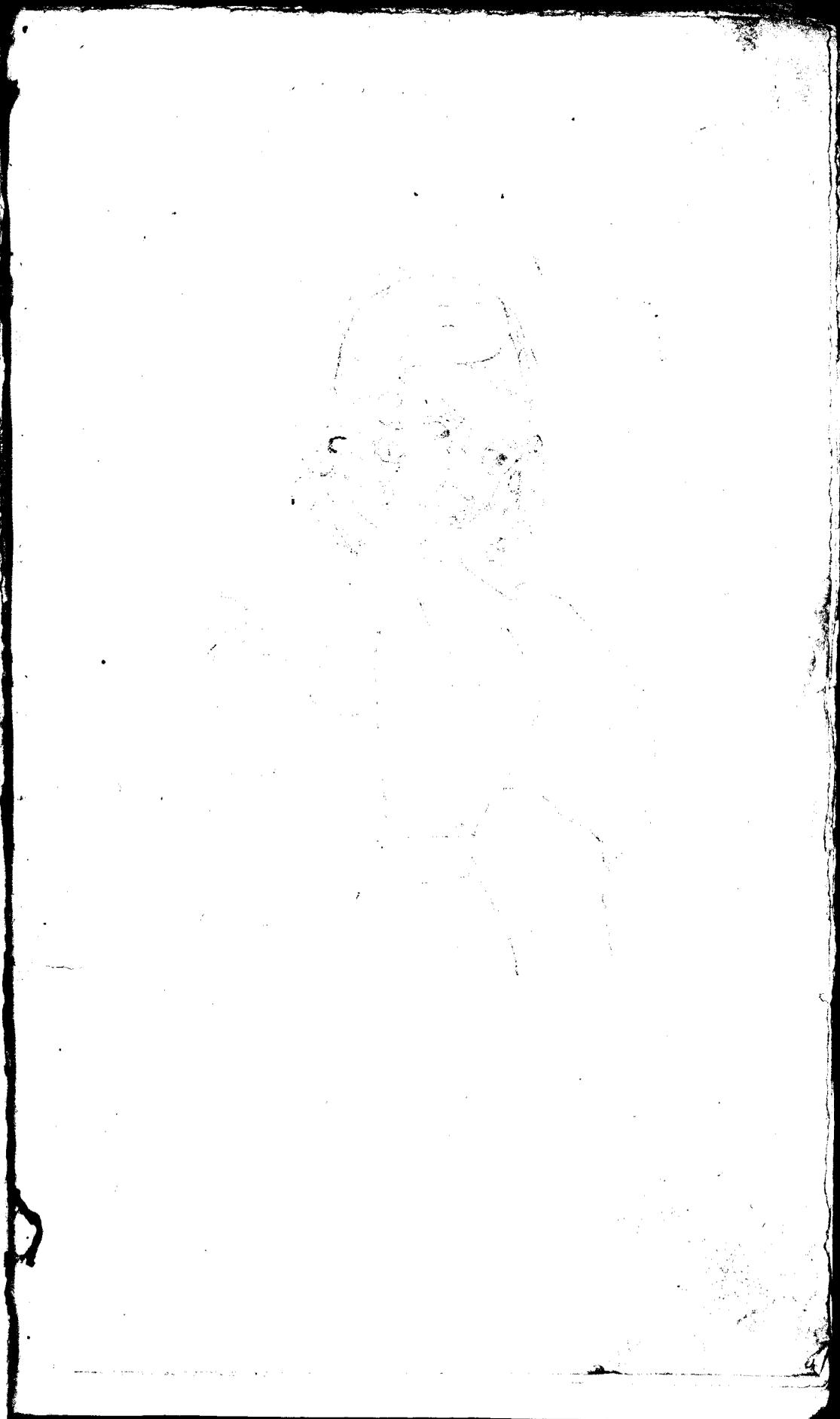


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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.	





Mrs. ELLEN STEPHENS,

Who, in pursuit of her husband and child, garbed as a *male*, served in the capacity of *Cabin Boy*, eight months on board of the Mississippi river Steamboats, in 1839 and 1840.

THE CABIN BOY WIFE ;

OR,

SINGULAR AND SURPRISING ADVENTURES OF

MRS. ELLEN STEPHENS,

Who, having been compelled to marry against her will, after experiencing much cruel treatment, was deserted by her husband, and in pursuit of whom, (and her infant child) dressed in *male* attire, and obtaining a berth on board of one of the Steamers, on the Mississippi River, as *Cabin Boy*, in that capacity made several passages up and down the river in 1839 and '40, without her sex being known or suspected.



Annexed is the still more surprising exploits of ALMIRA PAUL, who garbed as a male in the capacity of cook, &c., served on board several English and American vessels for the the space of three years, without betraying her sex.

NEW-YORK ;
PRINTED FOR C. E. DANIELS, PUBLISHER.

1840.

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MARKS

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THE CABIN BOY WIFE, &^c.

IT is not for pecuniary purposes that I have been prevailed on by a friend, to yield to his solicitations to make public my recent extraordinary adventures, which it was my intention should never have been disclosed to the world, had not a discovery thereof been made, as announced in some of our late public prints. A small yet respectable village of Mississippi was the place of my birth, to which my parents several years since emigrated from the State of Maryland—my father is a planter of considerable wealth, and by whom, I have many reasons to believe, that in the early part of my life I was much beloved; but, that eagerness peculiar to too great a portion of mankind, to possess bountifully of the wealth of this world, ultimately, I fear, absorbed in a great degree that fondness which he once manifested for me; to his credit I must, however, say, that my education was early attended to, and the first thirteen years of my life was spent without scarcely experiencing a sad hour; indeed, not an unpleasant reflection disturbed my thoughts by day, or interrupted my repose by night; brought up with and accustomed to the habits and amusements of those who prefer a country to a city life, I felt contented and envied no one for appearing to enjoy a greater share of domestic felicity than myself; and with such bright and flattering prospects at the commencement of life, it was not unreasonable to suppose that my after days would be productive of an equal degree of uninterrupted happiness—but, alas! the sad reverse has been my lot. At the

