

Highland Messenger.

LIFE IS ONLY TO BE VALUED AS IT IS USEFULLY EMPLOYED.

ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA, FRIDAY MORNING, JANUARY 8, 1841.

NUMBER 30

VOLUME I.
A. R. FINLEY & J. ROBERTS, EDITORS.
PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY.
BY J. H. CHRISTY.

The "Messenger" is published at Two Dollars and Fifty Cents per annum, in advance, or Three Dollars at the end of the year. No subscription discontinued, (except at the option of the publisher) until all arrearages are paid. Advertisements will be inserted at One Dollar per square for the first, and Twenty-Five Cents for each subsequent insertion. All communications must be post paid.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE CHASE.

(From Cooper's Naval History.)

A TERRIBLE INCIDENT.

In approaching nearer our own times, the incidents of the late war with England, the naval history of which more abundant materials exist, are narrated with great interest. Among the earliest events recorded by our author, is the escape of the Constitution, under Commodore Isaac Hull, from a fleet of British ships, in July, 1812. The story itself, and the style of its narration, are both so spirited, that we cannot help ourselves the satisfaction of laying it before our readers.

As the day opened, three sails were discovered on the starboard quarter of the Constitution, and three more astern. This was the squadron of Commodore Broke, which had been gradually closing in with the American frigate during the night, and was now just of gunshot. As the ships slowly varied their positions, when the boats were entirely cleared away, the Constitution had two frigates on her lee quarter, and a ship of the line, two frigates, a brig and a schooner astern. All the strangers had English colors flying.

It now fell quite calm, and the Constitution hoisted out her boats, and sent them to tow, and with a view to keep the ship out of the reach of the enemy's shot. At the same time, she swept up one of the main deck guns to the spar deck, and run it out astern, as a stern chaser, getting a long eighteen off the fore-castle, also for a similar purpose. Two more of the twenty-four pounders were run out of the cabin windows, with the same object, though it was found necessary to cut away some of the wood work of the stern frame, in order to make room.

By six o'clock the wind, which continued very light and baffling, came out from the northward of the west, when the ship's head was got round to the southward, and all the light canvass that would draw, was set. Soon after the nearest frigate, the Shannon, opened with her bow guns, and continued for about ten minutes, but perceiving she could not reach the Constitution, she ceased. At half-past six Captain Hull sounded in twenty-six fathoms, when finding that the enemy was likely to close, he was unable to put the boats of two ships on oars, and was also favored with a little more air than the Constitution, all the spare rope that could be found, and which was fit for the purpose, was payed down into the cutters, bent on, and a kedgion was run out, near half a mile and let go. At a signal given, the crew clapped on, and walked away with the ship, overrunning and tripping the kedgion, as she came up with the end of the line. While this was doing, fresh lines and another kedgion were carried ahead, and in this manner, though out of sight of land, the frigate had glided away from her pursuers, before they discovered the manner in which it was done. It was not long, however, before the enemy resorted to the same expedient. At half-past seven the Constitution had a little air, when she set her ensign, and fired a shot at the Shannon, the nearest ship. At eight it fell calm again, and further recourse was had to the boats and kedges, the enemy's vessels having a light air, a drawing ahead, towing, sweeping and kedging. By nine, the nearest frigate, the Shannon, on which the English had put most of their boats, was closing fast, and there was every prospect, notwithstanding the steadyness and activity of the Constitution's people, that the frigate would get near enough to cripple her, when her capture by the rest of the squadron would be inevitable. At this trying moment, the best spirit prevailed in the ship. Every thing was stopped, and Captain Hull was not without hopes, even should he be forced into action, of throwing the Shannon astern by his fire, and of maintaining his distance from the other vessels. It was known that the enemy could not tow very near, as it would have been very easy to sink his boats with the stern guns of the Constitution, and not a man in the latter vessel showed a disposition to despondency. Officers and men relieved each other regularly at the duty, and while the former threw themselves down on the deck to catch short naps, the people slept at their guns.

