ANGLO-AMERICAN ISTHMIAN DIPLOMACY

1815-1915

BY

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A Thesis Submitted to the Department of History and the Committee on Graduate Study of Leland Stanford Junior University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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THE LORD BALTIMORE PRESS
BALTIMORE, MD., U. S. A.

TO MY FATHER AND MY MOTHER
CHARLES WILLIAMS
AND
CAROLINE K. WILLIAMS

PREFACE.

Though the diplomatic relations of England and the United States over the Central American isthmus have received frequent consideration of a general character by writers on American diplomacy, no exhaustive study of the subject appears to have been before attempted. It is the aim of the following essay to present the result of a detailed investigation into Anglo-American isthmian diplomacy, from the first emergence of Central America as a subject of diplomatic interest between the two countries down to the immediate present.

The work here presented is to a large extent based upon new material. Part of this is in the form of printed sources, drawn upon to some degree by previous writers but by no means exhausted. The most important writings of this class are the British *Parliamentary Papers* and the *United States Documents.* But a much larger and more valuable contribution was made by the manuscript archives for the period 1815 to 1861, found in the Public Record Office in London and in the Department of State at Washington. Only a comparatively small portion of the archives bearing upon the subject of this study have been printed, and the unprinted material has hitherto been entirely untouched by research students.

Chapter I, which is merely introductory, makes no pretense at being an original contribution. The authorities upon which it is founded, however, have largely

the character of sources, and these have been used critically with a view to ascertaining the facts behind the conflicting statements of various contemporary writers. Chapters II to VIII, inclusive, which are based to a considerable but varying degree upon previously unused material, are the most original part of the essay. Access to manuscript archives made possible not only a presentation of many hitherto unknown facts, but also led to a new, and, it is believed, more accurate, interpretation of numerous phases of the subject considered by previous writers. Chapter IX, which covers a period subsequent to that for which the archives are open, presents some fresh viewpoints resulting from the new light thrown upon preceding events. The period covered by chapter X is too recent for a satisfactory treatment; hence, this chapter aims primarily to present in broad outline the latest phases of the general subject, in their proper relations. The concluding chapter, XI, summarizes the result of the whole study.

Certain irregularities appearing in connection with the bibliographical citations may need an explanation. In some instances more than one authority has been cited for a given statement. This has been done with two purposes in view: (1) to strengthen by a multiplication of witnesses statements based upon non-documentary writings—generally in the nature of travel sketches, largely made up of personal observations and reports from hearsay evidence; (2) to aid the reader who may wish to make a further study of the point in question. The authority believed to be the most reliable has been placed first on the list. Throughout the study, writings of a generally untrustworthy

character have been used only in a supplementary manner. References to manuscript sources are in every case as definite as possible. Wherever despatch or page numbers exist they have been given. Letters in the archives from important diplomatic or consular agents are as a rule numbered, but those from less important agents—particularly those written from Central America—are frequently unnumbered. Drafts of correspondence are generally unnumbered, as are also private letters from officials, while letters from private individuals are always without numbers.

This study was originally written as a thesis under the direction of Professor Ephraim D. Adams, in connection with my candidacy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Leland Stanford Junior University. For his painstaking supervision of my work and for his stimulating interest in it, I am especially indebted to Professor Adams. My gratitude is also due to Professor Henry L. Cannon of Stanford University for many suggestions which were of value in the later revision of the manuscript. Through the friendly interest of Mr. Hubert Hall, Assistant Keeper of the Public Records, in London, I secured access to the British manuscript archives, the most valuable part of my source material. My sister, Miss Edle Carolyn Williams, gave much assistance in the preparation of the accompanying map.

MARY WILHELMINE WILLIAMS.

WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS,
May 20, 1915.

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Central America, 1850-1860, showing disputed territory. Facing page 198

CHAPTER I.

The British in Central America Before 1815.

For more than a century before the government of the United States came into existence, the subjects of Great Britain had been actively interested in that part of the North American continent which, geographically, is included under the term "Central America".[1] By various and fluctuating degrees of political control their government protected them, and, in consequence, there gradually developed a close relationship between Great Britain and certain parts of Central America. It was the existence of this British connection with the isthmus and the fact that the connection was time-honored when the attention of the United States was first seriously attracted to the region that rendered subsequent British-American isthmian relations so complicated and difficult of adjustment. Shortly after the United States had become a rival of the British in Central America, so delicate had the situation grown that the American government, despairing of any other peaceful settlement, for the first and only time in its history compromised with the Monroe doctrine and made an agreement with Great Britain which later came to be known as the Clayton-Bulwer treaty. This instrument, instead of removing the difficulty, as had

[1] This account assumes a general knowledge of Central American history on the part of the reader. Bancroft's three-volume work is the best and most comprehensive history of Central America; Fortier and Ficklen's *Central America and Mexico* gives a good brief account.

been hoped, only magnified it to an alarming degree and brought into being the long-lived and vexatious "Central American question".

These early British interests were divided between three different portions of Central America: Belize Settlement, the Bay Islands, and the Mosquito Shore. For the purpose of making clear the subsequent chapters, a brief account of the early English connections with the places named is here given.

Belize Settlement.

The British settlement of Belize was a direct outgrowth of the buccaneering era in the Western World. At an early date the exclusive commercial policy of Spain tempted the subjects of other nations to acquire a share in her prosperity by irregular and violent methods. During the long and frequent wars they operated as privateers; in times of peace they were undisguised freebooters, or buccaneers. As time passed, the West Indies became the chief centre of operations for these "brethren of the coast"; and from here they made daring and profitable attacks upon Spanish vessels homeward bound from the colonies.[2] With the conquest of Jamaica by Cromwell, in 1655, the strength of the English buccaneers increased; for the early governors of the island as a rule not only connived at the marauding expeditions, but at times even shared in the plunder.[3] Indeed, Captain Morgan, notorious for sacking and burning many cities on the

[2] For a detailed account of the buccaneers see Haring, *Buccaneers in the West Indies*; Burney, *Buccaneers of America*; Johnson, *General History of the Pyrates*; Esquemeling, *Buccaneers of America*.

[3] Johnson, *Pyrates*, I, 25; Long, *History of Jamaica*, I, 300; Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 369.

coasts of Spanish America, as well as for preying upon Spanish vessels, was knighted by the British government and made lieutenant-governor of Jamaica.[4]

At first, when attacking Spanish ships, the freebooters aimed primarily to rob them of the wealth carried from the mines; this accomplished, the vessels, which frequently carried mahogany or logwood, were set afire and abandoned. Almost by accident a shipload of logwood was spared and taken to London, where the ready market which it commanded quickly revealed its value to the buccaneers. After this, logwood-laden vessels were eagerly captured for the sake of their cargoes.[5]

When Spanish prizes became scarcer the freebooters gradually took to cutting their own logwood on the thinly-settled portions of the Spanish coast.[6] This change began a few years after the English took possession of Jamaica.[7] The new enterprise was favored by Modyford, the governor of the island, as plundering Spanish bottoms had come to be frowned upon by the home government.[8] Spain was now too weak to do more than partially police her coasts and to seize the vessels containing plunder from her forests; consequently, for a time the British Council for the Plantations approved of the connivance of Modyford's successor.[9]

[4] *Cal. St. P., Col., Am. and W. I., 1675-1676,* 343; Long, *Jamaica,* I, 301; Haring, *Buccaneers,* 205.

[5] Dampier, *Voyages,* II, pt. 2, p. 47; Gibbs, *British Honduras,* 24.

[6] Dampier, *Voyages,* II, pt. 2, pp. 47-48; *Cal. St. P., Col., Am. and W. I., 1669-1674,* 121, 311, 426, 427, 428; Gibbs, *British Honduras,* 24.

[7] Haring, *Buccaneers,* 208-209; *Parl. Papers,* 1847, *Coms.,* LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 3.

[8] Haring, *Buccaneers,* 209.

[9] *Ibid.,* 210; *Cal. St. P., Col., Am. and W. I., 1677-1680,* 343, 406; *1681-1685,* 284.

Naturally, log-cutting settlements grew up with the development of this new British industry. One of the earliest establishments of this sort was made in Yucatan, on the Belize River, in 1662.[10] As logwood was plentiful on this part of the coast, the settlement prospered and was soon on a firm basis.

The reprisals of the Spanish upon the English logwood cargoes continued, however, in spite of precautions;[11] therefore in 1670 the British government attempted to secure by treaty a sanction or defense of the actions of its subjects. The seventh article of an agreement made with Spain in this year reads:

> It is agreed that the most serene King of Great Britain, his heirs and successors, shall have, hold, keep and enjoy forever with plenary right of sovereignty, dominion, possession and propriety, all those lands, regions, islands, colonies, and places, whatsoever, being or situated in the West Indies, or any part of America, which the said King of Great Britain or his subjects do at present hold or possess.[12]

Though the clause appears to have been inserted in the treaty ostensibly and primarily for the purpose of settling a dispute over the possession of Jamaica,[13] the British negotiators evidently aimed to secure a wording which might include the British log-cutting settlements on the Belize and on other parts of the Spanish

[10] L. L., "Balize", in *Nouvelles Annales*, C, 52; *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 13; Gibbs, *British Honduras*, 26. This was probably not the first British settlement in the region, for it seems that as early as 1638 a number of shipwrecked British sailors established themselves there. *Ibid.*, 26; Lucas, *Historical Geography of the British Colonies*, II, 297; Trendell, *Her Majesty's Colonies*, 347.

[11] Haring, *Buccaneers*, 211.

[12] Hertslet, *Treaties between Great Britain and Foreign Powers*, II, 196-197.

[13] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 27, p. 80.

coast.[14] This interpretation was attempted by the governors of Jamaica and by the Board of Trade,[15] but the Spaniards had no intention of acknowledging that such concessions had been made; therefore they continued to capture the logwood vessels of the British, and repeatedly destroyed their log-cutting settlements;[16] Belize suffered like the rest, and in about the year 1732 the settlers were driven away and their homes demolished. They promptly returned, however, and defeated all further expeditions sent against them.[17]

Belize was occupied by the British under the equivocal title of 1670 until the formation of the peace of 1763, which concluded the Seven Years' War. Whether or not the negotiators of this treaty were ignorant of the terms of that made in 1670 and of its possible application to Belize is not apparent.[18] In any case, by the later treaty England agreed to demolish all fortifications erected by British subjects in the Bay of Honduras; but the Spanish government permitted the log-cutters to remain, and guaranteed them protection, though, obviously, Spain still held full sovereignty over the settlement.[19]

Again, in 1779, when Spain had allied herself with the revolting English colonies, the Spaniards returned to Belize. This time the settlement was pillaged and many of its inhabitants taken as prisoners to Havana.

[14] Long, *Jamaica*, I, 341; *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 13; Gibbs, *British Honduras*, 27.

[15] *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 14; Burney, *Buccaneers*, 99-100.

[16] Wafer, *New Voyage to America*, 34; Long, *Jamaica*, I, 341; *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 13-14.

[17] Bancroft, *Central America*, II, 625-628.

[18] Long, *Jamaica*, I, 342.

[19] MacDonald, *Select Charters*, 265.

But in the following year Omoa, in Honduras, was captured by British officers, who, by convention with the Spanish authorities, arranged for the redemption of the "Baymen", as the settlers were called.[20]

By the treaty of 1783, which concluded the American Revolution, Belize still remained under Spanish sovereignty, and by this treaty definite boundaries were for the first time agreed upon for the settlement. The boundary line was given in great detail, but, generally speaking, the northern limit of settlement was to be Rio Hondo, and the southern, Belize River.[21]

Notwithstanding the stipulations of 1783, the British continued to spread; therefore a treaty made three years later extended the southern boundary as far as the Sibun River. Besides this extension of territory, the new agreement gave the settlers additional privileges within the district. Not only were they permitted to cut and carry away logwood, but they were also allowed to take mahogany and all other woods, as well as to gather and sell all other uncultivated products; but it was definitely agreed that no plantations were to be made or factories of any sort to be established, since the undisputed possession of the territory by Spain precluded the right of the English to form settlements of that kind.[22] A Spanish commissioner, in company with one representing the English government, was to be admitted to the settlement twice a year to examine into the condition of affairs.[23]

[20] *Ann. Reg.*, 1780, "History", 212-214; *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 15; Henderson, *British Settlement of Honduras*, 5-7.

[21] *Ann. Reg.*, 1783, "State Papers", 334-335.

[22] *Ibid.*, 1786, pp. 262-264.

[23] *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 17-18.

For many years the Spanish government held the settlers rigidly to the terms specified. Commissioners made regular visits for this purpose, and saw that the boundary limits were not exceeded, as well as that the other agreements were complied with. Repeatedly they uprooted and destroyed young plantations started by the residents.[24]

The jealous vigilance of the Spanish authorities was shared by the rival Spanish wood-cutters. This jealousy, and the fact that the British settlers tried constantly to exceed the terms of the treaty, led to repeated threats of hostilities on the part of the Spaniards. The Baymen, who were not permitted to erect fortifications, were alarmed at these demonstrations, and appealed to their government for protection. In response, Colonel Barrow was sent to the place with both military and civil commissions, and took charge of affairs as superintendent, January 1, 1797.[25]

In 1798, when England and Spain were again at war, a determined attempt was made to drive out the settlers. A combined expedition was sent from Campeachy and Bacalar, under Governor O'Niel of Yucatan. The Baymen, however, prepared for a desperate resistance. They burned the houses on Saint George's Cay, to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy, and met the invaders at sea.[26] With the aid of a small naval force under Captain Moss in the *Merlin*,

[24] Crowe, *Gospel in Central America*, 196; Gibbs, *British Honduras*, 50.

[25] Trendell, *Her Majesty's Colonies*, 348.

[26] Henderson, *British Settlement of Honduras*, 8; Crowe, *Gospel in Central America*, 196; Lucas, *Historical Geography*, II, 307. The population at this time, white and colored, was probably not more than six or seven hundred. Henderson, *British Settlement of Honduras*, 85.

they drove off the Spaniards after two days' fighting.[27] This appears to have been the last attempt of the Spanish actively to interfere with the Belize settlement.

During the remainder of the period previous to 1815 the same relations prevailed between the British government and Belize as formerly.[28] By at least three treaties in this period England virtually acknowledged that the settlement was upon the basis established in 1786. The third article of the peace of Amiens of 1802 reads:

> His Britannic majesty restores to the French republic and its allies, viz. his Catholic majesty and the Batavian republic, all the possessions and colonies which respectively belonged to them, and which have been either occupied or conquered by the British forces during the course of the present war.[29]

The only exceptions mentioned are the island of Trinidad and the Dutch possessions in Ceylon.[30] Again, in 1809, Great Britain and Spain formed an alliance in which the two powers agreed upon "an entire and lasting oblivion of all acts of hostility done on their side in the course of the late wars" in which they had been engaged against each other.[31] The last and most important of these treaties was that of 1814; it confirmed the first article of the treaty of 1786.[32]

In view of what has just been said, there seems to be absolutely no basis for the statement made by more

[27] Bird, "Sketch of the East Coast of Central America", in *Jr. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, XI, 81; Bancroft, *Central America*, II, 635; Henderson, *British Settlement of Honduras*, 8; Crowe, *Gospel in Central America*, 196-197.

[28] L. L., "Balize", in *Nouvelles Annales*, C, 54.

[29] *Ann. Reg.*, 1802, p. 609.

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] *Ibid.*, 1809, p. 737.

[32] Hertslet, *Treaties*, II, 245, 271.

recent writers, that the victory won by the Baymen in 1789 was a conquest of the Belize territory, and the event which led directly to the extension of full British sovereignty over the region.[33] The victory seems really to have attracted but little attention from the home government, and it was not until after a lapse of more than fifty years that enlarged claims were made in consequence of it. In 1815, and for many years subsequent to that date, as will be shown later, the British government merely regarded Belize as a settlement of British subjects upon soil the sovereignty of which rested in Spain.

The Bay Islands.

In the Bay of Honduras, close to the shores of the Honduran republic, lie the Bay Islands, a group of some half dozen islands, of which Ruatan[34] is by far the largest and most important. This island is about thirty miles long and eight or nine broad, and is possessed of excellent harbors, easily defended.[35]

While on his fourth voyage, in 1502, Columbus discovered and took possession of Ruatan and another island of the group, now generally known as Bonacca, in the names of the Spanish sovereigns.[36] The ownership of Spain was not disputed until towards the middle of the seventeenth century, when the buccaneers swarmed in the western seas.[37] The advantages

[33] See Gibbs, *British Honduras*; Egerton, *British Colonial Policy*; Keane, *Central and South America*; Woodward, *Expansion of the British Empire*.

