

POET'S CORNER.

From the Boston Gazette.

The vanity of human pursuits.
WHAT a shroud is man pursuing,
What a phantom all pursue,
Sill, though oft repenting, doing,
That which he should never do!

Some feel a more enticing flame,
Some late cause still moving,
Each striving for some different goal,
Each different ends approving.
In accumulating treasure
Some will always place their bliss;
And still craving, with measure,
Bow the knee to—Avarice.

Some think no sacrifice too great
In "power's purple robe" to ride;
Doom thousands to a cruel fate,
Only to satiate their—Pride.
Teach me above such thoughts to soar,
No such mean act to do;
May I, when this "poor play" is o'er,
A life well spent review.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

Of the loss of the American brig
Commerce, wrecked on the western coast of Africa, in the month of August, 1815, with the account of the sufferings of her surviving crew, who were enslaved by the wandering Arabs on the great African Desert, or Zahiran; & observations Historical, Geographical, &c. made during the travels of the Author, while a slave to the Arabs, and in the Empire of Morocco. By James Riley, late master and supercargo.
[We set sail [in the Commerce] from the bay of Gibraltar, on the 23d of August, 1815, intending to go by way of Cape de Verd Islands, to complete the lading of the vessel with salt. We passed Cape Spartel on the morning of the 24th giving it a birth of from 10 to 12 leagues, and steered off to the W. S. W. I intended to make the Canary Islands and pass between Teneriffe and Palma, having a fair wind; but it being very thick and foggy weather, though we got two observations at noon, neither could be much depended upon. On account of the fog, we saw no land, and found, by good meridian altitudes on the 28th, that we were in the latitude of 27, 30, N. having differed our latitude by the force of current, one hundred and twenty miles; thus passing the Canaries without seeing any of them. I concluded we must have passed through the intended passage without discovering the land on either side, particularly, as it was in the night, which was very dark, and black as pitch; nor could I believe otherwise from having had a fair wind all the way, and having steered one course ever since we took our departure from Cape Spartel. Soon after we got an observation on the 28th, it became as thick as ever, and the darkness seemed (if possible) to increase. Towards evening I got up my reckoning and examined it all over, to be sure that I had committed no error, and caused the mates to do the same with theirs. Having thus ascertained that I was correct in calculation, I altered our course to S. W. which ought to have carried us nearly the course I wished to steer, that is for the eastern-most of the Cape de Verdes; but finding the weather become more foggy towards night, it being so thick that we could scarcely see the end of the jib-boom, I rounded the vessel to, and sounded with one hundred and twenty fathoms of line, but found no bottom, and continued on our course, still reflecting on what should be the cause of our not seeing land, (as I never had passed near the Canaries before without seeing them, even in thick weather

