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WILLIAM EATON

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WILLIAM EATON

By

CORNELIUS C. FELTON

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LIFE  
OF  
WILLIAM EATON  
BY  
CORNELIUS C. FELTON







## WILLIAM EATON.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### *Eaton's Birth, Parentage, and early Life. — His Appointment in the Army. — His Marriage*

WILLIAM EATON was born at Woodstock, in Connecticut, on the 23d of February, 1764. His parents were in the middling rank of life, and brought up a large family, with moderate means. His father was a farmer, and for many years eked out his narrow income, by teaching school during the winter; an employment for which he is represented as having been well qualified by more than ordinary attainments for a farmer. He died November 23d, 1804.

William, the subject of this biography, showed very early in life, an extraordinary vigor of character. The rustic labor of a farmer's life had no charms for his lively imagination; but reading and the sports of the field were his special delight. When he was ten years old, his family removed from Woodstock to Mansfield; and here

his turn for hardy adventure was still more unfolded. At the age of sixteen he ran away, and enlisted in the army. In a little more than a year his health failed him, and he was obliged to set out for home. On the journey he was disabled from proceeding by lameness, and, during this awkward interval, supported himself in the family of a farmer by mending old chairs. At the expiration of a few weeks, however, his father went after him and carried him back. As soon as his health was restored, he rejoined the army, and remained in the service until April, 1783, when he was discharged, having attained the honors of a sergeant.

Soon after this, his mind seems to have taken a more decided literary turn; and in 1784 he began the study of the classical languages, under the instruction of the Reverend Mr. Nott, or Franklin; and in 1785, becoming religiously affected, he was made a member of the church of that place. In the same year he was admitted a student in Dartmouth College; and, according to the customary indulgence extended by that and other colleges of New England, the indigent students received permission to teach school during the ensuing winter. But Eaton was prevented by domestic embarrassments, from renewing his connexion with the College until two years later, in 1787, when he was again

admitted, and became a member of the Freshman class. He began his occupation as a teacher in November, 1785, in Windham, and continued until June, 1786, giving a portion of his time to college studies, under the instruction of the Reverend Mr. Coggswell. He then returned to his father's farm in Mansfield, where he divided his time between study and agriculture during that summer. In November, he recommenced his school in Windham, and continued in it until March, 1787. In May of the same year, he started on foot, his pack on his back with a few "notions" to sell, and one pistareen only in his pocket, for Dartmouth College. 'This scanty fund was exhausted when he arrived at Northfield; and in this destitute condition he gave way to an uncontrollable depression of spirits. This, however, was but transient. What with the proceeds of the sale from his pack, and other assistance rendered him on the way, he was enabled to complete his journey, and was received by Dr. Wheelock, the well-known president of the College, with great kindness. He was examined, and became, as has been stated above, a member of the Freshman class.

From this time Mr. Eaton continued a member of the College, supporting himself, in part at least, by teaching winter schools. The great exertions he was obliged to make, to keep up with the

studies of his class, impaired his health, and made it necessary for him to take a journey. On the 25th of August, 1790, he was admitted to the degree of bachelor of arts, and delivered, with a classmate named Jackson, a poetical dialogue at the Commencement of that year.

Having completed his collegiate course, Eaton again opened a school in Windsor, which he continued up to August, 1791. In the October of that year, he was chosen clerk to the House of Delegates of the State of Vermont.

During the next winter, Mr. Eaton made a visit to Connecticut, and renewed his acquaintance with the respectable family of General Timothy Danielson, whose youthful widow he afterwards married. In the following March, he received, through the influence of the Honorable Stephen R. Bradley, a senator of the United States from Vermont, the appointment of captain in the army, which he accepted. In May, he received orders from the Department of War to proceed to Bennington, where recruits were assembling under his ensign, Charles Hyde, of whom he immediately assumed the command, and entered vigorously on the recruiting service himself. About this time, he took the first three degrees in Freemasonry. On the 21st of the following August, he was married to the lady whom we have spoken of above, Mrs. Eliza Danielson, at Union, Connecticut, and

immediately proceeded with his wife to Windsor, Vermont. We have now arrived at the period when, properly speaking, the narrative of Mr Eaton's active life commences.

## CHAPTER II.

*Eaton's Departure to join the Western Army*  
— *His Altercation with Captain Butler.* —  
*Arrives at Cincinnati.* — *Returns to Brimfield.*  
— *His Engagement in the Recruiting Service.*  
— *Service in Georgia.* — *Trial by a Court-*  
*Martial, and Sentence.*

CAPTAIN EATON, having received marching orders, proceeded in September, 1793, with his troops to Albany, and thence to New York and Philadelphia. From the latter city he went to Pittsburg, where he was presented to General Wayne, and soon after joined the army at Legionville. The only affair of any consequence in which he was at this time engaged was a quarrel with the adjutant-general, Butler, which, though not greatly to the credit of either party, fortunately ended without bloodshed. At a general review in March, 1793, Eaton was placed in command of the left column of the army. In the course of the manœuvres, the general had ordered Eaton's column to form the line in the flank, and, after the firing was over, the acting adjutant-general directed them to return in the same order in which they had marched on the

ground, by files from the right, countermarch. Eaton ordered the two wings to countermarch from the left and centre. The adjutant-general then countermanded his own order, by directing Eaton to countermarch by the left; but Eaton, being confident that he was bringing the column into the right position, continued his march. This resulted in a violent altercation on the spot between these two officers. Butler rode toward Eaton with uplifted sword, and was met in his advance by the other, with his espartoon. This disorderly and unofficerlike scene was ended by the general, who directed the march to continue. But Eaton, deeming himself entitled to the usual satisfaction of a military man, sent the adjutant the following rather enigmatical epistle.

*“ Legionville, 17th March, 5 o'clock, P. M.*

“ SIR,

I am to understand, and am to be understood by, Captain Butler.

EATON.

“ The acting Adjutant-General.”

The Acting Adjutant seems to have been a little puzzled about understanding Eaton's despatch; he answered it, however, with a proposition of a general explanation in the presence of the gentlemen who commanded in Eaton's column; a proposition that met with a prompt acceptance. The meeting was held at “ Captain Price's hut ”; and.

after some deliberation, the gentlemen to whom the subject was referred, judiciously decided, that, as both "were unfortunate in being culpable, so it is incumbent on both to come forward and bury the matter in oblivion, by again renewing their former friendship." Captain Butler assented to this opinion, offered Eaton his hand, and here the matter ended. This anecdote is of little consequence, except that it shows qualities of character, which influenced the conduct of Eaton at every subsequent period of his life.

Eaton arrived at Cincinnati, with the army, on the 5th of May. He gives a glowing description of the beauty and fertility of that region, a picture, in some respects, contrasting wonderfully with the present cultivated appearance of that populous and wealthy part of the country.

During Eaton's connexion with the western army, which continued till February, 1794, he was engaged in several skirmishes, and participated in the erection of Fort Recovery. Having at this time obtained leave of absence, he returned to Brimfield, by the way of Philadelphia. The following June, he engaged again in the recruiting service at Springfield, by request of the secretary of war, and continued in it until 1795, when he was ordered to Georgia. He embarked at Philadelphia, with his troops, on the 1st of December, and encountered a violent storm on the voyage, accompanied with



thunder and lightning, which he commemorated in a series of heroic verses, more remarkable for sounding words than poetic diction, addressed to Mrs. Eaton. He arrived safely at Savannah on the 26th of the month, and proceeded thence to the station at St. Mary's to report himself to the commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Gaither. Captain Eaton's time and labor were immediately devoted to the building of a fort at Colerain, which he called Fort Pickering; "not, however," says he, "that I might satirize a good man, by erecting his monument in the mud." The object of the force at St. Mary's was to establish a trading factory, to hold in check the Indians and Spaniards, and to repress any violence on the part of disorderly citizens of Georgia, towards the inhabitants of Florida. In May of this year, commissioners arrived, on the part of the United States, to negotiate a treaty with the Creek Indians, which they effected in the June following, and thus accomplished the main object for which the troops had been marched to that station.

While Eaton was engaged at this place, a misunderstanding grew up between him and Colonel Gaither, the commandant, which led to the arrest and trial of the former by a court-martial. This trial is of some consequence, because an attempt was made at the trial of Colonel Burr, in Richmond, to set aside the testimony of Eaton, for rea-

sons drawn from these proceedings. Upon a review of all the evidence now to be had in the case, there can be but little doubt that Eaton was the object of unjust and harsh treatment from his commandant. It is very likely that Eaton's manners were offensive and impetuous, and that his mode of discharging the duties of his office was any thing but conciliating to Colonel Gaither. Captain Eaton was arrested in August, though he had twice, before that time, demanded, in writing, a court of inquiry, and once verbally, for the purpose of showing that the reports circulated to his disadvantage were without foundation. To this privilege he was legally entitled; but the granting of it did not suit the object of Colonel Gaither. The court-martial consisted of five members, one major, two captains, and two ensigns, all of whom, excepting the president, were inferior in rank to Eaton. The trial lasted more than a fortnight, and every effort was made to crush the character of the prisoner. He was charged with speculating on the men under his command; with detaining in his hands bounty money, and paying them in goods at an advanced price; with selling public corn, and allowing the public horses only two quarts per day; with disobedience of orders; with liberating a soldier, who had been charged with causing the death of another, and tearing in pieces the charge in a contemptuous manner; and with

defrauding the troops under his command of rations due to them, which were never accounted for to the men. To these charges Eaton made a long and elaborate reply, which he afterwards transmitted to the secretary of state, Colonel Pickering. His defence is minute and able. It is characterized by rude, fierce, and sometimes by figurative language, that rises to eloquence. He is not sparing of invective, and does not hesitate to charge his enemies with the basest motives. The origin of the commandant's hostility to him he expressly attributes to that officer's resentment for his refusal to purchase lands held by Gaither in the "Yazoo Grants," and obtained in a manner which Eaton openly reprobated. He charges upon him, also, a close connexion with a person owning large tracts in the vicinity of the post, and that the place had been selected with a view to gainful speculations, though wholly unsuitable for a military station or a trading factory, for reasons specifically detailed. The truth of the latter charge rests not on the credibility of Eaton's declaration alone; for Ensign Thompson, a member of the court-martial, positively asserts, that the commandant had "ordered Eaton to make no reports, although the secretary of war had given instruction that he should." Eaton obeyed the instructions of the secretary, and, as his reports were unfavorable to the private wishes of Colonel Gaither and his

friends, the sacrifice of the subordinate seems to have been resolved upon, as a necessary measure for the protection of their pecuniary interests.

The tenor of Eaton's defence is too bold and uncompromising for a man conscious of guilt ; and the testimonies to his excellent conduct, by the people in the neighborhood of his station, forbid the supposition that Colonel Gaither's charges were founded in truth. The court-martial, also, seem to have felt the force of his arguments ; for, though a majority were decidedly hostile, and every effort was made during five months preceding the trial to collect testimony against him, they yet sentenced him merely to two months' suspension from command. The proceedings of the court-martial were sent to the commandant for his approval ; but, instead of acting upon their decision, as it was his duty to do, he arbitrarily imprisoned Eaton in Fort Pickering, despatched the proceedings of the court to the secretary of war, and ordered Eaton, after a month's confinement, to the seat of government. The sentence was not confirmed. Eaton was told, on application to the secretary, that his standing in the army was not changed.

In January, 1797, Eaton returned to Brimfield, and remained there until the following summer. In July he was commissioned by the secretary of state to execute the orders of a committee of Congress, appointed to procure information relative

to Blount's conspiracy. Under this confidential commission, he was ordered to proceed to New York, and secure the person of Dr. Nicholas Romaine, with his papers. Eaton executed this order with the greatest promptitude, having brought the prisoner to Philadelphia in less than two days after his departure from that city. On his return from this expedition, he received the appointment of American consul in Tunis; but, previous to his departure for the place of his destination, he was charged with despatches for Mr. Gerry, then in Cambridge, and on the point of sailing for France. Having delivered them with punctuality, he revisited Brimfield, where he passed the autumn. In the winter he made a journey to Ohio, and returned in the following March. He remained at home from that time till the 12th of November, when he received notice from the secretary of state, that the vessels destined for Algiers were ready to sail. He accordingly took leave of his family, and arrived at the seat of government on the 18th of the same month. From this time the most important period of General Eaton's public life commences. He was placed in a station, which gave an ample scope to the energy of his vigorous character, and to his love of strange adventures. The theatre of his action henceforth was in a barbarous country, the distance and character of which lend a romantic charm to his way

of life and his singular achievements; though the remoteness of the scene has contributed to throw his real claims upon the memory of his countrymen into obscurity.

## CHAPTER III

*Eaton embarks for Algiers. — His Arrival there, and Presentation at Court. — Departure for Tunis. — He is delayed by contrary Winds. — Arrival at Tunis, and Reception by Famin. — Friendly Warning of the British Consul*

MR. EATON embarked on board the United States brig *Sophia*, bound to Algiers, on the 22d of December, 1798. The *Sophia* sailed in company with the *Hero*, the *Hassan Bashaw*, the *Skjoldabrand*, and the *Lela Eisha*, all destined by the United States as payment of stipulations and arrearages due to the Dey of Algiers. The *Sophia* had a passage of thirty-six days from the Capes of Delaware to the Bay of Algiers, where she arrived on the 9th of February, 1799. James L. Cathcart, the United States consul at Tripoli, had taken passage in the same vessel. Eaton and Cathcart waited immediately on Mr. O'Brien, the Consul-General of the United States for the Barbary coast, and remained with him until March. On the 22d of February they were presented at the palace, the armed vessels having been delivered to the Regency a few days previously. The following extract from Eaton's journal gives a pithy account of the ceremonies on that occasion.

“*February 22d.* — Consul O’Brien, Cathcart, and myself, Captain Geddes, Smith, Penrose, Maley, proceeded from the American house to the courtyard of the palace, uncovered our heads, entered the area of the hall, ascended a winding maze of five flights of stairs, to a narrow dark entry, leading to a contracted apartment, of about twelve by eight feet, the private audience room. Here we took off our shoes, and, entering the cave (for so it seemed) with small apertures of light with iron grates, we were shown to a huge shaggy beast, sitting on his rump, upon a low bench, covered with a cushion of embroidered velvet, with his hind legs gathered up like a tailor or a bear. On our approach to him, he reached out his fore paw as if to receive something to eat. Our guide exclaimed, ‘Kiss the Dey’s hand!’ The Consul-General bowed very elegantly, and kissed it, and we followed his example in succession. The animal seemed, at that moment, to be in a harmless mode; he grinned several times, but made very little noise. Having performed this ceremony, and standing a few moments in silent agony, we had leave to take our shoes and other property, and leave the den, without any other injury than the humility [humiliation] of being obliged, in this involuntary manner, to violate the second command of God, and offend common decency.”

On the 2nd of March, Eaton sailed from Algiers



for Tunis, but was forced by contrary winds into the Bay of Biserta. Here he went on shore, and sent a courier by land with a letter to Azulai, a Jewish merchant of Tunis, requesting him to provide a house with suitable accommodations, that should be ready on his arrival. He was unable to reëmbark until the 10th, on account of the surf, caused by a strong wind blowing into the mole, and a current setting out; in the mean time he accepted the hospitality of Stephen Decoster, an Italian, and acting vice-consul for the Emperor, Holland, and Ragusa. On the 12th, the *Sophia* came to anchor in the Bay of Tunis. The ship's papers were immediately exhibited to the Aga of the marine, who promised to send the necessary information to the Bey. On the 14th, permission was received from the Bey to go on shore, and they proceeded immediately in a barge to the city. As no house had as yet been provided, they took up their abode for the present with M. Famin, a Frenchman, who had heretofore been the agent of the United States at Tunis. The flags of the different European nations at peace with the Regency were hoisted at the consular houses, and the afternoon of the same day was spent in receiving visits. Mr. Eaton was cautioned, immediately on his arrival, against placing any confidence in M. Famin. The British consul intimated, that Famin was a dangerous personage.

and that Eaton's situation was a very critical one. He advised the American consul to unite caution and firmness in the negotiation, and told him, "that the Bey was a man of acute discernment, and generally of fair dealing, but that he was vain and avaricious."

Being thus forewarned, both of the character of the Bey, and of the French agent of the United States, Eaton had his first interview on the 15th. As the immediate business, which he had to discuss with the government of Tunis, grew out of an article, in a treaty negotiated by M. Famin on the part of the United States, which article had been rejected by the Senate, it will be proper to give some account of the disputed stipulation, before proceeding to the diplomatic intercourse of Mr. Eaton with that regency

## CHAPTER IV.

*Treaty negotiated by Famin. — Article rejected by the Senate. — Stipulations. — Other Articles objected to. — Instructions of Mr Secretary Pickering to the American Consuls. — Interviews of Eaton with the Bey, and Negotiations with his Ministers.*

JOSEPH ETIENNE FAMIN, who is mentioned in the preceding chapter, had been employed by Joel Barlow, Consul-General of the United States for the Barbary Powers, as American agent in Tunis. He had concluded the negotiation of a treaty of peace and friendship between the United States and the Bey and government of Tunis, in August, 1797, which was laid before the Senate in the March of the following year. The treaty was ratified, with the exception of the fourteenth article, which related to the duties on merchandise, to be reciprocally paid by the citizens and subjects of the parties in their respective ports. The article objected to by the Senate, was expressed as follows.

“The citizens of the United States of America, who shall transport into the kingdom of Tunis the merchandise of their country in the vessels of

their nation, shall pay three per cent duty. Such as may be laden by such citizens under a foreign flag, coming from the United States or elsewhere, shall pay ten per cent duty. Such as may be laden by foreigners on board of American vessels, coming from any place whatever, shall also pay ten per cent duty. If any Tunisian merchant wishes to carry merchandise from his country, under any flag whatever, into the United States of America, and on his own account, he shall pay three per cent duty."

The Senate resolved, "that it be recommended to the President of the United States, to enter into a friendly negotiation with the Bey and government of Tunis, on the subject of the said article, so as to accommodate the provision thereof to the existing treaties of the United States with other nations."

Although the Senate ratified the treaty, with the exception of the abovesaid article, there were stipulations in others, which were found objectionable, and of which the American agents were instructed by the Secretary of State to obtain modifications. Article eleventh provided, that a barrel of gunpowder should be given to the government of Tunis, for every gun fired in saluting American ships of war; and article twelfth, that "the subjects or citizens of the two nations shall be protected by the government, or commandants

of the places where they may be, and not by the other authorities of the country," and stipulated farther, that the government of Tunis might compel an American captain to put his vessel into its service, at such freight as the government itself should prescribe.

The Secretary of State instructed Messrs. O'Brien, Eaton, and Cathcart to procure, if possible, a change of the three articles in question into the following forms.

ARTICLE XI. — "When a vessel of war of one of the parties shall enter a port of the other, in which there is a fortification, she shall be saluted with fifteen guns; which salute the vessel of war shall return, gun for gun."

ARTICLE XII. — (First part as before.) — "The subjects and citizens of the two nations, respectively shall be protected in the places where they may be, by the officers of the government there existing; but, on failure of such protection, and for redress of every injury, the party may resort to the chief authority in each country, by whom adequate protection and complete justice shall be rendered."

"In case the government of Tunis shall have need of an American vessel for its service, such vessel being within the Regency, (and not previously engaged,) the government shall have the preference, on its paying the same freight as the

Tunisian merchants usually pay for the same service, or at the like rate, if the service be without a customary precedent." The words in the parenthesis to be omitted, if objected to

ARTICLE XIV. — "All vessels belonging to the citizens and inhabitants of the United States shall be permitted to enter the different ports of the kingdom of Tunis, and freely trade with the subjects and inhabitants thereof, on paying the usual duties that are paid by all other nations at peace with the Regency. In like manner all vessels belonging to the subjects and inhabitants of the kingdom of Tunis shall be permitted to enter the different ports of the United States, and freely trade with the citizens and inhabitants thereof, on paying the usual duties that are paid by all other nations at peace with the United States."

Or the following form, if preferred.

"The commerce of the citizens and inhabitants of the United States with the kingdom of Tunis, and of the subjects and inhabitants of the kingdom of Tunis with the United States, shall be on the footing of the most favored nations, for the time being respectively."

The Secretary instructed the American agents also to offer the Tunisian government a sum of money in lieu of the naval and military stores, stipulated to be delivered at Tunis, by the United States. The estimated value of these stores, at

Tunis, was thirty-five thousand dollars. The agents were authorized to increase the sum to one hundred thousand dollars, if absolutely necessary. But if the delivery of the stores should be finally insisted on, and the alteration of the fourteenth article refused without an additional stipulation, they were to offer five thousand dollars in cash. If more should be required, and the alternative were an immediate war, they were instructed to go as far as ten thousand dollars. If this should be unsatisfactory, the matter was to be referred to the American government. They were further authorized to offer, instead of the present of naval and military stores, a cruiser, not exceeding twenty-two guns, six-pounders, either to be built for the purpose, or one already belonging to the United States.

If the agents found their efforts ineffectual to secure the continuance of peace, they were directed to keep the negotiation pending as long as possible, and to despatch letters to the Consul-General at Algiers, to the American consuls in all the ports of the Mediterranean sea, and to the ministers in Spain and Portugal, in order that effectual measures might be taken to secure American vessels from the perils of anticipated war.

The stipulations in M. Famin's treaty, whose objectionable character rendered this negotiation necessary, Mr. Barlow declared were not comprehended in the first project of the treaty transmit-

ted to him in April ; and the insertion of the 14th article was accounted for on the ground, that M Famin, being a merchant, might derive important advantages from a direct trade with the United States. The Bey and his government were probably led to agree to it, either in order to favor the project of the agent, or to make it the instrument of extorting new concessions from the government of the United States, who, they imagined, would be willing to pay an additional sum of money to have it expunged. The hostile attitude assumed by France towards the United States was well known to Famin, from M. Herculais, the principal agent of that nation in Barbary, by whom he was first recommended to Mr. Barlow. This circumstance might have rendered him a willing accomplice in thwarting the interests of the United States.

He had, however, been promised the American consulate at Tunis, by Mr. Barlow, if he succeeded in making a treaty with that power ; contrary to the policy adopted by our government, of appointing none but American citizens to that important office, in any of the Barbary States. But his influence with the Saptapa, or Keeper of the Seals, whose agent he was for all prizes brought in by that officer's corsairs, and his power to injure the interests of the United States, made it important to avoid giving him offence, and, if possible, to conciliate his friendship



To compensate, therefore, the disappointment he might feel in being superseded by the appointment of another, Eaton was authorized to offer him, on the part of the United States, for his services in negotiating, first a truce, and afterwards a treaty of peace, two thousand dollars, a sum equivalent to the consular salary for one year; and to promise him, still further, a handsome present, in case of a successful issue to the final negotiation.

It has been already stated, that Eaton had his interview with the Bey on the 15th of March, being conducted to the palace and introduced by Famin. After the ceremony of delivering credentials, and kissing the hands of the Bey, coffee was brought in, and the conversation commenced. He began at once to complain, that he had not been informed that the American vessel was a vessel of war, that she might have received the customary salute; and that the business of the agency had not been introduced to him by his ministers, without the intervention of a *Jew*; and that the stipulated present of naval and military stores, though expected a year before, had not yet been delivered. To the first part of the complaint, the consul replied, that he was unacquainted with the custom;\* and to the last, that the treaty had been received by the American

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\* The consul here gave a diplomatic version of the true reason, which was, that the salute would have cost the United States about eight hundred dollars.

government only eight months before, when the plague was raging; and when that ceased, the winter had closed the harbors with ice; that all the means of the country were needed to defend her against the depredations of France, with whom she was at war; that the American government had objected to several stipulations in the treaty, and, when these should be altered, every exertion would be made to fulfil the obligations on their part.

