

The Examiner.

AND SEMI-WEEKLY INTELLIGENCER.

"THIS IS TRUE LIBERTY WHEN FREE-BORN MEN—HAVING TO ADVISE THE PUBLIC—MAY SPEAK FREE."—MILTON'S EURIPIDES.

New Series.

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The First Prize,

OR

THE YANKEE MERCHANTMAN.

BY CAPT. BOLTROPE.

It was on a warm and sultry afternoon in the tropics, that a clean built rakish looking brig, of the Baltimore model, was slowly foaming her way over the bosom of the broad Atlantic on her homeward bound voyage.

The sun was just about quenching its fiery heat beneath the blue waves of the ocean, throwing one last bright glare over the immense expanse of water.

All was quiet on board the White Cloud, the hands had knocked off from their work, every sail was set that could catch a breath of wind, and the long tapering yards were trimmed with a beautiful precision that gave evidence of skill and judgment in the man who commanded her, whom we shall take by the hand and introduce to the reader, by the name of Capt. Ben Bobstay.

Capt. Bobstay was a very large muscular man, of fifty years of age, and was cool, determined, powerful, and experienced.

His mate was a young man, a native of Maine; but who, in addition to the natural enterprise and go-ahead-attiveness of the Yankee character, had received the advantages of a liberal collegiate education, at a time when his family were in wealthy circumstances; a position which they had lost by the fraud and machinations of those who professed the most disinterested friendship for them. At the age of twenty one Robert Renshaw found himself penniless, the only support of his widowed, affectionate and almost heart broken mother.

Disgusted at the duplicity and faithlessness of his former companions, the proud and sensitive youth, now proud because of his poverty, became almost a misanthrope; he visited nowhere, shunned society, and felt alone in the world. In this mode of mind, he suddenly formed the intention of "following the sea," as it is called, and shipped on board of a vessel bound for the East Indies.

At the time that our story opens Robert Renshaw was twenty-six years of age; he had travelled much, and had stored his mind with a variety of practical and useful knowledge, which he every day found of immense utility to him. By a judicious disposition of various adventures which he had made from time to time on his voyages, he had acquired sufficient property to place his beloved parent in comfortable circumstances beyond want.

As we before stated, the sun was just setting, brightening the horizon with its last rays, when all hands on board the brig we have just visited, were roused by the cry of sail ho! from the mast head.

"Where away?" said the captain.

"Four points on the weather bow, sir," replied the man.

"I can't see clearly sir; but should judge she was a large two topsail schooner, very rakish and with a great spread of canvass."

"Mr. Renshaw! take this glass, jump up in the rigging, and see what you can make of her, sir!"

"Aye, aye, sir?" and away went the mate up the rigging to the main-top-mast cross-trees. After a long and steady look he confirmed the report of the "look-out," and gave it as his opinion that she was an armed craft.

"She must have us sir," said the mate, "for she has turned her course and is standing for us."

"Very well," replied the Captain, "with no more wind than there is now,

he could not come to us before twelve o'clock; there is no moon to-night; and I do not think it will breeze up any, so we have plenty of time to prepare, if it should prove to be our enemy."

"Yes sir, said Renshaw; but she may have sweeps!"

"True! I did not think of that; but then these Mexicans would be too lazy to use them if she has, unless it is to run away with."

Night fell, and a thick mackerel sky gradually overspread the whole heavens, shutting out every star and betokening a lively breeze for the next day.

"I have a proposition to make if you please, sir," said Renshaw, addressing the Captain.

"Out with it, sir."

"It is this:—we have no craft of that build in our navy, neither have the English or the French; she must then be a Mexican or a pirate; in either case she is well worth taking; the night is dark, let me take the boat and eight men well armed, you will have the second mate, cook, steward and two men on board the brig. I will board the schooner in the dark, they will not suspect such a thing, and I hope to carry her by surprise."

Captain Bobstay pondered a few moments, and finally replied:—"Well this brig and cargo are mine, I am responsible to no one. Go ahead."

In a few minutes Renshaw followed by eight able men, athletic Yankee sailors, armed to the teeth, and eager for the fun, was pulling away in the barge with muffled oars, in the direction where the schooner was last seen. As soon as he left the side, Captain Bobstay took in all sail but the main and foretopsails, which he lowered on their caps, hauled out the reef-tackles, hauled taut the buntlines and rounded through the slack of the clew-lines, he then braced up sharp, put the brig on the wind and laid his maintopsail to the mast, lashed his helm a-lee, armed the rest of his men except the cook, got out his other boat and pushed off in the wake of his mate, leaving the vessel in charge of the cook, who had been a long time with him.

Renshaw, in the meantime, perfectly unconscious of the intention of his captain, pulled silently and expeditiously for the schooner, the dim outlines of which in a short time he saw gradually nearing him.

"Avast pulling! lay on your oars and let her come; the flash of your oars in the water might discover us."

The looms of the oars were tucked under the riggings, and every man loosened his cutlass and shook the priming of his pistols.

In a short time, Renshaw, who spoke the Spanish language fluently, could hear the voice of the watch on board the schooner, threatening "*Muerie a las Malditos Yanquis*," or "death to the infernal Yankees," and congratulating themselves on this chance of "*Cortankando sus pesqueros*," or "cutting their throats."

