

THE PAST—THE PRESENT—FOR THE FUTURE

Vol. I. Printer's Retreat, Indiana, Tuesday, January 3. 1832.

No. 16.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY
WILLIAM C. KEENE

TERMS OF THE "MESSENGER."

For 60 days numbers, in advance, . . .	\$2 00
do do paid within the year, . . .	2 50
do do paid at the expiration, . . .	3 00

The above sums to be paid in produce, delivered at his office or such other place as may be agreed upon. Fifteen per cent deduction made when paid in cash.

☐ No paper discontinued until arrearages are paid
☐ Subscribers served by post to pay 25 cents extra
☐ Advertisements inserted at the usual rates
☐ Subscriptions paid within two months, will be considered in advance

PRODUCE

Messrs. Cotton & Mix, merchants, Mount Sterling,
are authorised to receive produce from our subscri-
bers

For the accommodation of our subscribers on the
Eastern route, produce may be left with
Richard T. Giddard, at his store, in York township,
Charles F. Krutz, at his store, in New York,
Arbert Gazlay, near Troy,
Samuel Hicks, in Cotten township,
Joseph McIntire, in Cotten township.

THE
PIRATE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

At the age of twenty five, while a poor lieutenant serving in Ireland, I had the offer of a good military appointment in India, and yet I hesitated to accept it, because I knew in so doing I should be forced to tear myself from one, who, I felt, was far dearer to me than any thing the world held, and to whom I felt I was as dear. Margaret Cameron, the object of my passion, was the daughter of a retired Scotch officer, who dwelt in my native village. I had known and loved her from childhood, and when this gave place to womanhood, my affection changed in kind, while it strengthened in degree. I will not go over the ten thousand times trodden ground of lovers' explanation, and self reproaches, and brothels, that passed between Margaret and myself—we parted solemnly pledged to each other. I was condemned, by the will of capt. Cameron, and by the necessity of obtaining some professional promotion, to spend a few years in India before I could receive the hand of his daughter.

I reached my Asiatic destination—long and anxiously looked for European letters—took up one day, by accident, an English paper, and there read: "Died at the house of capt. Cameron, in the village of A—, Miss Margaret Cameron, aged 18." I wrote in despair to capt. Cameron, informing him of the paragraph I had read, and implored him for the love of mercy to contradict it. The countess of Falsendale, a distant relation of my sole parent, my mother, who had been a continual drawback on all my early gratifications, and whose distinguished characteristic was the love of management and plotting, and bringing things about by her own exclusive agency, answered my letter, ratifying what I had heard, with the additional melancholy intelligence that my mother was no more. I will not here dwell upon my feelings.

The appearance of my name, about five years afterwards, among the "Marriages" in the *Calcutta Gazette*, was followed by successive announcements among the "Births and Deaths," in the same compendious record of life's changes. My wife perished of a malignant fever, and two infant children speedily followed her. I set out, to return over land to my native country, a sober, steady, and partially grey-haired colonel of 36. My military career had been as brilliant as my domestic path had been clouded. The habitual complexion of my mind, however, was gravity, a gravity which extended itself to my countenance, and there assumed even a shade of melancholy. Yet I was a disappointed, not a discontented man, and my character had, I trust, undergone some changes for the better. I arrived at a port in the Levant, and thence took ship for Malta, where I landed in safety.

At this period the Mediterranean traders were kept in a state of perpetual alarm by the celebrated "Demon Ship." Though distinguished by the same attractive title, she in no wise resembled the phantom terror of the African Cape. She was described as a powerful vessel, manned by a desperate fleet and blond crew, whose rapacity triumphed over all fear of danger, and whose cruelty forbade all hope of mercy. Yet, though she was neither "built" of air nor "manned" by demons, her feats had been so wonderful, that there was at length no other rational mode of accounting for them than by tracing them to supernatural, and consequently demonic, agency. She had sailed through fleets undisturbed, she had escaped from the fastest pursuers, she had overtaken the swiftest fugitives, she had appeared where she was not expected, and disappeared when even her very latitude and longitude seemed calculable.