[34] Also written Roatan or Rattan.

[35] Long, *Jamaica*, I, 333; Roberts, *Central America*, 276; Alcedo, *Dictionary of America and the West Indies*, IV, 334.

[36] Roberts, *Central America*, 275; Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 369. The name of Bonacca is sometimes rendered "Guanacca".

[37] Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 369; Travis, *Clayton-Bulwer Treaty*, 3; Edgington, *Monroe Doctrine*, 65.

offered by the islands as a rendezvous early appealed to the freebooters, who landed on them in 1642.[38] The Indians, who were apparently the only inhabitants at the time, made no resistance and the intruders established themselves on the islands. From this retreat, and particularly from the sheltered harbors of Ruatan, attacks were made upon the Spanish.[39]

The bishop of Comayagua, however, soon became much concerned over the injurious effect of the heretical British upon the religion of the natives, and helped incite the Spanish authorities to action against the usurpers. A strong force was organized under the leadership of various colonial officials, and in August, 1650, the buccaneers were dislodged.[40] But no attempt was made to guard Ruatan or the other islands against future seizure by the British. The few natives, whom the pirates had spared and enslaved, were too frightened to remain, and were therefore removed to the adjoining coast and allotted lands by the government.[41]

From this time until 1742, when war existed between Spain and England, the Bay Islands appear to have had no permanent inhabitants.[42] During this struggle, however, the English planned to gain control of the whole Atlantic coast of Guatemala. They captured and fortined several important places on the mainland, and later

[38] Strangeways, *Mosquito Shore*, 42; Juarros, *Guatemala*, 318; Crowe, *Gospel in Central America*, 184.

[39] Juarros, *Guatemala*, 319; Crowe, *Gospel in Central America*, 184; Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 370.

[40] Juarros, *Guatemala*, 319-321; Crowe, *Gospel in Central America*, 184-185; Gibbs, *British Honduras*, 25.

[41] Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 370; *De Bow's Review*, XXVII, 555-556.

[42] Long, *Jamaica*, I, 335; Juarros, *Guatemala*, 321; Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 370.

took possession of Ruatan.[43] Following this, they made a strong effort to colonize the island, but after the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle the settlements were broken up and the inhabitants removed.[44] Spain then tried to encourage colonization, but her efforts failed; and for some time the islands, though recognized as Spanish territory, seem to have been practically deserted.[45]

Later, however, a few British appear to have settled upon the islands, but when war again broke out, in 1780, they were driven away by the Guatemalans,[46] and the treaty of 1783 definitely stipulated that all English settlers should, without exception, retire from the Spanish continent and its dependent islands.[47] These terms appear to have been evaded, but a supplementary convention, formed three years later, containing more definite stipulations to the same effect,[48] resulted in British evacuation of the coveted territory.[49]

Yet when war again existed in 1796, they once more returned. British officers transported Caribs from

[43] Juarros, *Guatemala*, 321; Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 370-371.

[44] Long, *Jamaica*, I, 335.

[45] *Ibid.*, 335-336. Long, in his history, published in 1774, repeatedly urged (I, 334, and *passim*), the acquisition and settlement of Ruatan by England. He stated (p. 333), that two Jamaica traders had patents for grazing mules on the island.

Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 371, and Trendell, *Her Majesty's Colonies*, 348, give the impression that during this whole period the islands were definitely held by the British; the latter states (p. 348), that the government of Ruatan and Bonacca was connected with that of Belize, and that the administrative officers had their residence on Ruatan. With regard to this point, however, Long seems to be the best authority.

[46] Long, *Jamaica*, I, 333; Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 371.

[47] *Ann. Reg.*, 1783, "State Papers", 334-335.

[48] *Ibid.*, 1786, p. 263.

[49] Squier seems uncertain upon this point, *Notes on Central America*, 371; but Juarros gives a clear impression that the English abandoned the islands, *Guatemala*, 321.

Saint Vincent and the Leeward Islands to Ruatan and made that place a penal settlement. A guard of 2,000 negroes was stationed there for the defense of the islands. As soon, however, as these encroachments became known to the Spanish colonial officials, steps were taken towards the reconquest of the place; and in May, 1797, the Indians and negroes surrendered to a Spanish naval commander, after which the Spanish flag was hoisted and the territory formally declared a possession of Spain.[50]

After this, as long as Spain retained her dominion over Guatemalan territory, she remained in undisputed possession of the Bay Islands. About the year 1804 Captain Henderson, the superintendent of Belize, landed upon Ruatan, and, in writing of the incident, stated definitely that the island belonged to Spain.[51] Moreover, as has already been stated,[52] a treaty made between Spain and England in 1814 confirmed the first article of the treaty of 1786, which referred to British settlers on Central American territory. Therefore, if at any time previous Spanish control of the islands had lapsed, it was revived at this time and distinctly recognized by the British government.

The Mosquito Shore.

During the period considered in this chapter the term "Mosquito Shore" was applied in a vague way to the east coast of the captain-generalcy of Guate-

[50] Juarros, *Guatemala*, 321; Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 371; Gibbs, *British Honduras*, 52; Galindo, "Notice of the Caribs in Central America", in *Jr. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, III, 290.

[51] Henderson, *British Settlement of Honduras*, 168; Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 372.

[52] See above, p. 8.

mala, but particularly to that part lying between Cape Honduras and the mouth of the San Juan River.[53]

The name was derived from the Moscos, or Mosquitos, the semi-nomadic population which inhabited the district.[54] These people were a mixture of at least three races. Those to whom the term Mosquito was originally applied were American aborigines, partly composed of Caribs who invaded the coast from the West Indies.[55] To these was added, probably in the early part of the seventeenth century, an Ethiopian element through the wreck of an African slaver somewhere upon the coast.[56] Because of this infusion of negro blood, the name "Sambos" was at times applied to the population of the region, or at least to the more negroid portion of it.[57] As time passed, traders and buccaneers who frequented the shore contributed a Caucasian strain to the earlier mixture;[58] and more African blood was occasionally added by fugitive slaves from the adjoining settlements.[59]

The aboriginal inhabitants of the shore were never completely subjugated by the conquerors of Guatemala;[60] but the cruel treatment which they suffered

[53] Long, *Jamaica*, I, 314; *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 27; *Kemble Papers*, II, 419, in N. Y. Hist. Soc., *Colls.*, 1884.

[54] Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 48; Keane, *Central and South America*, II, 237; Churchill, *Voyages*, VI, 287; *Kemble Papers*, II, 419.

[55] Keane, *Central and South America*, II, 235.

[56] Churchill, *Voyages*, VI, 293; Henderson, *British Settlement of Honduras*, 216; Strangeways, *Mosquito Shore*, 328; Bonnycastle, *Spanish-America*, I, 172.

[57] *Kemble Papers*, II, 419; Roberts, *Central America*, 152-153; Strangeways, *Mosquito Shore*, 239; Bonnycastle, *Central America*, I, 172.

[58] Bard, *Waikna*, 337-338.

[59] Scherzer, *Travels in Central America*, II, 30-31; Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 208; Keane, *Central and South America*, II, 236.

[60] *Cal. St. P., Col., Am. and W. I., 1669-1674*, 303; Alcedo, *Dictionary*, III, 347; Long, *Jamaica*, I, 315, 317; Roberts, *Central America*, 54.

from the would-be conquerors bred in them a deep hatred for the Spanish people and their government.[61] This feeling was shared by the English buccaneers who infested the coast and worked harm to the Spaniards;[62] and they found it to their interest to foster it in the natives. But while encouraging opposition to the Spaniards, the freebooters themselves cultivated friendly relations with the Indians. They taught them the use of firearms and won their favor in various ways; and the Mosquitos in return helped the English in their attacks on the Spanish settlements.[63] Other adventurers came to the shore, especially from Jamaica, and traded with the Mosquitos for the natural products of the region.[64] With the aid of the Mosquitos as middlemen, they also exchanged British goods for the gold of the Spaniards, within the Spanish settlements.[65] The Mosquito coast was thus made a sort of "underground railroad" connecting the Spanish colonies, commercially, with the outside world.

As time passed, the freebooters and other British subjects made permanent settlements on the shore at Cape Gracias á Dios, Bluefields, and other points;[66] and thus the British influence grew. Shortly after the

[61] Dampier, *Voyages*, I, 8; Hist. MSS. Comm., *Report on MSS. of Mrs. Stopford-Sackville*, II, 289; Henderson, *British Settlement of Honduras*, 212, 225; Roberts, *Central America*, 153.

[62] Churchill, *Voyages*, VI, 286, 289, 291; Bard, *Waikna*, 337; Keane, *Central and South America*, II, 237.

[63] Long, *Jamaica*, I, 315, 317; Churchill, *Voyages*, VI, 287; Dampier, *Voyages*, I, 8, 10.

[64] Churchill, *Voyages*, VI, 286; Long, *Jamaica*, I, 319-320; *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 29.

[65] Long, *Jamaica*, I, 317; *Kemble Papers*, II, 428; *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 29.

[66] *Parl. Papers*, 1847, "Coms.", LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 36; Bonnycastle, *Spanish-America*, I, 172; Bard, *Waikna*, 337.

English conquest of Jamaica this influence was much increased, for Oldman, the chief of the Mosquitos, was taken to England, where he formed some sort of alliance with the English government,[67] in consequence of which the Mosquitos regarded themselves as subjects of the King of England.[68] After some years, however, the alliance seems to have been forgotten by the English government, for when Jeremy, the heir of Oldman, came into power he was sent to Jamaica, evidently at the instigation of British residents of the shore, to ask for British protection for his people.[69] Whether the request was granted at this time is not certain;[70] but at some subsequent date the governors of Jamaica adopted the plan of appointing justices of the peace for the shore, who in addition to their regular duties were empowered to decide commercial questions of contracts and debts.[71]

This policy was continued until the war of 1739-1748 with Spain. During this struggle the British government came quickly to realize the importance of the Mosquitos as military allies and as agents for carrying on illicit trade with the Spanish colonies.[72] Gov-

[67] Oldman received from the English king a "crown" and a "commission", which were but a "laced hat" and a "ridiculous piece of writing" purporting that he should kindly use and relieve such straggling Englishmen as came to the shore. Churchill, *Voyages*, VI, 288.

[68] Dampier, *Voyages*, I, pt. 2, p. 11; Edwards, *British West Indies*, V, 203.

[69] Sloane, *History of Jamaica*, I, 76; *Cal. St. P., Col., Am. and W. I., 1669-1674*, 493; Long, *Jamaica*, I, 316.

[70] Sloane says that Alhemarle, the governor of Jamaica, did nothing in the matter, as he feared that it was a trick to set up a government of buccaneers. *History of Jamaica*, I, 76; *cf.* Keasbey, *Nicaragua Canal*, 82-84.

[71] *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 29.

[72] *Ibid.*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 202.

ernor Trelawney of Jamaica, in 1740, wrote to the home government describing a plan for producing revolt in the Spanish colonies by aid from the Mosquitos.[73] For the purpose of executing the scheme, Captain Robert Hodgson was promptly sent to the shore to take possession of it in the name of the British government.[74] Hodgson called a meeting of the leading Mosquitos and made known his purpose to them. Then, probably through a liberal use of promises and rum, he secured their assent to a series of articles which he drew up.[75] These articles formally transferred the sovereignty of the shore to the British government, and made a Sambo chief, to whom the others were required to swear allegiance, the local ruler.[76]

Hodgson's attempt to produce a revolt of the back-country Indians failed, as did also Anson's and Vernon's expeditions, so there were no British conquests in Central America in consequence of Trelawney's scheme.[77] The British government, however, was now determined to secure a firm hold upon the Mosquito Shore. Therefore Hodgson was appointed superintendent of the region, and in 1749 he erected a fort at Black River, hoisted a British flag, and established a garrison of 100 men sent from Jamaica.[78] His action

[73] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 27, p. 83.

[74] *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 29; Bard, *Waikna*, 340.

[75] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 27, pp. 85-86; Bard, *Waikna*, 340-343.

[76] *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 29; *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 27, p. 84; Bard, *Waikna*, 340-342; Scherzer, *Travels in Central America*, II, 31.

[77] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 27, p. 86; Travis, *Clayton-Bulwer Treaty*, 24; Bancroft, *Central America*, II, 601.

[78] *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 29; Bard, *Waikna*, 343; Lucas, *Historical Geography*, II, 299.

really amounted to a formal assumption of possession on the part of the British government. His function was to look after British interests generally, and particularly those of a commercial nature. This latter duty included the cultivation and preservation of friendship with the Mosquitos.[79]

In the autumn of 1739, before the arrival of Hodgson, the Spanish ambassador to England had complained that the English of Jamaica incited the Mosquitos to attacks on the adjacent Spanish settlements.[80] After the arrival of the superintendent and the formal occupation of the region, protests were uttered again and again. In 1750 the Spanish threatened to expel the intruders by force.[81] By way of reply to this, Hodgson, at Trelawney's instructions, represented that the object in stationing a superintendent on the shore was to prevent British hostilities against the Spanish.[82] For a time the Spaniards were, or pretended to be, deceived, and complimented Hodgson with the title of colonel for his professed services.[83] But the aggressions of the British continued, and the Spanish finally prepared for hostile action.[84]

The British settlers, who numbered about a thousand at the time,[85] were alarmed at this, as was also Governor Knowles, Trelawney's successor.[86] Knowles lacked

[79] *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Cams.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 29.

[80] Bard, *Waikna*, 343.

[81] *Ibid.*; Bancroft, *Central America*, II, 601-602; Keane, *Central and South America*, II, 237.

[82] Bard, *Waikna*, 343; Bancroft, *Central America*, II, 602.

[83] Bard, *Waikna*, 343-344; Bancroft, *Central America*, II, 602.

[84] Bard, *Waikna*, 344; Bancroft, *Central America*, II, 602.

[85] *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Cams.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 36.

[86] Bard, *Waikna*, 344.

the enthusiasm for British territorial expansion which had moved his predecessor; accordingly he wrote to the home government that the whole Mosquito affair was "a job", and that if Hodgson were not checked or recalled he would involve the nation in difficulties.[87] While waiting for a reply from home, Knowles wrote to the captain-general of Guatemala in an effort to preserve peace.[88] In consequence of these endeavors, a more pacific spirit was displayed by the Spaniards.[89] But with the accession of a new governor the old difficulties returned, and helped produce a conflict with Spain.[90]

By the treaty of 1763 which concluded this conflict, Great Britain agreed not only to demolish all fortifications erected by British subjects in the Bay of Honduras, but also in "other places of the territory of Spain in that part of the world".[91] In the following year, orders were given for the destruction of the fort at Black River, and the withdrawal of the garrison;[92] and the orders were executed.[93] But the settlers were reluctant to leave the shore, and the British government, probably influenced by Otway, the existing superintendent,[94] soon changed its policy.

In view of their bitter opposition to British interference in Mosquito territory, it is certain that the Spanish

[87] Bard, *Waikna*, 344; Travis, *Clayton-Bulwer Treaty*, 26.
[88] Bard, *Waikna*, 344.
[89] Travis, *Clayton-Bulwer Treaty*, 26.
[90] *Ibid.*; Bard, *Waikna*, 344; Bancroft, *Central America*, II, 602.
[91] *Ann. Reg.*, 1762, "State Papers", 239.
[92] *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 30.
[93] Travis, *Clayton-Bulwer Treaty*, 26.
[94] *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 30.

authorities intended the terms of the treaty to apply to this whole territory as well as to the settlements strictly upon the shores of the Bay of Honduras; but in the wording of the agreement the British saw a chance for evasion. Could the whole of the Mosquito Shore be regarded as lying in the Bay-of-Honduras "part of the world"? Black River might be so considered, but not the settlement at Cape Gracias á Dios, and surely not Bluefields, which was far to the south and near the mouth of the San Juan River.

Apparently certain of good ground for defense of their action, the British soon resumed occupation of the shore, under pretense that they had been imposed upon by the Spanish court when they gave orders for evacuation of the region.[95] The system of appointing superintendents was restored. Robert Hodgson, son of the first superintendent, held office from 1767 to 1775, when, as a new plan of government was decided upon, he was recalled.[96] This plan provided for a superintendent and an elective council of twelve members. With the approval of the Jamaican authorities these officers could make police regulations for the country.[97]

While the British were establishing themselves more firmly upon the Mosquito Shore, the Spanish were by no means passive. They protested emphatically, and at times resorted to retaliatory measures;[98] but the well-known weakness of Spain and the evident value of the

[95] *Ibid.*

[96] Travis, *Clayton-Bulwer Treaty*, 27.

