

# 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.

SOUTH SIDE OF MAIN, A FEW DOORS BELOW MARKET-STREET.

#### TERMS:

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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 Norristown Register and Democrat.

#### THE AMERICAN EXILES.

A STORY OF THE REVOLUTION.

It was a proud day, that told the defeat of Yorktown, to the three millions of people that formed the population of the 'young Republic' that seven years before, to the astonishment of the world, had assumed the title of Independence beneath the emblematic insignia of Thirteen Stars and Stripes. Report seemed to have winged her swiftest courser; good news and glad tidings were written upon her scroll, and though her speed was as the lightnings that dart through Bolivian valleys, yet her voice, distinct as the thunders which shake the lofty Andes, was audible in every direction. The whole country was in ecstasy; every city and considerable town were taking methods extraordinary of expression of gratitude. But none could surpass Boston—unconquerable Boston!—(then as now, the great representative of New England spirit and sentiment) in grandeur of exhibition. Yet amid all this joy, heartfelt and expressed, there was found one it could not affect, a broken heart such tidings could not heal; a sorrowful countenance, from which public rejoicing could not chase the gloom!

In the (then) outskirts of the city was to be seen a small but neat and attractive dwelling, something of an English appearance, which has, as many others, long since given place to the more capacious ones of brick that, in durable walls, rise their multiple stories, to the no less joy of citizens than admiration of strangers. Here dwelt the heart of sorrow, the gloomy face that public rejoicing could not kindle into smiles. Her winters had not numbered to the blanching of her hair, yet years of sorrow had driven the freshness of youth from her countenance,—a freshness she once unrivalled by nymphs. Her history briefly related forms the subject of our story; yet her's is inseparable from another's, with whose we readily unite it.

The disinherited son, or Alpheus Wenton, as he appellation himself against detection, was the son of a British Nobleman both wealthy and influential, and being eldest, was of course regarded from birth as heir both to his honors and estate. Early as is common in high birth, promising traits were discovered in him—they were truly there. With an exterior that recommended him at once to the eye, he possessed an expansive mind, and a noble, generous disposition; qualities mind must discover, and mind alone can appreciate.

The Nobleman was an ardent supporter of the Crown's imperialism, and regarded those who would limit its prerogative, as the worst of traitors. In vain he strove to insinuate his prejudices into the young man's mind, whose own observation had early formed in him liberal principles, which the Nobleman observed with much concern; but hoped age would cure him of such "folly."

Youthful companions have much influence in moulding the mind. Wenton had one whose influence was not likely to be inconsiderable; he was the son also of a Nobleman, but whose estate had been confiscated, and honors taken from him. The unaffected gentility of his manners, the in-

telligence of his mind, and the magnanimity with which he sustained his family's arranged reputation, at once recommended him to the warm-hearted Wenton.

They first met when hunting in the forest—they ascended each other; they were friends—for mutual worth was a reciprocal recommendation. Wenton accompanied him to the dwelling of his father, which was near the woods, a most picturesque situation—a charming spot. About it grew flowers of every hue, collected from every clime, whose various, but united odors, expanded in the morning breeze, adding fragrance to Albion's balmy air, would oft call up Paradisaal recollections to the reader of the sublime Milton, while the shade of elms and poplars would well represent the bowers where—

With flowers, garlands, and sweet smiling herbs,

Espous'd Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed. [Paradise Lost. Book IV.]

It had been a country-seat in more prosperous days, and was preserved to him by the interposition of friends. As the young man from first sight had gained his esteem so the unfortunate nobleman drew his reverence, whose truly noble spirit that could not sink with the loss of titles, but like the gallant ship that outrides the gale when lightened of its ponderous freight, disclosed a fairer model, was a fine picture of true greatness for his contemplation. But there was in this group one that came in for a still greater share of his affections. The nobleman had a daughter, Elphisia, she was fair as Houries, and gay as the butterflies which fanned the fragrant air among her rose-beds. Her father's exile was her own, nor were her charms lessened by the seclusion. Wenton saw but to adore,—he became a lover.

