

# 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.

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## 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 discountance 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 Apalachicola Commercial Advertiser. SELLING SNAKES.

A short time since, as one of our steam boats was wending her way to the head of navigation, she brought up at an intermediate port between this place and the junction of the Chattahoochee and Flint rivers, for the purpose of "wooding" or landing freight. As soon as she had touched the bank, "bow line" made fast and plank out, she was boarded by one of those not very rare specimens of humanity, a full grown, live "hossier," bearing all the outward marks and brands which designate the "green horn" genus. Only waiting till the noise made by blowing off steam had ceased, with his hat drawn down on his eyes and his arms firmly buried to the elbows in his "trousers' pockets," he marched resolutely up to the clerk of the boat, and in a loud, uncultivated tone inquired "if he didn't want to buy a young rattle snake?" The clerk, like most of "the boys" on our steamboats, being particularly fond of a joke, and knowing his man, immediately conceived a plan by which some fun might be had in the dull and low prices. Assuming an air as serious as a judge, he propounded to the snake man many questions as to the size, age, color and order of his reptile, gravely remarking after all his interrogatories had been answered satisfactorily, that the was no just time in the snake market him sell but there was a commercial house in Apalachicola who were loading for Liverpool, and that part of the cargo was to consist of a rare collection of wild beasts, birds, and reptiles, that every thing curious was in great demand and snakes if they were the real pizen, would readily bring from fifteen to 20 dollars a head. The "hossier," elated with the thought of what a handsome sum he could make, thanked the clerk profoundly for his information, and immediately set out for home, where he ordered his hands to drop every thing else and go to catching snakes.

By the time the next boat passed that way, bound for this port, had succeeded in capturing, alive and unharmed a barrel of the most poisonous serpents embracing every variety and hue that crawled in his "diggins"—the adder, the moccasin, the rattle snake, &c., &c., of all ages and sizes. Having them placed on board the boat, regularly shipped in good order and well conditioned, marked and numbered as in the margin, and to be delivered at the port of Apalachicola, to Messrs. B. & H., [as per direction of the clerk aforesaid.] he paid his passage and took them in his own care, to make their delivery doubly certain. As soon as he had arrived here, his first inquiry was for the location of the above firm having found which, he presented himself with all the dignity of a man engaged in legitimate trade, stated the information he had received from the clerk, and desired that his snakes should be put at once upon the market.

Understanding the hoax at once, and determining not to spoil the fun, Messrs. B. & H., regretted that they had just filled their order for snakes, but had no doubt they would meet with ready sale, as there were several houses in the trade, and he was directed to one of these. By this time the news became general, and every body knew that there was a snake vender in town, and all had a disposition to "humor the joke." Resisting the signs along as he went, our snake friend soon presented himself at another counter and demanded "if they didn't want to buy some snakes?" Here he was interrogated with business-like gravity, as to the age, size, and species to which he replied that they were all sizes—little, midlin' and big; old, young and middle aged; spreadin' adders, copper belied, high land, and moccasin, striped and yaller rattle snakes, but they were all the genuine pizen, warranted to bite if they could, and kill if they bit. These were just the kind they wanted, and they were extremely sorry he had not arrived a day or two earlier, as it was probable they might have purchased the "whole lot," however, there was a firm a few doors below who would no doubt be glad of so good an opportunity of furnishing their friends in Liverpool with such a variety of poisonous serpents, and to this house he was directed. In this way the poor, unsuspecting, unsophisticated snake catcher was driven from house to house, from number to number, until at last, the day began to wane, and the prospects of a sale to grow dim, he presented himself, with flushed face and perspiring forehead, to the captain of one of our vessels, who he had been told, probably would take the whole lot at a fair price, and asked in a desponding and almost suppliant tone, "Don't you want to buy my snakes?" The captain was prepared for the question—the joke had reached the climax—and an unaffected irresistible roar of laughter broke from the crowd who had collected to hear his last appeal. The snake man stood aghast, the very picture of utter amazement and wonder, but *verdict* as he was, a ray of light broke in upon him, and he began to understand that he had been completely taken in. If any doubt still lingered about his abuse of intellect, they were effectually removed by the remarks of the crowd.

