JOHN R. MUSICK

SUSTAINED HONOR: THE AGE OF LIBERTY ESTABLISHED

John R. Musick

Sustained honor: The Age of Liberty Established

EAN 8596547351474

DigiCat, 2022
Contact: DigiCat@okpublishing.info

Table of Contents

SUSTAINED HONOR
PREFACE.
SUSTAINED HONOR.
CHAPTER I.
CHAPTER II.
CHAPTER III.
CHAPTER IV.
CHAPTER V.
CHAPTER VI.
CHAPTER VII.
CHAPTER VIII.
CHAPTER IX.
CHAPTER X.
CHAPTER XI.
CHAPTER XII.
CHAPTER XIII.
CHAPTER XIV.
CHAPTER XV.
CHAPTER XVI.
CHAPTER XVII.
CHAPTER XVIII.
CHAPTER XIX.
CHAPTER XX.
HISTORICAL INDEX.
CHRONOLOGY.

SUSTAINED HONOR

Table of Contents

The Age of Liberty Established

By
JOHN R. MUSICK

Illustrations By
FREELAND A. CARTER

1909

PREFACE.

Table of Contents

Written history is generally too scholastic to interest the great mass of readers. Dignified and formal, it deals mainly with great events, and often imperfectly with these, because, not pausing to present clear impression by the associations of individual life, it conveys a stiff and unnatural opinion of the past. Historians ignore the details which go to make up the grand sum total of history, and from the very best histories one can get but a meagre idea of the life and times of the people of bygone ages. It is these minor details of past events which lend to fiction its

greatest charm, and attract the multitude, by appearing more like truth. Although untrue in the particular combinations, scenes and plots delineated, yet well written fiction is drawn from nature and experience, and these facts in life, as with chessmen, are only arranged in new but natural positions. History should include everything in the nature, character, customs and incidents, both general and individual, that contribute to originate what is peculiar in a people, or what causes their advancement or decline. So broad is its scope, that nothing is too mighty for its grasp--so searching, scarce anything is too minute. Were written history a clear transcript of valuable incidents, it would be more enticing than the most fascinating fiction.

It is the purpose of this volume to deal with some of the remote and direct causes of the second war with England, by endeavoring, as nearly as our ability will permit, to transport the reader back to the scenes of eighty or ninety years ago, and give views of the incidents which clustered around the events of that time.

The war of 1812 has been properly termed by some historians the second war for independence; for, in truth, the independence of the United States of America was not established until after that event. Great Britain across the ocean and the horde of Tories still in America had not abandoned all hope of yet making the United States a dependency of the country from which she had fought seven long years to free herself. The war of 1812 was never fought to a finish. In some respects it was a drawn fight. Its results were not satisfactory to the patriotic American, and certainly were not to Great Britain. The contemptible "Peace

Faction" continually crippled the administration all through the contest of nearly three years.

After studying the patriotism of New England through the War of the Revolution, one is surprised at the unpatriotic actions of that section of the United States in 1812. One can hardly believe that it was party fealty and political hatred of the democratic party alone which made these formerly patriotic colonies and States hot-beds of sedition and treason. It looks as if those States, having built up a flourishing trade with Great Britain, cared little about the impressment of sailors, or the enslaving of their countrymen, so long as they filled their own pockets. The men seized were usually poor, and their happiness, liberty and life were lightly regarded in comparison with the prosperity of the "Peace Party" merchant. If patriotism were dormant in the East, however, in the growing West, and the generous South it was strong. From those sections came the hardy sons of liberty, who taught Johnny Bull anew to respect the rights of the common people. Though the treaty of peace was not satisfactory in many particulars, it more clearly defined the lines between the United States and British possessions in America, leaving the fishery question and the right to search and impressment in an unsettled condition, giving the "Peace Party" an opportunity to say, "I told you so."

