

native of the disaffected district of Puerto Principe. Hence the interest with which Spain watched affairs in Nicaragua.

On the 1st of September, a mass for the repose of the soul of Lopez was celebrated in the parish church at Granada, and the day was in other respects observed by the Cubans in the service. The ardent minds of these southern youths dreamed, however, more of the future than they meditated the past; they thought more of the time when they should sail for the island to avenge the death of Lopez and his followers, than of the dark and painful scenes which attended their execution. And it is this reluctance of the southern imagination to dwell on the gloomy side of affairs which fits its possessors less for the real work of revolution, than the robust children of the North, whose fancies do not fly from the grave and its surroundings.

Chapter Eighth.

THE WALKER ADMINISTRATION.

THE policy of the Walker government was, of course, the same as that of Rivas, so far as the introduction of the white race into Nicaragua was concerned. But the administration of Rivas was, from its nature, transitional. It sought to increase the American element without inquiring what place the new people were to occupy in the old society. Rivas and his cabinet felt that Nicaraguan society required reorganization, but they knew not how it was to be accomplished, nor would they have adopted the means necessary for the end even if the proper measures had been pointed out to them. Hence, when the reorganization, not merely of the State, but of the family and of labor, became necessary, another executive than Rivas was not a matter of choice. Not merely the secondary form of the crystal was to be modified, but the primary form was to be radically changed, and for this a new force was to be brought into play. It may be that the reorganization in Nicaragua was attempted too soon; but those who have read the foregoing pages may judge whether or not the Americans were

driven forward by the force of events. Sooner or later the struggle between the old and the new forms of society must inevitably have occurred.

The difference of language between the members of the old society and that portion of the white race, necessarily dominant in the new, while it was a cause keeping the elements apart, afforded also a means of regulating the relations between the several races meeting on the same soil. In order that the laws of the Republic might be thoroughly published, it was decreed that they should be published in English as well as in Spanish. The reason of this was apparent to every one; but the object of another clause in the same decree, "That all documents connected with public affairs shall be of equal value whether written in English or Spanish," was not noticed except by the careful observer. By this clause the proceedings of all the courts, and the record of all the deeds in the State, might be made in English. It was not necessary to decree that all such records should be in English—the mere permission was sufficient to accomplish the object. Lawyers will readily see what an advantage such a clause gave to those speaking both English and Spanish, over those acquainted only with the latter language.

The decree concerning the use of the two languages tended to make the ownership of the lands of the State fall into the hands of those speaking English. But in addition to this, a decree was published declaring the property of all enemies of the State forfeited to the Republic, and a Board of Commissioners was named "to take possession of, direct, determine upon, and sell all

such confiscated or forfeited properties." The Board was given the ordinary power of courts for citation, for examining witnesses, and for enforcing obedience to its orders. All property declared confiscated was to be sold soon after the rendition of the judgment, and military scrip was to be received in payment at the sale of such property, thus giving those who had been in the military service of the State an opportunity to secure their pay out of the estates of the persons engaged in the war against them.

The land titles in Nicaragua were in a very unsettled condition, and the same system prevailed there as in other Spanish American States. The limits of grants were indeterminate, and there was, of course, no registry law. Accordingly, in order to fix the number of outstanding grants from the Republic, a decree was published requiring all claims to land to be recorded within six months, and it was further decreed that after a certain date no conveyance or mortgage should be valid against third parties, unless duly recorded in the district where the land lay. This was a substitution of the English and American system for the rules of the Roman and Continental law. The recording of titles is undoubtedly for the public advantage, and those possessed of good titles to land in Nicaragua would in virtue of this decree have held their possessions by a tenure more certain than ever. But the system was fatal to the bad or uncertain titles. It also gave an advantage to those familiar with the habit of registry.

The general tendency of these several decrees was the same; they were intended to place a large proportion of

the land of the country in the hands of the white race. The military force of the State might, for a time, secure the Americans in the government of the Republic, but in order that their possession of government might be permanent, it was requisite for them to hold the land. But the natives who had held the lands for more than a generation admitted that the cultivated fields had diminished in number and extent every year since the independence, for the want of a proper system of labor; hence, according to the admission of all parties, the reorganization of labor was necessary for the development of the resources of the country.

In order to command the labor already in the country a decree was issued for enforcing contracts for terms of service. A stringent decree against vagrants was also published, and this was a measure of military caution as well as of political economy. When Martinez set about recruiting in Matagalpa the men scattered on the farms of Chontales and Los Llaños repaired to Granada in order to escape the press-gang. But these men had nearly all been in the employ of Legitimist masters, and when gathered in the city there was danger of their being used for bad purposes. Few of them had any visible means of livelihood, and hence most would have come under the provision of the decree concerning vagrants. As they had little disposition for work they soon disappeared after the publication of the decree, and thus a population which at the time might have proved dangerous around Granada was got rid of.