Such an attachment the young man was aware, would be far from pleasing to his strict father; therefore he would gladly have concealed it. Not long could this be, for his visits being frequent, his resort was inquired after, and the jealous nobleman was the first to make the discovery. He met him on his return, upbraided him in a rage for conduct that must bring disgrace upon his family, and threatened dishonour if he persisted. But what reasons, reproofs, or even threats, can weigh with the warm passions of a young man's breast? What are the pleasures love does not afford? what the honors its object does not promise? Again he went,—and again. Once more he was upbraided—the expostulation calmer, ending in a more determined threat. A less noble spirit than his might have been daunted—a less lovely object than she might have been forgotten—but no threats were so strong, no honors so dazzling, as the lovely Elphisia. Again he went.—He returned, but it was only to prove the punctuality of him who seldom promised in vain. The paternal roof was denied his shelter; no indulgent father welcomed him. When he knocked for admittance he was bid peremptorily to depart, and as he turned away with unwilling steps, he heard a fearful anathema pronounced upon him. The sternness of the father he knew was unrelenting, and no favor could be expected out from implicit obedience. "Could he obey? could he forsake her?" These questions were soon decided with one short struggle of the two all-powerful passions of the human heart, Interest and Love. For a moment the former balanced, but his heart mounting with the latter, it came down in triumph. "She should be his even at the loss of nobility;" and he hurried to the cottage with his misfortunes as the noblest proof of constancy. His story was soon related—Elphisia wept that she was the cause, or that she could not make returns; the nobleman wondered at his rash proceedings and urged him to return, that fortune might favor his desires, while the young man, not less affected, listened with a thousand raging passions in his breast, for the wrongs of his family were called afresh to his mind, & appeared more grievous as he contemplated them in conjunction with his friend's.

The friends were now constantly together young and ardent as they were, and com-

panions in misfortunes, they were prepared for any undertaking, however rash. They looked upon the power that could thus sport with their fortunes, as the worst of tyranny, and madly thought to upturn such long standing and deep rooted evils. The same forest in which their first meeting took place, became the place of resort—and there they formed the wildest of schemes that their excited minds could conceive. But they and their reckless companions were soon discovered, and forced to flee, yet not till he had made Elphisia his own. The nuptials were sudden and their parting a sorrowful one, but it was forced. He succeeded in evading his pursuers, crossed over to France, thence into Spain, whence he took passage to America. The West Indies he visited and the main, but Spanish and Spanish customs were alike intolerable, so he determined to seek a residence, though at some risk, trusting to his disguised appearance, among his own countrymen. He resolved on Boston, where, even at that period, strangers excited but little curiosity.

A more hazardous task must now be performed—he must inform his anxious spouse of his place of exile, and take means for her passage undiscovered, across the vast Atlantic. This could be done at no little hazard, as the nobleman was strongly suspected, and even after establishing his innocence, was still narrowly watched that the oculatory of the culpable might be discovered, as they were not thought to have fled the kingdom. All obstacles, however were at length overcome, and after two years of sad separation, their happiness was renewed by a joyful meeting. Their misfortunes were at once forgotten their exile seemed an asylum from persecution, and their seclusion was prized as the privilege of domestic enjoyment—for seclusion was necessary to security. He had prepared a home for her reception, just beyond the city side,—and where we found the broken hearted widow at the end of seven years' War, a happy and cheerful wife and an affectionate husband took up their abode about seven years before its commencement.

The time of their arrival was the most important era in the history of the British Colonies; the Ministry were about commencing that oppressive system of taxation so destructive to their colonial interests. The colonies themselves were fearful of some calamity—some aggression that might deprive them of those rights which to Englishmen were then sacred. However these fears may have affected the public tranquility, the home of the exiles was undisturbed, all was there calm as the unruffled sea; they were happy in their exile—no public commotion reached their little fire-side. Yet Wenton was not inattentive to the events with which the times were pregnant, his active mind was well qualified to trace their future course and comprehend, in part their wonderful results. But he observed only as an individual, whose safety must be his caution, and not only his own—but he had a precious charge, otherwise it is not doubted he had been found in the foremost rank of opposition. Never did he appear in public, his home and wife with the trotting child, were his only solicitude, as they were his only source of enjoyment.

