

As it was, the British government determined to proceed cautiously and, if possible, to remove all cause of jealousy regarding the canal route, while still maintaining the protectorate. Evidently with this in view the cabinet concluded to attempt negotiations in Washington. There were reasons for believing that better terms might be made with Clayton than with Lawrence. The former had shown nervousness when speaking to Crampton just after the receipt of the Hise treaty and had expressed great anxiety that the British government should not think that the treaty was in accordance with the wishes of the American government.⁶⁹ Besides, both Whig and Democratic press in America were violently attacking the British claims and calling upon the administration for action on the matter.⁷⁰ This situation also might have been expected to incline Clayton, embarrassed by a refractory Democratic Senate, to an early compromise settlement. Be these speculations as they may, the fact remains that some time previous to November 14th Sir Henry Bulwer was appointed British agent to Washington, presumably for the purpose of determining what chance there was of making a favorable arrangement with Clayton.⁷¹ But hope of reaching terms with Lawrence was not entirely given up; ⁷² the aim was to satisfy the United States without forsaking the protectorate, and if Law-

⁶⁹ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 1991, doc. 194, pp. 55-56.

⁷⁰ Crampton to Palmerston, Nov. 4, 1849, *F. O., Am.*, vol. 501, no. 95.

⁷¹ Bulwer sailed for America on November 14, the day after Palmerston wrote to Lawrence complaining of the terms of the Squier treaty. *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 27, p. 45.

⁷² The British Public Record Office is singularly lacking in any correspondence giving reasons for taking up the discussion of the question at Washington.

⁷³ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 35.

rence showed any sign of yielding, there was no reason why negotiations with him should not be resumed.⁷⁴

Bulwer received no detailed instructions before his departure, but in his last conversation with the Foreign Secretary, Palmerston pointed out that an unforeseen difficulty had arisen about an unimportant matter, and that while the question itself would have to be solved in a manner that comported with British honor, the matter out of which the difficulty had grown would admit of adjustment.⁷⁵ This view of the situation indicates that the British government was prepared to arrange its relations with Central America to suit whatever were the ultimate demands of the United States, should these demands be in any way reasonable.

Bulwer reached Washington some time in December, but for some weeks no attempt at negotiation was made. Indeed, for a short time it appeared that there would be no further effort to settle the question with England. This was when the British seizure of Tigre Island became known at Washington, and excitement ran high as a result.⁷⁶ Just at this crisis Carcache, a representative of the Nicaraguan government, arrived to solicit ratification of the Squier treaty.⁷⁷ Clayton, partaking of the general increase in suspicion of British aims in Central America, promptly stated, on January 5, in response to a note from Carcache, that the Presi-

⁷⁴ Lawrence did not receive word until April, 1850, that the negotiations had been entirely transferred to Washington. Appleton, "Memoir of Hon. Abbott Lawrence", in *Mass. Hist. Soc., Proc.*, III (1855-1858), 76.

⁷⁵ Bulwer to Palmerston, April 28, 1850, "Private", *F. O., Am.*, vol. 512.

⁷⁶ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 28-29.

⁷⁷ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 579, doc. 75, pp. 312-313.

dent would submit the Squier treaty to the Senate and would cheerfully ratify it if it received the approval of that body.⁷⁸ Bulwer, however, seems to have come to the rescue, and succeeded in allaying the suspicions of the American government to such a degree as to alter its intentions regarding the Squier treaty. Consequently, when, a little later, a call came from the Senate for the Squier correspondence and treaties,⁷⁹ it was met with a refusal from President Taylor.⁸⁰

After his arrival in Washington, Bulwer carefully studied the situation and saw that the chief interest of the American people regarding Central America lay in the need for an interoceanic route, and that the broader question of Mosquito claims had for the time a secondary place. He therefore concluded that, in trying to reach an agreement, it would be best to avoid all consideration of the latter question and to concentrate upon the former.⁸¹ This he seemed to believe would make possible a disposal of the difficulty without serious sacrifice of British pride. The situation of the American government at the time favored the idea. When Clayton, his nervousness increased by the discontent of the country and the demand of both houses of Congress for the Squier correspondence,⁸² went to him and declared that he "must either deliver up the whole subject to popular discussion and determination, or come to some immediate settlement upon it",⁸³ Bul-

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 313.

⁷⁹ *Cong. Globe*, 31 Cong., 1 sess., pt. 1, p. 159.

⁸⁰ Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, V, 31-32.

⁸¹ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 29-30.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 35.

⁸³ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no 1991, doc. 194, p. 61.

wer saw his chance. He determined to enter into a negotiation for the purpose of forming a treaty, although he was without treaty-making power and even without definite instructions from his government. Clayton's semi-appeal to him gave him an advantage which he was quick to seize. By playing upon the nervousness of the Secretary of State he induced him to avoid the subject of Mosquito claims in the discussion which followed, and to put practically the whole emphasis on securing guarantees of neutrality for the isthmian canal.⁸⁴

Yet, while driven from the bolder stand of a few months before, Clayton by no means gave up hopes of making the British relinquish the Indian protectorate. As a frank promise to withdraw seemed out of the question, he determined to gain his end by a less direct route; this was by securing such a wording of the treaty as would amount to a British agreement to abandon all control in Central America. Bulwer, on the other hand, strove to preserve the protectorate, while giving up all special advantage which might interfere with the security of the interoceanic highway. Even a casual study of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty makes it evident that a severe struggle took place between the negotiators, a struggle as the *Times* put it, "for generalship in the use of terms";⁸⁵ and such a study also shows that both contestants were forced to recede from some of the ground which they had hoped to hold. In short, it makes it clear that the treaty was not a victory, but a compromise.

⁸⁴ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 35-38.

⁸⁵ *London Times*, Jan. 19, 1856.

The project of a convention was quickly completed and on February 3 this was sent to Palmerston for his approval, together with a letter explaining the circumstances producing it.⁸⁶ But as negotiations had progressed, discontent in the United States had increased. A disavowal of the seizure of Tigre had not yet reached Washington, and just a week after the project was sent off, reports again came from Central America⁸⁷ of other violent acts committed by Chatfield and the British naval officers, in their efforts to collect claims against the republics.⁸⁸ Probably roused by the fresh suspicions resulting from these reports,⁸⁹ certain members of the American cabinet who knew the character of the recent agreement went to Clayton and desired that alterations be made in the project in order to prevent further disputes. Some arrangement, they stated, should be made for the relinquishment of Mosquito claims to territory along the San Juan. As it was, they felt that many would contend that the British meant to do under another name that which they agreed not to do under their own.⁹⁰

Clayton, thereupon, explained the situation to Bulwer, and on February 18 the latter wrote to Palmerston explaining the change of feeling which had taken place. It was his belief, he stated, that if Clayton had not already signed the project he would not do so now. However, having done so, he was bound inevitably to a conciliatory line of policy, if the project should be

⁸⁶ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 35-40.

⁸⁷ Bulwer to Palmerston, Feb. 18, 1850, F. O., Am., vol. 511, no. 31.

⁸⁸ Crowe, *Gospel in Central America*, 217-220.

⁸⁹ Bulwer to Palmerston, Feb. 18, 1850, F. O., Am., vol. 511, no. 31.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

approved by the British government, and would omit nothing to make that policy succeed. Though Clayton's colleagues were not so interested, Bulwer believed they would be loath to reject the treaty. But he added, "I ought not to disguise from your Lordship that this question is becoming, the longer it remains in abeyance the more intricate and perplexing, and that it contains within it if not the seeds of actual war, the seeds of such hostile and angry excitement as render war always possible, and very often produce many of the evils of war even when war itself is not produced." He therefore suggested that Palmerston add to the project, if approved by him, an explanation or clause that would quiet to some extent the suspicions of British intentions. In conclusion, he wrote: "I am bound to add my opinion that if nothing is done, and even that if nothing is done speedily, to set this business at rest, and bring it to an amicable conclusion, the tone of opinion on this side of the Atlantic will raise it ere long into very serious importance."⁹¹

While negotiations remained in this uncertain state the situation grew more tense. Rumors again reached the American government that British protection was to be extended to Costa Rica;⁹² and before fear of this could be allayed by word from Palmerston,⁹³ there arrived from Lawrence the announcement regarding the evacuation of Tigre Island and a disavowal of its seizure, qualified by the declaration: "Her Majesty's

⁹¹ Bulwer to Palmerston, Feb. 18, 1850, F. O. Am., vol. 511, no. 31. Part of this despatch is given in *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 40-42.

⁹² *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 46.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 46-47.

Government must not on that account be considered as giving up in any degree the claims which it has made on the Government of Honduras, and must hold itself free to use whatever means the Law of Nations may allow for obtaining the redress which it demands if that redress should continue to be withheld."⁹⁴

Such a statement, closely following reports of blockades and seizures in Central America, seemed to the American government utterly inconsistent with Palmerston's declaration that the British government had no intention of occupying or colonizing the region;⁹⁵ consequently it roused all the old suspicion of British good faith,⁹⁶ and caused the American government almost to despair of reaching an agreement.⁹⁷ As a result, the administration decided to pursue its own course, with the intention of continuing it should Great Britain prove herself determined not to act honorably. Accordingly, the American government seems to have worked in anticipation of a later struggle, diplomatic or military, with the British. In 1847 Christopher Hempstead had been appointed United States consul at Belize,⁹⁸ securing his exequatur from Great Britain.⁹⁹ On March 1, 1850, Clayton sent him a letter of recall, explaining that as the appointment might have been made "without full consideration of the territorial rights of Great Britain in that quarter", it was deemed advisable under existing circumstances to discontinue the consulate.¹⁰⁰ Although, before negotiations had begun, Bulwer, at least, had understood that the Squier treaty would not be presented to the Senate before the

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 34-35. ⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 48-49. ⁹⁶ *Ibid.* ⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 53.

⁹⁸ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 579, doc. 75, pp. 310-311.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 311.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 12, p. 2.

treaty which it was hoped would result from the negotiations, or except in connection with it,¹⁰¹ on March 19 it was nevertheless transmitted "for the advice of the Senate in regard to its ratification".¹⁰²

A few days after this, Bulwer received his government's approval of the treaty project, and was empowered to sign it. In order to remove the suspicions of the Americans, Palmerston directed that at the time of signing Bulwer give to Clayton a note stating that the British government had no intention of making use of the protection which it afforded to the Mosquitos, for the purpose of doing under cover of that protection any of the things the intention to do which was disclaimed in the letter to Lawrence¹⁰³ of November 13, 1849.¹⁰⁴ This greatly eased the situation. Moreover, a little later a letter was received from Palmerston disavowing any intention on the part of the British government of establishing a protectorate over Costa Rica.¹⁰⁵ Consequently, the negotiations proceeded, and after a few minor changes in the body of the treaty Clayton agreed to sign it. He added, however, that upon receiving the statement which the Foreign Secretary had directed Bulwer to make, he should be obliged to present a counter-declaration on the part of the United States government to the effect that it in no wise recognized the Mosquito title or sovereignty.¹⁰⁶ Thereupon, Bulwer, desiring to omit such an allusion

¹⁰¹ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 52-53.

¹⁰² Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, V, 33-34.

¹⁰³ See above, pp. 85-86.

¹⁰⁴ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 45-46.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 46-47.

¹⁰⁶ Bulwer to Palmerston, April 28, 1850, F. O., Am., vol. 512, no. 67.

to a difference between the two governments and feeling it desirable to bind the United States also as to American protection over any part of Central America, decided to omit the statement suggested by Palmerston, and instead to embody in the treaty the substance of the statement, but without direct mention of the Mosquito protectorate.¹⁰⁷ This being arranged, the convention was signed by the two negotiators on April 19, 1850.¹⁰⁸

Since the fame and notoriety of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty resulted almost entirely from the peculiar wording of the first article, that article is here quoted in full:

The Governments of Great Britain and the United States hereby declare that neither the one nor the other will ever obtain or maintain for itself any exclusive control over the said Ship-Canal; agreeing that neither will ever erect or maintain any fortifications commanding the same, or in the vicinity thereof, or occupy, or fortify, or colonize, or assume or exercise any dominion over Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito Coast, or any part of Central America; nor will either make use of any protection which either affords or any may afford, or any alliance which either has or may have, to or with any State or people, for the purpose of erecting or maintaining any such fortifications or of occupying, fortifying or colonizing Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito Coast, or any part of Central America, or of assuming or exercising dominion over the same. Nor will Great Britain or the United States take advantage of any intimacy, or use any alliance, connection, or influence that either may possess with any State or Government through whose territory the said canal may pass, for the purpose of acquiring or holding, directly or indirectly, for the subjects or citizens of the one, any rights or advantages in regard to commerce or navigation through the said canal,

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* Part of this despatch is given in *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 55-56.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 52.

which shall not be offered, on the same terms, to the subjects or citizens of the other.¹⁰⁹

By the fourth article the two governments engaged to use their good offices to "procure the establishment of two free ports, one at each end of the said canal", and the eighth stated that the two contracting parties desiring not only "to accomplish a particular object, but also to establish a general principle", agreed to extend their protection, by treaty, to any other practicable communications, whether by canal or railway, across the isthmus connecting North and South America. The remainder of the treaty referred to the more obvious provisions necessary for securing the construction and neutralization of the canal.¹¹⁰

Before signing the agreement, Clayton, fearing opposition from the Democratic majority of the Senate, with the aid of King, the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, obtained the approval of the leading members to the measure.¹¹¹ Therefore, he submitted it with a fair hope of securing ratification. Nevertheless, the treaty had a stormy time in the Senate, the members of which were distinctly divided on the question of what should be accomplished by the arrangement. Some were primarily interested in securing the guarantee for the proposed canal; others were bent upon driving the British completely out of Central America.¹¹² Stephen A. Douglas was leader of the latter faction, and was bitterly opposed to the treaty.¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 50.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 50-52.

¹¹¹ Buchanan, *Works*, VIII, 382; *Cong. Record*, XXII, 2981.

¹¹² *Cong. Globe*, 32 Cong., 2 sess., 237-238; 34 Cong., 1 sess., pt. 2, p.

1072.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 34 Cong., 1 sess., pt. 2, p. 1072; *Cong. Record*, XXII, 2971.

It took the best efforts of Clayton and King to persuade the opposition that the agreement was a practical application of the Monroe doctrine, and required the abandonment of the Mosquito protectorate.¹¹⁴

In the discussion of the treaty the uncertain wording of the first article was criticised, but King explained that the obscurity was due to a wish on the part of Bulwer to protect his nation's pride, and the desire of Clayton to indulge him in this. England, it was explained, felt that she was being forced into a sort of backward step, and it was expected that the Americans would not insist upon any expression that might wound her sensibilities.¹¹⁵ These explanations, evidently given with perfect sincerity by King¹¹⁶—though up to this time neither Bulwer nor Palmerston had acknowledged a retreat on the part of their government—so convinced some of the senators that they wished to retain, in the Squier treaty the clause recognizing the right of Nicaragua over the proposed canal route. They argued that this recognition was now of no real importance,

¹¹⁴ Buchanan, *Works*, VIII, 381-382.

¹¹⁵ *Cong. Globe*, 32 Cong., 2 sess., 253. In a letter to Squier describing the new treaty, Clayton added, "But let there be no exultation on our side at the expense of British pride or sensibility", and cautioned Squier to deal kindly with both British subjects and British agents. Dept. of State, Inst., Am. States, vol. 15, p. 108.

¹¹⁶ On May 8, 1850, King wrote to Buchanan in reference to the Clayton-Bulwer treaty: "I saw no objection to entering into a Treaty stipulation not to occupy or colonise any portion of Central America, when by so doing we are practically enforcing the Monroe doctrine, by requiring of England the abandonment of her claim to the protectorate of the King of the Mosquitos . . . The Treaty as I conceive accomplishes all that we ought to desire, while it strengthens the position we have heretofore taken, and avowed before the world. I may be mistaken in the views I have expressed; but if so, four-fifths of the Democratic Senators whom I consulted before the signature of the Treaty, were equally in error." Buchanan, *Works*, VIII, 382.

and that it would be satisfactory to Nicaragua and, in view of the terms of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, could not be obnoxious to Great Britain.¹¹⁷ Bulwer, however, pointed out to Clayton that this policy would destroy the harmony so necessary to the construction of the canal.¹¹⁸ Clayton agreed with him; and the Senate as a whole showed the same desire for friendly action.¹¹⁹ As a result of the efforts of Clayton and King, aided by Bulwer,¹²⁰ considerable temporary favor was created for the treaty in the Senate, and it was ratified without modification by a vote of forty-two to eleven.¹²¹ In view of the temper of the Senate a few weeks before, the fact that the treaty passed by such a large majority, or even that it passed at all, seems ample proof that the Senate as a whole believed the arrangement to be in harmony with the Monroe doctrine and felt that it would force the British out of Central America.

Shortly before the treaty was sent to the Senate, an instruction of far-reaching significance was received by Bulwer from his government. It had been reported, Palmerston wrote, that some Americans were about to establish themselves in the island of Ruatan. The islands of Ruatan and Bonacca were not only English de jure but were actually occupied by British settlers

¹¹⁷ Bulwer to Palmerston, May 6, 1850, "Private and confidential", F. O., Am., vol. 512.

¹¹⁸ When the treaty was signed on April 19, Clayton had assured Bulwer that should the Senate ratify it, care would be taken that any other treaty also confirmed by the Senate should conform with it. *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 52-54.