This was one of the most critical moments of the chase. The Shannon was fast closing, as has just been stated, while the Guerriere was about as near on the larboard quarter. An hour promised to bring the struggle to an issue, when, suddenly, at nine minutes past nine, a light air from the south struck the ship, bringing her to windward. The beautiful maneuver in which this advantage was improved, excited admiration, even in the enemy. As the breeze was seen coming, the ship's sails were trimmed, and, as soon as she was under command, she was brought close up to the wind, on the larboard tack; the boats were dropped in alongside; those

that belonged to the davits were run up, while the others were just lifted clear of the water, by purchases on the spare spars, stowed aboard, where they were in readiness to be used again at a moment's notice. As the ship came by the wind, she brought the Guerriere nearly on her lee beam, when that frigate opened a fire from her broadside. While the shot of this vessel were just fallen short of them, the people of the Constitution were hoisting up their boats, with as much steadiness as if the duty was performed in a friendly port.—In about an hour, however, it fell nearly calm again, when Captain Hull ordered a quantity of the water started to lighten the ship. More than two thousand gallons were pumped out, and the boats were sent ahead again to tow.—The enemy now put nearly all their boats on the Shannon, the nearest ship astern; and a few hours of prodigious exertion followed, the people of the Constitution being compelled to supply the place of numbers by their activity and zeal. The ships were close by the wind, and every thing that would draw was set, and the Shannon was slowly but steadily forging ahead. About noon, of this day, there was a little relaxation from labor, owing to the occasional occurrence of cat's paws, by watching which, closely, the ship was urged through the water. But at a quarter past twelve, the boats were ahead, and the toilsome work of towing and kedging was renewed.

At one o'clock a strange sail was discovered, nearly to leeward. At this moment, the four frigates of the enemy were about one point on the lee quarter of the Constitution, at long gun-shot; the Africa and the two prizes, being on the lee beam. As the wind was constantly baffling, any moment might have brought a change, and placed the enemy to windward.—At seven minutes before two, the Belvedere, then the nearest ship, began to fire with her bow guns, and the Constitution opened with her stern chasers. On board the latter ship, however, it was found dangerous to use the main deck guns, the transoms having so much ruck, the windows being so high, and the guns short, that every explosion lifted the upper deck and threatened to blow out the stern frame.—Perceiving, moreover, that this shot did little or no execution, Captain Hull ordered the firing to cease at half-past two.

For several hours the enemy's frigates were now within gunshot, sometimes towing and kedging, and at others endeavoring to close with the puffs of air that occasionally passed. At seven in the evening, the boats of the Constitution were again ahead, the ship steering south-west, half west, with an air so light as to be almost imperceptible. At half-past seven she sounded in 24 fathoms. For four hours the same toilsome duties were going on, until a little before eleven, when a light air from the Southward struck the ship, and the sailors for the first time in many weary hours were asleep. The boats instantly dropped alongside, hooked on, and were all run up, with the exception of the first cutter. The top gallant studding sails and stayavails were set as soon as possible, and, for about an hour, the people caught a little rest.

At midnight it fell nearly calm again, though neither the pursuers nor the pursued had recourse to the boats, probably from an unwillingness to disturb their crews. At two A. M. it was observed, on board the Constitution, that the Guerriere had forged ahead, and was again off her lee beam. At this time the topgallant studding sails were taken in.

In this manner passed the night, and on the morning of the next day it was found that three of the enemy's frigates were within long gunshot on the lee quarter, and the other about the same distance on the lee beam. The Africa and the prizes were much further to the leeward.

A little after day light, the Guerriere, having drawn ahead sufficiently to be forward of the Constitution's beam, tacked, when the latter ship did the same, in order to preserve her position to the windward. An hour later the Eolus passed on the contrary tack so near, that it was thought by some, who observed the movement, that she ought to have opened her fire; but as that vessel was merely a twelve pounder frigate, and she was still at a considerable distance, it is quite probable her commander acted judiciously. By this time there was sufficient wind to induce Captain Hull to hoist in the first cutter.