The articles and amendments, above explained, were then pointed out to the Bey, and he was informed by the American agents, as a proof of the good faith of their government, that they were authorized to stipulate for the payment of an equivalent in cash. The Bey replied, in substance, that he had cash enough, and to spare; but that the stores were peculiarly necessary to him at this time, and that the United States had found no difficulty in fulfilling their engagements with Algiers and Tripoli. It was offered in explanation, that the American government had agreed to furnish the Dey of Algiers certain armed vessels, for which he was to pay cash; that no difficulty had been found in fulfilling this contract, because the vessels carried with them their own means of defence. He intimated a doubt, as well he might, of the Dey of Algiers having paid the cash, and abruptly asked M. Famin, why he had hoisted the colors of the

United States, if the treaty had not been ratified. Though Famin declared he had received orders from the government, the American consuls assured the Bey that no such orders had been given, nor would be, until the ratification of the treaty, which would take place as soon as the few objectionable particulars had been adjusted, when despatches would be sent directly home, and the obligations of the American agent be at once acknowledged and paid. The Bey pettishly said, "It cost you but little to have your flag hoisted; it will cost you less to have it taken down," and insisted on the presents as a condition of peace. The consuls pointed out the danger of risking stores, which were contraband of war, in the Mediterranean, covered as it was with French and Spanish war-boats. They proposed, therefore, according to the instructions of the Department of State, to furnish the Bey with a cruiser, of equal value with the presents, provided he acceded to the required alterations in the treaty. Taking a hint from this proposition, the Bey declared, that he should expect an armed vessel gratuitously, when the business was settled. But he was promptly told to expect nothing of the kind; that the Americans had work enough for their navy in defending their commerce from the aggressions of France, and that it was only to prevent the loss of property in such a manner as would strengthen the hands of the

common enemy, and to convince him of the honor of the American government, that the proposal had been made of substituting an armed vessel for the naval and military stores. Finding the occasion unfavorable to his views, the Bey postponed the discussion, and dismissed the consuls, with an injunction to make their communications to him directly, or through his ministers, and not through the medium of a Jew. A few moments after they had retired into the area of the palace, the Serapita informed them; that the Bey would receive them again on Monday.

On the 15th, Mr. Cathcart attempted to go on board the ship, for the purpose of departing to the place of his destination, but was detained at the Goletta all night. He was hospitably entertained by an old engineer, in the service of the Bey, who cautioned him not to trust in the honesty of Famin, and declared that all the foreign consuls regarded him as a spy, and that he was generally believed to have furnished the government of Tunis with pretexts for demands upon the tributary nations, for which he received a brokerage. These hints of the character of Famin coincided with the statements of the British consul.

The American agents had an interview with the plenipotentiary of Algiers, who offered them his friendship, advised them to move with caution and perseverance, and encouraged them to hope for a

favorable issue of the negotiation. The government of Algiers exerted a commanding influence over the Regency of Tunis, by reason of its superiority in arms and resources; but it was neither safe nor prudent for any Christian nation to employ the mediation of Algiers in negotiations with Tunis, on account of the natural kindness existing between two kindred hordes of pirates. The Americans, therefore, were not forward to enter into confidential relations with the Algerine diplomatist, and contented themselves with a statement of the general bearing of their affairs.

On the 18th, another interview was held with the Bey, at which the objectionable articles and the proposed amendments were laid before him. He said, that he was not tenacious of the article in its present shape, and was willing to alter the duty to six, ten, or an hundred per cent, provided the United States would make it reciprocal and demand no partial privileges. The substitute, before cited, to the effect that the commercial intercourse between Tunis and the United States should be on the footing of the most favored nation, respectively, was proposed. The Bey replied, that he could not agree to this, until he knew what the duties paid in the United States were. In his ports the duties paid by the most favored nations were three per cent *ad valorem*, by a valuation taken in 1753; and many articles had risen six

hundred per cent in value since that time. This arrangement had been fixed by a treaty with France, and had been adopted as a rule for other nations. But the proposed substitute might expose his subjects to the payment of any duty the government of the United States saw fit to impose, with the single restriction, that it should not exceed the duties paid by the most favored nation. He therefore proposed to fix the duty at ten per cent, respectively, his subjects having the liberty of carrying their merchandise under any colors whatever. The proposition, however, was inadmissible, and the further consideration of the article was postponed to the next day.

The first clause of the amendment to the twelfth article was then introduced and no objection was offered to it by the Bey. The second clause in the same article, the Bey declared had been misconstrued or badly translated from the original; that it was intended to apply to cases of emergency only, when he had occasion to send vessels to the Levant, or other ports in the Mediterranean, but was not meant to extend to vessels of war or of the government. He was told, that the demand, even with this explanation, was not conceded to any nation on earth. It was not reciprocal; and would injure both the American commerce and his own, by turning American merchantmen from their course, and by deterring the vessels from his ports. The

following modification was proposed ; “ If, in case of emergency the government of Tunis should have need of an American vessel to facilitate despatches to any port in the Mediterranean, such vessel being within the Regency, and not a vessel of war, nor belonging to the government of the United States, may be compelled to perform such service, on receiving a payment sufficient to indemnify the owners and others concerned for such service and detention.” This was agreed to ; and the Bey passed to the delay of the United States in forwarding the presents. The reasons for this delay were re-stated, and the obstacles, interposed by the constitution of the United States were explained. The compact was not complete, because the Senate had not ratified it, and therefore the government were neither obliged nor authorized to forward the presents ; no provision would be made for this purpose, until the treaty should be amended and ratified, at which time the government would promptly fulfil all their engagements.

After a moment's pause, the Bey replied, “ To-morrow ! you have stayed till my dinner is getting cold ; come to-morrow at eleven o'clock.”

Another interview was accordingly held on the 19th, at the palace. The Bey touched upon the twelfth article again, and ordered his secretary to insert his explanation of the first clause in the original ; but he pretended, that he did not mean to

have the second altered, according to the understanding of the Americans, and ordered his secretary to alter the original, so that it should not be limited to couriers in case of emergency, but might extend to the freight of a merchant vessel, when a cargo was to be sent to, or brought from, any port in the Mediterranean. It was replied, that, if the alteration should be confined to couriers in cases of emergency, and for the immediate service of the government, the United States might possibly consent to it, but never would in its present form, or, if they should, American merchantmen would never enter his ports. The Bey affected great indifference in his reply, and declared, that the United States might reject it, or send it back, if they did not like it in its present form.

He then resumed the consideration of the fourteenth article, repeated what he had said the day before, and strongly urged the definite settlement of the duty, agreeing to a reciprocity. He was told, that the duties could not be exactly defined, because the power of laying duties on imports was vested in the Congress of the United States. The substituted article allowed him the privileges which were granted to the best friends of the country, and permitted him to impose on American goods the same duties, that he imposed on those of the most favored nations. It was positively declared,



that the article must be altered, or the negotiation was at an end, and the expectation of presents must be abandoned. Turning to the eleventh article, he inquired what alteration was demanded in that. "Strike out the barrel of powder for each gun, and reduce the number to fifteen." This he declined, but offered to render the terms of the article reciprocal by imposing the same duty on Tunisian vessels in American ports.

As this was already implied by the phrasing of the translation, he was told, that they would not agree to it, that although the expense would be but trifling, the demand was humiliating to us and not very honorable to him. "However trifling," was his reply, "it may appear to you, to me it is important. Fifteen barrels of powder will furnish a cruiser, which may capture a prize and net me one hundred thousand dollars." He was told, that both justice and honor would forbid the United States acceding to the demand. "You consult your honor," said he, "I my interest ; but, if you wish to save your honor in this instance, give me fifty barrels of powder annually, and I will consent to the alteration." This proposition was promptly and peremptorily declined. Upon which, turning to the Sapitapa, he said, "These people are Cheri-beenas ;\* they are so hard, there is no dealing with them." It was urged, that the United States

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\* Merchants from the confines of Persia.

had made great sacrifices to obtain a peace, which was likely to be useless. The grasping barbarian replied, that friends usually made good their professions by something better than words; but he was answered, that friendship was reciprocal, and, in business of this nature, was wholly out of the question; that, in equity, he would find it hard to justify his claims upon those who had never injured him, and who had been treated as enemies, though they had never been at war with him. "You will be pleased to consider, also, that you have never been at peace; and if it be no favor to have a free navigation into the Mediterranean, why do you ask it?" It was proposed to expunge the eleventh article altogether. He agreed that it should be done, and that no salute should be fired without being demanded; upon which he rose, without ceremony, and, as he was leaving the apartment, he was asked, if he had resolved upon any thing respecting the fourteenth article. "I'll think of it," said he; "there are other people to be consulted. You will call the day after to-morrow."

After the Bey's departure, the Sapitapa suggested to Mr. Cathcart, that the Bey might be induced to alter the article by a private present, but that the article relative to the powder must stand. Upon consulting a few moments, the agents replied, that a gratuity might be expected on the successful issue of the negotiation, but no stipula-

tion to that effect would be made ; that the United States had formed a good opinion of the ability and integrity of the Bey of Tunis, and it was hoped the opinion would be confirmed ; that *his* influence would probably have great weight with the Bey, and any friendly offices he might render would not be forgotten. He replied, to the intent, that he was favorably disposed to the American cause, and whatever influence he possessed, should be at their service.

On Thursday, the 21st, the American agents attended at the palace again, but no interview was held, as the Bey was engaged with letters from the East. On the following day, however, the subject was again taken up, and the Bey, reverting to the fourteenth article, reiterated his proposition to establish the duty at ten, twenty, or even one hundred per cent, *ad valorem* ; or, if they could inform him what duties were paid by other nations in American ports, he would determine whether the interests of his subjects would permit him to receive their terms. He was answered, that the duties paid in America were various and fluctuating, and that any further discussion on this point would be a useless waste of time. The proposition made by them was, to place the Tunisians on the same ground, as to commercial privileges, with the most favored nations for the time being ; and, as the Tunisian merchants would rarely if ever send

goods to America, the terms which he urged, could not be of much importance to him or his subjects. But the Bey assured them, that, as mankind were becoming more enlightened, he hoped he should send many vessels there before long. It was still insisted, that the Tunisians should not be admitted to privileges not granted to any other nation, even at the risk of war. The Bey was asked, if any inducement would prevail on him to make the proposed alterations in the treaty; to which he replied in the negative, and proposed a substitute, to the effect, that the citizens of the United States should have liberty to enter the ports of Tunis on condition of paying a duty equal to that paid by Tunisian traders to the United States; nine months being allowed to obtain the necessary information, and three per cent only being paid in the mean time; and that the subjects of the kingdom of Tunis should be admitted to the ports of the United States, on paying the duty usually paid by the most favored nation.

The eleventh article, prescribing the conditions of a mutual salute, was again discussed, and the following terms were finally agreed upon; "When a vessel of war of one of the parties shall enter a port of the other, and demand to be saluted, there shall be paid one barrel of powder for each gun demanded for the salute; but, if the demand be not made by the consul on the part of the United

States, or by the commandant of the vessel on the part of the kingdom of Tunis, no salute shall be given, nor payment demanded for the salute.”

It was proposed to send a cruiser instead of the stipulated stores. The Bey replied, that one cruiser was not enough, and that it would be a very good thing to compliment him with a cruiser *in addition* to the stipulated presents. This was of course declined; and the commissioners withdrew to the apartment of the Sapitapa, to have the alterations now agreed upon inserted in the original. The occasion was seized by the Sapitapa, to demand a present for the Bey; the demand gave rise to a little sharp-shooting, in which the agents had the best of the argument, but the Sapitapa showed the most passion. They separated, and the next Monday was appointed for another interview. This, however, did not take place until Tuesday, when the Sapitapa renewed his demand of a present for the Bey. It was evaded on the plea, that Americans were not admitted to the privileges of all other nations, and ought not therefore to be subjected to the same usages, and no proposition of this kind would be admitted. But Famin pretended to have a letter of Mr. Barlow's, instructing him to make provision for this demand. The fact was denied, and the letter was not produced; on the contrary, it was declared, that the American government would never yield

to the demand. "Then," exclaimed the Sapitapa, "you may write to your government, that you have a truce, but not a peace, with Tunis." An angry controversy followed, which ended in an agreement to send home to the American government a note, drawn up by the Sapitapa, containing an invoice of the articles furnished by Spain on a similar occasion, with the assurance, however, that no notice would be taken of it.

On the 27th a note was received from the secretary, dictated by the Sapitapa, insisting upon the payment of the claim, on the alteration of the treaty. Eaton answered it on the 29th, requesting to know, what the presents were, which were usually given on such occasions to the Keeper of the Seal and the secretary, and alleging, that the treaty could not be considered complete until now, and that the presents already given were in anticipation of this event. The letter went on to declare, that the consul would not govern his conduct by Spanish precedents, but perhaps the United States might be enabled to adopt the usages of the Danes and Swedes.

The secretary replied, a day or two after, that the treaty had been changed by altering and retrenching some of the articles, and therefore the customary presents would be required. The Bey insisted upon receiving not only a gratuity, according to the memorandum previously copied, but

something a "little better"; and they were informed, that if these terms dissatisfied them, the Bey would see them at his palace, and communicate something more precise for the **American government.**

## CHAPTER V

*Negotiation continued. — Influence of England. — Presents demanded by the Bey. — Statement of the Articles required. — President's Letter to the Bey. — Difficulties removed, and an Accommodation effected.*

MR. CATHCART sailed on the 2d of April, 1799, for Tripoli, leaving Eaton to conduct the negotiation in future alone. On the same day, he waited upon the Bey, with additional presents, to be divided between him and the Sapitapa; the Bey still insisted upon the present, but was told, that his demand could not be acceded to, and that the government of the United States must be consulted. "If you will not agree to it," said he, "you may go home, and consider void all that has been done." Eaton replied, that he would go, if there was no other alternative. "Very well," said he, "I give you ten days to consider the subject; and, if you continue in your present resolution, you may embark in the brig, on her return from Tripoli, and go home." Eaton assented, and the Bey left the chamber in a rage. The conversation was continued with the Sapitapa, who asked if the articles were not manufactured in



America, and if America was not an old country. The answer in the negative surprised the learned minister; but he cut the difficulty short, by saying, "The Bey must have his present; it is indispensable." Eaton urged the minister to use his influence with the Bey, in persuading him not to insist on a present, which it would be impossible to procure, and which would leave no alternative but war. As he left the court, he was beset by the clamorous demands of the under officers and principal slaves of the palace, for *money*, "according to the usages of all other nations," on the reception of a new consul.

The next day, the consul waited on the prime minister, and had another interview with the Sapidapa, whom he found in better temper than on the preceding day. He pressed upon him, however, that the Bey had been led to expect something handsome, in case of admitting the alteration; but, the alteration being acceded to, the implied promise seemed to be forgotten. The consul replied, that the Bey must have mistaken his meaning, or his meaning had not been intelligibly expressed; that his letter went no farther than to assure him, that the United States would not follow the example of Spain, and for the best of reasons, because they could not; that gold and diamonds were not to be had in America, nor anybody to work them. "What are you?" said

the Sapitapa, "a parcel of countrymen, shepherds, and rustics?" "Very much so." "But you build ships?" "Yes." "Well, suppose you agree to make the Bey a present of a small, handsome cruiser?" Eaton consented to consider this proposition, in the ten days that the Bey had given him to deliberate on the first, and the Sapitapa promised to use his best endeavors to facilitate the measure.

The following remarks, suggested by the preceding negotiations, are copied from Eaton's journal.

"It is hard to negotiate, where the terms are wholly *ex parte*. The Barbary courts are indulged in the habit of dictating their own terms of negotiation. Even the English, as the consul himself informed me, on his arrival and reception here, had furnished him a present in cash and other articles, valued in England at seventeen thousand pounds sterling. But Tunis trembles at the voice of England. This, then, must be a political intrigue of England, to embarrass the other mercantile Christian nations; and it has the effect. To the United States, they believe they can dictate terms. Why should they not? Or why should they believe it will ever be otherwise? They have seen nothing in America to controvert this opinion. And all our talk of resistance and reprisal, they view as the swagger-

ing of a braggadocio. They are at present seriously concerned, through fear that the English and Americans are in offensive and defensive alliance. The report is current, and I have taken occasion to cherish it, by being seen frequently with the British consul, dining with him, and holding secret intercourse. But, whatever stratagem may be used to aid our measures, it is certain, that there is no access to the permanent friendship of these States, without paving the way with gold or cannon balls; and the proper question is, Which method is preferable? So long as they hold their own terms, no estimate can be made of the expense of maintaining a peace. They are under no restraint of honor or honesty. There is not a scoundrel among them, from the prince to the muleteer, who will not beg and steal. Yet when I proposed to the Sapitapa, to-day, to substitute money in lieu of the present, he said the Bey had too high a sense of honor to receive a bribe, he would receive a present, but it would affront him to offer him money."

How far these strictures were justified by facts, the reader can judge from the statements in the foregoing pages, and a few specimens of Tunisian assurance, like the following. On the 6th, old Mustapha Coggia returned the present Eaton had sent him, with a message, that he was not accustomed to receive presents of lower value than those

given to the Sapitapa, who was inferior to him in rank, being second minister. The venerable statesman was represented as excessively angry, but it was intimated, that some small additions would soothe his passion, and make every thing right. The next day, the admiral entered a claim for a gold-headed cane, a gold watch and chain, and twelve pieces of cloth. The Aga of the Goletta, also, demanded the *usance* for the first vessel of war coming to anchor in the bay. These are a small specimen of the vexatious extortions to which the American consul was perpetually subjected.

An interview was held at the palace on the 14th. The consul was informed, that the Bey had declined the proposal of a cruiser in lieu of the present in jewels; upon which he again suggested a payment in cash, and offered a round sum of fifty thousand dollars in full of all demands. But the Sapitapa answered, that the maritime and military presents were very rich, and peculiarly necessary at this time; and if two hundred and fifty thousand dollars were to be offered, the Bey would decline it. Eaton recapitulated the arguments against the justice of the demand, and urged again the impossibility of procuring the articles. The Sapitapa declared, that the Bey must have the present at any rate, and, as to himself, he must be complimented with a double-barrelled gun and

a gold watch-chain. Such impudence naturally enough provoked the consul's somewhat irascible temper. He told the diplomatic beggar, that the United States would find it cheaper, and better policy, to send a force into those seas to defend their commerce, than to yield to these accumulated demands. The minister reported to the Bey, and the consul was introduced to his apartment. The Bey got into a passion, and rose to leave the hall; but, before he went out, turned to Eaton, and said, "Consult your government. I give them six months to give me an' answer, and to send the presents. If they come in that time, well; if not, take down your flag, and go home."

In a letter, dated July 15th, 1799, addressed to the Secretary of State, Eaton writes, "I have yet mentioned nothing of further attempts at a cash payment in lieu of the maritime and military stores, because no well grounded hopes were entertained of success, and because the results of projects some time since in operation were not known.

"Interest was making with the governor of Porto Farina and the Sapitapa, to influence the Bey into the measure, and the prospect was considered not wholly desperate, though not flattering. I had assured the Sapitapa, that if he would procure a final settlement and discharge of all demands, for any sum short of ninety thousand

dollars, he should be entitled to receive ten thousand dollars, promptly, in consideration of his good offices. He seemed much inclined to the *argument*."

"On the 28th ult., he gave a dinner at his garden." — "In the morning of this day, I took the opportunity to obtain his decided opinion relative to the cash substitute. He gave it, *that the project was not feasible*; said that the Bey had purchased, and was purchasing, all the ammunition he could procure; that he had sent vessels to Trieste, Mahon, and Spain, for maritime and military stores, such as he expected from America, without being able to procure them. That he was sending to Gibraltar and England with the same views; that the delinquency of the United States had occasioned great disappointment; particularly so at the present crisis. It had operated to retard, and indeed to defeat, plans of national defence and enterprise, the entire execution of which depended on these munitions of war. He was authorized again to declare, that no sum of money would be considered equivalent to the presents. He hoped, if the timber could not be procured immediately, (for I told him it was yet growing on the sources of our rivers,) that the guns, ammunition, pitch, tar, rosin, cordage, and such other articles as are to be found in our magazines, would be forwarded without delay.

“It is worthy of remark here, that, while we were at dinner, a body of Turks came armed to the garden, and even into the court-yard, and demanded money, alleging that the government, having made peace with everybody, had reduced them to famine; but they were resolved not to starve. This circumstance confirms the opinion heretofore advanced, ‘that they must be let loose upon somebody.’”

About this time, the Portuguese and Sicilian ambassadors left Tunis, each having concluded a truce with the Bey's government. This was an additional cause of alarm to the consul, and led him to a renewed effort to bring about a payment in cash. Accordingly, on the 4th of July, he waited on the Bey, and requested him to state what sum would satisfy his claims, and cancel his demands. “No sum whatever; you need not think more of it;” was the sharp reply. The result of this interview was such, that Eaton considered the *ultimatum* which he had been instructed to propose, as finally rejected. He became convinced, that the commerce of the United States was marked out as the victim of Tunisian piracy.

At the end of July, the Bey had the insolence to call on the consuls of the *tributary* nations residing at his court, including the American, and demanded immediate supplies of naval stores. He required of the American consul to charter a ship

to bring out the American contribution without delay. After wasting three days at the palace, in discussion of this reiterated demand, the matter was dropped. The Bey was prevailed upon to wait until the first of January "I have uniformly found the Bey," says Eaton, "a reasonable and accommodating man. But the Sapitapa owns corsairs, and Famin is his slave!"

A further attempt was made, early in October, to persuade the Bey to receive ten thousand dollars' worth of such articles as he might choose, from England, in place of the jewels, but without success. He answered, that "he was not a merchant; he knew nothing of the value of the presents; they were the usance, and he should neither abate nor commute." Such being the condition of affairs, the consul thought it prudent to caution the other American consuls in the Mediterranean.

Considering it necessary to communicate information of the existing state of affairs to the government at home, Eaton determined to send Dr. Shaw, of the brig *Sophia*, with despatches. He was accordingly directed to hold himself in readiness, as early as the 12th of October, to proceed to England, and consult with Rufus King, the American minister at the court of St. James; to deliver him a memorandum of the jewels demanded by the Bey, and take his instructions on the



mode of procuring them at the lowest price ; to carry a specific memorandum of the same to the United States, and to transmit a copy to the consul at Tunis. With these instructions, Dr. Shaw was ordered to proceed, with all convenient speed, to Philadelphia, the seat of government. This measure received the approbation of the consul-general at Algiers.