¹¹⁹ Bulwer to Palmerston, May, 6, 1850, "Private and confidential", F. O., Am., vol. 512.

¹²⁰ Bulwer to Palmerston, Aug. 6, 1850, "Secret and confidential", vol. 514, no. 157.

¹²¹ *Cong. Globe*, 32 Cong., 2 and 3 sess., Appendix, 267.

who were governed by a British magistrate appointed by the Belize superintendent. Moreover, in 1841 the governor of Jamaica had been instructed that if any other power should take possession of Ruatan he was to demand the removal of the intruder, and, should the demand be disregarded, he was authorized to resort to forcible means for compelling withdrawal without further instructions.¹²²

In a note to Clayton, dated April 15, Bulwer made known this view of his government, adding, "should any persons attempt to locate themselves therein and resist his [the governor of Jamaica's] request for their withdrawal, I deem it advisable to report to you at once the intelligence which H. M. Govt. has received knowing that you will take all the steps in your power to prevent the aggression of wh. H. M.'s Govt. has been informed."¹²³

Clayton was much disconcerted by this communication which seemed to threaten disaster to the treaty just negotiated with Bulwer. For several days he delayed action, during which time the treaty was signed and sent to the Senate, but when it was under discussion by that body he called upon the British minister and asked that he cancel his note. An official message like the note, he explained, if permitted to stand, must be sent to Congress, and should this be done, some of the members would very possibly imagine that Great Britain was at that moment laying claim to new territories in America—a belief which, however erroneous, would affect the passing of the treaty now under their

¹²² Palmerston to Bulwer, Mar. 14, 1850, F. O., Am., vol. 509, no. 25. See above, p. 39.

¹²³ Inclosure in Bulwer to Palmerston, April 16, 1850, F. O., Am., vol. 512, no. 63.

consideration. The reports of American designs upon Ruatan, Clayton stated, he believed were entirely incorrect.¹²⁴

In consequence of Clayton's representations, Bulwer agreed to cancel his note of April 15,¹²⁵ and to accept from Clayton as satisfactory a private note to the effect that the American government had never desired to occupy, fortify, or settle any of the Bay Islands, that he, Clayton, had no knowledge, information, or belief that Americans desired to establish themselves there and that no attempt of American citizens to do so would receive countenance from their government.¹²⁶

This indirection on the part of the American secretary of state, though it probably saved the treaty, played an important part in complicating English-American isthmiian relations, as will appear later.

The treaty as altered by Bulwer met the approval of Palmerston, who stated that the government would ratify it.¹²⁷ But a suspicion that it was intended by the Americans to apply to Belize and the Bay Islands seems to have risen in Palmerston's mind—evidently in consequence of Clayton's attitude towards Bulwer's note of April 15—and made him anxious to guard against such a contingency. The sole object of the British in wishing to retain the Mosquito protectorate was to save the dignity of the government and perhaps to do their duty by the Indians; but with Belize it was different; the population there was almost wholly composed

¹²⁴ Bulwer to Palmerston, April 27, 1850, "Private and confidential", F. O., Am., vol. 512.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ Clayton to Bulwer, April 24, 1850, "Private", *ibid.*

¹²⁷ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 58.

of British subjects, the territory was desirable, and the full title to it was almost their own. The attempts to place it entirely under British sovereignty have been described. The Bay Islands also were prized by the British because of the fine harbors of Ruatan. Consequently, Palmerston was roused to precautionary measures. He instructed Bulwer to deliver to Clayton, at the time of exchanging ratifications, a declaration that "Her Majesty's Government do not understand the engagements of that Convention as applying to Her Majesty's settlement at Honduras, or to its dependencies."¹²⁸ Should the United States government object to receiving and assenting to this declaration, Bulwer was not to proceed to the exchange of ratifications without further instructions.¹²⁹

Palmerston's declaration was regarded with much dissatisfaction by Clayton, to whom the treaty was already much less than he had hoped for and desired.¹³⁰ Consequently, for a time it was resolved to abandon the arrangement entirely.¹³¹ Besides, the doubt regarding the efficacy of the treaty, for a time overcome in the Senate, had returned very strongly immediately after the vote was taken,¹³² and King declared that if the document should be resubmitted for reconsideration in connection with Palmerston's statement, it would not receive a single vote.¹³³ But King seems to have convinced Clayton that the Senate did not regard the treaty as applying to Belize.¹³⁴

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 59-60.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹³⁰ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 694, doc. 13, p. 16.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² Bulwer to Palmerston, Aug. 6, 1850, "Secret and confidential", *F. O., Am.*, vol. 514, no. 157.

¹³³ *Cong. Globe*, 32 Cong., 2 sess., 237.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 250.

King suspected, however, that the object of the declaration was to obtain from the American government an acknowledgment of British title to the Belize territory,¹³⁶ and he was determined that no such admission should be made. Clayton also suspected the British of this design; but, in view of his evasive arrangement with Bulwer to prevent British pretensions to the Bay Islands from defeating ratification of the treaty by the Senate, he was especially concerned over the elastic possibilities of the term "dependencies", and believed that by this wording the British government aimed to insure its claims to the Bay Islands.¹³⁶

After considerable discussion the American government decided to proceed with the ratification, but to present a counter-declaration, calculated to annul any effect intended to be produced by the statement of the British government.¹³⁷ This counter-declaration was carefully drawn up by Clayton, who consulted Johnson, the United States attorney-general, with regard to its phraseology.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ *Cong. Globe*, 33 Cong., 1 sess., Appendix, 96.

¹³⁶ Bulwer to Palmerston, Aug. 6, 1850, "Secret and confidential", F. O., Am., vol. 514. According to Bulwer, in a conversation during the period of negotiation Clayton had acknowledged Belize "with its dependencies, including two islands called Ruatan and Bonaca", to be excluded from the terms of the treaty. Extract of memorandum inclosed by Bulwer in a private note to Webster, Aug. 17, 1850, Dept. of State, Notes to Dept., Gt. Brit., vol. 27. This statement appears inconsistent with some of Clayton's other statements and actions, but a knowledge of his equivocal conduct regarding the islands when the treaty was before the Senate makes it seem not unlikely that Bulwer reported the conversation correctly. Clayton possessed a wavering and contradictory disposition, qualities which were fully recognized by Bulwer. Bulwer to Palmerston, Mar. 2, 1850, "Private and confidential", F. O., Am., vol. 512, no. 43; "Letters of Bancroft and Buchanan", in *Am. Hist. Rev.*, V, 98. Cf. Crampton to Clarendon, Mar. 31, 1856, F. O., Am., vol. 642, no. 77; May 19, 1856, *ibid.*, vol. 643, no. 128; May 27, 1856, *ibid.*

¹³⁷ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 694, doc. 13, pp. 16-17.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

On July 4, the day upon which the ratifications were exchanged, Clayton wrote to King with reference to the proposed counter-statement and asked for his permission to state that the true meaning of the treaty had been explained by him, King, to the Senate before the vote was taken.¹³⁹ To this King replied that the Senate "perfectly understood that the treaty did not include British Honduras".¹⁴⁰

Consequently, before the ratifications were exchanged that night Clayton handed to Bulwer a document which declared that the treaty was not understood by the British or American governments or by the negotiators—

to include the British settlement in Honduras (commonly called British Honduras, as distinct from the State of Honduras) nor the small islands in the neighborhood which may be known as its dependencies. To this settlement, and these islands, the treaty we negotiated was not intended by either of us to apply. The title to them it is now and has been my intention, throughout the negotiation, to leave, as the treaty leaves it, without denying, affirming, or in any way meddling with the same, just as it stood previously. The chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, the Hon. William R. King, informs me that "the Senate perfectly understood that the treaty did not include British Honduras". It was understood to apply to, and does include all the Central American States of Guatemala, Honduras, San Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica with their just limits and proper dependencies.¹⁴¹

To this Bulwer replied in substance, that he understood Clayton's answer to the declaration of the British government as meaning that he, Clayton, fully recog-

¹³⁹ *Cong. Globe*, 32 Cong., 2 sess., 250.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 12, pp. 2-3.

nized that it was not the intention of the treaty to include the British settlement at Honduras, whatever might be included under the term, nor its dependencies, whatever they might be; and that British title to the settlement would not in any way be altered in consequence of the treaty.¹⁴² Exchange of ratifications followed.¹⁴³

Thus the treaty was concluded without the consent of the Senate to the declaration, and, in consequence, that declaration was obviously not an alteration of the treaty but was merely understood by the two negotiators as a "just specification of its meaning and intentions".¹⁴⁴ However, the President and his cabinet,¹⁴⁵ as well as individual senators who were consulted, knew of the existence of the declaration before the treaty was ratified. Furthermore, the interpretation of the treaty held by the government must have become pretty well known to the Senate as a whole within a few days after it was concluded, for, on July 8, the *National Intelligencer* stated that the treaty neither recognized nor altered in any way the British title to Belize;¹⁴⁶ and the message of the President, of the fourteenth of the same month, transferring the treaty to the House of Representatives, contained more detailed expressions to the same effect.¹⁴⁷

Although no discussion appears to have arisen at the time, in consequence of these post-ratification announcements, the Clayton-Bulwer treaty from the

¹⁴² *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 63-64.

¹⁴³ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 12, p. 4.

¹⁴⁴ Bulwer to Palmerston, Aug. 6, 1850, *F. O., Am.*, vol. 514, no. 157.

¹⁴⁵ *Cong. Globe*, 32 Cong., 2 sess., 248.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 249. ¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

first was unpopular in America. Its phraseology was vague and it did not directly abolish the Mosquito protectorate; hence it failed to convey the full assurance desired by the nation that British influence in Central America was absolutely obliterated. However, the American government believed that the peculiar wording of the first article had rendered the protectorate null; it felt that the agreement not to occupy, colonize, fortify, or exercise dominion was equivalent to an agreement to withdraw, for without the ability to do these things protection was impossible. To be sure, a nominal protectorate could exist under the treaty, but it was hoped that as the protectorate was utterly shorn of its power, the British government would entirely abandon it. This general view of the treaty was reflected in a letter written by Clayton to Squier when the treaty was before the Senate. He wrote:

I trust that means will speedily be adopted by Great Britain to extinguish the Indian title with the help of the Nicaraguans or the Company¹⁴⁸ within what we consider to be the limits of Nicaragua . . . Having always regarded an Indian title as a mere right of occupancy, we can never agree that such a title should be treated otherwise than as a thing to be extinguished at the will of the discoverer of the country. Upon the ratifying of the treaty, Great Britain will no longer have any interest to deny this principle which she had recognized in every other case in common with us. Her protectorate will be reduced to a shadow, "*Stat nominis umbra*," for she can neither occupy, fortify, colonize or exercise dominion or control in any part of the Mosquito coast or Central America. To attempt to do either of those things after the exchange of ratifications, would inevitably produce a rupture with the United States.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ The canal company.

¹⁴⁹ Dept. of State, Inst., Am. States, vol. 15, pp. 105-106.

Reverdy Johnson, the attorney-general, interpreted the agreement in the same manner. On December 30, 1853, he wrote in a letter to Clayton :

As one of the advisers of the President, I unhesitatingly gave him my opinion, that the treaty did effectually, to all intents and purposes, disarm the British protectorate in Central America and the Mosquito coast, although it did not abolish the protectorate in terms, nor was it thought advisable to do so "*in ipsissimis verbis*". All that was desired by us was to extinguish British dominion over that country, whether held directly or indirectly—whether claimed by Great Britain in her own right, or in the right of the Indians.¹⁵⁰

The correspondence upon the subject makes it clear that at the time of negotiation the British government agreed pretty closely with the United States as to the influence of the treaty upon the Mosquito protectorate¹⁵¹—an influence, however, which, strange to say, Bulwer, the British negotiator of the treaty, did not recognize as existing.¹⁵² Though there was no feeling

¹⁵⁰ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 694, doc. 13, p. 15. Though Johnson's letter was written more than three years after the ratification of the treaty, and during a controversy between the British and American governments over its interpretation, there is no reason to believe that the opinion of the Attorney-General here expressed differed in any degree from that held by him when the treaty was concluded.

¹⁵¹ This will be brought out in the following chapters.

¹⁵² On April 28, 1850, after the treaty was signed, Bulwer wrote to Palmerston: "I need not say that should your Lordship wish to make any further statement as to the views of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the protectorate of Mosquito, that statement can still be made; nothing in the present Convention is affirmed thereupon, but nothing is abandoned." *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 56.

In a memorandum of the negotiations kept for his own use Bulwer wrote: "The treaty, indeed, was intended to apply to future and not to present possessions in Central America; so that without any question as to what Central America is, H. M.'s settlement in Honduras and its dependencies are not included in the said treaty." Extract of Memorandum inclosed by Bulwer in a private note to Webster, Aug. 17, 1850, Dept. of State, Notes to Dept., Gt. Brit., vol. 27.

that the protectorate over the Mosquitos had been abandoned, it was fully realized that the relations with the Indians had been decidedly weakened.¹⁵⁸ Through the persistence of Clayton the substance of the protectorate had been taken away, though the form, with the pride of the British, had been preserved by Bulwer's shrewd diplomacy.

Just what either government thought would be the effect of the treaty upon British occupation of Belize and the Bay Islands, it is impossible to say, for no expression of opinion upon this point seems to have been recorded at this time. It seems fair to presume, however, that, after the British declaration regarding Belize had been exchanged for the American counter-declaration, both governments were uncertain as to what had actually been lost or won by the transaction; but that both were determined to get the most possible out of the arrangement in the execution of their respective policies. The effect of this procedure will appear later.

¹⁵⁸ During the negotiation of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, Chatfield endeavored to form a treaty with Honduras regarding the Mosquito boundary at the north. The first draft of the agreement bore the Queen's name as one of the parties to the agreement. Inclosure in Palmerston to Chatfield, Mar. 30, 1850, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 63, no. 11. Later, in June, this was changed by order of the British government, and the name of the Mosquito king was substituted, on the ground that the other form was not consistent with the language of the treaty with the United States, which engaged both parties not to "assume or exercise any dominion over Mosquito coast", etc. Palmerston to Chatfield, June 20, 1850, and inclosure, *ibid.*, no. 21, and Foreign Office notes of June 6 and 7, 1850, *ibid.*, vol. 63.

CHAPTER IV.

ATTEMPTS AT READJUSTMENT UNDER THE NEW TREATY, 1850-1852.

The negotiation of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty was brought to a successful conclusion by careful concentration upon the points of agreement between the two contracting parties, and studied avoidance of the larger Central American question, regarding which differences were well known to exist. To carry out the spirit of the treaty in its application to the Mosquitos was far more difficult, but it was a task which the British government honestly planned to attempt, even before ratifications were exchanged.

When the treaty was under consideration of the Senate, Bulwer wrote to Palmerston :

You will best judge if anything, and if anything what, is to be done as to the remaining difference between Nicaragua and Mosquito, on which the Government of Her Majesty and that of the United States still entertain opposite opinions, although these opinions are, by our Treaty, restrained or withdrawn from the necessity of being carried out into any act of hostility.¹

Though the British government, he added, no longer had any interest in maintaining the Mosquitos where they were or in protecting them in that particular locality, still they could not give up the protectorate or

¹ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 56.

change the condition of things on which it existed if pressed to do so in a disagreeable way ; yet the question might be finally settled with a friendly power on general and friendly grounds. If the pending treaty with the United States, and that between the latter and Nicaragua could be completed without any assertion of the right of Nicaragua over the Mosquito territory, a friendly arrangement might be made with the United States for the withdrawal of the Mosquitos from the vicinity of the canal. The Mosquito title might be purchased and the Indians reorganized in a particular district.²

In reply to these suggestions, Palmerston wrote :

Her Majesty's government feel that the present state of things in regard to the Mosquito Territory, and especially with regard to the Port of Grey Town, is in many respects inconvenient, and not entirely in conformity with the true spirit and meaning of the Convention just concluded between Great Britain and the United States. The British government is bound in honor to protect the Mosquitos, but her Majesty's government are of the opinion that the protection of Great Britain might be afforded to that nation as effectually in a different way, and without any direct interference of any agent of the British Government in the internal affairs of that country.

In accordance with this idea, he explained, the boundaries of the Mosquito territory might be adjusted by Great Britain in co-operation with the United States. In order to meet the terms of the treaty, and yet to secure for Greytown a well-organized government, the boundary dispute between Mosquito and Costa Rica might be so arranged as to give the port, with a suffi-

² *Ibid.*, 56-57.

cient district to the north of it, to the latter.³ In return for the cession, Palmerston wrote, the Mosquitos should be given some suitable and adequate compensation.⁴ In combination with these arrangements, he thought that the general differences between Costa Rica and Nicaragua might be settled by the good offices of the British and American governments.⁵ The basis of such arrangement might be the decision in favor of Nicaragua of some of the disputed questions of boundary on the western side of the isthmus.⁶

Bulwer knew that the American government was interested in securing a favorable canal treaty from Nicaragua, and therefore would not be likely to make any disagreeable suggestions to her while the Squier treaty was in abeyance. Consequently, he approached Clayton cautiously, remarking that if the American government would agree to the transfer of Greytown to Costa Rica in return for some cession of other disputed territory he would suggest such an arrangement to Palmerston.⁷ However, as he suspected would be the case, Clayton was opposed to such a disposal of the question.⁸ Bulwer therefore became convinced that the most urgent need at that time was to prevent the United States from recognizing by treaty the rights of

³ F. O., Am., vol. 509, no. 58. Though Costa Rica did possess a more stable government than Nicaragua, the fact that Great Britain was a friend of the former, while bad feeling existed between herself and the latter, which looked towards the United States for protection, undoubtedly also influenced Palmerston in considering the disposal of Greytown.

