

the one a Genoese, and the other a Florentine, among those of "distinguished Americans." The eminence of men who lived, three hundred years before we became a nation, will never be received by the world, as "evidence which cannot be resisted, that, by a removal to the new world, man has sustained no deterioration, either in body or in mind;" and to furnish this evidence, is the professed object of the work. If a supposed debt of gratitude to these illustrious navigators, induced the proprietor to bestow upon them the honours of citizenship, he might, with equal justice, have extended the favour, to Ferdinand and Isabella; but for whose liberality, perhaps, we should never have heard of Columbus. Upon the same principle, Queen Elizabeth and Sir Walter Raleigh, might be made to give ample testimony, that "the people of the west" are, in no way, inferior "to those who are born in the eastern hemisphere." But we are disposed to think, that "the new world" may stand, without any of these extraneous props; if it cannot, we had better not attempt the proposed comparison.

In the second place, since the Lives have been introduced, without regard, either to alphabetical order, or to weight of character, (and we commend the proprietor, for not having chosen either of these modes) we should have been better pleased, to have seen them arranged, according to the order of time, in which the subjects of them, respectively, flourished. This arrangement, besides being the most natural, would have been attended with several important advantages to the proprietor: it would have enabled him, from knowing, beforehand, what Lives would occupy each successive volume, to have all-wed to the artist and the biographer full leisure for the performance of their respective parts; while, at the same time, it would have precluded all suspicion of partiality in the selection. Under any arrangement, the Portrait and Life of WASHINGTON, ought not to have occupied the place now assigned to them.

Various artists of high reputation, have been employed in executing the engravings; but we must confess that they have not, by any means, equalled the ideas which we had formed, of the state of the fine arts in this country. We see none of that originality and splendour of genius which should have characterized a national work. Some of the portraits, indeed, are executed in a style but little above mediocrity; particularly that of AMES, of which the hand resembles nothing human. The eyes are also very badly done; for, besides that they do not appear to be fellows, the left eye is nearly an eighth of an inch higher than the right one, giving to the face the ludicrous appearance of smiling on one side, and frowning on the other. In the frontispiece we have the stale design of the Genus of America, with a most unmeaning face, pointing out to the Genus of History, who seems to look upon the work assigned to her, with the half suppressed, sarcastic smile of ridicule. The busts of Washington, Franklin, Jefferson and somebody else, who, from the resemblance, might be taken for the town-brother of Jefferson. The face of Washington, can only be known to be his, from its occupying the most conspicuous station; for it resembles that of a baboon, much more nearly than it does the human countenance; and the whole piece is very far inferior to what we have seen from the hands of the same artists, elsewhere. The figure of History, in the title page, is stiff and awkward beyond measure; the arms too large for the body; and the right foot, which is drawn up into a most uneasy posture, has exactly the appearance of being nailed to the heel of the left with an iron spike. The bust of Hamilton is the best in the book, both in point of execution and resemblance; and the portrait of Rush, which we perceive was not engraved for this work, occupies the next rank.

We shall now make a few remarks on the Lives which accompany these Portraits. In the preface, the writer takes some pains to point out the "uses and advantages of biography," and, from seeming so well to understand the deficiencies of Nepos and Plutarch, leads the reader to expect, all that can be wished for, in his own productions. But disappointment awaits the reader, who suffers himself to be so misled. Instead of biographies, he will see nothing but high wrought, hyperbolical eulogies which, *mutato nomine*, are the same, for every subject. Indeed, the author proves himself a perfect adept, in the art of exaggeration. Under the magic touch of his pen, every man becomes a hero, and every hero a god. We look, in vain, for those little foibles and weaknesses which are inseparably attached to the nature of man; and we turn away, in despair, from the contemplation of greatness, which so far transcends all power, and hope, of imitation. Thus, one of the noblest uses of biography is wholly lost. It may, sometimes, answer a good purpose, to indulge in panegyrics of the living, who, by being made to see the difference between

