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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.

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THE BURNING SHIP.

We find in the Atheneum, an account given by *an old Sailor*, of the adventures of his youth, of his attachment to a mistress, and of a burning ship; an abstract of which we give, in order to introduce the extract relating to the conflagration. The sailor was born in the same village, and in infancy slept in the same cradle, with the daughter of a Baronet, who was affable only when he was treated with the highest respect. They grew up together, and were inseparable in their amusements, for Sir Edward had left home on the death of his wife, and the little Agnes resorted frequently to the cottage of her nurse, and the society of her little foster brother. Thus time passed with little interruption to the delightful enjoyment of youth, till he arrived at the age of fifteen; when the soul springs to the magic touch of passion, if the spirited qualities of manhood, are ever to rise at all. At this time an accident that occurred at a little FETE given by his father, put an end to their intimacy. Agnes had escaped from the care of her aunt to grace the dance, and was giving entrancing proof of her affection, in the love creating movements of the dance, when she was rudely seized by the arm and torn out of the figure by her brother, who had unexpectedly arrived from the University. Her lover interfered, and was struck down by his antagonist and borne away from the scene by his companions, to prevent further strife. The plebean blood boiled at the outrage, but revenge upon the haughty family was hopeless, and with the mingled passions of love and anger, both stimulated by mortification, he strode away in the darkness of the night, not thinking or caring whither. In the morning he was overtaken by a naval officer, who proposed that he should serve his country. He accepted the invitation listlessly, and was sent immediately on service, and soon gave evidence of spirit and talent that insured promotion. He had made a confidant of the Lieutenant who enlisted him, and had secured the favor of all He was on board the Kings's ships in the East India service, and at the end of three years was sailing homeward, when we find the following detail.—*Boston Statesman.*

During all this time I had never heard from home—but still the fond remembrances of early enjoyments in that sweet spot, clung to my soul, and became the subject of many sketches from my pencil, some of which the captain had taken to ornament his cabin. Agnes, in all her loveliness, was always present to my imagination; prompting me to many an honorable action, and restraining me from every thing which could bring discredit on my affection. To her dear image I was indebted for the respect and esteem I enjoyed from every one on board.—The master's mate had been promoted to a lieutenancy, and I was appointed to fill the vacant station. Often did I rejoice in my heart at the prospect of once more embracing those who were so dear to me; and as often did the sickening sensations of distracting doubt agitate my breast.

One lovely evening, the sky was beautifully serene—the ocean, like a clear mirror, reflected the golden rays of the setting sun, and the light breeze just lulled the spreading sails to sleep, propelling the ship almost imperceptibly along, at the rate of three knots an hour.* It was one of those evenings that baffle the painter's art, and only the poet can pourtray. The first watch was drawing to a close; it had struck eleven bells†, the seamen on the lookout had proclaimed "all's well!" and every thing was again hushed to solemn stillness. I was standing on the gangway, full of pensive musings, watching a bright star, just kindling on the verge of the horizon; it beamed like a ray of hope, irradiating the gloom which hung heavy upon my heart. Suddenly it expanded like the glowing meteor, and the ocean was illuminated with a red and gory tinge. I was struck with astonishment; but at the same moment an exclamation resounded fore and aft. "A ship on fire! a ship on fire!" and the horrid conviction was, alas! too evident. In a few minutes the flames were distinctly visible, and the ship was pronounced to be about five miles distant. Never did I witness such alacrity among our crew, as in that hour of peril. The captain, and every officer and man, were on deck immediately, and as it was impossible for the frigate to approach in sufficient time to rescue the sufferers, before ten minutes had elapsed from that period of first noticing the fire, every boat was in motion towards the scene of danger It fell to my lot to command the captain's gig, a swift-pulling boat, with seven men, who bent to their oars with all the might of brave and generous spirits. As we drew near, the destructive element raged with increasing fury; and the shrieks of the wretched creatures came mingling with the crackling of the flames and the crash of falling masts. The frigate had fired guns and hoisted lights; to show them succour was at hand, and the boats' crews occasionally cheered, to announce that they were approaching to their rescue. The shouts were returned from the burning ship; but so wild, so fearful, they sounded like the expiring yell of agony, that still clung to hope and life. I would have dashed instantly alongside, but the old coxswain respectfully warned me of the danger of such a measure, 'as the boat,' he said, 'would instantly be swamped by the crowds that would rush into her.' We were now within a short distance of the vessel, and oh! what a sight of horror was presented! The ports were all open, and the flames were pouring from them as from so many mouths, seeming eager for their prey. Numbers of poor creatures were swimming towards us, whilst others held pieces of shattered spars, with strong convulsive grasp. The fore-part of the ship was nearly consumed, the upper part abaft was rapidly falling in. Those who could swim, we left for other boats to take up; and pulling under the stern, we lay unobserved, by the gun-room ports, while the fiery fragments came tumbling thick about us. Trusting to my skill in swimming, should it be deemed requisite to jump overboard, I instantly entered the port-hole; and the ship having turned before the wind, what little air there was, drove the greatest part of the smoke forward: yet there was an almost insupportable heat, and the suffocating vapors bid defiance to my efforts to penetrate farther. A feeling I could not account for—an indescribable feeling—urged me on, and I reached the gun-room ladder, at the bottom of which lay a human being, whose sufferings were apparently over. I passed my hand quickly to the heart, to feel if any palpitation yet remained, and discovered that the individual was a female; she was yet living, and in a few minutes was safely in the boat.

