

and he in turn has aided them at the expense of their rivals. Thus, perchance, one New York Steamship Company has destroyed a filibustering political power which another had built up, commercial rivalry doing that which the power of the United States failed to do:—

"DEAR SIR,—We have about 700 fine fellows from the mountains of Costa Rica now in Fort San Carlos. They have two 21 pounders, two brass 12 pounders, three brass 4 pounders, plenty of ammunition and provisions, and firm resolution to hold the river or perish to a man. We have all the steamers except the San Carlos, which I expect will be over with the passengers in a few days. We have a strong garrison at Sarapiquí, with cannon, &c. Also at Castillo, where Costa Rica has inaugurated a Governor. Last night General Mora and three hundred more men were placed in Fort San Carlos, that place having been taken by us the night before without firing a gun. We have accomplished a complete and rapid succession of surprises until we are in possession of the whole river from Point Arenas to Fort San Carlos. There was not a gun fired except at Sarapiquí, and I believe but three or four shots at that place, for we went in with the bayonets lashed to the rifles. In capturing the La Virgen we found on board all the Mimi howitzers and cartridges, pack saddles, &c., lately shipped by the George Law; the letters and all by the bark Gov. Hubbard, have fallen into our hands. You may make up your minds, Walker is now 'gone in.'—More men and munitions of war will proceed up to Fort San Carlos in the morning. The plan of operations is such as to ensure that Walker will desert the country or fall a victim to starvation in less than three weeks. General Montenegro is in Chontales, about 40 miles above San Carlos, with a thousand well-armed men. I assure you, should Walker hear of us before the passengers come over, and come himself with 3,000, it would be the destruction of the entire party, for our position is about impregnable. Walker has about 700 well men, and 400 sick; but I feel well assured he can get no information of our doings, and that the San Carlos will come as usual with her passengers."

Previous advices had announced that Gen. Henningsen had destroyed Grenada, and effected a junction at Rivas with Walker, — that the filibusterers were receiving, by each vessel, further reinforcements and supplies of food and munitions of war. So they professedly were in fine feather, and full of hope for the future. Yet, it had reached the ears of passers-by, that out of the force under the command of Walker and Henningsen, more than one-half were sick or otherwise disabled from doing duty. On Wednesday morning the *Illinois* arrived from Aspinwall, bringing news down to the 10th instant.

The *Panama Star and Herald* of Jan. 16, contains the following account of the plan of the Costa Rican expedition referred to in the above letter:—

It appears that the Costa Rican Government, in addition to the army it had sent to co-operate with the allied forces against Walker in Nicaragua, resolved upon organizing an expeditionary force for the purpose of possessing itself of the River San Juan, wisely judging that the efforts made to dislodge Walker would be prolonged, if not rendered futile, as long as he possessed facilities for receiving supplies and reinforcements by every steamer from the United States. On the 16th of December this force