It may not be amiss to quote here a statement of the articles of military and maritime stores, stipulated in the treaty to be delivered to the Regency of Tunis. The document has a singular appearance in these days ; but we must be content with the poor consolation, that other and more powerful nations submitted to terms even more humiliating. Here is the list ;

	Estimated Value.
26 cannon, 12 pounders, with ship carriages,	\$ 1,300
14 " 8 " " " "	. 500
12000 balls, from 4 to 24 pounds, . . . . .	2,000
250 quintals of cannon powder, . . . . .	3,750
50 quintals of priming powder, . . . . .	750
20 oak keels, 50 feet long, . . . . .	500
500 ribs, of the same, . . . . .	500
60 masts, for cruisers of from 12 to 36 guns,	2,000
300 oars, of beech, 34 feet long, . . . . .	300
800 oak planks, for sheathing frigates, . . .	1,600
5000 pine planks, of 3 inches, . . . . .	5,000
300 pieces of scantling, of 9, 10, 12, and 13 inches, . . . . .	1,200
200 oak knees, . . . . .	200

10 cables of 14 inches, and from 110 to 120 fathoms, . . . . .	2,240
10 cables of 12 inches, and the same length, . . . . .	1,920
19 hawsers, of 6, 7, and 8 inches, ditto, } . . . . .	3,500
200 quintals of cordage, from 1 to 9 inches, } . . . . .	3,600
600 quintals of sheet iron, of Sweden, . . . . .	4,000
200 barrels of tar, . . . . .	1,000
200 " of rosin, . . . . .	1,000
200 " of pitch, . . . . .	500
40 quintals of match-rope, . . . . .	
	34,360
Contingencies, . . . . .	600
	Total, . . . . . \$34,960

More than one hundred thousand dollars had been already expended in the negotiations with Tunis, but peace was not yet secured; and the above stipulated presents, with the Bey's extraordinary demands, would amount to nearly two hundred thousand dollars more. With good reason did Eaton urge, that the mode of treating with the Barbary regencies ought to be so reformed as to remove the impression, that weakness and fear had dictated the measures hitherto adopted by the United States. In his correspondence with the consuls at Algiers and Tripoli, this subject is adverted to with frequency and force; and his representations to the government at home abound with views, at once manly and judicious. The history of the subsequent intercourse between the United States and the Barbary powers confirms

the truth of his predictions, and the soundness of his arguments, in every particular.

The measure of sending Dr. Shaw home had a beneficial effect upon the dispositions of the Bey's government. It was regarded as a proof of a sincere intention to fulfil the stipulations of the treaty ; the influence of which Eaton had occasion to observe at the next interview with the Sapitapa. In a letter to Shaw, dated November 4th, he says, the Sapitapa "went into an explication of the causes which had produced in this court unaccommodating dispositions towards the government of the United States ; the principal of which was, an attempt to impose a treaty through the medium of Algiers. He said it was an indignity offered to the Bey, which no other Christian power had ever offered, and it was a result as ineffectual as it was unprecedented. I answered him, that the government of the United States, unacquainted with the true relation, which this Regency held with that of Algiers, had been seduced into that error by the intrigue of an influential Jew house at Algiers ; but, when convinced of the error, they had reformed their mode of negotiation ; the Bey would never again have occasion to imagine himself insulted from that quarter. We had some explanations that were personal, as they respected himself. The result of all which was, expressions of mutual confidence, and a tender of

reciprocal services. As a pledge of his sincerity he offered to procure me a *tiskery*\* for as much wheat as I pleased to ship."

Another cause of this change was the Bey's belief, that the Americans would send a fleet into the Mediterranean, as soon as a peace should be concluded with France. The private interest of the Sapitapa was also turned to account. He saw that the Americans would be his safest carriers to Spain, where he had opened an extensive commerce, the ships of other nations being exposed to the depredations of the belligerent powers of Europe, or the Algerine corsairs. Eaton told him, that, during his residence at Tunis, propositions had been sent to him by the American consul at Leghorn and Barcelona, and by two American shipmasters, to introduce a trade there; but that, since they had been informed of the articles of the treaty, nothing further had been heard from them. He was assured, that no American merchantman would voluntarily enter a Tunisian port under the present provisions of the treaty. The Sapitapa felt the force of these observations, and promised his influence with the Bey, to bring about a more satisfactory arrangement of affairs with America. The Bey also promised forbearance for sixty days, in spite of Famin's attempts to convince him, that the government of the United

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\* A permit.

States had no intention of fulfilling their engagements with Tunis. The consul, therefore, had, at this moment, a flattering prospect of terminating the negotiation with Tunis, in a manner favorable to the interests of the United States, and conformable to instructions of the government.

On the 27th of December, Eaton received information, through Mr. O'Brien, that the frigates *United States* and *Constitution* would probably bring out the articles intended for the Regencies, which he immediately communicated to the Bey, with an assurance that they would probably arrive in January. January came, but did not bring the promised presents. The consul was compelled to use all his diplomatic skill to soothe the Bey under this unexpected and unfortunate disappointment. He found it a matter of some difficulty, and requiring considerable address; for the spring was at hand, and the corsairs were waiting impatiently to be let loose upon their prey. Many American merchantmen were at anchor in the port of Leghorn; and intelligence had arrived, through that city, of General Washington's death. These and other particulars were communicated by Famin to the minister; and the impression very naturally made upon the Bey was, that the United States had violated their pledges, for ships might as well be sent to Tunis as to Leghorn. The prospect of a speedy adjustment again became overclouded

On the 24th of March, 1800, Mr. Eaton received by the *Sophia* a communication from the Secretary of State, with a letter from the President to the Bey. The Secretary's letter contained a few instructions in reference to the Bey's demand of jewels. Eaton was directed to use every effort to do away with the claim, or reduce it to the lowest possible amount, but if the presents were necessary to preserve the peace with Tunis, he must obtain time enough to get them from England, where they might be procured for much less than the estimated sum. The President's letter was made up of compliments and apologies; compliments to the Bey for his attentions to Mr. Eaton and Mr. Cathcart, and apologies for the failure to deliver the stipulated stores at the required time. But the Bey was assured, that the stipulations of the United States should be fulfilled, as early as the great distance of the country, and the time necessary to procure the stores, rendered it practicable.

When these letters arrived, the Bey was just recovering from a dangerous illness. The consul immediately repaired to the palace, was admitted to an audience, and, having passed the usual formalities, withdrew to the apartment of the Sapitapa. He stated the arrival of news from the United States, and desired to know when he might make a formal communication to the Bey. "Do you take us for dupes?" he exclaimed. "You have

at one time showed us letters from your minister at Portugal, at another from your consul-general at Algiers; at another from your consul at Leghorn. At one period your presents were under convoy of two frigates; at another in quarantine at Lisbon; and then we are placed at our windows with our spy-glasses, looking for the arrival of vessels which sail in air. We are no longer to be amused. It is not necessary that you take the trouble of a formal communication. I now candidly inform you, (a measure which has long since been resolved on,) that the corsairs now bound on a cruise, have orders to bring in Americans; and for this purpose, they are ordered to cruise off the coast of Spain and Portugal." The consul's explanations were impatiently interrupted by the Sapitapa's assurance that they were needless, the measure having already been fully resolved upon. The consul persisted. He informed the Sapitapa, that he had already placed his countrymen on their guard against this event; that American merchantmen were well armed, and would defend themselves. The Sapitapa's attention was aroused, and the consul took advantage of the change to proceed with his explanation, that the communications heretofore made were unofficial, and founded on letters from ministers and consuls, whose anxiety for their country's peace had led them to place too much reliance upon inaccurate infor-

mation. The present communication was direct from the American government, and included a letter from the President, written by his own hand, to the Bey, with the treaty ratified, and with assurances that a large ship was ready, laden with naval and military stores, and that he was, moreover, authorized to meet the demand of the Bey for jewels, in a way which would probably be satisfactory. "It is very well! This looks a little more like truth," said the minister, "but will not arrest the cruise. If we make captures of Americans we will send the Christians (meaning the crews) to your house; your vessels to Porto Farina; and their cargoes we will safely store. They shall be held in sequestration a given number of days, in expectation of the arrival of your presents so much talked about; on failure of which they shall be good prize."

It was answered, that a step of this kind would defeat its own object. The Americans would never yield without resistance, and bloodshed would be the inevitable consequence of making the attempt. To prevent, therefore, the evils that would certainly result from this project, the Bey ought to see the President's letter, and hear the communication. The minister finally said, he would see the Bey the next day, and appointed the day succeeding that for another conference.

On the appointed day the consul made the



above communications to the Bey. He was flattered by the President's letter, thanked God, and expressed his hope for the safe arrival of the ship; but observed that nothing was said about the jewels. The consul replied, that he had been directed to procure a present of this kind from England, but that the sum had been limited much within the estimated value of the jewels. "To me," said the Bey, "the sum limited is of no import. I shall be satisfied, provided the articles come according to the note."

The difficulties, which had threatened the peace of the United States for the last five months, were at last accommodated. The Sapidapa pledged himself, that the last clause of the twelfth article in the treaty, inserted by Famin, should be forever suspended, except so far as the customs of all other nations at peace with Tunis had conferred on the Bey's government the right of exacting services on special emergencies, and that the flag of the United States should be respected in all the ports of the kingdom. This agreeable intelligence was immediately communicated by a circular, addressed to the American consuls in the ports of the Mediterranean. For his services in managing these affairs, Eaton received the approbation of the President of the United States, and warm expressions of friendship from Mr. Pickering.

## CHAPTER VI.

*Arrival of the Hero with Stores. — Apprehensions of War with Tunis removed. — Fraudulent Conduct of the Bey. — Eaton takes Charge of the Danish Affairs at Tunis. — His disinterested Conduct in Relation to the Danish Vessels. — Letter of the Danish Admiral in Relation to it. — Eaton's Quarrel with Famin. — Chastises him publicly, and is summoned before the Bey. — Defends himself and denounces Famin. — Arrival of the Anna Maria with Stores, and her Detention in the Service of the Bey.*

ON the 12th of April, 1800, the ship *Hero*, Captain Robinson, arrived at Tunis and anchored at the Goletta. She brought a portion of the stipulated naval and military stores, to be delivered to the Bey's government. They consisted of tar, rosin, pitch, turpentine, cordage, cables, planks, masts, hawsers, and shot. The ship was unmanageable and weakly manned, "with just guns enough to give the signal of distress"; but the stores were of a quality superior to any thing that had heretofore been seen in Tunis. This arrival

relieved Mr. Eaton from many embarrassments, and took away all ground of apprehension, for the present, of war. How strong these apprehensions were, is fully indicated in the consul's letters. "I consider," he says to Mr. O'Brien, "old Robinson as the Mordecai of our nation; and it is owing to his perseverance that we shall escape the misery and shame of all being slaves to these miniature Indians. In less than six months we should have had more than a hundred of our fellow-citizens slaves here." Various obstacles prevented her from discharging the cargo, until twenty days after the regular time, for which her owners were entitled by contract to fifty dollars per day, amounting to one thousand dollars. This part of the contract gave the Bey an opportunity of practising an amusing fraud. The stores were intended to be paid for, and a promise to that effect was given by the governor at Porto Farina. They were, accordingly, unloaded and stored away. The Bey declined paying, but gave permission to take them back. As this would have detained the ship some twenty days more, with no means but her own, the stores were of course left in the keeping of the officers of the Bey's government.

The warlike dispositions of the Tunisians being diverted from the United States, by the partial fulfilment of the treaty stipulations, fixed upon Denmark. In 1797, the Bey had demanded a

large supply of naval and military stores from his friend, the Danish monarch, whom he allowed six months to comply with the requisition. The King was not sufficiently prompt in executing this commission. He sent a ship laden with timber, in 1798; but it was so far from meeting the Bey's expectations, that he rejected the cargo, even after it was unladen, and the articles, of which it was composed, were left to perish. The Bey's thoughts had been withdrawn from the Danes by his projects against the Americans. The arrival of the *Hero* had put a stop to his designs in that quarter, and the corsairs were accordingly let loose upon the commerce of Denmark. A Danish merchantman from Leghorn arrived soon after at the Goletta, unsuspecting of danger, information of which was immediately communicated by Famin, and the master and crew were arrested before they could make their escape. Another Danish ship, laden with coffee, sugar, and other West India produce, was sent into Biserta on the same day. In consequence of these events, the Danish consul-general, Mr. Hammekin, expecting to be compelled to leave the kingdom, solicited Eaton to take charge of the Danish affairs. As there were no rival interests between the two nations, the proposition was readily acceded to. On the 28th of June, the Danish flagstaff was cut down, and war was declared by the Bey against the King of Denmark; more than seventy Danes were condemned

to slavery, and the consul was confined to his house. A few days afterwards, he and his family were ordered to quit the kingdom of Tunis. The minister of the Bey detailed to Eaton the causes of the war, and attempted to show that the Danes were the aggressors. His argument was, "that the Bey had a right to demand presents, and that the King of Denmark had violated his good faith by treating that demand contemptuously." He confessed, in conversation, that the war was intended against the Americans; but the letter from the President had suspended the operation for a reasonable time, to wait the arrival of the ship. He acknowledged, that they had never received articles of so excellent a quality from any Christian nation. "I remarked to him," says Eaton, "that, if he had given me the credit which he was now convinced he ought, he might have saved himself and the Bey much impatience, and the entire trouble of arming his navy against us; but I had observed with some concern, that he chose rather to hear meddling fellows, who would as deliberately betray him as me, if the occasion suited." "That is past," said he, "and you have had your own way of revenge. We are convinced you have dealt candidly with us, though we sometimes thought you a little hard-bitted; but you are a sort of Englishmen, you Americans, are you not?" "We are not Italians." "Have you not

Pope in America?" "Yes; once a year our boys and girls of the streets, accompanied by our sailors and fiddlers, make a Pope and a Devil of old cast clothes, mount them both on a *borrico* (jackass), and, after driving them about till they are wearied, tar and feather and burn them together, by way of amusement." He laughed heartily, and said, "I believe you are just such another hard-headed race as the English; but, thank God, we are friends."

The Bey, by way of expressing his satisfaction, offered Eaton a house at Biserta, by the seaside, in which he might pass the summer. As early as the 16th of July, eight Danish vessels had been captured, and about one hundred men reduced to slavery. The estimated value of the ships and cargoes, together with the slaves, was four hundred and eleven thousand Spanish dollars. The masters of six of the captured vessels had desired Eaton to redeem their property, giving him to understand that they could open a credit in Leghorn. He went to the minister, and proposed to purchase the vessels in his own name. The proposition was accepted, and an agent appointed. Eaton examined the vessels, and made an offer. During the time taken by the minister to consider it, the Danish captains were alarmed into giving up the project. The consul's only hope now depended on the refusal of the government to

accept his terms. He was overbid by Famin ; but this proved to be only a *ruse* to extort a higher offer ; for a messenger arrived the next day at Biserta to declare the astonishment of the government at his departure, because their agent had received orders to close with his proposal. He returned immediately, concluded the bargain, and fixed on the mode of payment ; but the Danish captains failed to fulfil their promises, and Eaton was left with six vessels, purchased on credit. An opportunity was now offered him of realizing a handsome sum by a perfectly fair and honorable speculation, with property which had been forced, against his will, upon his hands ; but, when the difficulties with Denmark were adjusted by the sacrifice, on the part of that power, of eight vessels and cargoes and sixty-one thousand four hundred and forty Spanish dollars, for the redemption of eighty-six captives, Eaton surrendered the vessels in his possession to their respective masters, simply on the condition of his credit with the government being redeemed, and his actual disbursements repaid. This was an act of disinterested generosity which received the acknowledgment of the Danish admiral on the spot, and, subsequently more ample and emphatic expressions of gratitude from the monarch himself, through the medium of the "Board of Affairs relating to the States on the Coast of Barbary." The following extract

from their letter to Eaton is equally honorable to both parties.

“His Majesty the King, having been informed of your kind proceeding towards his subjects, who last year had the misfortune of being made slaves by the Tunisians; as also of the service you have rendered the owners of six of the captured ships, by venturing to purchase them, at the instance of the masters, and restoring them since to the said owners, though upon a somewhat precarious security of getting reimbursed your expenses; and of the friendly assistance which you have lent Commodore Koefoed, as he addressed himself to you; has been most graciously pleased to order us to transmit to you the gold box, ornamented with the initials of his royal name, which will be delivered to you along with this letter, and which you will please to accept, as a token of his most high satisfaction with regard to the services you have rendered the nation.”

The letter was replied to in suitable terms by the consul, and transmitted forthwith to the Department of State.

The intercourse between Eaton and the former American consul was not very cordial, as may be conjectured from expressions in his journals and letters, heretofore cited. About this time, it came to a sudden and violent conclusion, in a manner characteristic both of the faults and the excellences



of Eaton's temperament. Finding himself often thwarted by the intrigues of Famin, and irritated by personal insults, he gave him, on occasion of an accidental meeting, a severe castigation with a horsewhip. Famin summoned him before the tribunal; but Eaton, nowise intimidated by the apprehension of summary proceedings, met him there, and boldly denounced him as a traitor and a villain; declaring, that he did not present himself there to answer the allegations of the traitor, but to denounce him as such, and to withdraw from him that protection which he had never merited, but had shamefully dishonored.

"I will send you out of the country," said the Bey. "You will do me an honor, which I will take care to appreciate." "How dare you lift your hand against a subject of mine in my kingdom?" "If your renegade had been in the kingdom of heaven, and had given me the same provocation, I would have given him the same discipline. But the Bey of Tunis has too much penetration to believe that abject wretch *faithful* even to his patron. If he were such, if he were a true Frenchman, I would respect him as such; if an American, I would protect him as such; if a good Mussulman, I would honor him as such; or, if a Christian, he should be duly respected. He is neither one nor the other. I have documents to convince you, that he would sell your head for

caroubes, and barter away the reputation of your court for piastres. See here his statement to an American, who, by this means, has been entrapped into his hands. Hear him call your prime minister and his mercantile agents a set of thieves and robbers." "How!" "Yes, thieves and robbers!"

"Mercy! Forbearance!" cried Famin.

"Yes, thieves and robbers! This is the man of your confidence! This is the man of mediation between your Excellency and my master, the President; and these are the measures he uses to maintain the good understanding subsisting between us. Had he been faithful, either in his representations of your Excellency's character to the President, or in that of my nation to you, you would long since have received, whatever they might have been, the presents stipulated as tokens of friendship. It is his treachery, his falsehood, his sleek and plausible misrepresentations, which have generated the misintelligence between us. Do not suppose I am ignorant of his intrigues. Full well I know, he labored three days, incessantly, after my arrival at Biserta, to prevail on your Excellency to refuse me an audience. Full well I know, that, during our negotiation, he was playing a double game with us. And full well I know that he has uniformly insinuated, that my government were flattering you with delusive

expectations and insincere promises, and that I myself am sent here to be the instrument of this hypocrisy.”

“But how do you know these things? Whatever passed between him and me on these subjects, was *tête-à-tête*.”

“Yes, but the fellow had not prudence enough to keep your confidence. Elated with the prospect of success, he blabbed every thing to the woman he keeps; she to her neighbors; so that it has been the topic of conversation in half the Christian taverns in Tunis, ‘that his Excellency the Bey was going to send away the American consul’ to accommodate an apostate Frenchman! as if the Bey of Tunis had not independence of mind, nor discernment to discriminate between the event of insulting a nation and disobliging a slave. Permit me to suggest to your Excellency, your reputation has been brought into disrespect in the event.” The Bey listened. Famin was alarmed, and began an address in Arabic. “Speak French,” said the Bey, looking at him frowningly. He denied Eaton’s charges; but facts were brought in evidence, which convinced the Bey, who gave Eaton’s hand a cordial pressure on parting, and said to his court, “The American consul has been heated; but truly he has had reason. I have always found him a very plain, candid man; and his concern for his fellow-citizens is not a crime.”

A letter dated November 1st, 1800, addressed to the Secretary of State, gives the following account of further discussions with the Bey, relative to the presents.

“I was at the palace this morning and yesterday. Said the Bey, ‘What aim I to deduce from all your assurances of punctuality on the part of your government?’ I answered; ‘Your Excellency will have the goodness to believe, that, when information of our definitive arrangements was received in the United States, the stores, which we have stipulated as the condition of peace with you, were growing on our mountains, at the sources of our rivers.’ ‘Am I to suppose, then,’ said he, ‘your guns and your powder, comprised in that stipulation, were growing on your mountains? You find no difficulty in discharging your obligations with Algiers. Do you suppose me less able than Algiers to compel the punctual observance of treaties?’ ‘By no means,’ said I; ‘if we have been more attentive to Algiers than to you, it is not because we consider you less respectable, but more just than Algiers.’ ‘We must make an end of compliments,’ said he. ‘It would give me pain to affront you; but facts justify the conclusion, that, if you suppose me just, you study to amuse my justice. Denmark may furnish you a caution against such a reliance.’ ‘I suppose,’ said I, ‘your Excellency can

nave no doubt that the residue of our peace presents have long since been at sea ; but the winds have been many days against us.' 'They have been against us three years,' said he. 'Your Excellency will recollect they were very favorable last spring.' 'Not so favorable as I had been flattered to believe they would have been,' said he. 'What can be done ?' I asked. 'Can we make war upon the elements ?' 'You can choose your measures ; and you need not be surprised, if I reserve to myself the same privilege,' he answered. 'Permit me,' said I, 'to demand an explanation of this.' 'Events will explain it,' said he. I observed, 'If this manner of evasion cover a menace, I ought to know it for my government, in giving passports to your cruisers.' 'In this,' said he, 'you will use your own discretion. If you give them, it is an evidence that you are at peace with me. If you refuse them, I have nothing serious to apprehend from it.'"

Towards the end of the same month, an American ship, the *Anna Maria*, arrived at the road of Porto Farina, laden with plank, timber, masts, oars, iron, to the value of twelve thousand dollars. On the 30th, Eaton embarked at Tunis, in an open boat, belonging to the Bey, and reached the ship, ten leagues off, in the evening of the same day. The invoice and bill of lading were received the next day. The Bey's gov-

ernment were compelled to acknowledge the excellent quality of the articles forwarded by this ship from the United States; though they affected to complain that the plank and the oars were too short, and to be dissatisfied that the keels, guns, and powder were not forwarded also. "I believe the facts to be," says Eaton, "the government are dissatisfied, *that any thing has come forward*. If this opinion require evidence, I consider it sufficient to state, that the United States are the only nation, which have at this moment, a rich, unguarded commerce in the Mediterranean; and that the Barbary Regencies are pirates." The extraordinary concessions, made to the Tunisians by the Christian states of Europe, had greatly diminished the importance of a peace with the Americans; and apprehensions were still entertained by the consul, that the deficiency of naval and military supplies already furnished would be seized upon as a pretext for capturing American merchantmen. The government, however, treated the consul personally with great respect, and he endeavored to maintain a good understanding by reciprocating their civilities.

Eaton was anxious to obtain the discharge of the *Anna Maria* as soon as possible, to save the heavy expense of demurrage, which, if in proportion to the cost of the *Hero's* delay, would have amounted to three thousand dollars. The gov

ernor of Porto Farina was head of the admiralty and supervisor of all the arsenals. "To him," says Eaton, "I paid court, and put into his hands an *argument*, which convinced him of the propriety of discharging the American before the Swedes; and he, faithful to his engagement with me, prevailed on the Bey to make this an order." But the Sapitapa sent him a message, to the effect that the Regency had need of the American ship to send to Marseilles. Three days were consumed before this matter was arranged. Eaton steadily refused to yield to the demand, reminding the Sapitapa that it was a violation of the promise made in the preceding April. The minister threatened to use force; but Eaton assured him, that, put what he might on board, he would order the ship to America, and leave the event to be settled by the two governments. At length, the Sapitapa, finding Eaton resolute in maintaining his ground, offered a freight of four thousand dollars, and perquisites to the captain. These terms were accepted in preference to the hazard attending a refusal; the acceptance involving no dishonorable concession to the government of Tunis.

## CHAPTER VII

*Difficulties between Tripoli and the United States.*  
— *Project of a Commercial Convention with Tunis.*— *Its Failure.*— *New Demands of the Bey.*— *Determination to send a Squadron into the Mediterranean.*— *Outrage upon Mr. Cathcart, and Satisfaction demanded.*

FOR some time previous to the events just related, the affairs of the United States had been verging to a war with Tripoli. Eaton maintained a most friendly correspondence with the consul stationed there, Mr. Cathcart; but Mr. O'Brien, the consul at Algiers, had excited his suspicions, by what he deemed improper transactions with Jews, with whom he was engaged in commercial speculations. The following passage, at the conclusion of an able review of the relations of Christian powers with the Barbary regencies, expresses in a few words his opinion of the present position of American affairs. "America, in adhering to the injunction, 'Agree with thine adversary quickly while thou art in the way with him,' has rejected counsel of equal authority, and more in point, 'Cast not your pearls before swine.' A concise statement of our actual situation with these freebooters, I consider to be *war with Tripoli inev-*



stable. Tunis, now that the *Anna Maria* has arrived, will let us be tranquil until after the residue of our peace stipulations shall have been received, and the Bey shall have done with Spain. At Algiers, if the interests of the United States be not betrayed, they are not defended; nor will things alter for the better there, so long as we are represented by Bacri & Co.”\* At the conclusion of the same letter, Eaton intimates a wish to return to the United States, as soon as the affairs of the agency should be so arranged as to promise a few years’ tranquillity, having already been absent from his friends three years.

