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VOL XVIII | EASTON, MD. SATURDAY MORNING, APRIL 11, 1835 | NO. 15.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED EVERY
SATURDAY MORNING
BY ALEXANDER GRAHAM.

TERMS
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.

[From the London New Monthly Magazine for Feb.]

A 'Passage' in the Life of Tom Bermingham.

'Tom!' said my worthy progenitor to me, as we sat one evening over a bottle of unpaid claret, at his chambers in Albany; 'Tom, what is that ungentlemanlike and ill-folded dispatch that you're conning so attentively, with a face that's enough to turn your wine into vinegar?'

'My tailor's bill, Sir,' said I, with a groan that came *ab imis præcordiis*, followed up by a scarcely audible malediction, which I will not repeat, for fear of shocking the ladies.

'Poor devil!' ejaculated the 'governor.'

'Meaning me, Sir,' said I.

'No, Tom, meaning your tailor; you're welcome to the benefit of it, however. But no matter; fill your glass, and let us hear the sum total.'

'Only five hundred, Sir, in round numbers'

'Is that all? how very moderate!' exclaimed my exemplary parent.

'Why, indeed, Sir,' said I, 'it might as well have been a thousand, for any chance he has of seeing his money.'

That you may say, Tom; but his sort of thing can't go on for ever, and how long do you flatter yourself that it will last?'

'That is a point beyond my powers of computation, Sir; a spent fortune is like a spent cannon-ball—it goes a great way before it stops.'

'Ay! but it *does* stop at last, Tom; and let me tell you there was but a small trifle of powder in the charge, at starting Tom, there's but one thing for it, and I've told you so a thousand times, only you keep never-minding me; you must marry an heiress or a rich widow.'

'The Lord defend me from widows, Sir!' exclaimed I, with a shudder, (for there *was* a widow—and a rich widow too—but more of her anon;) and as for heiresses, Sir, I don't believe in them.—They are like ghosts, or mermaids, or griffins, unicorns; one hears of such things—some of them well-authenticated cases too—but one never meets with them oneself.'

'Pasha! Tom, you are a lazy indolent dog, or you might do very well, if you would set about it in earnest; to begin with, you are a devilish good looking fellow.'

'So the women *do* say,' answered I, with a peep at the chimney glass.

'Six feet one'

'In my stockings,' said I.

'Young enough in any conscience,' said my father.

'I should think so,' said I, 'in spite of my wig.'

'A Captain in Guards.'

'True,' said I, 'for the last ten years, and heartily sick of the same.'

'Heir-apparent to an old Baronetcy, and an estate of three thousand a year, in the county Tipperary."

'Yes,' said I, 'saddled with a double mortgage, & the jointures of two immortal old women!'

'Well, Tom, all the more necessary for you to make the most of it. You know very well it's all up with me; and if this infernal dissolution takes, I shall find it convenient to cross the water for the benefit of my health; but it's of no use talking to you. Are you going to the Opera to night?'

'I believe I must look in there by-and-by; Lady Hornsey has sent me a ticket as usual.'

'Ay, ay! There's a chance for you I have no doubt, if you think proper to avail yourself of it; a mighty good sort of woman, I'm told, with a clear five thousand a year.'

"Yes with a face like a nutmeg-grater, and a squint that's enough to give one a vertigo!—old enough to be my mother, too!"

'The carriage is ready, Sir Dionysius,' said the servant; most opportunely interrupting our *tete a tete*.

'Well,' said the Baronet, 'go your own road, Tom; you young gentlemen are always too wise to be taught—you must buy your experience, and a rare price you are likely to pay for it.'

'Faith! so I ought,' said I, 'for it's the only thing I am ever *likely to pay for*!'

Thereupon my revered relative walked off, leaving me to the society of the empty claret-jug and my own reflections.

'Tom,' quoth I, soliloquizing, 'the governor is right—something *must* be done in the matrimonial line—it is now or never—you will be thirty next month—time has thinned your flowing locks'—a grey hair makes its appearance now and then in your whiskers—but for all that, your day is not yet gone by—you must be 'up and doing,' however—the spring is half over—there is an end to all things in this world even to the patience of well-bred duns and the credit of civilized debtors—it is highly probable that before the shooting season fairly sets in, you may be reduced to the dreadful alternative of Lady Hornsey or the King's Bench—'the dagger or the bowl!' with a vengeance!—*N'importe!*—death before the dowager! says I; but in the mean time, we may as well make the most of her Opera tickets.'

