

# THE COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT.

I have sworn upon the Altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of Tyranny over the Mind of Man.—Thomas Jefferson.

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## TERMS:

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## MISCELLANEOUS.

### THE BATTLE OF MONMOUTH.

JUNE 28, 1776.

From the *Curtis Recollections and Private Memoirs of the Life and Character of Washington.*

The commander in chief (Washington) having completed his arrangements for bringing the enemy to a general action, proceeded slowly towards Monmouth court house, early on the morning of the twenty eighth June.

In the council of war, there were but two voices for risking an engagement.—Cadwalader, a gallant fellow, and devoted in his attachment to his Chief, and Anthony Wayne, who always said aye, when fighting was to be had upon any terms.

Washington certainly assumed a great responsibility in risking an engagement contrary to the opinions of a large majority of his generals, and notwithstanding the vast disparity of his forces, when compared with those of his adversary—the disparity consisting more in the materials of which the respective armies were composed than in their numerical estimates. But it is to be remembered that the two principal actions of the preceding campaign, though bravely contested, had resulted unfortunately. Since the close of the campaign of 77, an alliance had been formed with France whose fleets and armies were hourly expected on our coasts, while the demands of the people, demands too, often loudly expressed, were for battle.

Urged by these considerations, the American Chief determined, happen what would, to fight Sir Henry Clinton, so that he should not evacuate Philadelphia, and each his strong hold in New York unharmed. Crossing the Delaware, the American approached his formidable foe, who, owing to his superiority of numbers, discipline, and appointment, was least relying on his way towards Staten Island, the place of embarkation for New York.

As a soldier, Washington was by nature the very soul of enterprise; but, fortunately for his fame and for his country, this daring spirit was tempered by a judgment and prudence most happy in their character and effects. And yet an illustrious patriot and statesman of the revolution, and most accomplished writer, Mr. Jefferson, has said that the *Patriot* was rather the Fabius than the Marcellus of war, his extreme caution being him better for the cool and methodical operations of siege, than for the daring strategy of surprise, or the close and stubborn conflict of the field. Never was there such a misconception of the great soldier's qualities. Did not this modern Fabius, in the very depth of winter, and after overcoming mighty obstacles, surprise his enemy at Trenton, and recall victory to his standard when hope was almost sinking in despair? Did he not, by a masterly march, and mighty march, surprise his enemy at Princeton, and add yet another laurel to the garland acquired by the capture of Hessians? Did he not, with an army newly raised and defeated at Brandywine, twenty-three days thereafter, surprise his enemy at Germantown? And, though victory was denied him by a course of circumstances in human power could have strolled yet the boldness of the enterprise and the success attending it in the onset, secured such a confidence abroad in our arms and courage as to lead to our alliance with a powerful nation.

Did he not surprise the enemy at Monmouth? And although untoward events led to the operations of the early part of the day, yet the setting sun shone in the battle field in the possession of Americans; the enemy retreating, and our dead and wounded left as trophies to victors.

Such were the memorial instances in which Washington, with troops newly raised, and badly provided with every necessary of war, struck at the veteran and well appointed foe, when least expected, producing the happiest influences upon the American cause, both at home and abroad; for it is perfectly well known that the battle of Germantown decided the ministry of France to form the alliance that so materially contributed to the conclusion of the war, and the consummation of our independence.

As the Commander in Chief, accompanied by a numerous suit, approached the vicinity of Monmouth Court House he was met by a little sifer boy who archly observed. "They are all coming this way, your honor."

"Who are coming my little man?" asked Gen. Knox.

"Why, our boys, your honor, our boys, and the British right after them," replied the little musician.

"Impossible!" exclaimed Washington and giving the spur to his charger, proceeded at full gallop to an immense short distance ahead. There, to his extreme pain and mortification, it was discovered that the boy's intelligence was too true. The very elite of the American army, five thousand picked officers and men, were in full retreat, closely pursued by the enemy.

The first inquiry of the commander in chief was for Major General Lee, who commanded the advance, and who soon appeared, when a warm conversation ensued, that ended by the major general being ordered to the rear.

During this interview an incident of rare and chivalric interest occurred. Lieut. Col. Hamilton, aid to the commander in chief, leaped from his horse and drawing his sword, addressed the general with—

"We are betrayed—your excellency and this army are betrayed! and the moment has arrived when every true friend of America and her cause must be ready to die in their defence."