The cargo of the *Anna Maria* was not wholly satisfactory to the avarice of the Bey. The present of jewels still formed the theme of vexatious demands, and Eaton’s attempts to evade them had but little success. Orders were finally given to purchase them in England; and despatches were forwarded to Eaton from the Department of State, informing him of this determination, and instructing him to keep the American minister at the court of St. James advised of the progress of affairs in the Barbary States. In a letter to Mr. King, dated December 29th, 1800, he says, “At Tripoli, affairs wear a menacing front, and I am apprehensive, except Mr. Cathcart

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\* A Jewish mercantile house, with which O’Brien was supposed to be concerned.

receive some succor from government, before the spring season invites the corsairs to sea, we shall be insulted by that regency. At Algiers, the United States, like Spain, in the pure spirit of Christian charity, *bear all things, endure all things*; and we shall live in the merit of adhering to this Christian principle, so long as a Jew company control our affairs there." A few sentences from a letter to the American minister at Lisbon, under date of January 17th, 1801, exhibit more strongly Eaton's feelings at this period. "I have no longer a hope of obtaining any relinquishment of this Bey's claims to jewels. The astonishing abasement of the Christian nations with these regencies the last year, leave us without a precedent of resistance; and the almost total neglect of government to my reiterated representations deprive me of necessary arguments to combat the exorbitant exactions of this Regency. I have only to lament, with unavailing mortification, that these representations have merited so little attention. My country will lament also. For it is now obvious, that every conjecture I have hazarded, both respecting the inefficiency of the guarantee of Algiers, and also the dangers we risk by a too sparing economy, will be realized."

The affairs of the United States and Tripoli grow more critical every day. The Bashaw's demands were too exorbitant to be complied with;

and the examples of other Christian nations, in submitting to his degrading exactions, made it impossible for Mr. Cathcart to negotiate with any success. Eaton wrote him a letter of advice; counselling him to seize the opportunity afforded by a Swedish frigate, to send Mrs. Cathcart to Europe. In February, a circular letter passed through the American office at Tunis, from the consul at Tripoli, cautioning all American vessels to quit the Mediterranean, on account of the threats of the Bashaw. In a letter to Mr. Marshall, Secretary of State of the United States, dated March 6th, 1801, Mr. Eaton writes; "It is certain, the Bashaw of Tripoli is fitting out his corsairs against Americans; and so sanguine is he of the success of the expedition, that he already begins to calculate his profits, even in presence of Christian agents. Mr. Cathcart was obliged to leave Tripoli, and charged Mr. Nissen, the Danish consul, with the American affairs during his absence." Eaton opened a correspondence with that gentleman, for the purpose of making such arrangements as circumstances allowed, for the subsistence and comfort of any Americans who might be carried as prisoners into Tripolitan ports. The consul's despatches were sent to Eaton, to be forwarded to the United States. He regarded them as of so much importance, that he chartered a Ragu-

san brig, to proceed with them directly to their destination. The Bashaw demanded, as a condition of sparing the United States, two hundred and twenty-five thousand Spanish dollars, prompt payment, and twenty-five thousand annually; the Swedes having agreed to these terms. In his letter, accompanying these despatches, Eaton says, "If our government yield these terms to the Bashaw of Tripoli, it will be absolutely necessary to make provisions for a requisition of double the amount for the Bey of Tunis. Algiers will also be respected according to rank. If the United States will have a free commerce in this sea, they must defend it. There is no alternative. The restless spirit of these marauders cannot be restrained."

In the mean time, the Bey continued his importunities in relation to the jewels, and meditated new requisitions on the United States. He required the consul to inform the President, that he needed a supply of guns, for his castle batteries. The consul refused to comply, because his previous experience had taught him, that when such a demand was once communicated in a despatch, it was assumed as conceded. He told the Bey, however, that, if he would propose to exchange the guns due to him by treaty, for others of a larger calibre, the President would probably find no difficulty in

making the arrangement. To this the Bey demurred, and finally determined to write to the President himself. "While we are in difficulty with Tripoli," says Eaton, "it seems to me good policy to be on good terms with Tunis; but, if government should think differently, and, in lieu of a ship with presents, will consign to me a transport, with one thousand marines, between twenty and thirty-eight years of age, native Americans, and properly officered, under convoy of a forty-four gun frigate, I pledge myself to surprise Porto Farina, and destroy the Bey's arsenal." The Bey's letter was forwarded to the United States, in company with the despatches from the regencies, by the Ragusan brig. It contained a demand of forty iron twenty-four pounders, as a token of the friendship of the American President. On this occasion, as well as on many others, Eaton was urgent in his advice, that the United States should make some effectual display of their power in the Mediterranean, and change the degrading posture they had heretofore occupied, of tributaries to a horde of pirates, for a more manly attitude, and one more consonant with national honor. His representations had been disregarded, or at least nothing had been done in consequence of them. Eaton attributes the apparent apathy of government to the influence

of Mr. O'Brien, the consul at Algiers, whom he does not hesitate to charge with corrupt dealings with the Jews. It seems, that a strong personal hostility had long existed between this gentleman and Mr. Cathcart; and, as Mr. Cathcart's views coincided with Eaton's, it was supposed by the latter, that O'Brien's animosity lent an additional strength of coloring to his representations to the government at home. It is probable that the warmth of Eaton's feelings, and his attachment to Mr. Cathcart, may have warped his better judgment. While he was negotiating with the piratical government of Tunis, the war of party was raging with its greatest violence in the United States. The interests, involved in our intercourse with the Barbary powers, were not likely to occupy, to any great extent, the attention of the people of the United States, amidst the deafening clamors of the political strife. The distance of the scene of action lessened, probably, its importance in the eyes of the cabinet at Washington. We may, therefore, account for the tardiness of our government in adopting more energetic measures, without supposing the existence of treachery, or culpable carelessness, on the part of the agent at Algiers.

Before the declaration of war by Tripoli, time enough had elapsed to communicate the

alarm to all concerned in American trade throughout the Mediterranean. The Bashaw, moreover, contrary to his usual custom, gave permission to the American agent to leave the Regency. Hostilities were publicly announced on the 11th of May, and extraordinary measures were taken to communicate information of the event to the American minister at Lisbon, and to the government of the United States. Mr. Cathcart drew up a protest against the conduct of the Bashaw and his ministers, showing clearly that it contravened the letter and spirit of existing treaties, and unfolding, at considerable length, the subjects of dispute, and the cause of the war. It was anticipated by Eaton, that this state of things would rouse the attention of government, and that a sufficient naval force would be sent into the Mediterranean to protect our commerce, and punish the aggressors. With his characteristic ardor, he proposed to the Secretary of State, to leave the affairs at Tunis in charge of Mr. Cathcart, whose arrival from Tripoli was daily expected, and to join the fleet with a view to assist their operations by his superior local knowledge.

In the mean time Eaton had conceived the project of a commercial convention with the government of Tunis, by which the existing treaty should be amended, and some of its arti-

cles rendered more favorable to the United States. His ultimate object, in venturing upon this unauthorized negotiation, was to place the peaceful relations of the two countries on a more permanent basis, by engaging powerful commercial interests, on both sides, in favor of such a connexion. He entertained a high opinion of the Bey's sagacity, and felt assured that he could convince him of the advantage to his country of an extended commercial intercourse with the United States. Considerable progress had already been made in effecting his object, but he was finally unsuccessful. The causes of his failure are thus detailed in a letter to the Department of State.

“My project of a commercial convention with this Regency, I am apprehensive will produce nothing. Two circumstances operate to impede it. The protection given by the French to the Italian states, and the delays of the United States to forward their treaty stipulations. On the 27th ultimo, entered two corsairs from a cruise, a xebec of twenty-four twelve pounders, and a corvette of twenty brass nines, which had been boarded and disarmed by a French detachment commanded by Vice-Admiral Gaunthomme. The affair is so novel, so well done, and at the same time so laconic, that it seems worthy of detail ‘Who are you?’ hailed the republican. ‘Tunis-



ians,' was the answer. 'Whom do you cruise against?' 'Neapolitans.' 'What! do you not know that the Neapolitans are our friends? Dare you insult the allies of Frenchmen? Overboard in an instant with every offensive weapon, or I send you to the bottom.' The order was promptly obeyed. 'Go make the compliments of the First Consul to the Bey, your master. Tell him, it was not his intention to regard your breach of faith in renewing the war. You might have remained tranquil and undisturbed at home; but, if we find you abroad in search of mischief, we deprive you of the means. Tell him to beware of provoking the resentment of the First Consul; it will be terrible to him and to his country.'

"The Admiral wrote to the Bey in the same style. His chagrin and mortification may be better imagined than described. These were two of his best cruisers. But the contempt is more grating than the injury done him. He cannot aspire to avenge himself of the French. He dares no more look for prey from Italy. What shall he do? The Americans are a species of Christians, somewhat similar in their religion and government to the French, and must therefore expiate the affront. We are now the only nation on earth, against which Barbary can safely cruise; the Spaniards are included in the

list of French allies. For these reasons, this example of the French, though it is the only one worthy of imitation with these people, that has happened since my residence here, is extremely prejudicial to our affairs, and its influence is instantaneous. Since it took place, the Bey has totally changed his tone of treatment, has abruptly broken off the discussion of our commercial convention, and has formally announced to me, that, except the entire peace stipulations arrive in four months, I shall have his passport to leave his kingdom. I shall make my arrangements accordingly.

“The whole goes to prove the exactness of an opinion which I have long since advanced, that the mania of piracy is so blended with the system of these States, that it cannot be cured but by sovereign treatment. The arguments I have used with the Bey, to effect the object I proposed to myself, uniformly attracted his attention, received his assent, and induced flattering prospects of a favorable issue; but, when they came into contact with his cruising views, availed nothing. This piratical enthusiasm is as obstinate as religious bigotry, which yields to no force of reasoning or sense of humanity.”

Soon after the date of the above-cited letter, a fire broke out at night in the Bey's palace, which destroyed fifty thousand stands of arms

In a few days after this event, a message came to the American consul, requiring him to wait upon the Bey. Eaton was ill at the time, and could not comply; as soon as his health permitted, he attended at the palace, and was surprised by a new demand upon the United States. The Bey informed him, that he had apportioned his loss among his friends, and the quota of the American government was ten thousand stands of arms; and that he must state the demand to his government without delay. The consul positively refused, insisting, that it would be impossible for the United States to comply with so unreasonable and extraordinary a demand, and that the Bey's government was in a much more eligible position to order the arms from Europe, than the government of the United States. "If the Bey had any intention of purchasing the arms from Europe," said the minister, "he could do it without your agency. He did not send for you to ask your advice, but to *order* you to communicate his demands to your government."

Eaton replied, that he came to assure them, that no such communication should be made. "The Bey will write himself," said he. In that case, the consul replied, it would become his duty to forward the letter. But he assured the minister, that he would never receive a sin-

gle musket from the United States, and told him plainly, that a respect to decency, if not a sense of gratitude, ought to restrain the Bey from such an extraordinary claim. Within the last eighteen months, two large ships' cargoes had been received as a present, and another ship, laden for him, was already on its passage. The minister replied, that the supplies already received were only in payment of a stipulation, long since due as the condition of peace; the other claims were such as were made upon all friendly nations once in two or three years, and the Americans, like other Christians, would be obliged to comply with it, as an established custom. Eaton was inflexible. He persisted in declaring, that the treaty stipulations were the condition of a perpetual peace, and when their payment was completed, an end would be put to all further contributions to Tunis.

The minister was angry, and told Eaton that he might prepare himself to leave the kingdom very soon, if he persisted in holding such language. "If change of style on my part," said the consul, "be the condition of residence here, I will leave the Bey's kingdom to-morrow morning." "We will give you a month," said the minister. "I ask but six hours." "But you will write?" "No." "It is your duty to write." "For delinquency in duty, this is not

the place where I am to be questioned." "I tell you again," continued he, "your peace depends on your compliance with this demand of my master." "If so," said Eaton, "on me be the responsibility of breaking the peace. I wish you a good morning."

As had been anticipated, the conduct of Tripoli, and the urgent representations of Cathcart and Eaton, roused the new administration, in which Mr. Jefferson had succeeded Mr. Adams as President of the United States, and Mr. Madison had been placed at the head of the Department of State, to a more efficient course of measures with the Barbary powers. It was determined to send into the Mediterranean a squadron of three frigates and a sloop of war, under the command of Commodore Dale, to be employed in the defence of American commerce against the piracies of Tripoli, and of any other Barbary states, that should follow her perfidious example.

The time was considered by the government as peculiarly favorable for exhibiting an imposing force in the Mediterranean, as the country was at peace with all the rest of the world, and the naval power might be thus employed without adding much to the expense of supporting it at home. Great reliance was placed on Eaton's local knowledge, to give the measure

the most advantageous impression to the character and interests of the United States. He was instructed to use all his endeavors to satisfy the Bey, that his government was desirous of maintaining peace with all nations, and that, if the flag of the United States should be engaged in war with either of the Barbary regencies, it would be a war of defence and necessity, and not of choice. He was, also, authorized to inform the Bey, that a vessel was preparing to take in a cargo, which would complete the presents due to him, and that jewels, to the amount of ten thousand dollars, had been ordered to be prepared in London.

Eaton's position at Tunis had been so embarrassing, with so little to lighten the burden of incessant negotiations, and his representations had been treated at home with so much apparent neglect, that he had become disgusted with his situation, and repeatedly requested permission to return. But the new aspect of affairs encouraged him to hope, that the Barbary powers might be brought to assume a less insolent attitude towards the United States. His opinions had finally prevailed, and the President, unwilling to lose the services of so efficient an agent, at such a critical moment, urged him to remain at his post.

Another cause of discontent was removed.

It has been seen, that his differences with Mr. O'Brien were the source of perpetual disquietude, and even led him to suspect that gentleman's integrity. O'Brien had lately requested to be replaced by another consul; his request had been complied with, and, after this testimonial of his government's approbation, Eaton's situation was rendered more satisfactory. His correspondence shows that he engaged in the difficult and delicate duties of his office with new ardor. His letters to Mr. Cathcart, who had embarked for Leghorn, on the declaration of war by Tripoli, are marked by his characteristic determination and bold patriotism, and are written in a tone of undiminished friendship and respect.

In his passage to Leghorn, Mr. Cathcart had been pillaged by the commander of a Tunisian corsair, notwithstanding the inviolability of his person, as a public agent of the United States. As soon as Eaton received intelligence of this outrage, he presented himself at the palace, and demanded satisfaction for the insult offered the nation in the person of its representative. The Bey refused to comply with the demand, and avowed his determination never to admit Cathcart into his kingdom. Eaton returned to his office, and immediately addressed a long and energetic letter to the Bey, in French, in which

he recapitulated the recent indications of a hostile disposition on the part of his government, towards the United States, exposed the intrigues of the Jews at Algiers, and explained the causes of their enmity to Mr. Cathcart. The letter concluded by demanding permission for Mr. Cathcart to return to Tunis, and await the orders of his government, and claimed full satisfaction for the insult offered him by the Tunisian corsair.

The next morning a polite note was sent to Eaton from the palace, requesting an interview, and promising him entire satisfaction. He went accordingly, and was listened to with attention. The Bey promised to bastinado the captain of the corsair, and to consider further of the admission of Mr. Cathcart. Eaton learned, subsequently, that his suspicions of Jewish intrigue at Algiers against Mr. Cathcart were correct, and that letters had been written from Tripoli to Tunis, soliciting the Bey not to receive him into his dominions. At his next interview, he spoke of Cathcart's coming to Tunis, as a thing settled, and was not contradicted.



## CHAPTER VIII.

*Arrival of the American Squadron. — Tripoli blockaded. — Proceedings at Tripoli. — Issue of the Expedition. — Project of dethroning the reigning Bashaw and restoring his Brother. — Eaton's Voyage to Leghorn. — Return to Tunis. — Reported Capture of Tunisian Vessels carrying Provisions to Tripoli. — Discussions arising from it. — A Tunisian Xebec arrested and examined by an American Schooner. — Conduct of the Schooner's Crew, and Trouble growing out of it. — Eaton's successful Interposition.*

ON the 17th of July, 1801, Commodore Dale arrived at Tunis, in the United States frigate *President*, with the sloop *Enterprise*, and the day following Captain Bainbridge, in the *Essex*. After taking in a supply of fresh water and provisions, these ships of war proceeded immediately to their destination. The arrival of this fleet produced a strong sensation at the palace. Eaton ascertained, from a confidential friend, that Tripoli was already in a famishing condition, and dependent on Tunis for supplies; and it was intimated to him, that he would immediately re-

ceive application for passports of safe conduct for several Tunisian vessels, already taking in cargoes of provisions for Tripoli.

To evade such an application, to turn the occasion to the best advantage in striking a blow at the enemy, Eaton immediately issued a circular, declaring Tripoli in a state of blockade, and that all vessels attempting to enter that port would be dealt with according to the laws of nations applicable to such cases. As all commerce was monopolized by the government, this proceeding caused a great commotion. The principal commercial agent was sent to Eaton's house, with a demand, that the blockade should be so modified as not to effect the interests of the Tunisian Regency. A long discussion ensued, but Eaton firmly maintained his ground.

The agent declared, that he was authorized to state, that adherence to this position would endanger the peace with Tunis, and left the house in a violent rage. In a letter to Commodore Dale, Eaton writes; "Tripoli is in great distress. The corsairs are all at sea. She is starving in her capital, and will be thrown into consternation at your unexpected appearance. If this position, which the good providence of God gives us, can be sternly held a few months, Tripoli will be compelled to ask peace on our

own terms. The object is so desirable, that it seems worth exertions; more especially so, as Algiers and Tunis are looking to this rupture as a precedent for their intercourse with the United States."

Commodore Dale, having been joined by the frigate *Philadelphia*, appeared before Tripoli on the 26th of July. The Bashaw proposed a truce, but his terms were rejected. The principal effect, however, of this expedition, during the present season, was to maintain the blockade, in which the Commodore concurred, and to prevent American merchantmen from falling into the hands of the Tripolitan corsairs.

The reigning Bashaw of Tripoli, a few years before the American war, had usurped the throne, rightfully held by his elder brother, Hamet Caramegli, whom he had driven into exile. It was suggested originally by Mr. Cathcart, that advantage might be taken of this state of affairs to inflict a signal chastisement on the perfidious Bashaw, by restoring the banished prince to his dominions. The conduct of the Tripolitan government justified this measure; and the prospect of holding up to the other Barbary powers an ominous example of what they might expect from a war with the United States encouraged the American consuls to attempt it. Besides, it was generally understood, that the

people of Tripoli were suffering severely from the blockade, and were ripe for a revolt against a usurper, whose oppressions, added to his original crime against his brother, had already rendered his government intolerable. Hamet, the exile, was residing at Tunis, under the protection of the Bey. Eaton sought him out, and found him ready to enter into the scheme. It was concerted between them, that an attack should be made upon the usurper by land, while the navy was engaged in active operations by sea. Nothing, however, could be immediately attempted.

The following passage is from a letter, written about this time, to Mr. Samuel Lyman, a member of Congress. "To avoid the expense of prolonging the war, Tripoli should be bombarded. This is a very practicable measure. Commodore Dale thinks, that four frigates and three bomb-ketches are an ample force to do it effectually. He also supposes a descent on the coast at the same time would have good effect. I am of the same opinion, and am so confident of its practicability, that I will volunteer in the enterprise, in any character consistent with my former military rank and my present station, with two thousand active light troops. Perhaps it is my duty, and, if so, will not be deemed vanity to say, that, in case our affairs

continue tranquil in Tunis, of which there is a moral certainty, I could be more serviceable to my country at Tripoli than here, because I know the tactics of the Barbary and Turkish land forces, their mode of attack and manner of fighting, and for this reason should probably have the more influence in assisting the manœuvres of an assault. If such an enterprise should be resolved upon, an adjutant and inspector general to the troops would be requisite. I should be willing to take the responsibility of that office upon myself during the war."

Such was Eaton's view of the proper mode of conducting the war with Tripoli; and there can be no reasonable doubt, that the project would have been crowned with complete success, had his suggestions been listened to. He was destined, however, to attempt and execute a more hazardous and brilliant enterprise, as will be seen in the sequel.

On the 1st of December, the ship *Peace and Plenty*, Captain Richard Woods, arrived at Tunis, under convoy of the *George Washington*, with another supply of naval and military stores. After attending to the unloading of the cargo, Eaton obtained permission of the Bey to leave the affairs of the United States in the hands of Dr William Turner of the United States

Navy, then at Tunis. The declining state of his health made it necessary for him to resign, for a short time, the labors of his office, and to take a voyage for its recovery. The *George Washington* offering him a passage to Leghorn, he embarked for that port on the 13th of December, having furnished Dr. Turner with full and precise instructions by which to govern his conduct during the consul's absence.

The ship arrived at Naples on the 21st, and was ordered into quarantine, at the conclusion of which he seized the opportunity of submitting to his Sicilian Majesty's prime minister the question, whether the Americans would be allowed to land Moorish prisoners in his territory, in case of need, and on what terms; and suggested to him the advantages, that would accrue to both nations from a commercial treaty. The prime minister and other distinguished personages of Naples were profuse in their civilities and attentions to the American consul, and expressions of a cordial sympathy with the cause of the United States. He had also a private audience with the King of Sardinia, who happened to be in Naples, and obtained permission for the fleet to enter the ports of his island and procure provisions.

On the 30th of January, 1802, he arrived at Leghorn. The benefit of the voyage to his

Dear Mr. M. S. Fugate  
Geo. Washington,  
at Ancker, Bond of Staples

Dec. 28. 1881

Being of health in taking fresh air, change  
of climate and exercise, has prevailed on  
me to leave Barbary on a winter's voyage—

William Eaton





health was less than he expected, and he determined to hasten his return to Tunis. This resolution was confirmed by the receipt of intelligence, that the Bashaw of Tripoli was making overtures to his exiled brother, for the purpose of frustrating the concerted enterprise, above explained, against his territories. Eaton was anxious to be in Tunis before this consummation could be effected. He arrived on the 12th of March, and found Hamet on the point of yielding to the Bashaw's proposition. The government of Derne, a province of Tripoli, was offered him, and he was about to depart to assume the command.

Eaton represented to him the impropriety and danger of such a step, and that probably his brother's sole object was to cut his throat. He told the frightened prince, that, if he departed, he should consider him in the light of an enemy, and should use his best efforts to send him and his retinue prisoners of war to the United States. Hamet proposed going to Malta and waiting the issue there; but Eaton would only consent at present, that he should go to Leghorn or Sardinia. The refusal of the Bey to furnish any further supplies of provisions, added to the alarm and distress of the unfortunate man; and he readily yielded to any terms, which the consul saw fit to prescribe. It was

finally agreed that he should depart for Malta, with letters of recommendation from Eaton to the American commander, there to await the arrival of the fleet; thence to go with the fleet to Tripoli, and demand the restitution of his throne and his rights. Precaution was taken, however, to guard against a change of Hamet's resolution and a violation of his engagements, by a preconcerted plan to arrest him, if he should attempt to shape his course for Derne. The final agreement of the exiled Bashaw was accomplished in part by the assistance of the Sapitapa, to whom Eaton promised ten thousand dollars on the successful issue of the expedition.