age of sixteen it was my misfortune to become acquainted with one, who afterwards became my husband, and whom, I lament to say, has been the author of all the wretchedness that I have since experienced, and which is much greater than generally fall to the lot of a young, innocent, and inexperienced female—unfortunately for me, the youth of whom I speak was the only son of one who possessed bountiful of this world's goods, and this was sufficient, quite sufficient to induce my father (avaricious as he was) to sacrifice, in toto, the happiness of a once beloved daughter, and by whose imperious commands, I was compelled to give to that man my *hand*, to whom I could never yield my *heart*! he was indeed rich, (or so represented to be) but too soon was I satisfied that he was deficient of every other qualification that could render such a union a happy one—he proved not only extravagant and indolent, but intemperate and a gambler, and in less than three months after our marriage, made to me boastingly the voluntary declaration that I was much less the object of his *real* affections, than of another, whom, before he ever saw me, he had clandestinely married! With these declarations as well as of the unprovoked bad treatment that I had received from him, from time to time, I acquainted my father, but I blush to say, that by reason of the supposed *great wealth* that he was soon to be heir to, my complaints were unheeded.

Cruel as was the treatment that I received from him, and that without the least provocation on my part, I was induced to live with him, in hopes of a reformation, until after the birth of a son—from this period his affection for me appeared more and more alienated—not only during a whole night, but frequently (when engaged in his midnight revels) I was deserted a whole week by him—finding that I bore this cruel treatment with patience, and without manifesting the least disposition to retaliate, he at length began to threaten me with not only total desertion, but to deprive me of, and to carry away with him to parts unknown to me, my beloved *infant babe*! Cruel and inhuman as he had proved himself, yet I could scarcely believe him so lost to every principle of humanity, as to be capable of carrying this threat in execution—but, alas! in this respect he even deceived me; for, improving a favourable opportunity, he not only deserted me penniless. but ab-

scolded with my innocent babe! this was a trial more afflicting than any I had previously experienced!--had he left with me my darling charge, I should have given myself but little uneasiness on his account, not sufficient, I am certain, to have induced me to pursue him (as I afterwards did) knowing that I was far more happy without him than with him-- but "how can a mother forget her nursing child?"

On his departure, and at the loss of my infant, I became almost frantic; it was one month before I was, by strict inquiry, able to obtain any probable information of him, when I was informed that a person answering his description, had been noticed on board of one of the steamboats in company with a woman (probably his paramour) and a young child, ascending the Mississippi; on which information I immediately determined (for reasons above stated) to pursue him; and as he had left me penniless, and being denied the aid of my own parent, (who wrongfully professed to believe me most in the fault) as a matter of convenience, as well as to prevent his evading me, should he recognise me at first sight, the plan suggested itself to me of *disguising myself in man's apparel*, and which plan (without a disclosure to any living soul, male or female) I carried immediately into effect, by garbing myself in a suit of cast-off clothes of my husband, and with which, before break of day, I left my home and repaired to the nearest harbour on the Mississippi; where, after a detention of two days, I applied for and obtained the berth as an assistant cabin hand on board of one of the numerous steam-boats engaged in conveying passengers up and down the river.

I had now indeed, engaged in a new and novel scene of life, and in the first instance of which, circumstances had rendered it necessary that I should act a *deceptive* part, and nothing but the strong resolution that I would, if possible, recover my dearly beloved babe, at the expense of my life, and expose to the world the hard hearted wretch who was the author of my sufferings, produced on my part a sufficient degree of fortitude to enable me to perform the part in which I had engaged, without an exposure of my sex; which I believe, while thus employed, was not in a single instance even suspected--my daily employment was to wait on the passengers, and to assist in arranging and replenishing the tables

at meal times—at night, as it was customary for the hands to turn into their berths without divesting themselves of any other garment than their outer jacket, or, roundabout, on this account I suffered no inconvenience, but was the better enabled to prevent a discovery of my sex—during the day time, I was constantly on the look out for the object of my pursuit, and not a boat passed us up or down the river, but every male passenger on deck received a close inspection from me, and whenever permitted to go on shore, at the intermediate places of landing, I never failed to describe and to make strict inquiry of almost every one that I met with, for those answering the description of my husband and babe, and the female whom I suspected accompanied him; but without any success—yet, in my first passage, I was greatly encouraged that I should be more successful on my arrival at the city of *New-Orleans*, where I had been informed that many *rogues* sought refuge from justice; but, after remaining there six days, engaged in no other employment than that of endeavouring to ferrit out the wretch who had thus basely deprived me of all earthly happiness, yet I there met with no better success, and was compelled to return, with the intention of making no further search, but to give up the pursuit and trust to an all-wise providence for the recovery of my child—this was my determination, but before I reached the place of my destination, on my return, I received such information, from a passenger on board) of having met with such persons as described by me, a few days previous at a public house in *New Orleans*, that I was induced to make a second and even a third and fourth passage in the same capacity that I at first visited the city, but without being able after the strictest inquiry to obtain any information whatever that could be depended on, of either my husband or babe—it was consequently my determination that I would now immediately return to my home and friends, and adopt other means to recover my beloved babe, and had accordingly (without taking the precaution of changing my dress and assuming that more becoming me) proceeded in the public stage (in company with several other passengers) as far as the Capitol of *Mississippi*, where stopping to dine at the Mansion of a *Madam Dixon*, I was ushered into a room where among others, I have since learned was *Senator Thomas B. Rives*—I here thought myself as safe from de-

tection (as regarded my sex,) as I had been during the eight months previous, but now found myself mistaken, for it proved that I had not long been seated before I was suspected by some one present; who communicated their suspicion to Mrs. D., the landlady of the house, who on viewing me a few moments, declared me to be, in her opinion, a female in disguise, and which charge I unhesitatingly confessed to be correct; and as an apology for so appearing; disclosed to all present the sad tale of my sufferings, as recorded in the preceding pages—information of the singular discovery spreading abroad, I was now soon visited by many of my sex of the neighborhood, who immediately and generously contributed such articles of dress as were more becoming me, and who also obtained for me, a safe and speedy conveyance to my friends, from whom I had been eight months absent.