their actual merits, and the picture drawn of them, may learn to govern their future conduct, by the standard of excellence, erected by the panegyrist. But truth, naked truth, divested of all hyperbole, is essential to the biographer: not only, as it respects the true glory of the deceased, but as it regards the moral instruction to the living; which is the first, and only legitimate, object of biography. Eulogy, when carried to a height, not warranted by facts, becomes satire; and thus, has the effect of debasing the character, which it was intended to exalt. By placing the hero on an eminence, to which it is impossible to climb, by human effort; by describing him, such as no man ever was, or ever can be, all emulation is destroyed; all desire to excel is lost, in the acknowledged impossibility of the attempt. Besides, when a biographer confines himself to the public conduct of his hero, he can tell us nothing new: he exhibits him only, such as we have been always accustomed to see him, ready dressed to receive company. But it is not in the field, in the forum, or on the rostrum, that we can become acquainted with the man. We must follow him to his closet; we must see him, in the bosom of his family; we must know, whether he acts the hero to his valet de chambre; it is in these situations only, that we can find the motives, that influence his actions; it is here only, that we can gain a correct knowledge of the individual. In the delineation of character, it is of as much importance, to point out faults, that ought to be shunned, as it is to depict virtues, that ought to be imitated. But the encomiast, who prostitutes truth, by giving a loose to the creative powers of a wanton imagination, confounds all distinction, between the good and the bad, and deprives the public of that benefit, which a just discrimination would not fail to produce. A writer of this description, is also reduced to the frequent necessity, of contradicting himself; for, it is not possible, that two individuals can exist, in the same age and country, each holding the highest rank, in the scale of excellence; the superlative degree of praise, therefore, which is true, when applied to the one, must be false, when applied to the other.—*Ibid.*

To be continued.

St. Domingo, or Hayti.

The following particulars respecting this Island, are taken from a letter, dated the 16th of June, 1816.

"When a vessel arrives in the harbour of Cape Henry, no person is permitted to land until the ship has been visited by a boat from the shore. Shortly after coming to anchor, therefore, the visiting boat came off to us with a military officer, an interpreter, &c.—Their appearance was by no means prepossessing; their dress consisted of wide checked trousers with boots above them, a long blue coat faced with red, and out at the elbows, with a huge cocked hat, with a red feather, at least two feet long, and a dragoon sabre by their side, gave their black faces a very formidable appearance. They were however, very polite; inquired the news from Europe, swallowed cheese, ham, &c. by the lump, washing all down with wine, gin and porter; they then conducted the captain and all the passengers to the Governor the Duke de Marmalade, a blackman, about 60 years of age, a native of Africa, mild in his manners, and exceeding well liked both by natives and foreigners. He merely inquired our names, our business, took all our letters, papers, &c. in order to have them translated for his majesty, and then ordered us to wait on baron Dupuy, a man of color, about 50, private secretary to the King, and reckoned a second Talleyrand. He certainly is a man of address. I was afterwards introduced to Prince John, the King's son, who is a good young man, but has no abilities. I was, however, much pleased with him, and received many kindnesses from him.

"On one who has seen negroes and coloured people only in the degraded situation in which they are in the colonies, it has a singular effect when he goes among them where they only have command and control; and, although from my short residence in this quarter of the world, and from my general feelings towards them, as a people who are and have been cruelly and unjustifiably ill used, still I felt something like an ill natured contempt for their assuming an authority over me. The desolation which surrounds you in the town of Cape Henry serves to keep alive this feeling, and is, on first landing, perhaps the most impressive scene I ever witnessed. It formerly contained 60 or 70,000 inhabitants, built upon a plain, in the most regular order, all the streets intersecting each other at right angles, and running in straight lines E. and W. and N. and S. The buildings have been uniformly elegant. Picture to yourself such a place—the houses completely sacked, and only the outward walls and balconies remaining—trees and shrubs growing within and upon the walls—and grass growing upon the streets—and you have something almost as

melancholy as the appearance of Cape Henry.