The decree of the 22d of September was, however, the measure from which most was to be expected for organi-

zing the labor of the country. This was the act around which the whole policy of the administration revolved; and as it has been much criticised it may be well to give the decree entire. It reads:

"Inasmuch as the Constituent Assembly of the Republic, on the 30th day of April, 1838, declared the State, free, sovereign, and independent, dissolving the compact which the Federal Constitution established between Nicaragua and the other States of Central America:

"Inasmuch as since that date, Nicaragua has been in fact free from the obligations the Federal Constitution imposed:

"Inasmuch as the Act of the Constituent Assembly, decreed on the 30th of April, 1838, provides, that the federal decrees given previous to that date shall remain in force unless contrary to the provisions of that act:

"Inasmuch as many of the decrees theretofore given are unsuited to the present condition of the Republic, and are repugnant to its welfare and prosperity as well as to its territorial integrity: Therefore it is

"DECREED:

"ARTICLE 1. All acts and decrees of the Federal Constituent Assembly, as well as of the Federal Congress, are declared null and void.

"ARTICLE 2. Nothing herein contained shall affect rights heretofore vested under the acts and decrees hereby repealed."

One of the earliest acts of the Federal Constituent Assembly was the abolition of slavery in Central America; and as this, among other acts, was repealed by the decree of the 22d of September, it was generally sup-

posed the latter re-established slavery in Nicaragua. Whether this be a strictly legal deduction may be doubted; but the repeal of the prohibition clearly prepared the way for the introduction of slavery. The spirit and intention of the decree were apparent; nor did its author affect to conceal his object in its publication. By this act must the Walker administration be judged; for it is the key to its whole policy. In fact the wisdom or folly of this decree involves the wisdom or folly of the American movement in Nicaragua; for on the re-establishment of African slavery there depended the permanent presence of the white race in that region. If the slavery decree, as it has been called, was unwise, Cabañas and Jerez were right when they sought to use the Americans for the mere purpose of raising one native faction and depressing another. Without such labor as the new decree gave the Americans could have played no other part in Central America than that of the pretorian guard at Rome or of the Janizaries of the East; and for such degrading service as this they were ill suited by the habits and traditions of their race.

The difference between the colonial system of the English and Spanish Crowns explains the different results of the English and Spanish settlements in America. The colonies of Great Britain founded their own forms of society; they made for themselves all the rules and regulations their new situation required, and hence they built firmly the foundation of a peculiar and original civilization. Their institutions sprang from their necessities, and were hence adapted to the climate and the soil they found on the new continent. But it was far

otherwise with the Spanish possessions. The laws of the Indies were decreed by the Crown; and the regulations, sometimes for good but oftener for evil, were the result of monarchical will. In the case of Cuba the resolution of Isabella was swayed by the counsels of the benevolent Las Casas; and Spain owes her possession of the island at the present moment to the wise philanthropy of the simple-hearted priest. Negro-slavery is, without doubt, the cause of the present prosperity of the island as well as of its continued colonial government; and Cuba offers a fine contrast to Jamaica and St. Domingo; and displays to advantage the superior wisdom of Spain when compared with the false humanity of France and England. On the continent, however, Spain was not so fortunate as on the ever-faithful isle. Her conquest of force was there followed by no radical and permanent change in political organization. She carried thither the Roman law; but it did not inform the new society or breathe a fresh spirit into its institutions. The only real changes in Mexico and Peru, for example, were wrought by the church. The pagans of the continent were converted to Christianity and the mission fathers reclaimed the wild tribes from their savageism, teaching them agriculture and the rudimentary arts of life. Beyond the protection the Crown afforded the church in its labors for the re-construction of society, the Spanish government did little for its vast continental possessions. Slavery on the continent was not more than what the physiologists call a "trace;" and it soon yielded to the passions which followed the independence of the colonies.

The men who framed the Constitution of the United

States were not beyond the control of the influences which in France led to the horrors of Hayti and in England to the miseries of Jamaica. The wits and philosophers of the constitutional convention—the strong reason of Franklin and the brilliant genius of Hamilton, as well as the lofty soul of Washington—were not unaffected by the errors of the French reformers of the period. The mad rhapsodies of Rousseau, the sharp keen sarcasm of Voltaire, had infected the readers of that time with a sort of hydrophobia—a mortal aversion to the word *slavery*. Hamilton and Washington, though struggling against French notions, were still under the influence to some extent of the Genevese ravings about equality and fraternity. Mr. Jefferson not only yielded to the French fashions of thought and feeling, but actually cherished them as if they were the fruits of reason and philosophy. While such causes operated on the American leaders of the time, the people of the period were tainted with the notions of the English Buxton and Clarkson. The dissenters of Great Britain infused their opinions about the slave-trade into their religious brethren in America; and thus, by the union of French philosophy with English humanitarianism, the constitution of 1787 was burdened with clauses of which the evil effect is now constantly felt by the slaveholding communities of the United States.