Having furnished the public in the foregoing pages with the most important particulars of my recent adventures, I conceive it my duty ere I close, to impart to the *young* and *unmarried* of my sex, what I believe will prove to them important advice, in regard to the choice and selection that they may be induced to make, as partners for life, on which depends a life of conjugal affection and unalloyed happiness, or what will prove (as I have myself experienced) the sad reverse—in this important choice. I am confident that too great a portion of the unexperienced of my sex, are decidedly of the opinion that to obtain a partner for life who is reputed to be *rich*, (whatever may be his other failings,) is all that is requisite to insure all that is desirable in the marriage state, but how great is the mistake—how soon may they find that by being too much governed by this principle, they have marked out for themselves a path that will probably, in nine instances out of ten, lead them to a life of misery and woe! permit me to assure such, that they may too soon find that “all is not gold that glistens!” that the youth who boasts of the possession of a great *matrimonial* estate, may the *sooner* spend it, and in a manner that may be productive of both *ruin* and *disgrace*, to himself and family!—that he who has *all* to earn, by honest industry (even after he has selected a partner for life) is far preferable to one who professes to despise the industrious *mechanic*, to live a *gentleman* and to depend on the earnings of *another* for his support! how often do we see such, in

our large cities, indulging in idleness, suddenly precipitated from the pinnacle of the grand and imaginary castles which they have erected for themselves, and dashed into pieces! My female friends as you value *peace* and *prosperity* through life, I entreat you to beware of such, and in so important a choice as a partner for life, let not your only inquiry be "is he *rich* and of *wealthy* parentage?" but "is he (if poor,) frugal and industrious and of good moral habits!" such indeed were the principles that would have governed me, had I been left to my own choice—but I was compelled to marry one, with whom, from the commencement, I was confident (from his suspected habits of dissipation) I could never live happy—Yet, while I would caution the *most* inexperienced and unreflecting part of my *sex*, to beware of those brilliant but false allurements which are so frequently and artfully employed to captivate and destroy their peace and happiness, I am proud to say that there are, in my opinion, many whose great thirst for worldly *wealth*, is not the strongest passion that agitates their breasts; although in too many instances, doubtless, many may, like myself, have been plunged (through the avariciousness of a parent) into a state of matrimonial wretchedness—but, that there are exceptions, honorable exceptions, among those whom I now address, and who are of too high a price to be thus sacrificed for the *love of gold*, we here beg liberty to quote the opinion of one, who has no doubt both thought and written more on the subject.—"There are indeed (he observes,) instances where some have been over-persuaded, and others voluntarily married for *wealth* in the green years of their youth, while they knew not what they did, yet, as regards the more reflecting, it would be doing them too much injustice to suppose for a moment that the joys which *riches* purchase, are, as has been too frequently asserted, their only thought; that they would voluntarily connect themselves with such men, who, although reputed *rich*, they could not promise themselves a moment's peace or happiness after marriage! believe not the assertion that *wealth* is the fascinating—the irresistible influence which is of itself sufficient to draw *every* female to the marriage altar!—believe not that *all* would there pledge their word and honor to a falsity—to blasphemously attempt to deceive omniscient Heaven with an oath—a perjury!—there is a fire which glows in the hearts of

many which were enkindled at their birth, and which increasing years blow into a flame, and requires an influence more damp than money to extinguish—those feelings—those affections which have been planted deep in their hearts—there to live until such hearts should have mouldered into dust; and which were never intended to be torn out, and to ascend a smoking sacrifice from the altar of mammon to obtain earthly felicity—instances of the devoted affection of woman are not alone recorded on the pages of romance—love (but not that of gold) is still the bright dream of her youth; the child of her fancy which clings to her for support through all the vicissitudes of life—the great Creator of the universe formed her to cherish it and to be the companion of man; her smiles were to cheer him through the pilgrimage of life—her bosom was to be the pillow of his misfortunes and sickness, her love the solace in the desert of poverty, and is it natural to suppose that the object of creation is so much perverted, that her affections can be bought?—the desire of her life, her happiness, is the virtuous enjoyment of her love; and her love she bestows on him who renders himself the most agreeable in her eyes—who can raise her drooping spirits, and enliven her in the hour of her sorrow—such a companion she values above price, although his earthly possessions should be ever so small.”

The writer is not insensible that it is not such of her sex above described, that so much needs her advice, on the important subject of matrimony—no, it is to those of a different class that she would freely proffer it—to those who set a higher value on earthly riches than they merit—and who while they court the society and appear to adore those only who abundantly possess them, are too apt totally to neglect and to look down with contempt on those to whom fortune has proved less bountiful—and while they frequently unwisely refuse to accept of offers made them by the latter, gladly embrace those of the former, who although of suspected morals, wrongfully believe that a well lined purse with a gentlemanly appearance is sufficient to make up for every other deficiency—but, how sadly are they frequently disappointed! how sincerely does she repent of her folly in so unwise a choice, when doomed thereby to drink deep of the bitter cup of woe! and to be sensible too that he on whom she alone depended for so great a portion

of earthly felicity, should be alone the author of her sorrows! who, (as it is too frequently the case) first forming a connection with those who are usually termed "young men of fashion" and by whom he is persuaded that it is not only *fashionable* but conducive to health and *respectability* to become a constant visitor to the most noted hotels, coffee-houses, soda-rooms, &c., and from thence too frequently to the gambling-table—and the fatal consequence is that the much boasted of patrimonial portion is soon exhausted, and his innocent family at length deprived of even the necessaries of life, and in too many instances reduced to the most abject want and distress!—that such may not prove the lot of any one whom I now address, through a lack of foresight or improper advice, is the earnest desire of their afflicted friend,

ELLEN STEPHENS.