In short, it seemed as if ubiquity were an attribute of the demon ship. Her fearful title had been first given by those who dreaded to become her victims, but she seemed not ill pleased by the appalling epithet; and shortly, as if in audacious adoption of the name she had acquired, showed the word DEMON in flaming letters on her stern. To capture her seemed impossible, she ever mastered her equals, and eluded her superiors. Innumerable were the vessels that had left different ports in the Mediterranean to disappear for ever. It seemed the cruel practice of the Demon to sink her victims in their own vessels.

Most of the trading vessels then about to quit the port of Valetta, had requested and obtained, convoy from a British frigate and sloop of war, bound to Gibraltar and thence to England. So eager were all passengers to sail under such protection, that I had some difficulty in obtaining a berth in any of the holes and corners of the various fine fast-sailing copper-bottomed brigs, whose cards offered such "excellent accommodations for passengers." At length I went on board the 'Elizabeth Downs,' a large three-masted British vessel, whose size made the surrounding brigs dwindle into insignificance, and whose fresh-painted sides seemed to foreshow the cleanliness and comfort that would be found within. One little hen pen of a cabin on deck alone remained at the captain's disposal. However, I was fend of a cabin on deck, and paid half my passage-money to the civil little captain, who testified much regret that he could not offer me the 'freedom of the quarter-deck' (such was his expression,) as the whole stern end of the vessel had been taken by an English lady of quality.

It was the month of June, and the weather, though clear, was oppressively hot, when we set sail, under all the canvass we could carry, without, however, making much progress. The countess of Flowerdale, the name of my noble fellow-passenger, did not make her appearance on deck until towards the evening of the day we embarked. I was luxuriously stretched on a long seat which joined the steps of the quarter deck, when I heard her light foot as she ascended the cabin steps. I turned my eyes in the direction whence she came. Good heavens! what was my astonishment in seeing before me the form and features of Margaret Cameron! The scene and conversation that ensued I shall not here describe. It can easily be divined that Margaret had given her hand to save a parent, and that she had come abroad with a husband, who, dying, had left her a rich widow. In the limits of my little manuscript would allow, I could tell a long tale of well-managed treachery and deception; how that omnipresent Marplot of my adolescence, the countess of Falcondale, suffered me to remain in the belief that the death of capt. Cameron's niece, which occurred at A—, shortly after my departure, was that of my own Margaret; how in character of supreme manager of the affairs of the old officer, who had been struck with a paralysis, she kept my letters for her own exclusive eye; how she worked on Margaret's feelings to bring about a marriage with the earl of Flowerdale, in the hope of acquiring a footing in his house, and the right of managing his domestic concerns; how Margaret held out stoutly until informed of my broken faith; and how her marriage was kept from the public press. In the accomplishment of all this baseness towards me, I feel assured there was something inexpressibly soothing in the sensations of the countess of Falcondale, in thus over-reaching and punishing one who had so often mortified her self-importance as I had done. Her's is not a singular character.

Day after day, as we lay on the becalmed waves, I renewed my intercourse with Margaret. As my intimacy with her increased, I reflected with additional pain on her marriage. In the first place, I could not bear to think of her having belonged to another; and in the second, I felt that her rank and wealth might give to my addresses an air of self-interest which I felt they did not deserve. I dreaded the end of my voyage as much as I had at first desired it, and almost wished that we could sail for ever over these still, blue seas. Alas! it was not long ere I would have given all I held in life that Margaret and I had never met on those waves—ere I would have sacrificed all our late sweet intercourse, to have known that she was safe in her narrow house of turf by the lowly church of A—, and her soul in shelter from the horrors it was doomed to suffer.