Thus passively, Wenton saw years of public excitement and sad tumult pass by. However his mind may have been affected he disclosed not his fears to his wife, and rejoiced that she was free from apprehensions. It was not till the memorable year of seventy-five, which by the meeting of delegates at Philadelphia, gave a new color to the proceedings of opposition in the colonies which raised them above the unpopular state of masked mob, and gave them the honorable degree they claimed, "Men manfully and openly at the risk of Life and Fortune, opposing tyranny," that the fearful prospect was disclosed to her, and the happy home of the Exiles partook in any degree of the general excitement. The time was now come—the proposal for a Congress was received with enthusiasm and Wenton saw that he could enter the ranks of opposition to the "mother country" in a

noble cause; should he fail, it would be in a mighty struggle where a thousand brave hearts were united; should it succeed, Freedom—happy—would be its fruits. While there was a prospect (as we have said) of England abating her unjust demands, and the colonies being left to enjoy their rights, he broached not the unwelcome subject to his wife; but now she must know and prepare for the worst. The task was hard—it would be a sad relation—he knew many a pang would follow it.

It was the evening of the first day he had mingled with the patriots, that he resolved to speak of the threatening aspect of affairs. He returned home. The same neatness and order in affairs, and the same Elphisia with her pleasant countenance and cheerful smile, was there to receive him with her ever ready welcome. He looked around him; the place, like the cave of Calypso, seemed the haunt of the nymphs of pleasure—"it was a home—a happy one, never had sorrow reached it." So he thought but these scenes were about to change, and himself must be the first to disclose the secret of future woe. He hesitated,—for a time perhaps it might be avoided but then it must be sudden without preparation—a stroke undefended that comes down with all its force, "wide wasting."

This he knew was the fit time, ere arms were actually taken, to prepare her mind, for he was sufficiently acquainted with human nature to be aware that events foretold excite but little apprehension, & being often spoken of come with less terror than if sudden. Long dwelt he on the oppressions of the Home Government, the excitement into which the Colonies were thrown, and the probability of armed resistance. She heard it without emotion, for her mind was not misinformed, and she could appreciate his whole discourse. She began to consider the injustice of war and the dire effects of civil war to the country. He was surprised with what composure she discussed the subject, for even he was not aware what a noble heart beat within that bosom from which so much affection had flowed. That she did not perceive, her own exposure was plain, and thus he spoke:

In such an event every man will be called to sustain his rights, if it be by arms; and perhaps? . . .

"And you," she replied, for now the awful truth flashed upon her mind; "Oh, heaven forbid! My dear—dear Alpheus! be not thus cruel, think not of leaving me! I have followed you here to find with you a peaceful home, and now must we be parted!" She sank sobbing into his arms, and he waited her being calmer ere again he spoke of it.

Predictions at this time were not long in being verified. The attack of Lexington was responded to by the cry of 'to arms for Liberty.' Wenton heard the cry; all the patriotic passion of his heart were roused. He sprang for his arms in a kind of heroic madness; his cheek flush, his eyes sparkling, and he seemed fearfully determined. The unhappy Elphisia now saw that her greatest fears were more than real. She began to plead, he heeded not; or heeded not, her supplicating voice. She clasped his hands and bade him stay; she brought to him their only child—a lovely boy—and entreated by his love for her and affection for him;—for her heart was grieved at separation—separation for war! He was calm, here the brave man was overcome, while a tear rolled down his cheek. "Al! how strong affection grows!"

Not long did he hesitate: "It must be," he replied, as he embraced them affectionately; "my duty calls me—may Heaven bless that duty!" "And must we part?" she asked more composedly; "can we not avert this, which must prove fatal to all our hap-

py anticipations? Stay—oh, go not, my dear Alpheus,

"It is not my duty; my conscience—my country's sacred rights, my God calls me to prefer it."

"I am content. Duty is imperial, go with the ease of that conscience—for the rights of that country—in the blessing of that God."

Such greatness of soul overcame him; he could not reply, but clasped them again to his bosom, and bade them farewell. A few minutes more, and he was where trumpets sounded and drums beat to the march, and glittering standards waved over the armed troops that were collected to defend their rights, cheering each other by their mutual attestations of constancy and perseverance.

Once more they were parted; but she had not, as before, the consoling influence of friends—no father was near; she was a 'stranger in a strange land.' Her situation was a still greater grief, born as she was of noble parents, possessing the true spirit of nobility, she heard with indignation him whom she prized most dear, and whom she knew incapable of a dishonorable act, daily stigmatised as a rebel, while an insolent soldier with full licence paraded by, threatening each moment an unwelcome visit. Every thing about her was calculated to excite fearful apprehension. British soldiers occupied the town and hindered all communication with the Patriots. Arrests were frequently made—to be short, all was confusion and dismay! But she did not despond, for her's was one of those superior spirit women sometimes possess. In the army Wenton's situation was far different; a glorious enthusiasm reigned in every patriotic heart. All was stir and preparation for a mighty struggle; yet he did not forget Elphisia, the little Alpheus, and the (once) happy home; but he thought of them only in connection with his country that demanded the defence of his aims.

