

T S BROWN

PAPERS

Writing Book. 4



FALCONRY.

Strive to be either agreeable or useful ; thus only is it that the world can be gained.

Society must be occasionally changed, to avoid dulness and ennui. Even the best may grow insipid or tiresome.

Christian patience is surer than stoical resolution. The one calms, the other benumbs the soul.

The less the occasion for sin, the worse it is. In old age it is like shadows toward the evening, enormous.

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at the other house of the
Thursday Sept 13 1838

Journal of Thomas Stevens Brown
1838

As the rest of the water of the river was
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and very low on the left bank. The water
was very muddy and the banks were very
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and very low on the left bank. The water
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Journal of the [illegible] [illegible]

Ship Mary Frances at Sea
Sunday Sept 23rd 1038

As it is not in the nature of things, my dear Mary that you can ever be a sailor, and as the fates may so order that you may never see a Mother Carey's Chicken resting on the crested billow, I must write you something about the joys and sorrows of the sea. Here we are, somewhere about 250 miles from the coast of Florida, latitude 30° . can't be more exact because the towns and countries are not laid down regular in the Captains Chart of this place.

We left New York on Thursday 13th without creating any great sensation in the City. All got on board without accident, except an Irish steerage passenger, who probably accustomed to a military step, disdained to lengthen his pace, as he stepped from the wharf to the ship, and as a consequence stepped into the dock. A sailor went down for him, which made me suppose this man one of those philanthropic individuals studiously devoted to prolonging the life of the human species, but I soon had reason to alter my mind when I saw him doubling his fist in the face of a notary standing on the gangway, threaten to knock the said Notary into a

the Steward provided. The weather and the water were warm, from our being in the Gulf Stream, coats, stockings and shoes became superfluous. Disdaining such vanities, we stalked about with our trousers tucked up to our knees like the fishermen in Massienello, or a band of school boys practising rudiments of navigation with a shingle in a frog-pond. -

All things have an end, and so had the Hurricane. On Tuesday the wind went down, and with it the sea, and Mother Cary's Chickens came back again; not having got our bodies to peck at, they, grateful for small favours were quite willing to accept any crumbs thrown overboard. These chickens are queer beasts. In size and motion very like bank swallows they dash about in the wildest storm, skimming upon the Ocean's surface yet always rising above the crest of a billow the instant it is about breaking on them. - As the wind subsides they flock around the vessel with the peevishness and voracity of barn door chickens to seek for food amidst the rubbish thrown overboard. They are seen in flocks skimming like swallows, standing on the ends of their little wet feet, settling down like a duck, or diving beneath. When the weather becomes fine they all disappear, nobody knows how or when. -

To clear the wreck was a first duty. Among the rubbish was our cow, who instead of being "sto'en away" like

that of the bride of Robin Gray, died under the influence of a constitution unaccustomed to too much motion accompanied by salt water. We felt much of the milk of human kindness for her, though from the first she had given us no milk for our tea. I could say "Peace to her manes," only a cow has no manes, or "requiescat in pace" but it required neither pace or trot to carry her to the bottom attended perhaps by a procession of Sharks connected with the most ancient families in this quarter. She left an image of herself in a fine calf, which we barbarians devoted to immediate execution. How unchanged is the nature of man? Old Nock proved his joy in escaping from the deluge, sailor like" by getting tipsy, while we being landmen proved it after the rival patriarchs by killing a fatted calf —

When I last went to sea, our cow was washed overboard; now this was thrown. A striking evidence that any one interested in improving the breed of Cattle should never put valuable animals on board of a vessel in which I take passage

When the ship was brought up in the wind as the gale abated, she appeared as naked as our first parents, before our Grandmother Eve learned and practised plain sewing, for we had nothing set but two tiny fibs, and a

mizen topsail, but to make amends for the nakedness
aboard the rigging below was so decorated with the contents
of trunks, hung out to dry that the ship appeared like a loco-
motive pawn broker's shop. - The quarter deck might have
been compared to Chatham Street, and the fore-castle to the
most renowned part of the five points, while the deck was
strewn with polite literature, sufficient to make gentlemen
and scholars of a whole regiment, whether of the line or
Florida volunteers, for once the authors were free from the
hackneyed charge of being too dry. -

