J. Cattrupt

EASTON GAZETTE.

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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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ADVERTISEMENTS

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A Tragical Tale of the Sea.

The following dreadful tragedy is related in the London "Seamen's, Magazine and Church of England Guardian." The editor says it is an authentic narrative, as he received it from one of the parties referred to, although it was not thought best to give names or places,

——"Well, sir, I will tell you this story which you are so anxious to hear.

I commanded the ——, we sailed from ——, intended to call at ——, in order to take in passengers, and then proceed to ——. We arrived at ——, a destined, and went ashore immediately, in order to make arrangements with the parties that desired to go with me to ——. A gentleman and his lady, and another gentleman in an exceedingly weak state, slowly recovering from a malignant fever, composed the party, and being informed that the former had boxes of dollars, and plate to the amount of —— thousand pounds, which were to be taken on board, I made every necessary arrangement, and returned to my ship.

I had on board a mate, and —— men; and deeming it expedient, I called my mate privately into my cabin, and informed him of the large quantity of money and plate about to be committed to our charge with the passengers; and, to avoid even the possibility of danger from the crew, I desired him to use any means he thought best to induce them to remain ashore that night in order that we might convey the property on board, and stow it safely away, without their knowing [illegible] mediately assented, and, accordingly, got rid of the men. I reposed entire confidence in him and he appeared to deserve it; the men, however, were kept ashore all night while we, with perfect secrecy and safety, as we thought, had the property conveyed to the ship, and securely stowed away. In the morning the men came on board, and every thing being taken in, we got under weigh, with a fair wind in the evening.

The first night, and the succeeding day and night passed without any particular occurrence, and the wind continuing fair, we were, at the close of the second day, two hundred miles from land. My crew were most of them Irishmen, not such men, certainly, as I should have chosen but I was obliged to take them as I found them. Indeed one of the Irishmen, to whom I shall again refer more particularly, was not a seaman.

Every thing had proceeded in an even and regular course, until the close of the third evening, if I except an undue familiarity between the mate and the crew; which, although I observed, I had not even mentioned. On this evening, however, I was oppressed with a kind of uneasiness I cannot describe; but fearing it might be a prelude to sickness, I left the mate in charge; and retired to my berth much earlier than usual. I tried to sleep, but in vain. I rose, took some grog, and lay down again. I tried to compose myself, but found it impossible. I several times dozed a little, but almost instantly started under gloomy impressions or from frightful dreams. As this was quite unusual with me, having scarcely known a solitary instance of my rest being disturbed, I spent my hours under great despondency, and anxiously wished for the dawn of day. I continued thus until near 2 o'clock; even my dozing might have been interrupted by the slightest movement, so far was I from enjoying any thing like repose.

About two, I heard a footstep cautiously approaching, I listened, and a man came close to my berth, and muttered, 'Captain!' I called out, 'Who's there?' No answer being returned, I jumped out, and was instantly accosted by the Irishman above referred to, in the most abrupt and callous manner, with 'By J——s, it is all over with you; the mate has told the crew about the money; they have taken the ship, and your throat will be cut at three o'clock." I was momentarily deprived of the power of utterance, and before I recovered from the shock, the fellow was gone. I, however, soon became collected, and slipping on my trowsers and waiscoat, I immediately stepped into the gentleman's cabin to whom this treasure belonged. But he having overheard the dismal announcement, had most imprudently communicated it to his wife, who instantly swooned. She, when I entered, was perfectly insensible, and he, with clasped hands exclaimed in deep despair, 'O my wife! O my children! I shall never see you more!' Finding he knew the worst, I coolly said, 'Well sir, will you arm with me, and resist?' He said he could not, it was useless. I said, 'remember, sir, the property is *yours*—that your wife, and children are at stake You ought, therefore, to be ready to resist to the very last extremity, I too have a wife and children, and will, therefore, resist to the last for them, for my employers, and for *you*.' Finding, however, that he was literally sunk in despair, I returned to my cabin.

