

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.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY H. WEBB.

Volume IV.

BLOOMSBURG, COLUMBIA COUNTY, PA. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1840.

Number 28.

OFFICE OF THE DEMOCRAT,
OPPOSITE ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, MAIN-ST.

TERMS:

The COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT will be published every Saturday morning, at TWO DOLLARS per annum, payable half yearly in advance, or Two Dollars Fifty Cents, if not paid within the year.

No subscription will be taken for a shorter period than six months; nor any discontinuance permitted, until all arrearages are discharged.

ADVERTISEMENTS not exceeding a square will be conspicuously inserted at One Dollar for the first three insertions, and Twenty-five cents for every subsequent insertion. A liberal discount made to those who advertise by the year. LETTERS addressed on business, must be post paid.

MISCELLANEOUS.

From the Casket.

WOMAN'S REVENGE.

A TALE OF VENICE.

'Twas night and the broad expanse of heaven glittered with myriads of stars. At a distance the moon threw its soft light upon the towers of De Vasca. Venice, the loved Venice, the seat of joy and luxury, was hushed; its streets were all vacant, and not a footstep broke the stillness of the night. It was the hour when the stranger might gaze on its noble palaces through the dim mist of night, and wrap in wonder and awe, exclaim, this is indeed a bright land. The distant bell of St. Dominic tolled the midnight hour, as a gondola suddenly made its appearance beneath the Bridge of Sighs; it neared the shore, from it stepped a female form. Closely wrapping her mantle around her she ascended the steps that led to the bridge. She had just reached it when the sound of footsteps broke on her ear; and placing herself behind one of the abutments, where she was free from discovery, she waited their coming. They soon approached the bridge, and were those of a young and gallant cavalier, with his arm entwined round a female form.

"Nay, Donnezetti," exclaimed the cavalier, pausing, believe not what the world says. I swear I love thee, and none other. Be mine then, sweet one!"

"Gladly would I, Antonia, but my sire will not bestow his child on one whom he says loves another. 'Tis rumored Estelle, the handsome Estelle, is your future bride."

"Handsome!" echoed the youth, "Handsome! not so handsome as thee. Estelle was never my choice, Donnezetti. Thou does not believe these tales?"

"Believe them," echoed Donnezetti, clasping her arms around the cavalier's neck. "Believe them! Oh, do you love none other. Donnezetti is alone thy choice, and she is unworthy of it."

"Unworthy of it! never, sweet one! But hark! already has our cathedral bell tolled the hour of midnight: the breeze is springing, and dark clouds hover o'er our heads. Let us away; to-morrow night be at the window which overlooks the river—I will be here."

"Forget not, Antonia," whispered the maiden.

"Forget!" echoed the youth, as they retraced their steps. I will be there, and gaze again upon that lovely face."

"You shall," replied the female, emerging from her hiding place, "but for the last time."

'Twas night again; another day had dawned and fled o'er Venice. The scenes of busy life had been enacted, the gay had emerged amid their pleasures, the busy had plied their labor well, and death had mingled with the laugh of death. But hark, St. Dominic's bell tolls the midnight hour, and a light shines from the large gothic window of the castle D'Istra. It opens, and a maiden looks from it upon the dark waters that frown at a distance beneath. "Ah, my Antonia!" she exclaimed, as a form stood beneath her window, "thou art here."

"Here!" echoed a voice in a soft whisper,

but for a short time; and I have a gift such as Donnezetti merits. A silken cord let down by the sweet hand will soon give it thee."

The cord was lowered. "Now," exclaimed Donnezetti, as she clasped a small box in her hands, "'tis mine Antonia!"

"'Tis a fair bridal gift, Donnezetti, and such as thou alone meritest, who art handsomer than Estelle."

A loud explosion echoed o'er the waters, followed by a shriek loud and piercing and the form of Donnezetti disappeared from the window.

"Now who triumphs?" exclaimed a voice, and the voice, was that of the mysterious female of last night: but the cavalier stood before her as she prepared to depart.

"Ha, Estelle! he exclaimed, starting back, "you here?"

"Aye, Antonia, I have come to gaze on thy Donnezetti, so far lovelier than Estelle. I have seen her—gazed on her—she waits for thee, Antonia. Farewell."

