

News of the Week.

BURNING OF THE SARAH SANDS.

We copy the following account of the burning of this iron steamer, from a late number of the London Times. She was upwards of 200 tons burden, and was the first steamer on the Liverpool and Portland route. At the time of the disaster she was on her way to India, with nearly 400 soldiers, officers, and privates, besides several women and children.

"The voyage appears to have been favorable until the 11th of November, when the ship had reached latitude 14 S., longitude 56 E. (upwards of 400 miles from the Mauritius).—About three o'clock in the afternoon of that day the troops berthed on the after orlop deck noticed a smell of burning, which apparently proceeded from beneath them in the hold. It rapidly increasing, the alarm was given to Captain Castle, who at once ordered the after-hold to be examined, and to the astonishment and horror of all, the cargo stowed there proved to be on fire. It is stated that the bulk of the cargo there consisted of Government stores. Bale after bale was hauled up in the hope of getting at the heat of the fire; but in a short time the smoke became so dense as to defy any of the crew getting further in the hold. There was no confusion, however; every order was obeyed by the men with coolness and courage. The course of the ship was stopped. Col. Moffatt was seen in earnest consultation with Captain Castle deciding upon measures for suppressing the flames, while the crew were actively employed in taking all sail in and bringing the ship before the wind. Others ran out lengths of hose from the fire engines, which were passed down to hands below, while hose was also put on to the donkey engine.—It soon became apparent that all these exertions failed in checking the progress of the fire. Colonel Moffatt at the suggestion of the commander, directed his men to at once cast overboard all the ammunition, and in a short time they succeeded in clearing out the starboard magazine. The remainder of the powder in the port magazine, however, excited great apprehensions. Already had the after part of the ship become almost unapproachable from the dense smoke and heat which filled every portion of it. The Colonel appealed to his men for volunteers to attempt to rescue the contents of the magazine now so threatened. Several brave fellows instantly came forward and heroically succeeded in reaching the magazine and clearing it, with the exception, it is supposed, of one or two barrels. It was a truly hazardous work; several nearly lost their lives; they became overpowered with the smoke and heat and fell, and when hauled up by ropes to the deck they were senseless.

"The flames soon afterwards burnt up through the deck, and running along the various cabins speedily set the whole on fire.—There was a heavy gale blowing at the time, and Captain Castle perceiving the critical position of the ship, at once took measures for the safe lowering of the boats. They were launched without the least accident, the troops were mustered on deck, there was no rush to the boats, and the men obeyed the word of command with as much order as on parade. Colonel Moffatt informed them that Captain Castle did not despair of saving the ship, but for their own preservation it had been deemed advisable to keep the boats off so as to act in case of emergency. The women and children were lowered into the port life-boat, and she was directed to stand off until further orders.—All hands turned to constructing rafts of spare spars. In a short time three were put together which would have been capable of saving a large portion of those on board. Captain Castle succeeded in launching two overboard, and the third was left across the deck, to be lowered at a moment's notice.

"In the meanwhile the flames had made terrible progress; the whole of the cabins, saloons &c., were one body of fire, and about 9 o'clock the flames burst through the upper deck and ignited the mizen rigging. Through the forethought of Captain Castle in bringing the ship to the wind the fire and smoke were swept sternwards, but serious anxiety was felt lest the ship should pay off, and so render her destruction inevitable. During this fearful suspense a dreadful explosion took place, no doubts arising from one or two barrels left in the port magazine, which blew out the port quarter. The ship from the main rigging to her stern was in one body of fire. Captain Castle still had hope, although he expressed his fears to the commanding officer of the troops that the ship would be lost. Providentially the bulkhead of the after part of the ship withstood the action of the flames. Here all efforts were concentrated to keep it cool. Party after party of the troops volunteered for the work, and so endeavored to prevent the fire making its way forward.

"For hours did this state of affairs continue. Although the men kept the fire at bay below, it gained the main rigging. Mr. Welch, the chief officer, with several of the soldiers, at once went aloft with wet blankets, and after considerable peril and risk succeeded in extinguishing the flames. As it was, however, some of the yards were destroyed. Towards 2 o'clock the following morning, the men had the satisfaction of seeing the fire diminishing. The flames were gradually beaten back, and

by daylight were entirely extinguished. It was not till then that the fearful havoc made by the fire was clearly ascertained. The after part of the ship was burnt out—merely its shell remaining, and now another fate threatened her. The gale still prevailed, and the ship was rolling and pitching in a heavy sea, constantly shipping water at the port quarter, which had been blown out by the explosion. She had 15 feet of water in her hold, and active steps were necessary to prevent her foundering. All the men were set to the pumps and bailing water out of the hold. Capt. Castle, fearing the stern would fall out, got two hawsers under her bottom and made them taut.