One night, after we had been standing for some time contemplating the unrivalled blue of a southern summer sky, I thought, as I bade the countess a good night, that I per-

ceived a light breeze arising. This I remarked to her, and she received the observation with a pleasure which found no corresponding emotion in my own bosom. As I descended to my berth, I fancied I descried among the sailors one Gired Jaqueminet, whose face I had not before remarked. He was a Frenchman, to whom I had, during my residence abroad, rendered some signal services, and who, though but a wild fellow, had sworn to me eternal gratitude. He skulked, however, behind his fellows, and did not now, it appeared, chose to recognize his benefactor.

I believe I slept profoundly that night. When I awoke, there was a sound of dashing waves against the vessel, and a bustle of sailors' voices, and a blustering noise of wind among the sails and rigging; and I soon perceived that our ship was scudding before a stiff, nay, almost stormy sail. I peeped through the seaward opening of my little cabin. The scene was strangely changed. It was scarcely dawn. Dim and grey clouds obscured the heaven I had so recently gazed on. I looked for the white sails of our accompanying vessels, and our convoy. All had disappeared. We seemed alone on those leaden-colored billows. At this moment I heard a voice in broken English say, "confound—while I reef those tattered topsails, my pipe go out." "Light it again then at the binnacle, Monsieur," said a sailor. "Yes, and be hanged to de yard-arm by our cool captain for firing de sheep." Comment-faire! Sacre-bleu! I cannot even think without my pipe. De tonight! Monsieur in de little coop dere have always de lamp patent burning for hees lecture. He sleep now. I go enter gently—light my pipe." He crept into my cabin as he spoke. "How's this, my friend?" said I, speaking in French; "does not your captain know that we are out of sight of convoy?" Girod answered in his native language. "Oh! that I had seen you sooner. You think, perhaps, I have forgotten all I owe you? No, no, but 'tis too late now!" The man's face showed so much horror and anguish, that I was startled. He pointed to the horizon. On its very verge one sail was yet visible. A faint rolling noise came over the water. "It is the British frigate," said Girod, "firing to us to put our ship about, and keep under convoy. But our captain has no intention of obeying the signal; and if you get out of sight of that one distant sail, you are lost." "Think you, then, that the demon ship is in the seas?" said I anxiously. Girod came close to me. With a countenance of remorse and despair which I can never forget, he grasped my arm, and held it towards heaven—"Look up to God!" he whispered; "you are on board the demon ship!" A step was heard near the cabin, and Girod was darting from it, but I held him by the sleeve. "For Heaven's sake, for miladi's sake, for your own sake," he whispered, "let not a look, a word, show that you are acquainted with this secret. If our captain knew I had betrayed it, we should at this moment be rolling fathom-deep ever one another in the ocean. All I can do is to try and gain time for you. But be prudent, or you are lost." He precipitately quitted the cabin as he spoke, leaving me in doubt whether I were awake or dreaming. When I thought how long, and how fearlessly, the Elizabeth had lain amid the trading vessels at Valetta, and how she had sailed from that port under a powerful convoy, I was almost tempted to believe that Girod had been practising a joke on me. As, however, I heard voices near, I determined to lie still, and gather what information I could. "What have you been doing there?" said a voice I had never heard before, and whose ruffianly tones could hardly be subdued by his efforts at a whisper. "My pipe go out," answered Girod Jacqueminot, "and I not an imprudent to light it at de binnacle. So I just hold it over de lamp of Monsieur, and he sleep, sleep, snore, snore all de while, and know nothing. I have never seed one man dorne so profound."

I now heard the voices of the captain, Girod, and the ruffian, in close and earnest parlance. The expletives that graced it shall be omitted. But what first confirmed my fears was the hearing our captain obsequiously address the ruffian-speaker as commander of the vessel, while the former received from his companion the familiar appellation of Jack. They were walking the deck, and their whispered speech only reached me as they from time to time approached my cabin, and was again lost as they receded. I thought, however, that Girod seemed, by stopping occasionally, as if in the vehemence of speech, to draw them as much as possible, towards my cabin. I then listened with attention which made me almost deaf to