Again I returned with three of my crew and soon had the satisfaction of rescuing eight poor wretches, who lay in a state of insensibility, and must soon have perished. Stimulated by success, we penetrated to the burning deck above; and never shall I forget the horror of the spectacle. Here all was brilliancy and light, and the devouring element, rolling its huge volumes over many a devoted victim, roared in its fierceness as if to stifle the thrilling scream of the last death-pang. Several half burnt and mangled bodies could be distinguished in the flames, and many others lay in a senseless state, unconscious of the awful doom awaiting them. Near the transom, abaft, sat a mother with an infant in her arms. She seemed unconscious of any object moving near her; she saw not our approach but her eye balls widely glared upon the red hue of the burning fabric. I spoke to her, shook her but her eyes still continued fixed—alas! the film of death was on them! She heeded me not, but clasped her infant closer to her bosom—gave one wild, one dismal shriek, and her mortal agony was over. The moments became exceedingly precious, the smiling infant (for it smiled amidst the appalling scene,) was secured, and several poor wretches were dragged to the gun room scuttle, where they were thrown down, risking their limbs to save their lives; and the boat was completely filled almost to sinking; yet numbers were still left behind and roused from their stupor by the increasing heat, came rushing to the port, and plunging headlong into the sea. It was but changing their mode of death, for the watery element, equally fatal with that from which they strove to escape—engulfed them in its dark abyss, at once their destruction and their grave. I was compelled to put some of my rescued party in the launch, and then pulled briskly for the frigate. The female I had thus saved was still insensible; but yet, as she lay extended in the stern sheets of the boat, with her head resting on my knees, I could feel the tremulous palpitation of her heart; & Hope whispered that she might yet recover. She appeared to be young, but her dark hair hung in thick flakes down her face so as to conceal her features. The worthy coxswain had wrapped the infant in his jacket, which was now sweetly sleeping in the box by his side.