The next difficulty was to stop the water, which was pouring in through the quarter. Spare sails and blankets were placed over the opening, and the leak was partially stopped. There was no abatement in the gale during the morning, and in every heave of the ship the water tanks in the hold which had got loose, were dashed from one side to the other. The state of the ship, and the continued severity of the weather, rendered the constant working of the pumps and the bailing imperative. It was not till 2 o'clock in the afternoon that the boats containing the women and children could be got alongside. They were got on board, and the other boats, which had been ordered off during the raging of the fire, returned, with the exception of the gig, which had been swamped during the night, the officer in charge of her however, Mr. Wood, and the hands were picked up by another boat.

"During the remainder of the day, the following night and succeeding day, the whole of the hands and troops were engaged working the pumps and clearing the ship of the water. By the evening of the 13th the crew succeeded in securing the stern and getting steerage-way on the ship. She had then drifted as far as longitude 13 12 south. Captain Castle then set all sail, and bore up in the hope of making Mauritius, and to the joy of all on board, made that port in eight days, where her arrival and marvellous escape excited considerable sensation. The officers in command of the troops, speak in the highest terms of the conduct of Captain Castle during the trying occasion."

Under the head of "More British Heroes," the London Weekly Times alludes to the courage displayed by the men on board the Sarah Sands and on other occasions, and the benefits resulting from order and discipline in the hour of trial and danger:

"Heroic courage, contempt of danger and the discharge of duty in the face of death may be found on other arenas than the field of battle. Many instances are to be found in our naval history, and the most touching age of recent occurrence. Who can forget the story of the Birkenhead, or of the brave men who stood with arms folded on their muskets, and went down with the ship, in order that the women and children might be saved? There is nothing like this self-denying resignation conquering the fear of death to be found in the annals of chivalry. It required a higher courage than the impulse which sends a man into the thick of battle, or animates him to storm a battery, for in the heat of contest the blood is warm, and the hope of victory excludes the thought of danger. The power of discipline was exhibited the other day, when the luckless *Transit* was breaking to pieces in the Indian seas, and it seemed all but certain that some must perish to ensure the safety of the rest. There was no rush for the boats, no struggle for dear life, but all waited their turn with the cool determination of brave men. We have no standard by which to measure the devotion that in the one case inspired so many men to become a willing sacrifice for the weak and helpless, or the power which in the other conquered the innate selfishness of man, which impels him to seek the safety of his own life before all other considerations. The burning of the Sarah Sands supplies us with both qualities. It is impossible to conceive a more appalling situation than to be on board a ship on fire in the midst of the boundless ocean, with no help near, and the flames bursting through the deck and mounting to the rigging. There is no instance of any ship having been saved after the fire had obtained such mastery. Had there been a moment's faltering all would have been lost. The ship and all on board were preserved by an amount of courage on all hands which might almost be called superhuman, and which must, at least make us proud of the race and country to which we belong.

"The Sarah Sands, a fine iron ship of two thousand tons burden, with an auxiliary screw sailed from Portsmouth for Calcutta on the 15th of last August, having on board nearly four hundred officers and men of the 54th regiment besides eight women, seven children, and a number of ladies relative of the officers. The voyage appears to have been prosperous up to the 11th of November, when the ship was within four hundred miles of the Mauritius.—About four o'clock in the afternoon of that day a fire was discovered in the after hold, which was filled with Government stores. Notwithstanding the most strenuous exertions the flames spread rapidly, and soon seized upon the cabins. Captain Castle, the commander, immediately had the engines stopped, all sails taken in, and the ship's head brought to the wind. There was a quantity of ammunition stowed in magazines on the starboard and port quarters, in close vicinity to the flames, and Col. Moffatt, of the 54th, ordered his men to throw it overboard. This was a service of no small danger, but the soldiers rushed forward and quickly cleared the starboard magazine. By