⁴ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 58-59.

⁵ F. O., Am., vol. 509, no. 59.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Bulwer to Palmerston, July 1, 1850, "Private and confidential", F. O., Am., vol. 513.

⁸ *Ibid.*

Nicaragua over the San Juan, and worked with that end in view.⁹

With the accession of President Fillmore, Daniel Webster became secretary of state, and as the Clayton-Bulwer treaty was by this time ratified, discussions more to the point regarding the disposal of affairs in Central America seemed possible. Shortly after the ratification, Molina, the Costa Rican representative, informed Palmerston that his government was willing to submit the boundary dispute with Nicaragua to the joint mediation or arbitration of the United States and Great Britain,¹⁰ and would be bound by the decision of those governments.¹¹ Thereupon Palmerston communicated Molina's message to Bulwer with instructions to submit the proposal to the United States government.¹² The matter was made known to Webster by Bulwer,¹³ who at the same time suggested the desirability of speedily settling by joint mediation all of the territorial differences between Mosquito, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua.¹⁴

Webster replied that it would be necessary to know what the Nicaraguans would consent to before the United States government, which was in some degree compromised with respect to their claims by the expression of its opinions, could decide what would be the best course. He added, however, that he entirely agreed in the spirit of the plan suggested by Palmerston, and stated that he would recommend the Senate to do nothing for the time being with regard to the

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ This was in reply to an offer made by Palmerston. *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 65.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 65-66. ¹² *Ibid.*, 67. ¹³ *Ibid.*, 68. ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 67.

Squier treaty,¹⁵ to which Bulwer had called attention because it contained certain points objectionable to the British government.¹⁶

But the situation in Central America was such as to make a prompt settlement very difficult, if not impossible. Political conditions in Nicaragua had grown worse and the government had been brought very much under the influence of the canal company,¹⁷ an agent of which was reported as trying to induce the Nicaraguans to recapture San Juan.¹⁸ This town¹⁹ was at the time nominally under Mosquito sovereignty, but really governed by the British consul, who was virtually dictator²⁰ and, as representative of the arch-enemy, was cordially hated by the Nicaraguans. To avert danger of an attack, British war ships were ordered to visit the port,²¹ and after a time one or two vessels were kept constantly in the harbor.²² The boundary dispute between Costa Rica and Nicaragua had also grown more bitter, and war between the two threatened to increase the confusion.²³

More serious still was the fact that communication with the British and American agents in Central Amer-

¹⁵ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 68-69.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 70-72.

¹⁷ Bulwer to Palmerston, Sept. 29, 1850, "Private and confidential", *F. O., Am.*, vol. 515, no. 189.

¹⁸ *Parl. Papers*, 1856 *Coms.* LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 90.

¹⁹ In the autumn of 1850 the place contained fifty or sixty houses with a population of about three hundred. Squier, *Nicaragua*, I, 72-73.

²⁰ Froehel, *Seven Years' Travel in Central America*, 14; Squier, *Nicaragua*, I, 79.

²¹ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 90-91.

²² Squier, *Nicaragua*, I, 79.

²³ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 95.

ica was so difficult that it was almost impossible for their governments to keep in touch with or control them. The actions of Chatfield and Squier in particular, both of whom were lacking in tact and judgment and were exceedingly jealous of each other's intentions, often threatened to cause trouble for the countries which they represented. Apparently unaware of the opinion held at Washington regarding his treaty for the cession of Tigre, Squier seized the island shortly after its evacuation by the British,²⁴ and for many months the American flag floated over it, regardless of the fact that the Honduras legislature had disavowed the treaty of cession.²⁵ Chatfield, on the other hand, seemed finally to lose all interest in making Tigre British territory, but busied himself with various other violent acts calculated to force the Central American states to pay their long-standing debts. His efforts with Nicaragua and Costa Rica availed little, however, for both states united in refusing payment until the British acknowledged their rights to Mosquito Shore.²⁶ Furthermore, scarcely had the terms of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty become known before the two agents began to rouse irritation by their extreme and contradictory interpretations of that instrument, as to the peculiar advantages conferred by it upon their respective governments.²⁷ As a result of his unsatisfactory

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 61.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 94-95.

²⁶ Hall to Macdonald, Dec. 8, 1841, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 25; Chatfield to Palmerston, Nov. 6, 1850, *ibid.*, vol. 66, no. 104. Spain, by a treaty with Nicaragua, made July 25, 1850, acknowledged the exclusive claims of the latter to the sovereignty of Mosquito coast. Chatfield to Palmerston, Oct. 9, 1850, *ibid.*, vol. 65, no. 87.

²⁷ Inclosure in Chatfield to Palmerston, July 1, 1850, *ibid.*, vol. 64; Chatfield to Palmerston, Aug. 20, 1850, *ibid.*, vol. 65, no. 58; Bulwer to Palmerston, Mar. 10, 1851, F. O., Am., vol. 528, no. 49.

conduct, Squier was recalled in the autumn of 1850,²⁸ and was succeeded by Kerr,²⁹ who was of a less pugnacious disposition.³⁰ This change relieved matters but little, however, for Chatfield remained and kept up the condition of semi-warfare in Central America,³¹ and consequently created ill-feeling in the United States against England. But he too was removed, in January, 1852,³² presumably in consequence of repeated complaints by the American government,³³ and after his departure more pacific relations prevailed between British and American representatives on the isthmus.

Notwithstanding these various obstacles, Bulwer tried to keep the question of a Central American settlement to the front, for he felt that better and fairer terms, from a British viewpoint, could be obtained from Webster than from any other secretary of state.³⁴ But in consequence of Webster's determination to consider Nicaragua's wishes in the matter, no progress was made for several months. The Nicaraguan government had promised to send a representative to Washington, but none had arrived.³⁵ Should none be sent, Webster assured Bulwer, it was the intention of the American government to establish diplomatic relations

²⁸ Bulwer to Palmerston, Oct. 7, 1850, *ibid.*, vol. 515, no. 208.

²⁹ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 819, doc. 25, pp. 47-48.

³⁰ Chatfield to Palmerston, Oct. 25, 1851, *F. O., Cen. Am.*, vol. 72, no. 126.

³¹ Bulwer to Palmerston, Jan. 28, 1851, *F. O., Am.*, vol. 527, no. 20; Bulwer to Palmerston, Mar. 10, 1851, *ibid.*, vol. 528, no. 49.

³² Granville to Chatfield, Jan. 15, 1852, *F. O., Cen. Am.*, vol. 76, no. 2; Bulwer to Palmerston, June 22, 1851, *F. O., Am.*, vol. 529, no. 112.

³³ Bulwer to Palmerston, Jan. 28, 1851, *ibid.*, vol. 527, no. 20; Mar. 10, 1851, *ibid.*, vol. 528, no. 49.

³⁴ White to Palmerston, Nov. 12, 1851, *ibid.*, vol. 537; Bulwer to Palmerston, May 19, 1851, *ibid.*, vol. 528, no. 98.

³⁵ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 95.

with Nicaragua by appointing an agent to that government at once.³⁶

While the American government waited to hear from Nicaragua, Bulwer resumed the discussion of terms of settlement, and finally persuaded Webster to agree not to recognize the exclusive right of Nicaragua over the San Juan River or to make more than a commercial treaty with that government; but Webster would not consent to the cession of Greytown to Costa Rica.³⁷ Bulwer therefore suggested to Palmerston that the town be given to Nicaragua, in return for compensation to the Mosquitos and to Costa Rica;³⁸ and Palmerston agreed to this plan, provided insurmountable difficulties prevented the transfer of the port to Costa Rica.³⁹

Finally Marcoleta arrived as representative of the Nicaraguan government and expressed a desire to form commercial treaties with Great Britain and with the United States.⁴⁰ Shortly afterwards he began negotiations for the latter purpose with Webster.⁴¹ Meanwhile the discussion of the disputed points in connection with Mosquito was vigorously pursued by Webster and Bulwer, and the latter began to hope for a speedy termination of the whole question.⁴² However, when the two negotiators had almost reached an agreement regarding Greytown,⁴³ Marcoleta displayed a sudden change of mind,⁴⁴ and declared himself unwilling to sign any commercial treaty with England, or even with

³⁶ *Ibid.* ³⁷ *Ibid.*, 96-97. ³⁸ *Ibid.* ³⁹ *Ibid.*, 98.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* ⁴¹ *Ibid.* ⁴² *Ibid.* ⁴³ *Ibid.*, 98-99.

⁴⁴ The change in Marcoleta was evidently due to criticism from his government because of a willingness to make concessions, which he had at first shown, and to a correspondence which he had recently carried on with Senator Douglas, who was an enemy of any compromise with England. Bulwer to Palmerston, July 28, 1851, F. O., Am., vol. 529, no. 132.

the United States unless something respecting Greytown and the Mosquito territory was at the same time settled.⁴⁵

This stand of the Nicaraguan agent produced a change in Webster, who, while still expressing adherence to his former opinions, seemed reluctant to act upon them.⁴⁶ Bulwer, desirous of securing some definite result, drew up a statement of the opinions expressed by himself and Webster, which the latter after some reflection finally refused to sign.⁴⁷ Then Bulwer proposed a meeting of Marcoleta, Molina (the Costa Rican minister), Webster, and himself for the purpose of trying to reach satisfactory terms. The meeting was held July 11, but it resulted in nothing, as the Nicaraguan minister refused to accept any arrangement suggested by Bulwer, and offered instead proposals from his own government,⁴⁸ which Bulwer in turn refused to consider.⁴⁹ This change in affairs again brought negotiations to a standstill, for Marcoleta had no powers to go beyond the proposals he had made.⁵⁰ Some time before, Crampton had arrived at Washington for the purpose of relieving Bulwer, but at Webster's request the latter had consented to remain longer

⁴⁵ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 99.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* Webster's reluctance was certainly produced to some extent by the change in Marcoleta; but public criticism of his foreign policy may also have caused him to hesitate. Bulwer to Palmerston, April 7, 1851, *F. O., Am.*, vol. 528, no. 69.

⁴⁸ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 99. Marcoleta's proposals differed from those of Bulwer in that they provided for no compensation to the Mosquitos in return for Greytown, which, by both projects was to go to Nicaragua; and the boundary dispute between the latter and Costa Rica was to be settled by arbitration. *Ibid.*, 100.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 98.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 100.

in order to try to settle the Mosquito difficulty.⁵¹ Now, as no progress could be made until the Nicaraguan government was again heard from, Bulwer returned home in August, 1851.⁵²

During the period of delay an event occurred which created considerable feeling against England in the United States, and seriously threatened the friendly relations which the Clayton-Bulwer treaty had temporarily established. On November 21, 1851, the *Prometheus*, a vessel belonging to the Atlantic and Pacific Ship-Canal Company, was in Greytown harbor, about to leave for New York.⁵³ For some time harbor dues⁵⁴ had been levied by the municipal authorities upon all vessels entering the port except the English steamers which carried the mail. All had fulfilled the requirement except the *Prometheus*, which had made several trips, each time steadily refusing to meet the demands of the port officials, on the ground that the company did not recognize the Mosquito authorities.⁵⁵ On the occasion in question, after the usual bill of charges, plus

⁵¹ Bulwer to Palmerston, May 25, 1851, F. O., Am., vol. 528, no. 100.

⁵² *Dic. Nat. Biog.*, XIII, 6.

⁵³ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 111.

⁵⁴ This was a port charge levied solely by the local officials in order to meet expenses connected with the harbor. *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 618, doc. 30, p. 5. In accordance with the provisions of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, Palmerston, in the autumn of 1850, had instructed the Mosquito authorities to make Greytown a free port. Palmerston to Bulwer, Nov. 15, 1850, F. O., Am., vol. 510, no. 150. These instructions had been obeyed, and since January 1, 1851, no duties had been levied by the representatives of the Mosquito government upon vessels or goods. *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 618, doc. 30, p. 5.

⁵⁵ It should be remembered that the canal company had obtained its charter and contract from the Nicaraguan government. The contract had granted the company the use of the river and harbor "free of all duties or charges of any kind whatsoever". *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America",

arrears, had been presented and payment refused, a warrant was issued for the arrest of Churchill, the captain of the vessel, for the debt. Local officials went aboard and served the warrant, but Churchill still resisted. The officials, after giving notice that the vessel would not be permitted to leave until the debt was paid, went ashore. The captain, however, ignored the threat and in a few minutes his vessel was dropping down the harbor.⁶⁶ The British brig-of-war *Express* happened to be in the port at the time and its captain, Fead, had been requested by Green, the British consul, to detain the *Prometheus* in case the dues were not paid.⁶⁷ Accordingly the *Express* immediately followed the departing vessel and at Green's orders two shots were fired across her bows. The *Prometheus* then returned to her place of anchorage, and the president of the canal company, Cornelius Vanderbilt, who happened to be aboard, went ashore and paid the debt. The vessel was then permitted to proceed on her voyage.⁶⁸

On December 1, the board of directors of the canal company met and drew up resolutions regarding the affair, in which they claimed the interference and protection of the United States government.⁶⁹ White, the counsel for the company, sent resolutions, accompanied by a letter calling attention to Green's share in detaining the vessel, to the United States government.⁷⁰ Promptly upon receiving intelligence of the matter, the Navy Department ordered Commodore Parker,

⁶⁶ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 111.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 113.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 111; *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 614, doc. 6, pp. 2-3.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3. ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

commander of the home squadron, to leave as soon as possible for San Juan in order to protect American interests there.⁶¹ Parker was instructed to assure the authorities of the port, however, that the American government would not justify the non-payment of any lawful and proper port dues on the part of merchant vessels.⁶² On the same date Webster sent a despatch to Lawrence calling his attention to the action of the British officials at San Juan and directing him to inquire of Palmerston whether the captain of the *Express* had acted under orders from his government, and whether his course was approved. Should Palmerston's reply be in the affirmative, Lawrence was to state that the President would consider the proceeding a violation of the treaty of April 19, 1850.⁶³

The resignation of Palmerston just when Lawrence presented his communication prevented a prompt reply from the British government,⁶⁴ but on December 30, immediately after his installation in the Foreign Office, Granville wrote to Lawrence stating that Fead's act was not in consequence of any orders from his government, and that as soon as word should be received from Greytown a further statement would be made. In the meanwhile Lawrence might rest assured that it was "far from the intention of her Majesty's government to authorize any proceeding at variance with the stipulations of the treaty of Washington of the 19th of April, 1850."⁶⁵ Upon receipt of this note Lawrence expressed his regret that the British government had not yet received the official intelligence which would enable it to disavow the act of the *Express*.⁶⁶ To this

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4. ⁶² *Ibid.* ⁶³ *Ibid.*, ser. no. 618, doc. 30, pp. 1-2.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 4. ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6. ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

Granville replied that should the circumstances of the affair be shown to be such as were described by the American minister, the British government would at once disavow it.⁶⁷

During this period of suspense the affair was taken up in an angry manner in the United States by the Democratic party and the press, and matters were becoming serious⁶⁸ when Crampton received a letter from Vice-Admiral Seymour of the British navy, which relieved the situation. Seymour stated that his instructions to the commander of the Jamaica division of the navy did not sanction such an act as Fead had committed, and that therefore he had sent word to Fead to desist from enforcing the payment of dues at Greytown until further orders. Seymour also stated that Green, too, had apparently acted without instructions.⁶⁹ Crampton greatly relieved Webster's anxiety by reading portions of this timely letter to him, and he, Webster, asked Crampton to inform Seymour that the United States government highly appreciated the friendly and considerate spirit in which he had acted.⁷⁰

On December 20, Seymour had written to the Admiralty of the affair and explained the instructions which he had given regarding Greytown.⁷¹ Through this letter Granville received his first official information regarding the matter.⁷² On January 10, 1852, immediately upon the receipt of it, he wrote to Lawrence making known the attitude taken by the Vice-Admiral, and stating that the British government entirely ap-

⁶⁷ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 618, doc. 30, pp. 6-7.

⁶⁸ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 122.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 121. ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 122. ⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 121.

⁷² *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 618, doc. 30, pp. 7-8.

proved of the latter's conduct, and disavowed the acts of Green and Fead.⁷³

Lawrence expressed his gratification at the promptness with which the disavowal had followed the receipt of Seymour's report and stated that he had no doubt but that the apology would be received by his government in the same spirit which had dictated it on the part of Great Britain.⁷⁴ Lawrence's earlier report of the attitude taken by Granville had been received by Webster with much satisfaction,⁷⁵ and after notice of the disavowal and apology had reached him he expressed his belief that the British government had "behaved with great honor and justice in the affair of the *Prometheus*".⁷⁶ Thus the matter ended peaceably, and with friendly feelings between the two governments.

But the excitement growing out of the affair showed the constant danger in delaying a settlement regarding the Mosquito question and created greater anxiety on both sides for a resumption of negotiations.⁷⁷ Webster now, apparently for the first time, showed a real interest in effecting an adjustment. While writing to Lawrence shortly before the news of the disavowal was received, he expressed his fears for the future should the arrangement of matters in dispute with England much longer be postponed.⁷⁸ Moreover, Palmerston's withdrawal from the government was considered as particularly favorable to American interests, and hence to an adjustment.⁷⁹ It was now believed that England

⁷³ *Ibid.* ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

⁷⁵ Webster, *Writings and Speeches*, XVI, 635.

