

Columbia Democrat.

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

H. WEBB, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

Volume XI.]

BLOOMSBURG, COLUMBIA COUNTY, PA. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER, 15, 1845.

Number 30

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 arrears 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.

THE GARLAND



"With sweetest flowers enriched,
From various gardens call'd with care."

From the United States Journal.

EXCELSIOR.

Scorned be the heat disappointment embers:

Base be the soul for a moment enchained;
Power is within thee to burst the strong fetters,

And mount to a height yet to mortal un-
gained.

More fragrant th' balm when the branches
are shaken,

Sweeter the lyre notes the wing'd breeze
water.

The steel on the flint-stone is carelessly
hurled,

But the blaze which upspringeth illumines
the world.

Fix not thine eyes on the dark cloud above
thee

Think of the pure sky and sunlight beyond.
Let not the toil of the journey unnerve
thee;

Though seldom 'tis trod, yet the paths may
be found.

Upwards!—the dart may unerringly fly
At the eagle which swerves from his course
toward the sky;

Down the deep glen may the wild torrent
pour,

Amid the sweet valleys, the fierce tempest
roar.

It is valueless!—all which we strive not to
gain,—

But priceless!—the guardian of labor and
sorrow,

Then not what thou hast, but what thou
wouldest win;

Not the toil of to-day,—but the prize of to-
morrow.

Onward!—the mountain stream swells as it
flows,

As higher the sun rises higher it grows;
The proud tree on the wing of the wind
may be borne,

But the roots which strike deepest are latest
upturn

'Excelsior!'—grave on thy sword, furbished
bright—

In letters of fire, and the foeman shall
quail,

Let it blaze, like a star on the brow of the
night—

From the folds of thy banner flung wide to
the gale.

Look up! when no cloud hangs its dark
mantle o'er thee;

Reel! when no height rears its summit be-
fore thee

Wreaths for the victor, when battle is
won!

A smile from thy God, when life's labor is
done!

SOPHRON.

VERY GOOD.

The publishers of a Journal, the subscri-
bers to which are scattered over the country
very charitably wishes that some of them
were afflicted with the bilious remittent
ever.

MISCELLANEOUS.

From the Nantucket Inquirer.

BATTLE WITH THE PIRATES.

BY REV. CHARLES RICH.

I was at sea, bound to Cuba. Nothing transpired worthy of note for the first fifteen days of our passage, with the exception of a single event, which, as it may serve as a point of introduction to the subject of this sketch, shall be mentioned.—It was one of those empurpled mornings which the tropical sun so often ushers in with all its pageantry, while gliding along our sails all filled with a stiff trade, wind, that I discovered on the weather quarter, a black rakish looking craft running down with the intention, apparently, of intercepting our course. At the time of which I write, the Southern waters were infested with gangs of the most desperate and blood thirsty pirates which history ever yet mentioned. War was also existing between the Spaniards and the parties of South America, and privateers were constantly abroad for destruction of the enemy's ships. The new sail being to the windward had every advantage over us, and could therefore bear down upon us with a more flowing sheet, or haul her wind should she wish to avoid us. In less than three hours after we first saw her, she a beam of two miles distant, and proved to be a brig of nearly two hundred tons, well armed. All on board were somewhat alarmed at the approach of this new visiter, and especially when changing suddenly her course, she kept along directly abeam.

'A pirate—a pirate!' we heard from every mouth and from the captain to the cabin boy there was not one who did not wish himself safely moored at Mantanzas. This remained thus till noon, when the brig altered her course and steered directly for us.—Within an hour she shot beautifully across our bows, and firing a lee gun, her commander hailed the ship and ordered Captain N. to heave to, that he might board us. This was done, and the result was, that after half an hour had elapsed, during which time Captain N. and myself, were cabin'd with the Lieutenant of the brig, we were politely informed that we might proceed on our course, the officer announced himself, as he departed to be Lieutenant—of the Columbia gun brig L'Eperance. He had at first mistaken us for a Spanish vessel, and afterward delayed running down, as we looked not unlike a sloop of war.

It was on the third day after this occurrence, that we made the west end of Porto Rico. Captain N. had just gone below to breakfast, when taking up the spy glass I discovered in the Mana passage two tapering masts, scarcely visible under a high jutting bluff.

'He is a pirate, indeed,' cried I; 'on deck quick, Captain, for you will find this fellow to be no scare-crow of a man-of-war.' Captain N. was immediately on deck, and upon a second observation, he noticed that the vessel was hoisting her foresail, and before he could look the third time, she had every thing set coming out from under the land to meet us.