that time the after part of the vessel was so enveloped in smoke, and the heat had become so great, that it was nearly impossible to stand. The port magazine next to be cleared. To approach it seemed next to certain death—if the fire caught the ship must be lost. Volunteers were called for and presented themselves. They were successful in clearing out all but one barrel of powder, and several of the men were dragged up senseless from below while thus engaged. Still the fire spread, and still none relaxed in their exertions to stay its progress. But it was also necessary to make preparations for the worst. The boats were lowered without accident, and the ladies were placed in a life-boat under charge of the third officer. All were ordered to lie off the ship until recalled. Then three rafts were made, and two, capable of holding nearly all on board were launched over the side, while the third was kept ready on deck. By the time this was done the flames had burst through the upper deck and seized the mizen rigging. There was danger that the ship might pay off and get before the wind, and if this had happened no effort of those on board could have prevented the fire from spreading from one end to the other. A fortunate accident prevented the catastrophe; but at nine o'clock the powder in the port magazine exploded and blew out the port quarter. Then the captain nearly abandoned hope, and warned the officers in command of the troops to prepare for the worst.—Still the fire burned on, but by the providence of God, the strenuous and unceasing exertions of the men confined it to the after part of the ship. At midnight they had made some impression, and after that they 'drove it back inch by inch until daylight, when it was completely got under.'

"After this terrible struggle of more than twelve hours, the crew and passengers found that, having overcome one danger, they were exposed to another scarcely less formidable in their condition. The shell only of the after part of the ship remained; the port quarter had been blown out by the explosion; there were fifteen feet of water in the hold, and the ship rolling heavily, took in large quantities of water aft. Prompt and skilful measures were taken to save the ship from foundering, and the women and children with the boats were got on board. For the difficulties here overcome we must refer to the details given in another column. Suffice it to say that during the remainder of the day, all the following night and day, the crew and the soldiers were kept working at the pumps. On the 13th the stern was secured, and steerage way was got on the ship; and on the 23rd of November all arrived safely at the Mauritius.

"A more miraculous escape from the perils of fire and of the seas has never been recorded. We rejoice that a great calamity has been averted, and we must offer our tribute of admiration to the brave men whose courage and perseverance was rewarded by so happy a result."

UNITED STATES.

New York, Jan. 20.—At the burning of the Public School in Brooklyn yesterday, seven boys were killed, two are reported dead, and two wounded and not expected to live. They were all about six or seven years of age, except one, who was ten. Abijah Piersell, of Carl street was taken out alive, but not expected to recover. A child, name unknown, had both legs broken.

From Utah.—Governor Cumming issued his proclamation to the people of Utah on Nov. 21. On the same day he addressed a letter to Brigham Young, enclosing a copy of the proclamation, and asking whether a proclamation and passes found on the person of one of the Mormon captives, purporting to be signed by him (Young) were authentic.

The New York Herald has a letter from Salt Lake City, Nov. 7, which says that the Mormon Conference had just adjourned to meet on the 6th of April, 1858, in the same place. This does not look much like immediate emigration. Neither do the extracts from the remarks made at the Conference. They are, however, without any particular interest. The writer, (evidently a Mormon) in closing, says:

"I have never seen this people more united than at present. Women as well as men are doing their utmost to contribute to the defence of Zion. It fortunately happens that the history of Joseph Smith, which has been published in the *Deseret News* in weekly portions since the commencement of that journal, contains now that portion of his history the most interesting to the Saints—the days preceding his assassination. If anything had been wanting to decide the Saints to oppose the intrigues of the government, who seek the overthrow of President Young and his brethren, this history would have supplied amply every stimulus. It is scarcely possible to see a person with the *News* who does not feel that the death of that man of God has yet to be atoned for, and to submit to be handled again as we have been would lead to nothing less than the destruction of his successor, and to this we shall never submit, though all earth and hell shall combine against us. For rather would we see the whole fraternity of us laid on the altar—one great sacrifice—than see one hair of his head injured by sacrilegious hands."

Fillbustering in a New Quarter.—Appointments.—*Restoration of Naval Officers.*—*Kansas Matters.*—Washington, Jan. 14.—Dispatches to the Government this evening announce that the professional fillbusters of Texas are gathering in large numbers on the Rio Grande, preparatory to engaging in the Mexican revolution. Gen. Walker may turn his attention that

way, as he has abandoned his Nicaragua enterprise.