Several of the sufferers, restored to fresh air, speedily recovered; but it was only to lament some one whom they supposed had perished.—In the bows of the boat an elderly man raised his white head, and with incoherent language, inquired where he was. The bowman soothed him, and tried to explain his situation. "But my son! my daughter!" he exclaimed, 'where are they?' Then turning to the burning ship—'Wretched, wretched man, they are lost! —lost forever, and I yet alive!' He struggled to throw himself into the sea, but overcome with weakness, fell backward.—At this moment another voice faintly uttered 'My father! my father?' A cry of ecstacy burst from the old man's lips—It was his son. The youth lay near me & the exclamation drew my attention towards him. He started up like one awakening from a frightful dream, and glared wildly around. But, O God in what language can I portray the various feelings which alternately took possession of my soul, when fixing his look on me, I saw the countenance of Sir Edward's son. A sick shuddering came across me. The old man had called upon his daughter. In an instant the inanimate body of the young female was raised in my arms. I parted the dark tresses that obscured her face, & as the red glare shone upon it, recognized my Agnes! Yes, it was she! my arm had encircled her neck, my hand had been pressed upon her heart—but then I knew her not; and now to find her thus! Sobs of anguish, and tumultuous bursts of joy, followed in rapid succession. The men rested on their oars; the coxswain guessed the cause, but knew not the whole truth; and it was some minutes before I was sufficiently tranquil to give directions. 'You have saved her, Sir,' said the coxswain, and a glow of pleasure filled my heart. Sir Edward and his son had relapsed into stupor; and shortly afterwards reached the frigate. I sprang upon the deck, to inform the captain whom I had brought, and then returned again to the boat; to see my only, my richest treasure safely conducted up the side. In my arms I carried the dear girl to the captain's cabin stole one kiss from those lips, on which I had hung with such delight in early infancy—pressed her to my heart—and then hastened back to my duty. Again I reached the ship; but all approach was now impossible we could only pick up those who were unable to swim; and occasionally, by great hazard, run so close as to receive some poor sufferer from the wreck. Yet there were many who still remained; and dreading to trust themselves in the sea, hung tremblingly between two deaths.—My boat was once more filled, as were also the rest, and we made for the frigate which had arrived within a short distance.—Suddenly an awful explosion shook the whole atmosphere, the glare of light was for a moment increased—the next, a shower of blazing timbers fell in every direction around; and the pale moon alone shed her silvery effulgence on the transparent wave. No shouts, no shrieks were to be heard; the bitterness of death was passed, and all was tranquil as the grave. Happily the burning ruins had struck none of the boats, and we soon afterwards put the sufferers on board. The boats then again repaired to the place; but except the shattered remains of the wreck, no trace was left; the swelling billows rolled smoothly on—and that gallant ship, with many a stout heart was buried beneath its deceitful surface. Still we passed across and across, in every direction; & long after the sun had kindled up the day our search was continued;—but nothing met our view, except mutilated fragments of human bodies. and pieces of blackened timber. All hands repaired on board, the boats were hoisted in, and the frigate pursued her way to England.

*Miles †Half past eleven.

REVOLUTIONARY REMINISCENCE.

Capture of the British Gen. Prescott, by the American Lt. Col. Barton.

The following narrative of one of the most interesting events of the Revolutionary War is highly worthy of record. It is from an entirely authentic source.—The intelligent reader will hardly know which most to admire and approve:—The consummate skill and cool courage of the projector of this bloodless enterprise;—the modest and ingenius manner in which the narrative is penned;—or the true Yankee kindness and humanity shown to an open enemy in a time of high excitement.

Bost. Cent.

NARRATIVE.

In the month of November, A. D 1778, a detachment of British troops took Major Gen. Lee prisoner by surprise. Having a very high opinion of the General's abilities, I was resolved, if ever an opportunity offered, to surprise a Major General of the British army, with a view to procure his exchange: In the month of December, the same year, the enemy took possession of the islands of Rhode Island, Conanicut and Prudence. I being then in the service of this state, was ordered to the post at Tiverton, where I used the greatest endeavours to gain intelligence of some British officer of the same rank with Maj. General Lee, whom I might surprise, and thus effect an exchange of that great man. On the 20th June, 1777, a Mr. Coffin made his escape from the enemy on Rhode Island, and was brought to my quarters. When asked where Major General Prescott quartered, he said, at the house of Mr. Overing, on the west side of the island; and being requested, gave a description of the house. I now entered very seriously upon the plan of surprising General Prescott, in his own quarters. A few days after this, a deserter came off the island, who gave the same intelligence as Mr. Coffin. I could not yet enter fully on the enterprise, there were so many obstacles presenting themselves. The troops, as well as myself, were not long inured to service, and never had attempted an enterprise of this sort; and I was sensible if our plan should be blasted, that my country would reprobate my conduct as rash and imprudent; but after some considerable struggle with these difficulties, I determined to throw myself into the hands of fortune, and make the attempt. I communicated my plan to Colonel Stanton, the then commanding officer at this post, and requested his permission to put it in execution. He very readily gave me liberty to go and attack the enemy when and where I pleased. I then selected several officers, in whose abilities and secrecy, from a personal acquaintance, I could confide. I then asked them if they were willing to go with me on an enterprise; but where and for what particular enterprise, I could not then inform them. They all consented to go. The names of the officers are as follows.—Ebenezer Adams, captain of artillery; Samuel Philips, captain; James Potter, lieutenant; Joshua Babcock; lieutenant; Andrew Stanton, ensign; and John Wilcocks. The next step to be taken was to procure boats, which was attended with some difficulty, as there were but two at our post: however, in two or three days we obtained five whale boats, and had them fitted in the best possible manner.

