

THE

214

PRINCETON MAGAZINE.

EDITED BY

WILLIAM C. ALEXANDER.

VOL. I.

PRINTED BY JOHN T. ROBINSON.

1850.

THE
PRINCETON MAGAZINE.

A VISIT TO THE OLD HOUSE.

I had not revisited the home of my boyhood for forty years. It was moonlight, when I alighted from the stage-coach, within sight of the house in which I was born; and though I had determined to postpone my visit until the next day, there were some distant glimpses of towering elms and piles of building, which brought a world of recollections back upon me, and sent me to bed to dream all night of broken scenes from my boyish history. Ah! how deep are those impressions which are made in the child's soul while he is thinking only of his present sports and passing troubles!

Business of a more common-place and sordid character occupied me, among papers and receipt-books, till noon. I then prepared myself for a solitary visit to the home of my fathers; and I chose to approach it by the rear. Between the old garden and the river was a meadow. I had rolled in it, among the dandelions and buttercups, a thousand times: but the old nurse, who had been to me a mother, was long since dead. The cool clear spring was in the place where I left it; and the rill which wandered from it into the river was marked by an edging of greener grass. The fragrant mint along its borders came to my sense with associations of

opposing his election. Like most other eloquent men, Zachariah Johnston excelled in his conversational powers. And when in the country, people would be met at church, before the worship commenced, he would commonly have a large group around him listening to his discourse. On one of these occasions, the writer was among his hearers, when he felt at first somewhat shocked at hearing him describe the conduct of a certain man, who when at home passed for a moral man, but when in Richmond, associated with the vilest character: but his object was to produce a salutary effect on the minds of the youth who were hearing him.

It was a common report, that he was never seen to smile. Whether this was true I cannot tell; but being present when the students of an academy acted (as was then common) a ludicrous farce, while the rest of the audience were convulsed with laughter, Zachariah Johnston was not observed to relax a muscle of his face.

Johnston was a member of the Virginia convention, which adopted the federal constitution. In that august assembly he remained silent, until near the close of the debates, when he arose and delivered a short, sensible discourse in favour of the constitution; the substance of which may be found in the printed Debates of the Convention.

A.

MOTHER-COUNTRY AND FATHER-LAND.

A DIALOGUE.

F. L. Good morning, Mother-Country, I hope I see you well.

M. C. As well as I can expect to be, since you came in and robbed me of my rights.

F. L. I, Mother-Country, I? Why, you astonish me. What can you mean?

M. C. I mean what I say, that you have robbed me of my birth-right, and you cannot deny it.

F. L. I am ready to answer any fair and proper question, that is, any one that does not tend to criminate myself.

M. C. That is exactly what I wish to make you do, you good-for-nothing foreigner.

F. L. Ha, ha, ha! A foreigner, quotha! Ask any editor or sophomore or cheap poet that you meet, if I am not a native, or at least a naturalized citizen.

M. C. Are you not a German by birth?

F. L. Why, as to the place of my nativity—

M. C. Answer my question—yes, or no? Is not your true name *Vaterland*?

F. L. By what right do you propound these interrogatories?

M. C. Are you ashamed of your High Dutch blood? Perhaps then you will own yourself a Hollander, *Mynheer Faderland*.

F. L. Really, Madam, you are very exacting.

M. C. Oh I am not half done with my examination.

F. L. Pray proceed.

M. C. Did you not come over in the good ship Sentimental Slang, with Captain Namby Pamby of the Transcendental Horse Marines?

F. L. Good woman, you are growing quite abusive.

M. C. You will think so by-and-by, my man. Perhaps your mother does not know you that are out. I wish with all my heart you were safe at home.

F. L. At home! what does the poor old lady mean?

M. C. She means in the Black Forest or the Hartz Mountains, or in Westphalia, or whatever other part of Deutschland had the ill-luck to produce you.

F. L. Please, ma'am, I would rather go on with my catechism.

M. C. I warrant you. Well, answer like a man.

F. L. I will do my best, ma'am.

M. C. Did you come into the country as I said?

F. L. I do not deny it.

M. C. No, you dare not. But perhaps you will deny that you wormed yourself into the good graces of my dear young people.

F. L. What of that?

M. C. And drove poor old Mother-Country out of doors.

F. L. I did not do it.

M. C. No, but the poor babies did it upon your account.

F. L. Could I help their liking me better?

M. C. Yes you had no business here at all. You ought to have remained at home with Goethe and Schiller, or at least stopped in England with Carlyle and Coleridge.

F. L. You forget that this is a free country.

M. C. No, I never can forget that, while I see you taking on such airs among us.

F. L. I have done nothing that I ought to be ashamed of.

M. C. What! no fault to pretend to nurse my children, with that long grisly beard and foul moustache?

F. L. My face and whiskers are my own.

M. C. I am glad that they are not mine.

F. L. What could I do?

M. C. You could shave or stay at home. Only think of my dear little ones jabbering about Father-Land, instead of their own lawful Mother-Country!

F. L. My dear madam——

M. C. Changing their country from a woman to a man— from a mother to a daddy!

F. L. My good woman——

M. C. What taste! What gallantry! What natural affection!

F. L. I have been trying for some [time to get your ear——

M. C. You might leave me that at least—

F. L. To say that you are under a mistaken apprehension—

M. C. Oh of course. We natives are all wrong, I dare say.

F. L. Hear me out. I say you are mistaken in supposing that I wish to take your place.

M. C. To be sure—

F. L. Our names are altogether different—

M. C. I know it.

F. L. I mean in meaning—

M. C. And I know in knowing.

F. L. Yours means that the country is itself the mother of its people.

M. C. And your's means that she is their father. Ha! ha!

F. L. Not at all—the very idea is absurd.

M. C. So I think; but my darling little poets and tale-writers all believe it to be so.

F. L. Dear madam, what can lead you to imagine such a folly upon their part?

M. C. I can prove it.

F. L. If you only could!

M. C. I prove it thus. The little simpletons never name the name of Mother-country, but invariably substitute the name of Father-land. Does that convince you?

F. L. Yes, that they are silly and affected in their use of what they think a fine new word, much better than the fine old native phrase to which they were accustomed in their childhood.

M. C. This from you is quite surprising. But pray, my good sir, what does your name mean after all? It must mean something I suppose, though that is not so certain either. You say mine means that a person's country is his mother.

F. L. And mine means that she is the country of his fathers.

M. C. You will not deny that mine is more poetical.

F. L. It certainly is, for it personifies the country, in a most affecting manner, whereas mine is merely a historical description.

M. C. Your generosity and candour overwhelm me.

F. L. You are too polite.

M. C. We need not be at variance at all then.

F. L. I sincerely trust not.

M. C. And you did not mean to oust me from my place in the hearts and mouths of my children.

F. L. So far from it that I meant to make a very different proposal.

M. C. Pray what was it?

F. L. One of marriage—if you think you could endure a second husband.

M. C. I have not yet forgotten my poor Home Sweet Home.

F. L. I will help you to remember him.

M. C. The marriage contract—

F. L. Is already drawn, and stipulates that any of your children who shall dare hereafter to treat me as any thing but their step-father, shall be disinherited as traitors to their mother-tongue and mother-country.

HERCULES,

A MYTH.

Clad in the covering of the bearded Lion,
By arms divine in old Nemea slain ;
In seawinds cold the long hair tinkling, flying,
Or stiff with mists that dropt in crystal rain,