⁷⁶ Curtis, *Daniel Webster*, II, 596.

⁷⁷ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 117, 123-124.

⁷⁸ Webster, *Writings and Speeches*, XVI, 634-635.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, XVIII, 504, 510.

had a strong desire to settle all pending questions⁸⁰ and that she would never be in a better humor for the purpose.⁸¹ A strong effort was made to have Bulwer return to the country for the purpose of resuming the negotiations,⁸² but circumstances prevented,⁸³ so that duty fell to Crampton.

Matters, however, were in such confusion in Nicaragua that it seemed impossible to make the diplomatic connections necessary for consulting her with reference to terms. It was just at this time that the three states of Honduras, Nicaragua, and Salvador were making an effort to federate, but affairs were so unstable as to force Marcoleta to acknowledge that there was no government which he could properly represent, or which could properly give him instructions;⁸⁴ and Kerr, the American minister, who had been in Nicaragua for several months, reported that he had not yet been able to find any authority to which he could present his credentials.⁸⁵

But upon reflection the American government had decided that until the boundary dispute between Nicaragua and Costa Rica was settled, and until it was determined just where the proposed canal should run, no guarantee of sovereignty over the canal line could be given to Nicaragua; for such a guarantee, should the route run on the south side of the river—which was claimed by Costa Rica—would only complicate diffi-

⁸⁰ Curtis, *Daniel Webster*, II, 593.

⁸¹ Webster, *Writings and Speeches*, XVIII, 525.

⁸² Curtis, *Daniel Webster*, II, 593.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 593-596.

⁸⁴ Webster, *Writings and Speeches*, XVI, 636; *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 819, doc. 25, p. 55.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

culties.⁸⁶ Hence, as a canal treaty with Nicaragua must be an arrangement of the indefinite future, the friendship of that nation was not now so eagerly sought. This fact, as well as the urgency for the settlement of the Mosquito question and the hopelessness of early restoration of diplomatic relations with Nicaragua, made Webster willing to consider terms, independently of that state. The idea now was to reach an agreement satisfactory to the British and American governments, which could become the basis for a quadripartite treaty.⁸⁷

After Webster had expressed a desire to come to an understanding over the question,⁸⁸ Granville, on January 23, 1852, instructed Crampton to enter into a discussion with him, and outlined various plans of settlement to be proposed to the American secretary of state. It was the desire of the British government, Granville wrote, that the whole Mosquito question should be settled, and especially that it should be settled in such a manner as to secure the cordial assent and good will of the United States. The only stipulation upon which the government insisted was that the settlement be consistent with British honor.⁸⁹

But the change which almost immediately again took place in the Foreign Office, as well as the preoccupation of Webster with other matters,⁹⁰ prevented any definite progress from being made before events at Greytown once more attracted attention to that place.

⁸⁶ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 819, doc. 25, pp. 47-48.

⁸⁷ Webster, *Writings and Speeches*, XIV, 480.

⁸⁸ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 117.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 124-126.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 131, 143, 144, 146.

The difficulty this time rose from the instructions given Commodore Parker before his departure for Greytown. These had stated that the United States acknowledged no right in the government or vessels of Great Britain to exercise any police or supervision over American merchant vessels in Nicaragua or elsewhere, out of British dominions; on the contrary, the first article of the convention between the United States and Great Britain relative to Nicaragua, signed April 19, 1850, excluded each of the contracting parties from assuming or exercising any dominion over Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito coast, or any part of Central America.⁹¹

This view of the matter was presented by Parker to Captain Fead, who in turn reported it to his government. Upon receipt of Fead's letter, Granville wrote in an injured tone to Crampton with regard to Parker's language :

Her Majesty's Government cannot admit such an interpretation of the Convention of the 19th of April, by which, as understood by Her Majesty's Government, Great Britain is not precluded from protecting the Mosquitos but is only restricted from occupying, fortifying, or colonizing, or of assuming or exercising any dominion over the Mosquito Coast or any part of Central America; and Her Majesty's Government will therefore resist any attempt on the part of Nicaragua or any other Power to take possession of Greytown, or of any portion of the Mosquito territory, until some arrangement is concluded between Great Britain and the United States.⁹²

With his letter Granville inclosed a report from Seymour, showing matters to be in a critical condition at Greytown. The language of some of Parker's officers

⁹¹ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 614, doc. 6, p. 4.

⁹² *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 127.

was of so unfriendly a nature as to cause the British officers at the place to fear that they would further a threatened attack on the port by the Nicaraguans. In consequence of these demonstrations, Seymour had ordered an additional vessel to Greytown.⁹³

With reference to this situation, Granville stated that in order to maintain a good understanding between the two countries it was desirable that, until a final settlement could be reached, a provisional agreement be made, by which, without entering into any question of right of possession, both parties should recognize the existing government of Greytown as a merely *de facto* body, existing there for the benefit of commerce and the maintenance of order; and that in accordance with this agreement British subjects and American citizens at Greytown be enjoined to respect the local laws and pay the local port dues, and the commanders of British and American vessels stationed or arriving at the port be instructed to enforce respect to these laws and regulations.⁹⁴

The view given by Granville as to the bearing of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty upon the Mosquito protectorate is of interest because it is the first expression of opinion upon the subject exchanged between the two governments and is a slight hint of the long and bitter discussions over the interpretation of the treaty which were to come with more aggressive administrations in England and the United States. But at this time no discussion resulted, for when Crampton called Webster's attention to the matter, the Secretary of State replied that he by no means held the doctrine, which, from the terms of the Foreign Secretary's letter, the British

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 128.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 127-128.

government seemed to infer was that held by the American government. On the contrary, he said, he was "well aware that each Government still held its own opinion as to the rights of Nicaragua and Mosquito to Greytown" and that it was for the purpose of removing and reconciling these recognized differences of opinion that he was engaged in negotiations upon the subject with the British minister.⁹⁵ Furthermore, Webster received with favor Granville's proposal to recognize the *de facto* government at Greytown.⁹⁶ Therefore, in accordance with a suggestion from Webster, identical instructions, with full power to come to an agreement and execute the details of the arrangement, were sent to Parker and Seymour by their respective governments.⁹⁷

But before the instructions for this mutual arrangement were given, another event took place at the storm-center, which threatened further to embarrass the situation. On February 28 there met in San Juan a body of men largely composed of Americans—resident merchants⁹⁸ and adventurers, pausing on their way to California.⁹⁹ This assemblage passed resolutions expressing a desire for a more satisfactory government than that existing under the Anglo-Mosquito authorities, and indicating the determination to establish a new government based upon power to be obtained from Nicaragua, which was declared to be the rightful owner of the territory. In accordance with the resolutions, a committee of fifteen was appointed with instructions to

⁹⁵ *Parl. Papers, 1856, Coms., LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 134.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* ⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 134-137. ⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 110-112, 139.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 137, 151.

proceed to Nicaragua and secure a charter of incorporation.¹⁰⁰

Crampton, upon learning of these proceedings, immediately realized that the plans of the Americans could not be carried into effect without the violent expulsion of the existing authorities at Greytown—an event likely to cause misunderstandings or collisions between the British and American naval officers at the port, and, consequently, bad feeling between their governments.¹⁰¹ Therefore, he promptly communicated with Webster, and the two agreed upon a set of instructions which was sent to the British and American naval officers stationed at Greytown.¹⁰² These instructions were similar to those recently furnished to Parker and Seymour,¹⁰³ who were at the time so far apart that it would be long before they could meet and come to an agreement.¹⁰⁴ This prompt action and the good judgment of the acting British consul at Greytown¹⁰⁵ apparently convinced the disaffected Americans that they could not count on any support from their government, and caused their plans to come to nothing.¹⁰⁶

But the increase of immigration to the California gold fields and the popularity of the Nicaragua route had in four years' time quite changed the character of the population of Greytown, as well as greatly added to its numbers.¹⁰⁷ The American residents, who were the most numerous,¹⁰⁸ complained of British influence and attributed the difficulties which constantly rose in the town, not to Mosquito, but to British interference.¹⁰⁹ Therefore, Green, who acted as British consul and agent for the Mosquito king, and was in the latter capacity

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 138-139. ¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 137.

¹⁰² *Ibid.* ¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 140-142.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 137.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 150-152.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 151-152.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 169.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 168.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 168-169.

chairman of the town council,¹¹⁰ decided to remove the cause of friction by withdrawing from all direct interference with the management of the local government.¹¹¹ He was very probably also moved to this resolve by fear of another attempt such as that made in February to overthrow Mosquito sovereignty at Greytown and establish that of Nicaragua. Consequently, on April 1, he called a meeting of the inhabitants and transferred to them the power of self-government.¹¹² The result was the establishment of a free town corresponding in a small way to the German cities of Hamburg or Bremen.¹¹³ A new constitution was formed, and under it new officers were elected.¹¹⁴ The inhabitants, who preferred a government of their own to being under the dominion of Nicaragua, now unanimously expressed a dislike for that state and declared their intention of forcibly resisting any attempt of the Nicaraguans to occupy the place.¹¹⁵ However, they had no objection to the nominal supremacy of the Mosquito king, and permitted his flag to fly over the town.¹¹⁶

While the accidental discovery of gold in the California Sierras was thus causing the cessation of active British interference at Greytown, negotiations for the final disposal of the Mosquito question had made some headway. At Webster's request, Crampton had outlined a plan for the settlement of the dispute, to which the British government would agree. This provided for the cession of Greytown and a district to the north of it to Nicaragua, in return for a sum of money to be paid to the Mosquitos; for the establishment of a

¹¹⁰ *Parl. Papers, 1856, Coms., LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 168-169.*

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 169.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 168, 169.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 169-173.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 169-170.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 168, 188.

definite boundary for the remainder of the Mosquito territory wherein the rights of the Indians were to be respected; and for the settlement of the boundary dispute by giving to Costa Rica the district of Guanacaste and all territory south of the San Juan, together with a limited right of navigation of the river.¹¹⁷ After a conference upon the matter, Webster failed to approve of the arrangement, and seemed inclined to the cession of Greytown to Nicaragua without an equivalent, as Nicaragua was without funds; and he proposed the recommendation of union between the Nicaraguans and Mosquitos, the latter becoming Nicaraguan citizens. Crampton on his part objected to this plan as inadvisable and inconsistent with the position which the British had always held in regard to Mosquito, a position from which, he said, Webster must feel they could not honorably recede.¹¹⁸ Finally Webster again told him to draw up the articles in a manner acceptable to the British government, and to add such improvements and conditions as should occur to him.¹¹⁹ Crampton did this,¹²⁰ modifying his project in the hope of meeting the most serious objections of the United States.¹²¹ This project he sent to his government, which, after making some slight modifications, returned the articles with its approval.¹²² The document then became the basis of a plan of settlement.

There is no evidence that in the negotiations which followed Webster made any attempt to force the British out of Central America. The Fillmore administration restricted its interest in that region almost wholly

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 142-143.¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 143.¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 144.¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 144-146.¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 144.¹²² *Ibid.*, 147-150.

to gaining protection for the transisthmian canal,¹²³ though it had no intention of recognizing the Mosquito kingdom.¹²⁴ The British, on the other hand, took the same attitude as during the negotiation of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty. The aim was to effect a settlement entirely satisfactory to the United States, and at the same time to save what the British government called its "honour", in connection with the Mosquito protectorate and the Mosquito claims. Great Britain no longer harbored selfish designs in connection with her former allies; but it was necessary that the Indians be secured from the possible tyranny of Nicaragua. The object of the supplementary project was to effect this, and there is no reason to doubt that the British intended to withdraw all of their officials from the Mosquito territory, should the treaty, of which the project was meant to become a basis, be ratified.¹²⁵ However, out of regard for British pride no concession could be made to the Nicaraguan government which could possibly be interpreted as an acknowledgment that the seizure of San Juan had been unjustifiable, or that the claims of Mosquito sovereignty and independence on which it had been based were a mere convenient pretense. With these objects in view, the articles were worked over, and, after various changes had been made, they were signed by the negotiators, on April 30, 1852.¹²⁶ The substance of the arrangement was as follows:

(1) Definite boundaries should be established for the Mosquitos, who were to relinquish Greytown and a

¹²³ Webster, *Writings and Speeches*, XIV, 636.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 471.

¹²⁵ See above, p. 108.

¹²⁶ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 158.

tract of territory to the north of San Juan River to Nicaragua. In return for this cession, the Mosquitos were to have for three years the net receipts of all duties levied and collected at Greytown, at the rate of ten per cent. *ad valorem* on all goods imported into the state. The protection of the Indians was to be secured by an agreement on the part of Nicaragua not to molest them within their territorial reserve.

(2) Nothing in the preceding article should prevent the Mosquitos from voluntarily incorporating themselves with the Nicaraguans, in which case they were to be on the same basis as other citizens of Nicaragua. Greytown was to be established as a free port.

(3) Boundaries were to be defined between Nicaragua and Costa Rica, giving to the latter all of the territory south of the San Juan, and limited privileges of navigation in this river.

Articles four to seven contained provisions intended to facilitate the construction of the canal or to govern its use.¹²⁷

As neither Molina nor Marcoleta had been consulted regarding this last plan of arrangement,¹²⁸ the negotiators attached to it a statement that the propositions, so far as they pertained to the governments of Costa Rica and Nicaragua, were merely advisory and recommendatory; but their immediate consideration by those governments was earnestly invoked. Furthermore, unless these states promptly agreed to the general basis

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 155-158.

¹²⁸ Molina had been ignored because the terms he demanded for land on the Costa Rican side of the San Juan, to be used by the canal company, were considered unreasonable by Webster. Marcoleta had remained without powers or instructions until the project was practically complete. *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 819, doc. 25, pp. 64, 66.

of the arrangement and adopted proper measures for carrying it into effect, the British and American governments would immediately agree between themselves upon such measures as they should deem advisable to carry into full execution the terms of the treaty of April 19, 1850.¹²⁹

Since it was very desirable that the whole affair be terminated before the American Congress adjourned, Webster suggested that the proposals be sent directly to Central America for submission to the governments concerned. Crampton agreed to this, although the revised draft had not yet been approved by his government. Accordingly, it was decided that Kerr, who was at Nicaragua, should present the project to that government, and that a special agent, Robert Walsh, should be sent to Costa Rica to obtain her consent. In behalf of the British government, the proposals should be presented to both Costa Rica and Nicaragua by Wyke, the successor of Chatfield, who had some time before arrived in Washington on his way to his post. At the suggestion of President Fillmore, he had awaited the completion of the project in order that he might proceed to Central America in company with the American special agent, and thus make apparent to the Nicaraguans that the British and American governments were in harmony regarding the matter.¹³⁰ The plan was carried out, and Walsh and Wyke sailed from New York on May 10, intending to proceed first to Costa Rica.¹³¹

Some time before this Webster had sent Kerr careful instructions for the presentation of the subject to the

¹²⁹ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, vol. LX, "Correspondence with United States respecting Central America", 157-158.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 146.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 159.

Nicaraguan government. In anticipation of probable objection to payment for the return of Greytown, Kerr was directed to point out that the port had not been in Nicaraguan possession since January, 1848, when Nicaraguan authority was forcibly expelled. The hopelessness of inducing the British government to agree to the cession without equivalent was also to be hinted at; but Kerr was to assure Nicaragua that by agreeing to pay the compensation the Nicaraguan government would by no means be chargeable with inconsistency or dishonor, but would only be yielding to the stronger party, a frequent occurrence in the world's history.¹³² Such arguments were not likely to appeal to the proud Nicaraguans, but they were the strongest that Webster had to offer.¹³³

Kerr used his best efforts, but the Nicaraguans looked upon the project with anything but favor. Various reasons prompted their attitude. Naturally, they objected to giving any sort of compensation for the return of the port which they had repeatedly and emphatically declared to be their own. To make this objection more decided was the fact that Castellon, who had won prominence by his stand on the claims regarding Greytown, was now secretary of foreign affairs.¹³⁴ Moreover, the Nicaraguans had begun to feel that they had been betrayed by the American government,¹³⁵ which seemed to have gone over to the enemy. The hopes held out by the Monroe doctrine, reflected in the speeches of Hise and Squier, had not been fulfilled. Instead, the American government had united with the British in recommending settlement on

¹³² *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 819, doc. 25, pp. 77-79.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 97-99. ¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 93. ¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 100-101.

terms humiliating to Nicaraguan pride; and the recommendation had been reinforced by a threat.¹³⁶ Furthermore, American citizens had been guilty of high-handed conduct in Nicaragua. The canal company had usurped powers not granted by the contract;¹³⁷ San Juan had been converted into a free city, through the influence of North Americans; and the United States, in co-operation with Great Britain, continued to protect the place.¹³⁸ As an indication of its feelings, the Nicaraguan government on July 20, a few days after the proposals were presented, issued a decree which contained a refusal to consider such an arrangement as that recommended, an expression of a desire for settlement by impartial arbitration, and a declaration that the state of Nicaragua solemnly protested against all foreign interference in matters of her administration and against the use of force to restrain her will and her rights.¹³⁹

Wyke, having promptly secured the consent of the Costa Rican government to the project,¹⁴⁰ proceeded to Managua, the Nicaraguan capital, which he reached on July 26,¹⁴¹ but a few days after the decree had been issued. Kerr informed him of his lack of success;¹⁴² Wyke nevertheless presented the proposed arrangement in the name of his government, but was met with the answer that "the sacrifices demanded of Nicaragua were too great for that Government ever to make, and that they were ready to take the consequences, whatever they might be, of refusing to come to the proposed arrangement."¹⁴³

¹³⁶ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 819, doc. 25, p. 123.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 100-101.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 100-101, 104-106.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 103-104.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 91-92.

