

"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:

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.

##### THRILLING NARRATIVE.

LOSS OF THE U. S. BRIG WASHINGTON. U. S. BRIG WASHINGTON, PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 22 1846.

To the Editor of the Baltimore Patriot;

SIR: Should you deem the enclosed details of the wreck of the U. S. Brig Washington, in the hurricane of the 8th inst., off Cape Hatters, worthy a place in the columns of your valuable paper, they may prove not uninteresting to some of your readers, as being connected with a fate of a gallant officer, well known in your city, and wherever known beloved. A NAVAL OFFICER.

After a pleasant cruise of about a month, in the Gulf Stream, where she had been employed surveying, the U. S. Brig Washington, Lt. Comm'g Geo. M. Bache, stood in, on the 7th inst., for the capes of Virginia. As the wind appeared threatening, the wind fresh and blowing on shore, great anxiety was felt to reach an anchorage. The night came on dark and lowering, and as we neared the land all eyes were turned to the windward to catch the glimmer of the light for which we were striving, (that upon Smith's Island,) though the haze and squalls, now beginning to obscure the horizon, at the windward. About eleven our hearts were gladdened by the welcome cry of "light ho!" from the look out; but the joy was doomed to be of short duration.—The light upon Cape Henry, without making which the harbor cannot be entered, must have been obscured by a squall, for when we brought by the wind, after bearing up for it, expecting every moment to make the looked for beacon, always cheering to the mariner, in our case we felt to be our only hope—the terrible cry of "breakers ahead!" struck a pang to hearts throbbing with hope, and told that we were abandoned to the horrors of a lee shore, and that our only prospect of safety lay in being able to carry sail against the wind. Sea and current forcing us upon Cape Hatters, the terror of seamen, this all felt to be forlorn hope, for the gale, now increased in violence, howled ominously through the rigging and already our little vessel swagged under her canvass; the sky was obscured by flying masses of dark clouds; the crest of the waves heaving their dark volumes to the sky, flushed with the ghastly phosphorescent light often observed in storms, once the sea ahead was lit up for a few seconds by a pale blue light, known to seamen as the Corpus Santo, and whose appalling appearance they superstitiously regard as the precursor of misfortune and wreck. The barometer fell rapidly, and everything foretold a terrible strife of the elements.

Upon discovering the breakers, the brig was immediately worn with her head off shore; the courses reefed, her top sails double reefed and set. Nobly

the gallant craft did her part; groaning in every timber; her tall masts bowing to the blast. Daylight found her still dragging on, and rising to the seas which appeared pressing on to her destruction. It brought an increase of wind and most gloomy prospect, the sea ran fearfully high, and appeared one sheet of foam, far as the eye could reach. We had lost during the night the lee boats, which had filled torn from the davits, jib and flying jib booms, topmast, staysail, &c. The lead, every cast of which had been watched with deep anxiety, told that we were rapidly drifting upon the shore.—By seven the winds had increased to a hurricane; sail after sail had either been taken in, or splitting with a noise like thunder, blew into ribbons to leeward, the yards shivering like pipe stems; nothing remained but the foretop sail, unconnected under which the brig lay to until eleven, A. M., when the hurricane had reached its height, and raged with extraordinary violence, surpassing anything we had ever seen. The brig lay on her side; the water boiling over the lee rail; we were obliged to cling to the rigging, to prevent being blown or washed overboard, for the sea appeared uprooted from its bed and borne in huge masses through the air, constantly swept our decks. The lugs were thrown overboard, and subsequently the weather ones, and the helm put up; she refused to answer it, and the order was given to cut away the mainmast; it was promptly obeyed, as was every other, our noble crew behaving with the steadiness and discipline characteristic of "men of war's men."

In its fall the mainmast carried away the head of the foremast, topmast and foretop sail yards, which hung in a mass to leeward; every exertion was made to haul of the Washington's steered wildly on before the hurricane to the shore, she had striven so well to clear; the anchors had been prepared for letting go, as the last hope, yet no one imagined that the cables would hold for a moment in the furious sea. The horrors of the scene defy description. The fierce howling of the hurricane, the roaring of the waves, breaking in irregular masses about eleven our hearts were gladdened by the welcome cry of "light ho!" from the look out; but the joy was doomed to be of short duration.—The light upon Cape Henry, without making which the harbor cannot be entered, must have been obscured by a squall, for when we brought by the wind, after bearing up for it, expecting every moment to make the looked for beacon, always cheering to the mariner, in our case we felt to be our only hope—the terrible cry of "breakers ahead!" struck a pang to hearts throbbing with hope, and told that we were abandoned to the horrors of a lee shore, and that our only prospect of safety lay in being able to carry sail against the wind. Sea and current forcing us upon Cape Hatters, the terror of seamen, this all felt to be forlorn hope, for the gale, now increased in violence, howled ominously through the rigging and already our little vessel swagged under her canvass; the sky was obscured by flying masses of dark clouds; the crest of the waves heaving their dark volumes to the sky, flushed with the ghastly phosphorescent light often observed in storms, once the sea ahead was lit up for a few seconds by a pale blue light, known to seamen as the Corpus Santo, and whose appalling appearance they superstitiously regard as the precursor of misfortune and wreck. The barometer fell rapidly, and everything foretold a terrible strife of the elements.