Washington, consumed with the generous enthusiasm of his favorite aid, yet deeming the same ill timed, pointed to the colonel's horse, that was cropping the herbage, unconscious of the great scene that was enacting around him, calmly observing "Colonel Hamilton, you will take your horse."

The general in chief now set himself in earnest about restoring the fortunes of the day. He ordered Col. Stewart and Lieut. Col. Ramsey, with their regiments to check the advance of the enemy, which service was gallantly performed; while the general in person, proceeded to form his second line. He rode, on the morning of the 28th June, and for that time only, during the war a white charger that had been presented to him. From the overpowering heat of the day, and the deep and sandy nature of the soil, the spirited horse sank under him and expired on the spot. The chief was instantly remounted on a chestnut blood mare, with a flowing mane and tail. It was upon this beautiful animal, covered with foam, that the American general flew along the line, cheering the soldiers in the familiar and endearing language ever used by the officer to the soldiers of the revolution of "Stand fast, my boys, and receive your enemy, the southern troops are advancing to support ye."

The person of Washington always graceful, dignified, and commanding, showed to peculiar advantage when mounted; it exhibited indeed the very beau ideal of a perfect cavalier.

The good Lafayette, during his last visit to America, delighted to discourse of the "Times that tried men's souls." From that venerable friend of our country we derived a most graphic description of Washington and the field of battle. Lafayette said:

"At Monmouth I commanded a division, and it may be supposed, was pretty well occupied; still I took time amid the roar and confusion of the conflict to admire our beloved chief, who, mounted on a splendid charger, rode along the ranks amid the shouts of the soldiers, cheering them by his voice and example, and restoring to our standard the fortunes of the fight. I thought then, as now, [continued the good Lafayette.] that never had I beheld so superb a man."

Among the incidents of this memorable day may be recorded, on the part of the British, the death of the Hon. Colonel Monckton, a brother of Earl Galway. It is said that this gallant and accomplished officer had greatly injured his fortune by the dissipation incident to a long sojourn in city quarters, and that, in consequence he exposed himself recklessly on the 8th June. He was much regretted in the British army.

On the part of the Americans, the fate of the young and brave Captain Fauntleroy, of the Virginia line, was remarkable. He

was on horseback, at a well near a farmhouse, waving his turban while the fainting soldiers, consumed by a thirst arising from their exertions on the hottest day supposed ever to have occurred in America, were rushing, with frantic cries, to the well imploring for water. The captain, with the point of his sword resting on his boot, his arm leaning on the pommel, continued to wave his turban, when a cannon shot, bounding down the lane that led to the farmhouse, struck the unfortunate officer near the hip, and hurled him to the ground a lifeless corpse. The lamented Fauntleroy was descended from one of the old and highly respected families of Virginia. Leaving the comforts of home and the delights of a large circle of friends, this gallant young soldier repaired to the standard of his country early in the campaign of '76. He was highly respected in his grade, and his untimely fate was deeply mourned in the American army.

Headless of the remonstrances and entreaties of his officers, the commander in chief exposed his person to every danger throughout the action of the 28th June.

The night before the battle of Monmouth, a party of the general officers assembled, and resolved upon a memorial to the chief, praying that he would not expose his person in the approaching conflict. His high and chivalric daring and contempt for danger at the battle of Princeton, and again at Germantown, where his officers seized the bride of his horse, made his friends the more anxious for the preservation of a life so dear to all, and so truly important to the success of the common cause. It was determined that the memorial should be presented by Craik, the companion in arms of Colonel Washington in the War of '55; but Craik, at once, assured the memorialists that, while their petition would be received as a proof of their affectionate regard for their general's safety, it would not weigh a feather in preventing the exposure of his person, should the day go against them and the presence of the chief become necessary at the post of danger. Dr. Craik then related the romantic and imposing incidents of the old Indian's prophecy, as it occurred on the banks of the Ohio, in 1770, observing that bred as he himself was, in the rigid discipline of the Kirk of Scotland.—He possessed as little superstition as any one, but that really there was a something in the air and manner of an old savage chief deriving his oracle amid the depths of the forest, that time nor circumstances could ever erase from his memory, and that he believed with the tawny prophet of the wilderness that their beloved Washington was the spirit-protected being described by the savage, that the enemy could not kill him, and that while he lived the glorious cause of the American Independence would never die.