"To complete, the picture, however, you must conceive a climate uniformly serene, a kind of splendour in the bright blazing sun, and the lively verdure all around, and something so impressively sad in the appearance of the partial occupation of the ruined houses, which here and there contain a family of blacks and mulattoes, that words cannot convey any adequate description of the scene.—You are continually reminded that others than those you now see in a corner of what has been a princely mansion, raised it and dwelt in it: and, for aught you can tell, the very persons who huddle up in one corner of it, may have cut the throats of the former owners. The houses of the few English and American residents are exceptions to this, as are also the few occupied by the nobility. These have been completely repaired, and just serve to show how splendid a place it must have been when all the others were in the same state. The same description will apply to the country. I had an opportunity of travelling from Gonaves across the cape a distance of 60 or 70 miles. On every side I could see the ruins of fine houses and plantations, and from the appearance of the country, I have little doubt but the assertion of the French is correct, that their possessions in St. Domingo were once worth all the Colonies in the West Indies! I had no opportunity of seeing Christophe, which was very sorry for, for he kept himself so aloof from the Cape, that I might have continued there three months without his being once in it; and even then perhaps not visible."

MEXICO.

The editors of the Mercantile Advertiser were yesterday favored with a translation of the following interesting intelligence from Mexico. The fact here stated of the revolutionists having taken possession of Matagorda, is confirmed by the report of Capt. Fowler, from New-Orleans.

"His Excellency Don Jose Manuel de Herrera, minister plenipotentiary from the Republican Government of Mexico, to the United States, has communicated, under date of 24th August last, from the port of Matagorda, to a respectable person at Philadelphia, the following information:

The Republican army of the province of Vera Cruz, under the command of Gen. Vittoria laid siege on the 10th July last, to the cities of Cordova and Orizaba, which were then on the eve of surrendering. The Commander in Chief of the Republican troops of the province Puebla Teran, was endeavoring by forced marches to occupy the ports of Guazacualcos, which was without means of defence. Gen. Bastamente had been victorious over the Royalists as often as he had met them, and was pursuing them with all haste. Gen. Arredondo, commander in chief of the interior provinces, for the Royalists, had fallen back with the few forces under his orders on Monterrey, the capital of the new kingdom of Leon, in consequence of the Republicans having occupied the port of Matagorda, where they had fortified themselves, and where they were daily augmenting their strength. Subsequent to the possession of that port has been the evacuation of St. Antonia de Bazar, capital of the province of Texas, which was garrisoned by the regiment of Estremadura, one of the most famous corps of the Royal party.

"The representatives who are to compose the next Congress, are named by the people, and by the present time will have opened their session. It affords great pleasure to see the joy and enthusiasm which pervaded the Mexicans on the day of election. A person who was witness to this interesting scene says, that in the province of Valladolid, there were various likenesses of Washington and Franklin, which the people carried in their processions, accompanied with music and songs allegorical of the occasion.

"Between Washington and Franklin, some carried the resemblance of the Gen. Cura Balgo, the first who had the glory and courage to raise the standard of liberty, who was afterwards made prisoner, and shot by the cruel Spaniards at the age of seventy.

"Never has the Mexican cause presented so favourable an aspect. The next Congress, formed of men of influence, will remove all those difficulties, which, until the present moment, have paralyzed that rapid progress which was looked for in a revolution created by the unanimous and express will of the people.

"The immense resources which our beautiful country contains, will henceforward be administered by a government, which, meriting the public confidence, will give a new impulse, and will cause itself to be felt by the physical and moral qualities of the republic.

"The next campaign will be an object of lively interest to all men who are really lovers of the sacred rights of humanity; it will complete the emancipation of that

fine country from the oppressive hand of despotism. The inhabitants of Mexico will hereafter be enabled to enjoy and participate equally the precious gifts with which nature has favoured them."

