29. Dead Cock

At the end of 1857, the Thirty-Fifth Congress debated in Washington the admission of Kansas to the Union in an atmosphere of intensified animosity about slavery. Southern extremists were making a desperate effort to force their "peculiar institution" on the new State, against the wishes of at least five-sixths of its population. A sham convention, meeting at Lecompton, had adopted a pro-slavery constitution, subsequently ratified in a bogus referendum. Bowing to the Southern Democrats, despite the travesty of the fraudulent elections, President Buchanan insisted on pushing the Lecompton constitution through Congress.

Following a ten-day Christmas recess, Congress reassembled on January 4, 1858. The Filibuster Question immediately added fuel to the fire of the Kansas debates, and both houses adopted resolutions calling upon the President for information respecting the capture of Gen. Walker. Interminable debates followed. Walker's partisans on Capitol Hill knew all along that his cause was a dead cock in the pit, but fought the skirmish, anyway, without any prospect of practical gain. As its First Session drew to a close, the Thirty-Fifth Congress had failed to pass a single resolution helpful to Walker and thereby had buried the corpse that he carried in his breech pocket.

Greeley's Tribune, aware of this fact, used the occasion to poke fun at Walker once more: "The zealous and impulsive propagandists who espoused Walker's cause heedlessly, are getting sick of the experiment, and whatever else they may do, will take good care to keep out of the range of his new Nicaraguan bonds, which are considered as deadly as the rifle whisky that is said to kill at a hundred yards."

Bennett, in the Herald, agreed, and joined in the laughter. In "The Southern Fire-Eaters and Our National Policy," he concluded: "Walker is of about as much account in their consideration as is Dan Rice, who rides the rhinoceros at a horse opera on Broadway; though unlike Dan Rice, the rhinoceros he attempted to mount has completely thrown him."

Walker went South to friendlier environs. He arrived at Richmond on Monday afternoon, January 11, 1858. On Tuesday he paid a visit to the Virginia Senate and House of Delegates, where resolutions condemning Commodore Paulding had been offered and tabled. A banquet followed on Thursday evening, which the press reported as a splendid affair, and Walker's speech created a strong impression. The applause was furious, lasting several minutes.

Friday morning Walker left for Petersburg, Virginia, where his friends had previously held an "indignation meeting" at City Hall, arousing popular support for his cause. On Monday, January 18th, he arrived at Montgomery, Alabama, where an immense concourse of citizens crowded into the House of Representatives to give him an appropriate reception. Befitting speeches and resolutions were made, but, as usual, they were only talk, leaving no tangible benefits for the Nicaragua that Walker carried in his breech pocket.

Stopping at Selma on the stump, he pulled on the heartstrings of Southerners when he told his audience that the opposition to his cause as well as the high handed outrages committed against him and his men was due to the fact that Americans in Nicaragua favored the establishment of slavery.

He continued his journey down the Alabama River, arriving at Mobile on Friday, January 22d. According to the Mobile Register, when it was rumored that the steamboat King had reached the wharf, "with this distinguished personage [William Walker] on board," an immense crowd assembled to welcome him. The cannons of the Continentals thundered a salute of ten guns. On his appearance there was a long, loud shout, a hearty "all hail" to the hero and statesman who still referred to himself as the President of Nicaragua.

From the boat to the Battle House his progress was a triumphal march. On his arrival there vast numbers crowded the reception room to see and welcome him. Scarcely fifteen minutes had elapsed before there was assembled on Royal street, in front of the hotel, even a larger crowd than met him on the wharf, calling loudly for "Walker! Walker!"

In obedience to this summons Gen. Walker appeared upon the verandah, and delivered his usual speech. The next morning he was arrested in Mobile, by an order from New Orleans, but was promptly discharged on a writ of habeas corpus. A local judge subsequently quashed the proceedings.

On Monday evening, January 25th, in pursuance of a call made through the morning papers, Walker delivered another speech at a "Nicaragua meeting" in Mobile. In it, he disclosed a second secret reason for the opposition to his schemes: that he had rejected overtures from the Buchanan administration to go to Mexico and incite rebellion there, with a view of Mexico falling into the hands of the United States.

From Mobile, Walker went to New Orleans, where he appeared before the United States District Court on Monday, February 1st. But the Grand Jury had failed to indict him, and Judge McCaleb informed him that there was nothing against him. Nevertheless, Walker then asked to be put on trial for violation of the neutrality laws,

which the Judge refused, as the District Attorney said there was nothing against him unless new instructions were received from Washington.

Just then, Col. Frank Anderson and fellow filibusters were brought prisoners from Key West to New Orleans. The Grand Jury met again on February 3d, and this time found true bills against William Walker, Frank Anderson, and three others. Judge McCaleb set the fourth Monday in April for the trial.

Walker's reception in New Orleans left much to be desired. No cannons had thundered a salute, and no crowds demanded a speech from the hero as in Mobile. His supporters had failed to arouse a suitable "indignation meeting" for an appropriate reception. In fact, they had even failed to fill the barroom of the Arcade Hotel after loudly announcing their "Nicaragua Meeting" in the papers.

More alarming for Walker was the fact that the first step toward presenting a testimonial to Commodore Paulding, Walker's enemy, had originated, of all places, in New Orleans: A subscription had been opened in that city for the purpose of presenting to Com. Paulding a sword of honor, and to the officers and crew of the frigate Wabash a flag, as an evidence of the approval of their acts.

The truth of the matter was that Walker's Nicaragua scheme was dead everywhere, including the South. But to finance his venture Walker had flooded the South with bonds of $100, issued in his name, running twenty years, payable in Nicaragua lands. Large quantities of those bonds were held by residents of Mobile, Montgomery, and other places, who wished to recoup their losses, which accounted for the "indignation" manifested in those cities.

Repudiated and crushed, Walker went to Nashville, arriving there on February 7th. He stayed at home with his father, visited with John Berrien Lindsley and other old friends, and on Saturday evening, February 20th, at the request of 122 prominent citizens, delivered his customary speech before an "immense audience" assembled in Odd Fellow's Hall.

His address occupied nearly two hours. The Nashville Banner said that "Much enthusiasm pervaded the audience, which was frequently given bent to in the loudest applause." It then saw fit to explain that "Gen. Wm. Walker, at his old home, and among his early friends and associates, is most highly esteemed. His motives are believed to be patriotic and philanthropic, and he has the sympathies of the people in his noble and heroic struggles to carry forward his cause to a glorious consummation."

The New York Herald, naturally, saw it in a different light:

". . . General William Walker, the 'little grey eyed man' of Nicaragua . . . was at the last accounts speechifying at Nashville. When he shall have finished his campaign on the

stump he will probably disappear like Kossuth, or 'turn up,' like Micawber, in Australia; or, per-adventure, take another plunge for his military empire, as the head of some one of the revolutionary and filibustering factions in Mexico."