"Well," said he after pausing awhile as if to bring his mind to a focus upon the extent of his wrongs—"well it is a mean trick, any how to serve a fellow—Here I have had three niggers two days a ketchin' snakes takin' a pile of pains to get 'em without a bribe or scratch—run the risk of bein' bit by the blasted pizen things—paid three dollars to come down on the 4-d old boat, and deck passage, at that and the danger of bustin' up thrown in—paid thirty seven and a half cents on the barrel—lost three days work myself and wore my legs almost off a trampin' over your isler shells and said—your nasty fleas all over me as bin'—and didn't sold nary snake! It's a low trick, any way you can fix it and that's what a fellow gets by havin' any dealings with your steamboat clerks and your town people—the out-fits set in all creation! I'll chop every snake's head off, and take 'em back home for they should intercrawl in such a dod rotted place as this is!" And the "green horn" was downright savage. To appease his wrath the boys treated to the best the town afforded—made up a subscription to pay his passage back home in the cabin—and promised never to buy a snake from any body but him because he produced the real pizen breed.

Having put his threats of beholding his serpents into execution he left our city on return of boat with his barrel of dead vipers in a much better humor than could be expected—declaring however most roundly to the last that he'd never believe a d—d steamboat clerk again as long as he lived and that he had made his first and last trip to Apalachicola.

"Shall I help you to the butter?" said a lady to one of her boarders. "Don't trouble yourself the butter is strong enough to help itself," was the reply.

## GENERAL ZACHARY TAYLOR.

As there is a general desire to learn something of the history, character and qualifications of General Taylor, who now stands so conspicuously before the whole country as the commander of the army of occupation, we extract from one of our exchanges the following sketch. It will be found interesting:

General Taylor entered the army in 1808, immediately after the attack on the Chesapeake, and has been in the service of his country from that time to the present. Having entered the army as a lieutenant of infantry he had risen to the command of a company at the beginning of the last war.

For his gallant defence of Fort Harrison on the 5th September, 1812, President Madison conferred upon him the brevet rank of Major, and he is now the oldest brevet in the army.

In 1832, he became the Colonel of the 6th infantry, with this regiment he went to Florida in 1833, where he was always foremost in danger.

On the 25th December, 1838, Col. Taylor, at the head of a detachment of about 500 men, composed of parts of the 1st, 4th and 6th regiments of United States Infantry and some Missouri volunteers, met about 700 Indians under Alligator, Sam Jones and Coconochien, on the banks of the Okecho-bee. This battle was fought by the Indians, for the day before the engagement, Col. Taylor received a challenge from Alligator, telling him where to find him, and bantering him to come on—Col. Taylor desired nothing better and immediately pushed on as a rapid march to the expected battle ground, fearful that the wild Indian might change his purpose. The Indians had a strong position in a thick swamp, covered in front by a small stream, whose quicksands rendered it almost impassable but he pushed through the quicksands and swamps in the face of a deadly fire from a concealed foe, driving the Indians before him.

The action was long and severe. The Indians yielding the ground inch by inch, and then only at the point of the bayonet. After three hours of bloody contest, the Indians were routed and pursued with great slaughter, until night. This was the last stand the Indians ever made, in a large body, and the only instance in which they voluntarily gave battle. Though Col. Taylor won the day, it was at the expense of 139 killed and wounded—more than one fourth of his whole force. Two colonels, (Colonel Thompson of the Missouri volunteers, and Colonel Genery of the Missouri volunteers,) fell at the head of the troops. Capt. Van Swearingen and Lieuts. Brooke and Carter also fell in the engagement.

During the whole of the engagement, Col. Taylor remained on horseback, passing from point to point, cheering his men to the conflict, and exposed to the Indian rifle at every moment.

For this battle, Mr. Poinsett, Secretary of War, rendered merited praise to all engaged, in his communication to Congress. The brevet of Brigadier General was conferred on Col. Taylor, and he was given the chief command in Florida, which he resigned in 1840, after four or five years arduous and indefatigable service in the swamps and hammocks of Florida.

After his retirement from Florida, he was assigned to the command of the 1st department of the army, including the States of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, &c. with his headquarters at Fort Jessup, Louisiana.

His position gave him the command of the army of occupation, but the usage of his service would have justified the Government in assigning to that command one of the six general officers of the regular army, whose rank is higher than his.

But it may be fairly presumed that the high character, gallant services and great experience of Gen. Taylor, aside from his geographical position, pointed him out as the appropriate commander of an army, which was to plant our flag upon the banks of the Rio del Norte.

Gen. Taylor is about 56 years of age,

is a man of much general information, and an excellent and tried soldier; a prudent and skilful commander, whose traits of character are a wise precaution in providing for the hour of trial and a fearless, reckless courage in battle.