'Habit," saith the proverb, 'is second nature;' which philosophical maxim accounts, they say, for the equanimity of eels under the process of excoriation, and the cheerful vivacity of lobsters during their immersion in boiling water.—We certainly get used to everything in this world, from the tax-gatherer to the *tic-douloureux*; and fortunately for myself, long practice had qualified me to emulate the firmness displayed by the above mentioned ichthyological proficients in practical philosophy. In fact, although I could not be said, either literally or metaphorically, to have been ever flayed alive, *hot water* was a medium in which I had long existed so habitually, that my moral *epidermis* might be fairly reported as proof against a *scald*. Thus it was that in spite of the uncomfortable prognostics in which my worthy father indulged, and I could not fail to participate, I found no difficulty in summoning the requisite degree of placid *nonchalance* to my aid ere I showed myself at the King's Theatre—no fit *locale* for the exhibition of blue devils, except such as figure in the opera of 'Don Giovanni' or the *ballet* of 'Faust.'

To one less seasoned than myself to the *contrarietes* attendant on financial embarrassments, my entrance into the pit would have appeared singularly inauspicious; for there, in the door-way, leaning with his elbow against the wall, while his correctly attired person, gracefully disposed in conformity to Hogarth's 'line of beauty,' projected so far as nearly to impede the passage, stood my tailor!—the identical *schneider* whose small account, had given rise to the unsatisfactory discussion which I have just reported.

A tyro in the noble science of *dun-soothing* would certainly have endeavored to slip by unobserved, under the conviction that it is highly inexpedient to recall the fact of your existence to the memory of your creditors, unless you have serious thoughts of paying them; but I knew better. Civility is a cheap 'circulating medium,' and although not strictly a 'legal tender' for value received, it is often effectual to procrastinate still farther the deferred resumption of cash payments.' Mr. —— was gazing intently through his mother-of-pearl *Devonshire*, which was *braque* in the direction of a box on the first tier. *J'avais pu m'eclipser*; but I scorned it.

'How d'ye do, Mr. ——?' said I; addressing him, with as much *disinvoltura* as if he had been a member of White's.

Mr. —— acknowledged my courtesy with a flattered look. For a tailor, he was very much like a gentleman.

'May I ask to what bright particular star you are just now confining your astronomical observations?' said I, seeing the *lorgnette* again brought into play.

'I was admiring the beautiful Miss Henderson,' answered he, 'in that box over the second chandelier. The great heiress, I mean.'

'What! a beauty and an heiress, too! That is a conjunction unheard of in the planetary system of our London world. Perhaps you could put me in the way of an introduction.'

"I very much wish it was in my power to do so, Captain Bermingham," answered the schneider, with an obliging smile and a respectful bow.

"So do I, with all my heart, Mr ——," said *I*, as I walked off; "for *your* sake, as well as my own," added I, *sotto voce*, however; for I feared he might think the observation personal.

"Well," thought I to myself, as I squeezed through the alley, in the direction of Miss Henderson's box, "*Fas est et ab hoste doceri*;" which, freely translated, means that a gentleman may take a hint even from his tailor. "Let us see what this divinity is like.

I looked up, I was transfixed. She *was* a divinity. Such an alabaster brow such glossy ringlets! such Grecian purity of features! and, better still, such *British* purity of expression! such a soul in that soft dark eye! such a delicate tinge on that fair cheek! such grace and dignity in that swan like neck, with a hand & arm that might have driven Phidias himself to desperation! "She is an angel!" exclaim I; "but an heiress! the thing is impossible."

From this vision of Paradise I turned to a far different object—my adorable widow, whose box was at no great distance, and so situated, that she could take very accurate note of the direction in which my eyes had been fixed for the previous ten minutes.—From the unusual projection of her black velvet hat over the *parapet*, I shrewdly suspected that she was watching my movements, and although I was by no means desirous to encourage the development of her unhappy *penchant*, yet as *I* found her a convenient acquaintance, I came to the conclusion that politeness required me to pay my respects to her forthwith, especially as I might, perhaps, without any apparent anxiety on the subject, elicit some information concerning Miss Henderson, from one who dealt in all the gossip, and *more than all* the scandal, of London.

