EASTON GAZETTE.

WHERE THE PRESS IS FREE—"Literature, well or ill-conducted, is the Great Engine by which all Popular States must ultimately be supported or overthrown." Religion purifies the Heart and teaches us our Duty—Morality refines the Manners—Agriculture makes us rich—and Politics provides for the enjoyment of all.

VOL. X. EASTON, (MARYLAND) SATURDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 24, 1827. NO. 8.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED
EVERY SATURDAY EVENING BY
ALEXANDER GRAHAM,

At Two Dollars and Fifty Cents per annum payable half yearly in advance.

Advertisements not exceeding a square inserted three times for One Dollar, and twenty five cents for every subsequent insertion.

THE SEA VOYAGE.

BY RICHARD PENN SMITH,
Assistant Editor of the Aurora & Franklin Gazette, Philadelphia.

"Mess mates, hear a brother sailor,
Sing the dangers of the sea."

Early in the autumn of 1820, I sailed from the port of Philadelphia for Havre, in a French merchantman, commanded by a little native of Gascony, who had studied philosophy, not in the calm and shady groves of the academy, but in a world of turmoil and trouble. The ancients may boast of the patience and fortitude of Socrates, in the hour of death, and prate about the abstinence of Diogenes in his tub; but to my mind, he who patiently lives on through scenes of trial and suffering, exhibits more philosophy by half, than he who laughs at the terrors of death, or flies from the world, prostrates the dignity of his nature, and confines his ambition within the narrow compass of a tub. The little Gascon called himself a philosopher, and boasted of having read the ethics of Seneca for the fiftieth time; but that philosophy which is acquired by having the sensibilities blunted with continued buffeting, does not maintain such absolute dominion over the mind, but that it may be shaken from its purpose. So it was with the little captain, who would storm like a Hector at the sailors, and expatiate on the blessings of forbearance in the same breath.

Among the passengers, there was two particularly calculated to produce an impression on the mind of the spectator.—The one was a young man apparently about twenty five years of age, tall of stature and handsomely formed His countenance was pale, impressive, and full of manly vigor, his forehead, high and polished; but his deep set hazel eyes were overshaded by bushy brows, which gave a forbidding expression to his countenance—He kept aloof from the passengers. The other was a female about the same age, lovely in her appearance, and fascinating in her manners They were accompanied by a little girl, scarce five years old, whose striking resemblance to the lady was sufficient to satisfy the most careless observer that they were parent and child.

On board a ship our social feelings are naturally called into action, and even the most distant and reserved will at times, relax from their austerity; for when thus shut out from the world, it is then we feel how essential we are to the happiness of each other. But the deep melancholy that hung upon the brow of Campbell, which was the name of the young man alluded to, protected him from intrusion on his privacy: he seldom spoke to any one but his wife; to his child his lips were never opened.

By the time we had been a week at sea, the business of each passenger was known to the others; and for want of more interesting subjects of conversation, the circumstances of our several lives were related from our childhood to the hour of speaking. Campbell not only refused to take part in our conversation but seldom attended to what was going forward. He would frequently quit his meals abruptly, and pace the deck in evident agitation, which he in vain attempted to conceal.—Mrs. Campbell like a faithful mirror, invariably reflected the gloom of her husband's countenance; still she conversed freely & with animation; and occasionally a melancholy smile would play around her lips, which was as evanescent as the electric fluid that for a moment gleams through the clouds which obscure the face of the heavens, passes away, and leaves it all dark again.

The mysterious conduct of Campbell gave rise to numberless conjectures, none of which however, accounted for it satisfactorily. My curiosity was wrought up to the highest pitch, and I applied to the little Gascon, who boasted much of his knowledge of mankind, for some information on the subject.

'He is melancholique,' said the captain, at the same time placing the fore-finger of his right hand with much precision along side of his thin proboscis: 'He is melancholique.'

'That is evident, captain, but what does his melancholy arise from?'

'Ah, ha! dat is de questione for one philosophe to resolve.'

'Then sir, it is worthy of your investigation,' I replied.