or in the night.) [I came to a determination to haul off to the N. W. by the wind at 10 P. M. as I should then be by the log only thirty miles north of Cape Bajador. I concluded on this at 9, and thought my fears had never before so much prevailed over my judgment and my reckoning. I ordered the light sails to be handed, and the steering sail booms to be rigged in snug, which was done as fast as it could be by one watch, under the immediate direction of Mr. Savage. We had just got the men stationed at the braces for hauling off as the man at the helm cried "ten o'clock." Our try-sail boom was on the starboard side, but ready for jibing; the helm was put to port, dreaming of no danger near. I had been on deck all the evening myself; the vessel was running at the rate of nine or ten knots, with a very strong breeze, and high sea, when the main boom was jibed over, and I at that instant heard a roaring; the yards were braced up—all hands were called. I imagined at first it was a squall, and was near ordering sails to be lowered down; but then discovered breakers foaming at a most dreadful rate under our lee. Hope for a moment flattered me that we could fetch off still, as there were no breakers in view ahead; the anchors were made ready; but these hopes vanished in an instant, as the vessel was carried by a current and a sea directly towards the breakers, and she struck! We let go the best bower anchor; all sails were taken in as fast as possible; surge after surge came thundering on, and drove her in spite of anchors, partly with her head on shore. She struck with such violence as to start every man from the deck. Knowing there was no possibility of saving her, and that she must soon bilge and fill with water, I ordered all the provisions we could get at to be brought on deck in hope of saving some, and as much water to be drawn from the large casks as possible. We started several quarter casks of wine and filled them with water. Every man worked as if his life depended upon his present exertions; all were obedient to every order I gave, and seemed perfectly calm.—The vessel was stout and high as she was only in ballast trim.—The sea combed over her stern and swept her decks; but we managed to get the small boat in on deck, to sling her and keep her from staving. We cut away the bulwark on the larboard side so as to prevent the boats from staving when we should get them out; cleared away the long boat & hung her in tackles, the vessel continuing to strike very heavy, and filling fast. We, however, had secured five or six barrels of water, and as much wine as three barrels would contain; three of salted provisions; I had as yet been so busily employed, that no pains had been taken to ascertain what distance we were from the land, nor had any of us yet seen it; and in the meantime all the clothing, chests, trunks, &c. were got up, and the books, charts and sea instruments, were stowed in them, in the hope of their being useful to us in future. The vessel, being now nearly full of water, the surf making a fall breach over her, and fearing she would go to pieces, I prepared a rope, and put it in the small boat, having got a glimpse of the shore at no great distance, and taking Porter with me, we were lowered down on the larboard or lee side of the vessel, where she broke the violence of the sea, and made it comparatively smooth; we shoved off, out on clearing away from the bow of the vessel the boat was overwhelmed with a surf, and we were plunged into the foaming surges; we were driven along by the current, aided by what the seamen called the undertow, (or recoil of the sea,) to the distance of three hundred yards to the westward, covered nearly all the time by the billows which, following each other in quick succession, scarcely gave us time to catch a breath before we were again literally swallowed by them, till at length we were thrown, together with our boat upon a sandy beach. After taking breath a little, & riding our stomachs of the salt water that had forced its way into them, my first care was to turn the water out of the boat, and haul her up out of the reach of the surf. We found the rope that was made fast to her still remaining; this we carried up along the beach, directly to leeward of the wreck, where we fastened it to sticks about the thickness of handspikes, that had drifted on the shore from the vessel, and which

we drove into the sand by the help of other pieces of wood. Before leaving the vessel, I had directed that all the chests, trunks, and every thing that would float, should be hoisted overboard; this all hands were busied in doing. The vessel lay about one hundred fathoms from the beach, at high tide. In order to save the crew, a hawser was made fast to the rope we had on shore, one end of which we hauled to us, and made it fast to a number of sticks we had driven into the sand for the purpose. It was then lashed on board the wreck, and made fast. This being done, the long-boat (in order to save the provisions already in her) was lowered down, and two hands steadied her by ropes fastened to the rings in her stern and stern posts over the hawser, so as to slide, keeping her bow to the surf. In this manner they reached the beach, carried on the top of a heavy wave. The boat was stove by the violence, against the beach; but by great exertions we saved the three barrels of bread in her before they were much damaged; and two barrels of salted provisions were also saved. We were now, four of us on shore, and busied in picking up the clothing & other things which drifted from the vessel, and carrying them up out of the surf. It was by this time daylight, and high water; the vessel careened deep off shore, and I made signs to have the mast cut away, in the hope of easing her, that she might not go to pieces. They were accordingly cut away, and fell on her starboard side, making a better lee for a boat alongside the wreck, as they projected considerably beyond her bows. The masts and rigging being gone, the sea breaking very high over the wreck, and nothing left to hold on by the masts and rigging, I therefore made signs to come one by one, on the hawser, which had been stretched taut for that purpose. John Hoggan ventured first, and having pulled off his jacket, took to the hawser, and made for the shore. When he had got clear of the immediate lee of the wreck, every surf buried him, coming many feet above his head; but he still held fast by the rope with a deathlike grasp, and as soon as the surf was passed, proceeded on towards the shore, till another surf, more powerful than the former unclenched his hands, and threw him within our reach; when we laid hold of him, and dragged him to the beach; we then rolled him on the sand, until he discharged the salt water from his stomach, and revived. I kept in the water up to my chin, steadying myself by the hawser, while the surf passed over me, to catch the others as they approached, and thus, with the assistance of those already on shore, was enabled to save all the rest from a watery grave. All hands being now landed, our first care was to secure the provisions and water which we had so far saved, knowing it was barren thirtysand; and we carried the provisions up fifty yards from the water's edge, where we placed them, and then formed a kind of a tent by means of our oars and two steering sails. I had fondly hoped we should not be discovered by any human beings on this inhospitable shore, but that we should be able to repair our boats, with the materials we might get from the wreck, and by taking advantage of a smooth time, (if we should be favoured with one) put to sea, where by the help of a compass and other instruments which we had saved, we might possibly find some friendly vessel to save our lives, or reach some of the European settlements down the coast, or the Cape de Verd Islands. Being thus employed, we saw a human figure approach our stuff, such as clothing, which lay scattered along the beach for a mile westward of us. It was a man! He began plundering our clothing. I went towards him with all the signs of peace and friendship I could make, but he was extremely shy, and made signs to me to keep my distance, while he all the time seemed intent on plunder. He was unarmed, and I continued to approach him until within ten yards. He appeared to be about five feet seven or eight inches high, and of