She received me but coldly, in consequence, probably, of the tardiness of my arrival; and seemed disposed to "play off" the individual who had preceded me in the performance of his *devoirs*. This was a raw-boned, pale-faced and lanky-haired Professor at the Royal Institution who wore gold spectacles and took vast quantities of Lundy Foot. His appearance, I should have thought, would have been a regular *scare-Cupid*; but Lady Hornsey was blue as ignited alcohol, and there is no calculating the force of scientific sympathies.

After remaining for a short time a silent auditor of some very inflammatory discourse, concerning the nature of *gases*, sufficiently analogous to the state of the atmosphere, I determined to leave the worthy Professor in undisturbed possession of the field, and accordingly made my escape on the first practicable opportunity which a pause in the conversation afforded.

In spite of all my inquiries I could obtain no positive information on the subject of the lovely Miss Henderson, whose anti-romantic name I was the less inclined to deplore, from the consolatory reflection that it was *changeable*. That she attracted a good deal of attention was evident; but; all those to whom I applied for the necessary domiciliary, genealogical, and financial *renseignemens* seemed as much at a loss as myself to account for the sudden and unannounced appearance of so brilliant a luminary in the "starry firmament" of fashion.

It need scarcely be told that, ere the close of the *ballet*, I took my station at the entrance of the crushroom, to watch for the arrival of my nymph, on her way to her carriage She came forth from her box, leaning on an elderly man, evidently her father, and accompanied by a mustachioed *merveilleux* in waiting. If she had appeared lovely at a distance her attractions certainly lost nothing on a nearer inspection; and the witchery of her soft, clear voice, which occasionally reached my ear, as she addressed a few observations to her party, accomplished the work of fascination, and completed the measure of the romantic enthusiasm with which the first glance of her angelic countenance had inspired me.

While thus "drinking delicious poison" from her eyes, I stood gazing upon her in mute admiration, at a respectful distance, *I* heard snatches of conversation behind me, in which her claims and perfections seemed to form the principal subject of discussion.

"Lovely creature!—Splendid eyes, by Jove!—Miss Henderson—great heiress; uncle died in India; father City man; very wealthy; Stock Exchange; hundred and fifty thousand down; Man with her! 'Lord Clon-*something or other*; Irish peer; very *hard up*; not a rap; cleaned out a few nights since at the Athenæum,*"

I looked wistfully towards the *interlocuteurs*, but they were strangers to me I had, however, obtained some hearsay evidence respecting the lady, and was obliged to content myself with that for the present.

How malignantly envious I felt of Lord Clon-*something-or-other* when I heard the fair object of my devotion say to him, with a winning smile, as she prepared to obey the summons that reached her from below, 'Remember, we shall expect to see your Lordship on Monday evening; a very small party."

I followed the father and daughter down stairs, watched them into their carriage and felt like Ruggiero in "The Rovers; or, the Double Arrangement,";

"Barbs barbs! alas! too swift ye flew,
Her neat post-waggon trotten in."

"Coach, Sir; coach, Sir?; cab, Sir;" was re-echoed on all sides.

A sudden thought struck me as the barouche drew off. I jumped into a cab; "Follow that carriage," said I to the driver. "Come, be quick! or you will lose sight of it.

"Why, then," answered the *auriga*, in tones that once proclaimed his country 'bad 'cess to me if I don't make you spin over the ground in iligant style, and no mistake! Only it wouldn't do to stick too close to their skirts as them divils of sarvants might smoke us."

"Umph!" thought *I* to myself, "a respectable confidant for an *affaire du cœur*, Master Tom Bermingham! But no matter; the end must sanctify the means."

On we went; the barouche before, the cab behind; up Regent street, across Cavendish square, up Harley street, until the carriage stopped at a house situated within a few doors of the New-road.

The cabman, still a good deal in the rear, checked his Rosinante.

'What'll I do now, sir?" inquired he.

"Wait a moment," said I, "till the carriage draws off. But stay I have it! It will be a rather hazardous trick, certainly; but there's nothing like making a bold push. Pat, you shall have a sovereign if you will undertake to overturn me as close to that house as possible—without breaking any bones."

"Done!" said he; "but I needn't send the cab over. I'll just drive again' that lamp-post—asy like Do you jump out and throw yourself on the ground; lie *quite* (quiet), and leave the rest to me.'

