

FATAL EXPLOSION ON A STEAMER

now.

yesterday. At the solicitation of a number of gentlemen and ladies of the Fork neighborhood, Captain Rhodes of the steamer Marion had agreed to give them an excursion on the Wateree river, and on Friday morning the party consisting of about twenty-five, gathered at Red Bluff, a landing near the junction of the Wateree and Congaree rivers, on the plantation of Mr. Joseph Bates, of Richland county, about two miles from Wateree station, on the Camden branch of the South Carolina Railroad.

At about 11 a. m. the party boarded the steamer and she moved out from the landing. When she had gone about one hundred yards several of the guests who had been delayed made their appearance on the river bank and Capt. Rhodes ordered the boat to be backed into the mouth of a small creed in order that the belated party might be taken on board; but, as there was danger of rnnning on a tree or snag in the mouth of the creek, he gave the signal for re-versing the motion of the engine so that she might be moved forward. At this moment the explosion of one of the boilers took place, carrying death to some and dismay to the romainder os the party so joyous and happy the moment before.

At the time of the explosion most of the marconers were in the aft saloon of the steamer. The captain was in con-versation with Mr. Joseph Bates, near versation with Mr. Joseph Bates, near the pilot house, and the ill-fated party, consisting of the four Misses Henry. Mrs. S. Garner, Miss Minnie Bates, Mr. Lenoir, Mr. Trumble, Mr. Orville Stiles and Mr. J. C. Eason, were on the upper deck immediately over the boilers, or in various positions in near proximity to them. In an instant of time the fear-ful work of death had been done, the upper works of the steamer, were scat-tered in fragments over the river and adjacent woods, and the portion of the upper deck over the saloon had fallen in on those in the cabin, inflicting painful on those in the cabin, inflicting painful but not serious wounds on nearly all the occupants. Of course a panic seized most of those who had escaped immediate death, and but for the providential circumstance, of most of them being hemmed in in the cabin by the fallen deck, which afforded Capt. Rhodes, whose presence of mind did not forsake him, needed interval to assure them that the danger had passed and that they who had so far escaped were safe, many more lives would have been lost by jumping overboard in the panic. which resulted from the explosion.

The force of the explosion drove those immediately exposed to it into the river or on to the soft banks thirty or forty yards distant. Those who were seen to disappear in the river and whose