But, of course, Walker didn't disappear like Kossuth, or "turn up," like Micawber, in Australia, or even go to Mexico. On Monday, February 22d, he left Nashville, and on March 2d arrived in New Orleans on the steamer Belfast, from Memphis. He registered that day at the City Hotel, accompanied by Henningsen. The next morning he was at his old quarters and visited Judge McCaleb's court where he "voluntarily" gave bail in the sum of $4,000 to appear for trial on the 4th Monday in April.

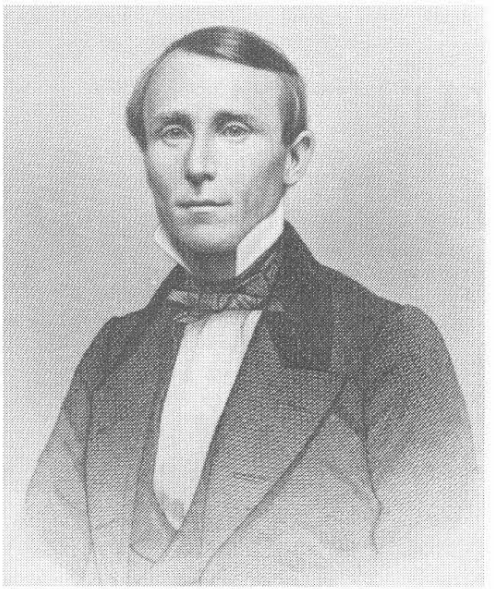
In a pamphlet published in New Orleans in April, 1858, Walker defended his determination to return to Nicaragua instead of going to Mexico. But Walker's argument failed to convince Southern leaders or to move public opinion, and he gained no followers. By then, the country had gained enough wisdom to turn its back on the little gray-eyed man of destiny, as Bennett dubbed him. Even Henningsen paid no attention to his "President" and went to Monterrey to tender his services to rebel General Santiago Vidaurri, hoping to form a Sierra Madre Republic in northern Mexico.

Walker had become so irrelevant in the South that "Nicaragua resolutions" condemnatory of his arrest by Commodore Paulding, presented by his supporters before the Louisiana Legislature at Baton Rouge and the Texas Legislature at Austin, lay on the Senate table in each place for weeks, "without any probability of their passage." In Alabama, they passed the Senate only to be defeated in the House by a vote of sixty-four to thirteen.

His trial in New Orleans was postponed several times. When he appeared in Court on the fourth Monday in April, U.S. District Judge McCaleb told him to come back on the fourth Monday in May. According to the New York Herald correspondent, the "pretext" for the postponement was the absence of Judge Campbell, of the Supreme bench; "but this is only a pretext, the truth being that the government is not ready to go on, and probably never will be sufficiently ready to go on to a conviction."

Judging from previous cases, observers knew from the start that the Walker trial would be a farce. For instance, Bennett wrote: "We are to have another of those humbugs called filibuster trials in New Orleans, where General Walker, Colonel Anderson and several others have been indicted by the Grand Jury for infringing the Neutrality laws. It requires no skill to foresee how this farce will end."

When Walker appeared in court on the fourth Monday in May, the trial was again postponed on account of the absence of Judge Campbell. On his next appearance, it was postponed again, and attachments were issued for absent witnesses. Finally, with Judges



William Walker
Portrait in his book *The War in Nicaragua*, March, 1860

Campbell and McCaleb presiding, and the Circuit Court room crowded with citizens, the trial started and the Jury was empaneled on May 31st.

On June 2d, the District Attorney, Walker, Soulé, and others, spoke, followed by Judge Campbell who explained the law and summed up the evidence. The jury, after being out some time, announced the impossibility of agreeing, and they were discharged. Ten were for acquittal and only two for conviction. Soulé moved for a new venire, in order to secure a speedy retrial of the case. The Judge promised to consider the suggestion. Next day, the District Attorney entered a nolle prosequi. Ultimately, on June 12th, 1858, ". . . This long-pending case of Gen. Walker and Col. Anderson, was this morning disposed of. Judge Campbell having required Gen. Walker to furnish bonds in the sum of $3000, and Col. Anderson in the sum of $1500, as a surety that they will not, within a reasonable space of time, engage in any filibustering expedition against the State of Nicaragua, &c. Finally, it was decided that the parties furnish their own recognizances for the amounts in question, which was done, and they went their way."

The farce was over, and the "little gray-eyed man of destiny" went his way, with his phantom of Nicaragua in his breech pocket, to immediately engage in another filibustering expedition.

30. Third Try

On June 18, 1858, the Mobile Register reported that, fresh from the late trial in New Orleans, Walker was in Mobile, where his presence was the occasion of a "spontaneous and extemporaneous demonstration of our citizens in compliment to and sympathy with himself, his cause and his trials." His friends kindled bonfires in the street in front of his hotel and spent a few dollars on fireworks and a band of music. Walker availed himself of the occasion to deliver a speech.

He then began a grueling three-week stumping journey through eastern Mississippi and western Alabama, addressing the people on "Nicaraguan affairs." From Mobile he went to Macon, thence to Columbus and to Aberdeen; to Carrollton, Eutaw, Greensboro and Marion; to Selma, and through Wilcox county, back to Mobile.

On July 10, he was the guest of honor at a public barbecue near Montgomery, Ala., at which U.S. Senator William Lowndes Yancey teamed up with him in delivering appropriate "Nicaraguan speeches." In the evening, at Bethel Church, in Montgomery, Walker and Yancey spoke again, before five or six hundred persons, and stirred the southern sentiment of the assemblage to an unusual degree. They then seized upon the occasion for the formation of a "Southern League," obtained a number of signatures and adopted a Constitution as the basis of the organization. They called themselves "The Leaguers of the South," whose motto shall be, "A Southern Republic is our only safety."

During his journey, Walker wrote several letters to Fayssoux, at New Orleans, apprising him that, everywhere, he had met with friends and encouragement. The trip was gratifying—at least, as far as feeling was concerned; but in regard to the essential material aid, results had been meager.

Back in Mobile, on July 19th, Walker wrote a letter to the Register in which he furnished "the facts of the case" proving that President Buchanan had proposed that Walker go to Mexico instead of Nicaragua. Secretary of War John B. Floyd promptly denied having said anything to Henningsen about Mexico to justify the assertions of Walker in his letter.

A new avenue for getting means opened for Walker toward the end of July. A friend of Fayssoux, George H. Bowly, had approached the directors of the Stebbins-White Canal Company, in New York, and they had offered to put Walker "on a footing" in Nicaragua "that will insure success." In return, they wanted from him a Transit

concession for "ninety-nine years." The Hermann on the Pacific and the Washington on the Atlantic, running under the Stebbins-White Transit Company charter, would effectively serve to hide their ulterior designs.

Walker thought that to give the Transit for ninety-nine years was "a pretty hard bargain." Moreover, in his correspondence from New York, old Transit hand Charles J. Macdonald did not appear to have much confidence in Bowly's negotiations. Consequently, on August 9 he went to New York himself, to negotiate in person; Major Humphreys accompanied him, "to see the people at Washington."