Having obtained the men, and all things in readiness, we embarked on the 4th of July, with intention to proceed to Bristol. After we got into Mount Hope Bay, there came on a heavy storm of thunder and rain, by which I lost sight of all the boats but one; the two boats which were not separated, pushed on with all speed, and landed at Bristol at 10 o'clock at night, being the 5th. I went to the commanding officer's quarters, where there was a deserter, who just made his escape from Rhode Island; taking him into a private room I questioned him concerning the enemy's position, whether there had been any alteration in the British encampment, within a few days; he said there had not. I then asked him where the commander in chief quartered; he very much surprised me when he answered, in the town of Newport. I asked him if he ever went with such a guard as a serjeant and ten men to the west part of the island, he told me he had not. I again asked him if he knew of such a guard being detached from the grand parade every morning at 8 o'clock; he said he did, I was now very well convinced that part of what he said arose from his ignorance of the quarters. At 8 o'clock the other boats joined us. I then took the officers with me on a small island (called Hog Island,) in plain sight of the British encampment and shipping, where, after we viewed them some time with a glass, I thus addressed them:—Gentlemen the enterprise which I have projected, and which I want your assistance to execute is this:—to go on to the island of Rhode Island, surprise Major General Prescott, at his own quarters, and bring him prisoner to the main. The officers, who knew nothing of my intention, seemed somewhat surprised. I gave them all the intelligence which had been obtained, the situation of the house where the General quartered, the part each must act, and, in short every particular of the intended enterprise; the officers then very readily consented to what I had proposed. After giving them the most solemn charge not to communicate to any one the least hint of our enterprise, we returned to Bristol, where we staid till the 6th, at night, when about 9 o'clock, P. M. we embarked and crossed Naraganset Bay, landed on Warwick Neck, from whence we meant to take our departure for the island.—On the 7th, the wind came into the E. N. E. which brought on a storm, and retarded the execution of the plan. On the 8th, the weather was fair; but there were several new obstacles which hindered our going.—The next day, being the 9th, the weather promising, every thing appeared to invite us to the enterprise.—The boats were now numbered, and every one assigned his boat and seat; to every boat there was one commissioned officer, besides one with me. I directed the commanding officer of the post at the shore to keep a good look out; and if he should hear three distinct muskets, to come on to the north end of Prudence, to take us off—for we had reason to fear that the men of war would send out their boats and cut us off from the main.