[97] *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 32; Travis, *Clayton-Bulwer Treaty*, 27.

[98] *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 32-34; Bancroft, *Central America*, II, 602-604.

coast led the British to take a more bold and open attitude than formerly. In reply to Spanish protests, the British government declared that the Mosquito territory had never been conquered by the Spaniards; consequently, its king was an independent sovereign and quite capable of acting politically as such.[99]

The indignation of the Spanish government at these claims influenced it to aid the revolting American colonies in 1779.[100] England, in retaliation for this unfriendly act, formed a daring plan for indemnifying herself through conquests from Spain for the probable loss of her Atlantic colonies.[101] By means of aid from the Mosquitos, the Spanish colonial dominions were to be cut into two parts, along the line of the San Juan River and Lake Nicarauga, after which each section was to be conquered separately.[102] Governor Dalling of Jamaica, with whom the plan originated, was put in control of the bold undertaking.[103] The Mosquitos did not give so much aid as had been counted upon, however, and in some cases even went over to the enemy.[104] The rainy season set in, and with it came disease. Adequate food and clothing and medical supplies were lacking, and the whole enterprise ended

[99] *Parl. Papers,* 1847, *Coms.,* LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 30; Travis, *Mosquito History,* 8; *De Bow's Review,* XXVII, 553.

[100] Travis, *Clayton-Bulwer Treaty,* 27.

[101] Fortier and Ficklen, *Central America and Mexico,* 115.

[102] *Ibid. Cf.* Edwards, *British West Indies,* V, 212, 214.

[103] *Kemble Papers,* II, "Preface," 7.

[104] *Kemble Papers,* II, 7, 406; Hist. MSS. Comm., *Report on MSS. of Mrs. Stopford-Sackville,* II, 287-288; Crowe, *Gospel in Central America,* 187.

in great disaster.[105] Of the more than 2,000 men sent out only 380 returned to Jamaica.[106]

At first the Spanish were also successful on the Mosquito coast itself, for the British garrison had been reduced.[107] The fort at Black River was captured in March, 1782, and the settlers were forced to take refuge at Cape Gracias á Dios.[108] But reinforcements were sent, and in five months the whole region was in control of the British, in whose hands it was when the war ended.[109]

When the treaty of 1783 was being negotiated, the question of British settlements in Central America gave considerable anxiety to the British cabinet. After the ambitious plans for conquest of Spanish soil had failed, the British government had no intention of relaxing the hold maintained on Mosquito territory previous to the war. The Spanish, however, were determined to drive the enemy from all of their territory except Belize; therefore the definitive treaty of peace stipulated by its sixth article that all English settlers except those at Belize should retire from the "Spanish continent".[110] The British cabinet objected to the article on the ground that it gave greater concessions than were warranted by the preliminaries, and wished to defer for six months the agreement regard-

[105] *Kemble Papers*, II, 3-65, *passim*; Crowe, *Gospel in Central America*, 187; Fortier and Ficklen, *Central America and Mexico*, 117; Mahan, *Interest of America in Sea Power*, 80; Bancroft, *Central America*, II, 611.

[106] Crowe, *Gospel in Central America*, 187; Fortier and Ficklen, *Central America and Mexico*, 117.

[107] *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 34.

[108] *Ibid.*, 34-35.

[109] *Ibid.*, 35; Travis, *Clayton-Bulwer Treaty*, 28.

[110] *Ann. Reg.*, 1783, "State Papers", 334-335.

ing the question covered by the article.[111] But as it seemed desirable to sign the treaties as soon as possible, Fox pointed out to the King that the British government could put its own interpretation upon the words "Spanish continent", and could determine whether the Mosquito Shore came under that description or not.[112] The King gave his consent, and Fox instructed the Duke of Manchester to accede to the objectionable article unless he could prevail upon the other negotiators to defer the consideration of it.[113] Further delay seemed undesirable, and the treaty was signed with this article unchanged.

After the agreement was ratified the British made no move towards the evacuation of the Mosquito Shore, and, in reply to the protests of Spain, declared that the shore was not a part of the "Spanish continent", but of the "American continent".[114] Nevertheless the Spanish government was determined, and as England was crippled by a long and unsuccessful war, and by discontent at home, she was forced to yield. After a long and bitter discussion, the treaty of 1786, which left no loophole for British evasion, was signed.[115] This stipulated that "His Britannic Majesty's subjects, and the other colonists who have hitherto enjoyed the protection of England, shall evacuate the country of the Mosquitos, as well as the continent in general, and the islands adjacent, without exception, situated beyond the

[111] Fox, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, II, 122, 124.

[112] *Ibid.*, 122-123.

[113] *Ibid.*, 124.

[114] *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 35-36; Bard, *Waikna*, 344; Keane, *Central and South America*, II, 238.

[115] *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 36; Burney, *Buccaneers of America*, 102.

line hereinafter described".[116] The line referred to was the new and more comprehensive boundary for Belize settlement.

The Indians were much opposed to the arrangement,[117] and in their opposition were probably supported by the settlers, some of whom remained in defiance of the treaty,[118] and by the traders.[119] Several attempts were made by the Spaniards to subjugate the Indians and to establish permanent settlements upon the coast, but all in vain. In 1796 the Mosquitos recaptured the last settlement—that on Black River—and drove out the Spaniards.[120] This seems to have been the last effort of Spain to secure control of the Mosquito Shore.

After the treaty of 1786 the British gave up all open political relations with the Mosquitos.[121] Yet the influence of the contraband traders, to whom the Indians were still invaluable, did much towards preserving a friendly feeling for Great Britain. This friendliness was also fostered by a continuance, by the Belize authorities, of an old custom of feasting the leading Mosquitos and of distributing presents among them.[122] Because of this attention the Mosquitos seem to have

[116] *Ann. Reg.*, 1786, "State Papers", p. 263. This treaty was very unpopular and led to a vote of censure by the House of Lords against the government. After a long, sharp debate the motion was defeated. *Ann. Reg.*, 1787, "History", 111-114.

[117] Stout, *Nicaragua*, 168.

[118] *Parl. Papers*, 1847, *Coms.*, LXIV, "Spanish-American Republics", 36; Roberts, *Central America*, 283; Bancroft, *Central America*, II, 606.

[119] *Kemble Papers*, II, 428; Bonnycastle, *Spanish America*, I, 174.

[120] Bancroft, *Central America*, II, 607; Travis, *Clayton-Bulwer Treaty*, 30.

[121] Bard, *Waikna*, 345; Bancroft, *Central America*, II, 606-607.

[122] Henderson, *British Settlement of Honduras*, 165-182; Edwards, *British West Indies*, V, 206.

considered themselves as still under British protection, and the Spanish tacitly permitted them to do so.[123]

As long as Spain retained dominion over Central America, the British government refrained from all further attempts at interference with the Mosquitos, and showed no special interest in the shore. In 1814, by a treaty already described, she confirmed Spain in her sovereignty over it. Shortly after this a captain in the corps of royal British engineers, who had made a voyage in the region, wrote: "The Mosquito shore . . . has been claimed by the British. The English held this country for eighty years, and abandoned it in 1787 and 1788. The Spaniards call it a part of Honduras,[124] which it really is, and claim it as such."[125] This statement seems to reflect the view of the British government at the time. The British protectorate no longer existed, and British control on the shore was a thing of the past.

Such was the character of British influence in Central America, extending over a period of more than a century and a half. At one time Great Britain had some basis for asserting a legal claim to all of the territory towards which her interests were directed;[126] and at times she exercised full control, now over one portion and now over another, in disregard of Spanish sovereign rights, and frequently in defiance of treaty stipulations. After a long struggle, largely devoid of success, Spain was finally able to strike an effective blow by the treaty of 1786. By means of this she

[123] Stout, *Nicaragua*, 168.

[124] The northern, or Honduran, part of the shore had been described by the writer.

[125] Bonnycastle, *Spanish America*, I, 171.

[126] The treaty of 1670.

drove the British from the Bay Islands and from the Mosquito Shore, but permitted the retention of the Belize concession, while carefully keeping in the Spanish Crown the sovereignty over Belize territory. The years which followed were largely occupied by the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars. During this period, Great Britain, from lack of inclination or lack of opportunity, failed to recover the hold which she had lost. Therefore, at the date with which the next chapter opens her Central American relations were on the same basis as immediately after the treaty of 1786.

CHAPTER II.

British Aggressions; American Interest Awakened, 1815-1850.

With the year 1815 there opened a new era for the United States. Though in the War of 1812 the visionary Republican party had utterly failed in its schemes for conquest, yet the nation had fought its battles alone, and, while frequently defeated and discouraged, had finally won an inspiring victory at New Orleans. The conflict roused the American people as a whole to national consciousness and filled them with a confidence in their own possibilities, hitherto lacking. With the close of the struggle the country assumed a more secure and dignified position among the nations.

After this second war for independence, the attitude of England, especially, was altered towards the United States. She not only showed a sincere desire to refrain from any unseemly meddling with American affairs, but even displayed a real anxiety to avoid all chances for future trouble. Actual concessions were as a rule reluctantly granted, but the discussion of subjects out of which serious differences might arise was avoided if possible, or postponed. It was this determination on the part of the British to maintain a pacific policy that prevented embarrassing complications as a result of Jackson's violent proceedings in Florida;[1] and it was undoubtedly also influential in effecting the temporary

[1] Reddaway, *Monroe Doctrine*, 14, 33. *Cf.* Rush, *Residence at the Court of London*, 399-413.

arrangements regarding Oregon, made by the convention of 1818.[2]

Up to 1823 nothing had arisen seriously to disturb the good feeling between the two governments. When, therefore, the "Monroe doctrine" was first given expression in December of that year, popular enthusiasm was roused in America for the British government because of the well-known position of Canning towards the designs of the Holy Alliance. Few outside of the American cabinet suspected that the attitude displayed by the President's message was not welcome to England, and might prove an embarrassing obstruction in the execution of plans which she herself cherished for the extension of power in the western world.[3]

Nevertheless, Canning was decidedly taken aback by this independent stand of the American government. However, without revealing his own views, and carefully refraining from all open acts which might rouse antagonism, he proceeded to adopt and carry out a policy calculated to render ineffective the Monroe doctrine in so far as it conflicted with British designs.[4] Canning's general policy was to prevent Latin America from looking towards the United States for help and from seeking alliances with her.[5] For this purpose the

[2] Beaumarchais, *La doctrine de Monroë*, 2, 6-7.

[3] Reddaway, *Monroe Doctrine*, 88.

[4] J. Q. Adams early discerned the unfriendly character of Canning's attitude (Adams, *Memoirs*, III, 437), and upon learning of Canning's death in 1827, wrote in his diary: "May this event, in the order of Providence, avert all the evils which he would, if permitted, have drawn down upon us, and all evil counsels formed against our peace and prosperity be baffled and defeated!" *Ibid.*, VII, 328.

[5] Chatfield to Palmerston, Oct. 28, 1835, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 16, no. 26; Temperley, "Later American Policy of George Canning", in *Am. Hist. Rev.*, XI, 783, 787-788. For instance, on February 8, 1826, Canning wrote to Vaughan: "The avowed pretension of the United States to put

British government was to secure a preponderating influence, politically and economically, in the new states.[6]

Great Britain was especially interested in Central America because of early relations there, and, in consequence of Monroe's proclamation, suspected the American government of watching with particular attention British movements in that quarter. However, at this period the American government did not merit the suspicion directed towards it. As yet the United States as a nation had hardly secured her bearings; she was a second rate power with an uncertain future. Her population numbered but little more than ten million, and was confined to the eastern fourth of the present settled area. In proportion as her national strength was less than it is now, so also were her interests less comprehensive. The Monroe doctrine, though boldly uttered, was merely defensive in aim; and for many years it was applied only to territory actually contiguous to American borders. The great triangle of Mexican domain shut off the attention of the United States government from Central America.

Though Central America as well as the other Spanish-American republics received Monroe's declaration with enthusiasm and looked towards the north

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themselves at the head of the confederacy of all the Americas, and to sway that confederacy against Europe, (Great Britain included), is *not* a pretension identified with our interests, or one that we can countenance as tolerable.

"It is however a pretension which there is no use in contesting in the abstract; but we must not say anything that seems to admit the principle." Mass. Hist. Soc., *Proc.*, XLVI, 234; *cf.* Rush, *The Court of London from 1819 to 1825*, pp. 431-433, 471.

[6] Turner, *Rise of the New West*, 222; Paxson, *Independence of the South American Republics*, 178-252, *passim*.

for protection from European enemies, there is nothing in either the English or the American archives to show that, for the first two decades following the proclamation, the United States government took any special interest in British encroachments on the American isthmus, or made any active attempts to check them.[7]

In 1825 the government was invited to send delegates to a great pan-American congress at which was to be discussed, among other questions, the manner in which all colonization of European powers on the American continent should be resisted.[8] It is true that on this occasion much interest was shown by the United States,[9] but in the instructions given the American representatives no special mention was made of Central America, or of British aggressions in that region.[10] Moreover, it should be borne in mind that Great Britain also was invited to the congress. However, as is well known, party opposition to President Adams prevented the American delegates from reaching Panama in time, and the congress itself came to nothing.

In fact, for a long period the United States government not only ignored Central America so far as the

[7] In 1824 the United States government decided to send an informal agent, Mann, to Guatemala. J. Q. Adams, the secretary of state, instructed Mann that the first object of his mission would be to gather information about the new republic. Guatemala, Adams wrote in his diary, was important because of its location on the isthmus, and because of the "commercial connections, and lodgments on the soil by the British, with the neighboring bay of Honduras and Mosquito shore". *Memoirs*, VI, 325. No note of resentment towards British interests in Central America is evident in the words just quoted. If such resentment had been felt by the American government, it seems probable that Adams's jealous patriotism would have caused him promptly to reflect it. See above, note 4.

[8] *Brit. and For. State Papers*, XIII, 397.

[9] *Am. State Papers, For. Relats.*, V, 916-919; VI, 356-366.

[10] *Brit. and For. State Papers*, XV, 832-862.

principles of the Monroe doctrine were concerned, but also quite neglected that country itself. Only occasionally were agents of the United States sent there, and those who were sent appear to have lacked both interest and efficiency.[11] In their instructions, the American agents were often directed to emphasize to the restless states the importance of union to the maintenance of republican government,[12] but though the history of British encroachments in Central America must have been pretty well known to the Washington authorities, nothing appears in the instructions regarding the matter; furthermore, the despatches of the agents contain no allusion to it.

Meanwhile the British improved their opportunity. During the last years of Spanish control and in the period of the Central American confederation they advanced but slowly, largely content to keep off all intruders and to hold the ground previously gained.[13] At this time a desire to be on good terms with the United States, as well as the lack of special interest, prevented the British government itself from adopting a very strong policy in Central America, though its agents in the region displayed much aggressiveness. But almost simultaneously with the dissolution of the confederation in 1839, and the consequent loss of power of united resistance, appeared a greater jealousy of

[11] Dept. of State, Inst., Am. States, vol. 15, p. 15; Squier to Clayton, Aug. 20, 1849, Dept. of State, Des., Guat., vol. 2.

[12] Dept. of State, Inst., Am. States, vol. 14, p. 212, and *passim*.

[13] Schenley to Planta, May 21, 1826, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 5; Memorandum from the British Premier, 1829, C. O., Hond., vol. 40; Palmerston to Granville, Oct. 4, 1831, *ibid.*, vol. 42; Granville to Palmerston, Oct. 24, 1831, *ibid.*

American designs, which overcame the earlier hesitation, and the policy of the government became as aggressive as its agents could desire. With the approval of their superiors, the British representatives intrigued to prevent further union,[14] and set one weak state or warring faction against the other to the advantage of their country, and at the same time extended their hold upon Central American territory. The British interference to prevent a closer union of states will be shown later, but attention is now directed to the British plan of acquiring more territory.

In the early part of the period under consideration the center of British influence was Belize. During the last years of Spanish sovereignty, when commissioners no longer visited the region, the settlers gradually spread south of the Sibun River into Guatemalan territory, and at the time of Central American independence had reached the Sarstoon.[15] After the overthrow of Spanish power, the British government was anxious to preserve to the settlers the rights granted by Spain. Consequently, suspicious over the wording of a treaty of alliance made between Guatemala and Colombia in 1825,[16] it required a distinct declaration from each state that neither designed to arrogate pretensions to a territorial authority which might possibly clash with British possessory rights in Belize.[17] In a treaty made with Mexico in 1826, Great Britain also secured the introduction of a clause guaranteeing to the British at Belize

[14] Froebel, *Seven Years in Central America*, 193-194; Scherzer, *Travels in Central America*, II, 31.