If the strong, broad minds of the constitutional convention of 1787 were not able to resist entirely the opinions prevalent in France and England concerning slavery, how much less were the poor, imitative creatures Spanish policy left to her American colonies after their inde-

pendence able to withstand the prejudices of the European world. Spain had, in fact, left them with too little slavery to preserve their social order. Instead of maintaining the purity of the races as did the English in their settlements, the Spaniards had cursed their continental possessions with a mixed race. Hence it would have been little less than a miracle if the Spanish American States had at the moment of independence decided to retain slavery in their midst. It is only of late years that the really beneficial and conservative character of negro-slavery has begun to be appreciated in the United States.

For a long time it was the fashion, and with many it still is, to regard the Northern States of the Federal Union as the conservative element of American society. It is true that the Northern States are the conservative element of the federal government; because the Union is nearly altogether the creature of their will and of their interests. Therefore, on all occasions they have sought to strengthen the federal power through tariffs and banks and large schemes of internal improvement. But such conservatism as this does not touch the organic structure of society; it merely determines its external form and appearance. The conservatism of slavery is deeper than this; it goes to the vital relations of capital toward labor, and by the firm footing it gives the former it enables the intellect of society to push boldly forward in the pursuit of new forms of civilization. At present it is the struggle of free labor with slave labor which prevents the energies of the former from being directed against the capital of the North

through the ingenious machinery of the ballot box and universal suffrage; and it is difficult to conceive how capital can be secured from the attacks of the majority in a pure democracy unless with the aid of a force which gets its strength from slave labor.

The Spanish American States, after their independence, aimed to establish Republics without slavery; and the history of forty years of disorder and public crime is fertile in lessons for him who hath eyes to see and ears to hear. Carried away by his imagination, or rather by his sensibilities, Mr. Clay pleaded the cause of Spanish American independence, and anticipated good government as the result of the movement. The policy he urged was undoubtedly wise both for the United States and for England, inasmuch as it opened the old Spanish colonies to other commercial nations. But the effects of independence have not been beneficial on the people of the colonies themselves. Spain gave order, at least, to the possessions she held in the New World; and order, attended as it was by exaction, sometimes even by extortion, was better than the anarchy of so-called Republican rule. In Nicaragua whole tracts which were cultivated under the Spanish dominion have gone to waste since the independence; and the indigo of the Isthmus, which even ten years ago was a valuable article of export, has disappeared almost entirely from trade.

If Spain, then, failed to leave her colonies with the internal force or the system capable of re-organizing their independent society, the plan immediately suggests itself of applying to them the rules which have constructed a firm and harmonious civilization where

the Anglo-American has found himself on the same soil with one of the colored races. The introduction of negro-slavery into Nicaragua would furnish a supply of constant and reliable labor requisite for the cultivation of tropical products. With the negro-slave as his companion, the white man would become fixed to the soil; and they together would destroy the power of the mixed race which is the bane of the country. The pure Indian would readily fall into the new social organization; for he does not aim at political power, and only asks to be protected in the fruits of his industry. The Indian of Nicaragua, in his fidelity and docility, as well as in his capacity for labor, approaches nearly the negroes of the United States; and he would readily assume the manners and habits of the latter. In fact the manners of the Indian toward the ruling race are now more submissive than those of the American negro toward his master.

Some, however, may urge that the climate of tropical America is unfavorable to the African negro. This idea has been set afloat by some statistics a British officer has published in reference to the comparative vitality of the European and negro regiments in Jamaica. The figures, as given, go to show, that the average mortality is greater among the negro than among the European regiments; and even Dr. Josiah C. Nott has been led to quote the statistics with approval, and to infer that tropical America is not suited to the African. But the figures of the British officer may be read in another sense, and probably with a nearer approach to natural laws. It is not the climate, but the profession of soldier, which

destroys so rapidly the negro regiments of Jamaica. No avocation of life requires so much intelligence, so much knowledge of the laws of life, and so much resolution and self-denial in adhering to them, as that of the soldier. The great difference between a veteran and a raw recruit is, that one knows how to take care of himself, and the other does not. But you never can make a veteran of the negro; he remains always in the condition of recruit, and hence negro regiments will have the health and vitality of regiments of recruits. No one, who has seen the negro in tropical America, will, for a moment, allow the accuracy of the deduction, hastily drawn from the regimental returns of Jamaica.

In Nicaragua the negro seems to be in his natural climate. The blacks who have gone thither from Jamaica are healthy, strong and capable of severe labor. They were much employed by the Accessory Transit Company on the San Juan river and at Virgin Bay; and even on the bungos of the lake and river, they bore the toil and exposure to the sun as well as the natives of the country. In fact, the negro blood seems to assert its superiority over the indigenous Indian of Nicaragua. Some of the negro and mulatto officers in the Legitimist army were remarkable among their fellows for courage and energy, though with these qualities were generally joined cruelty and ferocity.