Any attempt to describe the state of my mind would be useless. I think I stood for a few moments utterly at a loss what step to take, when somehow my hand got into my waiscoat pocket, and enclosed my knife. Without premeditation or design I opened it. I now recollected the sick gentleman, but I thought it best to let him remain in ignorance I knew not what to do; however, not knowing what might befall me, or what course I should take, I rushed towards the deck, but my hand accidentally striking against something which I found to be an American axe, I seized it, and the next moment was on deck, where I saw the helm deserted, and the mate with the whole crew sitting together drinking in the forepart of the ship. With the open knife in my left hand, & the uplifted axe in my right, I sprang in among them, and as my eye met the mate's, with one blow of the axe, I cleaved his head asunder. The men simultaneously rose, and fled in different directions? I followed the nearest instantly; and, just as he was in the act of going aloft, I buried the axe in his loins, and he fell overboard. One now turned and tried to grapple with me; but I, in a moment, drove the axe into his breast, and he fell at my feet. So deeply had the axe sunk into his body, that I was in imminent danger of being overpowered; but placing my foot on his chest, I by one vigorous effort, succeeded in extricating it. I now looked round, and observing no one near me, I went aft; but seeing here some one standing, I had again lifted my axe, when a voice exclaiming 'For God's sake, captain,' convinced me it was the sick gentleman. I could only say, 'Go in, sir.' Roused by my striking my hand against the axe, and unhanging it, he had come out, and having witnessed my actions, without knowing any thing of the cause, he concluded me laboring under a direful paroxysm of madness, and instantly obeyed thankful that he had not shared the fate of those who had fallen before his eyes.

I found the men had all fled to the rigging, and were still aloft. The moon shone brightly, and I called to the nearest man to come down, but he would neither answer nor move. I went into my cabin, fetched out my fowling-piece, and insisted on his coming down, or I would fire at him. At length he came down, and fell on his knees at my feet,—I asked him what he had to say of their blood-thirsty villainy: he replied, the mate had drawn them into it, and *he* was *obliged* to agree. 'Strip!' said I—he did so. I then put my gun and axe behind me; and cutting eighteen inches of rope, I gave him a severe flogging; to this I subjected every one of them, and they submitted without offering the least resistance; the passengers, during the whole period, almost petrified, looked on.

It only now occurred to me, that there was no one at the helm; I therefore took my gun and axe, and, as there was no alternative, I was compelled to occupy that post at once. The passengers all came to me, but I could only beg them to leave me. They still halted, however while I called the men before me, and told them I had now done with them: their conduct would determine my future steps, at the same time concluding by saying, I would kill the first man that manifested a mutinous disposition, or that dared to cross a given line on the deck before me, without my express command. I then ordered them to throw the bodies overboard, and return to their respective duties.

Beginning now to reflect on what I had done: remembering that my life, my ship, my passengers, their property and the cargo, were at least so far preserved:—remembering, at the same time, that I had accomplished only by the sacrifice of three men,—that their blood had been shed by me,—and, seeing it upon me when morning dawned; my feelings overcame me, and I burst into tears.

The danger was still by no means over. I had——day's to sail to——; no mate, two men less than before, and every reason to believe, that the crew would still watch for, and seize any opportunity to murder me *now*, if for no other purpose than that of securing their own lives. I therefore made up my mind to keep my post at the helm, day and night, that I might at least have all my enemies *before me*:—but *how* I should keep my post, do without sleep, or venture to sleep, *at* it, even for a moment, were questions on which I feared to dwell.

Whatever my fears and feelings were, I still manifested the same determined and fearless line of conduct by which I had hitherto succeeded. I kept my axe close to my side, in full view of the crew. The gentleman who owned the property, but who, in anticipation of the dismal event, gave himself up to despair, certainly did *now* offer any assistance in his power; but I had too much at stake to venture for a momrnt to trust him.

From the Irishman, I obtained a full detail of the plot,—the manner in which they intended to murder me and the passengers, and their intention to carry the vessel to——. This man was so generally employed near me: the passengers too, used him as far as they deemed prudent; though all were sensible that no confidence ought to be placed in him. Thirteen days at length, thus passed, during which we had contrary weather,—had fallen in with no vessel—and as to myself although I was still uninjured, and aware of no attempt against my life the men, my strength and spirits were nearly exhausted.

It will not be supposed by any, that I mean to assert I never did sleep during this period: still, I can assert that I am scarcely conscious of ever having, during the whole period, fairly fallen asleep, especially by night; and, indeed, it is in my estimation, no easy thing for a man to sleep, with a crew before him, every man of which he knows would seize that *opportunity* to murder him.

On the morning of the 13th day, however, I certainly started into something like sound sleep, in consequence of an idea of a glare of excessive light; and I am unable to express my utter astonishment, and the overwhelming emotions of gratitude that instantly filled my heart, at beholding the sun shining most brilliantly, & in full view of the flag flying on the battery of ——, I immediately ordered guns to be fired, and, in a short time, a boat, with a pilot, came along-side. We lay to, while they returned with my command for soldiers to take my crew into custody. I need not say they were *all* condemned to die. [illegible] the Irishman before alluded to, [illegible] sentence was commuted to perpetual banishment. I begged their lives might be spared, and used all my influence to save them, but in vain. Before their execution I saw them all, and they were informed, in my presence, of the means I had used to save them, and of their also proving utterly unavailing. They appeared so far satisfied that I had not acted from mere vindictive feeling—confessed their guilt but attributed their untimely end and indeed the origin of the whole to the mate alone."