[15] Codd to Goderich, Nov. 24, 1827, C. O., Hond., vol. 38.

[16] *Brit. and For. State Papers*, XII, 802-811.

[17] Chatfield to Palmerston, Feb. 3, 1834, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 14.

the same terms as were given by Spain forty years before.[18]

Bad feeling arose between the Central American confederation and the British settlers almost immediately.[19] As a result of complaints from the latter the British colonial secretary consulted the legal adviser of the Crown regarding the status of Belize. That official, basing his judgment upon the treaties of 1802, 1809, and 1814, referred to in the preceding chapter, gave the opinion that the treaties of 1783 and 1786 were still in force.[20] This decision prevented the establishment of full British sovereignty over the territory, for which the settlers had hoped;[21] consequently the inimical relations continued. Soon complaints against the Central Americans were again made to the home government, accompanied by the statement that the unfriendly Central American attitude was caused by the presence of people from the United States.[22] A little later the superintendent announced that North Americans were planning to settle in the region between the Sibun and the Sarstoon rivers.[23] This report seemed to rouse the British premier to consider the situation seriously. He admitted as undeniable the right of Spain to the Belize territory, but felt it desirable to determine whether she would not relinquish her

[18] *Brit. and For. State Papers,* XIV, 625. A little later an attempt to secure the same agreement with Central America failed because the Central American agent in London lacked the necessary powers. Edgington, *Monroe Doctrine,* 64.

[19] Codd to Bathurst, Feb. 6, 1825, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 4.

[20] Robinson to Bathurst, July 8, 1825, C. O., Hond., vol. 36.

[21] Codd to Goderich, Nov. 24, 1827, *ibid.,* vol. 38.

[22] Schenley to Planta, May 31, 1826, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 5.

[23] Memorandum of British Premier, 1829, C. O., Hond., vol. 40. The report was evidently false, for nothing further was said regarding the matter.

claims. Should she be unwilling to do this, he thought it might be well to regard the territory as a part of the state of Guatemala, and to offer the Central American government an earlier recognition in return for the cession of it.[24]

Nothing resulted from the suggestion at the time, however, but when the Liberals under lead of Morazan gained control of the Central American government they demanded that the British settlers retreat to the territory beyond the Sibun, the southern boundary established by the treaty of 1786.[25] This led the British agents to support the Serviles, who were more indifferent to British encroachments, and to work for the overthrow of Morazan.[26] The demand of the Liberals also caused Palmerston to oppose a suggestion[27] to settle the strife by means of a treaty with Guatemala,[28] and to instruct Chatfield, the British consul, to refrain from all discussion of the question of boundaries with the Central American government, warning him not to give them any reason to think that the British government considered the question one with which they had any concern.[29]

Insistent upon maintaining what it regarded as its rights, the Central American government confirmed a cession of tracts of territory between the Sibun and the Sarstoon, made by the state of Guatemala, to a land

[24] *Ibid.*

[25] Cockburn to Goderich, Jan. 26, 1833, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 13, no. 52.

[26] Chatfield to Palmerston, Feb. 3, 1834, F. O., Am., vol. 14; Squier, *Nicaragua*, II, 412-414; Stephens, *Central America*, II, 47-49.

[27] Backhouse to Cockburn, Feb. 19, 1834, C. O., Hond., vol. 45.

[28] Cockburn to Goderich, Jan. 30, 1833, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 13.

[29] Palmerston to Chatfield, Mar. 19, 1834, *ibid.*, vol. 14, no. 5; Palmerston to Chatfield, Sept. 22, 1834, *ibid.*, vol. 15.

company and to one Colonel Galindo,[30] an Irishman by birth, but a Central American by adoption.[31] This roused Cockburn, the Belize superintendent, to declare that the British government would resist to the utmost all encroachments upon this territory.[32] As Chatfield, true to his instructions, had refused to discuss the question of boundaries, the Guatemalan government decided to send Galindo to London to secure terms.[33] He was to go by way of Washington and endeavor to secure American aid against the British. But Chatfield, anticipating this move,[34] notified Vaughan, the English minister to the United States.[35] Vaughan took the hint and later wrote to Palmerston that he " had no difficulty in convincing Mr. Forsyth that the United States could not possibly listen to any such proposal from Colonel Galindo ".[36] Therefore, when Galindo made known his errand, he was informed that the United States government deemed it inexpedient to interfere in the matter. He then proceeded to London, but the British government refused to receive him as a diplomatic agent on the ground that he was a British subject, and his mission ended in failure.[37]

Meanwhile the quarrel between the British settlers and the Central American government had increased in bitterness, partly because of discriminatory duties

[30] Chatfield to Palmerston, Nov. 13, 1834, C. O., Hond., vol. 47, no. 23.
[31] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 27, pp. 12-13.
[32] Chatfield to Palmerston, Nov. 13, 1834, C. O., Hond., vol. 47, no. 23; Palmerston to Chatfield, May 13, 1836, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 18, no. 7.
[33] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 27, p. 12.
[34] Chatfield to Palmerston, Dec. 29, 1834, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 14, no. 29.
[35] Chatfield to Vaughan, Dec. 29, 1834, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 14; Chatfield to Vaughan, Jan. 10, 1835, F. O., Cen. Am. vol. 16.
[36] Vaughan to Palmerston, July 4, 1835, C. O., Hond., vol. 47.
[37] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 27, pp. 3-13.

charged by the latter upon all goods coming into the republic from Belize.[38] Consequently the residents took matters into their own hands; they held a convention, changed the name of the place to British Honduras, adopted a colonial form of government,[39] and, in November, 1834, sent a petition to London asking that the settlement be declared a regular British colony.[40]

As a result, the British government decided to settle the whole question. Its plan involved a definite recognition of sovereignty over the Belize territory as still existing in the Spanish Crown, for the purpose of securing the relinquishment of this sovereignty to Great Britain. Accordingly, in March, 1835, Villiers, the British representative at Madrid, was instructed to try to obtain from the Spanish government a concession to the whole tract of land occupied by the Belize settlers, as far south as the Sarstoon.[41] Villiers broached the matter to the Spanish foreign secretary,[42] hinting that if the cession was not made the settlement would be declared a British colony anyway.[43] He received an encouraging reply from the secretary,[44] but the question seems never to have been considered by the Spanish government, and the English ambassador thought it inexpedient to press the matter.[45] Palmer-

[38] Chatfield to Palmerston, Dec. 30, 1834, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 14, no. 28.

[39] Keasbey, *Nicaragua Canal*, 171; Walker, *Ocean to Ocean*, 50.

[40] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 27, p. 4; Crowe, *Gospel in Central America*, 206.

[41] Wellington to Villiers, Mar. 12, 1835, F. O., Spain, vol. 439, no. 19.

[42] Villiers to Wellington, April 8, 1835, *ibid.*, vol. 441, no. 61.

[43] Miller to Glenelg, May 18, 1835, C. O., Hond., vol. 47.

[44] *Ibid.*

[45] Palmerston to Glenelg, Sept. 15, 1838, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 21.

ston thereupon determined that it was best to "let the Spaniards quietly forget it",[46] and to permit whatever interests and claims the latter possessed to lapse.

The continued lack of interest in Belize on the part of the United States made this policy a safe one for the British government; and though the settlers were dissatisfied with the equivocal situation, their government consistently maintained its former stand, unwilling needlessly to attract the attention of the American or the Spanish governments to the region. In November, 1840, a new superintendent, Macdonald, proclaimed the law of England to be the law of the "settlement or colony of British Honduras", and sent a new petition to the home government;[47] But as Aberdeen thought it unwise again to open the question, and feared that a declaration of British sovereignty over Belize would be offensive to Spanish dignity,[48] nothing was done. Again, in 1846, Belize was heard from. A petition presented to the British government in behalf of Belize merchants asked that goods from Belize be admitted at British ports free from the discriminating duty charged upon foreign goods.[49] But the Colonial Office replied that the sovereignty of Belize territory rested not in Great Britain, but in Spain, under the treaties of 1783 and 1786.[50] Therefore the petition could not be granted. This seems to have been the last attempt of the Belize settlers for a long period to put themselves on a complete colonial basis.

[46] Palmerston to Glenelg, Sept. 15, 1838, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 21; Strangeways to Stephen, Mar. 20, 1839, C. O., Hond., vol. 56.

[47] Crowe, *Gospel in Central America*, 205-206; Gibbs, *British Honduras*, 50.

[48] Canning to Hope, Dec. 13, 1841, C. O., Hond., vol. 61.

[49] Hawes to Parker, Oct. 12, 1846, *ibid.*, vol. 71.

[50] *Ibid.*

For many years the British agents in Central America tried to rouse their government to the importance of securing the island of Ruatan,[51] and in 1830 the Belize superintendent, hoping to be sustained in his act, seized the island, on the excuse that the Central Americans had refused to return fugitive slaves.[52] But remonstrance being made by the Central American authorities, the seizure was disavowed by the British government, and the island abandoned.[53] The English authorities were nevertheless alive to the value of Ruatan, and, while from policy they could not countenance an occupation of it by their subjects, they kept close watch lest other nations seize it.[54] When Villiers was instructed regarding Belize, he was also directed to try to secure from the Spanish government the cession of Ruatan and Bonacca,[55] but his efforts in this regard were equally fruitless.

As the right of Great Britain to the islands was, in the opinion of the British government, "to say the least, exceedingly questionable",[56] it was felt that the revival of a dominant claim might by objected to by other European powers, and by the United States;[57] therefore the same policy was pursued as with Belize.

[51] Schenley to Planta, May 31, 1826, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 5; Cockburn to Goderich, Jan. 30, 1833, *ibid.*, vol. 13, no. 52; Cooke to Howickl, Aug. 13, 1831, *ibid.*, vol. 11; Prowett to Glenelg, April 15, 1837, C. O., Hond., vol. 51: Grey to Backhouse, Nov. 30, 1837, *ibid.*

[52] Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 372-373.

[53] *Ibid.*

[54] Palmerston to Granville, Oct. 4, 1831, C. O., Hond., vol. 42; Granville to Palmerston, Oct. 24, 1831, *ibid.*; Chatfield to Palmerston, Oct. 8, 1838, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 20, no. 58; Palmerston to Chatfield, Sept. 21, 1839, *ibid.*, vol. 22, no. 7.

[55] Wellington to Villiers, Mar. 12, 1835, F. O., Spain, vol. 4, no. 21.

[56] Colonial Office Memorandum of Correspondence respecting Ruatan or Rattan, Dec. 31, 1838, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 38.

[57] *Ibid.*

The British cabinet shrewdly kept open the question of ownership of the islands, and watched developments.[58]

When the Central American confederation had fallen to pieces, partly as a result of British influence,[59] the time seemed ripe for a bolder stand. In 1838 a party of liberated slaves from the Grand Cayman Islands came to Ruatan to settle. The Honduran commandant stationed on the island informed them that before they could establish themselves there they must obtain permission from the republic of Honduras. Some of the immigrants asked for permission, but others refused to do so and appealed to the Belize superintendent. Macdonald, noted for his aggressive policy, held the office at the time. He soon landed on Ruatan, hauled down the Central American flag, and hoisted that of Great Britain. Scarcely had he departed, however, before the commandant again ran up the Central American colors. Macdonald returned, seized the commandant and his soldiers and carried them to the mainland, threatening them with death if they attempted to return.[60] The government of Honduras protested and once more unfurled the flag of Central America on the island,[61] but it was hauled down by orders of the British government, and Chatfield was instructed to inform the Central Americans that the British government did not deem it necessary to discuss with them the right of British sovereignty over Rua-

[58] Chatfield to Palmerston, Jan. 30, 1836, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 18, no. 2; Chatfield to Palmerston, Oct. 8, 1838, *ibid.*, vol. 20, no. 58.

[59] Squier to Clayton, Aug. 20, 1849, Dept. of State, Des., Guat., vol. 2.

[60] Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 373.

[61] Palmerston to Chatfield, Sept. 21, 1839, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 22, no. 7; Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 374.

tan.[62] At this time Honduras was acting alone and was too weak to do more than protest; therefore the British remained in control.[63]

In 1841 the British government went a step further. It informed the governor of Jamaica that should any foreign power take possession of Ruatan he was to order the departure of the intruders, and he was authorized to use forcible measures for their ejectment, without further instructions, if the order was not obeyed.[64]

Meanwhile to the Cayman Island population had been added some English settlers,[65] and Macdonald, seeing his opportunity, offered to appoint magistrates for them if they so desired.[66] Some time later the offer was accepted, and subsequently magistrates were regularly appointed by the Belize superintendent.[67]

On the Mosquito Shore, as in Belize and the Bay Islands, the same slow but decided advance was made towards British control. In 1816 the heir of the Mosquitos was at his own request crowned at Belize,[68] and the custom was followed with his successors.[69] In spite of this, however, British interest in the Mosquitos seems temporarily to have declined, for the practice of giving them presents was discontinued, and was only

[62] Palmerston to Chatfield, Sept. 21, 1839, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 22, no. 7; Chatfield to Palmerston, Jan. 25, 1840, *ibid.*, vol. 23, no. 2.

[63] Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 375.

[64] Palmerston to Bulwer, Mar. 14, 1850, F. O., Am., vol. 509, no. 25.

[65] Fancourt to Elgin, Jan. 15, 1845, C. O., Hond., vol. 69, no. 1.

[66] Squier, *Notes on Central America*, 375.

[67] Fancourt to Elgin, Jan. 15, 1845, C. O., Hond., vol. 69, no. 1.

[68] Bard, *Waikna*, 345-346; Stout, *Nicaragua*, 168.

[69] Codd to Manchester, April 3, 1824, C. O., Hond., vol. 35.

revived in 1830, after the Indians had protested against English neglect.[70]

In the early thirties, when the Central American government was trying to secure a settlement with England regarding the Belize boundaries, an attempt was also made to induce the British to relinquish all claims to the Mosquito Shore, but Chatfield diplomatically evaded a discussion of the subject.[71] However, the claims of the Central Americans to the shore succeeded in reviving the interest of the British government; and as the Central American confederation weakened the British interest increased. In 1837 the Colonial Office ordered that the custom of giving presents be continued and that the Indians be protected from Central American encroachments.[72] In the following year Palmerston directed that the old connection with the Mosquitos be maintained, and, if anything, be drawn closer, because circumstances might arise to make the dependence of the Mosquito country politically and commercially useful to England.[73]

[70] Arthur to Bathurst, Jan. 15, 1821, *ibid.*, vol. 30; Cockburn to the Colonial Secretary [n. d.], *ibid.*, vol. 41. In view of later events, it is of interest to note the opinion held at this time by the Belize superintendent with regard to the southern boundary of the Mosquito territory. In 1830 the Mosquito king granted a tract of land, apparently lying between Bluefields and the San Juan River, to one McLeLachein who evidently intended to make a British settlement there. In referring to this circumstance, Cockburn wrote that he was not aware of any recognized right by which the king could make such a grant. Moreover, the settlement contemplated would be regarded with increased jealousy by the Central Americans because of its proximity to the San Juan River, by means of which it was proposed to open up a canal. Cockburn to Twiss, Feb. 7, 1830, *ibid.*

[71] Chatfield to Palmerston, July 5, 1834, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 14, no. 3.

[72] Stephen to Backhouse, June 15, 1837, *ibid.*, vol. 19.

[73] Strangeways to Stephen, Mar. 28, 1838, *ibid.*, vol. 21; Dept. of State, Inst., Am. States, vol. 15, p. 52.

But no very active measures were taken to increase British influence over that region until the appointment of the enterprising Macdonald to the superintendency of Belize. Macdonald quickly saw the use which might be made of the Mosquito protectorate, and in 1840 wrote to Russell urging the importance of keeping the Central Americans from possessing the mouth of the San Juan for transit purposes. To retain the river mouth for the Mosquito king, he declared, would promote British commercial prosperity, and strengthen national and political power.[74]

In August, 1841, Macdonald, accompanied by the Mosquito king, went in a British vessel to San Juan, the little town at the mouth of the river. Here he raised the Mosquito flag, laid claim to the port in the name of the Mosquito king, and announced the protectorate of England over the Indians.[75] The Central Americans were ordered to leave the place by the first of the following March.[76] The Nicaraguan commandant of the port[77] refused to recognize the sovereign of the Mosquitos, and was thereupon taken aboard the vessel and carried to Cape Gracias á Dios, where he was put ashore and left to get back as best he could.[78]

Macdonald's expedition was evidently made without instructions from his government, but, judging from Chatfield's reply to a protest from Nicaragua,[79] it was

[74] C. O., Hond., vol. 57, no. 45.