The advantage of negro slavery in Nicaragua would, therefore, be two-fold; while it would furnish certain labor for the use of agriculture, it would tend to separate the races and destroy the half-castes who cause the disorder, which has prevailed in the country since the inde-

pendence. But there are many who, while admitting the advantage of slavery to Nicaragua, think it was impolitic to have attempted its re-establishment at the time the decree of the 22d of September was published. This brings us to consider the decree in its relation with the question of slavery in the United States.

At the time the decree was published it was clear that the Americans in Nicaragua would be called on to defend themselves against the forces of four Allied States. Their cause was right and just, but it then appeared to touch themselves only. Up to that time there was no American interest in the country, save that of the army and of the Transit Company; hence it was expedient by some positive act to bind to the cause for which the naturalized Nicaraguans were contending some strong and powerful interest in the United States. The decree, re-establishing slavery while it declared the manner in which the Americans proposed to regenerate Nicaraguan society made them the champions of the Southern States of the Union in the conflict truly styled "irrepressible" between free and slave labor. The policy of the act consisted in pointing out to the Southern States the only means, short of revolution, whereby they can preserve their present social organization.

In 1856, the South began to perceive that all territory hereafter acquired by the federal government, would necessarily enure to the use and benefit of free labor. The immigrant from the free labor States moves easily and readily into the new territories; and the surplus of population being greater at the North than at the South, the majority in any new territory would certainly be

from the anti-slavery region. Besides this, the South has no surplus labor to send westward or southward. On the contrary the Gulf States are crying out for more negroes; and the uneasiness of Southern society results from the superabundance of its intellect and capital in proportion to its rude labor. It is impossible, in the present condition of affairs, for the South to get the labor it lacks; and the only means of restoring the balance to its industry is to send its unemployed intellect to a field where no political obstacles prevent it from getting the labor it requires.

There are, however, some people in the Southern States who condemn every effort to extend slavery, because they say, it irritates the anti-slavery sentiment, and thus feeds and strengthens hostility to Southern society. With them, the great cure for abolitionism, is rest and inaction on the part of slaveholders. But such are the shallowest of thinkers. It is impossible to keep down the discussion of the slavery question in the United States. The question is one which touches the whole labor of the country, and involves the vital relations of capital with labor.* And this is the question which in all ages, and in all countries, has divided states and societies. Hence it is idle to speak of the question being settled; from the nature of things the contest be-

* It may be proper to say that these passages were written before Mr. Seward delivered in the Senate, his masterly speech of the 29th February, 1860. However much a person may differ from the Senator's views, it is impossible not to approve the force and vigor of his thoughts and language. The writer deems it a great error, on the part of Southern men, to attempt to belittle the intellect, or depreciate the motives of the leaders of the anti-slavery party. The higher their intellects, the purer their motives, the more dangerous are they to the South.

tween free and slave labor is "never ending, still beginning."

In September, 1856, the canvass for the presidency was developing the passions and the prejudices of the several sections of the Union; and one of the great parties of the country, in convention assembled, had declared its sympathy and pledged its support to the efforts then being made to regenerate Central America. These promises and pledges were made by the party which relied on the slave States for its success, and it should have looked with favor on a measure which tended to strengthen slavery in the Southern States. But the manner in which the free labor democracy of the North received the decree re-establishing slavery in Nicaragua, is a proof of the hollowness of its professions of friendship for Southern interests. There was scarcely a voice raised in defence of the measure north of the Potomac; though the free-labor States may find, when it is too late, that the only way to avoid revolution, and a conflict of force between the Northern and Southern States of the Union, is by the very policy Nicaragua proposed to establish.

It is true the author of the slavery decree was not aware, at the time it was published, of the strong and universal feeling which exists in the Northern States against Southern society. He did not know how thoroughly anti-slavery sentiments prevail in the free-labor States; that they are taught in the schools, preached from the pulpit, and instilled by mothers into the minds of their children from infancy upward. But the knowledge of such a state of feeling would have made the publication of the decree a matter of sacred duty no

less than of policy. To avert the invasion which threatens the South, it is necessary for her to break through the barriers which now surround her on every side, and carry the war between the two forms of labor beyond her own limits. A beleaguered force, with no ally outside, must yield to famine at last, unless it can make a sally and burst through the enemy which confines it.