'I have investigate, monsieur, and parbleu, I have dive at de bottom. He goes to France, pour sa santa, mais, he is consumptif, and he may go au diable to de bottom, before he get to France. He is no philosophe, and this makes him melancholique.'

'Very satisfactorily and rationally accounted for,' I exclaimed.

'Ah! ha! monsieur, I have study the operation of de human mind.'

He concluded with an emphatic rap on the top of a huge snuff box, ornamented with a picture of Napoleon, and shrugging his narrow shoulders, strutted away with an air which he designed should add not a little to the dignity of his appearance.

Campbell was in the constant habit of leaving his birth early and retiring late. Every morning he was seen leaning on the side of the vessel, gazing on the sun bursting from his watery bed, and in the evening he was in the same position, with his wife beside him, contemplating the glorious orb sinking beneath the surface of the deep. I frequently watched him while at his evening meditations, until his cheeks were bedewed with tears, and on stating the fact to the captain, he called it womanish weakness, and ascribed it to his not being a philosophe. A single page of Boetheus, he said, would prove a radical cure in the present case.

Campbell had a favorite dog that never left the side of his master, for the faithful animal appeared to be conscious of the dejected state of his mind, and of the necessity of affection to soothe his feelings. We had been about two weeks at sea, & yet there was no visible change in the appearance or health of the invalid. He still continued his meditations night and morning, by the vessel's side. One moonlight night, after all the passengers had retired to their births, he still remained in his usual place with his dog lying at his feet. The porpoise showed his black back above the waves in the moon beams, and the voracious shark swiftly followed in the wake of the ship. Mrs. Campbell, with her child, approached the spot where he stood, wrapped in admiration of the beauty of the scene—There was not a cloud to obscure the heavens, and the sea was but slightly ruffled by the breeze which impelled the vessel rapidly onward. She stood beside him resting on his arm, and looking anxiously on his countenance which was raised upward, and was glowing with unusual animation.

'Oh! God! he ejaculated, who can contemplate such a night as this, and all the wonderous works that now present themselves, and deny thy existence and thy omnipotence! A scene like this, Louisa, must make the innocent heart overflow with boundless love and gratitude for his bounty to mankind'

'And the guilty!' she involuntarily murmured.

'To shrink with horror from its own unworthiness!'

She turned pale and trembled as he fixed his eyes upon her. They remained silent, for it did not require the motion of lips or tongue to communicate to each other what was that moment passing in their minds. He fervently pressed her to his bosom, and his swelling heart told far more than his voice could utter. She smiled upon him through her tears and again turned to expatiate on the beauties of creation.

The vessel glided rapidly forward, and her track was marked by the waves that seemed to wanton in the moonlight. Suddenly the ship rolled, and the favorite dog that had been standing at his master's feet fell overboard.—Campbell's first impulse was to leap into the ocean to save him.—His wife caught him by the arm time enough to prevent the desperate leap. He stood gazing in agony upon the faithful animal, who, struggling in the water made a feeble attempt to swim after the ship. Distress was pictured in the countenance of the dog, as the vessel rapidly receded from him. His struggle was but short, for while yet in the sight of those upon deck, a fearful yell denoted his fate. The shark that had followed the vessel for hours in pursuit of prey, received him in his ravenous jaws, disappeared for a moment, & then was seen again following in the track of the ship Campbell remained silent for some time, and his countenance denoted the deepest distress. At length he broke silence and turning to his wife said, with a melancholy smile:

"Louisa, do not smile at my superstition, but I feel as if my voyage in this life will terminate before my voyage across the Atlantic.

She endeavoured to dispel the melancholy idea that had taken possession of his mind.

'You may call it,' he said 'weakness, defect in education, vulgar prejudice, what you will, but surely life and death are not so widely separated, but that there may be some cord in this complicated system which shrinks instinctively at the approach of dissolution, and gives warning that the enemy, or as I should term it, the friend is at hand. Is the mind so lavishly bound to, and dependent on, this corporeal frame, that it which is to live to eternity, can receive no intelligence no light, but through the senses and organs of that body which will perish in a day, and be forgotten in its kindred dust. He paused, and taking her hand proceeded. 'If the mind be not thus absolutely dependant on the outward senses for intelligence, I now foretell a speedy close to my feverish existence."