They arrived in New York on August 16. On September 9, Walker confided to Fayssoux: "Matters are working well. . . . Tell all the Nicaraguans to be of good cheer: the day of our triumph begins to dawn." And on September 13, he rejoiced: "Tell all the Nicaraguans to be ready for moving by the 1st of November. I shall be in Mobile by the 1st of October, and will be able to impart details at that time. What would you think if I were to go to San Juan del Norte with a passport from Señor Yrisarri?"

Having made such "very advantageous" arrangements with the Stebbins-White Company which even included Nicaraguan passports for his and his men's entrance into the country, Walker went back to Mobile and sent circulars to his special friends all over the country, advising them that a vessel would sail for Nicaragua on November 10th.

On October 27, Minister Yrisarri issued in New York a Manifesto Against Filibusters, warning those endeavoring to invade Nicaragua under the disguise of colonists that nobody could enter the country without a passport. President Buchanan followed suit in Washington on October 30 with his own Proclamation Against the Filibusters.

Taken aback by the Presidential Proclamation, Walker rushed from Mobile to Washington, where he arrived by the Southern boat on November 6. It was then reported that Walker had a large amount of business to arrange with Joe White: They were closeted together a good deal in close consultation, and it soon became apparent that a perfectly good understanding had sprung up between them. Walker also consulted with fellow filibusters Wheeler, Cazneau, and Henningsen, and consorted with men of the ultra fire-eating secession stamp, such as Soulé, Yancey, De Bow, and Heiss.

On November 10th, Walker went back to Mobile. The Walker movement in the South, then called "Southern Emigrant Aid Society," or "Southern Emigration Society," had managed to gather only about 200 men at Mobile by November 10, the time fixed for their departure for Nicaragua. Their sailing was postponed until the 23d, for more emigrants were expected from Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, and neighboring States. They were to travel to San Juan del Norte on theAlice Tainter, a ship of 667 tons

burthen.

The secretary and treasurer of the Emigrant Society, Major Julius Hesse, of the office J. Hesse & Co.—in whose name the steamer Fashion had been cleared from Mobile in November, 1857—filed the routine request for the Alice Tainter's clearance at the Mobile Custom House. The collector of the port, Thaddeus Sanford, who had been "deceived" by the Fashion's false papers a year earlier, delayed his decision pending instructions from Washington. Upon deliberation at Cabinet level, Secretary of the Treasury Howell Cobb ordered Sanford to deny the clearance.

When the news spread in Mobile, on November 19, that the government had denied a clearance to the Alice Tainter, the filibusters assembled at the office of J. Hesse & Co. and demanded immediate transportation to San Juan del Norte or their passage money back. They dispersed when they were told that the money would be refunded.

Walker announced that if his presence alone marred a peaceful expedition, then he would not go with it. He left Mobile for parts unknown on the 20th, the same day Supreme Court Judge John A. Campbell arrived in town to have the leading "Nicaraguans" examined by the Grand Jury.

Everybody knew that Walker would be within calling distance when and if the emigrants arrived at San Juan del Norte; and on Tuesday, November 23d, the prospects of that happening suddenly brightened when filibuster Colonel Edmund H. McDonald brought to Mobile news from Washington that wonderfully facilitated the movements of the emigrants. It was then reported "that the first lot of emigrants will get off to-morrow, that the vessel will be regularly cleared by the Custom House here, and that each passenger will hold a passport signed by Yrisarri."

But Yrisarri had already provided the State Department the names of all the parties to whom he had furnished passports for Nicaragua. They were all to have sailed from New York on the steamer Washington. The Walker passport scheme fizzled: The authorities immediately declared spurious the passports in the hands of the Mobile travellers, and the Custom House didn't clear the Alice Tainter. Thereupon, on November 28th, Julius Hesse & Co. began refunding their money to the holders of tickets on the vessel, and about two hundred embryonic filibusters retraced their steps back home.

Walker reappeared in Mobile on November 30th, as mysteriously as he had disappeared ten days earlier. Summoned before the Grand Jury, he testified for six hours, in two days, answering questions as to his course of life in California, Sonora, and Nicaragua. Having also examined other witnesses, the Grand Jury found no bill and dismissed the case on December 3d.

Next evening—Saturday, December 4th—roughly one hundred emigrants remaining

in town boarded the schooner Susan at the wharf in Mobile. The Susan, 146 tons burthen, commanded by Capt. Harry Maury, belonged to Henry G. Humphries' "Mobile & Nicaragua Steamship Company." According to rumor, the vessel was on a coasting voyage to Key West, where its passengers would transfer to the steamship Washington, and proceed to San Juan del Norte.

Shortly after midnight, a towboat tugged the schooner into the bay and left it at Dog River Bar, ten miles below Mobile, though still inside the bay. In the morning the Susan lay almost becalmed, with only an occasional puff of wind. Captain Maury welcomed the lull as he set to work improvising sailors out of landsmen, for all but two of his crew had deserted the vessel when they saw the filibusters come aboard. The story was told that to turn his passengers into sailors, Maury resorted to a novel and ingenious expedient: he tied a playing card to each of the ropes of the vessel. The orders then ran somewhat in this fashion: 'Haul on the ace of hearts!' 'Let go the king of diamonds!' 'Belay on the deuce of spades!' etc. By this means the extemporized sailors soon got the hang of the ropes, and affairs went on pretty smoothly.

Though not more than twenty-eight years old, Captain Maury was a veteran skipper, having commanded vessels since the age of nineteen. On counting heads, 112 men travelled on board the Susan: Captain Maury, two sailors, a New York Herald correspondent, Charles Allen, self-appointed to act as historiographer, and 108 filibusters.

The Susan lay at anchor in the bay until midnight Sunday, when a good breeze came up and started it on its course. On Monday, at noon, within four miles of the fleet station and the open sea, the revenue cutter Robert Mc Lelland, under Captain J.J. Morrison, suddenly blocked its way, the captain demanding to see the schooner's papers. Maury replied that he had not cleared for any port yet, pointing out that he was bound for the fleet station with his signal flying for a water boat, to get ready for sea.

Captain Morrison then boarded the Susan, claimed it as a prize to the United States, and ordered it to return to Mobile. Maury refused to give up his vessel, alleging that any attempt to capture him where he then was would be contrary to maritime law, and he would certainly resist it. A heated argument followed, which almost came to blows when Captain Morrison told Colonel Anderson that he knew him well and also his band of pirates.

Some of the filibusters, incensed at this, made suggestions in the hearing of Captain Morrison to the effect that he should not be allowed to return to his cutter. The Captain immediately ordered his lieutenant in the boat alongside, to go on board of the cutter and fire a twelve-pounder into the Susan, regardless of his life. Maury calmed things

down, telling Morrison to keep cool, that no attempt would be made to prevent him from returning to his ship, and that the first shot must come from the cutter before any action would be taken by himself and his passengers.

But the deadlock continued, with Captain Morrison steadfast in his decision to take the Susan back to Mobile as a government prize, and Maury as firm in his determination not to be taken as a prize. Captain Morrison finally returned to the cutter, leaving Lieutenant George F. White, U.S.N. on board the filibuster ship, to watch over it and keep it from escaping. Maury accepted the Lieutenant as his guest, he said, until he got the Susan ready for sea and received his custom house papers from Mobile.