We were now come to our boats—that I went in was posted in the front, with a pole about ten feet long, and a handkerchief tied to the end, so that my boat might be known from the others, and that none might go before it. We went between the islands of Prudence and Patience, in order that the shipping which lay against Hope Island might not discover us. We rowed under the west side of Prudence till we came to the south end, when we heard the enemy on board the ships cry out all's well. When we were within about three quarters of a mile of Rhode Island, we heard a great noise like the running of horses. This threw a consternation over the minds of the whole party; but no one spoke, as I had given the most positive orders not to have one syllable uttered.—Thinking on the matter for a moment, I was sure that the enemy could not have the least knowledge of our design, and concluded it must be horses running as they often do. We now pushed for the shore. There was a man left to each boat to keep them ready for a push, for we expected that the enemy might try to impede our retreat. The party being now ready, we marched with the greatest silence in five divisions to the house where the general quartered. The entrance into it was by three doors; on the south, the east, & the west. The first division was to attack the south door, the second the west, the third the east, the fourth to guard the road, the fifth to act in emergencies. We left the guard house on our left and on our right was a small house where a party of light horse were quartered, in order to carry orders from the general to any part of the island. When we opened the gate of the front yard the sentinal, who stood about twenty five yards from us, hailed who comes there?—we gave no answer, but continued marching on. There being a row of trees between us and the sentinel, he could not well discover our number: he again hailed who comes there? we answered friends; friends advance and give the countersign. I spoke as though in a great passion, and said we had no countersign, have you seen any deserters to night? This had been previously contrived as a decoy, which had the desired effect; for before he suspected us to be enemies we had hold of his musket told him he was prisoner, and if he made the least noise he should be instantly put to death. We asked him if General Prescott was in the house. He was so frightened that at first he could not speak; but at last with a faultering voice and waving his hand towards the house, he said yes.—By this time each division having got its station, the doors were burst open. We first went into a chamber where we saw a Mr Overing—the General was not there. We went into another chamber where Mr. Overing's son was: he said the General was not there. I then went to the head of the stair way and called for the soldiers to set the house on fire, for we were determined to have the general dead or alive; on this we went below and called for General Prescott: we heard a voice saying what is the matter? I proceeded from whence it came and entering a room saw a man just rising out of bed, and clapping him on the shoulder, asked him if he was General Prescott he replied yes sir. I told him he was my prisoner, he rejoined I acknowledge it, sir; I desired him to hurry: he requested he might be allowed to put on his clothes; I told him very few, for our business required haste. In the mean time, Major Barrington, the General's aid-de-camp, finding the house was attacked, leaped out of the window but by the time he was to the ground was securred a prisoner. After the General had slipped on a few clothes, we marched for the shore. We desired the General to put one arm over my shoulder and the other over one of the officers' that he might go with the greatest ease and despatch. Major Barrington and the sentinel were kept in the middle of the party. In a little time we came to the shore.—The General seeing the five small boats, and knowing in what manner the shipping lay, appeared much confused, and asked me if I commanded the party; I told him I did; he said I hope you will not hurt me; I assured him whilst in my power he should not be injured. Before we got into the boats we put on the General's coat for as yet he had only waistcoat, breeches and slippers. We were very soon seated in our boats, the General in No. 1. After we had gotten a small distance from the shore we heard three cannons and saw three sky rockets, which was the signal for an alarm. It was fortunate for us that the enemy on board the shipping did not know the cause of it, as they might with ease have cut off our return to the main. We proceeded on till broad day light, when we landed at Warwick neck, the place from whence we took our departure, having been gone six hours and a half. The General when on shore, turned towards the island, and beholding the shipping, said, to me, Sir, you have made a damned bold push to night; I replied we had been fortunate, We went to the nighest house, where the General and his aid de camp were asked if they would rest themselves with sleep, which they did. In the mean time, we went to Warwicktown for a horse and chaise, with orders to the tavern keeper there to procure the best breakfast possible for the general and his aid de camp, and sent an express to Major General Spencer, at Providence, communicating the success of our enterprize. It was not long before the arrival of a coach, which General Spencer had despatched to conduct the General prisoner to Providence. I accompanied them, and related to General Spencer the particulars of our successful expedition.—He was pleased to express his approbation in the strongest terms, It is unnecessary to add that the principal object of the enterprise was afterwards effected in the exchange of General Prescott for General Lee.

WILLIAM BARTON.

NOTICE.

I HEREBY forwarn all persons from hunting with dog or gun on my Rich Neck Farm, and from shooting at Sedgy Marsh, or the Narrows—It is probable I shall be a good deal from home this winter; my Overseer will, therefore, have positive orders, not to suffer, or permit, any person in my absence, to hunt or shoot at those places—I do also forwarn all Craftsmen from taking wood from my point or shores, as considerable damage has been sustained by this practice—it is therefore expected gentlemen will have a due regard for their own feelings, as all trespassers will hereafter be dealt with according to law.

SAMUEL HARRISON.

Rich Neck, Dec. 1, w

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