

Levy Brothers

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DOMINION.

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OF

LITERATURE, SCIENCE AND ART.

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# The Old Dominion Magazine.

VOL. 6.

RICHMOND, VA., JUNE 15, 1872.

No. 6.

## BELLEVILLE.

In my opinion Charles Campbell, of Petersburg, did good service to Virginia by hunting up old scraps of paper at the antique seats of our gentry. The search enabled him to determine some important points of history which had been long in dispute. We aim at no such grand result. These papers of mine written for the OLD DOMINION are nothing more than Nugu Antique, for the writer has never been fortunate enough to discover any parchment or document to which he would attribute any special value. These trifles make no pretension to antiquity more than one of forty years. Virginians are not so crusty as to debar an octogenarian from amusing himself by a few innocent reminiscences.

In the summer of 1838 walked out to Lee's Springs about five miles to the south of Warrenton. Fine oaks all the way, and the scenery of the Ridge most superb so far as its softness was concerned. It beats any ever looked at

either in China or Peru, or even in the vale of Arno. Rested awhile at the farm of a gentleman who had surveyed a vast portion of Eastern Tennessee, but at the age of ninety was enjoying otium cum dignitate. Pushed on with my accustomed energy to Rapidale, as the Springs are often called. As multitudes have summered there, a description of the place would be a work of supererogation. Saw Carter, of Cleeve, author of the "Wagon Boy," a better ballad than Wordsworth could have written, and superior to any that Lockhart translated from the Iberian tongue.—Told him so; but begged him to add a stanza making his boy to drive over the Ridge. Give him a touch of the blue haze, for we Virginians regard that mountain as an Alexandrine, and instead of twelve, it speaks in twelve thousand syllables to our poets. He promised to improve the hint so soon as he should reach his lodge on Rappahannock.

Engaged in looking over a vol-

ume written by Mackenzie, on whom Scott bestowed the high designation of the Caledonian Addison. Joined by Warner Taliaferro, who ascended the steps of the porch, on his way from the spring, and he was a gentleman for whom any one would put aside a book, whatever the interest it may have inspired.

"Sir James Macintosh," I remarked, "in his History of England, has stated that an Italian who bore your name acted as minstrel to William the Conqueror, when in 1066 he invaded the dominions of Harold. But you cannot be descended from that personage, though doubtless the Norman gave him a patent of nobility."

"Why not?" he replied.

"Because the Taliaferros of our Old Dominion are too honorable ever to have lent themselves to such an expedition. Wish that the Saxon could have driven back the Norman into the sea he had crossed, and served him as Pharaoh was with all his chariots and horses.—Don't like invaders. How would you fancy it if people this side of Canada were to pounce down on the sovereign State of Virginny and rob the county of Mathews, and lay claim to Mob Jack Bay and perhaps Belleville, your seat in Gloucester?"

"Shouldn't like it," he answered, "and yet it may come to pass in the whirlwind of the human passions. But you are too *mountain-cerish* in your mental associations. Shall look for you at Belleville, in Gloucester, next Christmas. Don't

disappoint us. The gentlemen of the neighborhood will call on the author of the Picturesques. Your old comrade in study, Gulielmus H. Roy, wants to see you, who lives in Mathews, but he can cross over to Belleville in his boat."

"Life being vouchsafed," I replied, "keep a keen look out for me at Christmas."

We grant that Knickerbocker Irving is a bland and Goldsmithian writer, but in his Sketch Book and Bracebridge Hall he dwells too long on that festive season. Too much of a good thing is good for nothing, and the few words of peace on earth, dispersed by heavenly minstrels from the orchestra of Bethlehem, are worth all that men have ever written about Christmas.