We here conclude the interesting narrative of the recent adventures of the unfortunate MRS. STEPHENS, and although her story is too well confirmed to be for a moment doubted, yet lest some should suppose it almost impossible, (exposed as she was) to travel so long, and in the capacity which she did, without betraying her sex, we can assure such that there have been many far more extraordinary instances of females, thus disguised, having engaged in more bold and daring exploits, and for years, instead of months, having been enabled to escape exposure—among which many of our readers will doubtless recollect the instance of *Miss Deborah Sampson*, a native of the State of Massachusetts, who in male attire, enlisted as a soldier at the commencement of the Revolutionary war; and in which capacity faithfully and patriotically served out her term of enlistment, without a discovery of her sex being made, and after the conclusion of peace, petitioned for and obtained a pension from Congress!—and in addition to which we have on record a still more recent and extraordinary instance of a MRS. ALMIRA PAUL, who thus disguised, (during the last war) shipped on board of a privateer, in which, and on board of other vessels, she made many passages and was in several engagements.—As her narrative was taken from her own lips while a short time a resident of Boston, we here subjoin some important extracts therefrom:—

THE
SURPRISING ADVENTURES
OF
ALMIRA PAUL, &c.

“I was born in Halifax, (N. S.) in the year 1790, of reputable parents.—At the age of 15, I was married to a sea-faring man by the name of WILLIAM PAUL, by whom I had two children, and with whom I lived happily until the year 1811—when he having entered on board the British Privateer Swallow, was unfortunately killed in an engagement between the Swallow and an American privateer, on the 20th February, 1812. I was now left in very indigent circumstances, with two children, yet too young to earn their bread, and without a friend whose situation would enable them to afford me assistance. I now very sensibly felt the irreparable loss of a kind and indulging husband, who had lost his life in his laudable endeavors to obtain a humble subsistence for his family, as well as in defence of the rights of his country. As he had fallen by the hands of the Americans, I conceived them alone the authors of my misery, and regretted that my sex prevented my placing myself in a situation in which I might possibly be enabled to revenge his death.

It was not, however, until I found myself destitute of every means to support myself and family, that I formed the determination of placing myself in a situation which might not only enable me to gratify myself in this, but which most probably would be productive of something that might serve to alleviate my pressing wants. Having committed my children to the charge of my mother, for a few months, I, unknown to any of my friends, garbed

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myself in a suit of my late husband's clothes, and thus disguised, shipped myself as cook's mate, on board his Majesty's cutter *Dolphin*!—so well did I act the man, that I am confident no one on board had any suspicion of my being a woman—the only question asked me, was, whether I had ever been to sea—to which I answered in the negative; to guard myself well against every risk of exposure, I procured a pair of sementsers (a close garment) which I wore continually—I had too the precaution to keep constantly with me a suit of my own apparel, in case by accident a discovery should be made.

In June, 1812, the *Dolphin* put to sea, when I entered upon the duties of my birth, which my readers may suppose I was not a stranger to, indeed I was very soon acknowledged to be an excellent cook—as I was not obliged to stand my watch at night, and in the day time was only at the command of the chief cook, I should have passed my time as merrily as any of my shipmates, had I not for the first two weeks suffered much from sea-sickness, so peculiar to persons unaccustomed to the water—but this at length subsiding, I soon found that I gained much more strength, and a better appetite than what I before possessed—that I could eat and drink my allowance with as good stomach as any on board.

We had excellent officers, a good ship, and pleasant weather—and not a complaint was uttered on any account than our being unable to meet with the “cowardly Yankees!”—for such indeed they were termed by all on board. On the 19th August, being in lat. 41° 42', we, for the first time had the satisfaction to descry a Yankee frigate, with one of his majesty's frigates in chase—as we had been led to believe that the raw and unexperienced Yankees, with a few rotten frigates, would never dare risk an engagement with any of our ships, of equal force, we considered the capture of the American frigate as certain—his majesty's ship (which proved to be the *Guerrierre*,) passed within a short distance of us, and in signification of their intention to treat the Yankees, as they passed us they hoisted a keg of molasses and water, which the Yankees termed switchel, and of which they appeared extremely fond. We soon had the satisfaction to observe the *Guerrierre* overhaul her antagonist (which proved to be the *Constitution*) almost within gun-shot—but what was our chagrin and disappointment in

beholding at this moment his majesty's frigate tacking, and the Yankee in turn pursuing!—There must be some mistake (exclaimed our captain, biting his lips) for surely a British frigate would never run from one of Jonathan's fir frigates, with strips of striped bunting at her mast head! The Constitution bore down upon the Guerrierre, as if with an intention to bring her immediately to action, as soon as she got within gun-shot, she received the broadside of the Guerrierre—at about 6 P. M. both ships were within half pistol shot, a desperate engagement commenced on both sides—such a tremendous cannonade was kept up for the space of ten or fifteen minutes, as our oldest seamen observed that they had never before witnessed! we were all eye witnesses of the engagement, our officers standing each with his spyglass, in anxious expectation to see the Yankee colors soon come down—but, in less than fifteen minutes, they had the mortification to see the Guerrierre's mizen mast go by the board, and in twelve or fourteen minutes after, her mainmast and foremast, carrying with them every spar except the bowsprit! the Constitution now ceased firing, and having succeeded in getting along-side of the Guerrierre, soon compelled her to surrender!—O, it was indeed a mortifying sight to all on board of us, to see the complete destruction of one of his majesty's best frigates, in half an hour—and that too by the Yankees, of whose naval abilities and courage we had been led to form the most contemptible opinion! As the Constitution appeared but little injured, and might soon be put in a sailing trim, we conceived it most prudent to sheer off, lest we should receive similar treatment from her—from this moment I began to harbor a more exalted opinion of the Yankees, and to despair of very soon meeting with an opportunity to revenge the death of my husband!