"Stay, stay," exclaimed the cavalier, but she was far from his reach, and as he watched her distant form he sighed.

"Donnezetti! Donnezetti!" he exclaimed, but the low murmuring of the breeze was the only response.

"Donnezetti! Donnezetti!" again exclaimed he, but Donnezetti answered not. "She is playing with me," exclaimed the cavalier, climbing up the rude ledge that flanked the window. The breeze had blown out the flickering lamp, and as the youth leaped from the window into the room, the moon's beams discovered to him the prostrate form of Donnezetti. "Donnezetti! Donnezetti!" he exclaimed, kneeling down by her side; but a loud shriek broke from him as he clasped her cold form. She is dead—dead!" he exclaimed, "and Estelle is avenged."

'Twas morning—the sun rose sweetly on Venice, and all was bustle and gaiety. Its streets were thronged with idlers; gondoliers plied swiftly on the waters, singing their rude songs. The mansions of the nobility echoed with the loud laugh and dulcet warblings; but in one, wailing was heard—a lovely and fair flower had perished; the fairest in Venice—and a noble mother wept o'er her dear child. The voice of woe might be heard mingled with the laugh of the gay.—Salutations were given and received; but amid these the name of Donnezetti was whispered with grief. Vengeance and curses were heaped on the head of her destroyer; and many who had once listened to her enchanting voice and gazed upon her beauty, wept.

The great square of Placa di Napoli was filled with spectators, and the windows of the houses peopled by fair ladies, who gazed with perfect indifference on the scenes enacted below. In the middle of the square a platform was erected, at the farther end of which stood a block of wood covered with black cloth, and by the side of it an executioner.

"They come! they come!" echoed through the throng, as from the farther side of the square a procession was seen slowly advancing; all eyes were directed to it. It soon reached the platform, and as a female form ascended the steps, a cry of exultation burst from the crowd.

The maiden looked around as if to reproach the crowd. 'Twas ESTELLE! the young, the fair Estelle! For a time she spoke not, but fixed her eyes upon a young man who stood near the scaffold closely wrapped up.

"Antonina!" she whispered in silver tones. The youth turned from the spot. "Will you refuse to hear the dying words of Estelle—of you Estelle!"

"No! mine!" exclaimed the youth, springing upon the platform, "not mine, Estelle."

"'Tis false!" she exclaimed, "did you not one balmy eve, swear you loved me!—Oh Antonia, I have done much to keep that love."

"Say rather to loose it! Estelle, I did but jest."

"And so did I, when I gave Donnezetti her bridal gift. But I shall never see you another's."

"It would not matter if you did Estelle."

"Antonina!" exclaimed the maiden, and she fixed her eyes on him, "I have loved you, and you a one. I am selfish, very selfish; and, though in the last hour of my existence, I cannot bear the thought of your being another's."

"Cannot!" echoed the youth, "cannot! When."

"Estelle is not yet dead, Antonia; there is still time left for her to hinder thee.—Shall I tell thee how?" and she drew near to him.

"If it is possible," replied the youth.

"'Tis possible! and thus, thus, Antonia, you are mine in death." A dagger gleamed aloft in the air, and Antonia fell a bleeding corpse at the maiden's feet, breathing the name of Donnezetti.

A cry of horror burst from the crowd.—The enraged populace sprang forward to wreak their vengeance, when a loud shriek proclaimed that all was over, and as the executioner held the gory head aloft, a smile of derision hung over the features of the once fair Estelle. L. F. W.

From the Gentleman's Magazine.

THE GLADIATOR.

A Sketch from the reign of Nero.

CHAPTER I.