She expostulated against the weakness of permitting the loss of a favorite dog thus deeply to affect his mind.

'He was but a dog, 'tis true; but I, Louisa, could 'better have spared a better friend'—If I possess such. He was the means of awaking my mind from its present gloomy state to scenes of happier days. He has been my constant companion for ten years. We have climbed the mountain height together, where the air was pure and the heart beat freely; unoppressed by the contaminated atmosphere that encircles the elements of man. Whole days we have wandered over the wild mountains when the circling flight of the eagle, as he ascended to a purer region, yielded inexpressible delight to my young heart. When the cawing of the raven, perched and rocking on the topmost branch of some blighted pine hanging over the precipice, was a sight to arrest attention;—when I shouted with joyous heart to fright him from his secure seat, and he in very mockery mingled his cawings with the echo returned by the surrounding hills.—The sight of my poor dog served to recall those days of my boyhood and innocence; then have I not, indeed, bitter cause to deplore his loss.'

As the night was far advanced they repaired to rest, but the haggard and woe worn features of Campbell, the following morning, proved that rest had been a stranger to his pillow. The death of his dog was severely felt by him, and his mind was strongly imbued with the belief that his own death was near at hand. The superstitions, which in his youth gave an air of romance to life, and were cherished on that account until they became a part of his nature, still maintained dominion over his mind, undiminished, and nothing could persuade him from the belief, that he had received a natural, or supernatural indication that it was time for him to set his household in order.' 'The mystical cord had been touched,' he said, 'there is no mistaking the note—there is no mistaking my feelings.' The day passed and I remarked his countenance appeared more serene than usual.

The evening was calm and the golden beams of the sitting sun were dancing upon the green bosom of the heaving ocean. Campbell and his wife were upon deck as usual, enjoying the scene, and it seemed as if the delight he experienced at that time compensated for the load of misery he had entailed upon himself. His eyes glanced rapidly from the heavens, and as the tints in the sky and upon the water varied as the sun slowly descended, he pointed out the change and richness of coloring to his wife, who leaned on his arm and seemed to find more charms in his animated countenance, than in the beauties of the scene They were happier on that evening than they had been at any time since we left the capes of the Delaware; happier than at any moment afterwards.

About sunset the helmsman descried a vessel in distress about ten miles distant. As we approached, it proved to be a wreck in a most melancholy condition. Several dead bodies were seen on the deck, and lashed to the windlass was an emaciated being that scarcely had sufficient strength left to prove that life was still remaining, in the midst of death and desolation. We hove too, and our long boat was hastily lowered into the sea and manned with sturdy oarsmen I went on board accompanied by the captain, and we rowed towards the wreck It presented such a spectacle of horror, that even the little Gascon, with all his philosophy, shrugged his shoulders and shuddered as he beheld it. The deck was strewed with the fragments of human bodies, some bearing evident marks of having been mutilated to supply food for the survivors. In the forecastle lay two bodies; that of a female, and a young man.—

They were literally locked in death's cold embrace, for their arms were entwined around each other, and being stiffened in death, it was impossible to separate them This proved they had been many hours dead. The only living being on board was the emaciated wretch bound to the windlass. He was hardly conscious that we had come to his rescue. He was released and placed gently in the boat but such was his melancholy condition, that the exertion had well nigh snapped the feeble thread of expiring nature. After examining the wreck and finding nothing of value we returned to our ship

As we approached the ship, Campbell and his wife were still in the same position as when we put off for the wreck; gazing with intense interest on the almost lifeless being that lay in the boat, supported by the captain and myself. We were hoisted on board and the stranger was removed and placed on a settee in the forecastle. The passengers and crew eagerly came forward to behold the shipwrecked man, and among the rest Campbell and his wife. They rivitted their eyes upon his emaciated countenance; their gaze was intense, and it appeared as if the haggard being before them awakened bitter recollections, for their cheeks changed colour, and they turned to each other a look pregnant with meaning mingled with agony: and yet the poor wretch who appeared to be on the verge of life, was so emaciated, and altered by what he had endured, that scarcely the outline of his former self could have been remaining. He cast his feeble glance upon the crowd about him; at length his eyes rested on the receding forms of Campbell and his wife, and beamed with a ray of recognition—she remained immoveable, facinated to the spot by his gaze. The sailor placed his scrawny hand upon his forehead, as if to protect his feeble eyeballs from the glare of light; but he still gazed upon her, and after remaining a few moments in this position, a ghastly smile separated his thin lips.—The expression was horrible—She shrieked, fainted, and was carried to the cabin. None present could divine the real cause of her sudden illness.—The little Frenchman attributed it solely to the want of philosophy which in his opinion was the universal cause of evil: others supposed that her feelings were overcome by beholding a fellow mortal in so deplorable a condition: but I had seen enough to satisfy me that this was not the first time the stranger and the mysterious beings had met.