The Susan filled its water casks on Monday afternoon, and thereafter tacked across and down the bay, constantly chased by the fast cutter with a crew of nineteen men that could run circles around the schooner. Frequently coming within talking distance, Maury enjoyed good humored chats with the revenue commander. At one time he proposed to Morrison that the Susan would protect the cutter while among the pirates in Mobile bay, if the cutter in return would accompany the schooner to Greytown and protect it from the British fleet.

Having anchored for the night, on Monday, Morrison invited Maury on board the cutter, and both commanders spent two hours in friendly conversation. Morrison agreed that he would offer the Susan no violence unless Maury attempted to leave Mobile bay, in which case he would open his guns upon the schooner and sink it.

On Tuesday, December 7, the Susan continued tacking up and down the bay all day long, keeping the cutter wide awake and continually moving, until its officers and crew were well nigh worn out with fatigue. At nine p.m., Maury again visited Morrison on board of the cutter. After his return to the Susan, he hailed the cutter and told them he would now come to an anchor, to which they responded "all right." Maury then had an old bridge anchor attached to a rope thrown over the side, while four or five men rattled the chains, thus giving the cutter to suppose he was fast anchored for the night. The cutter immediately came to anchor.

In about an hour, in the midst of a heavy fog, Maury noiselessly slipped away. By three o'clock Wednesday morning, December 8th, the filibuster ship was tossed by the blue waters of the Mexican Gulf. They saw no more of the cutter. Lieut. White was still on board, being entertained during the evening in the after cabin by Colonels Anderson and Natzmer.

At 3 p.m. on Thursday, 250 miles out of Mobile, Lieut. White was transferred to the ship Oregon, bound to New Orleans. Upon arrival, he reported that the filibusters had told him they were on their way to Greytown. On Friday they met the schooner Fanny,

also bound to New Orleans, and requested it to report them as "the schooner Susan, from Mobile for Greytown, with emigrants—all well."

That was deliberate disinformation, designed to facilitate their landing at Puerto Cortés, Honduras, where Walker had sent them. Walker, at Mobile, was then laboring to get off another vessel and join them. On December 11, he sent Col. Theodore O'Hara, a Kentuckian, to Columbus and Aberdeen, Mississippi on a recruiting mission, and was anxiously trying to charter a ship for 250 or 300 passengers. But there were few vessels at Mobile harbor, and scarcely any adequate for his purposes. On the 17th, he had three schooners under consideration, but rejected all three as too small.

He then signed a contingent arrangement for a ship due to arrive in a few days. He expected Col. O'Hara back from Columbus on December 29th, and hoped to depart from Mobile on the 5th of January. And, once more, he used disinformation: he told Fayssoux "to keep active the idea of a movement from New Orleans. In this you can co-operate. It will aid us here to keep attention fixed in New Orleans."

But by then it had all come to naught on a coral reef in the Caribbean Sea, off Belize, British Honduras. On December 15th, as the Susan cruised down, hugging the Yucatan shore, and looking out for any war vessels that might be in search of such outlaws as slavers, pirates, and filibusters, Charles Allen, the Herald correspondent on board, jotted down in his diary:

"We are approaching Honduras, and as we hope to land in two days more, all is activity on board. It is rumored that minnie rifles, cartridges, cartridge boxes, cap boxes, &c., have been brought on deck, and are undergoing an examination preparatory to being used on shore. Lead is being run into balls, and taking all things into consideration, we 'smell the battle' not 'afar off.' I understand the programme is to land at Puerto Cortez, the port of Omoa, Honduras, and from that place, after obtaining mules, horses, arms and provisions, take up the line of march via the mule road through Comayagua to Leon, Nicaragua. The distance is said to be nearly three hundred miles, and the route not a pleasant one to travel. At Leon it is arranged to meet men and arms, and the first point to attack will probably be Fort San Carlos or Fort Castillo."

Such a plan was utterly foolish, and when it became public, the Herald accurately pointed out that the filibusters would have no support in Honduras or in Nicaragua, even if they had succeeded in landing, and that "this Walker's last expedition eclipses in its Quixotic character that to Sonora and the others."

But a providential shipwreck saved Walker and his men from a worse disaster. On December 15th, Captain Maury had been forced close to the coast by adverse winds, the Susan not proving at all weatherly in the rough sea then running. At 3 a.m. on the 16th,

Maury suddenly discovered breakers on the lee bow, and immediately ordered the helm to be put "down." The improvised and frightened sailor at the helm put the wheel hard "up," which brought the schooner before the wind, and before there was time to remedy the error, the Susan went stem on to a sunken coral reef.

In a few moments the Susan bilged and broke in two. The foremast, the mainmast, and the mizzenmast were cut away. It was a total loss, at the northeast point of Glover's Reef. Assisted by a family of turtle fishers in a nearby Key, all the men, during the next five days, were transported safely to the Middle Key on the reef in the fishermen's schooner Wasp. Anderson and Maury then went on the Wasp to Belize, sixty miles away, aiming to charter a vessel to convey the entire party to Puerto Cortés.

On the 24th, they made arrangements at Belize with the owner of the brig Kate, but when the captain of the vessel, recently arrived from New Orleans, saw them, he adamantly refused to take them, telling everyone that they were Walker's filibusters, making it impossible for them to procure any vessel at all. Under those circumstances, on December 26th, Maury and Anderson happily accepted an offer from British Governor Frederick Seymour for free passage to the United States with all their men aboard the British steam sloop Basilisk, then in port.

On the first day of the new year, the 112 shipwrecked filibusters arrived in Mobile on board the Basilisk. On landing, a procession was formed, and the Nicaragua flag hoisted. Capt. Maury was called out and made a speech to the crowd. In New York, upon receipt of the news of the emigrants' inglorious return, Horace Greeley merrily proclaimed in the Tribune what was by then a universal wish: "A happy New-Year to Nicaragua! May this event be an omen for her."

But that wish was not yet to be fulfilled, for no sooner had the Susan expedition failed than Walker was already laboring steadily and silently to begin yet another one.

31. Fourth Failure

In his correspondence with Fayssoux, Walker recorded his reaction to the wreck of the Susan. On January 13, 1859, he wrote from Mobile that although the failure of the expedition had somewhat deranged his plans, these had already begun again to resume form and substance. Two days later, he confided that his prospects were not as gloomy as most imagined. With a little luck he hoped to be in Nicaragua before the next 11th of April.

The form and substance of his plans called for funds and recruits which he was already seeking with the help of his usual friends. By January 29th, he was making inquiries about vessels and considering New Orleans as the starting point of the expedition. Simultaneously, he prepared himself for his arrival in Nicaragua.

The Constituent Assembly of Nicaragua had ratified a new constitution on August 19, 1858, and in October the American press had published its points worthy of notice. Chief among them the sixth article, by which "the religion of the republic is declared to be the Roman Catholic Apostolic," and the ninth, in which "the citizens are declared ineligible to public office if they do not profess the religion of the republic."