¹⁴¹ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 191.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

Thus, after negotiations extending over a period of two years, all attempts to carry out the terms of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty had proved failures. Yet it is by no means certain that at this time any arrangement based upon that ambiguous document could have been made which would have been acceptable to all of the parties concerned. Though the British were anxious for a definite settlement, in view of the concessions which they had gained from the United States by means of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, it seems likely that even a much more aggressive administration than that in power would have found it difficult to induce them at this time to give up Greytown without compensation to the Mosquitos. England most probably would have met any American attempt to secure such terms by a studied policy of evasion.

Yet it seems clear that the American negotiator did not do his best to effect a speedy and satisfactory settlement, which would secure for Nicaragua such an arrangement as that state had at an earlier date been led to expect. Though Webster for a time firmly insisted upon being guided in the negotiations by the wishes of Nicaragua, he later, as has been seen, retreated from this stand, though probably from justifiable reasons, and negotiated a project of arrangement which was a virtual disavowal of the earlier attitude of the American government. The project went further than the much-criticised treaty, the spirit of which it was intended to carry out; for while the Clayton-Bulwer treaty tacitly recognized the existence of a protectorate in Central America, the Webster-Crampton arrangement was, by its terms, practically an acknowl-

CHAPTER V.

THE BAY ISLANDS COLONY AND THE NEW INTERPRETATION OF THE CLAYTON-BULWER TREATY, 1852-1854.

While the English and American negotiators, in a spirit of friendly understanding, had been vainly trying to settle the Mosquito question, trouble was brewing in another quarter. On March 20, 1852, by royal proclamation, Ruatan, Bonacca, and four neighboring islands were erected into the British "Colony of the Bay Islands"; and thus Clayton's fears regarding the evil possibilities of the word "dependencies" in the Belize declaration were realized. This act eventually led both the British and American governments to assume extreme and decided attitudes towards the Clayton-Bulwer treaty and caused the Mosquito question to develop into the more complicated and dangerous Central American question. In view of this fact, it is desirable to determine, if possible, the motives of the British government in its relations with the Bay Islands.

The later interest of the British government in the islands, like its interest in the port and river of San Juan, rose chiefly from a fear that they might be monopolized by some other government in connection with a transisthmian highway, and, in consequence, British commercial and political power be crippled. The most dangerous rival, obviously, was the United States; and

the bold and rapid advance of that nation towards the southwest gave very valid grounds for suspicion. The aggressions of the British upon the Bay Islands previous to 1850, it will be remembered, kept pace with American territorial expansion.

There were two important differences, however, between the attitude of the British government towards the San Juan route and towards Ruatan, with its desirable harbors. The former could be made neutral and of equal benefit to all nations; but this could scarcely be done in the case of the latter. After the dissolution of the Central American confederation, it seemed hardly likely that, should the canal be built, the island would remain under the sovereignty of the weak Honduran republic. Instead, it was almost certain to be seized by some strong commercial power. Moreover, though the British government realized that the United States would never permit any foreign monopoly of the canal route, there was no particular reason to believe that a similar stand would be taken with regard to the Bay Islands, especially as they had been kept pretty well out of the early discussion preceding the formation of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty. Some such thoughts probably determined the British government quietly to maintain its hold upon the islands; and the statement which Bulwer handed to Clayton at the time of ratification, containing as it did the reference to "dependencies",¹ was undoubtedly meant to save the islands from the terms of the treaty.

But in view of the unwillingness of the nation to undergo further expense for the protection of new

¹ It will be remembered that the Bay Islands were governed to some extent from Belize.

colonies,² the British government had discouraged the settlement of British subjects on the islands.³ The aim of the cabinet seems to have been to hold the islands, more especially Ruatan, against all intruders until the canal should be built, when they should be declared a British possession, and become an important commercial station on the way to the Pacific. But in spite of discouragement from their government, many British subjects took up their residence on the islands, and, evidently at the instigation of British agents in Central America,⁴ sent repeated petitions to London, asking for protection.⁵ This situation, as well as the compromising attitude of Clayton towards the Bay Islands while the Clayton-Bulwer treaty was before the Senate, and the fact that the Webster-Fillmore administration had been primarily interested in guaranteeing the canal route and had seemed indifferent to British aggressions in other parts of Central America, led directly to the proclamation of the Bay Islands colony.

What would have been the American attitude towards this act had the Whigs won in the election of 1852 may well be left to conjecture; but it was very evident from the first that the Democrats, whose ambitious plans had been interrupted by a Whig administration, would not passively acquiesce in such an arrangement. Harbingers of coming difficulty appeared before the old administration went out. A newspaper announcement regarding the new British

² Colonial Office to Greaves, Jan. 18, 1849, C. O., Hond., vol. 78.

³ Lord Grey to Sir Charles Grey, April 14, 1851, *ibid.*, vol. 80, no. 111.

⁴ Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 375-376; Michell, "Island of Ruatan", in *United Service Magazine*, 1850, II, 544-545.

⁵ Colonial Office to Greaves, Jan. 18, 1849, C. O., Hond., vol. 78; Sir Charles Grey to Lord Grey, Dec. 11, 1850, *ibid.*, vol. 80, no. 33; Lord Grey to Sir Charles Grey, April 14, 1851, *ibid.*, no. 111.

colony had attracted attention in the United States ;⁶ consequently, shortly after Congress met in December, the Senate carried a resolution, offered by Cass of Michigan, requesting the President to communicate any information which he might possess respecting the establishment of a new British colony in Central America, together with a statement of what measures, if any, had been taken by the Executive to prevent the violation of the treaty between the United States and Great Britain, which provided that neither party should "occupy, or fortify, or colonize, or assume dominion over Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito Coast, or any part of Central America".⁷

The President stated in his reply of a few days later that no information of the character requested had been received by the State Department.⁸ But with the message were inclosed Palmerston's declaration regarding Belize and the notes exchanged by Clayton and Bulwer with regard to it.⁹ Thus, for the first time, the declaration became known to the Senate as a whole.

This at once produced an attack on Taylor's administration in general, and particularly on his secretary of state, who was charged with willfully concealing the correspondence. Cass and other Democrats now declared emphatically that had they understood that the treaty was not meant to apply to Belize they would never have voted for it. His object in voting for the treaty, Cass stated, had been to free Central America

⁶ Travis, *Clayton-Bulwer Treaty*, 141. A very caustic article upon the subject, written by Squier, appeared in the *Democratic Review* for November-December, 1852.

⁷ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 201-202, 205.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 205. ⁹ *Ibid.*, 206-207.

from all British influence. In view of the declaration, the British government had far better grounds for its supposed actions than he had at first believed.¹⁰

The defense of the administration was assumed by Seward, among others, and he defended Clayton from the charges brought against him, showing that the opposition could hardly have been so ignorant of the intentions of the treaty, immediately after ratification, as they pretended. The main object of the treaty, the defense declared, had been the building of the canal, and the aim had been merely to limit the encroachments of the British within the five republics of Central America, of which Belize was not a part.¹¹

This debate, and those following Clayton's election to Congress as senator from Delaware, were of a very bitter nature; and from an attack upon the Whig administration they soon changed to a denunciation of Great Britain. They pointed out that though more than two years had elapsed since the ratification of the treaty, British relations in Central America had undergone practically no change, and charged the British government with violating the terms of compact.¹²

Throughout the debates, the extreme Democrats maintained that the intention of the treaty had been to remove all British influence from Central America, Belize included. These claims, though not without foundation in the words of the treaty itself, were evidently more extravagant than those held by the same members at the time when the treaty was completed. The change was probably due partly to the fact that

¹⁰ *Cong. Globe*, 32 Cong., 2 sess., 237-238; 33 Cong., 1 sess., Appendix, 61-72.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 32 Cong., 2 sess., 247, 266-272, 414-416.

¹² *Ibid.*, 2 and 3 sess., Appendix, 245, 247-256, 257-279, 284-290.

the canal company had failed to fulfill its contract ;¹³ and thus the building of the canal, which it had been hoped would be begun immediately, was indefinitely postponed. Naturally, therefore, interest was shifted from the theoretical canal to the actual British encroachments. The bitterness of feeling in the Senate, caused by the reported British colonization of the Bay Islands, was undoubtedly also increased by the recent revelation of British efforts to thwart American designs in Cuba. While extending her own territory by direct violation of treaty engagements, Great Britain, in co-operation with France, had tried to induce the United States to enter into a tripartite treaty, guaranteeing Cuba to Spain. The proposal had been emphatically refused by the Fillmore administration, but resentment at British interference lingered.¹⁴

The President's message in reply to the Senate resolution was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations, which was also instructed to determine what measures, if any, should be taken regarding the Belize declaration.¹⁵ In its report the committee stated that it had obtained unofficial information, which appeared to be true, regarding the supposed new British colony in Central America, and had proceeded with its investigation as if the information were official. The committee accordingly reported that the Bay Islands formed a part of the republic of Honduras, and hence were a part of Central America ; consequently, any occupation or

¹³ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 214-216.

¹⁴ Schouler, *History of the United States*, V, 251-252.

¹⁵ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 671, doc. 407, p. 1.

colonization of them would be a violation of the treaty of April 19, 1850.¹⁶

As regarded Belize, the committee offered the decided opinion that the settlement, as defined by the treaties with Spain, lay within the territory of the Guatemalan republic, and therefore also formed a part of Central America. And it further stated that, should this opinion be correct, while it was not prepared to say that the treaty of 1850 would require the abandonment of those settlements by Great Britain, yet the United States government would have just cause of complaint against any extension of the boundaries beyond those prescribed by Spain, or as further allowed by the republic where they might be found; and that in any manner to enlarge or change the character of the settlements by any mode of jurisdiction would be a violation of the treaty.¹⁷ Furthermore, even should the settlements be found later to be outside of Central America, and thus not come within the strict engagements of the treaty, yet any colonies or other permanent establishments erected there by Great Britain or any other European power must necessarily excite the most anxious concern of the American government, and would, if persisted in, "lead to consequences of most unpleasant character".¹⁸

As to the resolution of the Senate with reference to Belize, the committee reported that the declaration of the British government and the reply made to it by the American secretary of state imported nothing more than an admission on the part of the two governments, or their functionaries, at the time of the exchange of ratifications, that nothing contained in the treaty was

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

to be considered as affecting the title or existing rights of Great Britain to the English settlements in Honduras Bay, and, consequently, that no measures were necessary on the part of the Senate because of such declaration and reply.¹⁹

This report was plainly a sharp return to Monroe-doctrine principles with reference to Central America, and it was a strong indication of the policy to be pursued by the incoming administration.

The stir created in Congress by the rumors of a new colony in Central America and by the presentation of the Belize correspondence quickly became known to the British government, but that government seemed unmoved by the attack upon it, and determined to pursue a conciliatory policy. In fact, it rather appears as if the policy became more conciliatory in consequence of American criticism, for two days after the receipt of a despatch from Crampton, reporting the Cass resolution,²⁰ Russell, now foreign secretary, wrote to Crampton offering terms for the settlement of the Mosquito question. Conditions had so changed, he explained, since the assumption of the Mosquito protectorate that the British now no longer had any interest in the Indians other than that derived from an honorable regard for their old connection with them. In consequence of this change, the British government had for several years vainly tried to suit its engagements to the altered circumstances. Now he suggested that an agreement be made by the British and American governments with the authorities at Greytown, making that

¹⁹ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 671, doc. 407, p. 17.

²⁰ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 200-201, 204-214, 217, 222-235.

place a free and independent port, after the payment of proper indemnity to the Indians. Plans for the protection of the Mosquitos were also offered. In conclusion, the Foreign Secretary added that though it was the intention of the British government to do all that honor and humanity demanded in behalf of the Mosquitos, it intended to adhere strictly to the treaty of 1850, and not to assume any sovereignty, directly or indirectly, in Central America.²¹

In a letter written later on the same day Russell referred to the plans already outlined and expressed the desire of the British government to make Mosquito a reality instead of a fiction. He acknowledged that while Greytown was virtually a possession and Mosquito a dependency of Great Britain, it was not unnatural that the United States should have looked upon that state of things with jealousy and aversion, and should have sided with Nicaragua; this, however, had all been changed by the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, and the great question now was how to turn the Mosquito country to the best account for the whole world. Therefore Crampton was instructed to present the matter in this light to the American secretary of state, explaining that honor required the British government to provide liberally and permanently for the Indians, but that, this point being secured, it had no objection to arranging with the United States for insuring the more rapid settlement and colonization of the Mosquito territory, and for establishing its future administration. Once established, the new state would soon become independent of both Great Britain and the United States, and probably soon be able to protect itself.²²

²¹ *Ibid.*, 202-203.

²² *Ibid.*, 203-204.

These proposals, it will be noted, utterly disregarded the rights of Nicaragua and were in conformity with the threat contained in the Webster-Crampton project, to ignore the Central American states concerned, should they refuse to accept the project as a basis of settlement.

But the suggestions of Russell met with no favor from Everett, who upon Webster's death had become secretary of state. In a communication to the President, Everett declared it more advisable to attempt to secure Nicaragua's acceptance of the Webster-Fillmore arrangement, than to resort to terms less favorable to her.^{2a} However, as the Fillmore administration was almost ended, no measures were taken, in consequence of Russell's proposals, to settle the dispute at that time.

The character of the claims made in the Senate for the Clayton-Bulwer treaty soon convinced the British government that in order to avoid serious misapprehension it was very desirable that the American government be given clearly to understand the British view of the treaty, and the conduct which the British government intended to pursue in regard to it. Consequently, on May 27, Clarendon, who as Russell's successor was again in the Foreign Office, wrote to Crampton with reference to the matter. Great Britain, he declared, intended to observe religiously all of the engagements of the treaty, but she had nowhere in that agreement renounced, and never had intended to renounce, the full and absolute right which she possessed over her own lawful territories in Central America. Neither had she renounced the protection which she had for

^{2a} *Parl. Papers, 1856, Coms., LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 218-222.*

centuries afforded, and still afforded, to the Mosquito territory. The Foreign Secretary then reverted to the efforts which had been made by the British government to adjust matters in Central America, asserting that it was still ready and desirous to effect a settlement. He added, however, that until such arrangement was made his government could not abandon its present position, nor permit either Nicaragua or Honduras to assert or attempt to establish by force a right of possession which the British government had always denied, and still denied.²⁴

Crampton made known this attitude to Marcy, Pierce's secretary of state, who replied that he was not yet able to say what would be the opinion of the American government in regard to the interpretation of the treaty, but that the matter was then being considered by the cabinet. He added that Buchanan, who had recently been appointed United States minister to England, would probably be instructed upon the subject and empowered to discuss it with the British foreign secretary.²⁵

Buchanan, who as Polk's secretary of state had taken much interest in the Mosquito question, now shrewdly planned for the settlement of the larger Central American question into which it had grown. On May 29 he wrote to Marcy and revealed his plan. It provided that the treaty with Great Britain regarding the Canadian fisheries and reciprocity be perfected at Washington, where it had been begun, with the exception of its final execution, which should be made to await the result of the negotiation to be carried on by Buchanan in London.²⁶ Buchanan believed that if the reciprocity

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 247-249. ²⁵ *Ibid.*, 252.

²⁶ Buchanan, *Works*, IX, 1.

treaty, which England was anxious to conclude, were held in suspense, she might be induced to abandon her pretensions in Central America.²⁷ Should such a plan as he mentioned not prove feasible, he suggested that the Central American question be settled in connection with the others at Washington.²⁸

Pierce, however, opposed the first plan, because he believed that the delay necessary to the completion of a Central American treaty might lead to actual collision between the two countries upon the fishing grounds;²⁹ the second plan he found equally objectionable, for he felt that to attempt to settle all of the questions at Washington would simply be to complicate difficulties.³⁰ In consequence of the President's disapproval of his suggestions, Buchanan declined the mission, for he believed that without some such arrangement as he had proposed the settlement of the Central American question would be delayed for years.³¹ He was finally induced to accept the post, however, and agreed to do his best towards effecting a settlement;³² but it was only with great reluctance that he gave up his idea of making the reciprocity treaty wait upon a settlement with reference to Central America.³³

Marcy's instructions to Buchanan were written July 2, 1853. Since the acquisition of California, he stated, Great Britain had manifested a more deliberate design to change the Belize settlement into a British dominion. Such a design would not be disregarded by the American government. Acts passed by Great Britain in 1817 and 1819, as well as the treaty made with Mexico in

²⁷ Buchanan, *Works*, VIII, 511; IX, 19.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, IX, 2-3, 23-24.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, VIII, 511; IX, 1, 10, 19.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, IX, 23-24.

³¹ *Ibid.*, IX, 1-2.

³² *Ibid.*, 2, 24.

³³ *Ibid.*, 3.