Oregon Election.—The returns of the recent election in Oregon on the adoption of the State Constitution, as far as heard from, are as follows:

Constitution.		Slavery.		Free Negroes.	
Yes.	No.	Yes.	No.	Yes.	No.
5063	1872	1155	5767	727	5359

Majority for Constitution, 3196; majority against Slavery, 4612; majority against Free Negroes, 4632.

There are a few more returns yet to come, which it is thought will increase all the above majorities. Our latest Oregon exchanges express the opinion that every county in the Territory has voted against slavery, and that complete returns will show the majority for the Constitution to be about 4,000; and that against slavery about 5,000; and the majority against permitting free negroes to settle in the State, something more than 5,000.

NOVA SCOTIA.

Nomination Day at Annapolis.—Annapolis, Jan. 26, 1858.—This day having been appointed for the nomination of Candidates to fill the vacant seats in Annapolis and Granville Townships, a large number of persons assembled at the Court House, when Timothy D. Ruggles was proposed by James Shaffner, Esquire, and seconded by William Weatherspoon, Esquire. There being no opposition, he was declared duly elected for the Township of Granville.—Moses Shaw, Esquire, was proposed by James Potter, Esquire, and seconded by Elias Grimes, Esquire, for Annapolis Township, and is opposed by William Wright, Esquire, who was nominated by John Potter, Esquire, and seconded by Isaac Vroom, Esquire. Election takes place on the 2d proximo.—*Halifax Morning Sun.*

LATE EUROPEAN NEWS.

We are indebted to the St. John Church Witness for the following summary of British and Foreign news received by the way of New York.

We are in possession of further news from India. We wish we could say it was of a cheering character; but, unhappily, the darker features of the terrible drama which is being acted on the plains of India, are again predominant. The announcement of the death of Sir Henry Havelock—struck down by disease, the result of anxiety and fatigue, at the very moment when Lucknow had been relieved, and the object for which he had done, and dared, and endured so much, successfully accomplished—would have been sufficient of itself to wring every heart with anguish. But, over and above this, comes the intelligence that, two days after this irreparable loss, the British arms sustained, in the neighbourhood of Cawnpore, a mortifying and most disastrous defeat. On the 27th of November, it is said, General Wyndham and his division fought a battle with the Gwalior mutineers, in which the latter were so far successful that they compelled the British troops to retreat, and burnt three thousand of their tents. "The 64th Regiment," the telegram adds, "is reported nearly cut up;" but it is said that this must be a mistake, or, at least, an exaggeration, because a considerable portion of the 64th Regiment was with Sir Colin Campbell at Lucknow.—The particulars of this engagement are not received, but we are quite satisfied that no blame can attach to General Wyndham, for he is a thorough soldier, and has, no doubt, well and thoroughly performed a soldier's duty. Whatever may have been the cause of the defeat, he was promptly and amply revenged. His disaster gave Sir Colin Campbell an opportunity of adding another to his well-earned laurels, and that opportunity was not lost. He had provided for the safety of the women and children whom he had rescued from the Residency of Lucknow; and, as this business was pressing, he set out without a day's unnecessary delay, with such troops as he could safely withdraw from the place—came up with the rebels upon the 7th of December—attacked and utterly defeated them—and captured "16 guns, 26 carriages of different sorts, an immense quantity of ammunition, stores, and provisions, and the whole of the baggage of the force." In point of fact, the Gwalior Contingent is annihilated; and, in achieving this great victory, the telegraph assures us "the British loss was insignificant, one officer only having been killed." While therefore, every man and every woman in the empire, who is not wholly insensible to the obligation of gratitude, will drop a tear over the grave of Havelock—and while we all deplore the disaster which has befallen General Wyndham's division—we may, we think, congratulate ourselves upon the fact, that, even in the midst of these grievous and serious calamities, the work of suppressing the insurrection has made substantial progress.

The *Court Circular* says the Queen would have made Havelock a peer, had he lived.—She will now take the family under her especial protection. Apartments in Hampton Court palace will as soon as possible, be granted with a pension of £500 a year, in addition to the parliamentary grant to be inherited by the son.

The papers are filled with accounts of the preparations making for the marriage of the Princess Royal. The *Globe* supplies the interesting information, that amongst the principal milliners it is stated that the fashionable colour for ladies' dresses on this occasion will be blue.