[75] *Niles' Register,* LXI, 98; Latané, *Diplomatic Relations,* 191.

[76] *Niles' Register,* LXI, 98.

[77] In 1832 the Nicaraguans had moved to the north bank of the San Juan River, *Parl. Papers,* 1847-1848, *Coms.,* LXV, "Correspondence respecting the Mosquito Territory", 84.

[78] *U. S. Docs.,* ser. no. 579, doc. 75, p. 24.

[79] *Ibid.,* pp. 24-26.

entirely approved.[80] In this letter Chatfield outlined the history of the British protectorate over the Mosquitos, stated that the Mosquio territory extended to the south bank of the port, and declared that as the British government recognized the sovereignty of the Mosquitos it would not regard with indifference the usurpation of their territory.[81] Chatfield's letter not only had the full approval of the Foreign Office, but was clearly written in compliance with instructions from the foreign secretary.[82] In reply, the secretary-general of Nicaragua entered into further protests, accompanied by a long argument to prove that the Mosquitos had never been recognized as an independent nation by any sovereign power in Central America.[83] This seems to have ended the quarrel for the time, and, in spite of British plans and acts, the Nicaraguan authorities remained at the port of San Juan unmolested for many years.

Before laying claim to San Juan in behalf of the Mosquito king, Macdonald had attempted to establish practical British sovereignty on the shore by placing the government in charge of a commission to which he intended to delegate his authority. This body was to be composed chiefly of British subjects and was to sit

[80] Soon after his appointment Macdonald found among the Belize archives documents showing the close alliance which had formerly existed between the Mosquitos and the British government. Perceiving the use to which these documents could be put, he sent them to his government. The result was a distinct increase of interest in the Mosquitos on the part of the British cabinet. Murphy to the Secretary of State, Jan. 20, 1842, Dept. of State, Des., Cen. Am., vol. 2.

[81] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 579, doc. 75, p. 24.

[82] Memorandum on Mosquito Shore, written Dec. 15, 1843, upon a Colonial Office letter of November 27, 1840, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 36.

[83] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 579, doc. 75, pp. 30-34.

at Belize.[84] The superintendent evidently appointed the commissioners without instructions, after which he outlined his plans for the Mosquito government, expecting that they would meet with favor from the British cabinet. Palmerston was strongly inclined to the scheme and wished it executed, but Russell, who at that time was colonial secretary, opposed it on the ground that it would make the shore in fact a British colony.[85] As Russell stood firm, the superintendent was informed that there was no objection to a commission composed of Englishmen, provided that they were considered solely as Mosquito, and not as British, agents.[86] Nothing further appears to have been done towards changing the government before 1842, when the death of the Mosquito king created an unsettled state of affairs.[87] As a result of this disorganized condition, frequent complaints of lack of protection, and of the encroachments of the Central American states on Mosquito territory, were made by British subjects on the shore.[88]

Finding that his earlier plans were unacceptable, Macdonald wrote in 1842, apparently shortly after the Mosquito king's death, urging that a British resident be appointed for the shore.[89] In the following year the Foreign Office took the matter seriously into consideration. A memorandum written at that time states that the question now was how to show interest in the Mosquito coast with determination as to foreign powers, but without adopting measures which might

[84] Memorandum on Mosquito Shore, written Dec. 15, 1843, upon a Colonial Office letter of Nov. 27, 1840, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 36.

[85] *Ibid.* [86] *Ibid.* [87] *Ibid.* [88] *Ibid.*

[89] Macdonald to Metcalf, April 30, 1842, C. O., Hond., vol. 63.

lead to unnecessary quarrels with them.[90] It was finally decided to adopt Macdonald's suggestion and station a British resident on the shore.[91] The selection of the official seems to have been left to Macdonald, who, in 1844, appointed Patrick Walker, his private secretary,[92] to the position, and established him at Bluefields.[93] The territory was renamed Mosquitia, and a new flag, closely modelled after the Union Jack, was given to the Indians.[94]

While the British were thus establishing themselves more securely in Central America, events in the United States had produced a renewal of the earlier British policy of blocking American advance to the southwest by supporting Mexico[95]—a policy which had not been vigorously pursued after Canning's death. At an early date when citizens of the United States began moving into Texas, the migration was not overlooked by the British agent in Mexico. He saw the danger and called Canning's attention to the probable outcome of the movement; but whether, in consequence, warning was offered to Mexico by the British government is not evident.[96] When Texas declared her independence and

[90] Memorandum on Mosquito Shore, written Dec. 15, 1843, upon a Colonial Office letter of November 27, 1840, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 36.

[91] *Ibid.*; Chatfield to Aberdeen, July 1, 1844, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 37, no. 24.

[92] Keasbey, *Nicaragua Canal*, 169.

[93] Chatfield to Aberdeen, July 1, 1844, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 37, no. 24.

[94] Crowe, *Gospel in Central America*, 213.

[95] Temperley, "Later American Policy of George Canning", in *Am. Hist. Rev.*, XI, 781; Adams, *British Interests and Activities in Texas*, 15, 239.

[96] After reporting the movement to his government, Ward, the British agent, remarked: "Not knowing in how far His Majesty's Government may conceive the possession of Texas by the Americans, to be likely to affect the interests of Great Britain, I have not thought it right to go beyond such general observations upon the subject, in my communication

expressed a desire to enter the American Union, the uneasiness and jealousy naturally increased, and Great Britain promptly took measures to preserve the independence of this new republic, and to maintain it as a strong buffer state against the extension of American power.[97] This reinforced jealousy of the British undoubtedly was influential in increasing their activities in Central America, as well as in determining their attitude on the Oregon question.

The United States appears, however, to have taken but little notice for some time of this revived policy of general aggressiveness against American interests,[98] and it was not until 1843 that the Washington authorities were really aroused regarding the situation in Texas. They then realized that British influence there was very strong, and believed that it aimed,

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with this Government, as appeared to me calculated to make it perceive the danger, to which it is wilfully exposing itself." Paxson, "England and Mexico, 1824-1825", in *Colo. Univ. Studies*, III, 118.

[97] Adams, *British Interests and Activities in Texas, 1838-1846*; Smith, *Annexation of Texas, passim.*

[98] In 1841, Murphy, a special and confidential agent of the United States, was sent to Central America with directions to learn the cause for the failure of Galindo's mission, and also to determine the existing state of the Belize boundary controversy. To his instructions Webster added: "This information you will endeavor to supply by proper inquiries, which, however, should be cautiously made and so as not to let it be supposed that this government takes any more interest in the matter now than it did at the time of the visit of Colonel Galindo to Washington, or that it is inclined to deviate from the course which was pursued upon that occasion." Dept. of State, Inst., Am. States, vol. 15, pp. 48-49. These words suggest an intention to adopt a more vigorous Central American policy. However, though Murphy secured the desired information, gave details regarding other British encroachments in Central America, and urged that a commercial treaty be made with Nicaragua to prevent the British from gaining control of the San Juan, no further steps were taken by the American government at this time. Murphy to the Secretary of State, Jan. 20, and Feb. 4, 1842, Dept. of State, Des., Cen. Am., vol. 2. The failure to act may have been due to the transfer of American attention to British interests in Texas.

among other things, at the abolition of slavery.[99] Thereupon, the American government began immediately to prepare for Texan annexation.[100] Simultaneously with this movement came the proclamation of the expansionist policy of the Democrats.[101] The election of Polk followed, and in the next year the admission of Texas to the Union.

These events were clearly disconcerting to British plans; but the policy of hindering American advance towards the southwest was stubbornly maintained, and was even given greater impetus when war between the United States and Mexico became imminent, and with it the American acquisition of California. Aberdeen, then British foreign secretary, even thought of active interference to prevent the latter event. He gave up his idea of doing so only in consideration that the Oregon question was still capable of peaceful settlement. Should the Oregon boundary negotiations end in war, aid was to be given Mexico.[102] As the Oregon boundary dispute was settled peaceably, Mexico fought her battles alone—and lost California.

This triumph of American expansionist schemes was certain to have a profound effect upon British policy in Central America. For centuries the importance of Central America for a transisthmian route had been recognized, and recently the line via Nicaragua had been considered the most feasible.[103] The significance of such a route at that time becomes evident only when

[99] Garrison, *Westward Extension,* 110-114; Reeves, *American Diplomacy under Tyler and Polk,* 132-134.

[100] Garrison, *Westward Extension,* 114-115.

[101] Rives, "Mexican Diplomacy", in *Am. Hist. Rev.,* XVIII, 275.

[102] *Ibid.,* 286-291.

[103] Travis, *Mosquito History,* 11; Snow, *American Diplomacy,* 330.

it is remembered that before the Civil War little faith was entertained that a railroad could be successfully built to the Pacific, or operated even if it should be built.[104] Therefore, upon gaining territory on the Pacific coast, the interest of the United States in Central America must increase tremendously.

As England clearly saw the outcome of the Mexican War before it began, she lost little time in preparing for it. Early in 1847 Palmerston, who had succeeded Aberdeen in the preceding July, wrote to Chatfield, and Walker, the Mosquito superintendent, and to O'Leary, the British representative at Bogotá,[105] asking, first, for the most authentic information procurable as to the boundary claimed by the king of the Mosquitos; and, secondly, for their opinions as to the boundary which the British government should insist upon as "absolutely essential for the security and well-being of the Mosquito state."[106] The replies varied to some extent regarding the limits claimed by the Mosquito king, though in general all indicated that he had pretended to dominion pretty well south to Chiriqui Lagoon, near the Isthmus of Panama; but all agreed that the boundary which the British should insist upon to the south was the San Juan River.[107]

A detailed report on the Mosquito Shore, which had been called for by the Committee of the Privy Council for Trade and Plantations, was made by John Mc-

[104] Travis, *Mosquito History*, 12-13.

[105] New Granada as well as Nicaragua claimed the Mosquito Shore.

[106] *Parl. Papers*, 1847-1848, *Coms.*, LXV, "Correspondence respecting the Mosquito Territory", 1.

[107] *Ibid.*, 2-52. Had the Mosquitos been recognized as sovereign and independent, the claims, when compared with the evidence submitted by Chatfield and Walker, would have been quite reasonable.

Gregor on February 1.[108] The foreign secretary apparently availed himself of the information contained in this report, for on June 30, before receiving replies to his inquiries, he wrote to Chatfield stating that the encroachments committed by the states of Honduras and Nicaragua upon the territory of the Mosquitos had given rise to the question of boundaries. Therefore, after carefully examining various documents relative to the subject, the British government was of the opinion that the Mosquito king's right should be maintained as extending from Cape Honduras to the mouth of the San Juan River.[109] Chatfield was accordingly instructed to notify the Central American states concerned, and to inform them that the British government would not view with indifference any attempt to encroach upon the rights or territory of the Mosquito king, who was under the protection of the British Crown.[110]

The instruction was followed by Chatfield, who, in speaking of the southern boundary, took the precaution to add the words, " without prejudice to the right of the Mosquito king to any territory south of the River San Juan ".[111] The two weak Central American states, roused to a fear for their independence, protested vigorously that they did not recognize the Mosquito kingdom, and declared their intention to resist the attempts

[108] *Parl. Papers,* 1847, *Coms.,* LXIV, " Spanish-American Republics ", 26-61. The report of McGregor also gave detailed information regarding Belize, the Bay Islands, and Central America in general.

[109] These boundaries coincide with those given by McGregor as existing in 1777. *Parl. Papers,* 1847, *Coms.,* LXIV, " Spanish-American Republics ", 27.

[110] *Parl. Papers,* 1847-1848, *Coms.,* LXV, " Correspondence respecting the Mosquito Territory ", 1.

[111] *Ibid.,* 56.

of the British to commit aggressions upon Central American territory in the name of the Mosquitos.[112] But unfortunately they were too helpless and distracted to unite against the aggressor.

In October, notice came from the "Council of State" of the Mosquito king[113] to the government of Nicaragua, that the Nicaraguans would be given until January 1, 1848, to withdraw from the San Juan. After that time, forcible means would be employed to maintain the king's authority.[114] On the same date, Walker, in company with the king, went to San Juan, hauled down the Nicaraguan flag, hoisted that of the Mosquitos, and fired a royal salute to the latter.[115]

The Nicaraguan government was, obviously, too weak to do more than protest, which it did, emphatically denying the existence of the Mosquito kingdom, and declaring that the Mosquito Shore, by the treaties of 1783 and 1786, had been Spanish territory, and that with independence from Spain the shore had become a part of the Central American states.[116] Twice, also, was appeal made to Washington by the Nicaraguans for aid against the British,[117] but no reply was returned at the time by the United States government.[118]

Before the opening of the new year the small Nicaraguan garrison evacuated the mouth of the San Juan

[112] *Ibid.*, 66-69.

[113] This was apparently Walker's development of Macdonald's idea for government by commission, and was made possible by the increasingly aggressive policy of the British government, as well as by the fact that Grey, and not Russell, was now colonial secretary.

[114] *Parl. Papers*, 1847-1848, *Coms.*, LXV, "Correspondence respecting the Mosquito Territory", 58.

[115] *Ibid.*, 57.

[116] *Ibid.*, 75-76, 93-94.

[117] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 579, doc. 75, pp. 11-14, 79-80.

[118] Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, V, 34.

and retired up the river to Serapaqui. On January 1, Walker, again accompanied by the Mosquito king, went to San Juan and hauled down the Nicaraguan flag which he found flying, and hoisted that of the Mosquitos, saluting it as before. He left a small party at the place and gave the Nicaraguan officials a short time in which to clear out the customs house. Again the Nicaraguans issued their protest, and a few days later the force at Serapaqui descended upon San Juan, hoisted the flag of the republic, seized the British officials stationed at the port, and carried them as prisoners to Serapaqui. On February 12 the fort at the latter place was destroyed by two British war vessels, the *Alarm* and the *Vixen,* sent to punish the defiant act of the Nicaraguans.[119]

Following the battle at Serapaqui Captain Loch of the *Alarm* made a treaty with the Nicaraguans. This provided for the surrender of the British prisoners, with apologies for all violent acts committed at San Juan, and also contained an agreement by the Nicaraguans not to disturb the Mosquito authorities at that place. But by the last article of the treaty the Nicaraguans tried to secure a loophole for escape. This article stipulated that nothing in the treaty should prevent Nicaragua from soliciting, by means of a commissioner, a final settlement of the difficulties with England.[120] Walker had been drowned at Serapaqui;[121] therefore Loch appointed an officer to fill his

[119] *Parl. Papers,* 1847-1848, *Coms.,* LXV, "Correspondence respecting the Mosquito Territory", 94-104; Squier, *Nicaragua,* I, 101; Crowe, *Gospel in Central America,* 215.

[120] *Parl. Papers,* 1847-1848, *Coms.,* LXV, "Correspondence respecting the Mosquito Teritory", 121.

[121] *Ibid.,* 104.

place, and also named a collector of customs for San Juan,[122] which was shortly afterwards renamed Greytown, in honor of the governor of Jamaica.[123]

In February, 1848, Palmerston, basing his action upon the reports of Chatfield and Walker, extended the southern boundary of the Mosquito territory to the Colorado branch of the San Juan, which was many miles south of the port.[124] The purpose of this extension was obviously to shut Nicaragua from both banks of the river and thus leave her no share in any interoceanic canal arrangements. In the following month, upon learning of the retaliatory measures taken by the Nicaraguans against the British at San Juan, the foreign secretary showed his determination by directing that the Nicaraguan authorities be notified that a British war vessel would be ordered to visit San Juan from time to time to maintain the officials stationed there. Furthermore, if the Nicaraguans persisted in intruding themselves in San Juan, measures of an unfriendly character would be resorted to upon parts of their own coast.[125]

These acts of Palmerston gave Nicaragua little reason to expect favorable results from negotiation; but since protest and appeal as well as attempt at physical resistance had proved vain, negotiation seemed the only hope left. Accordingly, Francisco Castellon was appointed Nicaraguan chargé d'affaires at London in the

[122] *Ibid.*, 123.