Consequently, on January 31, 1859, William Walker became a Catholic: In a solemn ceremony at the Mobile Cathedral, he abjured protestantism and was solemnly admitted to the Roman Catholic Church. Stashing away his treasured baptismal certificate, Walker travelled to New Orleans next morning. He carried Nicaragua bonds in hand, but, try as he might, he could not raise enough funds in the South for another expedition and soon headed for California, groping for aid.

On March 5 he sailed from New Orleans on the steamship Philadelphia, bound for New York via Havana; at Havana, on the 9th, he transferred to the steamer Granada for Aspinwall. At Panama, on the 16th, he continued as a second cabin passenger on board the Golden Age for San Francisco. He travelled incognito, using the alias James Wilson; but he went accompanied by Col. Bruno Von Natzmer. The New Orleans Delta reported his departure for California, and newsmen spotted him on each steamer and at every place he landed.

At Havana he told a journalist friend, for publication, that he was on his way to Aspinwall to take the English steamer for Southampton. In Panama the press reported that Walker was on his way to San Francisco and would soon return to Central America with an army of 1,000 filibusters. But the Gray-Eyed Man of Destiny, under the assumed

name of Mr. Wilson, kept very quiet in Panama, and did not show himself at all to the public. Those who saw him said that he looked very shabby and dejected.

Upon arrival at San Francisco, on March 31st, no sooner had Bruno Natzmer and "James Wilson" registered at the Metropolitan Hotel, the news spread that Walker had arrived in town. He kept himself very secluded, and was never seen in the streets; Natzmer did just the opposite, ostentatiously talking to reporters. He said Walker had no designs on Sonora, but many didn't believe him.

There were then two widely-publicized filibuster schemes aimed at Sonora: General Henningsen's "Arizona, Mexican and Central American Colonization Company," based in New York, and Colonel Lockridge's "Western Land Emigration Society," from New Orleans. Some people thought that Walker was part of one of them, or perhaps of both. But Walker only thought of Nicaragua, as he told Fayssoux: "People here think I have the idea of going to Sonora. Little do they know of me or of the other Nicaraguans. Time will, I trust, do us justice."

Bennett, of the New York Herald, knew Walker sufficiently well to surmise correctly that the little gray-eyed man of destiny had no intention of going to Sonora or any other part of Mexico, because "He himself is wedded to Nicaragua."

In San Francisco, assisted by friends like Randolph, Crittenden, Kissane, and Macdonald, Walker went to work to procure the means for his return to the land he had wedded. At first he saw a prospect of making some very good arrangements; but none materialized, and on May 4th, he wrote to Fayssoux he was leaving for New York the next day; that perhaps he could do something there, because "nothing can be done here without money, and money cannot be had in California for our purposes."

Walker had planned to travel by the overland mail route to St. Louis, still using the name James Wilson, because he wished to get to New York without attracting attention. He changed his mind at the last minute, and on May 5th he sailed from San Francisco on the steamship Orizaba,crowded with passengers for Acapulco and Panama. Col. Frank Anderson and Major Thomas Dolan accompanied him. Col. Natzmer had left San Francisco two weeks earlier, on a mission to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, and was at Minatitlán on May 5th.

Several other Walker filibusters were in the region, working for the Tehuantepec Transit Company, and Walker had urged Fayssoux to encourage as many as possible to go down there; for it was a part of his future plans to make use of Tehuantepec. Natzmer was to proceed from Minatitlán through Tabasco to Yucatan, his business being important and very nearly connected with Nicaragua.

It remains obscure who invented the story, but when the Orizaba arrived at Acapulco, all nineteen passengers who crossed through Tehuantepec reported that Walker had landed at Acapulco with a force of three hundred men, and was about to join his fortunes with the liberal party of Mexico. Upon hearing the story at Minatitlán, Natzmer remarked that it was nothing more than he expected, adding these significant words: "My business is now settled—I know exactly what to do."

Natzmer travelled with a passport from the Prussian Consul and was fluent in Spanish, both quite helpful for the mysterious trip he then started, allegedly through Yucatán (Mexico) and Verapaz (Guatemala). He went on horseback without guides. His only companion was Charles Allen, the filibuster who had acted as historiographer on board the Susan.

Walker, Anderson, and Dolan continued on the Orizaba to Panama, crossed the Isthmus unnoticed, and went on to New York on the Northern Light. Upon arrival on Saturday, May 28, nobody detected their presence among the 728 passengers from San Francisco. A telegraphic announcement from New Orleans had previously told New Yorkers that Walker had landed with three hundred men at Acapulco, and the press simply headlined: "No Further Tidings of Gen. Walker."

"James Wilson" had succeeded in getting into New York without attracting attention. But Walker's seclusion was short-lived. On the day of his arrival, Col. Henry T. Titus also happened to come into town, staying at the St. Nicholas Hotel. Anderson and Titus held a grudge against each other, arising from their contrasting behavior at Castillo. On learning of his antagonist's whereabouts, Anderson went to the St. Nicholas barroom to beat him up. In the drunken brawl that followed, Anderson wound up in jail and Walker's presence in the city became known to the press. The Herald remarked that the little chieftain, prince of filibusters and standing terror of all the population of Central America, had indeed landed, but the 300 men at Acapulco had come down to three in New York.

Beset by want, and frustrated by a lack of resources in the South and in California, Walker was still sanguine of success and transmitted airy hopes to Fayssoux in his first letter from New York, on June 4th, 1859: "The present moment is propitious. You may safely speak encouragingly to all our friends in New Orleans and elsewhere. Our day of triumph approaches."

The propitious moment stemmed from the ongoing Transit war of the Commodores, which Walker tried to capitalize upon with the help of Charles J. Macdonald, who had arrived from California ahead of him. In December, 1858, Walker had sided with Macdonald in a suit for wages against Garrison & Morgan, testifying in court in his

behalf. Thereupon, Macdonald collaborated with Walker in his dealings with Joseph L. White and other Transit magnates, as he had done in the past.

A new phase in the war of the Transit Commodores had started on April 7, 1859 when the Post Office Department issued a letter inviting proposals for transporting the mails of the United States between New York (and New Orleans) and San Francisco, beginning on October 1st, when the current contract with the Panama line would expire. Upon the receipt of bids from Vanderbilt and others, to do it via Panama, on May 10 the Postmaster General awarded the contract for carrying the mails to Mr. Daniel H. Johnson, of New York, who represented the Nicaragua Isthmus route interest.

Johnson in fact represented Joseph L. White, who saw the mail service as a means for securing the lucrative freight and passenger traffic through Nicaragua. The Transit question had continued unresolved, and it was widely believed that the contract to carry the mail, via Nicaragua, would guarantee the contractors the right to carry passengers and freight across the Isthmus with the protection of the government at Washington. But White was so odious to the people of Nicaragua that he wisely concealed his presence behind Johnson, a figurehead.