On the following day, while the commander in chief attended by his officers, was reconnoitering the enemy from an elevated part of the field, a round shot from the British artillery struck but a little way from his horse's feet, throwing up the earth over his person, and then bounded harmlessly away. The barren Steuben, shrugging up his shoulders, exclaimed, "that was very near," while Dr. Craik, pleased with this instance confirmatory of the Indian's prophecy, needed to the officers who had composed the party of the preceding evening, and then pointed to heaven, as much as to say in the words of the savage prophet—"The Great Spirit protects him—he cannot die in battle."

A ludicrous occurrence varied the incidents of the 28th of June. The servants of the general officers were usually well armed and mounted. Will Lee, or Billy the former huntsman, and favorite boy servant of the chief, a square muscular figure, and capital horseman, paraded a corpse of vallets, and riding pompously at their head, proceeded to an eminence crowned by a sycamore tree, from whence tree could be seen an extensive part of the field of battle. Here Billy halted, and having unslung the large telescope that he always carried in a leathern case, with a martial air he applied it to his eye and reconnoitered the enemy.

Washington, having observed these manoeuvres of the corps of vallets, pointed them out to his officers, observing, "See those fellows collected on yonder height; the enemy will fire on them to a certainty."

Meantime, the British were not unmindful of the assemblage on the height, and perceiving a burly figure well mounted, and with a telescope in hand, they determined to pay their respects to the group.—A shot from the six pounder passed through the tree, cutting away the limbs, and producing a scampering among the corps of vallets, that caused even the grave countenance of the commander in chief to dissolve into a smile.

Ner must we omit among the incident of the battle of Monmouth, to mention the

achievement of the famed Captain Molly, a *nom de guerre* given to the wife of a matron in Proctor's artillery.

At one of the guns of Proctor's battery, six men had been killed or wounded. It was deemed an unlucky gun, and murmurs arose that it should be drawn back and abandoned. At this juncture, while Captain Molly was serving some water for the refreshment of her men, her husband received a shot in the head, and fell lifeless under the wheels of the piece. The heroine, throwing down the pail of water, and crying out to her dead consort, "lie there my darling while I revenge ye," grasped the ramrod, the lifeless hand of the poor fellow had just relinquished, sent home the charge, and called to the matrones to prime and fire. It was done. Then, entering the sponge into the smoking muzzle of the cannon, the heroine performed to admiration the duties of the most expert artilleryman, while loud shouts from the soldiers rang along the line, the doomed gun was no longer deemed unlucky, and the fire of the battery became more vivid than ever.

The Amazonian fair one kept to her post till night closed the action, where she was introduced to Gen. Greene, who complimenting her upon her courage and conduct, the next morning presented her to the commander in chief. Washington received her graciously, gave her a piece of gold, and assured her that her services should not be forgotten.

This remarkable and intrepid woman survived the Revolution, never for an instant, laying aside the appellation she had so nobly won, and levying contributions upon both civil and military people, whenever she recounted the tale of the doomed gun and the famed Captain Molly at the battle of Monmouth.

On the night of this memorable conflict, Washington laid down upon his cloak under a tree, in the midst of his brave soldiers. About midnight, an officer approached cautiously, fearful of awakening him, when the chief called out to him, "Advance, sir, and deliver your message. I laid here to think and not to sleep."

In the morning the American made preparation to renew the conflict, but the enemy had retired during the night, leaving their dead and many of their wounded to the care of the victors. Morgan's mountaineers pursued on their trail, and made some captures, particularly the coach of a general officer.

The British grand army embarked from Staten Island. The number, or appearance of the troops, rendered the embarkation one of the most brilliant and imposing spectacles of the Revolutionary war.

Congress passed a unanimous vote of thanks to the General and Chief officers, and soldiers, for the march from Valley Forge and defeat of the enemy.

The *Schoolmas* general assortment of the Baltimore Clipper tells us of which the following is the substance:—

"School Commission. On Maryland, being in want of a moral man, who was capable of teaching the dead languages, and who would chew tobacco or drink whiskey, for the fortnight of this advertising had a rawboned Yankee appearance, with a knife and pistol in his hand, and a Cape Cod Protuberance on his forehead, and a gingerbread, in the other, as would the following dialogue with the committee aforesaid:—

"Well, sir," said the Chairman, eyeing the candidate from head to foot, "do you possess the necessary requisites for a public school teacher?"

"I guess I do," answered Slick, whittling his stick.