While the slavery decree was calculated to bind the Southern States to Nicaragua, as if she were one of themselves, it was also a disavowal of any desire for annexation to the Federal Union. And it was important, in every respect, to make it appear that the American movement in Nicaragua did not contemplate annexation. This idea constantly haunted the minds of the public men of the Union, little accustomed to regard political questions except from party points of view. It disturbed the mind of Mr. Pierce, when he wrote his message at the reception of Father Vigil; it worried Mr. Marcy, when he contemplated the future fate of the democratic party. And it was, without doubt, the uncertainty the Secretary of State felt in regard to the effect the Nicaraguan movement might have on party action in the United States which prompted him to frown on the enterprise from the beginning. Mr. Marcy was an old man, ambitious of yet higher station than he had held under the federal government; and his long experience enabled him to calculate with nice accuracy the weight of old party issues in conventions and popular elections. But here was a new element about to be thrown into the politics of the Union; and to the distrust of new things com-

mon to age, was added the inability of the Secretary to estimate precisely the force and direction of the Nicaraguan movement. To show the spirit of Mr. Marcy, it is only necessary to state when the decree repealing the acts of the Federal Constituent Assembly and Federal Congress was published in Nicaragua, Mr. Wheeler advised his government of the fact, and merely remarked that he thought it a measure of advantage for the Isthmus. The despatch of Mr. Wheeler was, according to excellent authority, discussed in a full meeting of Mr. Pierce's cabinet. Mr. Marcy and Mr. Cushing insisted on the immediate recall of the minister; while Mr. Davis and Mr. Dobbin defended Mr. Wheeler, saying he had done nothing but his duty in advising his government of the decree published in Nicaragua, and of the effect it was likely to produce on the country. The Secretary of State insisted on the dismissal of Mr. Wheeler to the last; and only the day before he left office, he required of the President, as a personal favor, that he should procure the resignation of the minister.

The decree of the 22d of September was intended to destroy the delusion of the public men of the United States as to the desire of Nicaragua for annexation. To a thinking mind it was apparent that to enter the Federal Union would be to defeat the object of the decree; for the federal law prohibits the introduction within the limits of its authority of any persons held to labor for a term of years. Nicaragua could not expect to draw her negro labor from States already complaining of the deficiency of their own supply; and the Southern States would themselves have opposed the annexation of a

territory which might drain from them the labor they so much need. In the heat of party passion, however, such views were not appreciated by the politicians, of whom Mr. Marcy was a type. They were too much absorbed in watching the currents of popular opinion and in distributing the spoils of party warfare, to devote any time to the consideration of the public weal or of a true and just public policy.

So far were the politicians of the Union from perceiving it was Walker's policy by the slavery decree to declare his hostility to annexation, that some of them supposed they had achieved a discovery by the publication of certain letters instructing Goicouria as to the course he should pursue in England. The intendente-general was authorized by Walker to proceed to London in order to impress on the English cabinet the fact that Nicaragua had no desire for admission into the American Union; and it was supposed that he, being a Cuban, might more readily get the ear of the British Ministry on the subject than a native of the United States. The letter of Walker to Goicouria instructed him to explain that the necessities of Nicaragua required "a republic based on military principles," such a republic being clearly unfit for admission into the northern Union. The English would readily perceive that the growth of such a republic toward the southern limits of the United States would tend to restrain the territorial extension of the latter power. Walker conceived that by such a policy he would promote the welfare of his native no less than of his adopted country; for the acquisition by the United States of any territory covered by a Spanish-

American population would be fertile of troubles and dangers to the confederacy, as well as of suffering and oppression to the inhabitants of the new territory. Above all, the acquisition of territory on the south would be fatal to the slaveholding States; for it would complete the circle of free-labor communities now girdling them on almost every side.

In France it would have been easier than in England to make the anti-annexation character of the slavery decree apparent. M. Ange de St. Priest, a savant who has published a large and valuable work on the antiquities of Mexico and Central America, accepted the office of consul-general for Nicaragua at Paris; and it was hoped through him to establish relations with the Imperial government. The steady policy of Napoleon the Third has been to increase the tonnage of France, and thereby to enlarge her facilities for educating sailors. It was hoped that such a treaty might have been made as would lead to the employment of French bottoms for bringing African apprentices to the ports of Nicaragua, thus furnishing labor to the latter republic, and increasing the trade of French ships. The Emperor has himself written a work on the subject of the inter-oceanic canal through Nicaragua; and his familiarity with the country would enable him to perceive the advantages of carrying negro labor thither. Next, too, to the possession of the isthmus by France, he would desire to have the canal route in the hands of a power bound to the empire by strong ties of interest and trade.

In fact it is the decided interest of all the continental powers of Europe, to favor the policy the Americans pro-

posed to pursue in Nicaragua. By this policy they would secure tropical products at a much cheaper price than at present; and Russia, particularly, needs a supply of such articles from a country not under the control or influence of England. Even Great Britain, if she would look beyond the immediate gains of her grasping merchants, might perceive permanent advantages from the security and order negro labor would give to Nicaragua. Now that the Crown has taken the government of India from a trading corporation, it might disdain to be moved by the narrow commercial jealousy which sacrificed Jamaica to the East India Company.