It was now nearly six weeks since I entered on board the cutter, when, being off Georgia Islands, we fell in with one of his majesty's ships of war, which having manned many prizes, and being in want of men, myself and twelve others were put on board—a short time after we captured the American privateer Dart, and three days after fell in with and engaged for twenty-five minutes the French Frigate Fair Play—the bullets whistled about my ears, but I think I was much less terrified than what many women

would have been in my situation—we had five men killed in the engagement, among which was our boatswain; we captured the French frigate after a short but severe engagement, when I with a number more of our crew, were put on board of her, with orders to conduct her to Barbadoes.

At Barbadoes we were ordered on board his majesty's sloop of war Sea Horse, which in nine days proceeded on a cruise. On board this vessel I served in my old capacity as cook's mate, but soon found that the chief cook (who had the principal control of me,) was of quite a different disposition from others whom I had served in that capacity—every thing that was vile, malicious and inhuman, appeared as if concentrated in this man; whose greatest delight appeared to be in cuffing and unmercifully beating me for the slightest offence, and frequently for no offence at all! my readers must naturally conclude, that to be at the mercy of such a ruffian, a woman, (and one who was a mother too,) must be placed in a very unpleasant situation! As he continued to use me with great severity, I conceived him my greatest enemy, and no longer felt a disposition to retaliate upon the Americans for the distress which they had caused me in depriving me of my husband—his fate was the fate of war, he voluntarily entered to contend and dispute rights with a foreign enemy, by whom in fare and equal combat, he was slain—my case was materially different—patriotism had induced me (if male) to volunteer my services in the cause of my country; I entered as a youth unaccustomed to hardship, and a stranger to the sea-faring life—and although they had no knowledge or suspicion of my being a female, yet, as I had behaved myself well, and they could not impeach me with cowardice in time of action, I conceived that I had a just claim to, and could not but reasonably expect good treatment from my own countrymen!—but such was not the case, the cook's unmanly behavior towards me, formed an exception, and which at length drove me to the awful determination of seeking revenge, even at the expense of my life!—an opportunity soon offered—as I one evening saw him stooping over the ship's side, to wash a bucket, I could not let pass so good a chance to carry my long premeditated plan into effect—I gave him a gently kick, and overboard sent master cook with his bucket—he bellowed like a boatswain—

and contrary to my expectation, and almost my wish, with the assistance of some of my shipmates, he was rescued from his perilous situation, where he had been nearly fifteen minutes, exposed to the sharks: As soon as he reached the deck, he alledged that he was indebted to some scoundrel for his evening's bathe, who had taken the liberty to kick him overboard! I feigned as much surprise as any one, and probably should never have been suspected, had not the boatswain, unfortunately for me, witnessed the whole transaction—he charged me with the fact, which I was soon compelled to acknowledge, information was lodged with the officers, who sentenced me to be floggod at the gangway!—Never could a poor female feel worse than I did at this moment!—to be whipped and lashed like a felon (although inconceivably shocking) was not the most I had to dread!—in stripping my back naked I should certainly be exposed, and thereby should the whipping then be inflicted, I should receive double punishment!—but, providentially, things turned out much better than what I was at first apprehensive of—I was only stripped to my shirt, and wearing always a tight waistcoat around my body next to my skin, the lash made a much less impression than what it would have done, had it been applied to my naked back—indeed, pleased to think that I was at this critical moment enabled to conceal my sex, I bore the punishment with all the fortitude of a heroine.

During our cruise we fell in with the American frigate President, Com. ROGERS, which pouring a broadside into us, killed two of our crew and wounded three, cut our sails and rigging, and otherwise crippled us very much; but by our superior sailing, we fortunately escaped. Our commander now found it necessary to enter the port of St. John's, to repair damages, as our ship was almost in a sinking condition. At St. John's we found the English privateer schooner Flora, ready for sea, but was detained on account of the difficulty of procuring her compliment of men. Our captain proposed that five of us should enter on board, observing, that if we went voluntarily, we would be entitled to a bounty and prize money, but compulsion would debar us from the recovery of either. As the reader may suppose, I did not fail to embrace this opportunity to free myself from the tyrannical cook—myself and four others stepped out, and signified our willingness to go on

board the privateer. I entered as an ordinary seaman, and for the first time exchanged the dish-clout for the swab—no person perhaps in my situation could have made a greater proficiency in seamanship than what I had done for so short a period—solicitous to obtain a complete knowledge of a seaman's duty, and to convince the world that the capacities of *women* were equal to that of the men, there was not a piece of rigging on board a ship, but what I could name, and no duty but what I could perform.

The *Flora* proceeded on a cruise up the Mediterranean—on the 10th October, then in sight of Gibraltar, we espyed a large sail bearing down upon us, which we supposed an American privateer of the first class—we hoisted American colors, but finding the enemy still bearing down upon us under a press of sail, to facilitate our escape, we threw overboard a part of our shot, all our spare spars, and cleared every thing off deck as well as from below, to lighten us as much as possible; the enemy notwithstanding still gained fast upon us, and at half past eight P. M., being within pistol shot, commenced a brisk and well directed fire upon the schooner, which cut our sails and rigging very much—we were still under American colors, and as our antagonist had shone none, we yet mistook her for an American, who regarded our colors only as a stratagem made use of by us to escape from them. At four P. M., the enemy's bowsprit ran athwart of us, which affording them an opportunity to board, although we had some moment previous hauled down our colors as a token of submission; they boarded us with the fierceness of lions, and with their swords, pistols, dirks, boarding pikes, &c., attacked our whole crew with unprecedented courage! we now for the first time discovered that our antagonist was not an American, but an Algerine brig of eighteen guns! it was in vain however, that we attempted to signify to them that we were English, with whom they were at peace; they, pointed to the American flag, which lay on our deck, continued to maim and beat us—scarcely one of our crew escaped being wounded. I received a severe cut from a sabre across my left arm, which penetrated to the bone. The barbarians finding that we were no longer in a situation to resist, put us all in irons and confined us below, and with their prize proceeded for port. In five days we were off Algiers, where we were

very fortunately visited by the English consul, who demanded and obtained our liberty, as his Britannic Majesty's subjects.