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driving spray hid them forever from our sight. We supposed ourselves among the breakers, and that our unfortunate shipmates had but anticipated our doom still it was a bitter pang to see them thus cut off from among us, and many an eye which had calmly confronted death, mistreated at their fate. They were among the flower of our crew, better seamen never trod a deck, and long will be cherished the memory of their generous, kindly natures. My pen is unequal to the task of paying a fitting tribute to the memory of our departed commander, to rare professional accomplishments, he added every virtue which ennobles the human character. Never was a commander more sincerely beloved and respected by those who served under him, his duty was always uppermost in his mind, and the last words we heard him utter were addressing his officers when they stood together on the brink of eternity: "Gentlemen I hope you think I have done my duty—have used every exertion to save the vessel." He had indeed done his duty, with the skill and courage which distinguished him—no mortal could have done more. Yet, when there appeared no earthly hope, God was mercifully pleased to succor us; the hurricane abated, our cables veered to the "better end" (contrary to all expectation) held, and the anchors dragging checked her drift, soon after the wind suddenly shifted to the northward and westward, the sea went down considerably, and still dragging, the brig tailed off shore. She was lightened of kedge, &c., the foremast cut away, and rode easily at sunset. Cape Hatters was seen close aboard. Until the 12th, we rode to a heavy gale from the northward, with two anchors head—the stream cable had parted. Our cables bearing a heavy strain, we expected every moment to part, and the breakers upon the Cape roaring astern. We were employed rigging jury masts until having saved only a few light spars managed badly. Upon the evening of the 12th, the wind dying away, hoisted on the larboard chain, and found the anchor gone.—In heaving up the starboard one, when near the bows, its shackle bolt drew and it was also lost; made sail upon the jury masts and stood to sea. The next day spoke the brig J. Peter-son of New York, and by her was kindly supplied with an anchor and a few spare spars, and the next day the steamer "Palmetto," obtained from her a small boat. Upon the 15th, wafted light airs from the southward, got within thirty miles of Cape Henry; when the wind again coming out fresh from the N. E. were again in great peril—barely succeeded in Weathering "Hatters Shoals," and again were blown into the "gull stream," where she lay to in a gale from the northward and eastward, until the 17th, when it abated, and in the afternoon to the great joy of all hands, a man of war, showing American colors, was described standing towards us. As she neared us, we recognized with emotions of pride and pleasure, the well known figure head of the "Constitution." We were immediately boarded and taken in tow by her, and upon the evening of the 21st, exchanging with her gallant crew three hearty cheers, we cast off and stood in the Capes of the Delaware, where we anchored on the 22nd, accompanied by a pilot boat. We were nearly destitute of water, and of every comfort; when we fell in with "Old Ironsides," and shall long remember with gratitude the kind sympathy extended towards us by her officers, and the alacrity and generosity with which they supplied our wants.

One noble fellow, as he passed astern, waved his hat in token of adieu, and this

### RU' BELL THE 'STRIKER.'

A SOUTH-WESTERN SKETCH.

BY WILL WHIPPLE.

Two years ago we were at the little town of Columbia, on the banks of the Mississippi, at that time a place of some local interest, from the fact of a ruffian being imprisoned there previous to his trial for murdering a man. The victim of this ferocious murder had called at Stewart's house after sunset and begged a lodging for the night, which was granted; but after the man had sought the resting place pointed out to him Stewart, in a spirit of brutal sport, set his dogs upon him and urged them on until the poor fellow, after vainly attempting to defend himself from their attacks, was literally torn to pieces, and then flung out of doors to die.

The circumstances of this horrible murder may still be fresh in the memory of many but the details of the capture of the murderer have never, we believe, been made public. And as the personages concerned in the arrest, together with the mode in which it was performed, afford a fine opportunity for exemplifying some of the peculiarities of South-Western character, we shall give the relation as we heard it from the mouth of one of the actors, indeed the principal in the affair. But to begin at the beginning.