a complexion between that of an American Indian and a negro. He had about him to cover his nakedness, a piece of coarse woolencloth, that reached from below his breast nearly to his knees; his hair was long and bushy, resembling a pitch mop, sticking out every way, six or eight inches from his head; his face resembled that of an orang-outang more than a human being; his eyes were red and fiery; his mouth, which stretched nearly from ear to ear, was well lined with sound teeth; and a long curling beard, which depended from his upper lip and chin down upon his breast, gave him altogether a most horrid appearance, and I could not but imagine that those well set teeth were sharpened for the purpose of devouring human flesh!! particularly as I conceived I had before seen in different parts of the world, the human face and form in its most hideous and terrific shape. He appeared to be very old, yet fierce and vigorous; he was soon joined by two old women of similar appearance, whom I took to be his wives. These looked a little less frightful, though their two eye-teeth stuck out like hog's tusks, and their tanned skins hung in loose plaits on their faces and breasts; but their hair was long and braided. A girl of from eighteen to twenty, who was not ugly, and five or six children, of different ages and sexes, from six to sixteen years, were also in company. These were entirely naked. They brought with them a good English hammer, with a rope-laniard through a hole in its handle. It had no doubt belonged to some vessel wrecked on that coast. They had also a kind of axe with them, and some long knives slung on their right sides, in a sheath suspended by their necks. They now felt themselves strong, and commenced a bold and indiscriminate plundering of every thing they wanted. They broke open trunks, chests, and boxes, and emptied them of their contents, carrying the clothing on their backs up on the sand-hills, where they spread them out to dry. They emptied the beds of their contents, wanting only the cloth, and were much amused with the flying of the feathers before the wind from my bed. It appeared as though they had never before seen such things. I had an adventure of silk laced veils and silk handkerchiefs, the former of which the man, women and children tied round their heads in the form of turbans; the latter round their legs and arms, though only for a short time, when they took them off again, and stowed them away among the other clothing on the sand-hills. They all seemed highly delighted with their good fortune, and even the old man's features began to relax a little, as he met with no resistance. We had no fire or side arms, but we could easily have driven these creatures off with handspikes, had I not considered that we had no possible means of escaping either by land or water, and had no reason to doubt but they would call others to their assistance, and in revenge destroy us. I used all the arguments in my power to induce my men to endeavour to conciliate the friendship of these natives, but it was with the greatest difficulty I could restrain some of them from rushing on the savages and putting them to death, if they could have come up with them; but I found they could run like the wind, whilst we could with difficulty move in the deep sand.—Such an act I conceived would cost us our lives as soon as we should be overpowered by numbers, and I therefore permitted them to take what pleased them best, without making any resistance; except our bread and provisions, which, as we could not subsist without them, I was determined to defend to the last extremity. On our first reaching the shore I allowed my mates and people to share among themselves one thousand Spanish dollars, for I had hauled my trunk on shore by a rope, with my money in it, which I was induced to do in the hope of its being useful to them in procuring a release from this country in case we should be separated, and in aiding them to reach their homes. We had rolled up the casks of water and wine which had been thrown overboard and drifted ashore. I was now determined to mend the long-boat, as soon as as well as possible, in order to have a retreat in my power, (or at least the hope of one) in case of the last necessity. The wind lulled a little in the afternoon, at low water, when William Potter succeeded in reaching the wreck and procuring a