'This looks suspicious,' said he, 'to be one moment stowed away like a spider, with nothing to be seen, and then within five minutes, to be in full chase after a stranger. I am afraid that we shall not find it such easy work to get rid of him as we did the brig the other day, what say you Charles? suppose that 'his craft prove to be a pirate, will you fight him! or shall we heave to, and quietly suffer them to cut our throats?'

'As to fighting,' I replied, 'little can be done in that way, for our whole armament consists of only one four pounder, two muskets, one cutlass, and my fowling piece; array indeed against the force which that fellow doubtless musters. But I can tell you one thing Captain N. its no harder to die by a cannon ball or boarding pike, than being strung up to the yard arm and choked to death by degrees, or by having our windpipes unskillfully opened by these quack doctors. For one, then, I say, ge-

clear if we can, but if the worst come to the worst 'why fight them.'

The true character of the suspicious vessel was soon ascertained, for not being able to out sail us, she fell astern into our wake at the distance of less than a half a mile, and discovering her error at not having cut us off at once, she fired a lee gun and hoisted the Spanish flag.—Of this we took no notice. Another lee gun was fired and the American flag was run up. This was also suffered to pass unnoticed. The third gun came from the windward doubled shotted, and as the smoke rolled away, the black flag with Death's head and cross bones, was seen flying at the main sail peak.

The vessel was a snakish looking craft—schooner rigged, yet one of the most beautiful I had ever seen. Every part of her displayed the most beautiful symmetry, and the long raking masts tapered gradually away almost to mathematical point.—Everything below the sails was as black as paint could make, affording a striking contrast to the two lines of white foam that widened from either bow, her deck was filled with men, in the centre of whom was the great weapon of offensive and defensive operations was mounted a huge brass thirty-two pounder turning on a pivot. This 'long Tom' was polished to the highest degree, and seemed to fling back the bright sunbeams in disdain as they fell upon it.

A council of war was immediately held, in which every one having spoken it was decided first to make every effort to escape and if that did not succeed, to fight till none remained. No time to be lost, for though we could hold good our distance while the present breeze lasted, yet should the wind die away, the pirate, being smaller than ourselves, could easily sweep to us. Beside his big gun was talking away every few minutes, and sending his shot all around us; 1 of which had already been so impolitic as to come splintering through our round house passing between Capt N. and myself in its passage over the lee bulwarks. The sails were immediately wet by the skysails to the spanker—logs of wood were painted black & put through the port holes in imitation of guns, and all the old pieces of iron that could be found were tied up in bundles for the langrage. The muskets and fowling piece were loaded, the bayonets being taken from the former and affixed to poles, to serve as boarding pikes. Such was our force. Permit me reader, once more to enumerate it. Fourteen men, one four pounder with not a ball to fit it, and with only five pounds of powder, ten wooden guns, two muskets, one fowling piece, cutlass, and two long poles with bayonets attached to them.

'Cook,' said I going forward to the cabin, 'fill your coppers with water, and heat it as soon as possible.'

'Lord Massa Charles what you going to do with so much hot water?'

'I will tell you cook what I want of it. You and the steward must get one of the water casks and saw it in two equal parts, each making a large tub. Should the pirates attempt to board us with boats, you fill these tub, with hot water, and when the devils come along side just trip the water over their heads and see how they will relish a good scalding.'

'Kyn, Massa Charles, guess dey will ink dat a rader a warm rescepsion.'

Poor fellow! these were his last words for a shot glanced from the mainmast, struck him on the head and killing him instantly.

Never was I more proud of my Yankee countrymen than during the terrible day. Unarmed, defenceless, tho' strictly lying around and across our vessel, with death directly before us, and that too a violent one; and one of our number stretched lifeless at our feet, it was enough to dash every face with consternation.—But not a single visage of fear could be traced in a single countenance of our little band. Every heart and hand was nerved to the contest while the firm and determined step with which each moved from spot to spot, showed that a noble resolution and not feeling of despair was to work in each man's bosom.

Short as has been my life, I have many scenes been brought into extreme pain, and more than once have been called to look

death in the face, but never did feel as I did during that chase. 'Tis not an easy thing to summon up your manliness and resolve to die—to trample down those high hopes of the future which have hitherto incited and sustained us—to behold our brightest dreams, like bubbles, dashed to nought by a violent hand—to tear away the warm and burning thoughts of home, and friends which cluster around the heart, and isolate one's self upon the edge of the grave—to gather up all the past into a minute, and gaze upon it with our last tearful look, and then fling forward the vision into eternity, that we may anticipate our reception there; it is not an easy thing to say die. We can read and even think of death without commotion, if he be far away, but when we listen to the hollow tread of his step lurking around us, and hear the weapon, hissing by as it hurries to slay our fellow, and feel that we may be the next victim; there is not a soul but thinks quickly and not a heart which does not beat as if it would tear itself from the bosom. And yet whatever these undefinable feelings may be, they are no fears—they are something nobler, bolder, which, while they send the life blood through every vein with the lightning's speed, bid the soul act, and aid it in action.