[123] Bancroft to Buchanan, Jan. 26, 1849, Dept. of State, Des., Eng., vol. 59, no. 114; Addington to Hawes, Jan. 12, 1849, C. O., Hond., vol. 78.

[124] *Parl. Papers*, 1847-1848, *Coms.*, LXV, "Correspondence respecting the Mosquito Territory", 94.

[125] *Ibid.*, 102.

This much accomplished, Polk's administration undoubtedly would have pursued a more vigorous policy towards the British encroachments in Central America, had it not been for the Mexican War. But while handicapped by the struggle with Mexico the government had no desire to venture into a more serious one with Great Britain.[135] However, before the war was over the United States government had determined to act. A hint of coming developments appeared in the presidential message of 1847, through Polk's assertion that no European power should, with the consent of the American government, secure any foothold upon the continent.[136] Early in the next year Elijah Hise was appointed chargé d'affaires in Guatemala. As the fate of the treaty of peace with Mexico had not yet been learned when Hise received his instructions, it was determined to proceed cautiously. The general plan was first to reunite the Central American states and thus aid them to resist British encroachments.[137] The purpose of the mission was to determine the extent of British aggressions, and to urge upon the states the necessity for union; and Hise was instructed accordingly.[138] When his report should be received the government meant to settle upon a more definite policy, calculated to put an end to British interference on the isthmus.[139]

[135] " Letters of Bancroft and Buchanan ", in *Am. Hist. Rev.*, V, 98, 99; Buchanan, *Works*, VIII, 379.

[136] Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, IV, 539-540.

[137] " Letters of Bancroft and Buchanan ", in *Am. Hist. Rev.*, V, 98-99; Buchanan, *Works*, VIII, 379, 380.

[138] *Ibid.*, 78-84.

[139] " Letters of Bancroft and Buchanan ", in *Am. Hist. Rev.*, V, 99. At this time, an American agent, Savage, was in Guatemala. He had announced the British seizure of San Juan, and in reporting the intentions of the British, had stated " all eyes are turned towards the United

The British government realized that as soon as the Mexican War was over the United States could be expected to interfere in Central American affairs. Therefore, Palmerston was on the alert. When, as a result of speeches of Senator Dix, delivered early in 1848, the American nation was being more actively roused against the British movements in Central America,[140] the foreign secretary furnished Crampton, the British representative at Washington, with a history of the Mosquito protectorate,[141] and instructed him to say in reply to inquiries that his government would be ready to vindicate its proceedings at San Juan whenever called upon to do so by any party having the right to question it.[142]

When the proposed mission became known to Palmerston, he wrote to Chatfield, stating that he understood that the principal object of Hise would be to urge a union of the Central American states in order better to resist any interference of the British government in the affairs of Mosquito. In consequence of this, Chatfield was instructed to take such steps as might be necessary or useful to defeat the policy of the United States so far as its object was hostile to the interests of Great Britain.[143] But Chatfield was in some way misled regarding the object of Hise's visit, and thought that he was merely to arrange a commercial treaty.[144] Therefore he was but little suspicious of the

States of America for the solution of this problem", but he gave no details regarding the general situation. Savage to Buchanan, Jan. 14, 1848, and Dec. 25, 1847, Dept. of State, Des., Guat., vol. 1.

[140] Crampton to Palmerston, Feb. 9, 1848, F. O., Am., vol. 484, no. 19, and April 2, 1848, *ibid.*, vol. 485, no. 35.

[141] *Ibid.*, vol. 483, no. 13.

[142] *Ibid.*, no. 20; vol. 497, no. 38.

[143] F. O., Guat., vol. 50, no. 24.

[144] Chatfield to Palmerston, Jan. 12, 1849, *ibid.*, vol. 57, no. 6.

American chargé d'affaires. Nevertheless he reported to Palmerston his intention to anticipate any possible designs of the Americans by private correspondence calculated to show the Central American states the uselessness of looking to North America for real sympathy at any time.[145]

Unfortunately for the plans of the Polk government, Hise was delayed by sickness and other causes[146] and did not reach Central America until late in October, 1848.[147] At the time of his arrival the Central American states were in the utmost confusion and on the verge of anarchy, a condition partially produced by the intrigues of the British agents. Honduras and Nicaragua, because of the Mosquito claims, hated and feared England, as did also Salvador, and looked towards the United States for aid.[148] The Servile party, to which the British gave preference, was in power in Costa Rica and in Guatemala; consequently the British government was in favor with those states.[149] The existence of a boundary dispute between Nicaragua and Costa Rica[150] also inclined the latter to look to Great Britain for protection against her stronger neighbor; and the suspicion of American designs roused by the Mexican War naturally caused Guatemala to hold aloof from the United States.[151]

After two months spent in investigation, Hise wrote his government that he was convinced that the British

[145] Chatfield to Palmerston, Jan. 12, 1849, F. O., Guat., vol. 57, no. 6.

[146] Buchanan, *Works*, VIII, 380.

[147] Dept. of State, Des., Am. States, vol. 15, p. 52.

[148] Chatfield to Palmerston, Jan. 11, 1848, F. O., Guat., vol. 51, no. 2, and Dec. 15, 1848, *ibid.*, vol. 53, no. 115.

[149] Travis, *Clayton-Bulwer Treaty*, 55.

[150] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 579, doc. 75, p. 136.

[151] Savage to Buchanan, Dec. 25, 1847, Dept. of State, Des., Guat., vol. 1; Savage to Webster, April 21, 1851, *ibid.*, vol. 3, no. 6.

designed to make themselves owners and occupants of the points on the coasts of Nicaragua which would become the termini of any interoceanic canal communication by way of the San Juan and Lake Nicaragua. Therefore, in order to outwit British schemes, he asked for power to negotiate transit treaties.[152] In May, 1849, he again wrote, explaining the urgency of the situation. The British agents, he said, were working to produce results the most inimical to American interests, by planning to secure control of the whole interoceanic line of transit.[153] Because of the slowness of means of communication, no word was received from Hise before the end of Polk's administration; consequently no reply or further instructions were sent to him.[154] In view of this fact and of his belief that further delay would be fatal to American interests, it is not to be wondered at that Hise ventured, without instructions,[155] to negotiate a canal treaty with Nicaragua.

The treaty, signed by Hise June 21, 1849, was in keeping with the Polk policy, and was a definite application of the Monroe doctrine to the situation in Central America. Through it, Nicaragua granted to the American government, or its citizens, in perpetuity, the right of way for transit purposes across Nicaragua, and permitted the fortification of such a route. In return, the United States pledged herself to protect Nicaragua in all territory rightfully hers.[156] By means of this treaty, the Nicaraguan commissioner believed

[152] Hise to Buchanan, Dec. 20, 1848, *ibid.*, vol. I.

[153] Hise to Buchanan, May 25, 1849, *ibid.*

[154] "Letters of Bancroft and Buchanan", in *Am. Hist. Rev.*, V, 99; Buchanan, *Works*, VIII, 380.

[155] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 579, doc. 75, pp. 105-106.

[156] *Ibid.*, pp. 110-117.

that Nicaragua had gained a protector in the United States, and that her case against Great Britain was consequently secure.[157]

While Hise had been thus cut off from his government, important changes were taking place in the United States. The Polk Democrats had given way to a Whig administration under Taylor. The gold discovery in California, becoming known throughout the country, had created a popular demand for more satisfactory means of transportation to the West than that afforded by ox-team journey across the plains or by the long voyage around Cape Horn. This demand attracted general attention to Nicaragua, where the British were in control of the eastern terminus of what was considered the best transisthmian route. The successful termination of the Mexican War had excited enthusiasm and increased the self-confidence of the nation; the conviction of "manifest destiny" still influenced a large portion of the population.[158] England must not be permitted to monopolize a route so valuable to American prosperity. Public opinion demanded that the government take measures to prevent such a possibility.[159]

At this juncture a group of American citizens formed a transportation company with the object of constructing a canal. In March, 1849, this association made a contract with the Nicaraguan government for the use of the San Juan route across the isthmus. When looking more fully into the subject connected with their

[157] Chatfield to Palmerston, May 17, 1849, F. O., Guat., vol. 58, no. 42.
[158] *Dem. Rev.*, XXV, 3-11.
[159] Travis, *Mosquito History*, 15; Henderson, *American Diplomatic Questions*, 111; Grahame, "The Canal Diplomacy", in *N. Am. Rev.*, CXCVII, 35-36.

contract, the members of the company learned of the extensive British claims in the name of the Mosquito king,[160] and were much concerned by the discovery. Meanwhile their movements had not escaped the jealous watchfulness of Chatfield, who, through the British consuls in Nicaragua, promptly notified the Nicaraguan government and the company that the whole of the San Juan River from its mouth to Machuca Rapids belonged to Mosquito, and could not be disposed of or used without the consent of the British government.[161] Chatfield also reported the situation to his government;[162] and in response to instructions from the Foreign Office,[163] Barclay, the British consul at New York, published a warning notice to the grantees not to begin work on the proposed canal, inasmuch as the British government was the protector of the Mosquitos, whose territory would be bisected by it.[164] Before this, however, the American company had reported conditions in Central America to the United States government and had asked protection for its undertaking.[165]

The new administration at Washington possessed a definite Central American policy, and promptly upon accession proceeded to execute it. Accordingly, letters were addressed by President Taylor and by Clayton, his secretary of state, to the Nicaraguan government, replying to the appeals for aid made to the Polk administration. These letters expressed the sympathy of the

[160] Keasbey, *Nicaragua Canal*, 193.

[161] Inclosures in Chatfield to Palmerston, May 5, 1849, F. O., Guat., vol. 58, no. 38.

[162] Chatfield to Palmerston, April 14, and 21, 1849, *ibid.*, vol. 57, nos. 33, 35, and May 5, 1849, *ibid.*, vol. 58, no. 38.

[163] Inclosure in Palmerston to Crampton, June 28, 1849, F. O., Am., vol. 497, no. 37.

[164] *Dem. Rev.*, XXV, 406.

[165] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 579, doc. 75, p. 119.

American government and the promise of its friendly interposition for the purpose of adjusting the Mosquito controversy.[166]

At the same time Hise, who had not yet been heard from,[167] was recalled,[168] and Ephraim George Squier was appointed as his successor.[169] Through his instructions Squier was made acquainted with the history of British encroachments in Nicaragua, and was directed to inform the Nicaraguan government that the United States would employ any moral means in its power " for the purpose of frustrating the apparent designs of Great Britain in countenancing the claims of sovereignty over the Mosquito coast, and the Port of San Juan, asserted by her ally the alleged monarch of that region ".[170] The new chargé d'affaires was empowered to make treaties of commerce with the Central American republics, and particularly one with Nicaragua in the interest of the transportation company,[171] which had become absorbed into the American Atlantic and Pacific Ship-Canal Company of New York.[172] This treaty was to secure to American citizens a right of way across the isthmus [173] for a transit line open to all nations, with exclusive benefits to none.[174] No objection would be made by the United States to the employment of foreign capital, which might be necessary to the success of the undertaking.[175] In anticipation of the price which Nicaragua might ask for such a concession, Clayton directed

[166] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 579, doc. 75, p. 132.
[167] *Ibid.*, pp. 120-121. [168] *Ibid.*, p. 117. [169] *Ibid.*
[170] Dept. of State, Inst., Am. States, vol. 15, p. 69.
[171] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 579, doc. 75, pp. 120-121.
[172] Keasbey, *Nicaragua Canal*, 197.
[173] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 579, doc. 75, p. 121.
[174] *Ibid.*, p 130. [175] *Ibid.*, p. 129.

that no guarantee of territorial independence should be given in compensation for the grant of right of way.[176]

When Squier reached Central America, he found the usual confusion in most of the states.[177] The three republics which favored the American government regarded his coming as an occasion for great rejoicing.[178] Their satisfaction was increased when Squier held out high hopes of American interference to drive out British power.[179] In consequence of Squier's promises, Nicaragua took a defiant stand against the British, strongly denouncing the Mosquito protectorate and expressing a determination to uphold the Monroe doctrine.[180]

The terms of the Hise treaty, still unknown to the United States, had been revealed to Chatfield, and had evidently thoroughly aroused his suspicions.[181] Consequently, he was on the alert when Squier arrived. At once there began between the two a struggle for the supremacy of their governments in Central America, which did not terminate until the recall of Squier a year later. Each important move of Squier was met by an act from Chatfield calculated to checkmate it. Squier's promises of American aid brought forth articles of a counteracting nature by Chatfield, published in the press of Costa Rica and Guatemala.[182] When

[176] *Ibid.*, p. 121.

[177] Inclosure in Squier to Clayton, July 20, 1849, Dept. of State, Des., Guat., vol. 2.

[178] Chatfield to Palmerston, July 27, 1849, F. O., Guat., vol. 59, no. 64.

[179] Squier to Clayton, June 3, 1849, Dept. of State, Des., Guat., vol. 2; Chatfield to Palmerston, July 27, 1849, F. O., Guat., vol. 59, no. 64, and Dec. 15, 1849, *ibid.*, vol. 60, no. 119; Squier, *Travels in Central America*, I, 251-256.

[180] Chatfield to Palmerston, Oct. 25, 1849, F. O., Guat., vol. 60, no. 98; Inclosures in Chatfield to Palmerston, Oct. 29, 1849, *ibid.*, no. 100.

[181] Chatfield to Palmerston, May 17, 1849, *ibid.*, vol. 58, no. 42.

[182] Chatfield to Palmerston, Dec. 15, 1849, *ibid.*, vol. 60, no. 119.

Squier tried to induce the three states friendly to the American government to form a union, the better to resist British encroachments,[183] Chatfield, perceiving his purpose, proceeded to frustrate it by inducing Honduras to form a treaty permanently detaching her from the contemplated league.[184] When a commission came to ask Costa Rica to become a member of the union,[185] the British consul again stepped forward to prevent her consent,[186] and in order the better to dominate Costa Rica, formed a new treaty with her,[187] after which he intimated to Nicaragua that Costa Rica was under British protection, and therefore her boundary rights must be respected.[188]

Notwithstanding the opposition of British agents and the existence of a rival British canal company,[189] Squier succeeded in inducing Nicaragua to grant the American company a favorable concession for the construction of a canal along the line of the San Juan.[190] Following this, the Nicaraguan government granted the company a charter of incorporation.[191]

These arrangements being made, Squier experienced little difficulty in forming a treaty for interoceanic communication based upon the general terms outlined

[183] Squier to Clayton, Aug. 20, 1849, Dept. of State, Des., Guat., vol. 2; Chatfield to Palmerston, Nov. 7, 1849, F. O., Guat., vol. 60, no. 107.

[184] Chatfield to Palmerston, Dec. 31, 1849, *ibid.*, no. 126; Squier, *Travels in Central America*, II, 180-181.

[185] Chatfield to Palmerston, Dec. 24, 1849, F. O., Guat., vol. 60, no. 123.

[186] *Ibid.*; Chatfield to Palmerston, Dec. 15, 1849, *ibid.*, no. 116.

[187] Chatfield to Palmerston, Nov. 28, 1849, *ibid.*, no. 114.

[188] Chatfield to the Principal Secretary of the Government of Nicaragua, Dec. 1, 1849, *ibid.*, no. 21.

[189] Travis, *Clayton-Bulwer Treaty*, 65.

[190] *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 19-24.

[191] Keasbey, *Nicaragua Canal*, 198.

in Clayton's instructions. The treaty engaged the two contracting parties to defend the canal company in its enterprise, secured from the American government a recognition of the rights of sovereignty and property possessed by Nicaragua in the canal route, and guaranteed its neutrality as long as it should be controlled by American citizens. The rights and privileges given by the treaty were open to any other nation willing to enter into an agreement with Nicaragua for the protection of the contemplated canal.[192]

As Squier discovered soon after his arrival, Hise's suspicions regarding the designs of British agents upon the termini of the proposed canal line were well founded. Not content with the British claims to San Juan on the Atlantic, Chatfield, as early as January, 1847, had written to Palmerston suggesting that Great Britain, in anticipation of the Americans, obtain a hold on the "Port of the Union" and on Realejo on the Pacific. The Central American states had long been in debt to the British; therefore he thought that an island in the bay might be accepted in part payment.[193] Palmerston displayed but little interest in the scheme,[194] but in the following March the British consul wrote again, this time asking for authority to obtain the cession to Great Britain of the port of San Carlos on Lake Nicaragua and three islands in the Bay of Fonseca, in return for which the British government should assume the payment of all claims against the states concerned.[195] Palmerston promptly replied that the government did

[192] *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 18-19.