About two weeks after leaving Columbia we were standing at the door of a small house in the little town of Jonesboro, on the Washita, and consisting of five or six log dwellings and a cotton shed of the same primitive architecture. Near where we stood were two Arkansawyers, as they call themselves, in earnest conversation, in the course of which one of them used a phrase which, though common at the South, was at least new to us. It was—*Ah! he's a striker.*

Now, although curiosity is said to be the peculiar prerogative of woman, we must confess that man likewise has no small share of the same ticklish propensity; at least we felt it on that occasion, and stepping forward said:

"My friend, what do you mean by a striker?"

"The man eyed us for a moment, and then replied—

"Why you see stranger—but stop a bit, till I take a Virginny feast."

"A Virginny feast," thought we; "what is that?"

We soon knew, for after diving into the recesses of his capacious pockets, he drew forth a large piece of chewing tobacco, and after offering it to us with "Have a chew?" he bit off sufficient to poison a horse, and rolling it to the side of his cheek, commenced his explanation afresh—

"Why, you see, stranger—Moses and Aaron war strikers, George Washington war a striker, General Jackson war a striker, and that man thar, pointing to an individual at a short distance off, 'he's a striker and no mistake. He aint felt his oats for nothin, I tell ye."

The definition puzzled us a little, but we made out enough of it to understand that all persons who perform deeds of prowess are "strikers."

"The man thar," indicated as a striker, was a short, lean, muscular man, dressed in the white blanket coat. With black stripes round the skirt and over the shoulders, so common to the South. He bore in the bend of his arm a long rifle, and at his side a stained and greasy leather pouch for bullets, from which also depended a long hunting-knife in its sheath.

After taking this survey, we turned to our new acquaintance and said—

"What has he done, to have that title given him?"

"Done—what, Ru' Bell! Didn't he capture Dick Stewart?"

"This then was the man who performed that exploit," thought we looking at him with still more interest, for the fame of the deed spread far and wide through those primitive regions, and we inwardly wished we could hear him relate the manner in which it was achieved. A few days afterwards we were gratified,

'You see,' said he, to a knot of auditors on board a steamboat, going to Exora Faber. 'You see, thar was a reward offered to any body who would take Dick Stewart and so I thought I mought as well have it as not.'

But were you not anxious about the result? This Stewart was, by all accounts, a desperate character, and I heard a man say—'If Dick Stewart told him to swim the Mississippi he would have to do it!'

'I know, stranger, but that was the best of it. I said to myself: Ru' Bell, you aint had a tearin' down fight for a mighty long time, and here's a smart chance to wake you up. But I'll git somebody to go along jest to see fair play like. So I called on General Plummer, and ses he, 'as I aint got nothin' to do jest now, I don't care if I jine you'—and then I knocked up Rafe Morgan, and he said as how though he had the agur rath'er tall, he reckoned he could see the 'on' 'twixt the shakins.' So we got our plunder and put it in a dog out and started for the Bio Bertholomee, as I heard tell Stewart was in the swamp up thar way. When we got to the swamp, we bruck through the cane, makin a bee-line for the nigger hut whar I more'n 'spected Dick Stewart lathered. I know'd all them diggins' well, and thar warn't a trail I hadn't follered from the Mississippi to the Washata for many a time I'd a hunted bar and sich like varmin from Rio Mason right across to the Bio Bertholomee campin' out o' nights and startin' fresh next mornin'.

'But were you not afraid of the wolves?'

'Well I warn't, hoss! Wolves can't sken me nor painters nuther. The bars is wuss nor all the other varmin put together—they've got a mighty nussy bug I tell ye.'

'Then you have been scared by the bears?'

'Well, stranger, I do confess that corn-ones'—a few. But as I was sayin', we struck a bee-line through the cane, and bimeby we come in sight of the little log-house, then ses I to the General, 'General,' ses I, 'you go one side and Rafe the other, and don't you two do nothin' unless Dick tries to make tracks for the swamp.'

'Well, you won't, Ru', ses the General.

'When I see'd 'em stand well off, I edges myself to a big cotton-wood tree, at good shootin' distance and hollers out:

'Hello house,' and bimeby I seed the door open a leetle—jest a leetle, and then Dick Stewart put his head round the corner of the door post. As soon as he seed me he ses:

'What do you want here, Ru'?'

'I want you, Dick,' ses I.

'You aint come to take me?' ses he lookin' as black as thunder.

'Well, I am, hoss,' ses I, a sort o' quiet like; 'and here's General Plummer and Rafe Morgan come to see fair play.'

'You'd a bloody sight better clear out while you can,' ses he, 'for I'm not gwine to be taken alive, I tell ye.'