He is a Kentuckian by birth, and all that word implies. He is an American in heart, and stamped with all the elements of a hero, by nature.

Under his command the flag of the Union will receive no dishonor on the banks of the Rio Grande.

## ANECDOTE OF WASHINGTON AND MORRIS.

Among the interesting anecdotes, related to us most graphically and feelingly of Washington, by Mr. Custis, when in the city lately, was one on the landing of the General at Whitehall, when he was about to be sworn as President of the United States. As the General was stepping on shore from the vessels he was addressed by an American officer, with "Sir I have the honor to command a guard of soldiers to escort you to your residence, and also on any other occasion you may desire."

"A guard! a guard for me?" exclaimed Washington, raising his stature, and quite overlooking the guard of some fifty soldiers. "Why, sir, I need no guard. I call for no other guard than the affection of my countrymen!" Whereupon with a wave of his hand the guard fell in to the rear. Mr. Custis says this anecdote was frequently related among others, by John Carroll, who was then with the General, and heard the remark of Washington, tending to show that he was a good and great man, and one worthy of the affection of the people; this alone would satisfy him, as it should all others of the fact.

Another anecdote related to us by Mr. Custis, was this: When Washington had marched his army as far as Elk River, on his way to Yorktown, Virginia, to attack Lord Cornwallis, the soldiers, then had been long without their pay, & greatly fatigued, requested their arrears; and as paper money was of little value to them, they desired it in silver. This was an alarming difficulty with Washington at this crisis for he knew well that his soldiers should have their pay, and yet he was extremely anxious to reach Yorktown with his troops as soon as possible, lest Lord Cornwallis should escape with his forces, which Washington had so confidently hoped to capture. In this dilemma he immediately called to him, Robert Morris, to whom he related in confidence and with much feeling the particulars of the case, and the prospective consequences, should it be found impossible to raise the money. Mr. Morris, who, as is well known, was a financier, as well as a true patriot and honest man, saw at once the difficulty and its probable consequences; and bethinking himself for a moment, he said, "As, I have it, General, I'll obtain the money."

The French fleet lay far below in the bay, yet hither Mr. Morris immediately pursued his way. Addressing himself to the Count under whose command the fleet was, he represented the anticipated funds from the government for the payment of the troops not having arrived in season, it became necessary to pay them before reaching the battle ground, where success was certain for the combined French and American forces, therefore, he would take the liberty of asking him with freedom for an accommodation for the present, and that he himself would be responsible for the amount, if required, &c.—This was done with so much truth and confidence that it produced the desired effect.

The Count readily and very politely proffered the requisite sum of silver; and

proceeding himself to his iron chest, took it out in crowns done up in parcels and delivered it to Mr. Morris; who thereupon proceeded with a light heart to the American camp, and to the no small joy of Washington, and his brave but suffering army. The army it is well known, proved successful, and perhaps this circumstance contributed in a great measure to that result.

There were two or three anecdotes of Robert Morris, told by Mr. Custis, which showed that he was one of the most important men, if not next to Washington himself, in the happy results of the Revolution; and Washington ever esteemed him as such. In this connection, Mr. Custis related most touchingly, the visit of Washington to the jail in Walnut st., Philadelphia, (where Mr. Morris was afterwards confined for debt,) on his arrival in that city. The interview was indescribably affecting, and so also was a visit subsequently paid by Mr. Custis to Mr. Morris when Mr. M. was near his death. But what rendered these last anecdotes more interesting on this occasion, was the fact that they were addressed to a group of gentlemen, one of whom was the venerable son of Robert Morris, and a resident of Philadelphia.

Gen. Waddy Thompson, late Minister to Mexico has just issued an interesting work entitled "Recollections of Mexico." As every thing relating to this country at the present juncture of affairs is read with interest, we make a few extracts from the work giving a description of the city of Mexico.

### THE CITY OF MEXICO.

The city of Mexico is said to be the finest built city on the American Continent. In some respects it certainly is so. In the principal streets the houses are all constructed according to the strictest architectural rules: The foundations of the city were laid, and the first buildings were erected by Cortes, who did everything well which he attempted,—from building houses, or writing a couplet to conquering an empire. Many of the finest buildings in Mexico are still owned by his descendants.—The public square is said to be unsurpassed by any in the world; it contains some twelve or fifteen acres paved with stone. The cathedral covers one entire side, the palace another, the western side is occupied by a row of very high and substantial houses, the second stories of which project into the street the width of the pavement; the lower stories are occupied by the principal retail merchants of the city. The most of these houses were built by Cortes who with his characteristic sagacity and an avarice which equally characterized him in the latter part of his life selected the best portion of the city for himself.