"Do you understand Latin?" asked one of the Committee men, a Dutch farmer.

"I guess I do," replied Slick again rounding the end of his stick with his knife.

"Well, let's hear some of your Latin," said the Chairman.

"Ruambo his squashicum, et punkinim linguam," said Slick, drawing his coat sleeve slowly under his nose.

"Humph!" exclaimed the Dutchman, "ish dat Latin? Who's the author?"

"Josephus," replied Slick; "he says in his life of Governor Hancock, 'Sic transit gloria Monday morning—Hancockibus quad erat demonstrandum.'"

"Dat's good!" exclaimed the Dutchman, rubbing his hands, "tere never was better Latin!"

"Now, sir," said the Chairman, "I suppose you understand Geography?"

"I guess I do," said Slick; sharpening the end of his stick.

"How far have you been?"

"As far as the District of Columby."

"What state is it in?"

"A state of desparation."

"What latitude are we in?"

"According to the thermometer we're ten degrees below zero."

"Which is the most western point of North America?"

"Cape Cod."

"Good. Now, sir, let us know how far you studied mathematics. What's the area of a square acre of land?"

"That depends upon the quality," replied Slick snapping the blade of his knife.

"Well, suppose it to be good corn land?"

"Why it depends upon the number of hills."

"Say—five hundred."

"Guess you might as well tell a feller how many grains to the hill?"

"Five."

"Then accordin' to Elucid, it would be 742 feet horizontally perpendicular."

"Excellent! Pray, sir, where are you from?"

"Stanton, down in the Bay State—and I can do 'most any thing."

"No doubt, but there is one thing you cannot do, you cannot humbug us, You can't go."

*A Mississippi Romance.*—A correspondent of the Natchez Courier, writing from the seat of government of Mississippi, in a long letter about banks and banking, gives currency to the following adventure:

I turn from the legislature to give an item which smacks of romance and novelty. Today there arrived in the stage, in company with Judge Bedley, a fair faced and juvenile passenger in pantaloons arrayed and on stopping at the mansion of Madame Dixon, the passengers were consigned to a room in company with Senator Thomas B. Rives.

In a few minutes suspicions were set afloat that the stranger was a woman, whereupon Mrs. Dixon in curious trepidation, repaired to the presence of our new guest.—

"You are a woman," said Mrs. D. "I know I am," replied the stranger, "but listen to my story." She then related an adventure that far eclipsed the dangers braved by the lover of Orlando; she had been cruelly treated, her husband had fled the country, and resolved to find him she changed her dress and went to the Mississippi River, where she secured a birth on one of the steamboats as cabin boy; this life she followed up and down the western waters for eight months, despairing of the object of her anxious pursuit she is now on her way to the bosom of her family in one of the eastern counties of Mississippi.

When her sex was discovered several ladies and gentlemen recalled her acquaintance, and by the kindness of her friends, she was soon transformed and conducted to the parlor glittering in all the splendor of her sex. The stories she told were interesting and all true—while a cabin boy she had two or three fights, in all of which she came off victorious! Who will say the Mississippi ladies are not brave and do not love? We intend to write the history of this lady for one of the annals; the materials are ample, her beauty, chivalry, devotion, and other heroic qualities! Look out for the story of the "cabin boy wife."

An article in Blackwood concerning the Jewish nation refers to their statistics of population as one of the most singular circumstances connected with the history of that remarkable people. While other races have gone on increasing and multiplying, Europe in general having doubled its population within the last hundred years, and England having nearly tripled hers within the last half century, the ratio of increase in America being still greater, the number of the Jewish people do not seem to have been enlarged. It is estimated that about three millions entered Palestine from the wilderness—the population of Judea probably never exceeded four millions. According to the computation of the German statist, the aggregate of the race now is about the same as in the time of Moses—that is, about three millions. The writer adds:

"This extraordinary fixedness in the midst of almost universal increase, is doubtless not without a reason—if we are even to look for it among the mysterious operations which have preserved Israel, a separate race, through eighteen hundred years. May we not naturally conceive, that a people thus preserved without advance or retrocession; dispersed, yet combined; broken, yet firm; without a country, yet dwellers in all; without a nation, yet waited as no nation ever was before or since—has not been appointed to offer this extraordinary contradiction to the common laws of society, and even the common progress of nature, without a cause, one of final benevolence, universal good, and divine grandeur?"

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