There was no time to be lost, as we heard the carriage-steps put down.—While he spoke, Pat suited the action to the word;—bang we went against the post. I was not sufficiently prepared for the shock, comparative gentle as it was; I was fairly jerked out, and, without any spontaneous effort, measured my length on the curb-stone rather more roughly than I had calculated; while my faithful squire set up a shout that might have been heard at the Zoological, and in two minutes the master and servants of the house were collected around me.

I lay quite motionless, and, to all appearance, insensible; while exclamations of terror and pity burst from the different individuals who composed the group, as they lifted me from the ground and carried me, unresisting, into the hall.

I had scarcely been deposited on a couple of hall chairs when I heard a female voice, which I immediately recognised, exclaiming, "Good heavens! what's the matter?' and a faint scream which followed the question proved that the fair inquirer fully appreciated the *awful* nature of the casualty.

"Here, Julia; for God's sake, your *vinaigrette, eau-de-Cologne*, salts—anything! Here's a poor gentleman who has just been thrown out of a cab. John run for the apothecary round the corner! God bless me! I am affraid he's dreadfully injured."

I gave a faint groan, without opening my eyes.

'Oh! for mercy's sake, bring him into the diningroom; poor young man!' exclaimed the lovely Julia. And when, in obedience to her benevolent suggestion, I had been removed to a softer couch, the dear angel actually went down on her knees, and began rubbing my temples with *eau de Cologne*.

Yes; I felt those delicate fingers on my forehead; her breath fanned my cheek! I would have broken ten legs to secure such a moment; and, lucky dog that I was! I enjoyed it in a whole skin.

I was fearful, however, of carrying the joke too far, lest the surgeon should arrive, and insist upon phlebotomizing me, or, what would be worse, discover that *I was shamming*. I therefore, with a deep drawn sigh opened my eyes, and looked languidly around me. What rapture to meet the earnest gaze of those soft black orbs!—to see that heavenly countenance bending over me in anxiety and alarm—nay, as *I* almost flattered myself, with something of a tender interest!

'Thank God, he receives!' exclaimed she in a tone of delight; but *I* could, *of course*, only recover my consciousness gradually. Before *I* was sufficiently *collected* to speak, one of the party, having unroled me from my cloak, had extracted my card-case from my coat pocket and read my name and address therein recorded—'Capt. Bermingham, —Guards, Albany.'

'God bless my soul!' exclaimed Mr. Henderson, 'Capt. Bermingham, of the Guards! The son of Sir Dionysius, the member for ——, whom we met at dinner last week, at the Seymour-Higginbothams'. He told me his son was in the Guards. *I* hope, my dear Sir,' he continued, addressing me, 'you are not seriously hurt?'

'No, nothing of consequence, *I* believe, answered *I*, faintly. '*I* really—*I*—am quite shocked—I am afraid I am giving a great deal of trouble,'

'Don't mention it, my dear Sir,' said my good Samaritan. 'But pray compose yourself until the arrival of the surgeon, who will be here immediately.'

'Will he?' thought *I*, then I must be off immediately, after I have secured an excuse for calling tomorrow.'

'Thank you very much,' said *I* rapidly reviving; 'but I trust *I* shall have no serious occasion for his services. My left arm is a little bruised, I believe; but *I* am sure I have no bones broken—I was only a good deal stunned. *I* shall, however, be quite well, in a minute or two, and cannot think of trespassing farther, to-night, on your kindness. My name is Bermingham—Captain Bermingham of the —— Guards. I must make the best of my way home now; but I trust you will allow me, when I am rather more presentable, to have the honour of calling upon you, and expressing more fully the gratitude *I* feel for the benevolent attention I have received.'

'I shall be happy to see you, at any time, Captain Bermingham—especially as I have the pleasure of being slightly acquainted with your worthy father. But you really must not think of going—you cannot walk I am sure. But stay, if you really will go, my carriage is here, and shall take you slowly home.'

'My dear Sir, I cannot think of——'

'Nay, I must insist. My coachman shall drive very carefully. In which direction were you going?'