On April 26, Nicaraguan envoy Máximo Jerez officially notified White's Canal Company that on the 23d of March the Senate and Chamber of Deputies at Managua had declared void and null an 1857 contract on the ground that the Company had failed to fulfil its obligations. White immediately resigned from the Canal Company, which cleared the way for further negotiations. On June 6, Jerez signed a Transit contract with the new Canal Company management, and personally took it to Managua to lobby for its approval by the Congress, which had previously rejected another contract he had signed with a Wallace-Vandyke Company in October, 1858.

Johnson (that is to say, White) and the Vandyke Company joined forces in May, forming a "United States and Central American Transit Company" to transport the mails, passengers, and freight through Nicaragua, alleging that the Vandyke contract was valid by the simple signature of Jerez, and that its rejection by the Nicaraguan Congress had been illegal.

That was the situation when Walker approached White in New York, seeking the means to return to Nicaragua. The ongoing negotiations were recorded by Walker in his letters to Fayssoux. The first sign of progress came on July 8: "In the course of a few days I expect to complete my arrangements. They are more satisfactory than any I have ever been able to make." And having reached an understanding with White on July 12, on the 13th Walker communicated the good news to Fayssoux: "I have at last made arrangements for our return to Nicaragua. They are of such a character that it will be

difficult, if not impossible, for the U.S. authorities or any one else to defeat them. Never before have I been able to do as much before leaving as I have now done in New York. In a few days I shall be in New Orleans and shall be able to give you the details verbally."

Not only would it be impossible for the U.S. authorities to defeat Walker's plans, but the U.S. Navy was actually collaborating in his filibustering scheme. Walker confided to Fayssoux the startling facts on July 16th: "I expect to leave on Monday as I have already written. I have been detained here several days in order to secure the property brought away by Paulding from Punta Arenas and now at the Brooklyn and Gosport Navy Yards. Dr. Kellum, who is Surgeon on the U.S. Surveying Steamer 'R.J. Walker', goes to Norfolk this afternoon in order to receive the property there."

With plenty of weapons in hand and plenty of funds in the offing, promised by White, Walker instantly urged Fayssoux at New Orleans and Maury at Mobile to have all recruiting officers enlist as many men as possible in the South, and to have them ready at New Orleans to sail for Nicaragua by the 20th of August.

Walker was exuberant, totally certain of success, freely conveying his mood in his letters to Fayssoux: "You may depend on it that my arrangements are of such a nature as to make it almost impossible for us to fail in getting off at the appointed time. They are of such a character, too, as admit of being kept secret until the moment of departure. You may be sure I would not write thus confidently unless I felt certain about the matter."

But in the same letter, there was an ominous detail which Walker failed to detect: "I have seen very little of Gen. Henningsen since I have been here, although at first he seemed desirous of being friendly. He labors under the delusion that he is absolutely necessary to us, and expects that the control of matters should be given up pretty much to him."

Walker's rift with Henningsen rapidly ruined all his plans. By August 5th, the rosy prospects had vanished when he again wrote to Fayssoux: "The parties with whom I made arrangements have been promising for the last twenty days to give me the money agreed on since the 12th of July; but they have delayed so long that I begin to fear they will not in any respect keep their engagements. In this state of uncertainty it will be well to advise our friends out of New Orleans not to repair thither until further advised."

A New York Tribune reporter learned from a friend of Joseph White what had transpired behind the scenes, and on August 13th the story was published in the paper: "What are the speculators about in attempting to act under the Wallace-Vandyke grant? They have had a number of interviews with the 'blue-gray-eyed man,' and were willing to carry him back to that country and let him reënact all the horrors of his former campaign. But Mr. J. L. White said that 'Walker wanted a master.' 'You, Sir, are well

enough, provided you have a master; you must obey orders if we put you there again.' This did not suit the blue-gray-eyed man of destiny. So they shook him off, and now Henningsen, who is their present mediator with 'Live-Oak George,' has, at their solicitation, been trying his hand. Henningsen is the man they have now chosen to revolutionize Central America."

Walker didn't give up and humiliated himself begging White to help him return to Nicaragua. In his October 1, 1859 manifesto "To the American People," he freely confessed that he had "not hesitated to beg almost as alms the pittance which might restore us to our rights and give to you and your children the wealth of the Indies." What concessions he made he did not say; he merely told Fayssoux, on August 13th, "to go on as before," since he had made arrangements "of the most satisfactory character."

But his relations with White were never satisfactory, and on August 20th he was still in New York: "I am still kept here by the unreasonable delays of parties who evince every disposition to keep the engagements they have entered into and who yet fail to do what their interests absolutely require." Finally, on the 25th, he announced to Fayssoux that after much delay and some unnecessary waiting "I have succeeded in closing our affairs here satisfactorily. I leave here to-day for New Orleans by the way of Cincinnati and Louisville."

Walker left New York as planned, was in Louisville on the 30th, travelled by steamboat down the Mississippi river, and arrived in New Orleans on September 6th. On September 19, the weapons left New York in the United States Mail Steamship Company steamer Philadelphia, bound for New Orleans via Havana and Key West. Upon arrival at New Orleans, on the 30th, they remained on board after the passengers landed and the regular cargo was discharged. The vessel was scheduled to sail for Aspinwall on October 6.

It was later reported that the Philadelphia actually had on board about 1,000 stand of arms, together with 90,000 rounds of ball cartridges and 20,000 percussion caps. Part of the weapons had been purchased in New York, but some came from the Brooklyn Navy Yard, where a filibuster officer had claimed them for their owner, William Walker, and obtained them on orders from Washington. The steamer also carried from eight to ten boats designed to carry the filibusters up the Colorado branch of the San Juan River.

About 300 strong, athletic young men, mostly of the better class of society, from Georgia, South Carolina, and Alabama, had congregated at Mobile, and, on October 2d, Captain Harry Maury took them on the mail boat to New Orleans, planning to continue on the Philadelphia to Aspinwall. The Mobile Tribune announced that they were emigrants, destined for the new land of gold and bright prospects, Chiriqui. On

publishing the item, the New Orleans Picayune explained to its readers, that "Chiriqui," as commonly interpreted, meant "Nicaragua."

In New York, The United States and Central American Transit Company announced the opening of its Line via Nicaragua with the sailing of its steamship St. Louis from New York, for San Juan del Norte, Oct. 5, connecting via Isthmus of Nicaragua with the steamship Pacific.

In New Orleans, Walker wrote his Manifesto "To the American People," as he prepared to depart on the Philadelphia for his "adopted country."

In Washington, President Buchanan sent instructions to the U.S. Marshal at New Orleans to seize the steamship Philadelphia, should there be grounds for belief that it was engaged in filibustering, and also to arrest any and all filibusters on the point of embarkation, and to order out an artillery company from Baton Rouge, in case of necessity.

The Philadelphia asked for a clearance in ballast for Aspinwall. The emigrants to "Chiriqui," down to 150 in number, had landed at the Southwest Pass telegraph station, waiting there for the steamer, pretending to be on a fishing expedition. Acting on instructions from Washington, the Collector of the Port refused the clearance to the Philadelphia; and on October 7 the Marshal with a company of U.S. soldiers peaceably arrested the entire "fishing party" encamped at Southwest Pass.