An attempt is made in this story to cover the whole period of the war and the causes leading up to it, treating it from the standpoint of an individual of the time. The pioneers of seventy-five years ago were a hardy race, long since disappeared. We hope that from Fernando Stevens,

the hero of this volume, the reader may derive some idea of pioneer life as it then was. Fernando Stevens was a namesake of the cabin-boy of Christopher Columbus on his first voyage to America, Hernando Estevan, of whom he was a lineal descendant. The hero of this volume was a son of Albert Stevens, a Revolutionary soldier, who was a son of Colonel Noah Stevens, of the French and Indian War, who was a son of Elmer Stevens of early Virginia history, a son of Robert Stevens of the time of Bacon's Rebellion. He was a son of John Smith Stevens, of the early Virginia history, who was the son of Philip Stevens, or Philip Estevan, the young Spaniard who was the personal friend of Captain John Smith and helped lay the foundation of Jamestown. He was a son of Francisco Estevan of St. Augustine, who was a son of Christopher Estevan of Cuba, a companion of Pizarro and De Soto, and he was a son of Hernando Estevan, who went as cabin-boy with Columbus on his memorable first voyage in which he discovered the Western Hemisphere.

This scion of a long line of stalwart but not famous ancestors is the one whose adventures we now narrate. Like his ancestors, he was only one of the rank and file of Americans, whose names are seldom seen in print, but who, after all, go to make up the true history of our glorious republic. Fernando's adventures, with those of Morgianna, the mysterious waif of the sea, form the romance of this story.

JOHN E. MUSICK.

KIRKSVILLE, Mo., July 11th, 1893.

SUSTAINED HONOR.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER I.

Table of Contents

THE YOUNG EMIGRANT.

[Illustration]

The first recollections of Fernando Stevens, the hero of this romance, were of "moving." He was sitting on his mother's knee. How long he had been sitting there he did not know, nor did he know how he came there; but he knew that it was his mother and that they were in a great covered wagon, and that he had a sister and brother, older than himself, in the wagon. The wagon was filled with household effects, which he seemed to know belonged to that mother on whose knee he sat and that father who was sitting on the box driving the horses which pulled the wagon. Fernando Stevens was never exactly certain as to his age at the time of this experience; but he could not have been past three, and perhaps not more than two years old, when he thus found himself with his father's family and all their effects in a wagon going somewhere.

He knew not from whence they came, nor did he know whither they were going. It was pleasant to sit on his mother's knee and with his great blue eyes watch those monster horses jogging along dragging after them the great world, which in his limited comprehension was all the world he knew,--the covered wagon. Suddenly some bright, revolving object attracted his attention, and he fixed his eyes on it. It was the wagon tire, and he saw it crushing and

killing the grass at the side of the road, or rolling and flattening down the dust in long streaks.

Then they descended a hill. It was not a long hill, but seemed rather steep. There was water at the bottom. He remembered seeing the bright, sparkling wavelets and never forgot the impression they produced. There was a boat at the bottom of the hill, and the wagon and horses were driven into the boat. A man and boy began propelling the long sweeps or oars. He watched the proceeding in infantile wonder and especially remembered how the water dropped in sparkling crystals from the oar blades. The boy had on a red cap or fez with a tassel. That boy, that cap and that oar with the sparkling dripping water from the blade were to him the brightest pictures and greatest wonders he had ever known.

He had not the least idea why the man and boy dipped those oars into the water and pulled them out all dripping and pretty, unless it was to amuse him. The oars were painted blue. He did not know where they were going, or when this journey would end, or that it was a journey.

Thus Fernando Stevens began life. This was the first page in his existence that he could recollect. In after years he knew he was Fernando Stevens, that his father was Albert Stevens, a soldier in the War of the Revolution, that his kind, sweet-faced mother was Estella Stevens, and that the very first experience he could remember was that of the family emigrating to the great Ohio valley.

Albert Stevens was married shortly after the close of the Revolutionary War, and he tried hard to succeed in New England; but he had no trade and no profession, and the

best lands in the country were bought. Seven years of his early life, with all his dawning manhood had been spent in the army, and now with his family of three children he found himself poor. Congress had made a treaty with the Indians by which the vast territory of the Ohio valley was thrown open to white settlers, and he resolved to emigrate to where land was cheap, purchase a home and grow up with the country.