There are worse things than a storm at sea. With
her head to the wind, and helm lashed down, the vessel
takes care of herself, picking her way amidst the billows
as if she understood the whole matter. - If the pumps clank
harshly at night, it is pleasant to know that they are not
neglected, and there is something enlivening in the hearty
"aye, aye," which the men respond to the commands of
their officers, and the cheery manner in which they sing as
they haul away. - As to the passengers, the winds, the waves
and the captain being responsible for all the mischief, they
attempt to appear quite unconcerned. - Some would sing
the song that Miss Rugg was teaching Margaret, "Some
like to roam, o'er the salt sea foam," or attempt a mournful
joke, which would produce upon our features the singularly

merry expression which a man exhibits when he thinks he puts on a mistleful countenance by looking as sorrowful as a tombstone and drawing down one corner of his mouth. —

We have met many vessels, but they generally pass at a distance; immediately after the storm we saw a schooner to windward to which we approached as near as we could, and wished them to come down; but perhaps supposing we wanted assistance, they kept aloof, until we got past, when they put about after us to tell us their story, but it was no go: the next day we made signals to another schooner with a little success, though our naked masts shewed that something was wrong. — Our passengers called him a North Carolinian, why, I cannot imagine, unless that being principally northern men, they were unwilling to own him for a countryman, and had an equal regard for the character of their adopted country, the extreme south. — We however had our revenge for a few nights after we hailed a schooner that had lost her foremast and wanted assistance. As he said nothing about Water or Provisions, we paid no attention to him. —

Our craft is a new ship of 300 Tons, with a Cabin on deck, like the Ladies cabin of a steamboat, and as Ships have no guards, our only promenade is on top of this cabin, which is about the size of a German principality,

45 feet by 25 guarded by a rail 15 inches high intended rather to hold the belaying pins than as a protection to the passengers. on this we frequently assemble especially after meals. A love of ease or sense of insecurity causes us to assume recumbent positions of every degree as picturesque and various as those of a party of Seals on a sand bank. Not that we do not exhibit one superior point of civilization namely, in holding in our mouths, little stocks of tobacco through which we draw smoke into our mouths for the especial and valuable privilege and pleasure of blowing it out again. — I have heard much of Seals, but never in the course of my reading did I read of any party of even the most exquisite dandies of the fin-tailed race amusing themselves on a sand bank or an iceberg with cigars in their mouths. —

Our equipage is composed of a Captain and two mates. The first mate is a Norwegian and a Methodist, who reads "Baxter's Saints Rest" as diligently as "Bowditch's Navigator"; a Cook and Steward, both blacks, seven men and two boys before the mast, seventeen passengers, of whom three are married ladies in the cabin, and about a dozen young men in the steerage —

The Cook is a thick necked greasy nigger in tarry trousers, officiates in a kitchen six feet square. We devour his dainties with high relish, but should you on shore ever have a kitchen of similar dimensions and a similar functionary I should

advise you whenever you give a dinner party to say nothing about it until the cloth is removed. — The Steward and Waiter is the Captains great man in matters of comestibles, and like a prime minister or any other great man's great man, he is very obsequious to those from whom he expects favors, to wit, the Crew and those in the Steerage, who instinctively understand that there can be no chance for extra biscuit unless this important official is conciliated and propitiated. — The Crew is an indefinite body, with seven heads, though perhaps if I had taken passage in the fore-castle I might have learned that some of them are wonderful fellows, the heroes of wonderful exploits. —

Just as we were leaving New York, the Pilot asked an old fellow with a face like a bear leg of Mutton seven times frozen and thawed, who was crossing the deck, "What's your name?" "Bill," was the reply. Now for me, I would have known as much of the gentleman's birth parentage and education, had he said "John Smith," but perhaps he may himself have considered that he announced as great a personage as though he had said "Parson Avery"; indeed who knows of the renown connected with the name? who knows but he may be the identical "Bill," who, at some period of his life was wrecked near Seringapatam in the German ocean, and lived for six weeks upon old shoes soaked in

Seawater - Of the Steerage passengers I know but little except that one sings a very good song for the edification of his fellows and two have approached half way into the Cabin, eating with the mates and lounging on the quarter deck instead of the long boat. -

The Cabin passengers form a very harmonious Corps dramatique. They are either residents of Florida or persons intending become residents. - We have no Englishman, but there is a Scotchman. but the Emerald Isle is represented by a young gentleman, a descendant of the "Gem of the Sea" who bears the euphonious name of Murphy. so ardent, so honorable and so intimately connected with a very numerous family both of animal and vegetable life. - A gentleman who appeared the most lively when we started now appears among the most sober. He was married a few days since and has left his wife behind, on his breast is a miniature brooch which I suppose (having asked no question) is the portrait of the bride. - You may think this strange, but should you ever marry a man who is going to the South by sea in September, and he should prefer taking your face painted upon a piece of wax along with him instead of your person, take my advice, Mary, stay at home and mourn your widowhood until his return. - To the ladies on board, I grieve to say I have been hardly civil, but the fault is your Mothers for she gave me most especial advice not to meddle with other

people's wives or affianced brides, and in this my day of exile and affliction I must perforce take advice or any thing else people choose to give me, physic excepted. The sea is at best a place where little devotion is manifested towards the fair sex, inso-much, that were it not both un-gallant and irreverent I would subscribe to the opinion of the second mate that Ladies and Ministers have no business on board a ship.