But, it may be said, England will never permit anything which looks like the revival of the African slave-trade. They, however, who watch closely the phases of British politics, know that the influence of Exeter Hall is on the wane. The frenzy of the British public against the slave-trade has exhausted itself, and men have begun to perceive that they were led into error by the benevolent enthusiasm of parsons, who knew more about Greek and Hebrew than they did about physiology or political economy, and of middle-aged spinsters, smit with the love of general humanity, though disdaining to fix their affections firmly on any objects less remote than Africa. All the arguments used by the adversaries of the slave-trade were drawn from its abuses; and the true remedy was, not to abolish but regulate the trade. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it was styled "a commerce for the redemption of African captives;" and if the old name, descriptive as it is of the true character of the trade, were revived, many of the prejudices against the business would be removed.

It was the alliance of a skeptical philosophy with a purblind religious zeal which generated the opinion of Europe in regard to the African slave-trade. Confining their attention to the abuses of the system, the opponents of the trade failed to raise their eyes toward any large views of the subject. If we look at Africa in the light of universal history, we see her for more than five thousand years a mere waif on the waters of the world, fulfilling no part in its destinies, and aiding in no manner the progress of general civilization. Sunk in the depravities of fetichism, and reeking with the blood of human sacrifices, she seemed a satire on man, fit only to provoke the sneer of devils at the wisdom, and justice, and benevolence of the Creator. But America was discovered, and the European found the African a useful auxiliary in subduing the new continent to the uses and purposes of civilization. The white man took the negro from his native wastes, and teaching him the arts of life, bestowed on him the ineffable blessings of a true religion. Then only do the wisdom and excellence of the divine economy in the creation of the black race begin to appear with their full lustre. Africa is permitted to lie idle until America is discovered, in order that she may conduce to the formation of a new society in the New World. A strong, haughty race, bred to liberty in its northern island home, is sent forth with the mission to place America under the rule of free laws; but whence are these men, imbued with love of liberty and equality, to derive the counterpoise which shall prevent their liberty from degenerating into license, and their equality into anarchy or despotism? How are they,

when transplanted from the rugged climate where freedom thrives to retain their precious birthright in the soft, tropical air which woos to luxury and repose? Is it not for this that the African was reserved? And is it not thus that one race secures for itself liberty with order, while it bestows on the other comfort and Christianity?

But man, ever the dupe of his vain desires, always oscillating between the extremes of opinion, and never fixed in the possession of truth, was not content with the place assigned the African in the plan of creation and of Providence. The preachers of the new gospel of equality and fraternity were not satisfied with descanting on the horrors of the middle passage, or of weeping over the miseries of men redeemed from the captivity of savage masters. If the slave-trade be criminal, slavery, which is the cause of it, should be extirpated. Therefore the trial is made on St. Domingo, and the slave, suddenly loosed from the restraints the law had put around him, goes forth to murder and destroy. Then they determine on another experiment more cautiously conducted and more narrowly watched. Slavery is abolished in Jamaica, and forthwith the island goes to waste. The time seems to be approaching when man, guided by a less vain philosophy, will seek truth in some other direction than Haytian massacres or Jamaican impoverishment.

If the views above expressed of the uses of the African in the economy of nature and Providence be correct, slavery is not abnormal to American society. It must be the rule, not the exception. But to keep it so re-

quires effort and labor. The enemies of the only original form of American civilization are many and powerful. They are resolute in their determination not merely to limit but to extirpate slavery. The man who leads the free-labor myriads of the United States—he, whose firm will and far-reaching mind do not quail either at the doctrines or the acts to which his political philosophy logically conducts him, has already declared that he hopes to see the time when the foot of not a slave shall press the continent. Yet the sluggards of slavery say, “a little more rest, a little more folding of the arms to slumber.” Strafford sleeps though the axe of the headsman is whetted for his execution.

The contest between free and slave labor in the United States not only touches the interests and destiny of those immediately engaged in the struggle but it affects the fate of the whole continent. The question involved is whether the civilization of the western world shall be European or American. If free labor prevails in its effort to banish slave labor from the continent, the history of American society becomes a faint reflex of European systems and prejudices, without contributing any new ideas, any new sentiments, or any new institutions, to the mental and moral wealth of the world. The necessary consequence of the triumph of free labor will be the destruction, by a slow and cruel process, of the colored races which now inhabit the central and southern portions of the continent. The labor of the inferior races cannot compete with that of the white race unless you give it a white master to direct its energies; and without such protection as slavery affords, the colored

aces must inevitably succumb in the struggle with white labor. Hence a Nicaraguan can not be an indifferent spectator of the contest between the two forms of labor in the United States; and deeper yet must be his interest in the matter if born and educated in a slave State of the Union, he revolves in his mind the results which will ensue to the home of his childhood, and the firesides of the friends of his youth, in case victory smiles upon the soldiers of free labor. Do not, therefore, men of the South, deem it the voice of a stranger, or of one without a stake in your country's welfare, which urges you to strike a blow in defence of your honor, no less than of your hearths and your families, ere the blast of the enemy's bugle calls upon you to surrender your arms to an overwhelming force.