Resolved to emigrate, the father collected his little property and provided himself with a wagon and four horses, some cows, a rifle, a shot-gun and an axe. His trusty dog became the companion of his journey. In his wagon he placed his bedding, his provisions and such cooking utensils as were indispensable. Everything being ready, his wife and the three children took their seats, Fernando, the youngest, on his mother's knee; while the father of the family mounted the box. The horses were started and the great vehicle began to move. As they passed through the village which had been to them the scene of many happy hours, they took a last look at the spots which were hallowed by association--the church with its lowly spire, an emblem of that humility which befits a Christian, and the burial-ground, where the weeping willow bent mournfully over the head-stone which marked the graves of their parents. The children, who were old enough to remember, never forgot their playground, nor the white schoolhouse where the rudiments of an education were instilled into their minds.

Their road was at first, comparatively smooth and their journey pleasant. Their progress was interrupted by divers little incidents; while the continual changes in the

appearance of the country around them, and the anticipation of what was to come, prevented those feelings of despondency, which might otherwise have arisen on leaving a much loved home. When the roads became bad or hilly, the family quit the wagon and trudged along on foot, the mother carrying the baby Fernando in her arms. At sunset, their day's journey finished, they halted in the forest by the roadside to prepare their supper and pass the night. The horses were unharnessed, watered and secured with their heads to the trough until they had eaten their meagre allowance of corn and oats, and then were hobbled out to grass. Over the camp fire the mother prepared the frugal supper, which being over, the emigrants arranged themselves for the night, while the faithful dog kept watch. Amid all the privations and vicissitudes in their journey, they were cheered by the consciousness that each day lessened the distance between them and the land of promise, whose fertile soil was to recompense them for all their trials and hardships.

Gradually, as they advanced west, the roads became more and more rough and were only passable in many places by logs having been placed side by side, forming what was termed corduroy roads. The axe and rifle of the emigrant, or mover as he is still termed in the west, were brought daily and almost hourly into use. With the former he cut saplings, or small trees, to throw across the roads, which, in many places, were almost impassable; while with his rifle he killed squirrels, wild turkeys, or such game as the forest afforded, for their provisions were in a few days exhausted. If, perchance, a buck crossed his path, and he

brought it down by a lucky shot, it was carefully dressed and hung up in the forks of the trees; fires were built, and the meat cut into small strips and smoked and dried for future subsistence.

As they advanced, the road through the woods became more difficult to travel, the trees being merely felled and drawn aside, so as to permit a wheeled carriage to pass; and the emigrant was often obliged to be guided in his route only by the blaze of the surveyor on the trees, and at every few rods to cut away the branches which obstructed his passage. As the stroke of the axe reverberated through the woods, no answer came back to assure him of the presence of friend or foe. At night in these solitudes, they heard the wolves stealing through the gloom, sniffing the scent of the intruders; and now and then, then bloodshot eyes of the catamount glared through the foliage.

Days, weeks and months passed in this toilsome journey through the wilderness, so indelibly impressing it on the memory of Fernando Stevens, that he never, to his dying day, forgot that journey. At last they arrived at the landmarks which, to Albert Stevens, indicated the proximity of his possessions. A location for the cabin was selected near a small stream of running water, on the south side of a slight elevation.

No time was lost. The trees were immediately felled, and in a short time Fernando, looking out from the covered wagon, perceived a clear space of ground of but few rods in circumference. Stakes, forked at the top, were driven into the ground, on which the father placed logs, and the chinks between these were stopped with clay. An enclosure was

thus hastily thrown up to protect the family from the weather, and the wife and children were removed to this improvised abode. The trunks of the trees were rolled to the edge of the clearing, and surmounted by stakes driven crosswise into the ground: the severed tops and branches of trees piled on top of the logs, thus forming a brush fence. By degrees the surrounding trees were "girdled" and killed. Those that would split were cut down and made into rails, while others were left to rot or logged up and burned.