The shipwrecked man was supported to a birth, medical assistance applied to, and every necessary that his helpless situation required to promote his speedy recovery was administered.

The melancholy and reserve of Campbell increased from the hour the stranger was rescued from the wreck. He appeared to shrink from the gaze of the meanest on board, and his visits on deck became less frequent, seldom making his appearance there till after nightfall, when there was no one to disturb his meditations, or dive into the secret workings of his heart. Even the presence of his wife who had heretofore possessed the power to sooth his most turbulent feelings, now served to increase his agony. His child was carefully kept from his sight; the presence of the little innocent was insupportable.

Every practicable attention was bestowed on the shipwrecked man who gradually recovered strength, and in a few days was pronounced out of danger, by the physician though his emaciated and woe worn appearance rather indicated a tenant of the grave than a being of this world The captain was attentive in his visits to the hammock of the sick man, and constantly administered with the medicinals of the physician, a page from his favourite Boetheus or Seneca. The fact was the captain though he boasted of being invulnerable to the sharpest shaft of fortune had not philosophy sufficient to protect him from feeling acutely for the sufferings of others. Though ever ready to bear himself all the evils that fate could heap upon him, he felt concerned if but a slight breeze passed over others, whose minds he imagined were not as strongly fortified as his own. He learnt from the sick sailor, that he was the captain of a merchantman, which had sailed from New York about a month before; when ten days out, in a rough sea the vessel was met by a heavy squall and capsized. Several of the passengers were washed overboard and perished, and when the ship righted there was so much water in the hold and cabin that the provisions could not be reached without much difficulty and the bread and water rendered unfit for use.—Starvation threatened them; the survivors were accordingly placed on allowance from the first As they had lost their rudder in the gale, and the spars and rigging had been carried overboard they were tossed about at the mercy of the waves He had beheld his crew and passengers die, amid the horrors of starvation, one by one, and the last who survived, had been driven in the agony of hunger, to appease the cries of nature, with the dead bodies of their fellow creatures. All this he beheld, and still clung to his wretched life with as much eagerness as if surrounded by all its pleasures and allurements.—At length he was the sole survivor, and his lamp of life was but faintly flickering in the socket; the deck of the vessel was constantly washed by the waves and as a protection against being swept overboard, he secured himself to the windlass, there patiently to await the dispensation of Him who giveth and taketh away. He had been in this situation two days when we providentially rescued him from impending destruction.

Mrs. Campbell was now seldom seen.—The ray of animation that occasionally dispelled the gloom from her lovely countenance had vanished, and the moments of cheerfulness that she at times formerly enjoyed, had now entirely deserted her. She was confined almost entirely to her cabin and sickness was assigned as the cause.

We had experienced for several days in succession nearly a dead calm. Campbell had heretofore admired and enjoyed this state of the elements, for what is better calculated to raise the contemplative mind from earthly matters than to behold in an autumn evening a cloudless sky reflected on the glassy surface of the slumbering ocean? But now the dead calm was torture to his restless spirit. He prayed for motion, and his impatience was betrayed in every action. His eyes were wild and wandering, and his movements abrupt and hurried. He inquired of the oldest seaman from which quarter of the compass might be expected the approach of the next tempest, and to that quarter were his eyes constantly directed, where every ascending cloud appeared to bring a fresh hope to his desolate heart.

