

EDITORIAL

THE TRUTH ABOUT NICARAGUA.

By DANIEL DE LEON

WAR against Nicaragua is being fomented by press, pulpit and professorships of capitalism on the ground that President Zelaya is a barbarian who tramples upon the Law of Nations.

The facts from which these conclusions are drawn are these:—

Two Americans, one Groce and another Leroy Cannon, residents of Nicaragua, took up arms against the Government; they were routed, captured and shot. Upon this it is claimed that Zelaya violated the Law of Nations—prisoners of war are not shot.

The conclusion—prisoners of war are not shot—is a begging of the question. Of course prisoners of war are not shot. But were Cannon and Groce prisoners of WAR? If they were, then rioters against a government wage legitimate war. This is a ridiculous proposition. Such “prisoners of war” have repeatedly been executed in this country. The fact is Groce and Cannon were two American adventurers, who joined an armed force against the government of President Zelaya, and sought to earn their living by internal disturbances. Such people fall not within the Law of Nations regarding prisoners of war. Their fate is regulated wholly by the criminal code of the nation in which they live.

In view of the facts which are not denied, and the conclusions, which can not be disputed, why this violence done to reason? Why twist riot into “war,” a common prisoner into a “soldier,” and the legitimate action of Nicaragua into a “violation of the Law of Nations”?

The Celebrated Baron Von Munchhausen tells the story of a fox he was once chasing, and which ran so fast that it outran its own skin. That is the picture American capitalism is now presenting.

In the language of the Republican platform this country has “a vast domain of

3,000,000 square miles literally bursting with latent treasure.” Yet so headlong is the course of American capitalism, that, with all these opportunities, still untouched at home, it outruns its own skin. The Groces and Leroy Cannons are the raw body that leaped into Nicaragua, and the skin, which the body left behind is now hying after it to re-cover the body that out-ran it.

Hence, riot to which swift punishment would be meted here, becomes “legitimate war” in Nicaragua, and captured brigands are converted into “prisoners of war” entitled to be treated as such.

This is the long and short about the threatened Nicaraguan war.

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