A year showed a great improvement in the pioneer's home. Several acres had been added to the clearing, and the place began to assume the appearance of a farm. The temporary shanty had given place to a comfortable log cabin; and although the chimney was built of small sticks placed one on the other, and filled in between with clay, occupying almost one whole end of the cabin, it showed that the inward man was duly attended to; and the savory fumes of venison, of the prairie hen and other good things went far to prove that even backwoods life was not without its comforts. [Footnote: The author has often heard his mother say that the most enjoyable period of her life was in a pioneer home similar to the above.]

In a few months, the retired cabin, once so solitary, became the nucleus of a little settlement. Other sections and quarter sections of land were entered at the land office by new corners. New portions of ground were cleared, cabins were erected; and in a short time the settlement could turn out a dozen efficient hands for house raising or log rolling. A saw mill soon after was erected at the falls of the creek; the log huts received a poplar weather boarding,

and, as the little settlement increased, other improvements appeared; a mail line was established, and before many years elapsed, a fine road was completed to the nearest town, and a stage coach, which ran once, then twice a week, connected the settlement with the populous country to the east of it.

This was the life the hero of this story began. It might be said to be an unromantic life; yet such a life was known to many of our American ancestors. It had its pleasures as well as its pains. It had its poetry as well as its prose, and its joys as well as its sorrows. The vastness of the forest and depths of the solitude by which he was surrounded, made its impress on his mind. He grew up in ignorance of tyranny and many of the evils of the great cities.

The cabin home and the narrow clearing about it formed his playground. His first toy was a half-bushel measure, which he called his "bushee!" This he rolled before him around the log cabin and the paths made in the tall grass, frequently to the dread of his mother, who feared that he might encounter some of the deadly serpents with which the forest abounded. He remembered on one occasion, when his mother found him going too far, she called:

"Come back, Fernando; mother is afraid you will step on a snake."

He looked about him with the confidence of childhood, and answered:

"No 'nakes here."

Just at that moment, the mother, to her horror, saw a deadly reptile coiled in the very path along which the child was rolling his "bushee," and with true frontier woman's

pluck, ran and snatched up the bare-footed Fernando, when only within two feet of the deadly serpent, carried him to the house, and with the stout staff assailed and killed the rattlesnake.

He remembered seeing the wild deer bound past the cabin door, and one day his father killed one. The big dog called "Bob," on account of the shortness of his caudal appendage, on another occasion leaped on a wild buck as he was passing the house, and seized the animal, holding it until it was slain. Wild turkeys were common; he saw them in great flocks in the woods, and did not suppose they could ever become extinct.

Fernando never forgot his first pair of shoes. He had grown to be quite a lad, and his bare feet had trod the paths in the forest, and over the prairies in summer and late in autumn, until they had become hardened. In winter his mother had made him moccasins out of deer skins; but he was at last informed that he was going to have a pair of shoes, such as he had seen some children from the eastern States wear. His joy at this intelligence knew no bounds. He dreamed of those shoes at night, and they formed the theme of his conversation by day. His sister, who was the oldest of the children, had been the happy possessor of three pairs of shoes, and she often discussed knowingly the good qualities of pedal coverings and of their advantages in travelling through brambles or over stones. Often as he contemplated his scratched, chapped and bruised feet, the child had asked himself if it were possible that he should ever be able to afford such a luxury as a real pair of shoes.

Money was scarce, luxuries scarcer. The frontier people lived hard, worked hard, slept sound, and enjoyed excellent health.

Though little Fernando had never owned a real pair of shoes in his life, so far as he could remember, he possessed a strong mind and body, and no prince was his superior. He had, as yet, never been to school a day, but from the great book of nature he had imbibed sublimity and loftiness of thought, which only painters and poets feel.