The theatre was crowded to overflowing. The blood-thirsty Nero, attended by Burrhus and Seneca, had already arrived, and taken his usual seat high above the arena, to witness the combat. A more disinterested expression of countenance cannot be conceived, than that which characterized the features of the emperor, as he sat looking down upon the arena, now prepared for the sacrifice of his victim. The populace, since accustomed to such fiendish exhibitions of his tyranny, had commenced their usual practice of hissing at the appearance of Nero, who now rose to his feet, and demanded in an authoritative tone of the attending lictors to bring forth the combatants. Immediately at this command, the wide and heavy doors which formed the entrance to the arena, flew ajar, as if by magic, and sword in hand, appeared the devoted Gladiators, who forced by the lictors into the centre of the arena, in silence awaited the signal to commence. The one was an athletic slave—the favorite of the inhuman monarch of Rome—trained from his infancy to the sword, to execute the private deeds of vengeance of his royal master.—With a careless air of self-confidence he stood regarding his unwilling but haughty antagonist with a smile of contempt, as he proudly signified to the emperor his readiness to commence the conflict which was to add another to the already innumerable crimes of Nero. The other was a Goth who, for some pretended offence, had incurred the displeasure of Nero, and by his order condemned to fight the skillful Gladiator before himself and the populace. He seemed to be a man some years past the meridian of life, and his furrowed cheeks and silvery locks gave evident proof of past care and sorrow. Without exhibiting the least sign of fear or trepidation, he informed the lictor of his willingness to begin the combat, at the same time he cast one farewell lingering look towards the assembly of people, as if expecting to behold some loved one for the last time, but instantly he turned away, disappointed at not meeting the familiar countenance of the one expected. The populace were now evidently moved to sympathy at the appearance of the venerable combatant—his gray hairs, wrinkled brow, majestic air, and noble bearing, all conspired to excite to arouse the dormant feelings of humanity, in favor of the prisoner, and loud murmurs of disapprobation might be distinctly heard to issue from the gallery. In a short time the words of "Down with the tyrant!" "Let's slay the murderer!" were successively wafted to the ears of the affrighted Nero,

who, foaming at the mouth, now arose and exclaimed—"By Jupiter! the slave that speaks shall fight himself—now silence, fools, and let the fight commence."

At these words, Majesticus, the prisoner, started from his reverie. His whole frame, which before had appeared so calm, was distorted with rage—fire flashed from his hitherto dull black eye—turning to the citizens, he exclaimed, "Romans and friends! listen while I tell you the cause of this; have ye daughters? I had one and I loved her, but the tyrant—"

"Attack him, Sextus!" exclaimed the Gladiator, fearing some sudden disclosure. Scarcely had the command been given when the hireling slave, already tired of the long delay, rushed with an impetuous attack upon his unpracticed opponent.—The shock though unexpected was received by the victim in a manner worthy of a more experienced swordsman; at the same time recovering, he inflicted upon the neck of the slave a wound which caused him to stagger streaming with blood, across the arena. Loud shouts of applause now rent the theatre, and the Goth, astonished at his own success, followed up his advantage and repeating his blow, brought the Roman to his knee. All were now on the tip-toe of expectation—loud cries of "Slay the villain," now burst from the seats, and the sword of the prisoner was raised high above the head of his enemy, to perform the wish of the people! Silence deep and death-like now pervaded the whole assembly: the fallen Gladiator stared his conqueror in the face with sullen malignity; the emperor, pale as a corpse, his eyes starting out of their sockets looked down upon the pair unable to open his quivering lips—he gasped as if the last hope was severed.

"By heaven!" at last he exclaimed to Seneca—"by heaven! he shall not die—baffled—not done—slain by an ignoble Goth. By Mars! it is too bad," and in order to arrest the attention of Majesticus, and save his favorite in a loud voice exclaimed, "What, ho! Majesticus!"

At the mention of his name, the Goth suddenly turned towards the speaker, when the agile Sextus sprang to his feet, and with renewed vigor continued the combat with so much dexterity as to gain the advantage in a few passes, for the Goth not expecting such a movement, now acted entirely on the defensive. The emperor smiled maliciously as he perceived the affect of his artifice. The skill of the Gladiator was now brought to bear, and the inequality of the combatants was clearly perceivable, for the strokes of Majesticus waxed fainter and fainter at every blow of his antagonist, who emboldened by his success, and confident of victory, directed his blows with more skill and certainty.

