

Post Captain when only 21, and was soon afterwards employed on very arduous, important and responsible services. For example, when, on the arrival of Admiral Count d'Estaing in the West Indies with a large fleet and army, there was reason to apprehend the annihilation of British interests in that quarter, and especially the capture of Jamaica, the English Admiral and General, who were then in command on that station, selected Captain Nelson to conduct the defence of Port Royal—this post being justly considered the most important on the whole island, as being the key to the whole British naval force, the City of Kingston and Spanish Town. Soon after the successful termination of that service, another, of a much more difficult nature, and especially hazardous on account of the extreme insalubrity of the climate, was imposed on him by General Dalling, then Governor of the British West Indian Colonies, who acted with the approval of Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department. Its object was to acquire possession of Fort San Juan, on the Rio San Juan, which runs from Lake Nicaragua into the Atlantic, and thus after occupying the cities of Granada and Leon, to cut the communications of the Spaniards between their Northern and Southern transatlantic dominions. Nelson was charged with the command of the considerable naval force employed in this expedition; and, as but comparatively few troops were attached to it, the brunt of the danger and fatigue fell upon the British seamen and marines, whom their young leader conducted towards the intended points of attack with so much skill, and with such astonishing displays of personal courage and audacity, that thus encouraged, they easily stormed all the Spanish outposts, and soon forced the panic-struck defenders of the Castle and Town of San Juan to surrender. But, owing to defects in the original plans of the expedition, the arrival at

San Juan occurred several months later than it should have done, and at the most unhealthy season of the year, so that fever set in amongst the seamen and troops, by which, out of a total of 1,800 people, not more than 380 survived. The complement of Nelson's own ship—the *Hinchinbrook*—was 200 men, of whom 145 found graves there, and, in the end, not more than 10 survived to return home. Dr. Moseley, the chief medical officer at Jamaica, placed on record the following remarks: 'It was on our San Juan expedition that Nelson commenced his career of glory. He did more than his duty: where anything was to be done, he saw no difficulties; not contented with having carried the armament safe to the harbour of San Juan, he accompanied and assisted the troops in all their difficulties. He was first on shore at the attack of (the Spanish outpost) St. Bartholomew, followed by a few brave seamen and soldiers, in the face of a severe fire. The audacity of the act intimidated the Spaniards, who, from the nature of the ground, might have destroyed the assailants; but they abandoned the battery and ran away. By his example and perseverance, the Indians and seamen were animated through their toil in forcing the boats, against the current, up the river; otherwise not a man would have reached San Juan. When they arrived there, as prompt in thought as bold in action, Nelson advised the carrying it instantly by assault; for he knew that the bad season was at hand and that there was no time to be lost. . . . Like Hannibal, before he attained to supreme command in the palmy days of Carthaginian conquest—like Wolfe (whom Nelson resembled in respect of many traits of character), when a brigadier at the siege of Louisbourg, this extraordinary twenty-one-year-old British Captain endeared himself to every body about him that witnessed his courage, heroism and skill, as exhibited in the course of the San Juan ex-

ended to, is 'The Life of Nelson,' (from his extensive collections of memoirs, and communications of Clarence, Admiral Lady Nelson, Lieutenant Hood, Lord Keith, Lord Davidson, and by the Librarian and Chaplain of John McArthur, Esq., Lord Hood.