Though he was shoeless, he was inspired with lofty ideas of freedom such as many reared in cities never dream about. The father had to make a long journey to some far-away place for the shoes. The day before starting all the children were made to put their feet on the floor, while the parents measured them with strings, and tied knots to indicate the size of shoes to be purchased. At last the measures were obtained, and the father put them in the pocket of his buckskin hunting jacket. Then he harnessed the horses to the wagon and, with, his trusty rifle for his only companion, drove away. Bob, the faithful watch-dog, was very anxious to accompany him, and whined and howled for two or three days; but he was kept at home to defend the family. A faithful protector was Bob, and woe to the intruder who dared to annoy the household while he was around. Fernando waited patiently and long for the return of his father. Every night before retiring to his trundle-bed, he would ask his mother if "father would come next day."

At last the joyous shout of the older children announced the approach of the wagon. They ran down the road to meet it. The horses jogged along with the wagon, which rolled and

jolted over the ground to the house. The wagon was unloaded. There were bags of meal and flour, coffee and tea, and then came the calico and cotton goods, jugs of molasses and a barrel of sugar. The shoes were in a box and finally brought out.

A great disappointment was in store for Fernando. His shoes were too small. The father had lost the string and purchased the shoes "by guess." Fernando tried hard to squeeze his foot into the little green coverings; but they were so small and there was danger of bursting them. Father had to go back to the land office in a day or two and would exchange them. He rode off on the white mare, "old Betts," and on his return had a pair of shoes large enough for Fernando.

They were awkward at first and cramped, pinched and galled his feet. His mother made him a suit of clothes of "blue drilling" and next Sabbath the whole family got into the wagon and drove off eight miles to Bear Creek to "meeting."

The people of the west were as thorough a combination and mixture of all nations, characters, languages, conditions and opinions as can well be imagined. Scarcely a nation in Europe, or a State in the union, that did not furnish emigrants for the great west. The greater mass from Europe were of the humble classes, who came from hunger, poverty and oppression. They found themselves here with the joy of shipwrecked mariners cast on the untenanted woods, and instantly became cheered with the hope of being able to build up a family and a fortune from new elements.

The Puritan and the planter, the German, the Briton, the Frenchman, the Irishman and the Swede, each with his peculiar prejudices and local attachments, and all the complicated and interwoven tissue of sentiments, feelings and thoughts, that country, kindred and home, indelibly combined with the web of youthful existence, settled down beside each other. The merchant, mechanic and farmer found themselves placed by necessity in the same society. Men must cleave to their kind and must be dependent upon each other. Pride and jealousy give way to the natural yearnings of the human heart for society. They began to rub off mutual prejudices. One took a step and then the other. They met half way and embraced; and the society thus newly organized and constituted was more liberal, enlarged, unprejudiced, and of course more affectionate and pleasant than a society of people of like birth and character, who would bring all their early prejudices as a common stock, to be transmitted as an inheritance to posterity.

Depending only on God and nature, the simple backwoodsman came to regard God as his only master and, like the Swiss patriot, would bow his knee to none other. Men were left free to adopt such religious views and tenets as they chose, and the generous laws protected every man alike in his religious opinions. Ministers of the gospel and priests, being presumed to be devoted to humanity, charity and general benevolence, were precluded by many State constitutions from any participation in the legislative authority, and their compensation depended wholly upon the voluntary aid of those among whom they labored in charity and love. In the wide district where the Stevens

lived, the country was too sparsely settled to support a stationed minister, and "preaching" was a luxury. Unsustained by the rigid precepts of law in any privileges, perquisites, fixed revenue, prescribed by reverence or authority, except such as was voluntarily acknowledged, the clergy found that success depended upon the due cultivation of popular talents. Zeal for the great cause mixed, perhaps, with a spice of earthly ambition, the innate sense of emulation and laudable pride, a desire of distinction among their cotemporaries and brethren, prompted them to seek popularity, and to study all the arts and means of winning the popular favor.

Travelling from month to month through dark forests, with such ample time for deep thought, as they ambled slowly along the lonesome horse path or unfrequented roads, they naturally acquired a pensive and romantic turn of thought and expression, which is often favorable to eloquence. Hence their preaching was of the highly popular cast, such as immortalized Peter Cartwright. The first aim was to excite the ministers; hence, too, excitement, or, in religious parlance, "awakenings," or "revivals" became common. Living remote from each other, and spending much of their time in domestic solitude in vast forests or wide spreading prairies, the "appointment" for preaching was looked upon as a gala-day, or a pleasing change, which brought together the auditors from remote points, and gratified a feeling of curiosity, which prompted the pioneers to associate and interchange cordial congratulations.

