

News Department.

CENTRAL AMERICAN AFFAIRS—THE CONDITION OF THE STATES AND THEIR RELATIONS.

Recent events in Central America have awakened in the United States a deep interest in the territory embraced in the States of Nicaragua, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Honduras and San Salvador. Our design, at this time, is to give a condensed statement of the affairs of these republics, and their relations to each other and to foreign Powers.

The territory of Central America lies between the eighth and sixteenth parallels north latitude, and has Mexico on its northern border, the Caribbean Sea on the east, the Pacific Ocean on the west, and New Grenada on the south. Its climate is mild and healthful. Its mineral and agricultural wealth is said to be unbounded. Its population, estimated at two millions, is about one-twelfth whites, four-twelfths mixed races, and seven-twelfths Indians. In 1503 it was taken for Spain by an agent of Cortez, and in 1821 it was formed into an independent republic.

The confederation embraced the five States above mentioned, and the following table gives the statistics:

States	Geograph. Sq. miles.	Popu- lation.	Indians.	Whites.	Ladinos*
Guatemala	3,512	700,000	450,000	100,000	150,000
San Salvador	308	350,000	70,000	70,000	200,000
Honduras	3,138	300,000	—	60,000	200,000
Nicaragua	1,857	350,000	120,000	110,000	120,000
Costa Rica	763	150,000	25,000	125,000	—
Federal Terri- tory	4	20,000	20,000	10,000	20,000
Total	9,605	1,900,000	685,000	475,000	740,000

*Children of white fathers and Indian mothers, and vice versa.

There was a dissolution of this union in 1839, and in 1842 a treaty of confederation between Guatemala, Honduras, San Salvador and Nicaragua, and Gen. Rivera Paz was elevated to the Presidency. In 1845 there was an unsuccessful attempt to revolt against Carrera, a half breed, who had been elected Captain-General, and war broke out between Honduras and San Salvador. The last named State soon after made a treaty of alliance with Guatemala, and a congress was held to settle the difficulties between the States. It was unsuccessful. Guatemala (in 1847) withdrew, and Carrera has since been hostile to the other States, although his time has been pretty well taken up in chastising the Indians in his territory. They are very troublesome. Honduras, San Salvador and Nicaragua have generally been friendly. Costa Rica is very much under English domination.

Guatemala, the largest, wealthiest and most populous of the Central American States, joins Mexico on the north and Honduras on the south. We find the population variously estimated, but think the above table nearly correct. There are only seven or eight thousand whites; the remainder are natives, or mixed races. Its principal source of prosperity is the cochineal trade, but it exports silver, mahogany, &c., to the amount of a million yearly. Its exports are about the same. Its exterior debt, generally in bonds held in England, is \$400,000—interior, \$800,000. It has a standing army of one thousand men, and a militia force of five thousand. Its government, according to the new constitution adopted in 1851, is vested in a President and Legislative Assembly (fifty-nine deputies). The judges and archbishop sit in the Assembly, which elects the President once in four years. Raphael Carrera, the present President, is of mixed Indian and Spanish blood, and is said to be a military despot. He is a good soldier and a stern ruler. He was a great friend of Santa Anna, and is terribly prejudiced against the North American. His sympathies were entirely with the aristocratic party in Nicaragua, and he was preparing to march to their aid when the democrats under Walker took Granada, and ended the war. He has, however, succeeded in subjugating the party opposed to him in Honduras, and given that republic a President of his own choosing. Carrera is the worst enemy in the way of the present government of Nicaragua.

San Salvador is south of Guatemala, north of Nicaragua, and west of Honduras. It is the smallest of the States, is divided into five departments, and has a trade nearly equal to that of Guatemala. Its government is vested in a President and Legislature—twenty-five members. This is a quiet and peaceable little State, and was for some time mediator between Guatemala and Honduras; but finding the task a hopeless one, it was dropped, and the authorities have since been engaged in the more pleasing and profitable duty of attending to their own affairs.

Honduras has Guatemala on the north, and San Salvador and Nicaragua on the west, and Costa Rica on the south. It has extensive mineral and agricultu-

ral resources. Its government is vested in a President elected by the Legislature, which consists of two chambers. General Trinidad Cabanas was chosen President in 1852, but he was recently ousted by Guatemalan troops, who named General Lioño President. The late of Cabanas is unknown at present. The trade of Honduras in mahogany, hides, &c., is very valuable; but on account of the disturbed state of politics, it has been nearly all monopolised by the English, who occupy a tract in the north called British Honduras, or Belize. The English government has also attempted to possess the Ruatan Islands in the Bay of Honduras, and this weak republic has thus been in danger of extinction, being bullied on one side by England and on the other by Guatemala; and having only the little state of San Salvador for its ally. An attempt has been made to build up Honduras by a railway to run across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. This is purely a North American speculation. The road will be one hundred and twenty-five miles in length, and will connect the Bay of Honduras on the Atlantic side with Izneca on the Pacific. The charter by the government of Honduras gives the company the right of way on each side of the line of the road for two hundred yards—the exclusive right for seventy years—a grant of 1,250,000 acres of public land. The company agree to finish the road in eight years, to carry the mails for one-third of the postage, and to pay the State one dollar for each passenger. The Honduras railway will be the best communication with the Pacific, as it has good ports on both sides, and several hundred miles north of Panama. The surveys have been completed and the construction of the road will soon be commenced.

