LIBERIA HERALD.

NEW SERIES.

(FOR OUR COUNTRY.)

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LIBERIA HERALD

Published Semi-Monthly.

The Liberia Herald is published in Monrovia on the First and Third Wednesdays in each month, at One Dollar *per annum*, payable in advance.

The rates of advertising in the Liberia Herald, are,—

For a single square, one insertion, $ " 37 1-2c
For half a square, one insertion, $ " 25c.
For each subsequent insertion, $ " 12 1-2c

Five lines or less, constitute half a square, and ten lines a square. If an advertisement exceeds a square the price will be in exact proportion.

Marriages and obituary notices are charged 25 cents for one insertion. Payments in all cases, in advance.

Voluntary correspondence, containing interesting or important news, solicited from any part of the Republic.

No notice will be taken of anonymous communications; nor will rejected communications be returned.

All communications must be addressed to "Liberia Herald."

BENJ'N. COATES WALTER BROWN.

COATES & BROWN,

Wholesale Dealers in Foreign and Domestic Dry Goods,

No 139 1-2 Market street, North side, between Third and Fourth streets, PHILADELPHIA

NEW GOODS!

A supply of merchandize just opened and for sale, at the usual rates and terms of the subscriber, at his old stand!!

Which stock embraces extensively, the requirements of the Liberian market, whether staple and fancy dry goods, or provissions be regarded.

EDWARD J. ROYE.

Monrovia, January 23 h 1852

NOTICE

The undersigned wishes to take this method to give notice of his intention to leave this County, and requests that all persons having claims against him would present them for settlement before the first of April ensueing, and all persons indebted to him will come forward and make payment before the above named period.

BEVERLY R. WILSON.

January 28th, 1852.

Job. Printing neatly and promptly executed at this office, at moderate prices.

LIBERIA HERALD

August 1st 1851

LIBERIA HERALD.

LIFE IN THE DESERT:

OR

HOW A PANTHER FELL IN LOVE WITH A FRENCH SOLDIER

During the enterprising expedition into upper Egypt, by General Bessaix, a provincial soldier fell into the power of a tribe of Arabs, called Maugrabins, and was thence carried into the desert, beyond the cataract of the Nile. In order to place a safe distance between themselves and the French army, the Maugrabins made a forced march, and did not stop till night closed in. They encamped around a fountain surrounded by palm trees. Not supposing their prisoner would attempt to escape, they contented themselves with merely binding his hands; and after having fed their horses, and made their supper upon dates, they all of them slept soundly. As soon as the French prisoner was convinced of this fact, he began to gnaw the cords that bound him, and soon he regained the liberty of his hands. He seized a carbine, and took the precaution to provide himself with some dry dates and a little bag of grain, armed with a scimetar, started off, in the direction of the French army.

In his eagerness to arrive at a place of safety, he urged the already weary horse until the generous animal fell down dead, and left his rider alone in the midst of the desert. For a long time the Frenchman walked on with the perseverance of a runaway slave, but was at last obliged to stop. The day was finished; notwithstanding the beauty and freshness of oriental nights, he did not feel strength enough to pursue his journey. Having reached a little cluster of palms, which had gladdened his heart at a distance, he laid his head upon a stone and slept, without taking any precaution for his defence.

He was awakened by the pitiless rays of the sun, which fell upon him with intolerable fervor; for in his weariness he had reposed on the side opposite to the morning shadows of the majestic plains. The prospect around him filled him with despair. In every direction nothing met his eye but a wide ocean of sand, sparkling and dancing like a dagger in the sunshine. The pure brilliancy of the sky left the imagination nothing to desire. Not a cloud obscured its splendor, not a zephyr moved the surface of the desert. The earth and the heavens seemed on fire. There was a mild, and awful majesty in the universal stillness! God, in all his infinity, seemed present to the soul!

The desolate wanderer thought of the fountains and roses of his own native provinces, and wept aloud. He clasped the palms, as if it had been a living friend. He shouted to relieve the forgetfulness of utter solitude. The wide wilderness sent back a sharp sound from the distance, but no echo was awakened. The echo was in his head.

With melancholy steps he walked around the eminence on which the palm trees grew. To his great joy, he discovered on the opposite side a sort of natural grotto, formed by piles of granite. Hope was awakened in his breast. The palm wood furnished him with dates for food, and human beings might come that way before they were exhausted. Perhaps another party of Maugrabings, whose wandering life began to have some charms for his imagination—or he might hear the noise of approaching cannon—for Napoleon Bonaparte was then passing over Egypt. The Frenchman experienced a sudden transition from the deepest despair to the wildest joy. He occupied himself during the day with cutting down some palm trees to defend the mouth of the grotto against wild beasts, which would come in the night time to drink at the rivulet flowing at the foot of the palms. Notwithstanding the eagerness produced by fear of being devoured in his sleep, he could not finish his fortification, during the day. Towards evening the mighty tree he was cutting fell to the ground with a crash that resounded through the desert, as if solitude had uttered a deep groan.