The scene, on the morning of this day, was very beautiful, and of great interest to the lovers of nautical exhibitions. The weather was mild and lovely, and the sea was smooth as a pond, there was quite wind enough to remove the necessity of any of the extraordinary means of getting ahead, that had been so freely used during the previous eight-and-forty hours. All the English vessels had got on the same tack with the Constitution again, and the five frigates wore clouds of canvass, from their trucks to the water. Including the American ship, eleven sails were in sight; and shortly after a twelfth appeared to windward, that was soon ascertained to be an American merchantman. But the enemy were too intent on the Constitution to regard any thing else; and though it would have been easy to capture the ship to leeward, no attention appears to have been paid to her.—With a view, however, to deceive the ship to windward, they hoisted American colors, when the Constitution set an English ensign, by way of warning the stranger to keep aloof.

"At meridian the wind began to blow a pleasant breeze, and the sound of the water, rippling under the bows of the vessels, was again heard. From this moment the noble ship drew ahead of all her pursuers, the sails being watched and tended in the best manner that consummate seamanship could dictate, until four P. M., when the ship Belvedere was more than four miles astern, and the other vessels were thrown behind in the same proportion, though the wind had again got to be very light.

In this manner both parties kept pressing ahead and to windward, as fast as circumstances would allow, profiting by every change, and resorting to all the means of forcing vessels through the water that are known to seamen. A little before seven, however, there was every appearance of a heavy squall, accompanied by rain; when the Constitution prepared to meet it with the coolness and discretion she had displayed throughout the whole affair. The people were stationed, and every thing was kept fast to the last moment, when, just before the squall struck the ship, the order was given to clew up and clew down. All the light canvass was furled, a second reef was taken in the mizen topsail, and the ship was brought under short sail, in an incredibly little time. The English vessels observing this, began to let go and haul down without waiting for the wind; and when they were shut in by the rain, they were steering in different directions to avoid the force of the expected squall. The Constitution, on the other hand, no sooner got its weight, than she sheeted home and hoisted her fore and main top-gallant sails; and while the enemy most probably believed her borne down by the pressure of the wind, steering free, she was flying away from them, on an easy bowline, at the rate of eleven knots.

Thus terminated a chase that has become historical in the American navy, for its length, closeness, and activity. On the part of the English, there were manifested much perseverance and seamanship, a ready imitation, and a strong desire to get along side of their enemy. But the glory of the affair was carried off by the officers and people of the Constitution. Throughout all the trying circumstances of this arduous struggle, this noble frigate, which had so lately been the sneers of the English critics, maintained the high character of a man-of-war. Even when pressed upon the hardest, nothing was hurried, confused, or slovenly, but the utmost steadiness, order, and discipline, reigned in the ship.

(From the Advocate and Journal.)

FEMALE EDUCATION.

Messrs. Editors:—What can be of more importance to our country than the proper education of our women? This sentiment is indeed working its way very generally into the public mind; but the times have not yet produced any satisfactory outline of the system of education best adapted to the females. We have had some scattering suggestions, and an occasional exhortation bearing this way; but it is believed there are radical errors which have as yet escaped detection. It is not pretended that we have not had long essays, and even large volumes; but who does not know that a great book may contain very little that is new?

The writer of this has very carefully examined several late works on the education of females, and finds nothing material added to the maxims of former times. Books of this kind will be useful as embodying principles already received, but the improvements they recommend are of a description much below the exigencies of the case. Great improvements never take their rise in a bare emendation of particulars. If the principles are wrong, vexatious and in vain will be the adjustment of details. "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Plant but acorns, prune and cultivate as you will, and you will gather only acorns at last. Yet the intolerable character of a particular or consequence may lead, and sometimes does, not to the emendation of such particular or consequence, but the rejection of the principle from which it springs. So far, I take it, we have advanced with female education.

