

The returned volunteers, who arrived in New York a day or two ago from Nicaragua, give deplorable accounts of the hardships they experienced. We annex the narrative of one of them, Mr. Martin Schroeder. It will be seen that he states that at least one-fourth of Col. Lockridge's troops are less than seventeen years of age, and some were not more than twelve. What material for an army! It seems to us cruel and wicked, to tempt such credulous and inexperienced youth into all the horrors of war.

MARTIN SCHROEDER'S STORY.

I left my home in St. Louis, Missouri, on the 12th of November last, for California, and went as far as New Orleans, where I remained until the 23rd of December; while there I got in company with a number of men who were going to Nicaragua, and accordingly enlisted under Major Ellis Martin, who has been in the various engagements which have taken place since the first of January, and suffered as much for the cause as anybody, thus describes the operations of the valiant Titus: Col. Titus sent down a small bongo to Greytown, to Lockridge, with word that he had surrounded Fort Castillo, and had given the enemy twenty-four to surrender.

At this time the Rescue returned with provisions, and Company B, Capt. Harris, to which I was attached, were conveyed to within about seven miles of Castillo, where we found the steamer Scott, with all of Titus's men on board. We were there told that, during the 24 hours, the Costa Ricans had received reinforcements, who made an attack in the rear of Titus's men, when they beat a retreat, the officers taking the lead; we had a number of men taken prisoners, and killed. It was supposed by many of us that Titus sold out to the enemy. On the 13th of March, the Texas arrived at Punta Arenas, with about 145 men, who joined the other forces. Sarapiqui was then vacated and destroyed. All of the forces, together with the artillery, were shipped on board the two steamers, when we once more proceeded up the river to attack Castillo, but found it so strongly fortified that the idea of an attack was abandoned.

Col. Lockridge then mustered the men, and informed them that he intended to abandon the river and attempt to join Walker by the other route. He then gave them their choice to follow him, or, if they preferred, they could return home. He expressed a hope that all who could speak plain English would continue with him. At this time there were about 400 men under his command, and of these about 100 signified their intention to continue with him, and the remainder to return home. We then proceeded down the river in the boats until within about two miles of Sarapiqui, where the Scott was to land a scouting party, who were to ascertain if the enemy had taken possession of Sarapiqui during our absence. While she was lying there for the Rescue, which was coming up, and when we were about 200 hundred yards off, her boiler exploded. I think there were 18 persons injured, that died within 24 hours, and some 20 more wounded, a portion of whom cannot recover. The wounded and sick were taken on board the Rescue and landed at Punta Arenas. At this time I was on the sick list; two days after the Tennessee came in and took away about 40 of us that were sick. We left there on the 5th and arrived here on the 16th. After we had got on board and were about to leave, the Rescue came alongside with about 200 of Lockridge's men, but the officers of the Tennessee refused to take any of them on board. Lockridge is a man of energy and great endurance, but I do not think he has much military skill. He was kind to the men when they were able-bodied, but as soon as they became unfit for duty his treatment was very harsh. The greater part of the officers treated the men worse than they would beasts. I think that at least one-fourth of Lockridge's army were less than 17 years of age, and some were not more than 12 years old.