It would be irksome to the reader to be told how the writer in fulfilling his promise, crept down to Gloucester. 'Tis not necessary to mention what road was taken, or what calls were made in the pony pilgrimage. Gray abbreviated his travels. He glanced at towns; but paused much longer on the landscapes of the lake country. He used his telescope with which to detect the hidden charms of nature. The writer took along no optigraph. The steed he rode was neither zebra, quagga, or donkey. But we passed Elk Run, Spotted Tavern, Yellow Chapel, Falmouth Bridge—slept at Mannsfield, the Christian inmates of which said, "abide with us, for 'tis towards evening, and the day is far spent." Between

Mannsfield and Port Royal met a friend on his way to preach. We shook hands. He was from the Merrimack, but had become saturated with Virgianism. Passed Elmwood, the seat of the Honorable James M. Garnett. Reached Tappahannock, and saw the house in which Tom Ritchie was born, so long the valiant leader of the Tenth Legion. Went forward and by hook or by crook found the gate that led in to the hospitable mansion of Warner Taliaferro. At the time to which reference is made, the country was in profound peace and blessed with abundance. In the words of Deborah, the highways were not occupied by the armies of Jabin and the soldiers of Sisera, nor had travellers to walk along the byeways. Passes were not common. Milkmaids could amuse themselves with the fleece of Dyer and repair to the cuppins at their own sweet will. The hewers of wood were unmolested in the forests, and the drawers of water were unwinding and winding their buckets at mossy wells. But we have seen a terrible time since those happy days. Little did we dream in riding through Commerce street, that Fredericksburgh was to bear the same relation to Virginia which Marathon bears to Greece—that the Marye Hill was to become immortal—that Mannsfield, once the seat of Governor Page, was to be laid in ruins, and that Americans can look with pride on old Rappahannock, as Hebrews look on the ancient Kishon.—

Thanks to the valor of Lee and Jackson, and above all to the Ruler of battles, that the old town escaped the fate of Wyoming, that once lay in the repose of a hamlet on the margin of the Otsego Susquehanna. In the war kirks became roofless, bells ceased to chime, merchants closed their stores, lawyers their offices and mechanics their shops; but we hear that Fredericksburgh has revived. 'Tis resuming the tints of peace after being made illustrious in the blaze of war.

The reader will say, don't forget that Belleville is your captian.— Well; the reader knows all about rural establishments in Lower Virginy. They have been often described by those who handle the pen of the ready writer, and they are becoming numerous as the tribes of Zebulon and Naphthali, and they were remarkable for the use of goodly words. It was Christmas, and of course pony missed the green sward of the summer, but he was not without nubbins which summer had produced. The writer had gone to make himself agreeable if he could, and to enlarge the area of his knowledge about Lower Virginia.

"It seems to me," I said to my host, "that the first settlers of this county must have been from a shire of the same name in our parent country."

"Your reasons for thinking so," he replied.

"Because the English shire is a peninsula, and the original Colon-

ists must have seen a resemblance in the Virginny tract which was laid off as a county. From looking about this Gloucester of ours it seems to be an almost island. You narrowly escaped being cut off from the main land. In our large territory there are hundreds of towns, villages and cities which owe their names either to a real or imaginary likeness. Here, said your sires, after they had peered around the premises, is a new Gloucester which has been photographed for us out of the sun which shone over the British shire from which we came. Here is Piankitank on the north, York river, fed by the Pamunkey and Mattipony, on the west and south, and a bay like that of Naples on the east, and here will we build our homes, open our parks, reap our harvests as true subjects of the English crown. But should the crown want too much of our money, then billions for defence, but not one dime in the way of tribute. And perhaps at the southern foot of Gloucester the great problem may be solved that all government must arise from the consent of the governed, as taught by Hampden and other Englishmen. From its natural advantages your peninsular strip became wealthy, your people hospitable, and their manners refined; and such seats arose as Shelley, Roswell, Warner Hall and Belleville."

"Any other resemblance?" asked my interlocutor.

"Coming here," I replied, "by as direct a line as possible, we have

seen but a small part of your county heritage. But it seemed to me that your soil is a plain, and not much above the level of the sea.— There is no mountain to ascend after crossing your territory. Now the Severn rises in the Welsh shire of Montgomery, but flows through a vale by Gloucester and empties into the British channel. When your sires named their future residence they might have been thinking of the lowlands through which that river takes its course. You have among you a little place called glens, and there are small and even large glens in the transatlantic shire. It was in a vale of the Severn that Jenner made his great discovery for which Parliament voted him ten thousand pounds. One of the most attractive pictures my eye has ever seen is one of that rustic physician intensely gazing on milkmaids from the bars of a cowpen. Millions have thanked him for slackening the speed of the pale horse and his rider in their flight over the five zones of the earth."