[193] F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 45, no. 4.

[194] Palmerston to Ward, April 16, 1847, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 49.

[195] Palmerston to Chatfield, June 17, 1848, F. O., Guat., vol. 50, no. 15.

not consider such a measure expedient;[196] Chatfield, nevertheless, urged the subject repeatedly,[197] and finally decided to secure Tigre Island, which commanded the Bay of Fonseca, as guarantee for the payment of British claims against Honduras, to which state the island belonged. He therefore wrote to the Honduran government pressing the payment of debts, and stating that if Honduras did not respond promptly a lien might be put upon Tigre until the claims should be paid.[198] In May, 1849, Palmerston again wrote in opposition to Chatfield's plans, stating that the government much preferred that the claims be met by proper payments, as Parliament would be very little disposed to take upon the public the payment of the claims in return for the islands in question.[199] Chatfield, however, still cherished the hope of securing at least the island of Tigre for his government, which, he felt, did not fully appreciate the situation.

The hearty welcome extended to Squier caused the British consul to believe, or at least to pretend to believe, that the three states unfriendly to England were seeking the protection of the American government in order to escape a direct payment of British claims.[200] Therefore, he pressed for settlement more vigorously

[196] Palmerston to Chatfield, June 17, 1848, F. O., Guat., vol. 50, no. 15.

[197] Chatfield to Palmerston, Nov. 24, 1848, F. O., Guat., vol. 53, no. 8; Jan. 5, 1849, *ibid.*, vol. 57, no. 4; April 14, 1849, *ibid.*, no. 33; July 24, 1849, *ibid.*, vol. 59, no. 63; July 27, 1849, *ibid.*, no. 67.

[198] Chatfield to the Principal Secretary of the Honduran Government, Jan. 26, 1849, *ibid.*, vol. 57, no. 2. In writing of the proposed lien on Tigre, Chatfield said: "I have partly been made to make it from a desire to anticipate an attempt in any other quarter, to get possession of a spot so valuable in a naval point of view on this side of the Continent." Chatfield to Dundonald, Feb. 24, 1849, *ibid.*, no. 1.

[199] Palmerston to Chatfield, May 1, 1849, *ibid.*, vol. 56, no. 7.

[200] Chatfield to Palmerston, Oct. 17, and Nov. 14, 1849, *ibid.*, vol. 60, nos. 95, 112.

than ever.[201] Upon learning of Chatfield's designs on Tigre, Squier became fearful that, if executed, they would embarrass all efforts to form a canal treaty and construct a canal, for he believed that the canal must terminate on the Bay of Fonseca.[202] Therefore, although unauthorized to do so, he determined to form a treaty with Honduras for the purchase of the island by the United States, or for its temporary cession until the canal arrangements should be completed.[203] Accordingly, at his request a Honduran commissioner came to Guatemala and formed a treaty ceding Tigre to the American government for a period of eighteen months.[204] Squier then promptly notified the British agents of the transaction.[205]

Chatfield thereupon hastened the execution of his plans, and, on October 16, a week after its cession to the United States, at his orders [206] Captain Paynter of the British navy seized the island and hoisted the British flag.[207] Squier protested and demanded its evacuation,[208] Chatfield refused and called attention to the lien which he had placed upon the Tigre in the preceding January. The proprietary rights thus established, he declared, no subsequent arrangement without cognizance of England could undo.[209]

[201] Chatfield to Palmerston, Oct. 17, 1849, *ibid.*, no. 95.

[202] Squier to Clayton, Oct. 10, 1849, Dept. of State, Des., Guat., vol. 2.

[203] Squier to Clayton, Aug. 20, 1849, Dept. of State, Des., Guat., vol. 2.

[204] *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 31-32.

[205] *Ibid.*, 33.

[206] Inclosures in Chatfield to Palmerston, Oct. 17, 1849, F. O., Guat., vol. 60, no. 95.

[207] Paynter to Hornby, Oct. 25, 1849, *ibid.*, vol. 68, no. 41.

[208] *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 33.

[209] *Ibid.*

Admiral Hornby, commander of the British fleet in the West Indies, was familiar with Palmerston's view of Chatfield's plans,[210] and, therefore, upon hearing of the seizure, he promptly ordered the restoration of the island to Honduras.[211] Later, both Chatfield[212] and Squier[213] were rebuked by their governments for the parts which they had played in the affair.

But the seizure of Tigre Island produced much excitement in the United States; and suspicion against the British government, which had been somewhat allayed by negotiations then pending, was again aroused, and a peaceful settlement of the canal question endangered. Clayton, through Lawrence, the American minister at London, demanded a disavowal of the act,[214] which, after some delay, was given,[215] though not in an altogether satisfactory manner.

[210] Hornby to Chatfield, Dec. 12, 1849, F. O., Cen. Am., vol. 64.
[211] *Ibid.*; Hornby to Parker, Dec. 12, 1849, *ibid.*, vol. 68, no 100.
[212] Palmerston to Chatfield, Jan. 17, 1850, *ibid.*, vol. 63, no. 1.
[213] Dept. of State, Inst., Am. States, vol. 15, pp. 100-101.
[214] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 579, doc. 75, pp. 313-315.
[215] *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 34-35.

CHAPTER III.

The Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, April 19, 1850.

While the British and American agents were manipulating the weak Central American states in the interest of the country each represented, a movement, initiated at Washington, had begun towards effecting, through negotiation, a peaceful settlement of the matter in dispute. But the problem was an unusually hard one because of the peculiar nature of the situation itself; and the difficulty was made greater by the suspicion and jealousy with which each government had long viewed the other; moreover, this mutual distrust was further stimulated by the rash acts of the agents in Central America, and the negotiations were embarrassed accordingly.

George Bancroft was American minister at London when San Juan was seized by the British, but for many months he received no instructions upon the subject, because his government had decided to investigate the situation before determining upon a course of action. The investigation was to be made by Hise, whose report, as has already been stated, was not received before Polk's administration ended. But Bancroft informed the American government of whatever came to his notice with reference to the dispute between England and Nicaragua. When Castellon, accompanied by Marcoleta, the Nicaraguan chargé d'affaires in Belgium, arrived in England for the purpose of trying

to settle the Greytown dispute, Bancroft apprised Buchanan of the fact and expressed the belief that Palmerston would not recede.[1] Later he reported the unsatisfactory reply which had been given Castellon, remarking that Aberdeen agreed with Palmerston in the stand which the latter had taken.[2]

Bancroft's last-mentioned report reached Washington very shortly before the inauguration of President Taylor and probably hastened the action of the new administration, which, while it had no schemes for territorial aggrandizement, was interested in dislodging the British from their position in Central America, and very desirous of securing a neutral transisthmian route. On April 30, 1849, Clayton, the new secretary of state, directed Bancroft to notify Castellon that the President had determined to grant Nicaragua's request by trying to induce the British government to abandon its pretensions to Nicaraguan territory. Bancroft was also directed to advise the Nicaraguan minister to "continue firm in asserting the rights of his government and not to do any act which might either weaken or alienate these rights".[3]

Two days later Clayton again wrote to Bancroft stating that for some time the President had anxiously viewed the acts of the British in Central America, but had not asked for an explanation, in the hope that the measures of the British government might still prove consistent with the treaties made between that government and Spain; or, if otherwise, that the differences between Great Britain and the Central American authorities might be settled in a manner satisfactory

[1] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 579, doc. 75, p. 222.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 224.
[3] Dept. of State, Inst., Gt. Brit., vol. 15, pp. 385-386.

to all parties. That hope, however, had apparently been vain. Therefore, since Nicaragua had requested the interposition of the United States with reference to the seizure of San Juan, the American government had investigated the Mosquito claims asserted by the British and had decided these claims to be without reasonable foundation, consequently the President had decided to present the American views upon the question to the friendly consideration of Great Britain.[4]

But before entering into any written correspondence upon the subject, it seemed best that Bancroft sound Palmerston in conversation as to the views and intentions of the British government regarding the Mosquito coast, and ascertain whether that government intended to set aside for its own use any portion of the territory; if so, for what reason, and on what principle. Clayton also suggested that Bancroft find out if the British government claimed a right as ally and protector of the Mosquito king to "control or obstruct the commerce of the river San Juan de Nicaragua, or *to keep forts or establishments of any kind on its banks*". Further, Bancroft was instructed to intimate to Palmerston the inexpediency of any great commercial power claiming a right to the river, in case it should become a world highway. He was to inform Palmerston in the most friendly manner that while the United States would look upon the exclusive possession or command of such a river by themselves as a great evil, which would draw upon the nation the jealousy and ultimately the hostility of the rest of the commercial world, yet they ought not to consent to its obstruction by any other power. If, after the subject had been thus presented,

[4] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 579, doc. 75, pp. 230-231.

Palmerston was still unwilling to abandon the British and Mosquito claim, or retire from the river and the command of its harbor, Bancroft was to express to him the views of the President regarding the Mosquito claim, assuring him that the United States was not actuated by ambitious motives or by any feeling in the least unfriendly to Great Britain. If this failed to move Palmerston, then Bancroft was to present a formal written protest to the British government. Bancroft was also directed to obtain from the Costa Rican minister an assurance that he would not commit the rights of his state by any convention with Great Britain. A cession to Great Britain of the territory south of the San Juan River, which was claimed by Costa Rica as well as by Nicaragua, might be a serious embarrassment to the United States. No British forts or possessions of any kind should exist on either bank of the river. Therefore, Clayton stated, it was desirable to warn Costa Rica against ceding her territory to Great Britain, for the safety of every American state would require that it yield to no further foreign aggression.[5]

Bancroft had no opportunity to present the subject to Palmerston for some time, but he had an interview with Molina, the Costa Rican minister, who assured him that the relation existing between his country and Great Britain was one of friendship, and nothing more. However, Bancroft suspected from Molina's manner that, in case war occurred with Nicaragua over the boundary question, Costa Rica meant to ask protection of England.[6] Therefore, in reporting the interview to Clayton, Bancroft suggested that the American agent in Central America try to get the two states to reach an

[5] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 579, doc. 75, p. 232.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 233.

agreement over their boundaries; meanwhile, he himself would endeavor to induce the Costa Rican minister to await the outcome of such an effort, before appealing to England.[7]

But Bancroft was decidedly slow in grasping the intentions of Costa Rica. This was evidently due to his inclination to credit Molina with more frankness and friendliness towards the United States than the latter really felt.[8] A note in the Public Record Office in London shows that in December, 1848, five months previous to Bancroft's interview with him, Molina had distinctly asked that the British government take Costa Rica under its protection, as that state feared trouble with New Granada and Nicaragua over boundary questions.[9] The terms offered by the Costa Ricans, in return for the protecting power of the British, practically amounted to a surrender of their country to the latter.[10] Thus it is evident that Clayton's fears of Costa Rican plans for British protection were far from groundless. Palmerston, however, refused the offer, though just at what time is not clear.[11] Buchanan, writing in April, 1850, expressed the belief that but for the determination to resist European colonization on the North American continent, shown by Polk's administration, the offer would have been accepted.[12] Yet this is by no means certain. To be sure, Great Britain, even at this early date, did not think it wise to run counter to the Monroe doctrine, but there were stronger reasons for not con-

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 233. [8] *Ibid.*, p. 223.

[9] Molina to Palmerston, Dec. 23, 1848, F. O., Costa Rica, vol. 1.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] Molina to Palmerston, Mar. 23, 1850, *ibid.*, vol. 3. This letter of Molina simply refers to the refusal as having been made "on considerations of too great a weight to be controverted."

[12] Buchanan, *Works*, VIII, 379.

sidering Molina's proposal. At this time the British government had come to feel strongly that the country was overburdened with colonies, and it was even believed that Canada must soon become independent.[13] By the seizure of San Juan and the extension of the Mosquito boundary to the Colorado, England had gained all that she desired at the time, in the vicinity of the proposed canal; therefore, all regard for American wishes aside, there could be no object in burdening herself with a Costa Rican protectorate.

Meanwhile the outlook for Nicaragua had grown more discouraging. The British government was plainly determined not to restore San Juan.[14] Palmerston's plan to settle all of the questions in dispute by an agreement between Mosquito, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua would not be considered by the Nicaraguans, who did not recognize the Mosquito kingdom.[15] Therefore, in despair, Nicaragua again turned to the United States. On July 12, Castellon addressed a note to Bancroft asking whether Honduras, Salvador, and Nicaragua, or the last-named only, would be admitted to the American Union. In case the American government were willing, upon what terms could the admission take place, and what steps were necessary to effect it? If the United States were opposed to annexation, could the Nicaraguans count, at least, on American aid in defending the integrity of their territory? If so, upon what terms would the aid be given?[16]

Bancroft, who was entirely without instructions upon this subject, cautiously replied that the United States had no selfish purpose in its policy towards Central

[13] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 579, doc. 75, p. 223.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 235. [15] *Ibid.*, p. 236. [16] *Ibid.*, pp. 301-302.

America; it desired only the welfare of the Central American states. The American government, he said, had hoped to see San Juan returned to Nicaragua, but intervention for that purpose had been delayed by the dissensions within Central America itself. In order that a more sympathetic regard from the outside might be secured, he advised that the boundary dispute be settled peaceably with Costa Rica, and that the latter be permitted to carry on commerce through the port of San Juan, duty free.[17]

After the receipt of this reply, Castellon once more turned to Palmerston and proposed arbitration.[18] "Should this be refused", Bancroft wrote Clayton, "Nicaragua must submit, unless she can rely on the prompt exertion of the influence of the United States."[19] But Palmerston would not arbitrate;[20] and, indeed, acquiescence in a plan to refer her claims to Mosquito to an international court was hardly to be expected of Great Britain.

Clayton's instructions on Central American affairs had reached Bancroft in May, but it was not until July that he succeeded in securing an interview on them with Palmerston, and even then the latter was called away before the interview was concluded.[21] Bancroft believed, and reported to Clayton, that Palmerston was purposely delaying in order to shut the United States out of the Central American discussion and thereby bring the Central American states to an acquiescence in British arrangements.[22] The British correspondence

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 303-304. [18] *Ibid.*, 236. [19] *Ibid.*

[20] Inclosure in Lawrence to Clayton, April 19, 1850, Dept. of State, Des., Eng., vol. 60, no. 45.

[21] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 579, doc. 75, p. 235.

[22] *Ibid.*

indicates the correctness of Bancroft's surmise; the plan was to frighten Nicaragua into yielding, and thus avoid any cause for American interference.