But like an heir, who soon ceases to mourn over a rich parent, he immediately began to strip off the broad beautiful leaves to form his couch for the night. Fatigued by his exertion and the extreme warmth of the climate, he soon fell into a profound slumber. In the middle of the night his sleep was suddenly disturbed by an extraordinary noise. He raised himself and and listened—and amid the deep silence he heard the loud breathing of some powerful animal. The sound fell upon his heart like ice. The hair started upon his head, and he strained his eyes to the uttermost to perceive the object of his terror. He caught the glimpse of two faint yellow lights at a distance from him; he thought it might be an optical delusion produced by his own earnest gaze; but, as the rays of the moon entered the chinks of the cave, he distinctly saw an enormous animal lying about two feet from him. There was not sufficient light to distinguish what species of animal it was; it might be a lion, a tiger, a crocodile; but the strong odor that filled the cave left no doubt of the presence of some large and terrible creature.

When the moon rose so as to shine directly upon the opening in the grotto, its beams lighted the beautiful spotted hide of a huge panther! The lion of Egypt slept with her head upon her paws, with the comfortable dignity of a great house dog. Her eyes, which opened from time to time, were now closed. Her face was turned towards the Frenchman. A thousand confused thoughts passed through the soldier's bosom. His first idea was to shoot his enemy through the head; but he saw there was not room enough for that; the ball would inevitably have passed her. He dared not make the slightest movement, lest he should awaken her; nothing broke the deep silence, but the breath of the panther and the beating of his heart. Twice he put his hand upon his scimeter, but the difficulty of penetrating her hard rough skin made him relinquish the project. To attempt her destruction, and fail in the attempt, would be instant death. At all events, he resolved to wait for daylight. Day came at last, and showed the jaws of the sleeping panther covered with blood.

"She has eaten lately," said the Frenchman, to himself. "She will not awaken in hunger."

She was in truth a beautiful monster. The fur on her throat and legs was of a dazzling whiteness; a circle of a little dark spots, like velvet, formed pretty bracelets round her paws—her large muscular tail was beautiful white, terminated by black rings; and the soft smooth fur on her body was of a glowing yellow, like unwrought gold, richly shaded with dark brown spots in the form of roses.

This powerful but tranquil hostess reposed in as graceful an attitude as a puss sleeping on a footstool. Her head stretched on nervous outstretched paws, from which her long white smellers spread out like silver threads. Had she been in a cage, the Frenchman would certainly have admired the perfect symmetry of her dark form, and the rich contrast of colors that gave such an imperial brilliancy to her robe; but, alone, and in her power, it was a different thing. At the mouth of the cannon he had felt his courage rising with increasing danger, but it was sinking now. The cold sweat poured from his forehead as he saw the sleeping panther. Considering himself a dead man, he waited his fate as courageously as he could. When the sun rose, the panther suddenly opened her eyes, stretched out her paws, and gasped, showing a frightful row of teeth, and a great tongue as hard and as rough as a file. She then shook herself, and began to wash her bloody paws, passing them from time to time over her ears, like a kitten. "Very well done," thought the soldier, who felt his gaiety and courage returning—"she does her toilet handsomely." He seized a little dagger which he had taken from one of the Arabs—"Come let us wish each other good morning," thought he. At this moment the panther turned her head towards him suddenly, and fixed a surprised and earnest gaze upon him.

The fixedness of her bright metalic eyes, and their almost insupportable brilliancy, made the soldier tremble, especially when the mighty beast moved towards him. With great boldness and presence of mind he looked her directly in the eye, having often heard that great power may be obtained over animals in that manner. When she came up to him, he gently scratched her head and smoothed her fur. Her eyes gradually softened, she began to wag her tail, and at last she purred like a petted cat; but so deep and strong were her notes of joy, that they resounded through the cave like the rolling of a church organ.

The Frenchman redoubled his caresses, and when he thought her veracity was sufficiently tamed, he attempted to leave the grotto. The panther made no opposition to his going out; but she came bounding after him lifting up her back and rubbing against him like an affectionate kitten. "She requires a great deal of attention," said the Frenchman, smiling. He tried to feel her ears and throat; and perceiving that she was pleased with it, he began to tickle the back of her head with the point of his dagger, hoping to find a favorable opportunity to stab her; but the hardness of the bones made him tremble lest he should not succeed.

