

NICARAGUA: WAR OF THE FILIBUSTERS

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Nicaragua: War of the filibusters by Daniel B. Lucas & W. A. MacCorkle & J. Fairfax
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NICARAGUA: WAR OF THE FILIBUSTERS



W. Walker

NICARAGUA:

War of the Filibusters,

BY JUDGE DANIEL B. LUCAS,
Late President of the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia.

WITH

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

By Hon. LEWIS BAKER,
United States Minister to Central America.

THE NICARAGUAN CANAL,

By Hon. W. A. MACCORKLE,
Governor of West Virginia.

THE MONROE DOCTRINE,

By J. FAIRFAX McLAUGHLIN, LL. D.

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INTRODUCTORY.

At five o'clock on the morning of May 1st of this year, I was awakened, in San José, Costa Rica, by the firing of cannon and the noise of a brass band parading the streets. On picking up the morning papers I learned that the demonstration was an act of rejoicing over the surrender in Nicaragua of "el filibustéro Yankee William Walker," on the 1st of May, 1857—thirty-eight years ago. With my coffee I glanced over that morning's issue of six of the eight daily papers of the city, and each one contained an editorial glorification of the heroic action of the Central Americans in expelling Walker and his followers from their soil. These articles were pitched on a high and patriotic key; and some of the papers denounced in manly terms all species of interference in the Home Rule of these countries by outsiders.

On the evening of the same day, a distinguished local orator delivered an address in Congress Hall before an interested audience of the representative, ruling citizens of Costa Rica, having the Walker invasion as his theme.

My attention having thus been drawn to the general subject, I found, on looking around, many evi-

dences in Costa Rica of the lively interest still felt in the effort of William Walker to subjugate Nicaragua, with a view of planting therein another race of people.

I also remembered that in Nicaragua, the 14th of September, the anniversary of the defeat of Walker's forces at San Jacinto in 1856, in which skirmish Byron Cole lost his life, is annually celebrated; and that in March of last year, the present Liberal Government of Nicaragua disinterred the bones of General Máximo Jérez, which had been smouldering in the church-yard at Rivas, and with much pomp of parade, carried them across the Republic, exhibiting them in state at Granada and Managua, and depositing them in a vault at Leon.*

These ceremonies, which extended over more than one week, were given all the significance which public speeches, flags and banners, parades and music, cannon and skyrockets could bestow. The day upon which General Ortiz would arrive at Leon with his troops fresh from their victorious campaign in expelling the Conservative President Vesquez from Honduras and installing Dr. Policarpo Bonilla, a Liberal, in his stead, was selected as that upon which

* Leon had been adopted by the Directory of the Liberal Revolutionists of 1854, as their capital of Nicaragua; while the Legitimate government, whose President was Fruto Chamorro, continued to administer its authority at Granada. Cole, who was killed at San Jacinto, was the American with whom the Liberal Directory made the first contract to bring immigrants, with the guaranteed right to bear arms, into Nicaragua; and this was the invitation which Walker accepted.

the climax of the celebration was to take place. The country people and the soldiery of the Republic overran the quaint old city which had been a seat of many a destructive quake, both of the earth and of political factions.

I have thus briefly pointed to some of the evidence that, after the lapse of nearly forty years, the Walker invasion is a reality with the people of Costa Rica and Nicaragua. The generation which knew Walker has, with Walker himself, passed over the Divide, but the patriotic spirit which repelled his intrusion is as bright in this generation as it was in 1856-'7. At that time there were a few intelligent citizens who believed at first that the United States Government, under the influence of the slaveholding element then dominant at Washington, was either openly backing Walker or giving him its covert encouragement, and Walker shrewdly disseminated that idea—apparently believing it himself. Some of these people hoped that this incursion of filibusters would result in the incorporation of these countries as a part of the Great Republic of the North. There are even now a few good citizens, natives, who would be pleased to see annexation and who could be induced to occupy seats in the Senate and in the House of Representatives at Washington from the States of Nicaragua and Costa Rica, but they are intelligent enough to understand that there is but little desire on the part of the people of the United States for the annexation of a foot of territory lying south of that country.