At the interview Bancroft asked whether the British government intended to appropriate to itself the town of San Juan or any part of the "so called Mosquito territory", to which Palmerston replied, "No; you know very well we have already colonies enough." When asked in whose hands San Juan then was, the Foreign Secretary replied, "For the present, in those of English commissioners." He acknowledged that this was an occupation by England, but stated that the occupation was only temporary. Thereupon Bancroft expressed the opinion of his government that there was no such body politic as the kingdom of the Mosquitos; that if there were any, its jurisdiction did not reach to San Juan; and that, even if it did, no right of exercising a protectorate belonged to Great Britain. In his response to this, Bancroft reported to his government, Palmerston "did not in the least disguise his strong disinclination to restore the port, insisting, however, that any purposes the United States might have in reference to connecting the two oceans by a commercial highway, would be better promoted by the policy which he is pursuing than in any other way. And in reference to the whole subject, his words were, 'You and we can have but one interest'." [23]

Bancroft was not reassured by Palmerston's concluding remarks, because of the attitude towards the restoration of San Juan, displayed in this interview, as well as by the reports of Castellon and Marcoleta. Moreover, Palmerston did not invite a renewal of the inter-

[23] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 579, doc. 75, p. 235.

rupted discussion, and when Bancroft learned that the Foreign Secretary had given a long interview to Castellon and Marcoleta, he decided that it was time to present the protest, as directed by Clayton.[24] But he had not quite finished writing the paper when notice of his recall came, and in view of this he thought it best not to present the protest to the British government.[25]

Before Bancroft's report of his interview reached Washington the American government had learned that a contract had been secured from Nicaragua by the Atlantic and Pacific Ship-Canal Company. As he knew that the completion of this contract was to be followed by a canal treaty, drawn up between Squier and the Nicaragua government, Clayton became uneasy over Bancroft's delay. Therefore, on August 16, he wrote to Rives, the newly-appointed minister to France, regarding the situation, and pointed out how important it was that Great Britain become acquainted with the views of the United States government upon the Mosquito question. "We are deeply anxious", he wrote, "to avoid any collision with the British government in relation to this matter; but that collision will become inevitable if great prudence be not exercised on both sides." With reference to the arrangement between Nicaragua and the canal company, he said: "We view the title of the state of Nicaragua, which entered into this contract, as irrefragable, and are about to make a treaty with her on the subject. When Great Britain shall ascertain the real objects that we have in view, she cannot, I think, fail to see the propriety of aiding instead of obstructing us in securing, for all commercial nations on the same terms, the right of passage by

[24] *Ibid.*, pp. 235-236. [25] *Ibid.*, p. 234.

the Nicaragua route from ocean to ocean, if that route should prove to be practicable." Consequently, Rives was instructed to pass through London on his way to Paris and perform the duty enjoined upon Bancroft, if, upon his arrival in London, it had not yet been performed. If Palmerston showed himself determined to maintain the Mosquito title, Rives was not to present the protest, but to leave that to Lawrence, Bancroft's successor.[26]

Palmerston was absent from London when Rives arrived,[27] but he soon returned, and on September 24, Rives had an interview with him. Palmerston received the American minister cordially, saying that he had returned to London solely for the purpose of seeing and conversing with him.[28] Rives stated the object of his errand as instructed, explaining the views of the American government and its intention to support the canal company in the rights granted it by Nicaragua. He then pointed out to Palmerston the peculiar interest which the United States must have in the canal route because of her possessions on the Pacific coast, assuring him, however, that the United States "sought no exclusive privilege or preferential right of any kind in regard to the proposed communication" but wished to see it "dedicated to the common use of all nations, on a footing of perfect equality for all." Yet, while possessing no selfish designs on the transisthmian route, the American nation "could never consent to see so important a communication fall under the exclusive control of any other great commercial power." *Mosquito* possession at the mouth of the San Juan could be

[26] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 27, p. 13.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 15. [28] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

considered in no other light than *British* possession, and must necessarily cause dissatisfaction and distrust on the part of other commercial powers. In view of these facts, Rives suggested to Palmerston that the governments which they represented come to a "frank and manly understanding with each other, and unite their influence for the accomplishment of an object of the highest importance to both of them as well as the rest of the world, instead of hazarding the final loss of so great an object by jarring and divided councils." [29]

Palmerston replied that he was very glad to have full and free conversation upon the subject. He had conversed to some extent with Bancroft regarding it, he said, but as Bancroft was soon to leave, it had not seemed necessary to enter into much detail. He then reviewed the controversy with Nicaragua, stating that from a very early time the Mosquito Indians had been treated by the British as forming a sovereign state. For more than a century, the British government had given them tokens of recognition and protection. The Nicaraguans, according to the Foreign Secretary, had taken forcible possession of the port of San Juan to which they had no right. The British, as protectors of the Mosquitos, had driven them out, but the Nicaraguans, while not in possession, had fraudulently granted a right of way to American citizens in order to draw the United States into their quarrel. In this connection Palmerston assured Rives, however, that there was not the slightest foundation for the suspicion, which existed in the United States, that the British government wished to plant a new colony on the San Juan, for they already had more colonies than they could manage;

[29] *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

" that, as to any idea of their holding exclusive possession of the mouth of the San Juan as the Key of the contemplated communication between the Atlantic and the Pacific, nothing could be further from their minds." [30]

Later Palmerston spoke of the dissension and strife which distracted the Central American states and prevented the development of their natural resources. In the interest of humanity and of the general commerce of the world, he declared, it was desirable to promote the civilization and improvement of those countries.[31]

When the conversation again reverted to the Mosquitos, Rives called attention to the fact that " the ultimate property or high domain of Indian territory was always considered as vested in the nations colonizing the country by the mere fact of discovery or settlement anywhere within the limits declared to be assumed by them ", and pointed out that this principle had been acted upon by Great Britain herself in various international pacts. The Foreign Secretary fully admitted the general doctrine stated by Rives, and said that this was the principle on which the British relations with the Indian tribes in Canada were conducted. But he insisted that the case of the Mosquitos was " *sui generis* and stood upon its own peculiar circumstances ". However, he declared that the question of Mosquito title need not prevent the consummation of the plan for interoceanic communication.[32]

Throughout the interview Palmerston's conversation was marked by " a tone of perfect frankness and the most conciliatory and friendly spirit towards the United States ", which led Rives to feel that the way had been

[30] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 27, p. 20. The italics appear in Rives's report to Clayton.

[31] *Ibid.* [32] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

opened for a better understanding and final co-operation.[33] In conclusion, Rives suggested, that "if Great Britain would do what she had the unquestionable power to effect with the Mosquitos, and exert her influence with Costa Rica, while the United States employed their good offices with Nicaragua, every political impediment to the execution of the great work they both desired to see accomplished would be speedily removed." This done, the benefits of the highway could be secured to all by an international guarantee. Palmerston received the suggestion very favorably and left the American minister with the impression that he was desirous of co-operating with the United States in promoting the accomplishment of the object in which both nations were interested, the construction of an interoceanic highway.[34]

When Lawrence arrived two or three weeks later he had interviews with Palmerston[35] and Russell,[36] both of whom repeated substantially what had been said to Rives. In consequence, Lawrence, like Rives, was led to believe that the British government would join with the United States in the guarantee of a transisthmian highway.[37]

A comparison of the attitude displayed by Palmerston towards Bancroft, with his manner of meeting and answering Rives and Lawrence, plainly reveals a shifting of British policy. The fact of such a change makes desirable at this point a more definite consideration of British motives as well as an investigation into the causes which made the English government show greater willingness at this time to discuss the Central

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 21. [34] *Ibid.*, p. 23. [35] *Ibid.*, p. 23-24.
[36] *Ibid.*, p. 24. [37] *Ibid.*

American question, and particularly the strictly canal phase of it, with the American government.

In the first place, it should be said that the aggressive movement of the United States towards the southwest, accompanied by the talk of "manifest destiny", had given the British good reason to suspect the Americans of designs upon the territory of the isthmus, and to fear that they might attempt to monopolize the Nicaragua route.[38] Should this fear be realized, the control of commerce in the Pacific would pass from English to American hands. To prevent such a monopoly of the interoceanic highway and to secure a share in any arrangement with regard to it, Palmerston directed the seizure of San Juan. That this was the Foreign Secretary's main and perhaps only motive is evident from a study of his conduct previous and subsequent to the seizure. Moreover, Rives after his interview expressed the belief that Palmerston's aim had been to prevent exclusive control of the interoceanic route by the Americans, and not to monopolize it for the British.[39] A *Times* editorial of a later date took the same view.[40] Indeed, the British government must have clearly realized that the American people would not peacefully permit the establishment of such a foreign monopoly.

After San Juan had come under Anglo-Mosquito control, there was a double British reason for avoiding all discussion with the United States government. Complicated with the old fear of American designs on the route, was the knowledge that since American

[38] Chatfield to Palmerston, Mar. 8, 1848, F. O., Guat., vol. 51, no. 30; Sept. 15, 1849, *ibid.*, vol. 59, no. 87; Manning to Green, Oct. 4, 1849, C. O., Hond. vol. 77.

[39] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 27, p. 21.

[40] London *Times*, June 13, 1850.

interests had focussed attention upon the region the Monroe doctrine might be applied to the situation in an attempt to drive out the intruders. This explains the attitude towards Bancroft as well as the attempt to force Nicaragua to acquiesce in British-made boundaries for the Mosquitos.

But despatches containing the purport of the Hise treaty [41] and outlining the terms of the canal contract of the New York company,[42] as well as reports of Squier's reception in Central America and the policy followed by him,[43] must have reached Palmerston a little before Rives's arrival. These would all be strongly influential towards convincing the British government that the United States must be reckoned with eventually in connection with Central America, and that further evasion would be useless, if not distinctly unwise. To lend emphasis to this view there was the fact that Castellon had departed without an agreement regarding Mosquito boundaries, and, in consequence, the Nicaraguans would undoubtedly again turn to the Americans, whose feelings had been strongly enlisted on their side. In the opinion of the *Times,* Nicaragua had gained a position that it was " most unwise to treat with violence and contumely ". [44] Therefore, that newspaper advised a pacific and conciliatory policy.[45] However, this policy was not to be directed towards the weak state of Nicaragua, but towards the power believed to be behind that state—the American govern-

[41] Chatfield to Palmerston, May 17, 1849, F. O., Guat., vol. 58, no. 42.

[42] Chatfield to Palmerston, April 21, 1849, *ibid.*, vol. 57, no. 35; May 5, 1849, *ibid.*, vol. 58, no. 38; Crampton to Palmerston, June 25, 1849, F. O., Am. vol. 499, no. 61.

[43] Chatfield to Palmerston, July 27, 1849, F. O., Guat., vol. 59, no. 64.

[44] London *Times,* Nov. 1, 1849.

[45] *Ibid.*

ment and the American people. These various considerations which have been mentioned seem to furnish ample explanation of the British change in attitude.

After Rives's frank and friendly statement of the American canal policy, practically all remaining suspicion of American intentions concerning Central America seems to have vanished. With its disappearance came a change of attitude towards Central America itself. Since the aim of the United States was really the establishment of a great commercial highway for the benefit of all nations, weakness and disorganization in Central America was no longer an advantage but a handicap to British interests; hence Palmerston's expression of a desire for the quieting of dissension in those countries, and the promotion of civilization.

One further matter requires attention in this connection. By the seizure of San Juan the British government had, for the time, insured the Nicaragua route against foreign monopoly; but in order to give some shadow of legality to the act, it had committed itself to an assertion of the Mosquito title to the port, as well as revived the British protectorate over the Indians and renewed the claim of full sovereignty and independence for them. This unfortunate proclamation of Mosquito sovereignty placed Great Britain in a position from which she could not easily withdraw. This attitude, in reality outworn, but forced on England as consistent with her past stand, consequently became the source of virtually all future trouble between the British and Americans over Central America, for it proved an obstacle in all negotiations and made difficult a free discussion of the matters taken up, with the result that misunderstandings arose which complicated the Cen-

territory of Guatemala, embracing Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Honduras, and, indeed, the whole Mosquito coast." [51]

In case the British rejected these overtures and refused to cooperate, Lawrence should present the terms of Hise's treaty which had recently been received, informing Palmerston that the treaty was made without authority from the United States, and assuring him that no step would be taken towards ratifying it, if, by an arrangement with England, American interests could be placed upon a "just and satisfactory foundation". Should the efforts to this end fail, however, the President would not hesitate to present it, or some other treaty which might be concluded by Squier, to the Senate for ratification, in which action he would be supported by the American people.[52]

Should the British government refuse all propositions made by Lawrence, the latter was directed to enter the protest which Bancroft was to have presented, and immediately notify his government of the fact.[53] If, on the other hand, Palmerston showed a willingness to co-operate, but should be still tenacious about the protection of the Indians, Lawrence was to suggest that the Nicaraguan government pay them an annuity in order to extinguish their title. Lawrence should strive to produce a withdrawal from all pretensions to the whole Mosquito coast.[54] "I shall await the result of your negotiation with no little anxiety", Clayton concluded. "Bring it to a speedy close one way or the other. We are ready for either alternative. If we

[51] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 27, p. 31.
[52] *Ibid.* [53] *Ibid.*, p. 33. [54] *Ibid.*, p. 34.

must have a collision with Great Britain about this matter, the sooner we understand it the better for us. The President is firm in his purpose and will never consent that Great Britain shall, under any pretext, enjoy any exclusive possession within the territory of Nicaragua. If we adopt the treaty negotiated by Mr. Hise and Great Britain should persevere in her assertion of the Mosquito title, I know not how we can avoid a collision consistently with our national honor." [55]

After the receipt of his instructions, Lawrence promptly secured an interview with Palmerston, and opened the subject in a general way, but avoided a discussion of the rights of the Mosquitos, explaining to the Foreign Secretary that he hoped it would not become necessary to do so.[56] After his interview he addressed a note to Palmerston, asking whether Great Britain intended to occupy or colonize Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito coast, or any part of Central America, and also whether the British government would join with the United States in guaranteeing the neutrality of a "ship-canal, railway or other communication to be open to the world and common to all nations." [57]

Lawrence's object in avoiding agitation of the Mosquito title and in narrowing the discussion to the two questions was to make more possible a prompt reply, and thus relieve the popular mind in America. Moreover, he believed that if the points covered by his inquiries could be settled, an amicable arrangement of the Mosquito question would follow.[58]

Palmerston's reply, written on November 13, stated that the British government did not intend to "occupy

[55] *Ibid.* [56] *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44. [57] *Ibid.*, p. 45. [58] *Ibid.*, p. 44.

or colonize Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito coast, or any part of Central America." In regard to Lawrence's second inquiry, the Foreign Secretary wrote that the British government would feel great pleasure in combining with the United States to effect the establishment of such an interoceanic highway as was suggested and would fully undertake to obtain the consent of Mosquito to such arrangements as would render the port of Greytown applicable for the purpose.[59]

In a private letter to Lawrence of the same date Palmerston protested against the terms of the Squier treaty. He had as yet received no copy of that document, he said, but if he had been correctly informed with reference to it, one object of the treaty was to engage the United States to endeavor to compel the British government to return Greytown to Nicaragua. Such an engagement would involve the United States in an unprovoked aggression towards Great Britain.[60]

Lawrence replied by pointing out that no maritime nation ought to desire or to be permitted to have exclusive foothold on the isthmus. On the contrary, the aims of such a nation should be confined to guarantees of neutrality. He hoped, therefore, that the Mosquitos might be properly provided for, that other causes of difference might be satisfactorily arranged, and the two governments thus be spared a discussion which could only defer matters, and perhaps lead to serious results. The Squier treaty, while it rested upon the validity of Nicaragua's claim of sovereignty from ocean to ocean, sought to secure nothing exclusively to

[59] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 27, p. 46.

[60] *Parl. Papers*, 1856, *Coms.*, LX, "Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America", 8.

the United States, and contemplated an invitation to the world to join in its provisions. "I have reason to believe", Lawrence concluded, "that the United States are as firm as they are sincere on this point."[61]

It was now clear that the negotiations would not proceed as smoothly as was at first hoped. Clayton saw an obstacle in the Foreign Secretary's promise to obtain the consent of Mosquito to arrangements regarding Greytown; consequently he declared that British withdrawal from the port was essential to the success of the enterprise.[62] Lawrence was accordingly instructed to press the matter so as to leave no doubt in Palmerston's mind of the American convictions regarding it.[63]

Lawrence also quickly saw the difficulty and soon became convinced that discussion of the Mosquito question could not be avoided. On December 14 he wrote to Palmerston that unless the views of the two governments upon the subject could be harmonized the desired cooperation would be prevented; and he asked definitely whether the British government was willing to transfer the Mosquito protectorate to other hands under provisions for the humane treatment of the Indians, and to let such parts of the territory, said to be occupied by them, as might be necessary, be dedicated to the transit route.[64] On the same date Lawrence wrote to Clayton expressing a determination to insist upon the abandonment of the Mosquito protectorate, even if Lord Palmerston gave up everything else.[65]

No reply was made to Lawrence's last-mentioned note to Palmerston, and with this note negotiations on

[61] *Ibid.*, 24-25.
[62] *U. S. Docs.*, ser. no. 660, doc. 27, pp. 51-52.
[63] *Ibid.* [64] *Ibid.*, pp. 54-58. [65] *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

the British side of the Atlantic terminated. The reason for this cessation was perhaps Lawrence's insistence upon discussing the Mosquito question with the purpose of forcing the British to retreat from the stand they had taken.

Some time in the autumn of 1849, probably when Lawrence began to direct his attention to the Mosquito title, the British government seems to have carefully investigated the history of the question. As a result it evidently concluded that the rights previously contended for were not easily reconcilable with the terms of the treaties with Spain.[66] Moreover, it discovered that the mouth of the San Juan was fortified by the Spaniards long before the establishment of the Mosquito protectorate.[67] The results of this investigation, and the fact that Nicaragua had won the sympathy of the United States, evidently caused the cabinet to abandon any intention it might have had to assume a defiant stand on the question,[68] which, with the existing temper of the American people, would have made war very probable.

On the other hand, the English government did not intend to give up the claims hitherto maintained for the Mosquitos if it could possibly avoid doing so. Besides, the British protectorate was not easily disposed of. Yet, from the present evidence it seems pretty certain that had Great Britain been squarely confronted with an American war as the only other alternative, a method of relinquishing Mosquito claims without too great damage to British pride would have been found.

[66] London *Times*, June 13, 1850.
[67] *Ibid.* [68] *Ibid.*