"Old Gloucester must have been a respectable shire," my friend observed.

"It was," I replied. "Humphrey, one of its Dukes, founded a library at Oxford, but being enlarged by Bodley, it is now called after his name, just as our Continent was called America and not Columbia. The associative faculty is often stirred in this Lower Va. Mine is kept still in Upper, but not Lower Virginny. And this Gloster in which you live is highly respecta-

ble. It may not have sent a martyr like Hooper to the stake, or reared a poet like Ken, or a bishop like the dogmatic Warburton, or a philanthropist like Raikes, or such a lady as Hannah More; but we knew some of the Pages who went from this county to the azure part of the Old Dominion, and they were highly polished people.— I carry about me a sweet remembrance of several days spent at their houses in the county of Frederick. In the course of my life we have met with Burwells, Armisteads, Throckmortons, Lewises, Swans, Pryors, Nelsons who were descendants from a Gloster stock. All clever, elegant people. Some of the Tabbs lived in my native town. But we have somewhat against the Virginia Gloster.”

“Let us hear it,” said my host.

“Is it true that a silk dress was manufactured in this county for the coronation of that good for nothing King Charles Second?”

“So rumored,” he replied, “and it’s probably true, for you know our sires invited him to quit Breda that he might be our king.”

“It was well,” I answered, “that Cromwell had died, for he might have sent the petitioners to the Dismal Swamp.”

We had quite a company of ladies at Belleville during Christmas week. Some of them were from Spotsylvania and one or two perhaps from Yorktown. They were intelligent, handsome and pious. A gentleman was announced. We recognized

him as our college acquaintance. Time had made on him but a slight impression. He was polite, good looking and well informed. Glad to meet him once more in a world subject to so many changes. Alarmed however when he said:

“A word with you in private at the earliest opportunity.”

What’s to pay now thought I. Is it some grudge arising from a college feud? Is there a quarrel on hand in such a tranquil nook as Belleville? He knows that my sacred vocation has long ago made me a non-combatant. Relieved however when he explained.

“Don’t wish you at some unguarded moment to allude to our having been fellow students at college. Being a candidate for the nuptial altar any such reference would be out of place. Be like one of that order of Monks, all of whom were pledged to silence. The fair daughters of Eve are apprised of the fact which you desire to be concealed, but the thing must be fixed in the best possible way. Let us rejoin our company. Every college, ladies, has four classes, and a beardless freshman is generally four years in the rear of a senior, but it gives me pleasure to meet this gentleman, although a senior at college is seldom very intimate with a freshman. A freshman is a mere lad, but a senior an experienced gentleman.”

Never saw my old comrade in so racy a humor. Especially so as nothing but the truth had been stated, and a short time after leav;

ing Gloster the candidate was united to one of the most pleasing ladies that ever approached the altar of Hymen. This weighty affair being disposed of, it was time to seek a little more information about a part of Virginia so fertile in associations to all lovers of the Old Dominion. Friend Taliaferro was always ready for an interchange of views.

"You are quite near to Yorktown and the river on which it stands. Are the banks of the river high or low?"

"In some places high. They approach the bluff. It is named after the old English city; but like that city has no cathedral which it took two hundred years to build. The town has but a scanty population, but it is a point at which a conference of deep interests and high passions took place on the 19th day of October, 1781, when Washington ascended to the zenith of his military fame and that of Cornwallis fell to its nadir point. The place at present wears a dreary aspect, and yet it looked gay enough when French admirals and generals and American armies were besieging the ramparts of the British commander."

"Want of success," I remarked, "seems often to impair public confidence in a military leader, and yet this was not the fact with Cornwallis. He became afterwards the pacificator of Ireland, the ruler of India, and he negotiated the peace of Amiens in 1802, into which Bonaparte entered simply that he might

oppress the continent. England detected his design—reopened hostilities and fought the world."