I here obtained my discharge from the privateer, in consequence of the severe wound I had received, and having remained on shore until it became in some measure healed, I took passage for Cadiz, where I shipped on board an English merchantman bound to Rotterdam, where we arrived in safety after a long and tempestuous passage—from Rotterdam the ship a few weeks after proceeded for Bristol, (Eng.) and from thence to Portsmouth, where all hands were discharged. As my wages amounted to considerable, like a real bred tar, I now felt a disposition to enjoy myself for a short time, at least, on shore. I took board with a number of my shipmates at a house of their acquaintance, a widow whose husband lost his life in the famous battle of Trafalgar—she was about thirty-nine years of age, of a pleasing disposition, and well calculated to please and to obtain her share of boarders, who were principally sea-faring people—to convince myself that this woman had no suspicion of my being one of her sex, I after a short acquaintance, proposed marriage to her, which she conditionally acceded to, and after a cruise we were to be united as husband and wife! This was the only instance which served to convince me, that the Portsmouth females were not suspicious of my sex.

After six weeks' recreation at Portsmouth, I obtained a berth on board the ship *Mary-Ann*, bound to Jamaica, where not meeting with a market, we proceeded for Martinique, and from thence to Liverpool, where I received my discharge. After I had spent nearly two months in Liverpool (in which time I had foolishly squandered away a great part of my wages) I began to harbour serious thoughts of returning home to my children and friends, from whom I had been more than 16 months absent. As there was no vessel in port bound directly to Halifax, I took passage on board one which was bound for Demerara, and thence proceeded immediately for New-York, where (peace having been happily concluded between Great Britian and America) I thought it very probable that I might obtain an immediate passage for Halifax. We safely arrived at Demerara, but being there detained much longer than was expected, I was unfortunately taken ill of the fe-

ver peculiar to that unhealthy climate—I was conveyed to the hospital, and the vessel proceeded without me—as my illness increased, I was not without my apprehensions that I should now no longer be enabled to conceal my sex—but, fortunately for me, a woman of color was my nurse, to whom I took an opportunity, to suggest, that, laboring under a natural infirmity, my situation required that I should constantly wear a close garment, which it would be improper for her or any other person to divest me of and which it was my sincere wish might not be removed. This injunction was strictly adhered to by the nurse, whose business alone it was to change my linen, make my bed, and to administer the medicine prescribed by the visiting physician. I was dangerously indisposed for several weeks, and in consequence of the weak and emaciated state to which the fever had reduced me, it was two months before I recovered strength to enable me to quit the unhealthy climate.

As my sickness had cost me nearly all that I possessed, and as I was determined not to return pennyless to my friends, I had once more recourse to the sea, to replenish my pockets. I shipped on board an English brig bound to the Havana, and from thence returned to Liverpool, I remained on shore but two weeks, when I entered on board an English brig bound to the Straits—in consequence of a very long passage, and the bad weather which we experienced, the brig had sustained so much injury when we arrived at Gibraltar, that she was there condemned, and her crew paid off and discharged. There being no immediate opportunity to return to Europe, I was again compelled to remain awhile on shore, although much against my inclination. With my shipmates I spent my time very agreeably, but always continued garbed in my pea jacket and trowsers, and used the utmost precaution that my sex should not be discovered. As we were one day taking a sail in a small pleasure boat, a few miles without the harbor, we saw what we supposed an English brig under easy sail, about five miles to leeward—as we had all become heart-sick of Gibraltar, this we thought might present us with an opportunity to return home—we steered immediately for the brig, and when within hail, inquired where from, and where bound, &c., and in plain English, was informed by those on board that they were bound on a cruise, and

were in want of hands. As we were all extremely anxious to quit Gibraltar, after a few moments consultation, we agreed to go on board and offer our services, without any further inquiry. As soon as I reached the deck, I recognized in the principal part of the crew, that savage appearance peculiar to the people of the Barbary coast—they indeed proved to be Algerines, cruising for Americans—those on board who could speak English, strongly urged us to enter—as they were in want of a steward, I accepted of that berth, as did the remainder of my shipmates of berths that were offered them.

Three days from that of our first entering on board, the brig chased an American privateer ashore near the Rock, where she was abandoned by her crew. The Algerines finding that she could not be got off, after stripping her of almost every article that was moveable, set fire to her. Five days after, we were fallen in with by some ships of the American squadron, commanded by Com. Decatur, destined against Algiers. As soon as the barbarians descried the yankee stripes, they beat to quarters, and swore that they would defend the brig while a shot remained, although one of the enemy's ships was apparently of three times their size. The Macedonian bore down upon us, while the silly barbarians lay too, making preparations for their reception—a few shots were exchanged, when a broadside from the Macedonian, compelled her antagonist to yield.

The Americans took possession of their prize and made prisoners of her crew, but fortunately for me (having represented my case fairly to the officers) I was at liberty, and was permitted to enter on board the Macedonian. Of these two evils, it may be truly said I was choosing the least—had I not declared myself by birth an Englishman, and voluntarily entered into the American service, I should have been retained as a prisoner of war, and as such, my sex might have been exposed. Yet although I was now with a people who spoke the same language, and whose manners and customs were familiar to me, my new situation was not agreeable—although I had been greatly mistaken as to the courage, and naval skill and abilities of the yankees, yet I could not regard them as friends in peace; the wound inflicted by the death of my husband was not yet healed; beside this, it was certain, that if I con-

tinued in their service, it would be attended with many inconveniences, to myself; it would prevent my immediate return to my family and friends, which I had resolved to do the first opportunity that should present; hence I formed the determination to quit the yankee service, the first chance. An opportunity soon offered; being sent with several others of the ship's crew to water, I improved my liberty, and succeeded in getting on board an American Fishing Schooner, bound to Baltimore, to which place I agreed to work my passage, and where we safely arrived after a passage of 45 days.