The conduct of this brave *Scot*, in his singularly critical situation, has been, and will be, variously judged of; though all attempts to ruin him, by false & absurd insinuations, so completely failed, that all the quarters and parties capable of forming a just opinion of the whole case, justified his conduct by the trongest expressions of unqualified approbation and by the most liberal rewards. While the man (we state the fact and leave it) who sunk under the mere apprehension in the awful moments of the impending danger, had afterwards so great a dread of *public opinion*—so keen a sense of shame—so little regard for the dictates of religion, for himself, and for his wife and children as almost immediately to blow out his own brains.

From the National Gazette.

We insert the following letter respecting the *remains of WASHINGTON*, written with the utmost warmth of patriotism and great cogency of argument and diction. The subject possesses much interest for all true lovers of their country and admirers of genuine *heroism*, first shewn in its plenitude and excellence in the character and conduct of our first President.

Letter from a late *M*ember of Congress from Maryland, to the Hon. *George E. Mitchell*, of the House of Representatives, written a short time before the close of the last session of Congress.

Dear Sir.—Through the loop holes of my retreat I have observed with interest the proceedings of your present session, and I felt particular pleasure on seeing your resolutions, so appropriately offered on the 22d February, for carrying into effect the views of the Congress of 1799, and for redeeming the solemn pledge, then made in behalf of the nation, to place the remains of the illustrious Father of his Country under a monument to be erected in the *people's house*. I will heartily congratulate you if you are able to command from the House just time and patriotism enough for the adoption of this measure before the adjournment. It is painful to recur to the cold indifference with which all the efforts hitherto made to fulfil the resolutions of 1799 have been treated; but it is a consolation to remember, that there have always been a few men of ardent patriotism, like your own, solicitous to keep alive the recollection of this duty. It will be doubtless remembered by some amongst you, that when the eloquent,—and, as I believe, truly patriotic member from Virginia,—Mr. *M*ercer,—then in the legislature of his own State,—proposed and carried by an unanimous vote of that body, a resolution for asking the remains of Washington from his family, to be removed and placed beneath a monument to be erected near their Capitol,—a member of the House of Representatives from South Carolina,—now, I believe, no more [Mr Huger,]—came forward with deep anxiety to claim the sacred dust, as plighted to the nation, and, with generous ardour, urged an immediate fulfilment of the nation's faith. And yet you are, at this late day, again to deliberate, in cold debate, whether you will even now discharge the solemn duty!

Allow me the freedom to express to you my feelings on this interesting subject, and to pray you to call up for immediate confirmation those resolutions so often and so shamefully put aside.—Whatever lurking opposition there may still be to the act proposed, there certainly can be no open argument maintained against it; as, on the other hand, to declaim in a set eulogium on the character, the virtues and the services of Washington, would be, I think, ill suited to the taste and feelings of every friend of the measure. In short, the question must be carried by an impulse of patriotic feeling and gratitude for the most eminent and disinterested services ever rendered by an individual to his race, or its loss must be not only entered on the proceedings of the House, but recorded by the Muse of History as a lamentable instance of the instability of all popular judgments, when the immediate excitements to them are removed.

How was it, in 1799, when the news of the death of this unrivalled patriot reached Congress, that every countenance was saddened with grief—every patriotic bosom was wrung with agony? so it was then related to us, and it was said that a sorrow too profound for utterance pervaded the hearts of all. Washington—the pride, the glory of the republic—the saviour of his country—the benefactor of mankind—was no more. The consequences of his departure could not then be calculated;—it was the will of Providence, that rules the destiny of nations;—but the *future* was not then foreseen. Happy, happy people! who have still been protected and advanced through untried experiments, and scenes of glorious achievement, to a state of unexampled prosperity!—And all these blessings may be regarded in the highest degree as the fruit of the wisdom and the pure and enlightened patriotism of that one man.

As soon as the impression of that profound grief had left the mind free to decide on a proper course to be pursued in relation to an event no less distressing than the loss of him who was declared by that august assembly "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his country men," the joint resolution of both House of Congress was passed unanimously, *that a marble monument be erected by the United States in the Capitol, and that the family of Washington be requested to permit his body to be deposited under it.* Shall not this resolve of the People of the United States, made through their representatives, be considered as a solemn pledge of their faith for the performance of the act decreed, when now, in calm retrospection of the neglect of more that thirty years to discharge that duty, we perceive the causes for our gratitude tenfold accumulated?—Our lamentation for the loss of the hero and the guide of our fathers through the perils of the revolutionary war, and of the profound statesman, who watched with parental solicitude, to his latest breath, over the interests of the people, is no longer the effervescence of a passion or a high-wrought feeling:—it is now a grief which the mellowing hand of time has softened into sober thoughts of national gratitude.