At length the long looked for storm arose in all its grandeur. Volumes of dense clouds regularly and gradually ascending like formidable armies preparing for battle. The winds that had been pent up, now burst forth, and the roaring waters, heaved with a convulsive motion. The spell was broken that had harmonized creation, and discord now prevailed. The appearance of Campbell became visibly changed.—His countenance was animated; there was a smile of terrible, but undefined meaning upon his lips; his eyes glanced wildly from the sea to the heavens, and he traversed the deck with a rapidity of step that excited the wonder of all who beheld him.—Our vessel was soon prepared to encounter the worst, but as the wind blew steadily from one quarter we felt no apprehension for our safety.—The sky was completely overcast, and the rain descended in torrents. Campbell still remained on deck after all the passengers and crew, excepting those upon watch, had retired to rest. No persuasion could induce him to go below, and to the entreaties of his wife and the captain he replied: "It is the only joyful hour I have experienced since I came on board; I beseech you not to interrupt it."

They left him and he seated himself in the most retired part of the ship, to brood over his feelings. I had retired to my birth, but I found it impossible to close my eyes, for the raging waters made such an awful coil as they dashed against the sides of the ship and gave rise to reflections, that would have kept me awake even had my mind been fortified with the philosophy of the little Captain. After tossing in my bed for about two hours until the fever of my mind was communicated to my body, I imagined I heard a piercing shriek proceeding from the deck. It was immediately followed by a groan. I leaped from my bed and rushed to the gangway I met the captain at the foot of the stairs, who had been awakened by the noise. On seeing me he exclaimed; 'Mon Dieu! le melancholique gentlehomme!" and ascended as rapidly as his diminutive legs could carry him. I followed and we hurried towards the place where we had left Campbell the preceding evening.

[*To be Continued.*]

From the American Farmer.
FRIDAY, June 26 1827.

THE PROSPECTS OF MARYLAND.

The actual condition and prospects of our native state are subjects that often excite melancholy reflections; but to what end shall we, by expressing them, give rise to unpleasant emotions in the minds of our readers—*cui bono?* The answer is, that it may be in this, as in the case of prevailing and destructive maladies amongst men and beasts, it often happens that he who describes their symptoms, and proclaims their effects, though he know not how to treat them; still renders an important public service and is entitled to the praise of benevolence, by drawing forth efficient advice and saving prescription, from those whose greater experience enables them to point out the latent cause of the disorder, and to designate the means of prevention or cure. The case of Maryland is we apprehend, not alone; her depressed and deteriorating condition is, we fear, common to all her southern and western sisters. Are we asked for the proof of the declining prospects of the farming interest? We answer, heaven grant that we may be mistaken! but let every man look around him; let his memory, if it can, run back for twenty or thirty years, taking, each one the circle of his own county; did it not then abound in well bred gentlemen farmers, living in good dwellings well supplied; their families genteelly clad and well educated; their churches in good repair and well attended; the intercourse of neighbouring families social and frequent, and their manners and amusements comparatively refined and elegant? Was there not every where an air of thriving prosperity, accompanied by all the evidences of good intellectual cultivation and rational enjoyments? What is *now* the state of the country? Does any one build substantial dwellings on a scale, and with conveniencies for the genteel accommodation and hospitable entertainment of friends? Do we see through the country successive plantations of young orchards to supply the place of those whose ruins only serve as perishing monuments of better management and better times? Have not truck patches with worm fences, and cabbages, and potatoes, taken the place of all the old fruitful paled gardens, neatly laid out and planted with jessamine, and tulips, and roses, and pinks, and heartsease? Such *were* the signs of comfort, and such the seats that some of us can just remember, as

"The beautiful epitome
Of all that useful is and rare,
Where comfort sat with smiling air
And laughing hospitality."

Formerly there were very many farmers and planters in every county in the state, who could maintain their families in a style of at least comparative affluence; enjoying leisure for mental improvement, and a taste for social pleasures. They could well afford, in union with three or four of their neighbours, to employ a good classical teacher for their children; while not a few had he means of sending their sons to some convenient college; delighted and happy in the well founded hope of seeing them rise to stations of public usefulness and fame; but how many planters or farmers

©Maryland State Archives, msa_sc2940_scm11029-0448.jpg