As yet no meeting house had been erected in all the region where the Stevens lived. The meeting on Bear Creek

was at the home of Mr. Moore, who was the happy possessor of a "double log cabin." One cabin or room was cleared of furniture, and sawn boards, placed on sticks of wood on end, furnished the seats. These were occupied and the "entry" between the cabins was filled by children. The preacher, who was also chorister, took his position near the door so as to accommodate those without as well as those within. He opened his saddle-bags and, pushing back his soiled linen, took out his bible and hymn-book and, proceeding to "line a hymn," "started it" himself, the congregation all joining.

Fernando Stevens had heard from his sister about these wonderful meetings; but he had never dreamed that a score of voices could raise such an uproar, and he ceased admiring his new shoes, while he fixed his eyes in terror on the capacious mouth of a pious old man, who, in his fervent zeal, was singing with all his might. As he sounded forth each resonant note, louder than the preceding, his mouth opened wider and wider, until Fernando took alarm and climbed upon his father's knee.

At this critical moment, there came on the air a cracking sound, and one of the boards which served the purpose of a pew broke in the centre and came down with a crash, precipitating nearly half a score of buxom, screaming girls into a promiscuous heap upon the floor. This was too much for Fernando. He could not but attribute the disaster to the wide-mouthed singer, and he screamed so lustily in his fright, that his father took him from the house to calm his fears.

Fernando's first experience at "meeting" was not very encouraging; but he did not despair. Soon after their return

home he heard the family begin to speak of the "camp-meeting," and learned that one was to be held at the head waters of Bear Creek, not far from the home of Mr. Moore, and that the family was going.

On the appointed day they took their places in the wagon and started for the camp ground. Notice of the camp-meeting had been circulated for several weeks or months, and all were eager to attend. The country for fifty miles around was excited with the cheerful anticipation of the approaching festival of religious feeling and social friendship. When the Stevenses arrived on the grounds, wagons and carts, coaches and old family chaises, people on horseback and on foot, in multitudes, with provision wagons, tents, mattresses, household implements and cooking utensils, were seen hurrying from every direction toward the central point. The camp was in the midst of a grove of beautiful, lofty, umbrageous trees, natural to the western country, clothed in their deepest verdure, and near a sparkling stream, which supplied the host with fresh water. White tents started up in the grove, and soon a sylvan village sprang up as if by magic. The tents and booths were pitched in a semi-circle, or in a four-sided parallelogram, inclosing an area of two acres or more, for the arrangement of seats and aisles around a rude pulpit and altar for the thronging multitude, all eager to hear the heavenly messenger.

Fernando beheld all in a maze of wonder, and half believed this was that Heaven of which his mother had told him so much. He half expected to see the skies open and the son of God descend in all his glory. Toward night, the

hour of solemn service approached, and the vast sylvan bower of the deep umbrageous forest was illuminated by numerous lamps suspended around the line of tents which encircled the public area and beside the rustic altars distributed over the same, which sent forth a glare of light from the fagot fires upon the worshipping throng, and the majestic forest with an imposing effect, which elevated the soul to fit converse with its creator, God.

The scenery of the most brilliant theatre of the world was only a painting for children compared with this. Meantime, the multitude, with the highest excitement of social feeling, added to the general enthusiasm of expectation, was passing from tent to tent interchanging apostolic greetings and embraces, while they talked of the approaching solemnities. A few minutes sufficed to finish the evening's repast, when the moon (for they had taken thought to appoint the meeting at the time of the full moon) began to show its disc above the dark summits of the distant mountains, while a few stars were seen glimmering in the west. Then the service began. The whole constituted a temple worthy of the grandeur of God. An old man in a dress of the quaintest simplicity ascended a platform, wiped the dust from his spectacles, and, in a voice of suppressed emotion "lined the hymn," of which that vast multitude could recite the words, to be sung with an air in which every voice could join. Every heart capable of feeling thrilled with emotion as that song swelled forth, "Like the sound of many waters, echoing among the hills and mountains." The service proceeded. The hoary-haired orator talked of God, of eternity, of a judgment to come and all that is impressive

