrongfully brought. Everywhere—before the functionaries of the Government—in the presence of assembled multitudes of the sovereign people—we declared that no effort should be used in order to regain the rights wrested from us by fraud and illegality. Do you suppose that if we had been conscious of any violation of law, we would thus have proclaimed our objects and intentions? Is it the habit of offenders against public right, or of conspirators against public justice, to herald their acts on the corners of the streets, and publish their wrong-doings in the market place?

Would we have violated the public conscience of this nation by calling on the people to disregard their own enacted statutes? No, Mr. President; let all your District Attorneys exhaust their energy and their ingenuity—let them attempt to pervert the law to purposes for which it never was intended—they cannot make good the charges which have been made against us.

Once the District Attorney attempted to convict me of a breach of the neutrality laws; but a jury of the country rendered a verdict of "not guilty," almost without leaving the bar. Again a like effort would be crowned with a like result.

After long and much patient endurance, we at length sailed from Mobile for San Juan de Nicaragua, on the 14th day of November last. The vessel in which we sailed was regularly cleared by the collector of the port, and a special inspector was sent aboard to examine the cargo and the passengers. Our rights, too, as Nicaraguans were acknowledged, for the collector refused to clear the *Fayoum* with Capt. Fayoum commanding, on the ground that he was a citizen of the United States.

With a regular register and clearance, we supposed when once on the high seas we were beyond the possible interference; all the epithets their mortal indignations

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of any United States authority; for even if we were admitted belligerents against a power with which the United States was at peace, the owners of the neutral vessel had clear right to carry warlike persons as well as contraband of war, subject only to the risk of capture by the enemy's cruisers. We did not for a moment imagine that naval officers would undertake to place restraints on American commerce in the absence of Federal law and of Congressional authority. The deference, too, we know your Excellency has for the Constitution of the U. States precluded the supposition that any orders had been issued to detain or capture an American vessel whose papers showed she was engaged in a lawful voyage.

Satisfied as we were of the entire legality of our voyage, we did not hesitate to enter the port of San Juan de Nicaragua, although we knew a U. S. steamer of war was present in the harbor. But we had scarcely landed before we were subjected to a series of illegal and insulting acts of the commander of the Saratoga. These acts have been detailed in two letters addressed by me to Com. Paulding, and now on file, I presume, in the Navy Department.

While we were being embarrassed by the action of the Saratoga we had not been idle. Col. Anderson, who had served his native country throughout the Mexican war, at the head of fifty men had ascended the river and gained possession of the stronghold—which in the last century had for days defied the guns of the proudest naval name in British annals. Not only this, but he had regained possession of valuable American property, unlawfully held by Costa Rican soldiers, and I had given the order to restore it to the agent claiming it for the owners. Permit me to ask whether it is such acts as these which authorize our naval officers to apply to us the violent epithets of the language?

Scarcely, however, had the possession of Castillo Viejo opened to us the way to Lake Nicaragua, and to the regaining of all we had lost by Capt. Davis' interference, than a most grievous wrong was again inflicted on us by Com. Paulding. On the 8th of December, the latter officer summoned me to surrender to him, and the Nicaraguan flag was a second time hauled down on Nicaraguan soil by the orders of the U. S. Navy.

It would be superfluous, sir, for me to say that the act of Capt. Paulding was without warrant of law. Much, too, as we felt the wrong, it was not the act itself, as much as the manner in which it was done, that cut us to the quick. We knew that the act was in violation of the sacred charter—the Constitution of the United States. We know that an authority higher than that of any Commodore—higher even than the President of the United States—would vindicate the sanctity of violated law and punish the offenders against the American Constitution. We felt, too, that the anguish and most potent sovereign—the people of the United States—would render justice for the injuries sustained. But far more grievous than the surrender—far more galling than to see our own flag lowered on our own soil—it was to be told that we were there to the disonor of the U. States. There were men on that sandy beach. Mr. President, who had carried your flag aloft amidst the thickest of the fire, and one had been promoted by a predecessor in your office for first planting your colors upon the heights of Corinto. Others among them had led your soldiers across the continent and always in the path of duty and of honor. For such men to be told that they disgraced the country they once had served so nobly and so well, was a pang sharper than that of death, and might have wrung a tear from man harder and more callous than he who inflicted the irreparable injury.

I need not tell you that I was unable to anticipate the act of Captain Paulding. Military necessity required me to hold Potosi Arenas, and the idea never entered my mind that an American officer, professing to execute the law, would so far forget his duty as to infringe, not only well established international law, but also the requirements of that instrument with which are involved the best hopes of mankind—the Constitution of the U. States. Even could I have foreseen the action of Captain Paulding, military reasons would have prevented me from leaving the Point—but it was impossible to imagine that so violent a step—marked as it was in its details by conduct worthy of soldiers in the sack of a town—would have been taken by an officer of the U. S. Navy. And, Mr. President, in the name of the official oath which you have taken, in the presence of Almighty God, I call upon you to punish the offender, and to right the wrong. I presume not to direct your wisdom in the course it shall pursue; but, in the name of the men whose rights your officers have infringed, and whose honor has been most harshly and heedlessly trampled in the dust, I call for the justice it is your high prerogative to bestow.