The tongue of truth and friendship is not that of undue praise or fawning flattery, and the soft songs of the suitor too often woo to danger and destruction. Therefore, be not displeased, sons of the South—for it is to you I now speak—if the criticism on your acts and policy appear harsh or severe; but examine your conduct and that of your public servants for the last three years and see whither it has led you. It is now but little more than three years since you elected the President of your choice, and in your simplicity you thought this success a great victory. What fruits have you reaped from it? Where are the rewards of your campaign? In what triumphs of policy have all your toils and all your efforts ended?

Your President—for he is the work of your hands—went into office pledged to your policy in Kansas and in

Central America. He attempted to deceive you in Kansas, and your leaders drove him to the course he was forced to pursue. Like sheep to the slaughter he and his Northern friends were led to the support of Southern policy in Kansas; but what has resulted from their sacrifice, or from all the efforts the Southern leaders made to drag them to the altar? Was Kansas admitted into the Union? Did you have even the empty pleasure of boasting over a barren victory? The Kansas contest was made, as all admitted, for an abstract right. Your leaders were true to you, because you were true to yourselves, when contending for an "abstract right"; let us see whether you and they were equally faithful to your honor and your interests when contending for a right not abstract.

The President was pledged to your policy in Central America even more explicitly than to your Kansas measures. The resolutions of the Cincinnati Convention on the Central American policy were drawn by no trembling or unsteady hand.* They were not couched in the Delphic sentences behind which timid politicians shrink when they seek the support of their constituents. Clear, distinct, and unmistakable, they could not be read in a dozen senses by the jugglers, who fancy all political wisdom consists in deceiving the people with words which seem other than they are. Have the pledges given at Cincinnati been redeemed? Have those words, so full of meaning and of resolution, taken shape in acts; or have they died into the sobs and sighs

* The resolutions were written by Hon. F. Soule.

and means of a party which aspired to greatness yet dared not its accomplishment?

It needs no new word to tell you how basely the pledges made at Cincinnati have been violated. It was not enough to trample under foot the promises made, in the name of a party, to the country; it was necessary also to disregard all the principles of public law, and to proclaim before the world that the end justified the means. Violated faith excused violated law: and when the message of the President, excusing the acts of Commodore Paulding at Punta Arenas, in December, 1857, was sent to the senate, Mr. Seward might well say, in a double sense, that his Excellency had become a convert to the "higher law" doctrine.

And how did the leaders of the South act in the emergency? It was just at the time the news of Paulding's act at Punta Arenas reached Washington that the adoption of the Lecompton Constitution was ascertained. Then the President besought the men who were driving him on the Kansas question not to press him on the Central American policy, and the Southern leaders, giving up the substance, fled in pursuit of the shadow.* The Lecompton Constitution would not give another foot of soil to slavery, and the movement in Nicaragua might give it an empire; yet the latter was sacrificed to the former, and the insults of Paulding and the President have gone unrebuked by the South up to the present time.

* Hon. A. H. Stephens was among the few public men of the South who clearly perceived the full importance of the Nicaraguan movement.

Is it not time for the South to cease the contest for abstractions and to fight for realities? Of what avail is it to discuss the right to carry slaves into the territories of the Union, if there are none to go thither? These are questions for schoolmen—fit to sharpen the logical faculty and to make the mind quick and keen in the perception of analogies and distinctions; but surely they are not such questions as touch practical life and come home to men's interests and actions. The feelings and conscience of a people are not to be called forth by the subtleties of lawyers or the differences of metaphysicians; nor can their energies be roused into action for the defence of rights none of them care to exercise. The minds of full-grown men cannot be fed on mere discussions of territorial rights: they require some substantial policy which all can understand and appreciate.

Nor is it wise for the weaker party to waste its strength in fighting for shadows. It is only the stronger party which can afford to throw away its force on indecisive skirmishes. At present the South must husband her political power else she will soon lose all she possesses. The same influence she brought to bear in favor of the position she took in Kansas would have secured the establishment of the Americans in Nicaragua. And unless she assumes now an entirely defensive attitude, what else is left for the South except to carry out the policy proposed to her three years ago in Central America? How else can she strengthen slavery than by seeking its extension beyond the limits of the Union? The Republican party aims at destroying slavery by sap and not by assault. It declares now that the task

of confining slavery is complete and the work of the miner has already commenced. Whither can the slaveholder fly when the enemy has completed his chambers and filled in the powder and prepared the train, and stands with lighted match ready to apply the fire?