I now for the first time, found myself safe on yankee ground, although as poor as a church mouse—I was extremely anxious to see my children and friends, and could have obtained a passage to Halifax, but the thought of returning pennyless to a place, where from poverty and want, I had suffered so much, deterred me. The work which I was enabled to do on board vessels, the wharves, &c. procured me a sum sufficient to defray the expense of board; but I had not been thus three weeks employed, when I was informed that the return of the American squadron from the Mediterranean was daily expected. As it was uncertain what port they would enter, I was not now without my apprehensions that I should be discovered and recognized by some of the crew of the Macedonian and apprehended as a deserter! to avoid this, I was at length induced once more to reassume my female dress; thus, after having been three years garbed as a male, the greater part of which I had been at sea, performing the duty of a seaman, and having never once betrayed my sex, prudence now dictated that I should exchange the jacket and trowsers, for a gown and petticoat, for a time at least.

Unaccustomed to continue a long time in one place, I tarried in Baltimore but a few weeks, when I took passage on board a schooner for the city of New York, where I obtained board, and there remained in idleness nearly six weeks, undetermined what I would next do, but finally determined, that, if pennyless, I would return to my friends, and mourning family, from whom I had been now three years absent!—Finding on inquiry, that I could not obtain an immediate passage to Halifax, I was advised to visit Boston for that purpose, I accordingly took passage on board

a packet sloop for Newport, (R. I.) and from thence, was conveyed to Boston in a mail stage, after having by the strong solicitations of a gentleman who made application for that purpose, furnished him with the foregoing particulars of my adventures for publication, the day preceeding, intending to take passage, (which I had previously engaged,) on board an English schooner bound direct for Halifax.

“ALMIRA PAUL.”

In addition to the foregoing remarkable exploits of *females* disguised, the English papers of 1835 furnished us with still another, in the instance of *Anne Jane Thornton*, an English girl of seventeen years of age, who in the month of February of the above year, arrived at the Fresh Wharf Bridge, London, on board the Ship Sarah from St. Andrew's, her sex having been discovered a few days previous—immediately on the discovery being made reports to her disadvantage were propagated, which at length reaching the ears of the Lord Mayor, with great humanity ordered the police to ascertain the particulars of the case, and see if she had been ill-used—on being by said officer brought before the Mayor, to him she related the following interesting particulars—first telling her name, age, &c., she said that “her father being a widower, took her and the rest of the family from Gloucestershire, where she was born, to Donegal, when six years old, where her father then resided—she regretted leaving home, as it must have caused him many a sorrowful hour, he being always affectionate to her—when she was but thirteen years of age, she became acquainted with a Captain Alexander Burke, an Englishman, but whose father resided in New-York, and before she was fifteen, they became strongly attached to each other—soon after young Burke was obliged to go to New-York, and she resolved to follow him, and accordingly quitted her father's house, accompanied by a maid-servant and boy; and having procured a cabin-boy's dress she obtained a passage direct to America—by degrees she became reconciled to her new situation, and when she arrived at New York, she hastened to the father of Capt. Burke, and from whom,

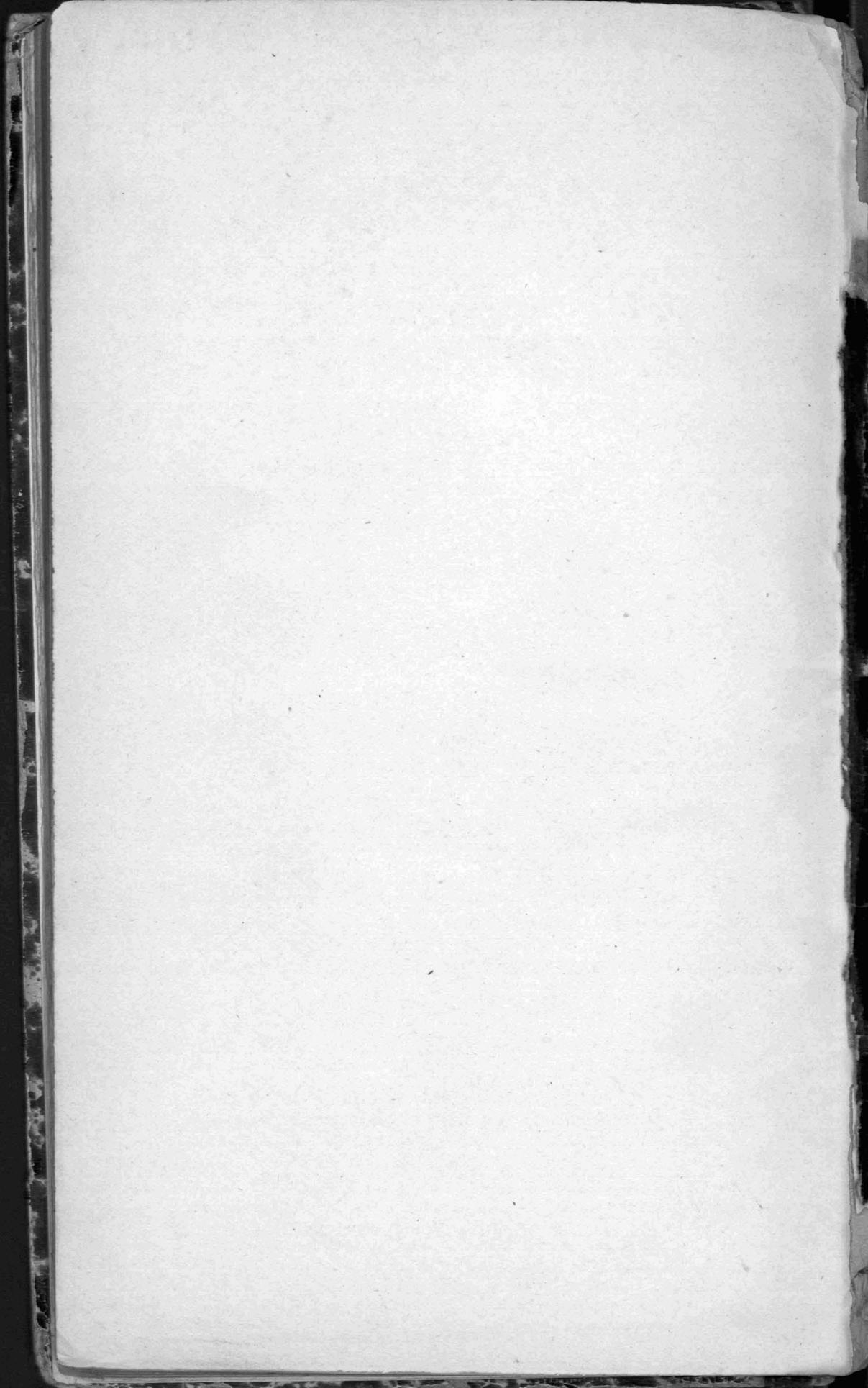
to her great grief, she learned that his son was dead!—disconsolate as she was, she hastened from East Point in North America to St. Andrew's, a distance of seventy miles through the woods, and which she walked alone, and all the way on foot—she there obtained the situation of cook and steward on board the Brig Adelaide, and next on board the Rover, which latter vessel returning to St. Andrews' where she met with the Sarah, Captain M'Intire, who engaged her as cook and steward, and in which ship, as stated, she arrived in London.—A few days previous her sex having been accidentally discovered—for thirty-one months she had been engaged in these remarkable adventures, and participated in the most severe toils of the crews, of which she performed a part with the greatest propriety and decorum:—