He who like myself takes an interest in every thing that passes, whether great or small cannot but enjoy himself in travelling, especially if he follows the Apostles example in making himself all things to all men. It is difficult to bring a dozen of persons of different modes of action and different manners of thought, all to the standard of our own preconceived opinions, or to the fashions or habits which have grown upon us in years of intimacy with other associates, but it is easy for us to accommodate ourselves precisely to them. Such has been my rule, and such I trust it ever will be, for it enables me to look back with pleasure to past associations without so many poignant pang's of grief for the separation, since I feel that any society into which I may be thrown will be fitted for the purposes it is called upon to fulfil, and that I may be happy in its bosom if I offend it not by foolish presumption. No Animal is more gregarious in its habits than

man. were you to see our party almost piled on each other on the upper deck at a starry night, you would imagine that in point of relationship we stood as near as first Cousins.

Sunday September 30th.

Our gale I told you had an end. - The courses being little or nothing injured, were soon re-set, but the topsails being in tatters required much tailoring which ended in dressing the ship tolerably correct, but minus one sail after all was done. since the gale the wind has been constantly opposite to our course, which has kept us upon a taut bowline endeavoring to draw to the eastward, and generally so light that we made but little headway. We had for variety a short gale which afforded us a little wading in the cabin during one day, but our Clothes &c. were tolerably wet and damaged already, and our persons had become tolerably well injured to salt water. The sea generally smooth, but the roll of that immense body of water the Atlantic ocean keeps the ship in continued motion. - Since yesterday we have lived in a calm, little has occurred on the face of the water to excite interest. Not a shark has shown his dorsal fin above the surface. We one day saw several dolphins, beautiful creatures about three feet long resplendent in all the shades and colors of a humming bird. - The comparison is not only correct, but has the advantage of being one that may be understood by you in

Vermont. they must however have degenerated in size since the days of the Classics, or it would have required a great number to tow a good sized Car, and the ride of Cyprius after all must have been but a poxy race. I have long wished to see a "dying dolphin," for no greater reason than to disabuse the world of what I have considered a "humbug," but I now begin to believe that language has ever yet been faint in describing them. — On another day we saw flying fish, little creatures rising from the water to flutter with difficulty a little space above the surface like the bulk of our own race, and to sink like them into oblivion, or to rise again for no other apparent purpose but to fall. One of them, (not our race, but the fish,) it was said, lighted on the foretop-sail yard arm to crow, but was frightened away by the Cook throwing his hat at him. — You must however receive this story as somewhat apocryphal. — I do not give it as a fact. —

The breakfast at eight, as on shore I am generally the last up, so am I at sea. — The principles of the Albion news paper are unchanged, so says its motto, by crossing the "broad Atlantic," my habits are unchanged by being upon it.

It being fashionable to sleep in our clothes, the toilet requires little arrangement. Indeed, let me here observe, that our ordinary dress is any thing but "Court" cravats, and stocks being voted inconvenient and jackets being preferred to

dress coats. Tell your mother that I do not wear my red
slippers, but that in white (not snow white) jacket, no vest
blue shirt and red handkerchief, in loose sailor knots with
an uncommon profusion of hair all round my face, I some
what resemble a character the similitude to which she
requested me to avoid, videlicet, a Pirate. After breakfast
while the mates eat theirs, and the steward clears away
we go on the upper deck to smoke, at this meeting, having
reclined all night, we generally repose ourselves like the
nigger's "raccoon" by "sitting on a rail. by ten, one or two
whist tables and a game at draughts are established, while
those not playing are immersed in literature. books and peri-
odicals being in abundance since the immersion of the trunk
has rendered a general drying indispensable. This course is
continued until dinner at one; after which we pass another
hour or two in smoking and conversation, but on this occasion
more reclining to the deck than at the earlier hour. - Then
come books and cards again till supper at six. after that we
assemble, the noisy to talk and the solemn to smoke and
perhaps out of compliment to the Sun whose last rays have
slanted across, are now found stretched in positions perpendic-
ular to the Horizon instead of standing in mass boated atti-
tude erect, perpendicular to the Zenith. - The steerage singer
before mentioned is frequently invited aft. We have alas a
beautiful voice in the cabin, and then the voice of song

bursts forth to gladden the waste of ocean in the most thrilling words and enchanting airs of modern minstrelsy, peeling off into a rapturous chorus in which all join, until the more sedate retiring leave the more volatile to conclude the concert with Nigger melodies, and the serio-comic ditty of "Old Gormes is dead" appropriately diatoned out by one of the company. There are on board two excellent flutes and a fiddle, but the latter instrument came to misfortune in our general deluge, having been very inconsiderately fastened together with glue only instead of ten penny nails.