The imperfect and vicious principles that have predominated in their education have been discovered only through the multiplicity of bitter consequences that followed.—Community is now writing under the malevolent effects of its own cherished system of instruction. It affords no pleasure to dwell upon evils that are past remedy; and were the present generation more concerned, it would be wisdom, perhaps, to remit the consideration of the subject altogether. There is one consolation attendant on investigations of this kind, namely, facility of proof. Cause and effect are before us; and however great may be the difficulty of providing for a better state of things, the utter mischiefs of the present course are undeniable. I shall now refer more particularly to some of the facts which warrant the above suggestions:—

1. Ignorance of natural science. One custom which prevails among females demonstrates their ignorance of physiology. Allusion is had, of course, to tight-lacing. The small waists of America, and the small feet of China, have one common origin in the profound depths of ignorance. The difference is merely a matter of taste. My remarks are rather expository than criminative; hence no attempt will be made to declaim against the absurdities of this practice.—The reference is one of illustration solely;

for I am convinced that mention of this vice for any other purpose tends to make matters worse, instead of better. Physicians and philanthropists may expatiate on the madness of this suicidal custom; may demonstrate that its inseparable attendants are pain and death; but all to no purpose. Ignorance forbids that they should know these things. And until the laws of the human mind are changed, it must be so; for the *habe ipse dixit*, even of love and knowledge cannot be received. The wisdom of medical and other advisers may not be doubted; their kind intentions certainly not; but the subjects of this advice fail to trace the concatenation of facts on which such conclusions rest. Hence they have only the force of abstracts supported merely by authority, and are deservedly rejected from among the number of governing principles.

Under the head of domestic management a list of grievances might be enumerated. The lady who has been brought up to compress her waist, and who thinks it right to do so, cannot be supposed to have a knowledge of what is requisite for the clothes of the rest of the family. The young and flexible child must shape to its clothes.—Stubborn indeed, are the laws of nature. But an expanded chest is quite too vulgar; its ossifying frame-work must therefore be taught to grow, not as God would have it, but as capricious ignorance will permit.—Here, too, we usually blame the woman, when she does but as she was learned.—She may be entitled to our pity, but scarcely to our censure. What does she know of the structure of the being she is modeling, or of the operation of the vital functions of its body? Has she ever been schooled in facts of this kind? If not, the councils of prudence will have the appearance of dogmatism and folly and cruelty will characterize the attempt to induce practical attention to what, under other circumstances, would have been cheerfully obeyed for its own sake.

2. Fataality of mind. In youth the natural buoyancy of spirits is a wise provision for a good beginning; but if no stock of knowledge is acquired during this period, the mind is doomed to a monotony that disqualifies it for lofty aspirations, and prolongs the continuance through life of a desire for the puerile gratifications of dress and amusement. "The soul without education, like a pile without inhabitant, to ruin runs."—Incapable of intellectual happiness, resort is had to the more worthless and often vicious pleasures of sense. Or, rather, the intellect divorced from the senses is stultified, and the unhappy being is borne by the latter, like Phaeton the Chariot of Jupiter.

But away with objections. It is time to stop finding fault, and say the little we have by way of reform. Without affecting to supply the desideratum in question, or making improvements beyond all that are past, the author wishes, to contribute what he can to a consummation so devoutly to be wished.

1. The course of instruction for females should be based upon human nature, and not upon the caprice of incompetent parents nor the silly and contradictory customs of society.—Learning that is valuable for one human being is so for another. There is a gradual approximation to this view in the various editorial movements of the day.—But this movement is still too vague. The public is moving, but the goal where it should stop is unascertained. Women are properly excluded from politics and public life; but why are they cashiered from truth? They live and act in this life as really as do men, and with the same accountability, and it is absurd to wonder that physical education is deemed either useless or unbecoming to a woman. We hear much of music and painting, &c., all very good as far as they go; but the vices now most to be deplored are not to be subverted by superficial accomplishments. A solid education in the elements of universal science can alone render *belles lettres* of any use to their possessor. A lady who understands chymistry and physiology must be much better prepared to nurse the sick and to manage the affairs of her own family so as to secure health and happiness, than one who can only make music and pictures.

2. Females ought to be so educated as to be judges of their own morality, and competent counsellors of their own sex. There are now a few such, and there always have been, perhaps; but what are they among so many? Why have we not more female seminaries of a high order? Perhaps they cannot be afforded, or it may be teachers cannot be found. These things, however, only show that female education is considered rather as a refinement, than as a necessary of life. They have of right no connection with the destiny of women more than they have with that of men. But in the one case we are passive, while in the other no inducement could make us so.—Women have, therefore, been educated as an appendage to society, and not as a constituent part—merely as an ornament that might or might not be retained without prejudice to the social constitution. Such are the leading principles that ought to govern in female education.