1826, clearly showed that Belize was not within British dominion; therefore, while the American government conceded that Great Britain had rights in Belize, it positively denied that Belize was a British province, and it was bound to resist any attempt to convert the settlement into a colony.³⁴

Though the direct object of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, Marcy continued, was ostensibly to guarantee the transisthmian canal route, the stipulation in the treaty most regarded by the United States was that for the discontinuation of Great Britain's assumed protection over the Mosquito Indians, and with it the removal of all pretext for interfering with the territorial arrangements which the Central American states might wish to make among themselves. It was the intention, as it was obviously the import, of the treaty of April 19, 1850, to place Great Britain under an obligation to cease her interposition in the affairs of Central America, and to confine herself to the enjoyment of her limited rights in Belize. In spite of her agreement not to occupy, colonize, or exercise dominion over any part of Central America, Great Britain still asserted the right to hold possession of and to exercise control over large districts of that country and important islands in the Bay of Honduras, the unquestionable appanages of the Central American states. The object which it was hoped that Buchanan would be able to accomplish, Marcy pointed out, was to induce Great Britain to withdraw from all control over the territories and islands of Central America, and, if possible, to abstain from

³⁴ Dept. of State, Inst., Gt. Brit., vol. 16, no. 2.

intermeddling with the political affairs of the governments and people of that region.³⁶

The policy of the new administration with reference to Central America was quite in harmony with Buchanan's own ideas; it was, in fact, a reversion to the old Monroe-doctrine principles of the Polk administration, which, according to Buchanan, aimed to sweep geographic Central America clear of all British influence which had developed since 1786;³⁷ and the basis of the demands to be made for British evacuation was to be the Clayton-Bulwer treaty.

The wording of this document is so ambiguous that any discussion, at the present time, for the purpose of getting at its full meaning would be of little profit. However, an impartial examination of the first article in connection with the statements in Marcy's letter leads to the conclusion that, on the whole, such an interpretation of the article as he made was not so unreasonable as might at first appear, though it was in strong contrast to that which the Fillmore administration seemed willing to accept.

It is true that the Belize settlement was originally in Mexico, but the encroachments of the settlers had been to the south, into what was plainly Guatemalan territory; therefore the district between the Sibun and Sarstoon rivers would evidently come under a strict application of the treaty terms. Moreover, though Marcy's intimation that the treaty required the discontinuation of British protection over the Mosquitos was rather sweeping, it is nevertheless true that a strict

³⁶ Dept. of State, Inst., Gt. Brit., vol. 16, no. 2. Most of this instruction is printed in *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 840, doc. 1, pp. 42-49.

³⁷ "Letters of Bancroft and Buchanan." in *Am. Hist. Rev.*, V, 99.

observance of the other terms would have made such protection a virtual impossibility.

On September 2, some time after Buchanan's arrival in London, Marcy sent him full powers to negotiate a treaty with regard to Central America. In his letter of that date Marcy stated that though the United States could not claim as a matter of right that Great Britain should altogether withdraw from Belize, still it was a very important object to prevail on her to do so. As to the Bay Islands, he believed that Great Britain had never defined the character of her claim to possess the so-called colony; but whatever rights she may have had to the islands were all relinquished by the Clayton-Bulwer treaty. However, it seemed wisest to give the British government a chance to explain its views upon the matter before presenting a formal protest against her further occupancy of the colony.³⁷ The President, he added, expected Buchanan so to treat the subject as to leave no doubt in the minds of the British ministers that the United States would insist upon the abandonment of the islands.³⁸

As the Crimean War was impending when Buchanan reached London, it was some time before he was able to secure an interview with Clarendon, and he thought it indiscreet under the circumstances to press the matter,³⁹ but in the last part of October he met Clarendon by appointment at the Foreign Office and had an interview which he considered highly satisfactory. The Foreign Secretary on his own account introduced the

³⁷ Such a protest had been previously suggested by Buchanan and was apparently a favorite idea of his. Buchanan, *Works*, IX, 29, 65.

³⁸ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 840, doc. 1, pp. 49-50.

³⁹ Buchanan, *Works*, IX, 70, 77.

subject of the Bay Islands and of the general Central American question, which led Buchanan to express the wish of his government that the questions be settled without unnecessary delay. After touching on the best method of procedure in regard to the negotiations, the conversation returned to the Bay Islands, and Clarendon remarked that he believed Ruatan to be a "miserable little Island" which had been occupied for many years by British subjects whose request for some kind of government had been granted. This, he declared, was an entirely different case from what it would have been had the British but recently first occupied the island.⁴⁰

Buchanan replied that he believed it would appear that the British, far from having occupied Ruatan for many years, had taken the island by force from Honduras as recently as 1841; but, in any event, the Clayton-Bulwer treaty had disposed of the question, for the island was unquestionably a part of Central America. He concluded by averring that the United States had no idea of acquiring any territory in Central America; it desired only that the Central American states be permitted to enjoy in peace what belonged to them, and that the British and American governments interpose their good offices to settle the boundary disputes between them. Neither Great Britain nor the United States, he believed, had any real interest to pursue a different course; moreover, in America all had expected that the Clayton-Bulwer treaty would produce that happy result. To Buchanan's wish for the welfare of Central America Clarendon heartily agreed, and with that the conversation on the subject ended.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Buchanan, *Works*, IX, 77, 80-81.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 81-82.

On November 12, a second interview took place. In the early part of it the Foreign Secretary asked if the Webster-Crampton project would do for a basis of settlement; and Buchanan promptly replied that that agreement was now at an end and could not be considered. That project, he stated, "both recognized and constituted the Mosquito Indians as an Independent Power; which could never be assented to by the United States. That these Indians were incapable of governing themselves; and the consequence would be that they must continue to be under the dominion of the British government." However much the American government liked Great Britain, it desired her withdrawal from Central America as quickly as possible. It was to effect this withdrawal that the United States had concluded the Clayton-Bulwer treaty; but unfortunately the object had not yet been accomplished. Besides, the United States could never recognize the right of Great Britain to a protectorate over the Mosquito Indians. Clarendon replied that the British government earnestly desired to get rid of its protectorate, but British honor required that this be done with a proper regard for the interest and well-being of the Mosquitos.⁴²

The plan suggested by Russell in the preceding January was also mentioned by Clarendon, but Buchanan objected to such an arrangement on the ground that it would deprive the Central American states of territory to which they were justly entitled; furthermore, this arrangement would perpetuate strife in Central America, because the states would never cease trying

⁴² *Ibid.*, 88-90.

to have the injustice redressed; in short, it would make confusion worse confounded.⁴³

At this second interview Clarendon showed a desire to avoid mention of the Bay Islands, and the subject was finally introduced by Buchanan, whereupon Clarendon, as before, tried to minimize the importance of the colonization of the islands, and intimated that the Americans were making "a Mountain out of a Mole Hill".⁴⁴ To this Buchanan answered—to quote from his despatch to Marcy:

Whatever you may suppose, I can assure you that this is the dangerous question; because we firmly believe that the establishment of this Colony is a direct violation of the Clayton and Bulwer Treaty. . . Even if it were a fact that you had always been in possession of Ruatan, still your obligation to withdraw from it would, in my opinion, be imperative, under the Clayton and Bulwer Treaty. . . Let me assure you that this will be considered a most important question by the Congress and people of the United States; and I have no doubt they will arrive at the same conclusion with the Committee of Foreign Relations of the Senate.⁴⁵

At the conclusion of this interview, Buchanan asked Clarendon for an official document regarding the colonization of the Bay Islands which Clarendon had previously promised him, and the Foreign Secretary gave him a copy of the proclamation, by the lieutenant-governor of the islands, erecting them into a colony in the name of the Queen. Buchanan sent this paper—which contained the first official information regarding the new colony in Central America to be received by the American government—to Marcy with his report of the interview.⁴⁶

⁴³ Buchanan, *Works*, IX, 91.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 94.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 94-95.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 96, 97. Cf. *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, XLIV, "Bay Islands",

Clarendon was so preoccupied with the Russo-Turkish question that Buchanan did not secure a chance to resume the discussion until the first part of January. During the interview which then took place the Foreign Secretary astonished Buchanan by presenting a new interpretation of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty. That arrangement, he declared, was entirely prospective in its operations and did not require an abandonment of any British possessions in Central America.⁴⁷ Bulwer, it will be remembered, took this view of the treaty from the first,⁴⁸ but a study of the previous correspondence upon the subject leaves no doubt that the British government itself had but recently adopted this interpretation.⁴⁹ Though it had hoped that possible American indifference and the declaration of Palmerston regarding Belize and its dependencies might limit attention to the Mosquito Shore, still the British government clearly understood the treaty to apply to existing as well as to future relations.

The change of attitude seems to have been due to several causes. Among these might be mentioned the temper which the Pierce administration had shown in reference to the Belize declaration and the colonization of the Bay Islands; congressional criticism of the British failure to withdraw from Mosquito Shore; and the actual difficulty of an honorable withdrawal which England had experienced in her attempts of the last two years. The fact that the canal company had

⁴⁷ Buchanan, *Works*, IX, 117, 134-135.

⁴⁸ See above, p. 108; also below, p. 163, note 59.

⁴⁹ See above, pp. 108-109, 111, 146-147; also below, p. 161. Cf. Buchanan, *Works*, IX, 341-342.

not carried out its contract very probably was also influential in producing this new stand; for now no early commercial gain, as a result of a transisthmian world highway, seemed likely to appear as compensation for relinquishing special interests in Central America.

Thus, after this interview of January, 1854, the general position of each of the parties on the Clayton-Bulwer treaty was clear to the other: in the opinion of the American government, the treaty was meant to be retrospective as well as prospective, and demanded British withdrawal from Central America; to the British government it was only prospective and merely prohibited further territorial and political extension in the region.

At this meeting in January Buchanan gave Clarendon a memorandum containing the views of the American government on the whole Central American question. The paper was temperately and logically worded and was a shrewd defense of the American attitude. The object of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, it declared, had been to place the two nations on exact equality with regard to the interoceanic highway; consequently, both had agreed never to occupy, fortify, or exercise dominion over any portion of Central America. As the United States held no land in the region, she was simply restrained from making future acquisitions; but in the case of Great Britain the language applied to the present as well as to the future, because when the treaty was made she was exercising dominion over a large portion of the eastern coast of Central America. Notwithstanding the agreement, the

British government had not taken the first step towards withdrawing from Central America. The failure to do so could not result from any obscurity in the treaty itself, for the first article clearly meant that the contracting parties should not exercise dominion over Central America, either directly or indirectly. Great Britain's disregard of treaty obligations was even more palpable in the case of Ruatan; not only had she failed to retire from there, but since the completion of the treaty she had formed Ruatan and five adjoining islands into a British colony. In vain had the self-denying stipulations been made, if Great Britain was to continue to exercise dominion over the Bay Islands.⁶⁰

Some months elapsed after the interview in January before further opportunity was given Buchanan regarding the matter, and before a reply was made to his paper. The reason for this lapse of time is partly to be found in the pressure of the war question with Russia; but a study of the correspondence leads to the suspicion that it was also due to intentional evasion of the subject on the part of the British government. This postponement of discussion may have resulted entirely from a desire to see the outcome of the quarrel between Russia and Turkey before a more determined stand should be taken upon the question in dispute with America; but Clarendon's words as well as his actions give cause for the belief that, as Buchanan suspected,⁶¹ he did not find it as easy as he had at first supposed it would be to defend the British claims in Central America, or to justify the view that the Clay-

⁶⁰ Buchanan, *Works*, IX, 118-128.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 148, 154, 180-181.

ton-Bulwer treaty was intended to be only prospective in its operations.

At the next interview, which was held April 11, Clarendon again announced distinctly that the British government considered the treaty to be entirely prospective, and not as interfering with existing possessions in Central America. This led Buchanan to point out that, in view of such interpretation, Palmerston had put himself to much unnecessary trouble in insisting upon an acknowledgment, before the exchange of ratifications, that the provisions of the treaty did not embrace Belize. To this Clarendon made no satisfactory answer, and he never did supply Buchanan with an explanation which reconciled Palmerston's action with the new interpretation of the treaty. As the Foreign Secretary promised a written statement of British views within a few days,⁶² but little more was said regarding the Central American question during this interview.

Yet the paper was not received until the first week in May. The statement was, as Buchanan characterized it, "rambling and inconclusive in its arguments".⁶³ Clarendon summarily disposed of the Mosquito question by stating that the United States would scarcely expect Great Britain to enter into an explanation of acts committed by her nearly forty years before, in a matter in which no right or possession of the United States was involved. He added, however, that since the peace of 1815 Spain had never raised a question with respect to the protectorate; and that the Central American republics—if it were to be admitted that the

⁶² Buchanan, *Works*, IX, 180.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 189.

rights and obligations of Spain were vested in them—had made no remonstrance against the protectorate for many years, though they well knew that it existed. Furthermore, though in 1842 the United States government was informed of the existence of the protectorate,⁵⁴ no objection was made up to the end of the year 1849. The protectorate had not been abolished by the terms of the first article of the treaty; the American minister had confounded the conditions of a sovereignty and a protectorate and had treated the agreement “not to colonize, nor occupy, nor fortify, nor assume, nor exercise dominion over”, as including an agreement not to protect. The British government never claimed, and did not then claim, any sovereignty over Mosquito; but the treaty of 1850 did not, and was not meant to, annihilate the protectorate which had long been exercised over it.⁵⁵

The aim in forming the treaty, Clarendon proceeded, had been to neutralize the proposed canal; and in deciding upon the terms the object of both negotiators had been presumably to draw up such a convention as, without conceding any specific point on which one party could not in honor yield, would make such concessions on all other points as the other party desired. An examination of the treaty would show that it was drawn up in such a manner as to make it a matter of indifference, so far as the canal was concerned, whether the port and town of San Juan were under the modified

⁵⁴ Macdonald informed Murphy, the American agent in Central America, that the protectorate had been reestablished, and Murphy reported the fact to his government. Murphy to the Secretary of State, January 20, 1842, Dept. of State, Des., Cen. Am., vol. 2.

⁵⁵ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 840, doc. 1, pp. 81-84.

protectorate of Great Britain, or under the government of Nicaragua.⁶⁶

Though, the paper continued, the British government did not pretend that the treaty by implication recognized the protectorate, still it clearly acknowledged the possibility of Great Britain or the United States affording protection to Mosquito, or any other Central American state, and admitted that the intention of the parties was not to prohibit or abolish, but to limit and restrict, such a protectorate. Defending and protecting was a temporary act of friendship; occupying, colonizing, fortifying, or acquiring sovereignty were acts having a permanent result. No one would maintain that the bar to colonization was a bar to all protection.⁶⁷

As to Belize and its dependencies, neither government had ever intended that the treaty should interfere in any way with them; this was shown by the fact that the term "Central America" could only be applied to the territory once included under the term "Central American republic", and also by the declarations exchanged by Clayton and Bulwer. Moreover, the fact that, in 1847, the United States sent to Belize a consul who received his exequatur from the British government, gave reason to believe that the term "Belize" in the declaration meant the Belize with the limits of 1850, for this act constituted a recognition by the United States government of the settlement of British Honduras, as it then existed. Furthermore, the limits of the settlement established in 1786 were abolished by a subsequent state of war between Spain and England.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 840, doc. 1, p. 86.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 87. ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 89-90.

With reference to Ruatan and the adjoining islands, Clarendon stated, the only thing debatable was whether they were dependencies of Belize, or of some Central American state. An attempt followed to show that the pretensions of Great Britain to consider Ruatan and Bonacca dependencies of Belize were of long standing and existed when the treaty of 1850 was formed, at which time it was not questioned by the American government. In consequence of these facts, the British government could not admit that an alteration in the internal form of government of these islands was a violation of the treaty, or afforded to the United States a just cause of remonstrance.⁵⁹

In reply to the views presented by Clarendon, Buchanan, on July 22, 1854, wrote a long and able paper, emphasizing his former arguments and presenting new ones to meet those of the Foreign Secretary. An agreement on the part of Great Britain not to "occupy" any territory then actually occupied by her, he maintained, clearly was an agreement to withdraw therefrom. If, as the British government held, the treaty was only prospective in its nature it amounted to an American recognition of the British right to territory already held in Central America. Such an interpretation entirely destroyed the mutuality of the convention, for it bound the United States, which held no territory there, not to acquire any. But the British government, at the time of ratification, must have regarded the treaty as applying to the present as well as the future; otherwise, why the Belize declaration?

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 90-93. Clarendon's paper was based partially upon arguments furnished by Bulwer. Inclosures in Bulwer to Hammond, Sept. 30, 1854, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 83. See above, p. 108.