'My dear Sir—you are too kind—my head is so confused—I scarcely recollect—I think; I believe I was going to join some friends in the Regent's Park, to sup after the opera but, as you really are so kind as to allow me the use of your carriage, *I* shall trouble the coachman to drive me home to the Albany'

During all this time, *I* was furtively watching the countenance of the lovely Julia, whose interest in my welfare was apparently not diminished by my restoration to consciousness. I have no doubt I looked pale, for in the performance of my successful manœuvre, I had got a slight shake; and my left shoulder just warned me that there was sufficient of *reality* in the affair to heighten the effect of the romance.

I now took my leave, as gracefully as was consistent with the imaginary injuries I had sustained in the fall; and supported by the arm of one of the servants, I proceeded to the carriage. But before I had got out of the house, it occurred to me that I ought, in common gratitude, to inquire the name of my new friend, as I could not be *supposed* to know it. I therefore begged that he would have the goodness to inform me to whom I was so greatly indebted, &c. He complied by giving me his card, which, having asked it merely for form's sake, I put into my pocket without looking at it, and indeed there was not sufficient light at the street-door, where I received it, to admit of my reading the name.

'Place your honor,' said the cabman, as *I* was slowly assisted into the carriage, 'you've forgotten the fare.'

'Get along with you,' said the butler. 'Do you think the gentleman's going to pay you; for a'most breaking his neck? You ought to be had up to Bow street.'

'Stay,' said I, with Christian meekness, & a forgiveness of injuries that was truly edifying, '*I* dare say the poor man is not much to blame, and accidents will happen. Here is your fare, my good fellow,' *I* continued, slipping a sovereign into his hand, 'and for God's sake, drive more cautiously in future.'

Mr. Henderson's servants delivered me safely in Albany, with every precaution that my *precarious* state required.

My father had not returned from his club, and *I* gave the strictest injunctions that he should not be informed of what had occurred; supposing always; and I regret to say that it was not a matter of course; that he did not make his appearance in that exquisite state of beatitude in which the vulgar cares of existence and the trifling interests of humanity, sink into insignificance in the eyes of one who is

'O'er a' the ills o'life victorious'

After a night of unbroken slumbers, enlivened by very agreeable dreams throughout which romantic affection, and marriage settlements; the darts of Cupid and the three per cent. consols were oddly jumbled in my head, according to the usual incongruity of the fantastic visions of Morpheus, *I* arose in high spirits, and very little the worse for my tumble. As *I* was completing my toilet, an operation in which I did not forget a black silk handkerchief, by way of a sling for my *invalided* arm; as I meant it to do great execution; I saw on my dressing-table the card which I had received from my Harley-street friend on the preceding night, and which I had taken from my waistcoat-pocket while undressing. What was my surprise when I discovered that, instead of 'Mr. Henderson,' it bore the name of Lieut. Col. Sir George Jervoise!' Could it be the same card?—Yes, there was the address—No.—, Upper Harley street.

'Well,' thought I, 'I took it for granted he was her father; but I suppose he is only her uncle. Perhaps her father is dead. So much the better—parents are sadly in the way, when a young lady is disposed to make a disinterested match.

With this consolatory reflection I made my appearance at the breakfast table, where I found the 'governor' all sympathy for my mishap, of which he had heard the most exaggerated accounts.

At his request I now gave him my version of the affair, which was tolerably correct, as far as it went, although I took the liberty of suppressing such facts as I was not desirous to communicate. I therefore said nothing of Miss Henderson, but dwelt long and eloquently on the kindness of Sir Gorge Jervoise. 'He stated, Sir,' observed I, 'that he had had the pleasure of meeting you at dinner lately.'

'To be sure, to be sure,' said my father, suddenly recollecting the name. 'It was no later than last week, at the Seymour-Higginbothams', I sat next to him, and a very sensible, agreeable fellow he is. The dinner was given in honor of him and his young bride!'

'*Bride!*' exclaimed, or rather screamed I, bouncing from my chair.

'Why, what the devil's the matter with the man?' said my father, staring in amazement.

'Bride, sir. Did you say 'bride?'

'Yes sir! his bride! And a mighty pretty woman she is, I can tell you! with a splendid pair of black eyes. And an heiress, too. They had only been married about three weeks. She was a Miss Henderson.'

I started on my feet, upsetting sundry cups and saucers in the abruptness of the movement, tore off the sling from my arm, threw it into the fire, and began pacing the room with gigantic strides.