Meantime the intercourse between the consul and the government of the Bey was not of the most friendly character. An angry interview in April terminated by the Bey's ordering Eaton to quit his court, and hold himself in readiness to embark on board the first American ship of war, that should arrive in port. The consul turned short upon his heel, returned to his office, and ordered, that no more passports should be filled out for Tunisian cruisers. This proceeding was immediately reported to the Bey, and his commercial agent hastened to beg, that the order might be countermanded, intimating that the Bey had no wish to provoke

a war by sending away the consul, but only to obtain another more capable of cherishing peace than Eaton. He was answered, that the consul had taken his ground, which would not be surrendered until the Bey had changed his position.

A few days after, he was invited to the palace by the Bey, and discussed with him the relative advantages of peace and war. The minister professed a willingness to maintain the peace with the Americans on the same footing as with the other small Christian nations, but they must have a consul with less *fantasia*, and more friendly to the Barbary interests. Eaton replied, that he daily expected permission to return to the United States, and to be succeeded by his colleague, Mr. Cathcart. The Bey pretended astonishment, and declared, that Mr. Cathcart should never come into his dominions on any pretext whatever.

About this time, a rumor reached the Bey, that an American frigate had captured four coasting vessels belonging to his subjects, bound to Tripoli, laden with wheat, barley, oil, and other provisions. The consul was summoned to the palace, and immediate restitution of vessels and cargo was demanded. The Bey asserted a right to carry provisions, in all cases, to his friends, and maintained the principle of

“free bottoms, free goods.” Eaton denied the right, and affirmed, that the principle was never construed to extend to a blockaded port. Seasonable and formal notice of the blockade of Tripoli had been given. If, after this, he permitted his subjects to carry provisions to that port, he took the responsibility on himself; if they engaged in these enterprises without his consent, it was a voluntary risk on their part, and they had no reason to complain in case of capture; since the captures, being made according to acknowledged maxims of war, were, of course, good prize to the captors.

The Bey talked of reprisals, and Eaton of retaliation. The Bey desired Eaton to write to the American commander to capture no more of his vessels, but to turn them from their course if they were found carrying provisions to Tripoli; the request was declined, but the interview was concluded without the usual display of anger on the part of the Bey. It was afterwards ascertained, that the report was without foundation, the captures having in fact been made by the Swedes. The only use of these discussions, therefore, was to give the Bey an intimation of what he might expect, whenever his vessels should be captured by the Americans under like circumstances.

An incident occurred in the Mediterranean

this season, which gave Eaton great concern, and brought temporary dishonor upon the American name. A Tunisian xebec was arrested and examined by the commander of an American schooner, Lieutenant Sterrett. It was afterwards ascertained, that several articles, of no great value, had been plundered, and, on the arrival of the crew, at Tunis, loud complaints were made to the government. Every term of reproach and insult was heaped upon the Americans, and for a time the worst consequences were apprehended. Eaton was instantly summoned to the palace, and found the Bey in a towering passion. "You, Sir," said he, "you, who boast eternally of the rectitude and honor of your government, by this act stand convicted, that you represent a nation of pirates. What! do you bring your warriors from your country, destitute of shirts,\* commissioned to fall upon and strip my defenceless subjects. Had you captured this vessel, I should have viewed the act in a different light; but the protection of your right to navigate the sea freely, as your President expresses his motive for sending a squadron before Tripoli, I find to be a system of plunder. But, to show you that I am not to be the subject of your aggressions, I will im-

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\* Among the plundered articles was a *shirt* belonging to Rais Mustapha, commander of the Xebec.

mediately send every American you have in port, in irons, to work at the Goletta, yourself at their head." By energetic assurances, that restitution should be made for every article of property plundered, and that the criminals should receive exemplary punishment, Eaton succeeded in calming the rage of the Bey. The consul was indefatigable in his exertions to fulfil his promise; and he had the satisfaction of proving to the Bey, that the crime was confined to one marine and two common sailors of the schooner's crew, and that no officer was in the slightest degree implicated.

Intelligence was received from Lieutenant Sterrett, that the Bashaw of Tripoli was making great defensive preparations, but that general discontent pervaded all classes of his subjects, not excepting the Turkish soldiers, who derived most benefit from the war. The exiled Hamet was known to be in Malta, waiting for the arrival of Commodore Truxton, who had been appointed to the command of the American squadron in the Mediterranean. The prospect of success was promising, and no doubt was entertained, that the issue of the war would be favorable to the American arms.

## CHAPTER IX.

*Intervention of the Bey of Tunis in the Affairs of Tripoli and the United States. — Arrival of the Constellation at Tunis. — Demand of the Bey for a Ship renewed. — Eaton communicates his Project against Tripoli to the Commanders of the Squadron. — It is disapproved by them. — Brig Franklin captured by a Tripolitan. — Efforts to procure the Liberation of the Crew. — Further Communications with the exiled Bashaw. — Differences with the Commanders of the American Squadron, and Difficulties of Eaton's Situation in Tunis. — New Demands of the Bey. — The exiled Bashaw leaves Malta for Derne. — Arrival of Commodore Morris at Tunis. — His Arrest. — Eaton's Rupture with the Bey, and Return to the United States.*

On the 24th of May, Eaton was summoned, by a note from the prime minister, to the palace. On his appearance there he was surprised to find the Bey in an unusually complaisant mood; and, in conversation with the minister, he ascertained, that the Bey's object was to make a proposition of peace with Trip-

oli, through the mediation and under the guarantee of the government of Tunis.

The minister informed Eaton, that he was authorized to propose the negotiation. It was replied, that the United States had no inducements to desire war with any nation, and if Tripoli would make suitable retractions, the subject of peace might be considered; but even then it would be considered hazardous to treat with the reigning Bashaw, after having seen such flagrant violations of faith. The remaining part of the interview is given in Eaton's own words, in a letter to the Secretary of State.

“‘If the Bey of Tunis would act as mediator between the parties, and take upon himself the guarantee of the peace on the part of Tripoli, would it remove this difficulty?’

“‘We have great reliance on the good faith, equity, and magnanimity of His Excellency the Bey of Tunis, and should be very secure in his responsibility; but is it certain, that this Bey would take upon himself the guarantee of a peace in behalf of Tripoli?’

“‘Yes. But if you talk of retractions and indemnities, it would be idle to talk of peace. On the contrary, according to all custom, you must make the Bashaw a small *present*; though he would be willing to put up with something less than what he at first demanded.’



“‘We were not the first to violate the peace. We are not the first to demand it. If Tripoli be solicitous for it, she must abandon the idea of imposing conditions; she will most certainly never receive a caroube\* in consideration of her friendship. We do not set any value upon it.’

“‘Nay; but if you place no value on her friendship, the security of your commerce in this sea, and the saving of the expense of armaments, are objects of consideration, in which you consult your own interest.’

“‘We never supposed our commerce in this sea more secure than at present, notwithstanding the war with Tripoli; and, as to the expense of armaments, we accumulate nothing on that score from making the Mediterranean the manœuvring ground of our seamen. We shall probably always have a squadron in this sea.’

“‘But Tripoli is very poor; she cannot subsist without the generosity of her *friends*; give something then on the score of charity.’

“‘Tripoli has forfeited her title of *friend*. Besides, there is a vast difference between the beggar who seizes my horse by the bit, and, with a pistol at my breast, demands my purse, and him, who, with one hand pressed to his heart, and the other hanging with his hat, asks

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\* Fifty-two caroubes make a dollar.

charity for the love of God. The former merits its chastisement; the latter excites commiseration. I leave you to apply the figure.'

"'I feel it. But the Barbary Regencies never make peace without presents.'

"'It is high time, then, that there should be a precedent.'

"'But you say you are disposed for peace.'

"'Yes; but you are not to understand me that we either wish or will accept it on dishonorable terms.'

"'There can be nothing dishonorable in making a small voluntary present to Tripoli.'

"'Drop the subject, if you please. Tripoli is not in a right position to receive expressions of our hospitality. Nor am I vested with powers to negotiate. I can only express to you the general, but fixed sentiment of my government and country, *that we prefer peace to war, if we can have it on honorable terms*; and you are at liberty to express this sentiment to Tripoli. She may take advantage of it if she thinks proper. Otherwise, four or five years of warfare with that state will be but a pastime to our young warriors.'

"'I shall send off a cruiser,' said the minister, 'with the result of this interview.'

"'At evening the commercial agent was at my house. Went over the same ground. Was sure,

that we should never have a peace without *paying something*; it would disgrace the Regency; but he seemed extremely solicitous to have permission to write something promising to Tripoli on the subject of a negotiation. He said, what the minister had asserted in the morning, that the only pretext the Bashaw of Tripoli had for breaking faith with the United States, was that the peace was not voluntary on his part, but forced on him by Algiers.

“These overtures go to prove the embarrassed situation of our enemy; and promise, if suitable advantage is taken of it, a peace on our own terms. We hold the high ground of him at all points. I am partial to my original plan of restoring the rightful Bashaw, though nothing was said on the subject at the palace to-day. I think it highly probable, that the reigning Bashaw has offered more *powerful arguments* to engage this minister in his interest, than either his brother had the means or myself the discretion of offering. Besides, the Bey of Tunis is ignorant of that project. It will be seasonable enough to inform him of it after having insured its success. In the mean time let us amuse the usurper with his own propositions.”

Towards the end of May the United States frigate *Constellation*, Captain Alexander Murray, arrived at Tunis, bringing the arms prepared

for the Bey in London. They were immediately presented, and found highly acceptable; but a former demand was instantly revived through the minister, for a corvette or brig of war, such as had been given to Algiers. He was referred to the treaty stipulations, and the claim, for the present, was silenced.

Mr. Eaton gave an account of his measures with Hamet, to Captains Barron and Bainbridge, of the squadron, immediately on their arrival. His sanguine expectations were somewhat disappointed by the severe criticisms, which those officers made upon his plans. Captain Murray coincided in their views, and rejected the scheme, says Eaton, "in an air of authority and reprimand, which I should not expect, even from the highest departments of government." The conduct of these commanders was regarded by Eaton with contempt, and he did not fail to represent it in language of strong complaint.

The measures objected to had been concerted with the approbation of Mr. Cathcart, and others whose local knowledge and soundness of judgment entitled their opinions to the highest respect. The consul reasonably thought, that a plan formed under such auspices, and sanctioned by such authority, was deserving of more attention than these gentlemen seemed inclined to accord to it. "How is it," he asks, "that every com-

mander, as well as everybody else, who has acted on this coast, comes into this measure; and that three only, who have scarcely or never been here, take on themselves to reject it?"

Captain Murray, however, in the absence of Commodore Truxton, felt bound to put a check to measures, which his instructions, in his opinion, did not authorize him to participate in, and which were likely to cause considerable expense to the United States. Whether his opinion was correct or not, there can be no doubt that he acted from a conscientious regard to his duty.

On the 6th of July, the American brig *Franklin*, Captain Andrew Morris, was carried into Biserta, captured by a Tripolitan corsair. Information was carried to Eaton by express, from the vice-consul stationed there. The corsair's first plan was to march the ship's crew to the city of Tunis, and thence by land to Tripoli; but the Bey was apprehensive of trouble with the Americans, and objected to the passage of American slaves through his country. The ship and cargo were sold by auction to the commercial agent of the Bey, and the men were chained in the hold of a Tripolitan galley. Every effort was made by the consul to alleviate the sufferings of these unhappy men, but he was prohibited from even exchanging a word with

them. Information was despatched in all directions, and strong representations were made, of the importance of watching the harbor of Tunis, which had become a rendezvous for the enemy. The American commanders were urged to attempt the recapture of the prisoners, before their arrival at Tripoli, whither they had been despatched in the galley. The labor was vain; the crew of the *Franklin* were transported to their place of destination, and held in slavery. A claim was immediately made for their release, on a promise to surrender seven American prisoners in return for a number of Turks who had been released by Commodore Dale the preceding summer. Instructions were also forwarded to Mr. Nyssen, the Danish consul, and acting consul for the United States since Mr. Cathcart's departure, that provision should be made, at the expense of the American government, for the support and comfort of the prisoners. These measures were finally unsuccessful, but the prisoners were set at liberty at the instance of Algiers.

The presence of Hamet, the exiled prince, at Malta, caused great alarm at Tripoli; and the Bashaw immediately seized and confined the chiefs of some of the principal villages, to prevent an insurrection. His subjects, however, with few exceptions, regarded the event

as a signal interposition of heaven, and looked forward to the restoration of their rightful sovereign, and the reëstablishment of peace with the United States. The situation of Hamet was such, in the mean time, that Eaton was obliged to furnish him with funds for the supply of his present wants, as appears from the following letter, dated August 6th, 1802.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY HAMET CARAMELLI, BASHAW  
OF TRIPOLI.

“SIR,

“I have had the honor to receive your Excellency’s letter of the 16th ultimo; and I improve this first opportunity to request Mr. Pulis to furnish you with two thousand hard dollars on the credit of the United States; which I hope will be a relief to your situation until the arrival of our Commodore, who is hourly expected here. He arrived at Gibraltar early in June, but has been detained in that quarter for the arrangement of public affairs with the Emperor of Morocco. I hope your Excellency’s patience will not be exhausted. Remember that your brother thirsts for your blood I have learned from a certain source, that his project of getting you to Derne was to murder you. He is now more determined than ever, because he has intercepted some of your letters to your friends in Tripoli. You cannot be safe,

therefore, in any part of your Regency unless you enter it in your true character of sovereign. I believe in God, the mighty and the just, that this event is not far distant. In the mean time, permit me to recommend to your Excellency to keep up a correspondence with those of your party in Tripoli, and with your subjects of the country. Let them be persuaded, that your friends will not abandon you, until, by the help of God, they shall see you restored to your faithful people. Give them assurances to redress their grievances and to treat them like a mild and just prince. And do every thing to detach them from the interest of the usurper.

“I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

“WILLIAM EATON.”

The situation of the consul became more and more difficult and disagreeable every day. The differences between him and the officers of the squadron, not only annoyed his feelings in private, but lessened his influence as a public agent. He was exposed to many perplexing obstacles in the discharge of his duties, and his representations were received with sneers. The following passage from a letter to the Secretary of State, presents a strong picture of his condition at this moment.

“My exile is become insupportable here



Abandoned by my countrymen in command, no advice from government to regulate my conduct, and my own exertions failing of effect, I am left subject, though not yet submissive, to the most intolerable abuse and personal vexations. Anxiety, perplexity, and a climate unfavorable to my constitution, waste my health.

“The position I have taken and held with this Bey, in regard to passports for his merchantmen for Tripoli, has excited a temper and disposition in this court, to distress me in my personal concerns. I have frequently stated, that my salary is an inadequate support. The check, which Captain Murray thought proper to put on my public measures, has not less affected my public character. Thus situated, I am consuming life, property, and perhaps public reputation here, without the consoling prospect of having the merit of being useful to my country. Why should I remain at a post which is no longer tenable? Again I repeat, my individual resources are insufficient barriers against the avarice of this regency. From the first moment of my agency here, it was apparent to me, that submission to the demands of this Bey would only sharpen avidity. I stated this apprehension in my communications to government; it was thought *too lively!* My measures to chastise a perfidious enemy are now branded by com-

manders as *speculative*; the effusions of a disordered fancy! Is it not enough, that I have sacrificed almost four years to the service of my country, in a state of painful sequestration from all rational enjoyment? Will anybody allege, that I have not discharged my duty with an upright zeal? And are such the rewards of my services? To be branded, unheard in my own defence, and by a solitary captain of a frigate, with *speculation* and *insanity*!

“It were impossible to keep these things concealed here, even if they had been transacted with less publicity. The Bey says, ‘I always told the American consul he was a madman,’ (because I have not been his obsequious slave, as are half the consuls near him,) ‘and it appears the commanders of his nation are of the same opinion.’

“I am constrained, therefore, not less by a regard to the interest and honor of my country, than to my own individual interest and honor, to request the President will permit me to resign the trust I have the honor to hold under the government of the United States, unless more active operations shall be resolved on against the enemy; in which case it would gratify me to remain on this coast till the issue be determined.”

The Bey made new requisitions upon the United States. Through his minister he com-

municated to Eaton a formal demand of a frigate of thirty-six guns. The claim was of course resisted, and even the statement of it to the government declined. The Bey then determined to write with his own hand to the President of the United States; and, not satisfied with Eaton's pointed refusal to communicate his demand, attempted to gain the point by requesting him to make the form of a letter, which should be sent to the President under the Bey's own signature. According to Tunisian logic, this would have become the consul's own act, and therefore a promise. Eaton understood this perfectly well, and peremptorily refused. He argued, from the treaty compact, against the demand, and put the question pointedly to the minister if he was not ashamed to make it after having received lately such valuable presents from the United States. The minister replied, that the presents were a mere peace stipulation, the payment of which had long been delayed. He recapitulated the history of the negotiation, and concluded by insisting on the frigate as a token of the "veritable friendship of the prince of America."

The demand for a form of a letter was repeated to the drogoman, who had been instructed to reply, that the consul would write neither directly nor indirectly. This was not the last.

Again the minister demanded of Eaton, personally, the form of a letter, in still more imperious terms, but to no purpose. The consul was firm, and could not be frightened by the minister's menace, that the Bey would write *in English* himself; a menace which his Excellency would probably have found some difficulty in executing. The object of this requisition, as the Bey probably never supposed it would be complied with, must have been to provide a plausible pretext of a rupture with the United States, if circumstances should encourage a hope of plunder, or of greater concessions. The following is a translation of the letter, as it was finally written.

“Tunis, 8 September, 1802.

“The Bashaw, Bey of Tunis, to the President of the Republic of the United States of America.

“MR. PRESIDENT,

“With equal pleasure and satisfaction, I have seen arrive, and have received successively, all the military and naval stores, as well as the superb jewels, which your government has sent forward for my Regency and myself, in execution of our conditions for the confirming and consolidating of the good harmony and alliance, which, thank God, have been established and actually subsist between us.

“While I am happy to give you this assurance, indeed sincere, of my full contentment, I ought not to dissemble that I do not, at the same time, see myself treated with the same distinction and the same regard that you have had for your other friends; and, since I am equally one, I avow to you, with frankness, as I have already declared to Mr. Eaton, your consul, that it would have been infinitely agreeable to me if you had also made me a present of a vessel of war.

“Mr. Eaton not finding it convenient to charge himself with the communication of this demand to you on my part, I am determined to testify to you directly, by the present, that it would be very agreeable to me that you should send me a good frigate of thirty-six guns, which would add to the high esteem I have for your nation, and would more and more cement the ties of our friendship, which on my part I shall maintain firm and inviolable.

“Convinced as I am beforehand, Mr. President, that this demand, taken into consideration, will obtain the full effect which I expect from it, I renew to you the assurance of my most distinguished esteem, and I pray Almighty God to have you in his holy keeping.

“HAMOUDA BASHAW BEY,

“*Prince of the Princes of Tunis, the  
City well guarded, the Abode of  
Happiness.*”

Captain Murray, after reconsidering the consul's scheme, in relation to the exiled Bashaw, fell in with it so far as to offer to take him on board his ship, and convey him to Derne. This was contrary to Eaton's wishes, in the most important particulars. His object was to prevent the prince from resorting to that province, in order that he might appear before Tripoli with the American fleet. The Bashaw finally determined to leave Malta for Derne in an English brig. Eaton lamented this determination, as fatal not only to his own plans against the enemy, but as likely to expose the Bashaw himself to destruction. The conduct of the squadron was by no means satisfactory to the consul's ardent temperament. He regarded it as dilatory and inefficient, and extremely prejudicial to the interests of the United States. The blockade of Tripoli was but imperfectly maintained, and ships laden with provisions often succeeded in entering the harbor, and affording the enemy essential relief. Add to this, the Bey was becoming more haughty in his tone, and more insolent in his demands, apparently encouraged by the inactivity of the fleet. The imperious style of his letter to the President of the United States, Eaton regarded as an indication and expression of the contempt that potentate was encouraged to entertain for the character

of the American nation. He then writes to the Secretary of State, under date of October 22d, 1802.

“The indignities I have suffered at this court latterly are insupportable. On the first appearance of our squadron, this Bey behaved respectfully; he has grown insolent in proportion to the moderation of their movements and the success of the enemy. I have in no instance yielded to his exactions. But, again permit me to repeat, without more energetic support I cannot maintain the position I have taken here; a position which has hitherto received the approbation of every distinguished officer of the general government with whom I have had the honor to correspond. And, suffer me to add, if further concessions are to be made here, I desire *I may not be the medium through whom they shall be presented*. The rich presents I have already given this Bey, in the name of the Chief Magistrate of the United States, serve only to show him our wealth and our weakness, and to prompt his avarice to new demands. Three years ago I apprehended this consequence of our yielding expressions of amity. The same effect will result from the same cause so long as the latter exist.”

Such being the state of things, Eaton determined to return to the United States. He felt

assured, that he could render no important service to his government by a longer residence in Barbary; and he began to suspect, that the Bey of Tunis would not hesitate to seize and hold him in durance as a hostage, in case of a rupture with the Americans, for which he was supposed to be seeking a pretext. He was also desirous of repairing to the seat of government in person and settling his accounts; a step rendered necessary by the fact, that for many items he had no regular vouchers, and that the vouchers of others required explanation.

His measures with Hamet had involved an expense of about twenty-three thousand dollars, for which he had obtained the cash on credit in Tunis; and for the repayment of which it was necessary that immediate provision should be made. To meet this heavy expense, which was now regarded by him as useless, since the frustration of his plans, Eaton had no private resources. All his means had been exhausted by the rapacity and extortion of the horde of pirates, among whom the last few years had been spent. The Regency viewed him, as he supposed, with a jealous eye, and regarded him as an enemy to the Barbary interests.

At length Commodore Morris arrived at Tunis. The hostile temper of the Bey's government was not slow to show itself, in the conduct



of its officers towards this commander. A dispute between him and the Bey's commercial agent determined the Commodore to leave the city without a formal visit to the court; but he was detained for the payment of the loan, above mentioned, which Eaton had negotiated with the commercial agent. The consul warmly remonstrated against this act of violence, insisting that he was alone responsible in his representative capacity. The plea was unavailing, and immediate payment was insisted on. The Commodore returned to the American house, and Eaton presented himself immediately to the Bey and inquired if this detention were by his order. He found there was no alternative, but that the Commodore would be compelled to satisfy the demand before he could obtain permission to embark. The French commissary-general engaged to advance the money on his bills on Leghorn; and Eaton proposed to execute an assignment of all his property in the United States, as a security to the Commodore, for the reimbursement of this sum, in case the contingent charges which occasioned the loan should not be admitted on final settlement with the government.

The next day, the Commodore, Mr. Cathcart, who had lately been appointed Mr. O'Brien's successor in Algiers, Captain Rogers, and Mr. Eaton, waited on the Bey at the palace. Eaton

remonstrated with the Bey, in pointed terms, against the national indignity and breach of hospitality, in the detention of the Commodore, explained at large the means in his possession of meeting the debt, and declared that he had been hindered from a more seasonable payment, by the frauds of the minister, who had absolutely robbed him.