In my last, I observed that there was much confusion in the application of our limited system. But in this, as in other cases, the stronger oppress the weaker.—By chance and by force the interests of this class have been shuffled aside till they manifest little disposition to call their spoliators to account. Society can be so arranged in all its domestic affairs as to admit of the requisite mental elevation. The plodding,

unbroken industry of some housekeepers, is rather the effect of habit than of necessity. We must look to those who have put down, to raise up those whom they have depressed. Let the means and excitements to study be no longer withheld from the adult; and let children of both classes be put upon the broad and equal ground of human nature—then the dominancy of fashion will give place to the control of reason.

W. H.
Hammondsport, Aug. 25, 1840.

ILLINOIS.

It is a singular circumstance in the early history of this country, that, a time when the settlements on the Atlantic were yet few and isolated, struggling for existence against penury, sickness, and the hostility of the natives, and all along their western border lay a repulsive and unexplored wilderness, the enterprise of the French should have penetrated, by way of the northern Lakes, to the country bordering on the Mississippi, and more than a hundred and fifty years ago, established colonies, which have existed uninterrupted to the present day. In the villages of Kaskaskia, Prairie, du Rocher, Cahokia, and their vicinity, are yet to be seen the descendants of the men, who followed La Salle, in the latter part of the seventeenth century, in his adventurous exploration of the course of the Mississippi. Here, in these regions of beauty and fertility, existed for many years, secluded from, and almost unknown to, the rest of the world, a company of as light-hearted and as mirth-loving individuals, as ever emigrated from the father land of mercurial spirits. At peace almost always with the Indians, whom they were content to defraud of their furs, without seeking to drive them from their country; basking under a genial climate, and deriving an easy subsistence from a soil fertile beyond all prior experience, the French of Illinois, for more than three quarters of a century, vegetating in colonies, which nothing but their indolence and love of ease prevented from rivalling those, in which the energy of the settlers on the Atlantic was laying the foundations of this republic.

An observer of the latter part of the seventeenth century, possessed of the most correct information with regard to this country, may well have doubted where eventually, the strength of population would preponderate.—On the one hand, the adventurers on the seaboard, though obliged to derive a support from a soil comparatively barren and unkind, and to contend with the undying hostility of the natives, with the most disheartening sickness and mortality, possessed the advantage of more easy access to the mother country, and greater facilities for commerce. On the other, the French colonists were in possession of the two natural outlets of the West, the Mississippi and the St. Lawrence. They had ingratiated themselves, by their facility of adaptation and careless ease of manner, with the Indians. They found a climate which, whatever it may have proved to other Europeans, was to them singularly congenial, and the kindest and most fertile soil that was ever taxed for the support of man. In addition to all these advantages, the mother country, at different times, lavished large sums of money for their assistance, and her government was, to the last degree, kind and parental.

With these lights, would not such an observer have been justified in predicting, that the *cordons* of French settlements along the Mississippi and on the borders of the Lakes would increase and tighten, till it had forced the inhabitants on the other side of the Alleghenies into the sea, or compelled them to submission? And may we not now speculate upon the probability that, had the circumstances of the rival nations, who were contending for this part of the continent, been reversed, the result would have been very different? Had the Anglo-Saxon emigrants originally penetrated to the lakes and ascended the Mississippi, may we not presume that their dense and thriving communities in the West would soon have ousted the Frenchmen, who might have been hunting crabs, and eating oysters, on the shores of the ocean?

As it turned out, while the descendants of the English were toiling for a subsistence on the sand of Virginia, or on the bleak hills of New-England, they were acquiring, at the same time, the habits of industry, the energy of character, and the love of industry, which carried them triumphantly through the war of the Revolution; the Frenchman, on the banks of the Mississippi, was dreaming away his life, happy, so long as the village musician would "pipe him to dance," and only caring to vary its monotony by a trading voyage, up some of the branches of the great river, among the Indians, to whom he felt no repugnance to assimilate himself in manners and indolence.—N. A. Review.