This is the hour when true courage sovereignty on its throne, it is now that noble deeds are done, to which the finger of his story loves to point. Through the day we kept the interval between us and the pirate about the same. We had perhaps gained on him a little, but sun went down the breeze slackened, and soon died away almost to a calm, though not till night had shut in for protection. Every light on board, including that of the binnacle was extinguished, and the helmsman commanded to steer by the stars. The night wore away slowly, each one in turn catching a short nap on deck, for none was permitted to go below, as an attack might at any time be expected from the boats of the schooner.

I had stretched myself upon one of the seats in the stern boat, with my head resting on the taffrail for a pillow, not to sleep for that was impossible, but to think of home, and to throw off for a moment, the heavy weight that was crushing my heart. It was so very still that the silence seemed oppressive. I had laid but a few moments when I thought I heard something resembling the splash of an oar, and rising from my seat threw a hasty glance over the bows of the boat. What a sight met my eyes! There was a large boat filled with men, at least thirty in number, all armed with cutlasses and pistols, while by the side of each lay a boarding pike. Fortunately for me I was not observed, and clearing with a single bound the sides of the boat and taffrail, I sprang upon deck and shouted with a voice that rung like thunder through the air. 'Pirates along side! pirates along side!'

The alarm spread through the ship and every one in a moment was ready to repel the enemy. The pirates perceived they were discovered, and opened the attack with pistols and upon the first fire disabled three of our poor little band, yet we yielded not an inch but stood ready to die in defence of the vessel. The muskets and fowling piece were brought down to the taffrail, shure death to the first two heads that appeared above it.

'Board the Yankees my boys and cut their cowardly throats and then for the plunder,' came from the commander of the boat showing by the use of the language that he was either an Englishman or an American.

'Not easily; said a green hand to me, 'but the rascals, I'll spoil the bread basket of some of them I know.'

Determined, however, as we were, all our resistance would have been in vain had not the steward interfered. Five of the pirates had at last gained a footing in the main chain, and the first two had almost as soon fallen back dead in their boats, from the unerring fire of our muskets. There was no time to reload, and in a moment the other three were over the rail and on the deck in close grapple with the captain, and two of the men. A groan behind and in the

chains, told me that the slaughter was going on, and the next moment the second mate

all dead in the lee scuppers. For a minute or two it was the clash of steel, oaths, groans, when suddenly a loud splash was heard, and almost at the same moment those of the pirates who were in the boat were observed to shove off with most horrible imprecations. The steward it seemed had at the beginning of the contest, filled the tubs with boiling water, and unobserved by the pirates had dashed it full in their faces. Blinded and convulsed with pain they could do nothing, and their only safety was in retreat. Six who were on deck soon fell literally cut to pieces, not however, without having slain two of our number. As the battle closed a kind Providence, as it in pity sent a stiff breeze, and in a few minutes we were moving rapidly along secure at least for the present from further danger.

When the day dawned our foe was discovered about three miles astern, and as the land breeze was dying away, and consequently very light, she had two boats attached to the schooner rowing head to quicken her speed. In consequence of this assistance the pirate gained rapidly upon us and when the sun rose only a half a mile, separate us. The shots were flying fast, carrying a way a large part of our mizzen topmast and splintered the main yard arm. Our sails were completely riddled, yet fortunately no one was injured. Preparations were again made for boarding, & we boats were this time sent both filled with men. On they came with their pikes and cutlasses gleaming in the morning sun. It was now a dead calm, and there we lay with no means of defence, compared with that of the enemy unable to move a single inch, and a bloody set of men within a quarter of a mile, maddened by their former success, rowing up prepared to wreak upon us vengeance by every imaginable torture. The fifteen minutes which elapsed after boats left the schooner were to us a period of intense agony. We knew that we must die, and that by inches, unless that unerring Providence, without whose notice not even a sparrow falls to the ground, should interfere for our rescue. The parting hand was taken by all—no distinction now existing between officers and crew. A letter, previously prepared by the captain, stating our situation, was placed in a bottle with the mouth well sealed, was committed to the ocean to tell our fate to those we love at home. Many a prayer was offered by hearts that never prayed before, and eyes that had never wept were now filled with tears.