"Cursed treachery!" cried the Goth, as covered with wounds and streaming with blood, he nerved his arm to the utmost, and summoning his remaining strength, he aimed one desperate blow at the breast of his opponent, who, skillfully avoiding the pass, at the same time he plunged his weapon, *Seneca Capulo*, into the heart of his victim! The tumult in the gallery increased. The emperor prepared hastily to depart—a shriek, loud and heart-rending, now burst upon the ears of the spectators! and a female appearing at the entrance of the arena, proclaimed at once the cause of the disturbance. She was beautiful in the extreme—pale and marbled like, she stood like a statue regarding the Gladiators. Her dress was of spotless white—simple, but arranged with a taste of extreme neatness, and her jet black hair hung in loose fastoons nearly down to her very feet. At last, recovering from her petrification, she rushed between the combatants just as Sextus had withdrawn his fatal weapon, who aiming to repeat his blow to make death more certain, *died his blade again in the blood of innocence!*

"Father!" murmured the dying girl as the red blood stained her spotless garments—"father! I am dying! bless me, father, ere I die."

"Ha! my child it is—it is—my Mina—"

tyrant—villain!—ha! ha! ha!" exclaimed the dying father, in a voice of distracted agony, and staggering back, he fell on the arena a lifeless corpse, embracing even in death the inelastie form of his martyred daughter. The assembly again broke forth in rebellious epithets against the emperor, and some were hastily approaching to put their threats in execution, when Nero warned by Seneca of his danger, retreated amid curses of the rabble, by a backway to his palace.

CHAPTER II.

'Twas midnight. The emperor had long since retired to his apartment. He lay upon his couch, wrapped in irregular slumbers, and annoyed by unwelcome dreams. "Ha! ha! ha!" exclaimed he in his sleep, "see she dies!—ha, is she his daughter? then I am avenged—no let a slave learn how to thwart a Caesar—what blood? Yes! blood—a Caesar's blood? No—the blood of the hated Goth!"

The roars of the tumult, occasioned by the enraged people, were now wafted to the ears of the murderer—the monarch of Rome—who awakening, and springing from his couch, hastily put on his armor, and stood in the centre of the apartment, the very picture of terror and dismay.

"Ha, Vindicus!—slave!—ha! dost thou sleep when a Caesar calls?" cries the terrified Nero.

"I await your commands," answered a tall youth entering to the emperor. He was a young man just ripening into manhood, dressed in the garb of the common slave, but his prominent features and the dark clusters of curly ringlets, which hung in rich profusion round his shoulders, proclaimed him to have been born of nobler parentage. Having made his obeisance to the emperor, he retired towards the window which overlooks the principle street in front of the palace; and had the emperor observed more closely, he might have seen him clutch frantically a dagger, which was but partially concealed in his bosom.

"See'st thou any thing?" asked Nero, in a voice rendered scarcely audible by fear; "see'st thou any thing?—for the sake of Rome, what means this uproar?"

A smile of triumph lighted up the pale features of the emperor, and said—"Fly, sire! fly! there is no time to spare—'tis Vindex, the Gaul—fly, sire! fly!" followed by the people and the Pratorian guards he approaches the palace—fly! sire fly!" exclaimed again and again the youth impetuously.

"Fly! slave?—fly from whom? a Caesar fly? By the Gods! if thou darest utter that word again, I'll cleave thee in two!"

The noise increased now to a ten-fold degree. The emperor trembled the shouts of the mob could now be distinctly heard—nearer they approached the palace. Nero retired to the window. "Ho, the tyrant! down with the tyrant!" exclaimed the Gaul without, as he endeavored to force an entrance into the palace. Alarmed for his immediate safety, Nero approached the slave, and affectionately laying his hand on his shoulder, said in a voice as mild as fear would permit—"Vindicus! dost thou love thy master?"

"Dost doubt thy slave, sire?" answered the youth emphatically.

"By heaven, I do not!—but see the whole of Rome is against me. The Pratorian band and Burrhus, and all, are ungrateful rabble—assist me now, slave! and command a Caesar hereafter. Nay be quick," reiterated Nero, as the tumult without increased, "or 'twill be too late. Say, slave can't thou not help? is there no assistance? hast thou no safety?"

"I have!" muttered Vindicus.

"What?"

"This!" whispered the slave through his clenched teeth, drawing from his bosom the hidden dagger.

"What meanest thou, slave?" asked Nero in an alarmed voice.

"To save my master!" was the cold response. "Say, sire! dost recollect the Goth—the Gladiator?"