THE ABSENT PHILOSOPHER AT HOME.—The following anecdote is related by Lessing, the German author, who, in his old age, was subject to extraordinary fits of abstraction.—On his return home one evening, after he had knocked at the door, a servant looked out of the window to see who was there. Not recognizing his master, and mistaking him for a stranger, he called out, "The Professor is not at home." "O very well," replied Lessing, "I will call another time;" and so saying he walked composedly away.

VANITY.

"The cry is up, and Scribblers are my game." The Editorial craft, (like most other crafts) is sometimes in need of a little scraping. The overflow of vanity and presumption which the following article exhibits, for instance, seems to require a passing touch.

Editors looking up.—We see from time to time a paragraph with the above heading, containing the information that the conductor of some paper has been elected constable, councilman, assemblyman, governor, member of Congress, etc., as if it were a matter of astonishment that a man capable of directing, on his own responsibility, much of the public mind, should be deemed worthy of sharing with two or three hundred in the making of a few laws, or of being the instrument to distribute a few offices on party grounds. A case has occurred in New-Hampshire, which appears to us to give occasion for a proper kind of paragraph.

Governors looking up.—His Excellency Isaac Hill, for six years member of the Senate of the United States, and subsequently for many years Governor of the Commonwealth of New-Hampshire, has become editor of a weekly paper, called "The Farmer's Friend." We congratulate him on his promotion, and point to the case as illustrative of the maxim, that industry and application lead to success.

We are not obliged to say from which of our cotemporaries we have cut this precious scrap, nor from which again it professes to have copied it. The little thing speaks for itself, and as we only wish to correct an evil, not to judge the offender, (and least of all to get into a controversy with an Editor, for some of them might have more "points," than we have time to count;) we shall barely say a word or two concerning the vanity it discovers.

Who has not heard or read of the *fy*, which, sitting on the coach wheel, remarked with great self-complacency to the wheel, "what a dust we raise!" And when will men learn that they are by no means as much as they think themselves to be?

It is true that a rifle in the hands of an experienced and veteran huntsman is a weapon of danger and of death; but surely it is a matter of mirth to hear the pompous exclamations of a lad who has just changed his petticoats for pantaloons, and who, with his little gun and yet with what volubility he discourses of us, and us, and our's. And is it a whit less ridiculous to hear an editor of some little country journal talking of what see have done, and what see will do in the regulation of a nation's business: supposing himself "capable of directing, on his own responsibility, much of the public mind." (!!!)

How easy it is to fancy our consequence, and to think because a few people read our paper that we are a very important personage. In a certain circle we may be so, but the man who has not discrimination enough to know how to value the applause of such, has, we think, very little capability of "directing much of the public mind."

Some folks don't seem to have the art of discriminating between who is "directing" and who is directed. It strikes us there are very few of the Editorial fraternity who "direct much of the public mind," but there are a good many who know what direction to take after they know "much of the public mind."

A MOTHER'S DYING LOVE.

The plague broke out in a little Italian village. In one house the children were taken first. The parents watched over them, but only watched the disease they could not cure. The whole family died. On the opposite side of the way, lived the family of a day-laborer, who was absent the whole week, only coming home on Saturday night, to bring his scanty earnings. His wife felt herself attacked by the fever in the night. In the morning she was much worse, and before night the plague-spot showed itself. She knew she must die, but as she looked upon her dear boys, resolved not to communicate death to them. She therefore locked the children in a room, and snatched her bed-clothes, lest they should keep the contagion behind her, and left the house. She even denied herself the sad pleasure of a last embrace. O, think of the heroism which enabled her to conquer her feelings, and leave her home and all she loved—to die. Her oldest child saw her from the window, "Good bye, mother," said he, in his tenderest tone, for he wondered why his mother left them so strangely. "Good bye, mother," repeated the youngest child, stretching his little hand out of the window. The mother paused. Her heart was drawn towards her children, and she was on the point of rushing back. She struggled hard, while the tears rolled down her cheeks at the sight of her helpless babes. At length she turned from them. The children continued to cry, "Good bye, mother." The sound sent a thrill of anguish to her heart, but she pressed on to the house of those that were to bury her. In two days she died, recommending her husband and children to their care with her dying breath.