'I dar say,' ses I, 'I spected as much and I told the General so; but I'm the man what's gwine to take you, Dick—the General and Rafe won't do nothin', jest to oblige me, unless you try to streak it.'

'Go way, Ru', I don't want to hurt you,' ses he; 'look here you see I'm not unprepared.'

'That's a fact,' ses I; 'you've got two rifles, a double barrelled shot gun, two pistols and a bowie-knife; but it aint no use hoss—you must come.'

'Must come!' ses he, gripping his rifle and gittin' oudaciously sarage. 'Must come! look here, Ru' 'aint five men as take me, nor ten nuther, and you know I so you'd better make tracks for the Bio mighty quick, or I'll blow my rifle through you.'

'That's all o' rect enough, Dick,' ses I lookin' right into his eye all the time, for I seen he was a gittin' calswampous, 'That's all o' rect enough, Dick, but I didn't paddle all the way up the Bio for nothin', and I wouldn't look well for me to go home with out you. Besides, ses I 'what would the General and Rafe say—I promised 'em a fight, and it would be unfair to disappoint 'em, it would.'

'Well, ses he lookin' as savage as a she bar what has cubs. 'If you will have it, blaze away then.'

'No, Dick' ses I, 'I'm made up my mind to captivate you; but it's agin the laws for me to fire afore you've made any resistance so shoot on at once' or else s'trender—it aint no use talkin' so much about it for you must come.'

'Stranger you should have hearn him rip and cuss, when I said thar he stompd and he swore, and called me all manner o' names, until he churmed himself up into a froth! but it wan't no use—He couldn't sken me nor yit put me in a passion and make forget what I war doin'—I've fit the lugs too much for that. So all at once' he guv a shriek, and blazed right away. I seed what war comin' and so I dodged behind the cotton wood tree. I war jest in time, for the bullet ploughed along the bark and took off a splinter right agin my mouth and the wind of it tuck away my breath, so as to make me stigger o' one side a leetle when crack! comes another bullet and rips my hat right off my lead.

'Hooray!' ses Stewart; 'thar's twice I've hit you, Ru' go home now like a good boy—you can't take me.'

'I didn't say nothin', but I drops quietly down behind the tree, and curlin' my rifle round it, blazes away at him and his lum in the side and when I seed him fall back I 'erawls to the other end of a big gum what laid on the ground a rottenin' and turns on my back and loads my rifle agin in double quick time and then I replee the leetlest mit through a crook of the limb to see for Stewart. Thar he was in the door-way with his lips tight clenched and his eyes a flashin', and lookin' all about arter me with a kinder snort. His face was a leetle pale, and the blood was oozin' out from his side. Well we waited jest so for a good while—he a watchin' for me and I a peepin' for a chance at him; for he keep himself covered pretty much by the door post, and it warn't no use in me to fling away a shot. At last I got tired and thought I'd a better draw him out. So I lifted my hair on my head till it stood straight up like and then showed it above the log. Crack! went his rifle agin, and I felt the bullet scowp me; but I didn't care for that but up I jumps and fires right into him. I know'd I'd hit him for he guv a queer sort o' scrow to his mouth and fell back behind the door post agin.

'Well, arter this, we wasted a good deal o' time a watchin' for one another, but at last I coteh'd his eye a shinin' between the logs and then I thought I would try a trick on him that I had practised on the Ingins once afore. So I wobbled along on my belly like a serpent till I reached the cotton wood tree and clinin' with my left hand to the tree I swung myself suddenly round it and as he fired I jumped away up with a shriek and fell kerthump right off on the arth. The moment I did so he sprung out all a bleedin' and struck for the cane brake; but Rafe Morgan dashed forward and ketchin him in his arms flung him down and thar they wrastled fist one up and then 'other till Stewart got Rafe undermost and then I seed him fomb'e at his side for so nothin' and presently General Plummer calls to me quick—

'Look out Hu'! look out! Shoot Stewart the second!' ses he. 'Seed set! he's a gwine to knife Rafe.'

'And sure enough the bowie was about to make a plunge when I fired. Well I sters said Dick was a r'al roarer—what I ye think he did! Why he dropped his knife and flung Rafe uppermost jest in time for my bullet to perforate him through.

'What Morgan—your friend?'

'True as Gospel stranger, It was a lean hole in at the shoulder and out at tother side. Well it made me mad to see Rafe turn over on his back, so I sprung forward, and afore Stewart could use his knife agin I pinn'd him to the ground.

'S'trender!' ses I.

'I'll see you d—d fast,' ses he and then he turned all sorts o' colors and fainted.

'Well the General and I stounded the blood of both of Rafe and Dick, and then we carried 'em in the dug out, and paddled tow'n the Bio, makin' the nearest tracks for