The President's Palace formerly the palace of the viceroys, is an immense building of three stories high, about five hundred feet in length, and three hundred and fifty wide it stands on the site of the palace of Montezuma. It is difficult to conceive of so much more the appearance of a cotton factory or penitentiary than what it really is. The windows are small, and a parapet wall runs the whole length of the building, with nothing to relieve the monotony of its appearance except some very indifferent ornamental work in the centre, there are no doors in the front either of the second or third stories—nothing but disproportionately small windows, and too many of them the three doors, and there are only three in the lower story, are destitute of all architectural beauty or ornament. Only a very small part of this palace is appropriated to the residence of the President, all the public offices are here, including those of the heads of the different departments; ministers of war, foreign relations, finance and justice, the public treasury, &c. &c. The halls of the house of deputies and of the senate are also in the same building and last, and least the botanic garden. After passing through all sorts of filth and dirt on the basement story you come to a dark narrow passage which conducts you to a massive

door, which when you have succeeded in opening, you enter an apartment enclosed with high walls on every side but open at the top, and certainly not exceeding eighty feet square, and this is the botanic garden of the palace of Mexico, a few shrubs and plants and the celebrated manita tree, are all that it contains. I have rarely in my life seen a more gloomy and desolate looking place. It is much more like a prison than a garden. A decrepit, palsied old man, said to be more than a hundred years old, is the superintendent of the establishment, no one could have been selected more in keeping with the general delapidation and dreariness of this melancholy affair.

But the cathedral, which occupies the site of the great idol temple of Montezuma offers a striking contrast. It is five hundred feet long, by four hundred and twenty wide. It would be superfluous to add another to the many descriptions of this famous building which have already been published. Like all other churches in Mexico, it is built in the Gothic style.—The walls of several feet thickness, and made of unburnt stone and lime. Upon entering it, one is apt to recall the wild fictions of the Arabian Nights, it seems as if the wealth of empires was collected there. The clergy of Mexico do not, for obvious reasons, desire that their wealth should be made known to its full extent, they are, therefore, not disposed to give full information upon the subject, or to exhibit the gold and silver vessels, vases, precious stones, and other forms of wealth, quite enough is exhibited to strike the beholder with wonder. The first object that presents itself on entering the cathedral is the altar, near the centre of the building, it is made of highly wrought and highly polished silver, and covered with a profusion of ornaments of pure gold. On each side of this altar runs a balustrade, enclosing a space about eight feet wide and eighty or a hundred feet long. The balustrades are about four feet high, and four inches thick in the largest part, the hand-rail, from six to eight inches wide. Upon the top of this hand-rail at the distance of six or eight feet apart, are human images, beautifully wrought and about two feet high. All of these, the balustrade, hand-rail, and images, are made of a compound of gold, silver, and copper—more valuable than silver.—I was told that an offer had been made to take this balustrade and replace it with another of exactly the same size and workmanship of pure silver, and to give half a million of dollars besides. There is much more of the same balustrade in other parts of the church I should think in all of it not less than three hundred feet.

As you walk through the building, on either side there are different apartments, all filled from the floor to the ceiling, with paintings, statues, huge candlesticks waiters and a thousand other articles made of gold or silver. This too is only the every day display of articles of least value the more costly are stored away in chests and closets. What must it be when all these are brought out with the immense quantities of precious stones which the church is known to possess? And this is only one of the churches of the city of Mexico where there are between sixty and eighty others and some of them possessing little less wealth than the cathedral and it must also be remembered that all the other large cities such as Puebla, Guanajuato, Guanaxuato, Zacatecas, Durango, San Luis Potosi have each a proportionate number of equally gorgeous establishments.

### RAIN AND ROMANCE.

The editor of the Waterbury (Conn.) American "lets off" the following fine specimen of hyphenism, on receiving a refreshing rain.

"The external features of the vegetable kingdom already exhibit signs of gratulation and early flowering trees and shrubs are gently disclosing their blooming charms to the gaze of their impatient admirers."

Editors are to be so flowery Nature might as well hang up her fiddle.

Study is as necessary to the mind as food is to the body.