The Sapitapa was affronted, and charged Eaton with madness, and the Bey ordered him to quit the court. The consul replied, "It is well. I am not dissatisfied to quit a court where I have experienced little else than violence and indignity." The Bey said to the Commodore, "The consul is a man of a good heart but a wrong head. He is too obstinate and too violent for me. I must have a consul with a disposition more congenial to Barbary interests." He charged Eaton with violating the laws of the country, by bastinading his subjects. The chastisement of Famin was acknowledged. "But I denied," says Eaton, "that he was his *subject*, though I knew him to be his *voluntary slave*. His conduct towards me had merited chastisement; it had been treacherous, dishonest, and base. Finding no other means of justice, I had used the discipline, which I would again use in similar circumstances."

The Bey acknowledged, that Eaton had not,

in his public agency, been wanting in any point of duty, or in respect to himself, as a prince. Eaton reiterated that he had suffered every species of outrage and insult in the Regency, and thanked the Bey for ordering him out of it; he should depart, at least with the consolation of leaving behind him the impression that he was not a slave. They parted with mutual expressions of regard, and Eaton left the court. Having made arrangements to intrust the affairs of the United States to the hands of Dr. George Davis of New York, he took passage on board the squadron, determined to repair, immediately on his arrival, to the seat of government, to render an account of his public services during the four years of his agency at **Tunis.**

## CHAPTER X.

*Eaton's Arrival in the United States. — Visit to Washington. — Passes the Summer in Brimfield. — Second Visit to Washington, and Attempt to settle his Accounts with the United States. — Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives. — Appointment as Navy Agent of the United States for the Barbary Powers. — Cautious Policy of the President. — Return to the Mediterranean and Arrival in Egypt. — Reception by the Viceroy. — Determination to join the Bashaw. — Arrested at the Turkish Lines. — Difficulties surmounted, and a Junction with the Bashaw effected. — Convention concluded between Eaton and Hamet.*

MR. EATON accompanied the squadron to Gibraltar, where it arrived on the 23d of March, 1803. From thence, he took passage on board the merchant ship *Perseverance*, and arrived in Boston on the 5th of May, and immediately rejoined his family in Brimfield, from whom he had been separated four years and a half. Early in the summer he repaired to the seat of government, for the purpose of adjusting his ac-

counts, and of urging the adoption of vigorous measures against Tripoli, particularly by employing the exiled Hamet against the reigning Bashaw. The settlement of a part of his accounts, requiring the action of Congress, was postponed to the next session, and Eaton returned to the quiet enjoyment of domestic life. The summer and autumn he devoted to the care of his family, the education of his children, and the management of his farm.

In January, 1804, he again repaired to Washington to complete his unfinished business with the government. The Department of State having refused to allow the twenty-two thousand dollars expended in concerting measures with the exiled Bashaw, and other smaller claims, Eaton addressed a long and able letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, in which he recapitulated the most important transactions of his agency, explained the grounds on which his expenditures had been made, and went into an elaborate defence of his projected plan of attack on Tripoli. In this document, the character and policy of the Barbary regencies are drawn with extraordinary vigor, and the expediency of resisting their insolent demands, by an effectual display of military and naval force, is fully exhibited. With his usual vehemence, he does not hesitate to arraign before

the Representatives of the nation, the conduct of the American commanders, who had opposed his plans. He defended his own character from the imputation of speculative views, which some of his opponents had thrown out against him, by a triumphant array of facts, exhibiting his disinterestedness, integrity, and honor.

During this period his leisure time was occupied with his domestic affairs. His private and family letters show in a pleasing light the affectionate zeal with which he devoted himself to the welfare of his children. Their education was a subject on which he felt the liveliest interest, and nothing was left undone, and no expense was spared to procure for them every advantage within his power to bestow.

In April of this year, Eaton was appointed Navy Agent of the United States for the Barbary powers. The exiled Bashaw had placed himself at the head of an army of Arabs at Derne, and had already gained some advantages in the field over the usurper. He proposed to the President of the United States such terms, as induced him to promise an effectual coöperation against the common enemy, the reigning Bashaw of Tripoli.

The President at first determined to send out, as a loan, some field artillery, a thousand stands of arms, and forty thousand dollars, and

Eaton undertook to lead in an enterprise for recovering the American captives in Tripoli, and imposing terms of peace on that Regency, by bringing a rival and an army upon the enemy's rear. But, before the squadron was ready to take its departure, information arrived that the Bashaw had retired to Alexandria, in Egypt, for want of supplies. This apparent reverse in the exile's fortunes checked the hopes of the administration, and the supplies were withheld. Eaton was ordered upon the expedition, without any special instructions, for himself or Commodore Barron, the commander-in-chief, who was intrusted with a general discretion in regard to cooperation, and referred in vague terms to Mr. Eaton, as the American agent for the Barbary regencies, and a man who was likely to be extremely useful. This cautious policy of the President was annoying and irritating to Eaton in the extreme. He regarded it as an attempt on the part of the Chief Magistrate to shield himself from responsibility if the enterprise should fail, and to secure the honor in case of success.

The situation of Eaton was embarrassing. He bore with him no evidence from the government of their friendly disposition towards the Bashaw. No alternative was left but to assume to himself the task and responsibility of convincing the exile and the world of the fidelity of

the United States, though he was convinced, that the administration had been guilty of a breach of good faith. He was aware, moreover, that expectations had been formed by the American people, which his friends looked to him to fulfil. He was determined not to disappoint them, though he felt that the enterprise was forlorn and perilous. "I am convinced," he says in a letter, "that our captives cannot otherwise be released without ransom; and, as an individual, I would rather yield my person to the danger of war in almost any shape, than my pride to the humiliation of *treating* with a wretched pirate for the ransom of men, who are the rightful heirs of freedom."

Eaton embarked in June, on board the squadron destined for the Mediterranean, consisting of the frigates *John Adams*, the *President*, the *Congress*, the *Essex*, and the *Constellation*, under the command of Commodore Barron, and Captains Rogers, Barron, Campbell, and Chauncy. He arrived at Malta on the 5th of September, from which place he addressed a letter to the Secretary of the Navy, in which he says, "The advantages calculated to result from a coöperation with him (the exiled Bashaw) seem not to have diminished in prospect from any occurrences, which have happened since these proposals were made. The reigning Bashaw



persists in his demand of a ransom for our captives. But the distress, which must be occasioned by the means he is obliged to use in support of these pretensions, cannot but increase the discontent of his subjects, and ripen them for revolt. For such of them as subsist ordinarily, by cruising or commerce, being barred these resources by a harassing blockade; and such as depend on labor for subsistence, being compelled to serve for his defence without pay, will be very apt to seize an opportunity to relieve themselves from that distress, when it offers, on principles so consistent with their proper allegiance and religion. Those subjects, who were heretofore in the interests of the friendly Bashaw, are still so. Through these instruments, I firmly believe, the enemy may be taken from his sofa at the same instant that our fellow citizens are rescued from chains. The only obstacle, that seems to oppose the success of this measure, is want of supplies to put it in operation. These are not in the fleet; and the Commodore is not decided whether any construction of the President's instructions extends to a discretion of procuring and furnishing them. He will probably express himself on this subject after having fixed on his plan of operations."

The squadron arrived at Alexandria on the 25th of November, and the next day anchored

at the port. On the 1st of December the adventurers entered the mouth of the Nile, and arrived at Grand Cairo on the 8th of the same month, and were received with many marks of respect by the Viceroy.

A war was raging in Egypt between the Mameluke Beys and the government of the Viceroy. The exiled Bashaw had been reduced by a series of disasters to the necessity of joining the former, and was at this time actually with them, commanding a few Tripolitans and other auxiliaries, and besieged in the village of Minyeh, in Upper Egypt. This state of things added further embarrassments to Eaton's operations, by making personal intercourse with the Bashaw difficult if not impossible. He was still farther harassed by the uncertainty of obtaining the Viceroy's firman for the Bashaw's departure, in case he should be detached from the army of the Mamelukes. He resolved, therefore, to throw himself on the honor and hospitality of the sovereign, without further delay. Accordingly he left the British consular house, accompanied by Captain Vincents, to whom he had brought letters from Sir Alexander Ball, the British Governor of Malta, and with Dr. Mandrici, an Italian, whom he had known at Tunis, to make a formal visit to the Viceroy, by appointment.

They were accompanied by a numerous es-

court, and preceded by lighted flambeaux and torches. The streets were lined with curious spectators, eager to get a sight of "the men who had come from the new world." They were received with great state and magnificence in a large and splendid hall. The Viceroy met them with dignity and affability, seated Eaton next himself, on a sofa of embroidered purple and damask cushions, and arranged the rest of the company on the right and left. After the customary ceremonies, and some conversation on indifferent topics, the court were directed to retire, leaving the Viceroy and his interpreter alone with his visitors. The occasion was seized by Eaton to make a full and candid explanation of his object. He gave a rapid sketch of the events which had led to the war with Tripoli, and of the negotiations with the exiled prince, adding many reflections, well adapted to flatter the pride and prejudices of his Excellency.

The Viceroy approved the plan, and promised his influence in promoting its success, with the reservation, however, that if the Bashaw should have joined the Mamelukes, it might change the dispositions he would otherwise make concerning him. It was replied, that an object of distress should not draw down the resentment of an exalted mind, and that it was more like God to pardon than to punish a repenting ene-

my. The Viceroy was pleased with this ingenious flattery, and assented. He promised to send couriers in search of Hamet, and no doubt was left that permission would be obtained for the embarkation of the Bashaw and his suite. The only embarrassment remaining, was the difficulty of withdrawing him from the Mamelukes without exciting suspicions, which would be fatal. The Viceroy immediately granted him a letter of amnesty, and permission to pass through the Turkish army unmolested. Eaton had already found at Cairo the prime minister, and one of the confidential governors, of Hamet Bashaw, in concert with whom he despatched secret couriers with the letter of amnesty and passport of safe conduct.

While waiting for the issue of these measures, he employed himself in finding out Tripolitan emigrants in Egypt, and ascertaining their feelings towards the rival brothers. A letter came from the Bashaw in answer to Eaton's first despatch from Cairo, informing him of a place which he had selected for an interview; but, as Eaton's subsequent letters had advised him to repair to the English house at Rosetta, under the guarantee of the Viceroy's passport, he determined to go thither himself. Receiving no intelligence on his arrival, he proceeded to Alexandria, and there received another letter informing him that the Bashaw adhered to his first se-

lection of a place of interview, near lake Fayoum on the border of the desert, and about one hundred and ninety miles from the seacoast.

Eaton determined on attempting a journey thither, notwithstanding the hazards of travelling through a country exposed to all the horrors of civil war. Accordingly he left Alexandria, with two officers from the *Argus*, and an escort of twenty-three men, indifferently mounted; but had proceeded only about seventy or eighty miles on his route, when he found himself arrested at the Turkish lines. Circumstances were strong enough to excite the suspicions of a less vigilant commander than the general of the Ottoman troops, and it was not surprising, that a body of armed foreigners, shaping their course towards the enemy's rendezvous, and with no other ostensible object than to find a refugee Bashaw, should not be permitted to pass unmolested.

Their situation was extremely embarrassing. Eaton quieted the Turkish commander's suspicions by adroitly complimenting the correctness of his military conduct, and assuring him that, knowing his magnanimity, he was determined to have an interview, in full confidence that he would aid a measure, so humane, and so favorable to the Turkish interests in Egypt, even in case he would not permit him to pursue

the object personally. To this was added, that he had it in charge to tender him a *douceur*, as a testimony of the exalted opinion entertained of his name and merits. The Turk was overcome. He called a young Arab chief to his tent, related to him the business, and asked him if he could give any account of Hamet. The young man exclaimed, that he knew all, and added, that twenty thousand Barbary Arabs were ready to march from the Egyptian border, to recover their native country and inheritance, and that he would pledge his head to the Turkish general to bring Hamet Bashaw in ten days.

He was accordingly despatched the next morning on this errand. The suspicions of the general were not yet wholly removed. He kept a vigilant eye upon the Americans, but extended to them every attention, dictated by politeness and hospitality. In a few days a messenger arrived from Hamet, with information that he was in the vicinity, accompanied only by his suite of about forty persons. The Turk's suspicions were now removed; he took Eaton by the hand, applauded his candor, and invited him to a dinner at his camp.

After joining the Bashaw, they proceeded to Alexandria; but the intrigues of the French consul, who represented the Americans as English spies in disguise, exposed them to new dif-

faculties, by persuading the admiral of the port and governor of the city not to admit the Bashaw, nor suffer him to embark. The Bashaw's progress, however, was not much impeded; for, having resolved to march by land to Derne and Bengazi, he moved round Lake Mœris, and formed his camp at Arab's Tower, about thirty miles west of the old port of Alexandria. In the mean time Eaton informed the Viceroy of the contempt with which his letter of amnesty had been treated, upon which his Excellency forthwith addressed a firman to the governor, commanding immediate compliance, and imposing a fine of twenty-five thousand piastres.

Preparations were now making to take up the line of march through the Libyan desert. The party at present consisted of five hundred men, one hundred of whom were Christians recruited on the spot. They were to proceed to Bomba, and there await the arrival of Captain Hull, with supplies and reinforcements, which, it was supposed, would place them in a condition to make themselves masters of the provinces of Derne and Bergazi. To secure to the United States an indemnity for the expenses of this expedition, Eaton entered into a convention with Hamet Bashaw, by which the latter pledged the tribute of Sweden, Denmark, and the Batavian Republic.

## CHAPTER XI.

*Preparations to march across the Desert. — Difficulty with the Camel-Drivers. — March commenced. — Further Difficulties with the Arab Recruits. — Alarming Intelligence from Derne, and its Consequences. — Extracts from Eaton's Journal. — News of the Squadron at Derne. — March continued. — Arrival at Derne. — Battles with the Troops stationed there. — Overtures of Peace by the reigning Bashaw. — Negotiations concluded. — Derne evacuated. — Eaton's Return to the United States, and flattering Reception.*

In March, 1805, the caravan was arranged at Arab's Tower, and the forces organized. The caravan consisted of one hundred and seven camels, and a few asses. The troops were, nine Americans, including Lieutenant O'Bannon, and Mr. Peck, a non-commissioned officer, and six private marines; a company of twenty-five cannoniers, commanded by Selim Comb, and Lieutenants Connant and Roco; a company of thirty-eight Greeks, commanded by Captain Luca Ulovix, and Lieutenant Constantine; the Bashaw's suite of about ninety men; a party of Arab cav-



alry ; making the whole number about four hundred. Before the march began, the camel-drivers, fearing that, if they performed their services before being paid, the Christians would defraud them, refused to proceed. The Bashaw was irresolute ; but Eaton ordered the Christians under arms, and, pretending a counter march, threatened to abandon the expedition, unless they advanced without delay. This measure was effectual, and the mutiny was suppressed. A few days after the march commenced, a courier from Derne met the Bashaw, and informed him that the province had taken up arms in his cause. This good news produced demonstrations of joy among the advanced troops, which proved nearly fatal to the Christians who were escorting the caravan. The foot forces of the Arabs, hearing the fire, and thinking that an attack had been made by the wild Arabs of the desert, were only prevented by the prudence of one of their companions from disarming the Christians and putting them to death.

On arriving at a castle, called by the Arabs Masroscah, Eaton learned, for the first time, that the caravan had been freighted by the Bashaw only to this place, and that the owners had received no part of their pay. They refused to proceed to Bomba, or to wait for the money, alleging that their engagement with the

Bashaw was already fulfilled. They were promised payment on condition of proceeding two days further, to which they finally assented. Eaton raised among his men a sufficient supply of money, added to what the Bashaw procured from his followers, to pay off the caravan; which being done, instead of performing their engagement, they deserted, and turned their steps towards Egypt.

A plot was discovered among some of the Arab chiefs to proceed no farther, until assurance was received that the American vessels had arrived at Bomba; a report having been put in circulation, that a body of eight hundred cavalry, and large foot forces, were on their march from Tripoli, for the defence of Derne. A resolution was finally taken, without consulting the commander, to remain on the spot, until a runner should go to Derne and return. Eaton immediately ordered their rations to be stopped. He resolved to seize the castle and fortify himself there, until relief could be procured from the squadron, and to draw off the Christians, leaving the Arabs to devise the means of their own subsistence and safety. This decided conduct had the effect of bringing back a part of the insurgents, who agreed to proceed two days further.

On the 26th of March, a courier brought in-

telligence from Derne, that five hundred of the reigning Bashaw's cavalry, accompanied by great numbers of Arabs, were but a few days' march from that place. This information produced great alarm in the camp; the Bashaw hesitated about proceeding further; the camel-drivers fled with their caravan, and the Arabs seemed determined to return to Fayoum. One of the principal chiefs, the Sheik el Tahib, refused to advance without certain intelligence of the American squadron at Bomba. Eaton reproached him with want of courage and fidelity. He left the camp in a rage, swearing that he would join them no more, and carried with him a small detachment of his tribe. The Bashaw was anxious to recall him, but Eaton refused to ask as a favor, what he claimed as a right, and immediately issued orders to march.

The Sheik, finding the commander was inflexible to threats, came back with his whole party. The following extracts from Eaton's Journal, show with what difficulties his progress through the desert was beset.

“*March 28th.* I perceived a manifest reluctance in the Bashaw to advance, and evident calculations for a retrograde march. Joseph Bashaw's forces had seized on all his nerves. He now took from my officers the horses he had given them for the passage through the desert,

and gave them to some of his footmen ; drew off his Mahometans, and stood balancing, after the troops were drawn up for the march. I reproached him with indecision, want of perseverance, and of consistency in arrangement. I demanded the horses for my officers. High words ensued. I ordered the march in front. The Bashaw retrograded. We proceeded in front with the baggage. The Bashaw came up in about two hours ; and, making us some compliments for our firmness, said he was obliged to dissemble an acquiescence in the wishes of his people to render them manageable. We proceeded twelve miles and a half to a castle *Shemees*, and camped at one o'clock, P. M. In the evening, discovered that the Arabs, who had joined us on the 25th, and who, as we expected, were following us, had all taken up their march for the borders of Egypt. The Sheik el Tahib had discouraged and dissuaded them from pursuing the expedition. The Bashaw sent off a general officer with sundry horsemen to bring them back by persuasion.

“ Hamet Gurgies, the officer who went for the Arabs, did not return this day.

“ *March 29th.* Remained in camp, waiting for Hamet Gurgies. At this castle, which is a rough stone wall, laid in clay mortar, about ten feet high, without bastions, and one hundred feet

square, there seems to be some trade with the inhabitants of the interior of Africa. We find here cattle, sheep, butter, fowls, eggs, and dates, but very dear; and for which we bartered rice at great disadvantage. The situation is enchanting; vast plains, capable of high cultivation; good well water, and some enclosed gardens of fig and palm trees. But every thing bears the ruinous aspect of ravage and war. About four P. M., Hamet Gurgies came up with the Arabs, who separated themselves from us on the 27th.

“*March 30th.* At six, A. M. resumed our march with the Christians and baggage, leaving the Bashaw to follow with his Arabs, who were mounted for the purpose. At this instant a dispute arose between the Sheik el Tahib and Sheik Mahamet, concerning the distribution of one thousand five hundred dollars, which the former had received of the Bashaw to be equally distributed, a part of which he had concealed; and grew so warm that Hamet swore he would proceed no farther. Three other Sheiks and several other considerable Arabs took part with him, and retrograded. The Bashaw in vain endeavored to reconcile the parties. Sheik Mahamet persisted in quitting the expedition, and with his party moved rapidly off. The Bashaw left them, and hastily pursued us, with a view of arresting our march, having sent back Hamet

Gurgies and two other officers to endeavor to recover the malecontents. We had gained fifteen miles ahead, when he came up with us at two o'clock, P. M. But it was necessary to retrograde three miles to water, and there encamp. The expedition could not proceed without those chiefs, as they had many people and powerful influence with the *Eu ed alli* tribe near Derne, to which they belong."

At five o'clock in the afternoon they encamped. The Bashaw, with twelve horsemen and the interpreter, returned to the castle, intending if possible to reconcile the Sheiks and bring up their party. This caused a new delay.

"From Alexandria to this place," says Eaton in his Journal, "we have experienced continual altercations, contentions, and delays among the Arabs. They have no sense of patriotism, truth, or honor; and no attachment where they have no prospect of gain, except to their religion, to which they are enthusiasts. Poverty makes them thieves, and practice renders them adroit in stealing. The instant the eye of vigilance is turned from an object on which they have fixed a desire, it is no more to be found. Arms, ammunition, and provisions most engage their furtive speculations; but sundry of our people have been robbed of their clothes and other articles. With all their de-

pravity of morals they possess a savage independence of soul, an incorrigible obstinacy to discipline, a sacred adherence to the laws of hospitality, and a scrupulous pertinacity to their religious faith and ceremonies. Day before yesterday I was admitted, as a mark of special distinction, within the walls of their castle. Curiosity brought every Arab about me who belonged to the tribe. They examined the lace of my hat, epaulettes, buttons, spurs, and mounting of my arms. These they took to be all gold and silver. They were astonished, *that God should permit people to possess such riches, who followed the religion of the Devil!*”

The interpreter undertook to explain to them that the religion of the American people differed from that of other nations who wore hats,—this being, in the eyes of the Arabs, the distinguishing mark of a Christian. He told them that they believed in God, and respected all his revelations, but made no distinction between the believers in different creeds; a statement, that puzzled them not a little. They had heard, however, that Eaton was a good man and a great friend of the Musselmans, and lamented, that, being an infidel, he must unquestionably be damned. They urged him to secure his admission to Mahomet's paradise by repeating after them a simple formulary, implying that

Mahomet was the prophet of God. He replied, that the Americans were promised a heaven distinct from that of the Papists and Musselmans, but that all good men would be admitted to it, and excursions would be allowed into the paradise of Mahomet and the heaven of the Pope. He told them that he was assured himself of a civil reception by those opposite prophets, inasmuch as he had many friends among the followers of both. They smiled at this representation, but confessed they should be glad to see him in their paradise, though they had some doubts whether Mahomet would allow him to come even on a visit, unless he professed his religion and became a true believer.

The Journal continues, "*April 1st.* Sheik el Tahib put himself at the head of five Sheiks, three of whom were of the caravan, and presented himself at my marquee, to demand an augmentation of the ration. I refused. He menaced. I reproached him as the cause of all our delays in the march, and with a total failure of all his engagements with me. He had engaged me four hundred mounted Arabs of his tribe at the Marabout, and to bring me to Bomba in fourteen days. His whole number of men consisted of but twenty-eight; we had now been twenty-five days in gaining half our distance; and, instead of encouraging our progress, he was on all occasions throw-



ing obstacles in our way. He recriminated the Bashaw and other Sheiks. I thought the Bashaw and Sheiks he accused were better men than himself; and would not hear them calumniated. He believed me partial. I said to him, if he had experienced any evidence of my partiality, it was in his favor until after his hypocrisy betrayed itself. It was true I now held him in no consideration, for I could place no reliance in any thing he said or undertook. He seemed very indifferent about the opinion I entertained of him, provided he could obtain his object. He cautioned me against persisting in the resolution I had taken not to augment the ration; it would unavoidably produce an insurrection. The other Sheiks and caravan would leave me. As for himself, he could not subsist on rice alone; he *would have bread also*. I asked him if he thought to compel the measure. He said, with a menacing tone, ‘Remember you are in a desert, *and a country not your own. I am a greater man here, than either you or the Bashaw.*’ I retorted; ‘I have found you at the head of every commotion, which has happened since we left Alexandria. You are the instigator of the present among the chiefs. Leave my tent! but mark; if I find a mutiny in camp during the absence of the Bashaw, I will put you to instant death as the fomentor of it.’ He left the

tent; mounted his horse; and, with two other Sheiks, took himself off. The Bashaw's hasnadar (treasurer) had been called into my tent on the entrance of the Sheik el Tahib. He had the influence to pacify the other chiefs, or to engage them to wait at least till the return of the Bashaw. At two o'clock the Sheik el Tahib returned; entered into the tent of my officers; regretted that he had lost my confidence; apprehended that some secret enemy had insinuated unfavorable impressions against him; was devoted to me; would even abandon the Bashaw to follow me; and begged Messrs. Farquhar and Peck to use their influence for a reconciliation.