breath. "But again I say, Jack," said the voice of the real captain, "what are we to do with these fine passengers of ours? I am sick of this stage-play work, and the men are tired by this time, of being kept down in the hold. We shall have them mutiny if we stifle them much longer below. Look how that sail is sinking on the horizon. She can never come up with us now. There be eight good casks in the fore-castle, and we can spare them due ballast. That would do the job decently enough for our passengers—ha!" Here there was something jocose in the captain's tone. "Oh! mine coot captain, you are a man of speerit," observed Jaquemont; "but were it not wise to see dat sail no more, before we show dat we no vile merchants, but men of de trade dat make de money by d'valor?" "There is something in that," observed Jack; "if the convoy come up, and our passengers be missing, 'tis over with us. We can no longer pass for a trader; and to hoist the Demon colors, and turn to with frigate and ship both, were to put rash odds against us." "And de coot sacks wasted for nothing," said Jaquemont, with a cool levity that contrasted curiously with his vehement and horror-stricken manner in his cabin. "Better to wait one day, two days, parbleu! tree day, than spoil our sport by de precipitation." "I grudge the keep of these dainty passengers all this while," said the captain, roughly; "my lady there, with her chickens, and her conserves and her pasties; and Mr. Mollyflower Colonel here, with his bottles of port and claret, and cups of chocolate and Mocha coffee. Paying, too, forsooth! with such princely airs for every thing, as if we held not his money in our own hands already. Hunted as we then were, 'twas no bad way of blinding governments, by passing for traders, and getting monied passengers on board: but it behoves us to think what's to be done now?" "My opinion is," said Jack, "that as we have already put such violence in our habits, we ought to take the farce another day or two until we get into clear seas again. That vessel, yonder, still keeps on the horizon, and she has good glasses on board." "And the men?" asked the captain. "I had rather, without more debate, go into his hen pen here, and down into the cabin below, and in a quiet way do for our passengers, than stand the chance of a mutiny among the crew." Here my very blood curdled in my veins. "Dat is goot, and like mine brave captain," said the Frenchman; "and yet Monsieur Jean say well too much danger kill at present; but why not have the crew above deck widout making no attention to de voyageurs. Dey take not no notice—Miladi tink but of moon, and stars, and look; and for de colonel, it were almost pity to cut his throat in any case. He ver coot fellow, like we chosen speerit. Sacrebleu! I know him a boy" [I had never seen the fellow until I was on the wrong side of my thirtieth birth day.] "Always for de mischief—stealing apples, bawling his schoolfellows, and order speerited tricks. At last he was expelled de school. I say not dis praise from no lore to him, for he beat me one, two time, when I secretaire to his uncle, and den run off wid my sodd'lent, so I ver well pleased make him bad turn." "Well, then, suppose the men come on deck, half at a time," said the captain, and we'll keep the prisoners—Heaven help us! the passengers—till the sea be clear, may be still sunset." "Look, look!" said Jack. "The frigate gains on us; I partly see her hull, and the wind slackens." I now put my own glass, which was a remarkably good one, through my little window, and could distinctly see the sails and rigging and part of the hull of our late convoy. I could perceive that many of her crew were aloft, but the motion of our vessel was so great, that the frigate was sometimes on and sometimes off the glass; and I was therefore unable to discover whether she were hoisting or taking in sail. It was a comfortable sight, however, to see a friendly power apparently so near; and there was a feeling of hopeless desolation when, on removing the glass, the vessel, whose men I could almost have counted before, shrank to a dim, grey speck on the horizon. The captain uttered an infernal oath, and called aloud his sailors; "Sennen, ahoy, ahoy! Make all the sail you can. Veer out the main-sheet, top sails unreefed, royals and sky-sails up!" &c. &c. "Stretch every stitch of canvas. Keep her to the wind, keep her to the wind!" I was surprised to find that our course was suddenly changed, as the vessel which had previously driven before the breeze, was now evidently sailing with a side wind.

The noise of rattling cables, the trampling of sailor's feet on deck, and the increased blustering of the wind in the crowded sails.