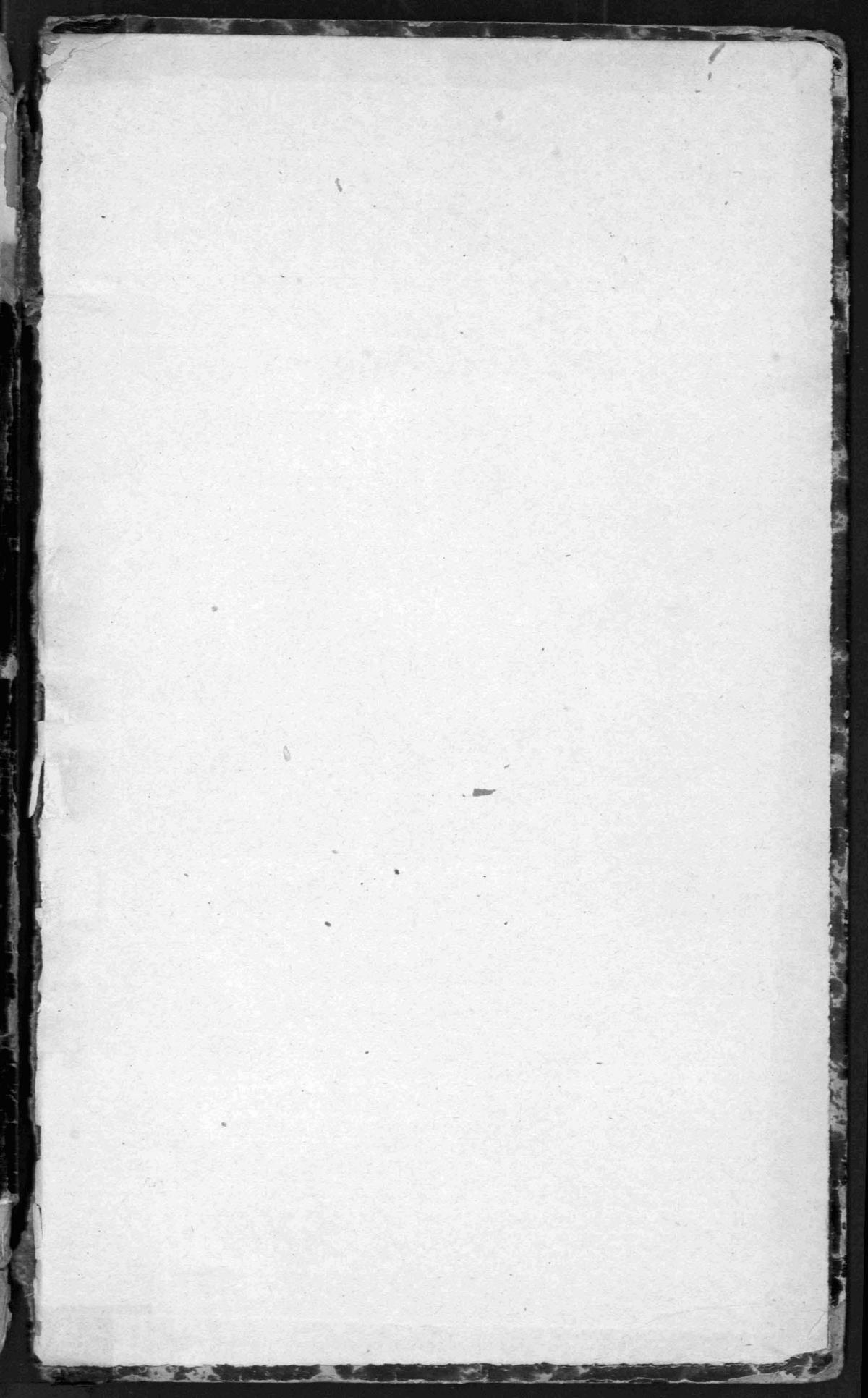
With pitch and tar her hands were hard, tho' once like velvet soft,
She weighed the anchor, heav'd the lead, and boldly went aloft,
Just one and thirty months she brav'd the tempest, we are told,
And always did the duty of an English seaman bold.

TO THE READER.

So numerous are the publications latterly ushered into the world by novel and romance writers, that a tale of *truth* can hardly be received by the intelligent reader as *authentic*—the Publisher of the foregoing Narratives, with these considerations, deems it a duty to assure his readers that they may be relied on as *facts* as they did really occur, without the shadow of *fiction*, and as such they have been carefully collected, and now offered to the public for their inspection, by their humble servant,

THE PUBLISHER.





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