These moonlight nights at sea are lovely beyond description. A group on the deck of a gallant ship gliding onward with regular graceful motion, the after sails behind us, before us the mainmast with its obelisk of canvas towering from the deck to the royal. On each side the blue, blue rippling sea stretching to realms beyond the night, and above the bright clear sky, sparkling only with stars of the greatest brilliancy, and night's lunar queen riding majestically through the firmament, sole mistress of the niche above and illumined world of waters beneath. If there be an Elysium on earth it is this, it is this." could we be surrounded by and hold converse with those we love best.

In retiring as in waking, I follow my land custom, never thinking of bed until every body else is asleep. I am on deck nearly as much during the night as in the day. On

one occasion indeed in coming down to my berth I found
my companions turning out of theirs. —

Our voyage, you will perceive, is destined to be a long one,
a matter of much annoyance to the Floridians, but not
much to me while I can like Byron say of the Ship,

"Not care what land she bears me to,

"So not again to mine."

We have plenty of provisions and water. the latter
being kept on deck, has acquired a genial temperament
which enables us to drink any quantity without danger
of the disastrous consequences which frequently occur in
New York in July from drinking too much of it cold. The
Ship's store of alcoholic liquors is however entirely ex-
pended, and little is left among the private stores of the
passengers, so whatever may have been the profanity of
our vessel on leaving New York, she will arrive in port
a temperance ship with a freight of tea-totallers. —

Were I corresponding member of a temperance society,
I would not fail to communicate such a miraculous conversion
of a whole ship's company for the edification of a quarterly
meeting, were it not that I should be obliged to write an epic
in defiance of the omities. — with only a middle and an end
without a beginning to cover the disappearance of the
liquor which was shipped before we sailed.

Key West October 8th.

I grieve to say there was on board, a falling off from the temperance cause, much to the disappointment of the Mate whose ideas upon this are as punitical as upon religion; for on a calm day when the hatches were opened to get some provisions we discovered in the hold a cask of Brandy from which a supply was immediately pumped. The Carpenter rather posed the mate a few evenings since in an argument "Can evil come out of good or unclear from what is clear?" said "Chips" inquiringly. "No," answered the mate. Then said Chips, "We are born without sin, for we are descended from the sons of Noah, who was commanded to take nothing unclear into the Ark" I know not if the idea be original to "Chips," or whether he intends starting a new sect, in the flowery and varied field of Protestantism, but I am certain if he should commence that in a few years, profane courts of law would be invoked to decide points of faith and ordain which was the true orthodox, the Chippites or the Anti Chippites, other questions of belligerent rights arise and each party of meek devotees of brotherly love endeavor to kick the other out of possession of their common place of worship -

The latter part of the voyage has been prosperous. The first land made was the southern part of Abaco, one of the Bahamas, and what Paddy called a desolate Island. Off this point called the Hole in the Wall, there being a complete passage

through the rocks about 30 feet wide and fifty feet high we laid becalmed one day or more. All our attempts against the lives and liberties of the fishes of the deep proved futile; our lines hung over the rail in vain, and the harpoon was an idle parade. A Shark made a careful survey of the ship, but was away before we could prepare for his capture. To no effect did I stand in the mizen chairs trailing a piece of pork to entice him toward the quarter, and to no effect did a passenger by my side hold ready a harpoon to fix him should he run in. On another day porpoises came frolicking about leaping their whole length out of the water or swimming with their black backs out. We managed to wound one and then all disappeared.

Our passage lay across the Bahama Bank, 16 feet deep with a bottom of white sand which gave a singular chalybeine hue, and the weather being calm the bottom is every where visible. We arrived near this Island on Saturday evening, and came up with the breeze yesterday morning; - notwithstanding our tedious passage, and that a schooner soon passed us only seven days from New York, we have cause of thankfulness, for the islands and reefs are strewn with wrecks, nearly 50 vessels and many lives have been lost, in the late gales. Of this place I shall write hereafter, the first appearance is striking

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MULTIPLICATION TABLE.

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