The fact that no attempt was made to except any other Central American territory amounted to an admission that the British were bound to withdraw from all of their other possessions there.⁶⁰

As for the Bay Islands, even admitting for the sake of argument that the Belize declaration was binding, these islands were not excluded by it, for the word "dependencies" applied only to the small islands in the neighborhood of the settlement, as stated by Clayton in his note to Bulwer, and not to the large island of Ruatan which was hundreds of miles from Belize. The British statement attached much importance to the fact that Ruatan was occupied by the British in 1850; it was for the reason that not only Ruatan but the whole eastern coast of Central America was occupied by them that the United States was so anxious for a convention requiring British withdrawal. But for this agreement, the United States, in self-defense, would have been compelled to accept cessions of territory in Central America.⁶¹ Then followed an investigation into the British title to Ruatan, which Buchanan showed to rest on very flimsy foundations.⁶²

When the treaty was formed, the paper proceeded, Great Britain had merely taken the first step towards possessing the island. Consequently, no mention was made of the matter by the United States government at the time, for, in view of the terms of the treaty, it was not doubted that Great Britain would promptly withdraw. Instead of so doing the British government had erected Ruatan and five adjoining islands into a British colony. Clarendon had failed to assert any-

⁶⁰ Buchanan, *Works*, IX, 216-217.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 217-220. ⁶² *Ibid.*, 220-225.

where in his paper that any of these five islands had ever been occupied by the British government previous to their formation into a colony.⁶³

The protection of the San Juan route, far from being the only feature of the convention, as the statement of Clarendon seemed to intimate, was only one feature of a policy far more liberal and extended. This policy embraced all routes, whether for railroads or canals, throughout Central America; and the prohibition of occupation was co-extensive with the whole territory over which such canals or railroads might pass. The American government could not become a party to any arrangement whereby Great Britain should merely withdraw from the port and harbor of Greytown and the northern bank of the San Juan, thus leaving the remainder of the Mosquito coast in its present condition; the American government stood upon the treaty, and firmly believed that Great Britain should have abandoned the whole Mosquito territory more than four years before.⁶⁴

The British statement asserted, Buchanan continued, that though, in 1842, the American government knew that the protectorate existed, it did not complain until 1850. The American government had no right under any treaty with Great Britain until 1850. Had it interfered previous to this time it could have done so only under the Monroe doctrine, which the British government did not recognize. But it should not be concluded that without this convention the United States would not have interfered eventually to prevent, if possible, any portion of Central America from being permanently occupied or colonized by Great Britain.⁶⁵

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 225-226.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 230-232.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 232-238.

Finally, the American statement declared, whether the term "Central America" appearing in the first article of the treaty was considered in a political or a geographical sense, it applied to the territory between the Sibun and the Sarstoon, for this was a part of the province of Vera Paz in Guatemala. Moreover, Clayton's letter to Bulwer upon exchanging ratifications referred to the convention of 1850 as applying to all of the Central American states, "with their just limits and proper dependencies". Hence, the territory in question, being within the just limits of the state of Guatemala, was expressly embraced by the convention. The United States emphatically denied that the appointment of a consul to Belize was even the slightest recognition of British title to the port. Consuls were mere commercial, and not political, agents. The contention that the territory between the Sibun and the Sarstoon was British by right of conquest, Buchanan proved to be unsound by citing the treaties of 1809 and 1814 with Spain and the treaty of 1826 with Mexico, as well as acts of Parliament passed in 1817 and 1819.⁶⁸

But regardless of the nature of the British claim to this territory, the question, as in the case of the Bay Islands and the Mosquito coast, did not turn upon the validity of the claim, but upon the fact that Great Britain had bound herself not to occupy any portion of Central America, or to exercise dominion over it. As to Belize proper, limited by the treaties of 1783 and 1786, the United States would not for the present insist upon the withdrawal of Great Britain from it, provided all the other questions between the two governments were settled amicably. But it must be distinctly under-

⁶⁸ Buchanan, *Works*, IX, 238-240.

stood that the United States government acknowledged no British claim there except the right to the usufruct specified in the Spanish treaties, and it recognized the former Spanish sovereignty as now belonging either to Guatemala or to Mexico.⁸⁷

Thus, through Buchanan's second formal statement the attitude of the United States was more clearly revealed, and such arguments were presented against the British view as it seemed hardly likely that the British government would be able to refute. This was the last word between the two governments for some time, directly upon the controversy over the Clayton-Bulwer treaty. Meanwhile events of importance to British-American relations were taking place in Central America, and to these attention is now directed.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 241.

CHAPTER VI.

AMERICAN DEFIANCE OF BRITISH CLAIMS, 1853-1855.

At the time when Great Britain and the United States were approaching what appeared to be irreconcilable differences over the meaning of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, affairs in Central America were assuming a correspondingly serious aspect. Borland, Kerr's successor as United States minister, was one of the earlier causes of discord. He was a man of the school of Squier and worked as assiduously as did the latter to build up American influence and counteract that of Great Britain. Upon arriving in Central America, Borland found the British in the ascendancy in Costa Rica and Salvador, and especially in Guatemala,¹ where the American government was particularly hated and feared because of its recent interference in Mexico.² Even Nicaragua was suspicious of the United States, partly because she had come to regard the Clayton-Bulwer treaty as an abandonment of the Monroe doctrine.³ In fact, Honduras was the only state which was at this time distinctly friendly towards the American

¹ Wyke to Clarendon, Nov. 27, 1853, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 79, no. 37; Borland to Secretary of State, Dec. 10, 1853, Dept. of State, Des., Nic., vol. 1, no. 11.

² Wyke to Clarendon, Mar. 13, 1854, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 82, no. 9. So fearful of American designs were the Guatemalans that they even talked of a Spanish protectorate. Wyke to Clarendon, Oct. 30, 1853, *ibid.*, vol. 79, no. 33.

³ Borland to Marcy, Sept. 20, 1853, Dept. of State, Des., Nic., vol. 1, no. 5.

government;⁴ and this loyalty was obviously due to the attitude of the United States regarding the British-colonization of the Bay Islands.

Borland, however, while complaining vigorously against the actions of the British in Central America,⁵ immediately set about improving conditions in that region for his own country. By liberal promises he soon regained Nicaragua's confidence,⁶ and, in accordance with his Monroe-doctrine principles, negotiated a commercial treaty with her, by which her territorial claims were again guaranteed on the part of the United States.⁷ He went further than this; he criticised the Clayton-Bulwer treaty and urged its abrogation on the ground that Great Britain had violated its terms;⁸ and then he proceeded to act as if the treaty had been already set aside. His plan, strongly hinted at in his speeches and letters, was evidently to bring the whole of Central America under the control of the United States for the purpose of annexing the region to the American Union.⁹

While Borland was working, in a manner entirely unauthorized by his government, to strengthen Ameri-

⁴ *Ibid.*, Borland to Marcy, Dec. 10, 1853, *ibid.*, no. 11; Wyke to Clarendon, Feb. 27, 1854, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 82, no. 6.

⁵ Borland to Marcy, Dec. 10, 1853, Dept. of State, Des., Nic., vol. 1, no. 11.

⁶ Wyke to Clarendon, Oct. 30, 1853, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 79, no. 33.

⁷ Crampton to Clarendon, May 1, 1854, F. O., Am., vol. 595, no. 115; July 3, 1854, *ibid.*, vol. 597, no. 172. This treaty met with no favor from the American government. *Ibid.*

⁸ Borland to the Secretary of State, Aug. 28, 1853, Dept. of State, Des., Nic., vol. 1, no. 3.

⁹ Inclosure in Borland to Marcy, Aug. 29, 1853, *ibid.*, Borland to Marcy, Nov. 10, 1853, *ibid.*, vol. 1; Dec. 15[?], 1853, *ibid.*, no. 15. In one of his public speeches in Nicaragua Borland stated that his greatest desire was to see Nicaragua forming a bright star in the flag of the United States. Wyke to Clarendon, Nov. 27, 1853, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 79, no. 37.

can interests in Nicaragua, Squier, as a private citizen, was similarly engaged in Honduras. During his residence in Central America as an agent of the United States government, Squier had contracted an intense hatred of British influence on the isthmus. This feeling was kept alive after his recall, and at about the time of Borland's arrival in Nicaragua Squier also returned to Central America and made his headquarters in Honduras. The ostensible purpose of his visit was to obtain a grant from that republic for the construction of an interoceanic railway,¹⁰ but he was suspected by the British of being primarily interested in "the furtherance of his well-known political views regarding Central America".¹¹

Indeed, Squier's actions appear to have given good reason for British suspicion. According to reports, he lost no opportunity of declaring that he staked all of his hopes of success in life on the prospect of annihilating every vestige of British influence in Central America.¹² At this time Honduras and Guatemala were at war, and, as the latter was a British stronghold, Squier was much interested in the contest. He became the chief instigator and adviser of Honduras, and it was said that under his influence a Honduran agent was sent to Washington to secure aid in the war, and possibly also with the idea of bringing about annexation to the United States.¹³ Moreover, rumors were afloat

¹⁰ Crampton to Clarendon, July 24, 1854, "Confidential", F. O., Am., vol. 597, no. 195.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Crampton to Clarendon, Mar. 6, 1854, "Confidential", *ibid.*, vol. 594, no. 58.

¹³ Crampton to Clarendon, June 5, 1854, *ibid.*, vol. 596, no. 147; Seymour to the Secretary of the Admiralty, Mar. 24, 1854, Ad. Sec. In-Letters, 5629, no. 32.

that Squier had secured, or was about to secure, from the United States, men and arms for the purpose of driving the British out of Mosquito territory and Ruatan.¹⁴

Though Great Britain felt at this time that the American government intended honestly to observe the terms of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, there was yet a fear that public opinion in the United States might force support of Squier;¹⁵ consequently, Crampton was directed by the foreign secretary to inform Marcy that the British government was convinced that he would give no countenance to the schemes of Squier.¹⁶ As an additional precaution, it was decided to reinforce the British naval station in the West Indies.¹⁷

While affairs were in this condition, an event occurred which on first appearance seemed likely to produce a rupture between the British and American governments; the famous British protectorate over Mosquito was put to test by the United States. The occurrence originated in a quarrel, begun early in 1853, between the Accessory Transit Company¹⁸ and the

¹⁴ Crampton to Clarendon, Mar. 6, 1854, F. O., Am., vol. 594, no. 58; Seymour to the Secretary of the Admiralty, Mar. 24, 1854, Ad. Sec. In-Letters, 5629, no. 32.

¹⁵ Wyke to Clarendon, Nov. 27, 1853, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 79, no. 37.

¹⁶ Clarendon to Crampton, Mar. 24, 1854, F. O., Am., vol. 590, no. 64.

¹⁷ Crampton to Clarendon, Mar. 6, 1854, *ibid.*, vol. 594, no. 58; Seymour to the Secretary of the Admiralty, Mar. 24, 1854, Ad. Sec. In-Letters, 5629, no. 32; Hammond to Merivale, April 26, 1854, C. O., Hond., vol. 89.

¹⁸ In order to take advantage of the increase of traffic across the isthmus, in consequence of the discovery of gold in California, the Atlantic and Pacific Ship-Canal Company had secured a modified charter giving it the monopoly of a line of transit across the isthmus. Under this charter it styled itself the Accessory Transit Company. Scroggs, "William Walker and the Steamship Corporation in Nicaragua", in *Am. Hist. Rev.*, X, 793.

authorities at Greytown. Though securing its charter from Nicaragua, the company had obtained from Greytown a concession to build a coal depot on Point Arenas, on the opposite side of the river from the town.¹⁹ The terms of the concession were quickly exceeded by the erection of warehouses, stores, and hotels.²⁰ This angered the town authorities, and the anger was increased by the company's refusal to deliver its passengers on the town side of the harbor, thus cutting off the inhabitants from all share in the profits from transisthmian traffic.²¹

According to the agreement, the land was to be given up upon requisition from the town;²² the requisition was made, but the company ignored it. The town then ordered the removal of the establishments from Point Arenas within thirty days,²³ but no attention was paid to the notice, and when the time limit had expired the town officials destroyed some of the buildings.²⁴

Meanwhile, as a result of appeal from the Transit Company,²⁵ Captain Hollins of the American navy had been ordered to Greytown with the sloop-of-war *Cyane*, for the protection of American interests.²⁶ He arrived a day or two before the time set for a second attack on the buildings, and upon learning of the situation notified the town authorities that he would resist by force any attempt to execute the design.²⁷ However, a body of armed men was sent from Greytown to complete the

¹⁹ *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 236.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Harper's Magazine*, X, 56.

²² *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 236.

²³ *Ibid.* ²⁴ *Ibid.*, 237. ²⁵ *Ibid.*, 243-245. ²⁶ *Ibid.*, 245.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 240.

work of destruction; but upon landing they were confronted by marines from the *Cyane*, sent by Hollins. In the face of this resistance the party from the town retired and for a time efforts against the company were abandoned.²⁸

This event became the subject of correspondence between Great Britain and the United States; but as this was just when the British government was being sharply attacked by the American Senate, Clarendon very wisely preserved a conciliatory tone, only showing sufficient resentment at Hollins's act to preserve the dignity of his government.²⁹ Marcy's reply to the complaint of Clarendon contained a hostile note,³⁰ however, which further roused the Foreign Secretary;³¹ but the American government soon learned that the Transit Company had received its concession from Greytown—a fact of which it had previously been ignorant³²—and therefore assumed a milder tone.³³ The British government quickly responded, and the irritation produced by the affair disappeared.³⁴

But the Transit Company's buildings remained on Point Arenas and, in consequence, bad feeling continued between the company and Greytown. At first the feeling was largely on the side of the latter, which bitterly resented the commercial monopoly maintained by the company, but soon the enmity of the Transit Company was increased by the loss of large amounts of goods stolen from their stores, apparently in retaliation, by their neighbors in the community across the river. When the company demanded the return of the goods and the punishment of the offenders, the town

²⁸ *Ibid.* ²⁹ *Ibid.*, 246-247. ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 252-255. ³¹ *Ibid.*, 255-257.

³² *Ibid.*, 257-258. ³³ *Ibid.*, 258. ³⁴ *Ibid.*, 257-258.

officials refused to take any action.⁸⁵ This was the situation in the summer of 1854 just before the second clash came.

✓ The initial act of the second difficulty was the shooting of a negro citizen of Greytown by Captain Smith of the *Routh*, one of the Transit Company's steamers. Smith's vessel ran into a bungo of merchandise belonging to the negro, and in the quarrel that followed the negro met his death.⁸⁶ This took place some miles up the San Juan River. Borland, the United States minister to Central America, happened to be aboard the *Routh* at the time, but apparently he made no attempt to interfere.⁸⁷

After the vessel returned to Greytown, the municipal authorities attempted to arrest Smith on the charge of murder. The latter resisted and Borland went to his aid, informing the marshal of the place that the United States government recognized no authority as existing at Greytown to arrest an American citizen. When, a few minutes later, a body of men who had accompanied the marshal in a boat to the steamer's side threatened to board the *Routh* and attack the captain, Borland ordered them off with a gun. This produced quiet, and the marshal withdrew.⁸⁸

But in the evening of the same day an attempt was made to arrest Borland while he was at the home of Fabens, the United States consul at the port. A number of people gathered about Fabens's house, and, during a conversation between Borland and the mayor of the town, some one in the crowd threw a broken

⁸⁵ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 734, doc. 126, pp. 19, 20, 22-25.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, ser. no. 918, doc. 9, p. 8.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, ser. no. 734, doc. 126, p. 16.

bottle at Borland, slightly wounding him. The mayor stated that the second attempt at arrest was made without his authority, so the gathering soon dispersed, but an armed force was stationed between the consulate and the harbor, thus keeping the American minister a prisoner throughout the night.³⁹

At a meeting held in the morning aboard the *Northern Light*, one of the company's steamers about to sail for New York, it was decided that the persons and property of American citizens were not safe from aggression.⁴⁰ Consequently, Borland made arrangements with fifty of the passengers, who agreed to remain over and afford the necessary protection; and he himself returned to the United States aboard the *Northern Light* for the purpose of laying the whole subject before his government.⁴¹ Fabens also reported the matter to Washington, by letter, expressing the opinion that frequent visits of a United States man-of-war would have a beneficial effect upon all concerned.⁴²

In consequence of the reports of Borland and Fabens, and of previous complaints on the part of the Transit Company,⁴³ the American government determined to send the *Cyane* to the scene of difficulties. In his instructions Hollins was told to consult with Fabens and learn the truth regarding the actions of the Greytown citizens. "It is very desirable", wrote the secretary of the navy, "that these people should be taught that the United States will not tolerate these outrages," and that they have the power and the determination to check them. It is, however, very much to be hoped that you can effect the purposes of your visit without

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 17. ⁴⁰ *Ibid.* ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 18.

⁴² *Ibid.*, ser. no. 702, doc. 85, pp. 10-11.

⁴³ von Holst, *History of the United States*, V, 12.

a resort to violence and destruction of property and loss of life. The presence of your vessel will, no doubt, work much good. The department reposes much in your prudence and good sense.”⁴⁴

On June 9, Marcy wrote to Fabens instructing him to co-operate with Hollins. Goods belonging to the Transit Company, he stated, had been stolen and withheld by the people or authorities of Greytown. It was hoped that the town would have adjusted that matter to the entire satisfaction of the company, and thus would have relieved Hollins from the “disagreeable necessity of taking any action with regard to the subject”. The American minister to Central America had been insulted by the authorities or people of Greytown, Marcy continued, and nothing short of an apology would save the place from the infliction which such an act justly merited. It was expected that this apology would be promptly made, and satisfactory assurances given of future good conduct towards the United States and its agents who might in future be sent to the place.⁴⁵

✓ The peculiar character of the above instructions immediately attracts attention. They implicitly directed that in case of necessity violence should be used against Greytown, but left entirely to Hollins and Fabens the determination of the necessity, as well as of the degree of violence to be employed. Such instructions seem to indicate a desire actually to test the British protectorate over Greytown, as well as a resolve to ignore the agreement, made with Great Britain two years before, to protect the *de facto* government of the place. This defiant attitude of the American govern-

⁴⁴ U. S. Docs., ser., no. 734, doc. 126, p. 2.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

ment seems to have been produced by the unsatisfactory condition of the general Central American question. But two or three weeks before the instructions were sent to Fabens and Hollins, Marcy had received from Buchanan Clarendon's statement of May 2, presenting formally and officially the view that the Clayton-Bulwer treaty was prospective in its operation, and did not apply to existing British possessions in Central America. This unreasonable stand apparently led the American government to use the opportunity offered by the situation at Greytown with the aim of convincing Great Britain that such an interpretation of the treaty would not be tolerated, and that complete abandonment of former claims in Central America was essential to the preservation of friendly relations with the United States.