The beautiful Sultana of the desert seemed to tempt the courage of her prisoner, by raising her head, stretching out her neck, and rubbing against him. The soldier suddenly thought that, to kill her with one blow, he must strike her in the throat. He raised his blade for that purpose—but at that moment she crouched down at his feet, and looking up in his face with a mixture of affection and native fierceness. The poor Frenchman leaned against the tree, eating some dates, and casting his eye anxiously around the desert, to see if no one was coming to free him from his terrible companion, whose strange friendship is so little to be trusted. He offered to feed her with some nuts, and dates, but she looked upon them with supreme contempt. However, as if sensible of his kind intentions, she licked his shoes and purred.

"Will she be so when she get hungary?" thought the Frenchman.

The idea made him tremble. He looked at the size of the panther. She was three feet high and four long, without including her tail, which was nearly three feet more in length, and as round as a great cudgel.

Her head was as big as a lion's, and her face was distinguished by a peculiar expression of cunning. The cold cruelty of the panther reigned there; but there was likewise something strangely like the countenance of an artful woman, in the gaiety and fondness of the present moment.

During the whole day, if he attempted to walk away, the panther watched him, as a dog does his master, and never suffered him to be far out of sight. He discovered the remains of his horse, which had been dragged near the mouth of the cavern, and he easily understood why she had respected his slumbers.

Taking courage from the past, he began to hope he could get along very comfortably with his new companion. He laid himself beside her, in order to conciliate her good opinion. He patted her neck, and she began to wag her tail & purr. He took hold of her paws, felt her ears, rolled her over the grass. She suffered him to do all this; and when he played with her paws, she carefully drew in her claws, lest she should hurt him. The Frenchman again put his hand upon his weapon, with a view of plunging it into her throat, but he was still held by the fear that the animal would kill him in her anger. Besides, he really began to have an unwillingness to kill her. In the lonely desert, she seemed to him like a friend. His admiration of her beauty, gentleness, graceful activity, became mixed with less and less of terror. He actually named her Mignonne, in remembrance of a lady whom he had loved in his youth, and who was abominably jealous of him. By the end of the day, he had become so familiar with his dangerous situation, that he was almost in love with its exciting perils. He had even taught the panther her name. She looked up in his face when he called "Mignonne."

When the sun went down, she uttered a deep and melancholy cry.

"She is well educated" exclaimed the soldier. "She has learnt to say her prayers."

He rejoiced to see the panther stretch herself out in a drowsy attitude.

"That is right, my pretty blonde," said he. "You had better go to sleep first."

He trusted to his own activity to escape during her slumber. He waited patiently; and when she seemed sound asleep, he walked vigorously toward the Nile. But he had not gone a quarter of a league over the sand, when he heard the panther bounding after him, uttering at intervals a long, sharp cry.

"Of a truth," said he, "her friendship is very flattering; it must be her first love." Before she came up, the Frenchman fell into one of those dangerous traps of loose sand, from which it is impossible to extricate one's self. The panther seized him by the collar, and with incredible strength brought him to the other side of the ditch at a single bound.

"My dear Mignonne!" exclaimed the soldier, caressing her with enthusiasm, our friendship is for life or death."

He retraced his steps. Now, that he had a creature that loved him, to whom he could talk, it seemed as the desert were peopled. Having made a signal flag of his shirt, he concluded to wait patiantly for human succor. It was his intention to have watched during the night, but sleep overpowered him. When he awoke, Mignonne was gone. He ascended the eminence to look for her, and soon perceived her at a distance, clearing the desert with long, high bounds.

When receiving his caresses, she purred aloud, and fixed her eyes upon him with even more fondness than usual. The soldier patted her on the neck, and talked to her as he would to a domestic animal: "Ah, ah, Miss! you have been eating some of the Maugrabins. Ain't you ashamed? Never mind; there are worse animals than you are. But please don't take a fancy to grind up a Frenchman. If you do, you won't have me to love you any more."

This singular animal was so fond of caresses and play, that if her companion sat many minutes without noticing her, she would put her paw in his lap to attract attention. Several days passed thus.

The panther was always successful in her excursion for food, and always returned full of affection and joy. She became used to all the inflections of the soldier's voice, and understood the expressions of his face. Sometimes he amused his weary hours by counting the spots on her golden fur, and observing how beautifully they were shaded; she showed no displeasure even when he held her by the tail to count the splendid white rings, that glittered in the sun.

Maryland Historical Society

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