Each prayed for himself, but wept for others; wept, that this little band of honest hearted men should fall like sheep before the murderous knives of the destroyers.

'I should not wish my poor shipmates said Captain N., 'to go before the bar of my God, as I expect in a few minutes to do, unnecessarily stained with the blood of my fellow beings, but I hold self-preservation to be the great first law of our nature; and although to all human appearance, we must die, even if we should succeed in destroying three of our number of the enemy, yet we will endeavor to rid the world of some of these monsters.'

According to the directions then given by him four barrels were placed on the quarter deck and covered with boards, upon which temporary platform the little four pounder was lifted by all hands, loaded to the muzzle with pieces of iron.—The object of this was to raise the gun above the rail, for the pirates being astern, it could not be directed toward them through the port holes in the side of the vessel. Capt. N. aimed the gun himself, not pointing it directly at the boats, but at a spot about twenty rods distant from the ship, with the intention of discharging the piece when the boats covered that spot. The priming was secured on, and in breathless anxiety we waited the enemy's approach.

Suddenly a gleam of hope flashed a cross every countenance. In the eastern board was observed a dark ripple—kirting the horizon; sure evidence that the sea breeze, and therefore plied cars with all their strength.

from the range of the gun, 'and the wa'y second I lift my hand do you fire.'

Almost immediately the signal was given and the gun was discharged. Unerringly did those iron messengers of destruction do their work. One boat was completely shattered to pieces, and as far as we could judge at least twenty sunk into a bloody grave. Those in the other were apparently uninjured, but were obliged to stop and rescue their companions. This delay saved us, for before the enemy were again prepared for the attack the sails beautifully stretched themselves to the full, under the first blast of the sea breeze that reached us, and the noble ship careered over with the pressure, as if bowing in defence to the fiends, immediately shot away from danger. Never did the air ring with nine more hearty cheers than those from the quarter deck of the Java. The change was electrical; and the revolution of feelings in every bosom was legibly written on the countenance.

Some danced, and some, among the rest our Captain, even wept for joy, and many were the long yawns and jokes told on that day. Still we were not entirely free from danger; for although we might hope that the pirate thus baffled & weakened would abandon the chase yet he might resolve upon being revenged for our resistance, and pursue us even to our destined harbor.

Early next morning we had observed a sail on our weather bow, but so far distant that her hull could not be distinguished. After the breeze had taken us we soon gained upon her and by noon had come up abeam. She proved to be the French brig L'Amicite, from Havre bound to Vera Cruz, with two hundred passengers on board.

'Ah! Monsieur,' said her captain it broken English, 'if you be von honest man, you will please tell me vat for dat vessel fire so many guns at you?'

We replied that it was a piratical vessel.

'Mon Dieu! von pirate did you say? Oh! sarr! I esteem von very great man to escape so very nicely. Monsieur oh Monsieur, vat shall I do? My vessel is von slow sailor, & pirate vill catch us and kill us all. Oh, Monsieur vill you be so much a good man as to keep vid me a little while?'

To this request we knew not what to reply. The brig, as the captain said, was a very dull sailor, and if we kept company we should be obliged to shorten sail and thus again be exposed to our old enemy. On the other hand, we could not endure the thought of deserting so many of our fellow beings in a moment of extreme danger, and yet if we remained with them we could not defend ourselves, much less them. We however took in some of our light sails & kept with the brig for nearly an hour. Finding, however, that the pirate gained rapidly upon us only one alternative remained, and that was to crowd all sail and leave the brig to the protection of Providence, unless indeed we were willing to remain bound hand and foot to be captured. The commander of the brig was therefore advised to alter his course and steer in a northerly direction, as the pirate being so eager to secure us for our incivility to his men, might leave the brig unmolested. The light sails being again set, we parted forever. Sadly did we mistake the probable movements of the pirates, for immediately upon our separation he hauled his wind and stood for the brig.

Gladly would I here close my sketch and if possible the darkest oblivion a cross the bitter recollection of that hour. But it can never be effaced from memory; it has haunted us by day and by night, even now though many years have intervened, as I recall it more vividly before my mind hot scalding tears are gathering.

The brig was soon overtaken. For a few moments there was a dread conflict—yard-arm was locked in yard-arm, and a column of smoke soon wrapped them both in one deadly embrace. The Java was Hove too that we might learn the result of the battle. Soon the firing ceased and the smoke rolled away—what a sight was presented! Not a spar of the brig was standing white her decks were covered with dead everywhere the blows of death. The victims were soon despatched and one after another thrown into the ocean. The schooner had lost foremast which now lay to a short distance from her. The work of plunder went on. Three the boats went