By the Last Mails.

Spanish Outrage.

NEW-ORLEANS, Sept. 17.

We have at last received such information relative to the outrage lately committed on the American flag by the Spaniards, as may be relied upon. Expecting to receive some information, we forebore any allusion to the subject in yesterday's gazette. The Firebrand was not in company with any other vessel when she fell in with the 3 Spanish corvettes. When fired upon, Lieut. Cunningham shewed his colors, and hailed the commodore—mentioning the character of his vessel. After continuing their fire some time, the Spaniards sent an officer on board the Firebrand, to whom Mr. Cunningham's commission was shewn, and afterwards Mr. Campbell, second in command of the Firebrand, was sent on board the corvette, on the requisition of the Spanish captain.

When Mr. C. arrived on the deck, he was insulted by the most opprobrious abuse, and a sentinel was placed over him; his boat's crew was also compelled to go on board—immediately put in irons, and then cruelly beaten. It is added, that M. Cunningham repeatedly assured the Spanish capt. that he had struck his flag, that he considered the Firebrand as a prize to his catholic majesty, and entreated that she might be taken possession of agreeably to the usages of belligerents.

This was declined by the gallant champion of the mission—but he still detained Mr. Campbell and his boat's crew.

At the expiration of four hours, however, a sail appeared at a distance; the prisoners were released, and the Firebrand permitted to depart by the redoubtable Don, who did not fail to load her commander with the foulest reproaches, and protested that he had orders to drive every American vessel from the Gulf of Mexico.

We shall accompany the preceding facts with no observations; the base recital is sufficient to arouse the indignation of every man who has an American heart, or a heart that spurns cowardice, and its constant associate, cruelty. We feel confident, knowing intimately, as we do, the officers of the Firebrand, that they offered no provocation to the vessels of a friendly nation, and that in whatever circumstances they be placed, they never would dishonor either themselves or their country.

The Infamous Slave Trade.—By a memorandum of arrivals at the Havana, it appears, that fifteen hundred slaves had been brought there from Africa—from the 5th to the 12th September inclusive!—in 4 vessels, each of them averaging above 300. Humanity shudders at this abomination. The spirit of the age denounces it in a voice of thunder.—"The Almighty has no attribute, which can take side" with such an atrocious heresy.—*Enq.*

IMPORTANT.

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 10.

Arrived ship Madelena, Weiden, of New-York, 36 days from Teneriffe with wine, &c. On the 27th August, four days before the M. sailed, the British packet Brazil, arrived off the port in 11 days from Gibraltar, bound home; and her commander stated, that the Dey of Algiers had been put to death, and his son proclaimed successor—that, on assuming the reins of government the son immediately annulled the treaty which his father had made with Com. Decatur—that the American and British squadrons were to unite in the attack upon Algiers—and confirmed the account of the capture of the British Packet Walcheren, by an Algerine cruiser.

Supposed Bombardment of Algiers

Capt. Evans, of the ship Ann Maria, arrived at this port last evening in 60 days from Leghorn, informs, that on the 15th and 16th of August, he heard a heavy cannonading in the direction of Algiers, and supposed it to be Lord Exmouth's fleet bombarding that city.

Unhappy Catastrophe.—Yesterday morning, between the hours of 9 and 10 o'clock, TOBIAS LEAR Esq. accountant of the War department, put a period to his existence, by shooting himself through the head. We have not as yet learnt the causes which led to the perpetration of this unhappy deed. Mr. Lear was naturally cheerful and pleasant, on the fatal morning, Mr. L. breakfasted with his family in his usual good humor, and was proceeding as they thought to his office, when the report of a pistol was heard from the back of the yard—Mr. Lear, son of the deceased, immediately proceeded to the spot from whence the sound appeared to issue, and found his father weltering in his blood. *Georgetown paper, Oct. 12.*