The activity of the Patriots surprised even Regulars; the night of the sixteenth of June showed them watchful and active, and the morn of ever memorable seventeenth, proved them brave and determined. The din roar of a broadside from the Lively, that roused the surrounding county in alarm, told the attack at dawn; the flames of Charlestown's steeples, the hard contest of midday; and the cease of artillery, the flight—the victory, hard earned—of little use—at decline. Elphisia was among the thousands of anxious beholders; she saw, or thought she saw his dancing crest; and now she sighed, now shouted, as fear or enthusiasm surprised her mind. But she was forced to sigh; they had fled; she knew not his fate. She returned lonely to her dwelling. After two days of sad suspense she received from a man in disguise the following note:

A word to Elphisia: I am alive—well. We are not overcome; we are more than victorious in our retreat. My little troop is brave as I can wish, I took the front fight, and scorned not the rear in retreat. Time admits no more; pray for the patriots.—farewell.

Your affectionate,  
ALPHEUS WENTON.

17th June, evening.—At Cambridge. We can now leave her to enjoy a happy hour; but we leave her among strangers, among foes.

A few weeks and the patriots were overlocking Boston with their works; but it was months ere they would consummate the joy—ere, by forcing the reluctant Loyalists and Regulars to their ships, their arms could give protection to long oppressed and insulted friends. On the morning of their retreat, Boston

was the scene of all the hustle consequent on the movement of large armies, and soon it was observed they were flying, when a loud shout was heard reaching along the Patriots' ranks, who hurried to possess this the first fruit of glorious opposition. Yet none entered with a lighter heart, more exuberant joy than did Wenton. 'I shall soon behold her—soon be with her,' he thought as he marched proudly into the town. In a few minutes he gazed on the dwelling that had formerly been the home of so much happiness. 'She is there—she is here,' he uttered loudly as he saw the folded curtains; and he hurried into the door.

'Heaven! what means this?' and his voice resounded through many deserted rooms. He stood motionless for a moment, as if appalled by the unexpected scene; then rushed madly through the deserted house, calling 'Elphisia!' at every door; the same echo was returned,—the same confusion was visible in every place; all was deserted; she showed signs of violence. At last overcome, he sat down & looked wildly around him: 'Where could they be? had they taken shelter among neighbors? had the soldiers plundered & driven them from their home? or had they gone voluntarily with the Loyalists?' These questions came quickly to his mind, and he returned to the army where all was mirth and hilarity, for in the excitement nothing could be learned of their absence.

At their retreat the British took every means time would allow, to crush the spirit of opposition; many excesses were committed by them; many of the people were prevailed upon to follow them; and some of the friends of the Patriots even were forced away, as it were a kind of hostages to damp their zeal. Wenton soon learned the sad truth; they had taken from him dear pledges, but still he was zealous. In a few days the fleet sailed for Halifax and the unhappy, despairing exiles were forced to endure a more grievous separation.

Two years from the commencement of hostilities the revolution had spread, strengthened and sustained itself through out the whole length and breadth of the Colonies; Various battles, undecided were fought, and the hostile armies had sustained different positions each to the other, and not the least interesting in the vicinity of Germantown. Wenton was still the zealous patriot; with his brave troop of volunteers he had always followed the fortune of the army in every change. Although he would accept no higher honors than the command of his troop, he had gained a noble fame; for the in field his bravery & judgment were no less conspicuous than his virtue and affection in private life, and Germantown was to give new proof.

It was evening (all was enthusiasm in the army; the surprise of Germantown was planned for the next morning) when Wenton with some officers was examining the plan of an attack. 'What think you of it? Captain Wenton?' said one; 'can it possibly miscarry?' 'I think!—Here a letter was dropped into his hand, the superscription of which spoke its author, 'It is hers,' he ejaculated, as he abruptly left the room that he might read it undisturbed.

It contained joyful news no less than permission to Boston, but good health, see her hopes, with many sweet anticipations of the future prospects of the little Alpheus; all calculated to luxuriate his joy.

Elphisia had been detained about two years at Halifax. Although it was not a captivity of suffering, it was one of great anxiety; but now her fondest anticipations were revived in the prospect of soon meeting him from whom