set out, not by the Sarapiquí River, as was publicly received and believed, but by the San Carlos, another tributary of the San Juan which enters that river about half way between the lake and San Juan del Norte. This was done for the purpose of misleading a detachment of Walker's forces who were posted at Hipp's Point, at the mouth of the Sarapiquí. As this route is very little if ever used, the Costa Ricans experienced great difficulty in a tracing, having to cut their way through the forest along a track where mules could not be used, and along which all the provisions and munitions of war had to be borne on men's shoulders. Six days were spent on the march, during which the rain fell incessantly. At last, the "embarcadero" was reached, and a few canoes were hastily constructed, and rafts made of the trunks of trees rudely lashed together with vines and twigs. Thus these enterprising men, most of whom had never before beheld a boat on a navigable river, boldly embarked on December 16, to float down an unknown stream, to its confluence with the river San Juan, and thence to Greytown itself. It was indeed a perilous undertaking. Had these frail rafts, upon which 120 men had ventured, met one of Walker's steamers coming up or going down the river, the slightest contact would have been fatal to them. On the morning of the 23d, the expedition was landed into a creek near Hipp's Point, to refresh the men, previous to attacking Walker's post of 50 men and 2 cannon. At that moment a steamer was heard coming down the river. The men were made to lie down on the rafts. It was a perilous moment. The steamer passed without any one on board having seen or suspected the lurking danger. A road or track was soon cut toward the flank and rear of Walker's post, which they silently reached. The signal (a single shot) was given. The Costa Ricans rushed with their bayonets with horrid yells upon their surprised foes, and in half a minute resistance was at an end. A panic had seized them. Some were bayoneted—the rest sprang off the bank into the deep and rapid river. One brave officer (Capt. Thompson) did all that mortal man could do to rally the men, but in vain—the onslaught was too sudden and overpowering to admit of resistance. Captain Thompson only ceased his exertions after he received a second severe bayonet wound. His very enemies, admiring his signal gallantry, liberated him subsequently at Greytown, where also they did all in their power to alleviate his sufferings. One man beside Capt. Thompson was saved from the river, and five escaped into the forest. The rest are said to have perished. A sufficient force having been left to guard Hipp's Point, the rest of the adventurous band again committed their lives to the precarious chances of the river upon the same rafts, which had now become rickety and insecure. They arrived close to Greytown about 2 o'clock on the morning of the 24th. Here again fortune favored them, for a steamer was just getting up steam to ascend the river. She was immediately taken with three others. Had the expedition been delayed an hour later in its descent, it must have perished. It would, indeed, have been "touch and go," the slightest touch from the steamer would have separated the slightly-bound pieces of the rafts, and sent the Costa Ricans instantaneously to a watery grave. By dawn of day the steamers were taken without loss, and the Costa Ricans also in possession of Punta Casilla (or Punta Arenas), which they have always claimed as belonging to their country. At the same time the inhab-

itants of Greytown became aware of the presence of this unexpected invasion. The place was soon in confusion and commotion; one party, the most numerous, threatening violence to the foreigners in the place (mostly Americans), under the cry of "Viva Costa Rica." However, the officers commanding the expedition discouraged any and every hostile attempt against the inhabitants of Greytown, and at the place next morning in the captured vessels. In the meantime the United States Consul made an application to the officer commanding the British squadron at Greytown "to protect the property of Capt. Joseph N. Scott, agent of Messrs. Chas. Morgan & Son of New York, from a forcible seizure by a force of Costa Ricans under the command of Col. Joaquin Fernandez." To this, Capt. John C. Erskine, senior officer, replied from on board the Orion, dated Dec. 21, 1856, that he had "taken steps, by landing a party of marines from one of her Majesty's ships, to protect the persons and private property of Capt. Joseph Scott, his family, and all citizens of the United States of America; and the officer of the Costa Rican force, now at Punta Arenas, also assured him they should be placed in no peril." Then as regards the capture of the steamers, Capt. Erskine, in continuation, very judiciously expressed himself as follows:— "To prevent all misapprehension, I think it, however, right to state that the steamers and other property belonging to the Accessory Transit Company, being at this moment the subject of a dispute between two different companies, the representatives of which are on the spot, and one of them authorizing the seizure, I do not feel justified in taking any steps which may affect the interests of either party. With respect to the participation of a force of Costa Ricans in the seizure and transfer of steamers alluded to, I must observe, that these steamers having been for some months past employed in embarking at this port and conveying to the parties with whom Costa Rica is now carrying on active hostilities men and munitions of war, it appears that as a non-belligerent I am prohibited by the law of nations from preventing that execution of such an operation by a belligerent party."

"I have the honor, &c.,

"JOHN E. ERSKINE,

"Capt. and senr. officer.

"To B. S. Cotrell, Esq.,

"U. S. Consul at Greytown.

"December 21, 1856."

On ascending the river (when off the mouth of the River San Carlos, which, as before stated, is a tributary of the river San Juan,) one of the steamers was despatched to ascertain if General Jose Joaquin Mora, brother of the President of Costa Rica, had arrived at the embarcadero with the main body of the expeditionary army; and it so, to report the success of the expedition to Greytown, so that measures might immediately be taken for carrying promptly into effect the second part of the plan of the operations. On proceeding up the San Carlos five men, placed on a raft as videttes, became so frightened by the noise and appearance of the approaching steamer (never having before seen or imagined the like), plunged into the river and were drowned in the attempt to reach the bank. The steamer then landed two men to cut their way through the forest to the embarcadero, in order that general Mora might receive timely notice that the steamer was no longer an enemy, so that the probability of his firing upon her might be removed. General Mora was found at his post, with 800