In New York, the Collector of the Port also refused a clearance to the St. Louis on orders from Secretary of the Treasury Howell Cobb, who had learned that Henningsen and 200 men were to go on it to San Juan.

Thereupon, mail contractor Daniel H. Johnson told the Post Office Department that owing to the filibuster news and the failure of some of his arrangements, he (Johnson) could not fulfil his contract with the government. The Postmaster General then forfeited Johnson's contract and awarded the California mail service to Vanderbilt's Atlantic and Pacific Steamship Company, via Panama.

Walker, in New Orleans, promptly wrote (though apparently didn't publish) a strong protest which he labeled "Startling Facts," recounting in detail the Marshal's and the Collector's actions (but not his own) which allegedly showed "in all their nakedness the present depravity and corruption of the Federal Government."

32. Farewell

The trial of Walker's filibusters for violation of the neutrality law in connection with the aborted Philadelphia expedition took place at Judge McCaleb's Federal Court in New Orleans. On October 18th, 1859, four subordinates were charged—Col. Anderson and Captains Maury, Fayssoux and Scott—and the four were acquitted on the 24th. The Philadelphia, libeled by the United States District Attorney, was later released by Judge McCaleb, who "luminously" reviewed the facts and law of the case, deciding that "no decree of forfeiture can be rendered against this vessel, and that the libel must be dismissed." It goes without saying that none of the leaders—Walker, Henningsen, and White—had to face trial.

Enjoying liberty, but having reached the end of the line without minimal means at hand for another expedition, Walker spent his time writing. Thus, while the entire South was anticipating conflict on the eve of the Civil War, William Walker calmly wrote his memoirs in New Orleans. He titled them The War in Nicaragua, covering events from his arrival in the country on the Vesta in June, 1855, to his departure on the St. Mary's in May, 1857.

After four months of assiduous labor, on February 17, 1860 Walker took his manuscript to book dealer and publisher S.H. Goetzel & Co., at Mobile, to arrange its publication. Mr. Goetzel was enthusiastic, saying he could sell 20,000 copies in Alabama alone; the book would be printed in New York; he would go there with Walker to superintend the work; and he could get it in the market by the first of April.

Walker left Mobile for New York the next day, by way of Montgomery and Charleston. On February 27th, he handed the finished manuscript to Goetzel, in New York, and thereafter they both superintended the printing. On March 5th, Walker wrote to Fayssoux: "My business goes on well here. The book is to be ready by the 20th of the month; so you may have it by the first of April. The publisher insists on putting an engraved likeness of the Author in the book; and although it offends my sense of propriety I have to submit to it as a part of the `humbug' of the trade."

Walker finished proof-reading on Wednesday, March 14. Ten days later he was in Louisville with the first printed copies of his work, which he must have autographed for his father, sister and brother-in-law. When he arrived at New Orleans on board the riverboat Diana, in the morning of April 10, The War in Nicaragua was already on sale in the city.

No sooner landed, and walking down the street with Captains Fayssoux and Scott, Walker suddenly encountered an irate Colonel Lockridge who denounced the book as far as it related to him, "as being totally false in almost every particular." He informed Walker that he would hold him "responsible therefor at an early day." Walker simply answered, "When you please, sir."

A duel was averted at the last moment by the good sense of Lockridge's second, Col. R. H. Purdom, who convinced him to withdraw the challenge pending Walker's reply to a question: In criticizing Lockridge's actions in the book, did he intend to charge him with acting otherwise than as a gentleman of honor and courage? Walker said he didn't, and added: "When I aim to make charges against the character of any man, let me assure you that it shall be in words not easily misunderstood."

In the three years following 1857, Walker's war in Nicaragua had become ancient history for a South already psychologically under siege, and the book utterly failed to impact on current events. In the North its reception was naturally negative. Greeley's Tribune mentioned its publication, but neglected to include it in its weekly reviews, while Bennett, in the Herald, took advantage of the occasion to show clearly once again what he thought of the "little gray-eyed man":

"Books Received to April 15.

"The War in Nicaragua. Written by Gen. William Walker. S.H. Goetzel, Mobile.

"The man who is his own advocate has a fool for his client, says the proverb, and the axiom paraphrased may be justly applied to the author of this book. General Walker, surrounded by the reserve which he took care to maintain towards those who took service under him, was a personage of undefined and undefinable mental proportions, and he consequently passed current with the public for a certain amount of capacity. His memoir will prove fatal to the reputation, such as it is, that he has acquired, inasmuch as it shows that a man may occupy a large space in the eye of the world without having much in him."

American historians have been kinder, giving Walker high marks for his "passion for truth" and praising his War in Nicaragua for the "scrupulous accuracy" of the facts recorded. The four leading Walker researchers concur. The only fault detected is in his treatment of the slavery question, which they consider insincere propaganda.

In my opinion, Chapter VIII, "The Walker Administration," is perhaps the most accurate in Walker's book: his views on slavery, expounded in that chapter, are precisely the same views he had repeatedly expressed before, already recorded in this biography. Chapter VIII is a remarkably truthful account of Walker's attempt to radically change the primary form of the crystal in Nicaragua, in complete harmony with the facts

recorded in these pages.

As Professor William O. Scroggs pointed out in his biography of Walker (Filibusters and Financiers, New York: Russell & Russell, 1969, p. 380), the outstanding feature of Walker's book is his dispassionate treatment of friend and foe. His pen betrayed no emotion: "Few writers have succeeded in narrating a story in which they have played such a predominant part with so little revelation of their own personality. To the reader the author appears as the cold embodiment of an idea or purpose rather than as a being endowed with all the traits characteristic of human nature."

Throughout the book Walker always refers to himself in the third person. It often seems as if a different personality—the Timothy Tucker that surfaced in 1849 in the wake of Ellen's death—wrote the book for his two brethren, President Gabriel Gumbo and military genius Dick Dobs.

In 1857, when a Nashville schoolmate of Walker narrated to a reporter how Billy's character had suddenly changed on the death of Ellen, transforming the sickly, yellow-haired boy of Nashville into the stern Nicaraguan filibuster, the journalist commented that the story sounded romantic, but that it was the only intelligible clue that explained the strange revolution which had taken place in Walker's character. And he added: "Why should it not be blasted love, and the vision of his broken-hearted deaf-mute, dead of love for him? To an imagination such as his must be, a vision like this may well become a permanent and powerful reality, casting its dark hue over his whole career and character."

A few months later, when Walker visited Washington after his arrest by Commodore Paulding, the New York Tribune correspondent observed: "It is as good as a play—or rather it is better than most plays—to attend a levee of Walker's, and see him receive the Texan Generals and California Colonels who seek an introduction—great, burly, strapping, bearded, fierce-looking, loud-voiced fellows, frank, hearty and unceremonious, they stride into the room, and, on encountering the impassive face and frigid fingers and divinity-student air of the redoubted fillibuster, they subside suddenly into the condition of men who, supposing themselves invited to a feast, find themselves at a funeral."