The instructions to Hollins and Fabens had been made known to the Transit Company and were quite in harmony with its wishes and plans. In fact, judging from a letter written June 16, 1854, by White, counsel for the company, to Fabens, a quiet understanding existed between the American government, Hollins, Fabens, and the company. Much discretion had been given Fabens, White wrote, and he hoped that it would "not be exercised to show any mercy to the town or people. . . . If the scoundrels are severely punished", he continued, "we can take possession and build it up as a business place, put in our own officers, transfer the jurisdiction, and you know the rest. It is of the last importance that the people of the town should be taught to fear us. Punishment will teach them, after which you must agree with them as to the organization of a new Government and the officers of it. Everything now

depends on you and Hollins. The latter is all right. He fully understands the outrage, and will not hesitate in enforcing reparation." ⁴⁶

The instructions were executed by Fabens and Hollins, aided by Scott, agent of the company at Greytown. Before the arrival of the *Cyane*, Fabens, as directed, notified the inhabitants of the town that the United States government required reparation for the wrongs committed by them, but had received no reply. ⁴⁷ He learned from private sources, however, that the town neither intended to pay damages nor to apologize for the insult to Borland. ⁴⁸ As soon as he arrived, Hollins communicated with Fabens and the two decided to renew the demands already made. After consultation with Scott, it was determined to call for \$24,000 damages for the loss of goods belonging to the Transit Company, ⁴⁹ and an apology for the insult to Borland, with an assurance of future good behavior. ⁵⁰

Accordingly, on July 11 such a demand was made by Fabens. ⁵¹ This demand was likewise unheeded, and Hollins, after consultation with the others, decided to give the town twenty-four hours in which to render satisfaction. Hence, on the following day at Hollins's order a proclamation was posted in public places about

⁴⁶ Inclosure in Crampton to Clarendon, Sept. 10, 1855, F. O., Am., vol. 623, no. 188. There seems to be no reason for doubting the authenticity of this letter. It was printed in the newspapers and appears not to have been questioned. Moreover, the proposed scheme was quite in harmony with the company's well-known character.

⁴⁷ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 734, doc. 126, p. 29.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ In the opinion of Clarendon, this was an unreasonable sum (Clarendon to Crampton, Aug. 31, 1854, F. O., Am., vol. 591, no. 191), and, though there are no means of verifying this opinion, a knowledge of the circumstances leads to the belief that it was correct.

⁵⁰ *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 734, doc. 126, p. 9.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

the town, declaring that if the demands were not met by nine o'clock the next morning the place would be bombarded.⁵² A body of marines sent by Hollins secured the arms and ammunition which were at the station house.⁵³ At the same time Scott invited the women and children and the aged and infirm as well as all who would declare themselves well-disposed towards the United States to take refuge in the river steamers of the company.⁵⁴ But only about twelve availed themselves of the offer.⁵⁵

While these things were taking place, the British schooner *Bermuda* with Lieutenant Jolly in charge lay in the harbor. Hollins notified Jolly of his intentions,⁵⁶ and the latter entered a solemn protest against the proposed action. The town, he pointed out, was entirely defenseless and the force under his command was totally inadequate to protect the place against the *Cyane*.⁵⁷ Hollins expressed regret that Jolly considered a protest necessary, but declared that he, Hollins, must enforce the reparation demanded by his government.⁵⁸

As no attention had been paid to any of the demands made in behalf of the United States government, on the morning of July 13 Hollins opened bombardment. When the bombardment was over, the buildings spared by the guns of the *Cyane* were set afire by Hollins's orders, and the town was thus totally destroyed.⁵⁹

Hollins's action met with strong condemnation from the American press and people.⁶⁰ The *New York Times* was particularly bitter, and, assuming that the

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7, 9-10. ⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 10. ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 10, 30.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 31. ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 7. ⁵⁷ *Ibid.* ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, ser. no. 702, doc. 85, p. 29.

⁶⁰ *New York Times*, July 26, 31, Aug. 1, 2, 1854; *New York Tribune*, Aug. 2, 3, 5, 16, 1854; *Boston Transcript*, July 28, 29, Aug. 3, 1854; *Boston Post*, July 31, 1854; von Holst, *History*, V, 12.

action was directed or approved by the government, intimated that the terms of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty had been broken, and denounced President Pierce for a violation of the Constitution of the United States, on the ground that Congress alone could declare war.⁶¹ The *Times* was an opposition paper, but the best elements of the Democrats themselves felt that they could not honestly defend the deed.⁶² The fact that resolutions from both houses of Congress, asking for the correspondence upon the subject, with a copy of Hollins's instructions, were carried by a large majority and in spite of administrative opposition was indicative of the general disapprobation of the country.⁶³

The attitude of the British government towards the destruction of Greytown is of decided interest in view of the declaration, which the government had repeatedly made, that the place was under British protection and would remain so until terms could be agreed upon for its disposal. The town had been utterly destroyed by a United States war vessel. The protectorate was thus finally put to a test.

Throughout England the affair was, of course, disapproved, regretfully by those friendly to the United States, and savagely by newspapers like the London *Times*.⁶⁴ As usual, this paper reflected the views of the government. Clarendon, writing to Crampton on August 31, 1854, declared the outrage to be "without a parallel in the annals of modern times",⁶⁵ but added that it was a consolation to learn, as he had from

⁶¹ New York *Times*, Aug. 1, 1854.

⁶² von Holst, *History*, V, 9-10.

⁶³ Crampton to Clarendon, July 31, 1854, F. O., Am., vol. 598, no. 204; Griffith to Hammond, Aug. 20, 1854, "Private", *ibid.*, vol. 598.

⁶⁴ Buchanan, *Works*, IX, 248.

⁶⁵ F. O., Am., vol. 598, no. 191.

Crampton, that the deed had been indignantly reprobated by public opinion in the United States, and he had no doubt that these feelings would be shared by the American government.⁶⁶

Upon first learning of the matter, Buchanan had promptly assured the British government of his conviction that Hollins's act was without authority and would be disavowed by the United States.⁶⁷ Marcy, however, seems to have been placed in a quandary by the situation. It is possible that Hollins's measures were more extreme than had been desired by the American government,⁶⁸ but in view of the instructions furnished him, they could hardly be disavowed. On the other hand, American public opinion, which was probably much more adverse than had been expected, had to be considered; and the British government had to be reckoned with. In this dilemma it was evidently thought best to avoid discussion as long as possible. Accordingly, when approached by Crampton regarding the subject, Marcy replied that for the present he must decline expressing any opinion, as the matter was under consideration of the American government.⁶⁹ A little later when Crampton broached the subject, Marcy declared that he could not yet speak officially regarding it, as he had not heard from the President. But during this conversation, he tried to make much of the fact

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Buchanan, *Works*, IX, 248.

⁶⁸ On August 8, Marcy wrote in a private letter to Buchanan: "The occurrence at Greytown is an embarrassing affair. The place merited chastisement, but the severity of the one inflicted exceeded our expectations. The Government will, however, I think, stand by Capt. Hollins." *Ibid.*, 242. Marcy may have been perfectly sincere in this statement, but in view of Buchanan's expectation of a disavowal, in a letter to Buchanan Marcy would scarcely have commended the act.

⁶⁹ Crampton to Clarendon, July 31, 1854, F. O., Am., vol. 598, no. 204.

that the principal ringleaders of Greytown had been received aboard Jolly's vessel, and, as Crampton expressed it, showed an attempt to shift the blame for an unpopular act to the shoulders of a British officer.⁷⁰

On September 21, when more than two months had passed without a disavowal or an explanation from the American government, Clarendon again addressed the British minister at Washington. The British government, he wrote, had confidently expected the outrages and wrongs committed at Greytown to be indignantly disavowed by the United States government as they had been by the American people, but had seen with surprise and regret that the sentiments of the people had not been re-echoed by the cabinet at Washington, and that so long a time had been allowed to elapse without Hollins's conduct being disavowed. Crampton was instructed to read this letter to Marcy.⁷¹

Finally, in the President's message of December 4, 1854, a definite stand was taken by the American government. The message gave a detailed account of the bombardment and the events connected with it, but with such omissions⁷² and misrepresentations⁷³ as

⁷⁰ Crampton to Clarendon, Sept. 18, 1854, *ibid.*, no. 229. The charges made against Jolly were promptly investigated by order of the British government, and Jolly was completely exonerated. Fanshawe to the Secretary of the Admiralty, Nov. 25, 1854, Ad. Sec. In-Letters, 5629, no. 204.

⁷¹ F. O., Am., vol. 591, no. 198.

⁷² For instance, the message failed to state that before the bombardment began arms and ammunition had been removed from Greytown and put aboard the *Cyane*.

⁷³ The message declared Greytown to be a "marauding establishment too dangerous to be disregarded and too guilty to pass unpunished, and yet incapable of being treated in any other way than as a piratical resort of outlaws or a camp of savages depredating on emigrant trains or caravans and the frontier settlements of civilized states", which was only partly true. Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, V, 282. Further-

to leave an erroneous impression of the incident. In concluding his consideration of the matter, the President wrote: "It certainly would have been most satisfactory to me if the object of the *Cyane's* mission could have been consummated without any act of public force, but the arrogant contumacy of the offenders rendered it impossible to avoid the alternative either to break up their establishment or to leave them impressed with the idea that they might persevere with impunity in a career of insolence and plunder."⁷⁴

Thus the American government tried to justify the act of its official, and, in view of the instructions sent to Hollins and Fabens, it is rather difficult to see what other course was possible. But the whole affair was unjustifiable. It is true that the insult to Borland and the depredations upon the property of the Transit Company demanded some action on the part of the United States government, but to bombard and then burn a town deserted by its inhabitants, and thus to destroy the property of the innocent with that of the guilty, was an act unworthy of a civilized nation. Furthermore, in considering the guilt of the Greytown people it should be remembered that there were mitigating circumstances. Because of Hollins's interference, their grievance of the preceding year against the Transit

more, the message stated that Hollins had appealed to Jolly "to interpose and persuade them (the people of Greytown) to take some course calculated to save the necessity of resorting to the extreme measures indicated in his proclamation." *Ibid.*, 283. Neither the report of Fabens nor that of Hollins justify such a statement. Moreover, nearly a month before the President's message appeared, Jolly distinctly stated in reply to a question from the Admiralty that Hollins "did at no time entreat or request him to exert his influence with the authorities at Greytown to act differently". Inclosure in Fanshawe to the Secretary of the Admiralty, Nov. 25, 1854, Ad. Sec. In-Letters, 5629, no. 204.

⁷⁴ Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, V, 280-284.

Company still existed; and Borland had protected the murderer of one of their number, who had apparently been innocent of any offense.

The President's message was practically the last word between the two countries upon the general subject of the bombardment. The British government had asked for a disavowal of the act, and the President had replied by defending it. The British government did not press the matter further.⁷⁵ The protectorate over Mosquito, like the kingdom which it pretended to protect, was but a shadow when a strong nation was the aggressor.

It may be suggested that had not the British government been embarrassed by the Crimean War at the time, Hollins's proceedings might have had more serious results. It is possible that in such case the call for disavowal might have been worded less mildly, and the correspondence might have taken on a more belligerent tone, but it is unlikely that the affair would have gone beyond this. The protest and call for disavowal by the British government were merely made for the purpose of saving—or trying to save—British dignity. If a disavowal could be obtained, so much the better; if not, the matter would be dropped. The British government fully realized that a war over such a flimsy pretext as the Mosquito kingdom would not only receive the condemnation of the world at large, but, what was

⁷⁵ In conversation with Buchanan, Clarendon severely criticised the presidential message relative to the destruction of Greytown, which Buchanan in turn defended. Buchanan, *Works*, IX, 337.

The Nicaraguan government had also protested against Hollins's act, but it had not ventured to demand a disavowal of the act. Griffith to Hammond, Aug. 27, 1854, "Private", F. O., Am., vol. 598.

more to the point, would also fail to receive either the approval or the support of the British people.⁷⁶

In addition to a disavowal of the outrage, the British government had attempted to secure indemnity for property of British subjects which had been destroyed by Hollins. In accordance with instructions, Crampton informed Marcy that his government considered compensation due for these losses; ⁷⁷ but the Secretary of State gave little reason to believe that such damages would be paid, and took the ground that as the inhabitants of the town formed a sort of *de facto* government, they had no claim to protection on countries of which they were natives.⁷⁸ However, Wheeler, a new minister to Central America, with Fabens, was instructed to investigate the claims for damages presented by various nations,⁷⁹ and for a time Marcy held out some hope that "innocent sojourners" at the place might be compensated;⁸⁰ but later he stated that so far as he had been able to examine the reports sent in no such persons existed.⁸¹ He informed Crampton, however, that American citizens who claimed damages were treated just as the people of other countries.⁸² Finally, after Cramp-

⁷⁶ The attitude of the British public regarding the subject was reflected in the press in the spring of 1853. The *London Globe* for March 3 remarked that if cause for war with the United States were wanted, the very positive grounds necessary for a quarrel with kinfolk "should not be mixed up with the assertion of anything quite so aboriginal as the ill-defined rights, titles, and dominions of the tawny,—and to confess the truth,—somewhat trumpery majesty of Mosquito." And the *News* for April 2 expressed the opinion that the sooner the British government gave up its interference in the paltry squabbles of the savages of Mosquitia, and the semi-savages of Honduras and Nicaragua, the better it would be for its reputation.

⁷⁷ Clarendon to Crampton, Aug. 31, 1854, F. O., Am., vol. 591, no. 191.

⁷⁸ Crampton to Clarendon, Sept. 18, 1854, *ibid.*, vol. 598, no. 229.

⁷⁹ Clarendon to Crampton, Feb. 16, 1855, *ibid.*, vol. 616, no. 32.

⁸⁰ Crampton to Clarendon, Mar. 12, 1855, *ibid.*, vol. 620, no. 60; Crampton to Clarendon, July 16, 1855, *ibid.*, vol. 622, no. 136.

⁸¹ *Ibid.* ⁸² *Ibid.*

ton had repeatedly called the attention of the American government to the subject of claims,⁸³ the Foreign Secretary consulted the law officers of the Crown with regard to it and was informed by them that as the United States government had adopted the acts of its naval officer, it could not, in accordance with the principles of international law, be called upon to make compensation to British subjects for the losses occasioned to them by those acts. In a confidential note Clarendon made known this opinion to Crampton, and added that it was of great importance that a maritime power like England should uphold the doctrines of international law thus laid down, since her fleets were likely often to be engaged in hostilities against seaport towns. Consequently, he wrote, the British government did not think it advisable that Crampton should officially press the Greytown claims.⁸⁴ With this the matter was dropped and no claims were ever paid by the United States for damages caused by the bombardment of Greytown.

Long before the correspondence arising from the bombardment ended, there had grown from the rumors of armed expeditions to be sent from the United States to Central America a reality which in time roused the old British suspicion of American designs on the isthmus, and struck terror to the hearts of the Central American republics. This was the filibustering movement. Early in 1854 reports were abroad that an American colonization society had secured certain lands

⁸³ Crampton to Clarendon, Mar. 12, 1855, *F. O., Am.*, vol. 620, no. 60; Clarendon to Crampton, May 21, 1855, *ibid.*, vol. 616, no. 100; Crampton to Clarendon, July 16, 1855, *F. O., Am.*, vol. 622, no. 136; Jan. 28, 1856, *ibid.*, vol. 640, no. 11.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 638, no. 45.

1849, when three of the states turned eagerly towards the United States for protection against British encroachments. Though Guatemala had not forgotten her old claims on Belize territory, in the last part of 1853 the prime minister of the republic approached Wyke expressing a desire to settle the Belize boundaries by secret treaty with Great Britain, in order to protect his state from American designs,⁹¹ his idea apparently being that the American government might use the boundary dispute as an excuse for intervention. But the British government prudently replied that this would not be conducive to the interest of Guatemala, as such a treaty would be more likely to produce than avert the dangers anticipated from American encroachments.⁹² A little later Nicaragua revealed her fears by soliciting a treaty which would bring her into closer relations with the British government. She even promised to let her Mosquito claims lie dormant, in the hope that the Indians would later voluntarily unite themselves with her, and offered to acknowledge Greytown a free port under the protection of all nations.⁹³ The matter was presented by Wyke to his government, but Clarendon replied that if a treaty should be formed with Nicaragua it was expedient that some mention be made of the Mosquito territory.⁹⁴ Wyke believed that Spanish pride would prevent the Nicaraguans from acknowledging the independence of the Mosquitos, so it was thought best to let the matter rest for a while.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Savage to Webster, April 21, 1851, Dept. of State, Des., Guat., vol. 3, no. 6; Wyke to Clarendon, Nov. 27, 1853, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 79, no. 37; Clarendon to Wyke, Jan. 19, 1854, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 82, no. 3.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ Wyke to Clarendon, Mar. 13, 1854, *ibid.*, no. 9.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 7.

⁹⁵ Wyke to Clarendon, July 29, 1854, *ibid.*, no. 22.