compliment between that of an American Indian and a negro. He found the timber of the wreck very decayed, and the nails were rusted together, so that we could not support the planks. I ordered them to be turned up in order to get at her bottom. I looked her timbers together, however, as well as I could, which was very imperfectly. I had bad tools to work with, my crew, now untrained by my authority, having braced a cask of wine, and taken copious draughts of it, in order to dispel their sorrows, were most of them in such a state, that instead of assisting me, I tended to increase my embarrassment. We, however, at last got the boat turned up, and found that one whole plank was out on each side, and very much split. I had the pieces in, assisted by Mr. Savage, Horner, and one or two more. We obtained a little board into the seams and splits with our knives, as well as we could, & worked upon her until it was quite tight. I had kept sentinels walking with handspikes, to guard the tent and provisions during this time, but the Arabs had managed to rob us of one of our sails from the tent, and to carry it off, and not content with this, they tried to get the other in the same way. This I would not permit them to do. They then showed their hatchets and their arms, but finding it of no effect, they retired for the night, after promising, as near as I could understand them, that they would not molest us farther, till morning, when they would bring camels down with them. We had previously seen a great many camels tracks in the sand, and I of course believed there were some near. One of the children had furnished us with fire, which enabled us to roast a fowl that had been drowned, and driven on shore from the wreck, on which, with some pork, and a little bread and butter, we made a hearty meal, little thinking that this was to be the last of our provisions we should be permitted to enjoy. A watch was set of two men, who were to walk guard at distance from the tent, to give an alarm in case of the approach of the natives, and keep burning a guard fire. This we were enabled to do by cutting up some spars we found on the beach, and which may have belonged to some vessel wrecked there before. (To be continued.)

FOR SALE. I will sell at Private Sale, that Tract of LAND known by the name of BROWN'S PURCHASE, lying in the Patuxent, and containing 261 acres more or less. It is deemed unnecessary to give a description of the above land, as it is presumed those who wish to purchase, will view the same, which they may do by calling on Mr. John Davis, who resides on it. Terms of sale, application to be made to Messrs. Warfield & Ridgely, of Annapolis, August 21.

AN Overseer Wanted. A single Man, who can come well recommended for honesty, sobriety and industry, will meet with employe liberal wages for the ensuing year. Application to the subscriber on the north side of Severn. FREDERICK GRANNEL Aug 21.

State of Maryland, ss Anne Arundel county, Orphan's Court August 19, 1817. On application by petition of John Plummer, Jan. executor of the will and testament of Stephen Williams, late of Anne Arundel county deceased, it is ordered that by the notice required by law for that purpose, to exhibit their claims against the deceased, and that the same be published once in each week, for the space of six successive weeks in the Maryland Gazette and Political Intelligencer for A. A. County.

Notice is hereby given That the subscriber of Anne Arundel County, hath obtained from the Orphan's Court of Anne Arundel County, Maryland, letters testamentary on the personal estate of Stephen Williams late of Anne Arundel County deceased. All persons having claims against the said deceased are hereby warned to exhibit the same, with the vouchers thereof, to the subscriber, at or before the 2d day of September next, they may otherwise be excluded from all benefit of the said estate. Given under my hand, this 2d day of August, 1817. J. Williams, Executor.

By order, W. S. GR...

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MARY...
Price - Three Dollars
John Deal, of Anne Arundel County, petitioning for the relief of sundry indigent persons, and the relief of sundry indigent persons, and the relief of sundry indigent persons...