As she was moving but slowly over the waters, Renshaw thought it advisable to board over the stern, which would at once give him command over the quarter deck, and the officers; too great an advantage to be lost. In consequence he let her glide past, keeping just under the shadow of her bends without touching, and counting her ports as she slid by; six ports were counted with the frowning muzzles projecting,—finally the Mexican standard with the Eagle standing on the cactus and holding the serpent, turned its lazy folds to his keen gaze.

"Now lads, caution and courage is the word."

According to a preconcerted arrangement, the bowman put his boat hook to

the gunnel of the Mexican boat hanging to the other davits, and held on, being towed by the schooner, while Renshaw's men carefully and silently deposited their oars on the thwarts of their boat. Luckily the schooner like most others of her class, had no cabin windows in the stern. Renshaw himself quietly climbed up the staff of the boat-hook the man was holding into the small boat above him, taking the painter of his own in his teeth. He arrived safely without creating alarm, being sheltered from observation by the taffrail and round-house of the schooner, made fast the end of his painter, and in a few moments was joined by his men.—He then raised his head above the taffrail and saw the man at the wheel and two officers leaning over the weather side of the quarter rail. Silently he advanced, followed by his men, one of whom stunned the helmsman by a blow delivered in true nautical style, under his ear. In a minute more the two officers found themselves at the bottom of the cabin stairs, having performed sundry evolutions and convulsions in arriving at this terminus, half stunned, bruised, and in no way able to account for the manner of their getting there. Their first impulse was to rush on deck; but their progress was suddenly stopped by the companion hatch, which was hauled over and barred down.

In the meantime, our hero, at the head of his daring little crew, pushed boldly forward into the waist, conquering all before them in their surprise, and would doubtless have succeeded in carrying the schooner by this *coup de main*, as bold as it was well conceived, had the officer in command forward not heard the disturbance, and at a glance seen that the schooner was boarded.

Hastily summoning his crew which was now diminished to some twenty-five men, since ten of them had been thrown overboard by the impetuous Americans, and five officers, locked up in the cabin without means of egress; he made a furious charge, and the intrepid little band now presented a small but solid front to their assailants.

The Yankees fought like tigers, making sad havoc with their enemies, whom nothing but their immense numerical superiority and the courage of their leader kept to their work. But overborne with numbers they gradually gave ground.

The Mexican officer with some of his men had dragged one of the bow chasers from its port, loading it with grape and cannister, and was about pointing it on our little band of heroes, when with a yell that made all ring, a gigantic form was seen coming over the bows followed by several others.

With one whoop of his herculean arm the head of the cannoneer, who was about to apply the match, rolled on the deck, another sent the gallant officer to his last account, while the men who followed him attacked like furies in the rear of the astonished and panic stricken Mexicans; the surviving ones of whom immediately ran below, when the hatches were hauled over them and secured.

In half an hour more Captain Bobstay, who had thus most opportunely come to the rescue of his gallant mate, was in peaceable possession of the Mexican Privateer *El Volador*, or the Flying Fish. Upon searching, nearly two hundred thousand dollars were found on board of her; funds sent by the Mexican Government to Havana to aid in the purchase of ammunition for carrying on the war.

In ten days the brig arrived in Charleston with her prize, which was condemned and sold, so that with the prize money and lawful booty our hero found himself

at the end of his cruise, worth nearly forty thousand dollars.

Being comparatively wealthy, he married a young lady to whom he had long been attached, and who was every way worthy of him, but with whom his poverty had prevented his being previously united; he now dwells in Massachusetts, beloved and respected by a large circle of friends and acquaintances.

THE EXAMINER.

Wednesday, December 11, 1850.

THE ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

We beg of the Committee of the Agricultural Society—or rather of that fraction of the Committee who regulate its affairs—not to suppose that because we have for a long time been silent in reference to them, we have therefore forgotten the shabby trick they played us in the matter of the Society's advertizing. We mean to bring it before the public again and again, whenever an opportunity for doing so is offered, until we shall have ample satisfaction for the injustice practised towards us.

The reason alleged for not paying our Bill last Summer, as before intimated, was, that our Paper was not in existence when the Secretary made an arrangement on behalf of the Society, with the other Printers in Charlottetown, to publish their advertisements at a stipulated and uniform price. The reason, even if it were founded in fact, would be untenable. It is not founded in fact. The publication of *THE EXAMINER* was suspended merely, from 27th February, 1849, till 12th January, 1850; but it was not finally discontinued—was not out of existence, or it would not have been re-issued. The fact was well known to everybody that the publication would be resumed: notices to that effect were issued, and widely circulated. Now there is one circumstance which clearly shews that the reason alleged for refusing payment of our Account was nothing but a subterfuge. At the time the so-called arrangement was made with the respective Printers, Mr. Pippy was engaged in the publication of the *Review*. At the expiration of six months from its commencement that Paper was discontinued, and Mr. Pippy, after the elapse of a few weeks, started the weekly *Advertiser*. No new arrangement was made for the publication of the Society's advertisements in the latter paper; Mr. Pippy continued to publish them as usual, under the notice and sanction of the Committee. Is not this fact, then, sufficient to shew, that it was the determination of this junta, from the first, to deal unfairly by us—to debar us unjustly from participating in the patronage of a Society, which is supported by the public funds to benefit the Island at large, and is supposed to have no personal or political bias?

But there is another circumstance which