Time presses. If the South wishes to get her institutions into tropical America she must do so before treaties are made to embarrass her action and hamper her energies. Already there is a treaty between Mexico and Great Britain by which the former agrees to do all in her power for the suppression of the slave-trade, and in 1856 a clause was inserted in the Dallas-Clarendon Convention, stipulating for the perpetual exclusion of slavery from the Bay Islands of Honduras. This clause was suggested (as the writer was informed by the person himself who proposed it) by an American, for the purpose of securing the support of England to a projected railway across Honduras; and thus the rights of American civilization were to be bartered away for the paltry profits of a railroad company. And while Nicaragua was to be hemmed in by an anti-slavery treaty between England and Honduras on the north, Costa Rica made an agreement with New Granada that slavery should never be introduced within her limits. The enemies of American civilization—for such are the enemies of slavery—seem to be more on the alert than its friends.

The faith which Walker had in the intelligence of the Southern States to perceive their true policy and in their resolution to carry it out, was one of the causes which led to the publication of the decree of the 22d of September at the time it was given forth. Nor is his faith

in the South shaken; though who can fail to be amazed at the facility with which the South is carried off after chimeras? Sooner or later, however, the slaveholding States are bound to come as one man to the support of the Nicaraguan policy. The decree of the 22d September, not the result of hasty passion or immature thought, fixed the fate of Nicaragua and bound the Republic to the car of American civilization. For more than two years the enemies of slavery have been contriving and plotting to exclude the naturalized Nicaraguans from their adopted country. But as yet not a single additional barrier has been interposed; and the South has but to resolve upon the task of carrying slavery into Nicaragua in order that the work may be accomplished.

If other appeals than those of interest are required for stimulating the Southern States in the effort to re-establish slavery in Central America they are not lacking. The hearts of Southern youth answer to the call of honor, and strong arms and steady eyes are waiting to carry forward the policy which is now the dictate of duty as well as of interest. The issue between slavery and anti-slavery has been made in Nicaragua, and it is impossible for slavery to retire from the contest without losing some of its courage and character. Nor is the issue one of mere words. It is not a tilt of sport, a joust of reeds; but the knights have touched the shields of their adversaries with the points of their lances, and the tourney is one of mortal strife. And may fortune most favor them who best do their duty in the fray.

Something is due from the South to the memory of the brave dead who repose in the soil of Nicaragua. In defence

of slavery these men left their homes, met with calmness and constancy the perils of a tropical climate, and finally yielded up their lives for the interests of the South. I have seen these men die in many ways. I have seen them gasping life away under the effects of typhus; I have seen them convulsed in the death agony from the fearful blows of cholera; I have seen them sink to glorious rest from mortal wounds received on honorable fields; but I never saw the first man who repented engaging in the cause for which he yielded his life. These martyrs and confessors in the cause of Southern civilization surely deserve recognition at its hands. And what can be done for their memories while the cause for which they suffered and died remains in peril and jeopardy?

If there, then, be yet vigor in the South—and who can doubt that there is—for further contest with the soldiers of anti-slavery, let her cast off the lethargy which enthral her, and prepare anew for the conflict. But at the same time she throws aside her languor and indifference, let her, taught by the past, discard the delusions and abstractions with which politicians have agitated her passions without advancing her interests. It is time for slavery to spend its efforts on realities and not beat the air with wanton and ill-advised blows. The true field for the exertion of slavery is in tropical America; there it finds the natural seat of its empire and thither it can spread if it will but make the effort, regardless of conflicts with adverse interests. The way is open and it only requires courage and will to enter the path and reach the goal. Will the South be true to herself in this emergency?

Chapter Fifty.

THE ADVANCE OF THE ALLIES.

IN the beginning of September, 1856, the army of Nicaragua was organized in two battalions of Rifles, two of Light Infantry, one of Rangers, and a small company of Artillery. The First Rifles was the fullest as well as the best corps of the army, and it scarcely mustered two hundred effective men. The Second Rifles was a mere shadow of a battalion, and its discipline was almost entirely neglected. The Light Infantry battalions were larger than the Second Rifles, and some companies of these, as, for example, the company of Capt. Henry, of the Second Infantry, were in good order and condition. The Rangers consisted of three small companies, under the command of Major Waters, and were capable of effective service. Capt. Schwartz, with a few artillerymen, had shown capacity for organizing his corps, and possessed knowledge in his profession, he having served for some time as an artillery officer in Baden during the revolutionary troubles of 1848. The whole effective force scarcely amounted to eight hundred men.

Gen. Hornsby was in command of the Meridional De-



THE

WAR IN NICARAGUA.

WRITTEN BY

GEN'L WILLIAM WALKER.

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WITH A COLORED MAP OF NICARAGUA.  
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1860.