'Good Lord!' exclaimed my father, in real alarm, 'the boy's mad! My life for it! he has had a concussion of the brain in that cursed fall!' And so saying, he began ringing the bell, as if the house was on fire.

'For heaven's sake, sir,' said I, 'don't alarm the neighbourhood. I have only made a confounded fool of myself;—that's all'

'Well, Tom,' said he, '*I* am glad it's no worse; but as it isn't the first time by a great many, to my certain knowledge, you may as well take it easy, any how.'

'Take it easy, indeed!' exclaimed I. 'When I have run the risk of breaking my neck for nothing! But you shall hear the whole truth, sir, and judge of my disappointment.'

I then proceeded to supply the deficiencies of my former narrative, and put my worthy father in possession of all the facts of the case. He listened to my recital with the most provoking hilarity; and, after complimenting me on what he was pleased to designate my 'unheard-of-impudence,' and 'unparalled effrontery,' he ended by declaring, with an oath, that *I* was his 'own son, every inch of me.'

'But, Tom, my boy,' said he, 'don't be downhearted! There are plenty of heiresses—and pretty ones, too—to be had, if you will only take the trouble of looking for them;—and, at all events, if the worst come to the worst, there is Lady Hornsey.'

The Pirates.—The interesting circumstances in relation to the reprieve lately granted to the Pirates under sentence of death in Boston, are generally known. Mrs Child, wife of David L. Child, Esq. of Boston, who was of counsel for the pirates at their late trial,—a lady well known in the literary world, having the strongest conviction of the innocence of the accused, went to Washington for the noble purpose of laying the matter before the President, and to ask for a reprieve, on the ground that the circumstances of the case plainly indicated the existence in a foreign port of evidence that would have an important bearing on the case. She had an interview with the President and retired, leaving him fully possessed of all the merits of the petition. The President sent for the Attorney General, who revived the whole matter, and decided that there was not sufficient ground for granting a reprieve. When the President announced this decision to Mrs. Child the whole interview is said to have been inexpressibly affecting. The lady fell on her knees and entreated him to reconsider the subject; the persons present, including the President himself, were dissolved in tears; but he remained firm to his decision, and the lady left Washington the next morning with a heavy heart. She had scarcely reached home when the Marshal received a warrant reprieving the persons condemned for three months.

Now whether the pirates be innocent or guilty, no one can sufficiently admire the courage and self devotion of a lady who could undertake such a journey alone, at this inclement season, and go through the immense and formidable task of urging such a petition. The President, doubtless, was moved by the extraordinary enthusiasm of Mrs. Child to reconsider the matter, after she had left the city; and as, in such cases, where there is the least uncertainty, that mercy which should always temper the justice which resides in the breast of a chief magistrate, will always prompt him to err on the safe side, he resolved to grant the reprieve, that at the supposed evidence might be obtained, if it really existed.

If the men are in fact guilty, it will appear; if innocent they will not suffer. and as no injury can accrue to public justice, by waiting further developements, it must ever be a source of gratitude and satisfaction to the public, as well as to the lady in question, that, but for her heroic exertions, these men would now be in eternity.—*Greenfield (Mass.) Mercury.*

Navigation Extra.—A little cutter, called the Circe, of only 22 tons, has found her way from London to the Cape of Good Hope, navigated by the master and two boys! After leaving Deptford, which was on the 2nd Aug. 1833, she had been at Madeira, the Canaries, Cape de Verds, to Abralhas, on the South American Coast, Isle de Grand, St. Sebastian, Elizabeth and Saidanha Bays, and, on the 7th of March, 1834, arrived at the Cape of Good Hope.

This is not so extraordinary a fact as one performed many years since by a Down Easter. Captain Shackford, now of Ohio, an eccentric man, then living in Portsmouth, N. H. purchased a Chebacco boat of 20 tons, and with no companion but his dog, and no object but to see the world, navigated her safely to England, where he had an interview with Sir Joseph Banks, and thence found his way to one of the West India Islands. On his arrival, although his papers were authentic, he was arrested by the civil authorities and confined as a pirate, and it was not till a subsequent arrival of some of his townsmen, who were acquainted with his solus voyage that he was set at liberty.—*N. Y. Com. Adv.*

The Whigs of Rhode Island have nominated Mr. KNIGHT, as their candidate for Governor.

*Meaning, of course, not the distinguished club, but the notorious gambling house of that name.

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