beyond. He spoke of his experiences and toils, his travels, his persecutions and triumphs, and how many he had seen in hope, in peace and triumph gathered to their fathers. When he spoke of the short space that remained for him, his only regret was that he could no longer proclaim, in the silence of death, the unsearchable riches and mercies of his crucified Redeemer.

No wonder, as the speaker paused to dash the gathering moisture from his own eye, his audience was dissolved in tears, or uttered exclamations of penitence. Many who prided themselves on an estimation of a higher intellect and a nobler insensibility than the crowd caught the infection, and wept, while the others, "who came to mock remained to pray."

In due time a schoolhouse was erected on the banks of the creek a mile away from the house of Albert Stevens. Fernando was sent with the older children. Mrs. Creswell the teacher had no end of trouble with the little fellow, whose ideas of liberty were inconsistent with discipline, and who insisted on reclining on the floor instead of sitting on a bench. He became hungry and despite the fact that his preceptress had forbidden "talking out loud" declared that he wanted something to eat.

"Wait a bit," answered the teacher. "We will have recess by and by."

"Is recess something to eat?" he asked.

This question produced a titter, and the insubordinate youngster was again told he must not talk. After awhile he became accustomed to school and liked it. He grew older and learned his letters. It was a tedious task, the most

difficult of which was to distinguish "N" from "U," but he finally mastered them, and his education, he supposed, was complete. After two or three years, he learned to read. His father on one of his journeys to town brought to their forest home some excellent books, with bright, beautiful pictures. He was now nine years old, and could read with some difficulty. One of his books was a story about a man being wrecked on an island, and having saved a black man named Friday from death by savages. Fernando never tired of this wonderful book, and, in his eagerness for the adventures of Robinson Crusoe, learned to read well without knowing it.

From reading one book, he came to read others, and lofty, ambitious thoughts took possession of his soul. His mind, uncontaminated or dwarfed by the sins of civilization, early began to reach out for high and noble ideas.

His father had been a captain in the continental army, and had travelled all over the Atlantic States during the war for independence. He told his children many stories of those dark days and sought early to instil in their young minds a love for their country, urging them ever to sustain its honor and its flag.

Fernando Stevens, even early in childhood, became a patriot. He could be nothing more nor less than a patriot and lover of freedom with such training, and growing up in such an atmosphere. With the bitter wrongs of George III. rankling in his heart, he came to despise all forms of monarchy, and to hate "redcoats." The cruelties of Cornwallis, Tarleton, Rawdon, Tryon and Butler were still in the minds of the people, and the boy, as he gazed on his father's sword hanging on the cabin wall, often declared he

would some day take it and avenge the wrongs done in years gone by.

Years passed on, and Fernando, in his quiet home in the West, grew to be a strong, healthy lad, with a constantly expanding mind.

CHAPTER II.

Table of Contents

MORGIANNA.

It was early on the morning of June 13, 1796, just twenty years after the Declaration of Independence, that Captain Felix Lane, of the good ship *Ocean Star*, was on his voyage from Rio to Baltimore with a cargo of coffee. The morning was specially bright, and the captain, as brave a man as ever paced a quarter deck, was in the best of spirits, for he expected soon to be home. He had no wife and children to greet him on his return, for Lane was a bachelor. He had served on board a privateer during the War of the Revolution and had done as much damage as any man on salt water to English merchantmen. Like most brave men, Captain Lane had a generous soul, a kind heart, and there was not a man aboard his vessel who would not have died for him. He preserved perfect discipline and respect through love rather than fear, for he was never known to be harsh with any of his crew.