But permit me to conclude by adding that in all events and under all circumstances, there are duties and responsibilities from which I and the officers and men I represent will not, dare not shrink. No extreme of illegal interference—no amount of hard words or unjust epithets—can deter us from following the path which is before us. The functionaries of the Government may exhort upon me the expletives of the language—they may insult the public conscience and degrade their own characters by applying to us

angust; but, conscious of the right and justice of our cause, we shall not relax our efforts nor be driven into a violation of the law. As long as there is a Central American exiled from his native land and deprived of his property and civil rights, for the services he rendered us, in evil as well as good report, so long shall our time and our energies be devoted to the work of their restoration. As long as the bones of our companions in arms, murdered under a barbarous decree of the Costa Rican Government, lie bleaching and unburied on the hill sides of Nicaragua, so long shall our brains contrive and our hands labor for the justice which one day we will surely obtain.

Permit your officers, if you can, to trample under foot the Constitution and the laws; pass unnoticed, if you will, the most violent invasions of individual rights and public duties; treat with scorn and contempt, if you choose, the demands for justice which we humbly, deferentially place at your feet—we will not be cast down or dismayed. We fight for the rights of our race, which have been denied us by an ungrateful and degraded aristocracy. We strive to retain assimilated the device some of our ancestors have borne on many a field—"none shall wound us with impunity." And so long as our faith in right endures good—our confidence in the God of our fathers remains unshaken—so long shall we use all just and proper means to regain what has been wrongfully wrested from us. I have the honor to remain, with high respect, your obedient servant.

WILLIAM WALKER.

His Excellency, the President of the United States.

Look at Home.

There are many evils and wrongs at our own door, which, despite all our philanthropy and charity as a nation, we are apt to overlook in our laudable anxiety to remove those at a distance. Suffering and oppression are going on beneath our eyes, unknown to us or unheeded by us, at the very moment that our vision is stretched away to the Sandwich Islanders or the negroes of Alabama. And as with us, so is it with all other civilized nations. Humanity is too apt, in its eagerness to stretch forth relief to all the world, to forget that the most landable and most useful charity is that which begins at home.

Reading, a few weeks since, one of Dr. Quigley's papers—"Three Memorials Murders"—recalled to my mind the strange circumstances of one of the most mysterious domestic dramas that ever taxed the ingenuity of man, or required the flight of time to develop.

The locality of our story lies amid one of the wildest and most picturesque regions of the Old Dominion, where the head waters of the Rappahannock wash the base of the Blue Ridge.

The precise spot—Crossin's—was a sublime and beautiful scene, where two forest-crowned ranges of mountains cross each other at oblique angles.

At the intersecting point of these ridges lies a little hamlet, named, from its elevated position, Altamont.

At the period at which our story opens the four estates, in the four angles of the irregular mountain cross, were owned as follows:

The eastern farm, called Piedmont, was the property of Madame Anderly, a Virginian lady of the old school.

The western and most valuable estate was the inheritance of Honora Paul, an orphan heiress; grand-daughter and ward of Madame Anderly.

The northern and smallest one, called from the deepest vale of the four—Haw's Hole—was the property of old Hugh Hawe, a widower of gloomy temper, parsimonious habits, and almost infamous wealth.

The southern farm—nursed from the extravagant cost of the elegant mansion-house, elaborate out-buildings, and highly ornamented grounds, which had absorbed the means of the late owner, "Farquhar's Folly"—was the heavily mortgaged patrimony of Godfrey Farquhar Dulane, the grand-son of Hugh Hawe, and a young aspirant for legal honors at the University of Virginia.

But little benefit to the heir was to be hoped from the inheritance of his father's birthright property. In the first place, old Hugh Hawe had bought up in his own name all the claims against the estate of Farquhar's Folly—doubtless to prevent a foreclosure, and to save the property for his grand-son.

But, unshapely Godfrey had mortally offended the despoiled old man by declining an agricultural life, and persisting in the study of a profession—a course that had resulted in his own disinheritance.

To make this punishment more bitter to his grandfather, the old man had taken into his favor, Dr. Henry Hawe, whom he had established near himself at Farquhar's Folly.

At this time, the disheveled hair, having finished a term at the University, had come down to spend a part of his vacation in his native place.

It was upon the Saturday evening of his arrival that he found the little hotel, and, indeed, the whole village of Altamont, in a great state

of excitement from the fact that the celebrated

heiress, Miss Honora Paul, had just stopped there, and passed through on her way home.

Those who had been so happy as to catch a glimpse of her face, and with each other in praise of her many charms, while those who had not, listened with eagerness, and looked forward to indemnifying themselves by seeing her at church the next morning.

The next day, Godfrey Dulane attended church where he saw and fell in love with the most beautiful and intellectual-looking girl he had ever beheld. From the disappearance and vicinity of her attire, he supposed her to be some

poor dependent of Madame Anderly's whose

name she sat.

Godfrey was completely captivated;

and he resolved at once to win, and, if possible, win the lottery being for his wife, poor girl though she was. He was glad she was poor because she could for that reason be more easily won." But on accompanying Mr. Willoughby, the clergyman, and his brother-in-law, Rev. Mr. Hause, home after church, what was his amazement and dismay at being introduced to the supposed "poor girl," whom he was to win, to no other than the celebrated Miss Honora Paul, the greatest heiress and belle, as well as the best and noblest girl, in the State of Virginia. She greeted him cordially, and in a few minutes the company were busily engaged in conversation. The topic of "capital punishment," having been started, Godfrey turned to Honora, the young girl, and his brother-in-law, Rev. 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