This decree of your predecessors is not held up to you as a covenant with the departed patriot: to him or to his fame its performance can avail nothing; it can add nothing to the mighty meed of his large honours, which all mankind have awarded to him, and which history and posterity will preserve to future ages against the rasure of oblivion. It is with yourselves you have covenanted; it is to your children's children who are to reap the fruits of his patriotic services; it is to the moral grandeur of the nation you owe the strict discharge of it. Will any man, then, in your enlightened body, call for arguments to prove the obligations we all owe to the mighty chieftain, and to the pure and disinterested Father of his country? Shall any man be called upon to dilate on the military exploits and civic virtues of him, whose whole life was devoted to deeds of patriotism? The time is most propitious to the adoption of this long delayed measure of national gratitude. It is now "the high and palmy state" of our country; a profound peace reigns; and your finances are in the most flourishing condition. You have not long ago, passed through triumphs and rejoicings raised in honour to a living patriot—the friend of Washington—on whom you bestowed a tribute of noble munificence; blessing yourselves who gave, and him who received: and you will not surely falter in this light discharge of your obligations towards one, who, in the purest spirit of disinterestedness, ever, whilst living, refused the proffered gifts of his country, except when he was permitted to dispense them for the advancement and glory of the nation? What was it you gave to the philanthropic foreigner—the gallant knight of freedom—the good La Fayette? It was but a memorial of the services of that illustrious individual—a memento of the gratitude of this nation for the important aid he volunteered to it in its infant struggle to be free. For this you have raised to him a monument in the ever during hills and vallies of your country; and honorable men now representing the feelings of this same people, cannot consistently withhold a simple memorial from the native patriot, to whom the homage of all hearts has been offered up, or refuse his venerated remains a place in that temple of liberty which his valour and wisdom so eminently contributed to establish.

Will it be said, that such a manifestation of national gratitude as the one proposed would be to adopt a superstitious reverence for *men*, and to set a precedent under which the future minions of tyrants and oppressors will hand down their names, in undistinguishable honours, with those of patriots and sages, and that every common *hero* will claim the right of national sepulture? This is not the character nor can it ever be the effect of the act you propose to do. It must be a single case in the annals of this Republic. Two Washingtons come not in an age. If some distant generation after us shall [illegible] or of wild ambition, and another Father of his country shall arise—endued with that "etherial spirit" which is vouchsafed by Providence to a few of the sons of men, in wide intervals of space and time, qualifying them to lead, to guide, and to save, then let posterity follow our example, and raise a monument to his virtues. The fame of mere heroes has grown too vulgar for the admiration and affections of this enlightened people: but if, in the vicissitude of human affairs, either by force or by corruption, their liberties should ever be endangered, the example of this illustrious saviour of his country, impressed, perhaps, by a national memorial of it, upon the descendant of some revolutionary sire, shall call forth a champion to free his country from tyranny, and restore the glorious fabric of liberty and law.

The moral influence of such memorials of national gratitude can never be denied by him who has studied human nature or understood and felt the operation of moral causes. It is at the tomb of the departed parent or friend the heart is most affected with the remembrance of every virtue and of every act of kindness which distinguished him; and it is but an extended sentiment which is sprung in the patriot's bosom by a contemplation of the disinterested services of the hero and the sage: and, as the minds of men are thus imbued with gratitude for deeds which have ennobled and dedicated to honor the memory of departed patriots, a generous emulation incites and elevates their talents to the achievment of like services to their country. When the sacred ashes of Washington shall have been deposited in the citadel of freedom, they will regenerate the only real Phœnix that ever had existence, in the production of a *heart* for this great republic, and will afford the strongest cement of that *union*, which was the object of his fondest care and the latest theme of his patriotic exhortation. Let but a simple monument uprise from the vault which has been already prepared in the foundation of the Capitol as a receptacle for his sacred bones, and *the Capitol* becomes a monument of Washington. That whole magnificent edifice becomes his mausoleum, in which the servants of the people, in successive generations, will annually assemble to take care of the Republic, and, as they daily pass his tomb, their hearts will glow with admiration of the great asserter of the freedom of their forefathers, and they will vow, with reverential gratitude, to transmit it unimpaired to their posterity.

I am apprehensive that in one provision of your reported resolutions, you have presented an obstacle to their passage;—I mean the plan of adding a "pedestrian statue." I do not pretend to any peculiar taste in monumental architecture, but

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