The correspondent added that he suspected that Walker had consciously formed his manner and his character on the model of Conrad, the Corsair of the poem of that name, by Byron:

> *But who that Chief? his name on every shore*
> *Is famed and fear'd—they ask and know no more.*
> *With these he mingles not but to command;*

Few are his words, but keen his eye and hand.
Ne'er seasons he with mirth their jovial mess,
But they forgive his silence for success.

Perhaps both journalists were right, for it seems that Ellen had indeed become a permanent and powerful reality, casting its dark hue over the Gray-Eyed Man of Destiny's career and character, and he in turn, consciously or unconsciously, formed his manner and his character on the model of Byron's imaginary hero.

Byron was Billy's favorite poet. Byron's creation, "The Bride of Abydos," was the stimulus for his Poem on the Crucifixion in 1844. In The Unity of Art, in 1848, he said that Byron will be remembered as long as there is any sympathy for suffering genius, and analyzed Byron's Manfred, calling it one of the finest productions of the Classical school.

When he wrote The War in Nicaragua, late in 1859, William Walker (or his alter ego, Timothy Tucker), reminisced that when the Americans landed at the wharf of Realejo and leaped ashore for the first time in Nicaragua, on June 16, 1855, "The deep gloom of the tropical forests was more impressive from the ocean of sunshine which surrounded it; and the stillness of all nature affected the beholder with an awe which commanded silence and reflection." (p. 37)

On June 28, marching from El Gigante to his first battle at Rivas, drenched by rain that fell in torrents during the night, Walker at dawn enjoyed "the balmy effects of the soft, mild air, which seemed a fluid altogether different from the atmosphere of northern climates." It felt "as if a thin, and vapory exhalation of opium, soothing and exhilarating by turns, was being mixed at intervals with the common elements of the atmosphere." (p. 46)

Reflecting on the vapory exhalation of opium, in the wake of the storm, Byron's Don Juan appears full-blown in Walker's reminiscence:

The evaporation of a joyous day is like . . .
. . . a billow left by storms behind,
Without the animation of the wind;
Or like an opiate, which brings troubled rest. (16.9-10)

Approaching Rivas to do battle under the influence of Don Juan's soothing and exhilarating opiate, on that joyous day Walker's eye beheld:

". . . a vision of enchantment. The lake of Nicaragua lay in full view, and rising from it, as Venus from the sea, was the tall and graceful cone of Omotepe [sic]. The dark forests of the tropics clothed the side of the volcano, which seemed to repose under the influence of the soft sunshine around it. The form of the mountain told its history as if

written in a book; and the appearance of the volcano was so much that of a person enjoying a siesta, the beholder would not have been surprised to see it waken at any moment and throw the lava from its burning sides. The first glimpse of the scene almost made the pulse stand still." (p. 49)

Walker's imaginative vision of enchantment—the island of Ometepe with its two conical volcanoes—was Lady Gulbeyaz, the Sultana, with her "Paphian pair," in Byron's Don Juan:

The lady rising up with such an air
As Venus rose from the wave, on them
Bent like an antelope a Paphian pair[3]
Of eyes, which put out each surrounding gem;
And raising up an arm as moonlight fair,
She sign'd to Baba, who first kiss'd the hem
Of her deep purple robe, and speaking low,
Pointed to Juan, who remain'd below. (5.96)

Lady Gulbeyaz, the Sultan's bride, rising as Venus from the sea: *"Her presence was as lofty as her state; / Her beauty of that overpowering kind, / Of forms and features; it would strike you blind"*(5.97), turns to Juan,

Without more preface, in her blue eyes blending
Passion and power, a glance on him she cast,
And merely saying, 'Christian, canst thou love?'
Conceived that phrase was quite enough to move. (5.116)

And move it did, making Walker's pulse stand still. His bizarre, "waxing poetic" reaction at the sight of two conical volcanos in his narrative of The War, which Don Juan explains, shows sublimation at work: the psychological mechanism when Walker displaced the love formerly directed to Ellen, onto the object of his mission, which from 1855 until his death, was Nicaragua.

The capture of Granada—capital of Nicaragua—psychologically meant for Walker the possession of Ellen; and when forced to abandon the city, he destroyed it rather than allow his rivals to regain it. In The War, he explained it by means of the defense mechanism called projection, attributing to others what, in fact, were his own innermost feelings:

3. PAPHIAN\adj, usu cap (fr. Paphos, ancient city of Cyprus that was the center of worship of the Greek goddess of love Aphrodite). 1: of, relating to or characteristic of Paphos or of the people of Paphos. 2: relating esp. to illicit love [Webster's Third New International Dictionary]. Two conical volcanoes—Concepción and Madera—rise side by side on Ometepe island in Lake Nicaragua.

"The attachment of the old Chamorristas to Granada was strong and peculiar. They had for their chief city a love like that of a woman; and even after years have passed tears come to their eyes when they speak of the loss of their beloved Granada." (p. 340)

Walker's attachment to Nicaragua was indeed strong and peculiar—a love of a woman—which a journalist noticed and recorded in 1859 in these words: "The `little gray-eyed man of destiny' is surely fascinated by the hills of Nicaragua, unless it be the pleasure of playing Emperor, which has so mighty power over him."

In his biography of Walker (The World and William Walker, New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1963, p. 120) Albert Z. Carr also noticed that Walker was "infatuated" with Nicaragua "as if it had been a woman."

Walker never again fell in love after the death of Ellen. He was remarkable for his chastity—the society of the ladies had no charm for him. In the words of his cousin, Mrs. Bryant, except for his love for the deaf and dumb girl of New Orleans, Walker never noticed women.

Playing Emperor on the hills of Nicaragua was Walker's everlasting obsession. From 1855 until his death he no longer belonged to his native South, but to Nicaragua. The message came through clear in his defense speech at the trial in New Orleans in 1858, which the New York Times reported:

"General Walker, probably, has his own skill as a Court-room orator to thank for coming through this trouble unscathed. When called upon for his defence, he delivered a speech, which is by far the most earnest, determined and well-worded he has yet spoken. Its effect was necessarily marked. In it he distinctly avows his unalterable determination to ride his Nicaraguan hobby so long as he lives and Nicaragua don't run away, or somebody else get it. At the same time, he disavows any intention to violate the laws of the United States, and, in effect, disfranchises himself as an American, virtually throwing off his allegiance to this country, and declaring himself henceforth a Nicaraguan."

Walker's transformation was complete on January 31, 1859, when he became a Catholic at Mobile. Of course, everybody knew that he did it because of the law passed in Managua. That obvious political motivation, however, fails to explain the fact that Walker really became and died a Catholic, as will be seen in chapter 34. Consequently, additional causes must be sought. In my view, the transformation of Walker, caused by sublimation, made him break with his Nashville Presbyterian upbringing and compelled him to embrace the Catholic faith of Nicaragua.