"At five o'clock he came to my tent; professed eternal obligations and attachment; would seek every occasion to give proofs of it; and hoped that an opportunity would offer to him at Derne to convince me that he was a *man*!

"I replied, that I required nothing of him by way of reconciliation, but truth, fidelity to the Bashaw, pacific conduct among the other chiefs, uniformity and perseverance in this conduct. These he promised by an oath; and offered me his hand."

"Visited the Arab camp. Their young men, young women, and children are perfectly well made, and though copper-colored, are hand-

some. Never saw teeth so universally sound and white, even, and well set. The women do not veil; have nothing of the affected reserve and bigoted pride of the Turks; yet in their general deportment modest and bashful. I took dates in the tent of their principal Sheik; one of his wives served them in an osier pannier, and seemed elated with the visit. I complimented her elegant proportion and symmetry. She smiled, and said there were much handsomer young women in camp than herself. I doubted it. To give me proof, sundry fine girls and young married women were invited in. I admitted they were very handsome, but could not give up my first opinion."

On the 2d of April, the Bashaw returned with the Sheiks, who had left the party a few days before. He had overtaken them, at a distance of fifty-nine miles on the route to the province of Bahara, after riding all night and the following day, exposed to a fall of rain and severe winds, and subsisting on milk and dates, which were occasionally supplied by the Arabs of the desert.

The evening of the same day Eaton held a meeting of the Bashaw and all the Sheiks at his tent, and urged upon them the importance of union and perseverance to insure the success of the enterprise in which they were engaged. They

listened to his representations and pledged their honor to abide by his counsels; and orders were accordingly given to resume the march at the beat of the reveillee next morning. The whole number of effective men on the ground was found to be between six and seven hundred, exclusive of camp followers and Bedouin families. The movements of the following day are thus detailed.

“*April 3d.* Marched at six, A. M. Advanced only ten miles in front, when the Arabs pitched their camp and insisted on remaining here until they could send a caravan five days’ march into the interior of the desert, to a place called Seewauk to procure dates. We were in a valley upon the centre of a vast elevated plain, and had excellent cistern water. I urged the march ahead. The Arabs positively refused to proceed. They were short of provisions, and had no other resort. I said those wants would be supplied at Bomba. They replied, that this depended on contingency; we could not command the sea. I threatened to take off the Christians. They entreated I would halt till the next morning. To this I consented on condition, that they would solemnly promise to throw no more impediments in the way of our progress to Bomba, and that they would hereafter yield implicit obedience to my orders; threatening at the same time to embark with the

Bashaw and his suite at that place, and proceed directly to Tripoli, leaving them to contend for the provinces of Derne and Bengazi alone, in case of any infraction of these conditions. They pledged themselves; and we encamped. Their caravan went off for Seewauk, to join us again at Bomoa."

The following extract contains a still more striking picture.

"*April 8th.* Marched at six, A. M. Descended the western declivity of the mountain. At nine called a halt near a cistern of excellent rain water, excavated in a solid rock, at the bottom of a deep ravine, by the torrents of water and small stones which rush down the mountain by this avenue during the rainy season. This was a precious repast to our thirsty pilgrims. I went with a small party to survey the seacoast and reconnoitre the country, intending to pursue the march as soon as the army should have refreshed themselves. But, during my absence, the Bashaw ordered the camps pitched. On my return I demanded his reason for so doing. He answered, that the exhausted situation of the troops and people required at least one day's repose. I discovered, however, that his real intention was to remain on this ground until a courier should return, which he was about to despatch to Bomba in quest of

our vessels. We had only six days' rations of rice; no bread nor meat, and no small rations. I urged this circumstance as an impulsive reason why the march should continue. He said the Arab chiefs were resolved to proceed no farther till the camp should have recruited themselves by a little repose. I told him, if they preferred famine to fatigue, they might have the choice; and ordered their rations stopped. The day passed confusedly among them. At three, P. M. the Bashaw, compelled by his Arab host, struck his tent, ordered his baggage packed, mounted, and took up a march for Fiaume by the mountain. I waited without emotion the result of this movement, not choosing to betray a concern for ourselves. Discovering, however, an intention in the Arabs to seize our provisions, I beat to arms. My Christians formed a line in front of the magazine tent. Each party held an opposite position for the space of an hour. The Bashaw prevailed on the Arabs to return; they dismounted; and he pitched his tent.

“Supposing the tumult tranquillized, I ordered the troops to pass the manual exercise, according to our daily practice. In an instant the Arabs took an alarm; re-mounted, and exclaimed, ‘The Christians are preparing to fire on us!’ The Bashaw mounted and put himself at their head, apparently impressed with the same apprehension

A body of about two hundred advanced in full charge upon our people, who stood their ground motionless. The enemy withdrew at a small distance, singled out the officers, and, with deliberate aim, cried,— *Fire!* Some of the Bashaw's officers exclaimed, 'For God's sake do not fire! The Christians are our friends.' Mr. O'Bannon, Mr. Peck, and young Farquhar, stood firmly by me. Selem Aga, (captain of cannoniers,) his lieutenants, and the two Greek officers, remained steadfast at their post. The others were agitated, and in fact abandoned us. I advanced towards the Bashaw and cautioned him against giving countenance to a desperate act. At once a column of muskets were aimed at my breast. The Bashaw was distracted. A universal clamor drowned my voice. I waved my hand as a signal for attention. At this critical moment some of the Bashaw's officers and sundry Arab chiefs rode between us with drawn sabres and repelled the mutineers. I reproached the Bashaw for his rashness, or rather weakness. His hasnadar asked him if he was in his senses. The Bashaw struck him with his naked sabre. The fracas had nearly resumed its rage, when I took the Bashaw by the arm, led him from the crowd, and asked him if he knew his own interests and his friends! He relented; called me his friend and protector; said he was too

soon heated ; and followed me to my tent, giving orders at the same time to his Arabs to disperse. After a moment's breath, he said, if I would give orders to issue rice, it would quiet every thing. This I would not do on any other condition than his promise to march to-morrow morning at reveillee beating. He promised, and provisions were issued. Confessions of obligation and professions of attachment were repeated as usual on the part of the Bashaw and his officers ; and the camp again resumed its tranquillity. The firm and decided conduct of Mr. O'Bannon, as on all other occasions, did much to deter the violence of the savages by whom we were surrounded, as well as to support our own dignity and character. After the affair was over, the Bashaw embraced him with an enthusiasm of respect, calling him *the brave American*. The Chevalier Davies, my aid-de-camp, acted a part which I would rather attribute to an amiable disposition than to weakness of nerve. My doctor behaved decidedly like a coward, and a base one. Mr. Farquhar conducted with manly firmness. One of the Arabs, during the agitation, snapped a pistol at his breast. Happily it missed fire ; had it been otherwise, the fire would most probably have become general and the result serious.

“ We find it almost impossible to inspire these



wild bigots with confidence in us, or to persuade them, that, being Christians, we can be otherwise than enemies to Mussulmans. We have a difficult undertaking.”

The Bashaw continued to show signs of distrust. It had been intimated to him, that the Americans designed to use him only for the purpose of obtaining a peace with his brother, and the intimation filled him with alarm. How much ground existed for this suspicion will appear in the sequel. A council of war was held on the 10th of April, and an insurmountable reluctance was manifested, on the part of the Arabs, and some of the Bashaw's people, to proceeding further without intelligence of the squadron. Eaton was forced to yield, and agreed to halt after two days' further march.

Happily the courier, who had been despatched to Bomba, arrived the same evening, with information that the vessels were off that place and Derne. In an instant the gloom and discontent were changed to enthusiastic rejoicings. The Arabs resumed their confidence, and the Bashaw promised to force the remainder of the march to Bomba. In five days more, having endured great hardship from want of provisions and water, they reached that long desired port; but Eaton was astonished to find there no trace of a human being, and no indications of the

vessels. The Arabs became outrageous and abusive, and resolved to depart the next morning. Eaton proposed to attempt reaching Derne, but it was thought impracticable. Finally, he drew off with his Christian followers, and kept up fires on a mountain in the rear all night. At eight the next morning the discovery of a sail spread joy and exultation through the camp.

It proved to be the *Argus*. Captain Hull had seen the fires and stood in. Provisions were sent ashore for the suffering troops. The next day the sloop *Hornet* arrived, with a still further supply. The army passed three days in refreshing themselves after their weary march, and making preparations for continuing it to Derne. Their journey was resumed on the 23d, and they now began to approach cultivated fields. Measures were taken to prevent pillage. A herald proclaimed throughout the camp, "He who fears God and feels attachment to Hamet Bashaw, will be careful to destroy nothing. Let no one touch the growing harvest. He who transgresses this injunction shall lose his right hand." On the 24th they encamped in a pleasant valley, about five hours' march from Derne. Information was received, that the governor had taken his position, and was determined to defend the city, and that the army of the reigning Bashaw was in the neighborhood, and would

probably, by a forced march, arrive at Derne first.

The Arabs were again alarmed, and the Bashaw desponded. The next morning, when orders were given to march, the Arabs mutinied, and the Bedouins refused to strike their tents. By persuasions, reproaches, and the promise of two thousand dollars to be shared among the chiefs, they were prevailed on to advance, and the same afternoon the camp was pitched on an eminence overlooking Derne, from which the place was reconnoitred. The governor's defence was found to consist of a water battery of eight nine pounders towards the northeast, a few temporary breastworks and walls of old buildings on the southeast; and on the front of the bay, about one third of the inhabitants, in the interest of the reigning Bashaw, had provided their terraces and the walls of their houses with loopholes. The governor had also mounted a howitzer on the terrace of his palace. Several Sheiks came out in the evening to visit the Bashaw, and assured him, that the remaining two thirds of the inhabitants were loyal to his person, but that, as the governor could bring eight hundred men into the field, and was master of all the batteries, the breastworks, and the seaboard, it would be difficult to dislodge him.

The next day the *Nautilus* came in sight,

and the *Argus* and *Hornet* the day after. On his first arrival, Eaton had sent in to the governor a flag of truce, which was returned, with the laconic answer, "My head or yours." The morning of the 27th, the army was put in motion towards the city. The *Nautilus* and *Hornet* approached the shore, and one of the field-pieces was drawn up the precipice. The troops advanced to their positions, and a fire commenced on the shipping, which was returned by Lieutenant Evans, who stood in and anchored within a hundred yards of the battery, and by Lieutenant Dent, who had taken a position, from which he brought his guns to bear on the battery and the city. Captain Hull anchored the *Argus* near enough to throw a twenty-four pound shot into the town. A detachment of six American marines, a company of twenty-four cannoniers, another of thirty-six Greeks, under the command of Lieutenant O'Bannon, with a few Arabs, occupied a position opposite the enemy, who had taken post behind their temporary parapets at the southeast quarter of the town. The Bashaw seized a castle overlooking the town on the south-southeast, and posted his cavalry on the plain in the rear. The firing became general before two o'clock, wherever Americans and Tripolitans were opposed. The battery was silenced in three quarters of an hour

and most of the enemy precipitately withdrew from that quarter to reinforce the party opposed to Eaton and his handful of men. The fire of the fieldpiece being slackened by the loss of the rammer, and the discharge of the enemy's musketry continually increasing, the troops were thrown into confusion, and it was impossible to reduce them to order. Eaton was convinced that a charge was the last resort, and accordingly rushed with his men against a body of the enemy ten times his number. They fled, keeping up an irregular fire from the palm trees and walls in their way.

At this moment Eaton received a ball through his left wrist, which disabled him from using his rifle. Mr. O'Bannon pressed on with his marines, the Greeks, and as many of the cannoniers as could be spared from the fieldpiece. They passed through a shower of musketry, took possession of the battery, and planted the American flag on its ramparts. The guns were turned upon the enemy, who were driven from their outposts, and took refuge in the houses, from which they were speedily dislodged by a heavy and well directed fire poured into them from the vessels. The Bashaw took possession of the governor's palace, and a little after four o'clock the troops had entire possession of the

town, the battle having raged about two hours and a half.

The governor took sanctuary in the harem of an old Sheik, in a division of the city favorable to the Bashaw. He was demanded of the aged chief; but neither persuasion, bribes, nor menace could overcome his determination not to suffer the hospitality of his house to be violated. He declared, that, whatever might be the weakness or crimes of the Arabs, no instance was known among them of giving up a fugitive to whom they had once accorded their protection; and, should he transgress that sacred principle, the vengeance of God, and the odium of all mankind, would justly fix on him and his posterity. Finding that the governor, Mustapha Bey, though shut up in his sanctuary, was an active, intriguing, and dangerous enemy, Eaton determined to seize him by force; but the demonstrations of resistance, even among the friendly inhabitants, were so unequivocal, that he soon found it prudent to desist from the attempt. "The Christians no longer respect the customs of our fathers and the laws of hospitality," was the universal outcry, and all Eaton's arguments were unavailing. That night the Sheik aided the governor to escape to the enemy's camp, with a retinue of fifteen or sixteen Turks.

Five or six days were employed in putting

themselves in as good a state of defence, as the means they possessed rendered possible. Eaton took up his post in the battery, raised parapets, and mounted guns, to be prepared for all events. The moment of gaining Derne was peculiarly fortunate, as the army, sent from Tripoli for its defence, was less than three days' march distant on the day of the attack.

Contrary to Eaton's expectations, the Tripolitan troops, being joined by the governor of Derne, advanced upon the town and offered battle. An engagement took place on the 13th of May. The enemy attacked a detachment of about one hundred of Hamet's cavalry, who were posted a mile from the town. The detachment was overpowered by superior numbers, and pursued into the city, and almost to the palace held by the Bashaw, whose supporters opened upon the pursuers a warm fire of musketry. The guns from the *Argus* and *Nautilus*, and from the battery, together with the field-pieces, were kept in continual action; but, such an obstinate determination to seize the person of the Bashaw was manifested, that Eaton began to fear the day was lost. Not being able to make a sortie for the Bashaw's relief, on account of the weakness of his post, he turned his guns upon the town, and a shot from one of the nine-pounders killing two of the enemy near the palace,

a retreat was instantly sounded, the town was abandoned at all points, and the enemy were pursued by Hamet's cavalry, under the shot of the vessels, which galled them severely in their flight. Before three o'clock in the afternoon, the city was reduced to tranquillity, and the enemy were to be seen only on the neighboring heights. The loss of the Tripolitans was twenty-eight men killed and fifty-six wounded. Of the Bashaw's troops, the killed and wounded amounted only to twelve or fourteen.

In the following days several attempts were made by the Tripolitans to renew the assault. They endeavored to collect camels for the security of their front and flanks, and surrounded their camp with parapets. But the Arabs were afraid to advance within reach of the cannon, and refused to use their camels as breastworks. Eaton was desirous of attacking their position by a *coup de main*; but circumstances prevented the attempt. The enemy continued to show themselves in a menacing attitude. A company of fifty or sixty foot, covered by a troop of horse, fell upon several Arab families, who were encamped in the rear of the town, and drove off cattle and camels. They were pursued, three of them were killed and wounded, and the plunder was retaken. Eaton marched out from the garrison with a small detachment, with a view



of cutting off their retreat. They made but a momentary resistance, and fled before a charge of the bayonet. Their captain and five men were killed, and two taken prisoners. The enemy's camp beat to arms, moved towards the pursuing party in a body, but did not approach within musket-shot, fearing to be drawn into an ambuscade.

The next morning they resolved to avenge themselves by an attack, advanced with their whole force, and took post on an eminence in full view of the town. Preparations were made to receive them ; but, when orders were given for the attack, the Arabs mutinied and marched off, and the Tripolitans were compelled to follow them. On the 2d of June another attempt was made with similar success. The Arabs refused to advance, alleging, that they were willing to fight an enemy in their own mode of warfare, but would have nothing to do with Americans, who fired enormous balls, that carried away men and camels together, or rushed on them with bayonets, without giving them time to load their muskets. Another attack was feigned the following day, which was repelled with loss. On the 11th of June, the enemy, having received fresh reinforcements of Arabs, appeared on the heights that overlooked the town, but seemed irresolute. There was only one pass

through the steep and rough ledge of rocks, on the side of the mountain, through which cavalry could descend. About half way between this pass and the town, the Bashaw had posted a small body of cavalry to serve as videttes. A large detachment of the enemy descended the pass to cut off the post, but were resisted and repelled. Small reinforcements came up on both sides, until the battle became general. The *Argus* annoyed them with her shot, whenever they were uncovered from the ridges, and one of the fieldpieces was occasionally brought to bear on them from the advanced battery. The action lasted four hours, when the enemy gave way and were chased back to the pass in the mountain, and many of their horses were left in the hands of the victors. The number of the Bashaw's killed and wounded was between fifty and sixty; the enemy lost between forty and fifty killed, and had upwards of seventy wounded. The battle was fought chiefly under the direction of the Bashaw. Eaton had doubts whether he should be justified in continuing offensive operations, for reasons which will appear in what is about to be related.

Colonel Tobias Lear had been appointed consul-general of the United States at Algiers, and commissioner to negotiate a peace with Tripoli. He was instructed to act under the advice of

Commodore Barron, commander of the American forces in the Mediterranean, as to the selection of a favorable moment to open the negotiation. That moment had now arrived, in the opinion of the commodore, and he hastened to communicate this opinion to the consul. Accordingly he repaired to Tripoli in the United States frigate *Essex*, and opened a communication with the Bashaw. The Bashaw demanded two hundred thousand dollars for peace and ransom, the delivery of all the Tripolitans, and the restoration of their property. These terms were rejected at once, and the *ultimatum* proposed was a mutual delivery of prisoners; and, as the Bashaw held about two hundred more than the Americans, the payment of sixty thousand dollars for their ransom. To prevent fruitless altercation, the consul refused to go on shore until these terms were formally acceded to. On the 3d of June the preliminaries were completed, and sent off to the *Essex*, with the Bashaw's seal. The consul immediately went on shore, and the officers and crew of the frigate *Philadelphia*, who were held in captivity, were immediately set at liberty. The bravery of the Americans at Derne, and the idea that they had a large force and abundant supplies at that place, had made a strong impression on the Bashaw. The consul took advantage of this impression, and

endeavored to make an arrangement favorable to the exile; but he could only persuade the Bashaw to engage, that, if his brother would withdraw peaceably from his dominions, his wife and children should be restored to him.

These facts were speedily communicated to Eaton, with orders to evacuate Derne, agreeably to the articles of stipulation between Mr. Lear and the Bashaw of Tripoli, by Commodore Rogers, who had succeeded Commodore Barron in the command of the squadron. The information filled Eaton with disappointment and indignation. He had looked forward with enthusiastic ardor to the prospect of driving the usurper from his throne, reinstating the exiled brother, and setting the American captives free, without conditions and without ransom. He anticipated with pride, that by his means and through his agency the United States would inflict a signal chastisement on an unprincipled usurper and pirate, and teach the other regencies a lesson of respect for the American name, which they would not be likely soon to forget. He felt, moreover, that the honor of the country was pledged to the cause of Hamet Caramelli, and that to desert him at this period, when perfect success seemed on the point of crowning the enterprise, would justly expose the American people to the charge of selfishness and bad faith.

Lear's friends

It would show a disposition on their part to use the unfortunate exile so far as his influence and his name promoted their own interests, by holding up the delusive expectation of coöperation to the end; but, the moment the reigning Bashaw should be frightened into the acceptance of moderate terms of peace, to leave the unhappy prince to his fate. It was seen, that his condition would now be worse, than if the enterprise had never been attempted.

The terms on which peace was concluded met Eaton's decided reprobation. The payment of sixty thousand dollars for the prisoners of war, "but not a cent for peace," he regarded as an insult to the understanding of the people; because, he very justly argued, the capital of the largest province in the Bashaw's dominions, containing twelve or fifteen thousand inhabitants, was in the possession of the Americans, and the enemy despaired of recovering it by force of arms. So far, therefore, from not paying a cent for peace, a kingdom had been surrendered to secure it, a concession which he pronounced needless and prodigal.

Eaton's representations were unavailing, and he was obliged to comply. His situation was certainly embarrassing, and, to a man of his ardent temperament, mortifying in the extreme. Perhaps his own wishes led him to attribute

more meaning to his instructions from the commanders in the squadron, than an unprejudiced reader would discover there. Certain it is, he had no idea, that the Bashaw was to be used merely as an instrument of bringing about a peace with the usurper; and, when Hamet had been alarmed by an insinuation to that effect, in the early part of the march across the desert, he took the greatest pains to do it away. There can be no doubt, that his anticipations of success in an attack on Tripoli would have been completely fulfilled. The victories already gained, the popularity of Hamet's cause, the hatred of the people for the tyrannical usurper, the distress caused by the blockade, and the wholesome terror inspired by the exploits of the American arms by sea and land, held out every prospect of entire success.

Such being the state of things, it must be admitted, that Mr. Lear was too precipitate in his overtures. The least he was justified in demanding was an unconditional surrender of all American prisoners, a peace on the terms of the most favored nations, and stipulations for the entire security of Hamet and his followers, under the guarantee of the United States. The Bashaw would have been forced to yield every one of these demands, or, if he refused, the Americans would have been fully justified in

marching upon his capital, and driving him from his throne. The payment of the money was adding another link to the long chain of disgraceful concessions made by Christian nations to the exactions of the Barbary pirates.

That the Americans were bound to proceed with Hamet at all events, is more than can fairly be asserted; on the contrary, it seems evident, that they were bound to accept an honorable peace, whenever the reigning Bashaw saw fit to propose it. They had nothing to do with the fact of his being a usurper; he had been the recognised sovereign of Tripoli, and diplomatic agents from the United States had been received and acknowledged at his court. To interfere, then, in the internal affairs of the kingdom, by assuming an arbitration upon the claims of two rivals contending for the throne, might, with some appearance of justice, have been condemned in the eyes of the world as a departure from the usages of nations, and an unwarrantable violation of the principles that regulate the intercourse of sovereign states.

The despatches of Mr. Lear and Commodore Rogers were communicated by Captain Campbell, of the frigate *Constellation*, who informed Eaton, that he had been instructed by the commander of the squadron, to receive the garrison on board his ship. On the 11th of June, the

Lear  
vs.  
Campbell

captain went on shore, and was accompanied by Eaton to the town. The Bashaw was immediately informed of the peace concluded between the United States and his brother, and the stipulation, that his family should be restored to him on condition of his withdrawing quietly from the kingdom. He was alarmed at the danger of his situation, and said, that his only hope of safety was in leaving the country with them; and even this would be impossible for him, and hazardous to them, if the project should transpire before it was carried into effect. Eaton therefore kept up the idea of an attack on the enemy, which was the more easily done, in consequence of a report put in circulation, that a reinforcement had arrived in the frigate for this very purpose. Ammunition and extra rations were ordered to be distributed among the Moorish and Arab troops, and spies were despatched to ascertain the enemy's position. The garrison were inspected and directed to hold themselves in readiness to advance. At eight o'clock in the evening patrols were stationed to stop all intercourse between the town and the port, occupied by the Americans. In the mean time the boats of the *Constellation* were laid along side the wharf, and the captain of the cannoniers was ordered to embark his company first, and after them the Greeks



This manœuvre was executed with promptness and silence, and a messenger was despatched to the Bashaw requesting an interview. He immediately came with his retinue, and embarked in the boats. The marines and American officers followed. When all were fairly off, Eaton stepped into a small boat, and had just time to get to a safe distance from the shore, when the alarmed soldiery and populace crowded to the camp, the battery, and the coast, with cries of terror and bursts of execration. The tents and horses that were left were seized, and preparations were immediately made for flight. The garrison, with the Bashaw and his suite, were on board the *Constellation* about two o'clock in the morning, and, before daybreak, the Arabs, and such inhabitants of the town as were able to make their escape, fled to the mountains.