No one knew why the captain had never married. His first mate, who had sailed under him four years, had never dared broach him on the subject of matrimony. There was a story--a mere rumor--perhaps without the slightest foundation, of Felix Lane, when a poor sailor boy, loving the daughter of an English merchant at Portsmouth, England. The mate got the story from a gossipy old English sailor, who claimed to know all about it, but whose fondness for spinning yarns brought discredit on his veracity. According to the old sailor's

account, the fair English maid's name was Mary. Her father was one of the wealthiest merchants in the city; and one day when Lane was only nineteen he met Mary. Her beauty captivated him and inspired him to a nobler life. Mary loved the young sailor; but it was the old story of the penniless lover and cruel parent. The sailor was forcibly expelled from the house and sailed to America, with a heart full of revenge and ambition.

He arrived just after the battle of Lexington, and soon shipped aboard a privateer. Again it was the old story of a rash lover laughing at death, seeking the grim monster who seemed to avoid him. His ship was so successful, that in a short time each of the crew was rich from prize money. Four years and a half of war found Felix Lane commander of the most daring privateer on the ocean. He was already wealthy and continued by fresh prizes to add to his immense fortune. The merchant marine of Great Britain dreaded his ship, the *Sea Rover*, more than the whole American navy. Lane was one of the most expert seamen on the ocean, and might have had a high office in the regular navy, had he not found this semi-piratical business more lucrative.

One day his vessel sighted a large merchantman, off the coast of Spain, and engaged it in a terrible conflict. The merchantman carried twice as many people and heavier guns than the *Sea Rover*; but by the skilful management of his ship Captain Lane continued to rake her fore and aft until she was forced to strike her colors. When the conqueror went aboard, he found the splintered deck a scene of horror. Cordage, shrouds, broken spars and dead and dying men strewed the deck. Near the gangway was a middle-aged

man holding in his arms a girl mortally wounded in the conflict. He recognized her in a moment, and the scene which followed tried all the powers of the old yarn-spinner's descriptive faculties. He held her in his arms and wept and prayed until her life was extinct. It was said that she recognized him and that she died with a sweet smile on her face, pointing upward to a place of reunion. The father, who had survived the conflict, was released, and Captain Felix continued his career a sadder and better man.

Whether this story was true or not, no one can at this day tell, for Jack tars are proverbial yarn-spinners, and seek more after romance than truth. One thing is quite certain, though, Captain Lane was still a bachelor, and had resisted all the advances of beautiful women, until no one doubted that he would end his days a bachelor.

On this bright June morning a sail was descried S.S.E., and there immediately sprang up a little conversation between master and mate as to the probable character of the ship.

"Perchance, captain, it's a British cruiser," suggested the mate.

"If it should be, we have no fears."

"No, for the *Ocean Star* can show a pair of clean heels to anything afloat. These British have a habit of searching all vessels they can capture and impressing seamen."

"It's ugly business."

"It will breed another storm."

"I don't think America will long submit."

At this, the mate, whose temper was as fiery as his red hair, vowed:

"If they should board a ship of mine, I would give 'em lead and steel, until they would not care to search or impress any one."

"They have no such right," the captain answered, and his face grew very stern.

The vessel, whatever she was, did not cross their path, however, and in a few hours disappeared around some jutting headlands.

They had only left Rio the day before, and had very light winds. The land breeze lasted long enough to bring them by Santa Cruz, and their ship drifted along all day between Raza and the main. Toward night the sea-breeze came in fresh from the eastward, and they made four-hour tacks, intending to keep the northern shore quite close aboard, and to take their departure from Cape Frio. The night was very clear, and at eight bells they tacked ship to the northward, heading about N.N.E.; Raza lights could just be discerned, bearing about West. Captain Lane had come on deck, as was his custom, to "stay" the brig, and, finding everything looking right, was about to go below, when the man on the lookout cried:

"Sail ho!"

"Where away?" demanded the Captain.

"Two points off the lee bow."

The captain walked forward to the forecastle, from where he descried what appeared to be a large square-rigged vessel standing directly for them, with her port-tacks aboard. This seemed strange to the captain, as he knew of no vessel which had left Rio, except one several days