Nicaragua has the Atlantic on one side and the Pacific on the other. Honduras joins it on the north and Costa Rica on the south. Its government is a Legislature and an executive officer, called Supremo Director. General Chomorro was selected to this office in 1851, for two years. There had been two parties contending for supremacy in the State since 1838. The constitution then adopted was liberal, but it was set aside by the Chomorro or aristocratic party, who desired to remove the election of President entirely from the people, give him the power of a dictator, and otherwise to make laws offensive to the democratic party. The leader of the democrats was Don Patricio Rivas. He found himself in a peculiarly delicate position. The democrats were able to maintain their position if not put down by outside interference. That interference was likely to come from Guatemala. One Guardiola, a partisan of the Chomorro party, succeeded in gaining the aid of Carrera. The democrats then invited Walker and his friends in California to assist them, and sent a blank commission of Commander-in-Chief, to be filled up with any name they saw fit. Mr. Walker was considered the best man for the place, and the departure of his battalion—its success in Nicaragua—the capture of Granada—the formation of a provisional government, with Rivas at its head, are well known to our readers. Nicaragua is a country of immense value in many respects. It is a depot for a large amount of property owned by citizens of the United States, and two of its ports are occupied almost entirely by Californians in transit. Mr. H. L. Kinney has set up a colony near Greytown; it is composed of North American citizens, and is daily receiving accessions. Large numbers of North Americans are preparing to join Walker's Standard, in disregard of the proclamation of the United States. Nicaragua is now menaced by a fresh invasion from Guatemala, and Guardiola is busy in intriguing against the new government, which, although popular, is only an experiment so far. It is the desire of the democratic party to bring about a union between Honduras, San Salvador, and Nicaragua. A powerful nation would thus arise, and Carrera could be wiped out, if necessary. Central America, or the greater part of, will, if this government is firmly established, become an entirely North American as the State of New York; and will, no doubt, some fine day ask for admission as a member of the Federal Union.

Costa Rica is the southernmost State of Central America. It is one of the smallest in territory, but the richest in resources. It has been at peace many years and its people are represented as being industrious and quiet citizens. Its chief reliance is the coffee crop, and the exports of the article amount to four thousand tons annually. Its present government was established in 1823. The State is divided into six departments, each of which elects two deputies to the Legislature. The executive consists of a President, Don Raphael Mora, and a Vice-President, Creamuco, elected for six years. The present administration is be-

lieved to be in favor of the British government, whose agents are continually intriguing in all the Central American republics. The Nicaragua route across the Isthmus runs along the frontier of Costa Rica.

The British possessions in Central America include British Honduras, the Bay Islands, otherwise called Ruatan, and the tract called Mosquitia. These possessions really belong to Honduras and Nicaragua, and the British government holds them in defiance of the treaty signed at Washington five years ago, and commonly called the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, which contains the following stipulation:—

Neither Power shall occupy, or fortify, or colonize, or annex, or exercise any dominion over Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito Coast, or any part of Central America; nor should either make use of any protection which either affords or may afford, or any alliance which either has or may have to or with any other State or people, for the purpose of erecting or maintaining any such fortifications, or of occupying, fortifying or colonizing Costa Rica, the Mosquito coast, or any part of Central America or of assuming or exercising dominion over the same.

In defiance of this, the government of Great Britain holds the territory above named as absolutely as it controls the city of London, and its agents, we are informed, are rapidly obtaining a dangerous preponderance in Costa Rica.

We have thus endeavoured to give the plain facts, in order to show the importance of the question which is now before the executive of the United States, and which will shortly come before Congress. We desire that the people should understand the matter and then Congress should follow. The popular voice is above treaties and maps, and diplomacy, and Congresses, and presidents, and humbugs generally. It is of the highest importance that our government should meet this question without fear and without prejudice. The regularly credited Minister of Nicaragua is now in Washington, and has strong claims upon the United States. It is for the Mercantile interest of this republic that the government should be maintained in Nicaragua. Peace reigns within the borders of that country for the first time in many years. But its prosperity is menaced by foes from without and enemies within. It asks for the countenance and friendship of the great Republic of the North, and it seems to us, in the present state of things, that the most rigid conservatism could not refuse to grant so proper a request. If we do not take a step in the right direction now, some of us may live to see the best part of Central America erected into an English colony, and our right of way to the Pacific disputed by the British government.—*N. Herald.*

WE copy the following notice of the miscreant Colonel Walker, with whom through our columns, our readers are already slightly acquainted, from the selections of the *Pictorial Eastern Chronicle*:—

COL. WALKER.—The following account furnished to the *Washington Star* by Senor Espinoza, a Nicaraguan exile, who was a passenger in the last steamer from Greytown, gives a very different view of the measures pursued by Colonel Walker in Nicaragua, from that which has heretofore been given to the public. It also places the American Minister in a peculiar position.

“When it was known that the court martial of Americans, into whose hands Walker had surrendered Corral, had determined on his death, addresses were sent to Walker, signed by all the foreign residents in Granada, and by all the clergy and principal native citizens, asking that his life be spared, and offering on the part of the clergy and men of wealth, to mortgage their fortunes as a guarantee that Corral, if not executed, would live tranquilly in San Juan del Norte. But Walker sternly refused to spare the victim. Soon after Corral was shot, the people of the city surrounded his corpse a large majority being women, who cut all the hair from his head in little locks, and imbued their kerchiefs and portions of their clothing in his blood to be kept as relics.

Mr. Espinoza says, that the American Minister Mr. Wheeler, was seen on the 13th of October, the day on which Granada was taken, at the door of his house, giving brandy to Walker's men; his (Wheeler's) son being at the time among Walker's men armed with a sword, and shouting as one of them.

The Secretary of State, Mr. Blaylock, was secreted in the house of Mr. Wheeler, and asked leave of Mr. W. to visit a brother then dying in consequence of a wound received on the memorable 13th of October. Mr. Wheeler consented, and after he had left that gentleman's house, he sent after him a message, saying