In the morning, a messenger from Tripoli went ashore under a flag of truce, carrying letters of amnesty from the reigning Bashaw to the people of Derne, on condition of their returning to their allegiance. They rejected his offer of pardon, declaring, that they knew the Bashaw's perfidy too well to be ensnared by it, and were resolved to defend themselves, to the last moment, against his troops. "In a few minutes more," says Eaton, writing on board the *Constellation*, "we shall lose sight of this

devoted city, which has experienced as strange a reverse, in so short a time, as was ever recorded in the disasters of war, thrown from proud success and elevated prospects into an abyss of hopeless wretchedness. Six hours ago, the enemy were seeking safety from them by flight; this moment we drop them from ours into the hands of the enemy, for no other crime but too much confidence in us. The man, whose fortunes we have followed thus far, experiences a reverse as striking. He falls, from the most flattering prospects of a kingdom, to beggary."

The duties annexed to Eaton's appointment as Navy Agent of the United States, having ceased with the war, he requested of Commodore Rogers to grant him a passage in the first ship that should be sent home from his squadron. He arrived at Syracuse towards the end of June, where he was detained some time in settling the business growing out of the expedition to Derne, which caused him some trouble and perplexity. He endeavored to prevail on Hamet, who was with him at Syracuse, to accompany him to the United States, but unsuccessfully. The unfortunate man determined to remain for the present, in the hope of making some arrangement with the king of the two Sicilies, against the reigning Bashaw, and, as a last resort, to return to Upper Egypt.

On the 6th of August, 1805, Eaton took passage for the United States, and arrived at Hampton Roads in November, having touched at Malta, Tunis, Gibraltar, and Madeira. He was received with lively demonstrations of respect by the citizens of Richmond, who tendered him the honor of a public dinner. The same distinction awaited him in Washington.

His brilliant services to the country in the war with Tripoli had given him an enviable reputation throughout the United States. It was generally agreed, that his exertions had compelled the Bashaw to offer terms of peace; and that, if the treaty had not been so hastily concluded, and the naval force in the Mediterranean had properly sustained him, he would in a short time have made himself master of Tripoli, dictated his own terms of peace, and prevented the necessity of any further tribute to the Barbary powers. In the President's message to Congress, his name was mentioned with distinguished honor; but the measures of Lear were supported by the administration. With his usual warmth and imprudence, Eaton commented severely on that gentleman's conduct, and thus gave much offence in the political circles of Washington. The quickness of his temper, and some peculiarities of manners, no doubt, excited strong prejudices against him in the minds of

many, and probably had their influence in repressing the disposition of Congress to acknowledge his services in the manner their importance deserved

## CHAPTER XII.

*Eaton's Visit to Brimfield. — Return to Washington. — Proceedings of the House of Representatives. — Resolve passed by the Massachusetts Legislature. — Eaton's Deposition on the Trial of Burr. — Final Adjustment of his Claims. — Election to the Legislature by the Inhabitants of Brimfield. — His Conduct as Representative. — Failure of Reëlection. — Death of his Step-son. — Correspondence with the Ex-Bashaw and other Friends. — Speech in Town Meeting at Brimfield. — Last Illness, and Death. — Character.*

IN the December following his return to the United States, Eaton visited his family in Brimfield. In the principal cities and towns on the way, he was complimented with public dinners, and other expressions of popular respect. He remained but a short time at home. His business with the government demanded immediate attention and a speedy return to Washington. His services having been publicly noticed in the President's message, a resolution was introduced into the House of Representatives of the United States, to present him with a medal in com-

memoration of his brilliant enterprise. The resolution, after a debate of great warmth, was negated by a small majority.

The Legislature of Massachusetts, however, treated him in a very different manner. They passed a resolve, with a suitable preamble, authorizing the committee for the sale of eastern lands, to convey to him, his heirs, and assigns, a tract of ten thousand acres of any of the unappropriated land of the Commonwealth in the District of Maine, and the Governor was requested to transmit to him an authentic copy.

In the autumn of 1806, Eaton was solicited to become a candidate for a seat in Congress for Hampshire South District. Two gentlemen, representing the respective parties into which the district, as well as the country, was divided, had already appeared in the field. Many citizens, fearing disastrous measures from the violence of party spirit, were desirous of being represented by some person of high character, unpledged to any set of public measures, and fixed their eyes on Eaton. He instantly replied in the following manly terms.

“I have really no ambition, in the existing state of our national affairs and political relations, to take on me the high responsibility of representing this district in Congress. I have already refused to be named as a *party* candi-

date, because, believing it possible, that both parties may have permitted themselves to become too much adherents to *party*, a pledge to either would tend to cramp the freedom of de liberation.

“From this expression of my feelings, you may naturally draw, Sir, a conclusion of my political sentiments. We want more union, more energy, more of the temper of accommodation. The *names* Federalism and Democracy, which, at this moment, split the affections of our countrymen, ought to be lost in the proud name of *American*. Till this event happens, I fear we shall continue to be weak at home, disrespected abroad. With these candid declarations before you, and deciding on them, use my name, Sir, if you think it may be used to the service of my country.” The wishes of Eaton’s friends, however, were not gratified. He never became a member of the House of Representatives of the United States.

During the session of 1806–7, Eaton was again at Washington, occupied with the adjustment of his accounts. A bill was passed in the month of February, and approved by President Jefferson, authorizing and directing the proper accounting officers to liquidate and settle them upon just and equitable principles, under the direction of the Secretary of State. He had

first, however, addressed the Chairman of the Committee of Claims in the following terms.

“Washington City, February 9th, 1807.

“SIR,

“On a review of the statement accompanying my petition of 20th February, 1804, now before this honorable Committee, I cannot find a paragraph which needs correction or modification. That statement surveys the chief ground and origin of my claims. Have the goodness, Sir, to pass attentively over it; and to carry forward, in the examination, a view of the events which have since occurred to establish the correctness of the measures there alluded to. It will satisfy you that a perseverance in those measures has given *peace* to this country, and *emancipation* to three hundred of our fellow citizens; and that, while it has done something to stamp a good impression on the pirates of Barbary, it has saved your treasury more than a million of dollars. My reward, hitherto, is penury and wounds! I ought not, perhaps, to say this; it carries something which savors of reproach; this I do not mean. I have nowhere been *refused* indemnity. On the contrary, three years ago, when as yet the effects of my arrangements had not been realized, your Committee expressed an opinion that I *had a well founded claim on the government.*



“But the delay, in the decision necessary to a reimbursement of my expenditures, has greatly distressed me in my individual concerns; expenditures of which my country now reap the profit; and of which a vast majority of my countrymen appear to be very sensible.

“I do not present myself here to ask alms, nor to expect gratuities; nor yet to draw on your sensibility to awaken a consideration for all the sacrifices to which I yielded, in standing to the duties of my station at the court of a piratical despot, and on the coast of a savage enemy. You cannot make me such indemnity; you cannot, Sir, under any shape I can present the claim, award me a remuneration for the sacrifices of property incident to the vexations, impositions, and proscriptions which the Bey of Tunis practised on me in consequence of my resistance to his unwarrantable exactions against the United States. You cannot bring back to me nine years of active life; you cannot restore to me the strength of an arm. But for actual disbursements for the benefit of our common country, whether voluntary or extorted, I have a right again to resort to your justice, and to believe that this justice will be no longer delayed

“It is only fit here, therefore, that I avow the perfect confidence I feel, Sir, in the dispo-

sition and the righteousness of this Committee to give my claims a deliberate and a seasonable review, and an equitable award.

“With regard, however, to the last item of my charge, it should be remarked, *this was not originally intended to be brought against the United States*. I had faith, that the honor of the court of Sardinia would redeem the paper of a nobleman charged with the high trust of a national negotiator; and, in case of failure here, had confidence in the exertions of the son of that nobleman to reimburse me the cash I was compelled to pay, as his surety, for the redemption of the child of his affection, and for the honor of his family. I should, undoubtedly, have realized these confidences, had not a dispensation of the government of the United States (unacquainted with the usages of that country) released the surety held at Tunis for the debt, and been construed by the Chevalier Porcille as a generous acquittal of the debtor. A reimbursement ought to come from the court of Sardinia to our government. Papers touching this transaction are submitted with my other documents.

“The heavy expenses incident to an appeal to this Chancery for such a length of time as I have been before you, and at so great a distance from my home, together with the circum

stances of these private funds lying so long useless to me, have necessarily laid me under pecuniary responsibility to my friends. The suspense of another year must lodge me in a *prison*.

“If you find, Sir, that I have been upright to my country, let my country, by a reciprocity, now enable me to ransom myself. I have the honor to be, &c.

“WILLIAM EATON.”

In May of this year, Eaton was elected by the citizens of Brimfield to represent them in the Legislature of Massachusetts. He was unable to take his seat at the first session, having been summoned to attend as a witness, before the court in Richmond, on the celebrated trial of Aaron Burr for high treason. Great efforts were made by the prisoner and his counsel to destroy the testimony of Eaton, particularly by the evidence of Colonel Gaither; but, though suspicions remained in the minds of some, that he had listened too favorably to the seductive propositions of Burr, his testimony was not invalidated, and his defence of his proceedings and character must be regarded by every candid mind as perfectly successful. In his deposition, he gave a full and minute account of his intercourse with Colonel Burr, and its termination. After recapitulating the heads of the treasonable

scheme that had been explained to him, he proceeds as follows.

“I listened to the exposition of Colonel Burr’s views with seeming acquiescence. Every interview convinced me more and more, that he had organized a deep-laid plot of treason in the West, in the accomplishment of which he felt fully confident. Till, at length, I discovered, that his ambition was not bounded by the waters of the Mississippi, and Mexico, but that he meditated overthrowing the present government of our country. He said, if he could gain over the marine corps, and secure the naval commanders, Truxton, Preble, Decatur, and others, *he would turn Congress neck and heels out of doors; assassinate the President; seize on the treasury and navy; and declare himself the protector of an energetic government.*

“The honorable trust of corrupting the marine corps, and of sounding Commodore Preble and Captain Decatur, Colonel Burr proposed confiding to me. Shocked at this proposition, I dropped the mask, and exclaimed against his views. He talked of the degraded situation of our country, and the necessity of a *blow*, by which its energy and its dignity should be restored; said, if that blow could be struck here at this time, he was confident of the support of the best blood of America. I told Colonel

Burr he deceived himself in presuming, that he, or any other man, could excite a party in this country, who would countenance him in such a plot of desperation, murder, and treason. He replied that he, perhaps, knew better the dispositions of the influential citizens of this country, than I did. I told him one solitary word would destroy him. He asked what word? I answered, *Usurper!* He smiled at my hesitation, and quoted some great examples in his favor. I observed to him, that I had lately travelled from one extreme of the Union to the other; and, though I found a diversity of political opinion among the people, they appeared united at the most distant aspect of national danger. That, for the section of the Union to which I belonged, I would vouch, should he succeed in the first instance here, he would within six weeks afterwards have his throat cut by Yankee militia.

“Though wild and extravagant Mr. Burr’s last project, and though fraught with premeditated slaughter, I felt very easy on the subject, because its defeat he had deposited in my own hands. I did not feel so secure concerning that of disjoining the Union. But the very interesting and embarrassing situation, in which his communications placed me, left me, I confess, at a stand to know how to conduct myself with

propriety. He had committed no overt act of aggression against law. I could draw nothing from him in writing; nor could I learn, that he had exposed his plans to any person near me, by whom my testimony could be supported. He had mentioned to me no persons who were principally and decidedly engaged with him, except General Wilkinson, a Mr. Alston, who I found was his son-in-law, and a Mr. Ephraim Kibby, late a captain of rangers in General Wayne's army. Satisfied that Mr. Burr was resolute in pushing his project of rebellion in the west of the Allegany, and apprehensive that it was too well and too extensively organized to be easily suppressed; though I dreaded the weight of his character when laid in the balance against my solitary assertion, I brought myself to the resolution to endeavor to defeat it, by getting him removed from among us, or to expose myself to all consequences by a disclosure of his intentions. Accordingly, I waited on the President of the United States; and, after some desultory conversation, in which I aimed to draw his view to the westward, I used the freedom to say to the President, I thought Mr. Burr should be sent out of this country, and gave for reason, that I believed him dangerous in it. The President asked where he should be sent? I mentioned London and Cadiz. The President

thought the trust too important, and seemed to entertain a doubt of Mr. Burr's integrity. I intimated that no one, perhaps, had stronger grounds to mistrust Mr. Burr's moral integrity than myself; yet I believed ambition so much predominated over him, that, when placed on an eminence and put on his honor, respect to himself would ensure his fidelity; his talents were unquestionable.

“I perceived the subject was disagreeable to the President; and, to give it the shortest course to the point, declared my concern, that, if *Mr. Burr were not in some way disposed of, we should, within eighteen months, have an insurrection if not a revolution, on the waters of the Mississippi.* The President answered, *that he had too much confidence in the information, the integrity, and the attachment to the Union,* of the citizens of that country, to admit an *apprehension* of the kind. I am happy, that events prove this confidence well placed. As no interrogatories followed my expression of alarm, I thought silence on the subject, at that time and place, became me. But I detailed, about the same time, the whole projects of Mr. Burr to certain members of Congress. They believed Colonel Burr capable of any thing, and agreed, that *the fellow ought to be hanged*; but thought his projects too chimerical, and his circumstances

too desperate, to give the subject the merit of serious consideration. The total security of feeling in those to whom I had rung the tocsin, induced me to suspect my own apprehensions unseasonable, or at least too deeply admitted; and, of course I grew indifferent about the subject.

“Mr. Burr’s visits to me became less frequent, and his conversation less familiar. He appeared to have abandoned the idea of a general revolution, but seemed bent on that of the Mississippi; and, although I could perceive symptoms of distrust in him towards me, he manifested great solicitude to engage me with him in the enterprise. Weary of his importunity, and at once to convince him of my serious attachments, I gave the following toast to the public.

“‘The *United States*. — Palsy to the brain that should plot to dismember, and leprosy to the hand, that will not draw to defend *our union!*’

“I doubt whether the sentiment was better understood by any of my acquaintance than Colonel Burr. Our intercourse ended here; we met but seldom afterward. I returned to my farm in Massachusetts, and thought no more of Mr. Burr, nor his empire, till some time late in September or in the beginning of October, when a letter from Morris Belknap, of Marietta, to



Timothy E. Danielson, fell into my hands at Brimfield, which satisfied me that Mr. Burr had actually commenced his preparatory operations on the Ohio. I now spoke publicly of the fact; transmitted a copy of the letter from Belknap to the Department of State, and, about the same time, forwarded, through the hands of the Postmaster-General, to the President of the United States, a statement, in substance, of what is here above detailed concerning the Mississippi conspiracy of the said Colonel Aaron Burr; which is said to have been the first formal intelligence received by the executive on the subject of the conspirator being in motion."

The preceding extract contains all that is essential to Eaton's defence. The whole document is extremely curious, as an illustration of the ambitious enterprise of the most turbulent spirit, that ever interrupted the repose of the United States.

Eaton returned to Brimfield, after having concluded the business that had summoned him from home, and took his seat in the Legislature of Massachusetts in December. The town which he represented was decidedly Federal, and of course expected him to shape his political course according to the doctrines of that party. But Eaton had been absent in foreign service during the most active years of party contention, and,

though he agreed in general with the political views of the Federalists, he felt as yet none of that wholesale party zeal, that sacrifices every thing else to party objects. The state of his mind is fairly exhibited in the letter quoted in a preceding page. Accordingly, he refused to surrender his individual sentiments, and expressed himself with a degree of freedom, and perhaps imprudence, that gave great offence to the Federal leaders.

It was charged against him, that he attempted to win the good opinion of both parties, and the charge is seemingly supported by his biographer, but without the slightest foundation. In the whole course of his public career, his conduct was such as to forbid such a supposition upon any candid construction of motives and actions. He carried his freedom of opinion and expression to a faulty excess, which created many enemies, public and private. The fanaticism of party spirit in free countries is as intolerant as fanaticism in religion. Individual opinions are restrained by a tyranny as inexorable, as that of the Holy Vehme, the secret tribunals of the Middle Ages. Let the politician venture to oppose a measure of the party to which he is supposed to belong, or express an opinion varying in the least from the received standard of political orthodoxy, and no epithets of abuse

are too vile to be applied to his conduct; no baseness too deep to be imputed to his motives; no punishment within the power of his self-constituted and inexorable judges, too severe to be inflicted, by wounding his sensibility, if not by injuring his person. No matter how pure his private life, how stainless his honor, how brilliant his talents, how venerable his age, how numerous and important his services to the republic; the claims of purity, of honor, of talents, of age, of public service, are drowned by the senseless cries of the multitude; his character is offered up, and his prospects blighted, to appease the wrath of men, who are unworthy to loosen the latchet of his shoes.

In the spring of 1808, Eaton was again summoned to appear as a witness, in the trial of a person charged with being an accomplice of Burr, before the District Court of the United States, then sitting in Philadelphia. On his return, he was mortified to learn, that the disapprobation of his conduct, as a member of the legislature, had prevented his reelection by his fellow citizens. This disappointment, and the failure of other expectations, particularly of receiving a military command in the army of the United States, deeply affected his mind. His pecuniary affairs became embarrassed, and his manners and conduct in social life were not

such as to conciliate the favor of those who surrounded him. The activity and excitement of his busiest years; the singular scenes he had witnessed; the strange manners of the people he had so long dwelt among, had, in fact, unfitted him for the quiet pursuits of civil life. He was unequal to the contest with disappointed hopes and pecuniary embarrassments, and gave himself up to misanthropy and despair, except in moments of intemperate indulgence; a temptation which became at last too strong to be resisted.

In August of this year, his domestic peace was deeply wounded by the death of his beloved step-son, the favorite companion of his adventures at Derne, E. E. Danielson, who fell in a duel with a naval officer, at New York. The feelings expressed in his reply to Lieutenant Babbit, of the Navy, who had communicated the sad event, are too honorable to his head and heart to be omitted in this place.

“Brimfield, August 14th, 1808.

“DEAR SIR,

“The sympathy you manifest in the event which occurred on the 5th instant, so afflicting to myself and family, receives our unaffected acknowledgments.

“I wish Danielson might have lived to the usefulness of which he was capable. But who can parry the arrow of death! The *when* and

the *where* we receive the shock is of less consequence than the *how*. I have always flattered myself, that your friend could not die unlike a brave man ; but it pains me that the ground of his fall had not been marked with more usefulness to his country. Brave, great, and experienced men may sometimes find it necessary to their reputation, that they meet in personal contest. This may be justified where the fate of a nation is depending ; such occurrences are rare ; but the *trivial* disputes, which excite ardent young men to put life up at a game of hazard, cannot be reconciled to principles of morality, patriotism, or character. Danielson wanted no tests of his bravery ; young as he was, experience had tested this. I lament more the absence of his prudence, than I should the loss we feel, had he fallen in the legitimate field of glory. The manner of Hamilton's death added nothing to the lustre of his fame ; and the circumstance of Burr's killing him gave no man the more confidence in Burr's honesty or patriotism ; the catastrophe satisfied no one on the merits of the cause which produced it. Individuals may slaughter each other honorably by the laws of chivalry ; all that society can pronounce on this exhibition of courage is,—‘Alas!’ The absence of Commodore Rogers at that eventful moment is much to be lamented. His

presence would have overawed the extremity, which has brought affliction to the concerned for the deceased, and a loss to the service of our country. I most devoutly hope that this unhappy incident may prove a caution to the young gentlemen of your profession against sudden sallies of passion.

“Any thing in detail, which you can state concerning the melancholy death of my son and friend, will confer on me a peculiar obligation. I have received no communications from Mr. Boyd or Mr. Evans on the subject.

“I am, Sir, &c.,

“WILLIAM EATON.”

The remaining events of Eaton's life are too simple and unimportant to require an extended narration. His occupations were those of a private citizen in a country town. He maintained a correspondence with the friends, whom he had known in his public life, particularly with the Ex-Bashaw. A cordial attachment existed on both sides, which was kept up by frequent interchanges of letters. Eaton took an active part in urging his claims upon the attention of Congress, and not without success; and had, at last, the satisfaction of learning, that the Bashaw had been appointed to the government of Derne, through the agency of the United States. His

intercourse with Mr. Cathcart was renewed; that gentleman having returned home, after an unsuccessful attempt to assume the office of consul at Tunis, to which he had been appointed. He continued to take an interest in public affairs, and delivered a powerful speech, in August, 1808, at a town meeting in Brimfield, convened for the purpose of considering the expediency of petitioning the President of the United States to remove the embargo, or to summon Congress, if his authority to do this himself was deemed insufficient. The speech was thoroughly Federal in its political tone, and expressed the views of his fellow townsmen with such clearness and vigor, that a copy was requested for the press. It was printed in the newspapers of the day, and widely circulated.

At length, the fatigues he had borne, the disappointments he had met with, the excesses he had indulged in, undermined his constitution and prostrated his health. During the winter of 1809-10, he suffered severely from rheumatism and gout. The succeeding spring and summer he partially recovered, but the approach of winter brought back his old complaints with increased severity. His strength daily failed; but he lingered in a state of great bodily suffering until the 1st of June. In the intervals of distress, his love of social intercourse and facetious

or satirical conversation was too powerful to be restrained; and, as long as he had the command of his senses, he listened eagerly to foreign and political news. He expired on the evening of June 1st, 1811. Previous to his death, he had requested to be buried with military honors, and designated the gentlemen whom he wished to act as pall-bearers. His wishes were complied with in every particular; and his body was carried to the church, where a funeral discourse was delivered by his long-tryed friend, the Reverend Dr. Welch, of Mansfield, Connecticut. He was in his forty-eighth year at the time of his death.

In person, Eaton was about five feet eight inches in height. His complexion was fair and ruddy; his eyes large and blue; and his whole countenance expressive of energy, dignity, and command. His military talents were of a high order. His intellect was strong, his perceptions acute, his feelings ardent. He was quick to resent injuries, but of the most generous disposition, when the first impulse of passion was over. His devotion to the interests and honor of his country, even under circumstances calculated to exhaust his patience and irritate his temper, exhibited his character in a most favorable light. In his diplomatic intercourse with the Barbary pirates, he adopted a tone of boldness and in-



dependence which astonished them, accustomed as they had always been to the most abject and humiliating submission. In some particulars, perhaps, his eccentric conduct and irritable temper threw difficulties in his way, that might have been avoided by a more complying disposition. The opinions he expressed in his correspondence with the Department of State, and with private friends, were singularly acute and correct; and, had they been acted upon at an earlier period, would have saved the United States many degrading concessions, and secured to the American arms imperishable glory.

As a writer, Eaton possessed extraordinary command of language, and energy of expression. His imagination was vigorous and discursive, but his taste was not sufficiently chastened by the study of classical models. Had he devoted himself to letters, he might have adorned almost any department except poetry. As a public speaker, his efforts were characterized by fluency and even eloquence, and a far-reaching political foresight. As a soldier, he was fearless of danger, persevering in the pursuit of his object, patient under fatigue, and full of resources to meet every military emergency. His qualifications for a life of danger and adventure were extraordinary. He loved hazardous enterprises to enthusiasm, because they called into action

those energies of his daring character in which he most delighted. But all his labors and hopes centred in the love of country and the love of glory. His country failed to requite his devotion, and the shortness of his life left his aspirations for glory but imperfectly gratified.

THE END.









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