



EXPLOSION OF THE STEAMER J. N. SCOTT NEAR SERAPIQUI, SAN JUAN RIVER, NICARAGUA, WHEREBY FIFTY FILIBUSTERS WERE KILLED AND WOUNDED.

EXPLOSION OF THE J. N. SCOTT, NEAR SERAPIQUI, SAN JUAN RIVER, NICARAGUA.

THERE is an old saying that troubles never come single, and while we hear for the first time discouraging accounts from Gen. Walker, we also have to read a terrible steambot accident, which has been the means of sacrificing many lives among filibusters. It would seem that immediately after the repulse of Col. Titus at Castillo, the works at Serapiqui were destroyed and all the buildings burnt; in consequence the troops then at that point embarked on board the river steamers, March 22, and proceeded to Fort Slatter, a place about twenty miles below Castillo, and named after a gentleman of New Orleans who had largely contributed to the filibuster cause. The forces at this point joined those from below on board the two steamers Rescue and J. N. Scott, making about 300 able men, besides about 100 sick and wounded. This included the 150 recruits who had just previously arrived from New Orleans under command of Major Capers, and a number of whom were taken sick soon after reaching San Juan. From Fort Slatter the steamers ran up to Kelly's store, about eight miles below Castillo, where the greater portion were landed and marched around the rapids. About eighty men under Capt. Schlicht were left at the store to hold the position. Above the rapids the men were again taken on board, and the steamers proceeded to within view of Fort Castillo, when it was discovered that the enemy had more strongly fortified the place by the construction of water batteries, and more particularly by throwing up works on Nelson's Hill—an elevation on the same side of the river, a little below Castillo. According to appearance, the Costa Ricans had concentrated all their available forces at Nelson's Hill and Fort Castillo, and the general opinion was that it would require not less than 2,000 men to dislodge them. The steamers halted during the survey within two-thirds cannon-shot of Nelson's Hill, where they could see men passing to and fro on the hill, but no fire was opened upon them.

After a prolonged consultation it was decided that to make an attack would be highly imprudent, promising no successful result, and that nothing remained but to retire at once. The steamers then headed down stream, and stopped at Kelly's store, where they took on board the men left at that place under Capt. Schlicht. On the 31st of March, got up steam and headed for San Juan, with a sort of scow-built craft in tow, carrying the cannon, arms, equipments, &c. When about a mile above Serapiqui, the Scott ran on to a sand-bar and stuck fast; and it was here the explosion occurred. The Scott, it will be recollected, was a stern-wheel boat, and the boiler and machinery were located towards the after part. At the time, a large number of men were gathered about the furnace, roasting crackers, and otherwise cooking. Our informant was in the act of descending the cabin stairs, with the aid of crutches, when the explosion happened. He was thrown on his back, but sustained no serious injury. About twenty men were killed outright, missing included, and eight or ten have died since; not far from thirty men were more or less scalded in addition. The cause of the explosion was the supposed defective condition of the steam apparatus, and the carelessness of the engineer. From the blackened condition of the faces of the

scalded, some thought at first powder had been maliciously placed in contact with the furnace. There was a larger quantity of powder on board, but luckily it was stowed forward, and was not ignited.

Immediately after the explosion the scalded were placed on board of the launch, and the Rescue taking it in tow, started for Punta Arenas. A number of the men were left on the Scott for the time, as that vessel, being partly aground, did not entirely sink. On arriving at Punta Arenas, some eight or ten surgeons, from the vessels composing the British fleet, came on board, and tendered their services to dress the wounds of the disabled. They contributed all the kind attentions in their power, and are entitled to much praise for the same.

Upwards of one million and a quarter dollars have been subscribed for the six new banks to be started in St. Louis.

SIR JOHN BOWRING.

ABOUT sixty-five years ago, on the 17th of October, 1792, Sir John Bowring was born at Exeter, England. His family had for a long time been connected with the woollen trade in the West of England; and he received the elements of his education at a rustic school near Dartmoor. His regular studies were, however, interrupted. At fourteen, he was called from his books to assist in the trade of his father, which mainly consisted in preparing goods for China and the Spanish Peninsula. While thus engaged in duties which are harsh to those who "want something to occupy the mind," young Bowring formed studious habits, and strove to acquire knowledge of every description. His primary ambition being to master languages, he succeeded, before his sixteenth year, in acquiring French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese; and ere long he made himself proficient in the Dutch and German tongues. His subsequent efforts in this line were

attended with marvellous success; and, as time passed on, he learned to speak and write the Slavonic dialects, in Russian, Servian, Polish, Bohemian, Bulgarian, Slovakian, and Illyrian; the Scandinavian, in Icelandic, Swedish, and Danish; Teutonic, Anglo-Saxon, High Dutch, Low Dutch, Frisian, and Allemanish; Ecclesian, Lettish and Finnish; Hungarian, Biscayan, French, Provençal, and Gascon; Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Catalonian, Valencian, and Galician!

Bowring had early turned his attention to the literature and economy of commerce, and his great ability, as well as his extensive acquirements, at length brought him into notice with the English government. In 1828 he was sent to the Low Countries, to examine into the manner of keeping the public accounts. He was engaged with Sir Henry Parnell, in a similar mission in France, in 1830; and his reports in both these spheres were laid before Parliament. In the following year, in conjunction with Mr. Villiers, he examined the tariffs of England and France, with a view to their relaxation. In 1834 Dr. Bowring proceeded to Belgium, and in 1835 to Switzerland, visiting also Italy in 1836, and subsequently Egypt, with a view of promoting the principles of free-trade in their application to commerce.

While in youth Dr. Bowring became a political pupil of Jeremy Bentham; and he afterwards maintained his master's principles for some years in the *Westminster Review*, of which, at one period, he exercised the functions of editor. He had always been a consistent advocate of parliamentary reform; and when the great battle had been fought and the victory won, he appeared as the candidate for the representation of Blackburn. Unsuccessful at that place, he was subsequently elected by the inhabitants of Bolton, and sat in Parliament till 1849, when he was reappointed by Lord J. Russell to be British Consul at Hong Kong. While on his way to China, in 1849, the people of Malta presented Dr. Bowring with a handsome service of plate, as a reward for his advocacy in Parliament of the interests of the Maltese. He returned to England in 1850, and in the following year he was honored with knighthood, and appointed to the Governorship of Hong Kong, an office which he forthwith assumed, and has since held. In 1855 he proceeded on a mission



SIR JOHN BOWRING, BRITISH COMMISSIONER, CHINA.