A Cornwallis was once Archbishop of Canterbury, and we presume that the General belonged to a family influential both in church and State. Since the time of which we write the Appomattox surrender has taken place. What injury, we ask, occurred to the military reputation of Gen. Lee? Not a particle. He is still regarded both in Europe and America as the equal of Lord Wellington, and Wellington in his day was without a rival. When we consider how disproportioned were his forces to those of the Northern Army, the last campaign of Lee will ever be cited as the greatest in human history.

Lower Virginia enjoys one inestimable blessing in the way of weather. We know that the Indian summer is often hailed by the people of the upper country when it is difficult to say whether the mountains put on a skylike, Prussian, indigo or smalt blue. But in the lowlands the sun seems to exercise more than his common power. It had been cold enough to prevent the ringing of a sheepbell, but all the inmates of Belleville were rejoicing in a glorious Indian summer. The atmosphere appeared in its brightest haze and sweetest balm—warblers left the hollows of the trees, the rivers glistened, anglers talked of blue-caps and sun-fish, and the Chesapeake shone like the tropical Bay of Rio Janerio. Rode to the seat of Dr. Taliaferro,

the immediate progenitor of my host. A venerable man. Met a carriage on the way, from which the ladies called out—

“What celestial weather.”

Before the atmosphere lost its magic spell took occasion to pass a day or two with the Rev. Charles Mann, the rector of the parish. Introduced by the rector to several interesting ladies who doubtless belonged to his charge. It has been my habit through life always to regard the abodes of ministers with complacency. Wordsworth did the same thing when he made his Scottish tour, and Christopher North and McKenzie when they went a gunning and angling.

“Bowles,” I remarked, who was a native of Northamptonshire, lived a long time in a quiet rectory. It was the most commodious one in the whole of England. He fell into a logomachy with Byron. He took, however, a singular position in that controversy.”

“What was it like?” said the rector.

“Why, that a poet always found his material exclusively in the natural world. This would limit a writer to the description of scenery. So restricted our poets would become tame, and Byron stepped into the arena as the champion of social feeling and artificial life. He was a great minstrel, but as a man perfectly odious in the estimation of all the virtuous. Would have been Bowles rather by a vast deal than the Lord of Newstead Abbey.”

“Anything else to say about Eng-

lish rectories?” enquired my obliging host.

“Yes; Goldsmith was brought up in one of them at Pallas in Ireland. Among all writers he is my favorite. In his day he was called the Inspired Idiot. Only to think of applying the term idiot to a man who made natural history readable as a Persian tale, took the quintessence of Greek and Roman events out of many volumes, in his Chinese letters made Londoners believe that he had come from the Orient, played the ‘Traveller’ on his flute all the way from Leyden to the English channel, and placed the deserted village so perfectly on a level with the human affections that we keep our very hamlets in an embellished state lest they should moulder under the touch of time or be overwhelmed by an inundation of ruin which is common to all human things. In a Devonshire rectory Herrick wrote his wine songs, but subsequently lamented that his pen had ever been devoted to such an anacreontic purpose.—Will not enlarge. Must send you a ‘Decade of Letters’ written about the English rectories, and you know they have been lived in by many good men. Heaven forbid that because of my attachment to the Scottish Kirk we should ever speak unkindly of rectories in the Tidewater country of Virginia. Your people are attached to the form of their religion. No wonder: your ancestors brought it with them from the old country, and Parson Hunt baptized Pochahontas with



rain water out of the hollow of a forest tree. The artist has not been true to nature, for in his picture of the baptism he has given us a bowl."

"But," said Rector Mann, "have you been entirely silent about the manses of the Scottish Kirk?"

"No: could send you old Peter Bell's decade of letters about those manses which were published in a Richmond paper, but it is perfectly proper that you should prefer the rectories."

The next morning the excellent rector drove me to the Court House and introduced his guest to many gentlemen. A neat, handsome place, but oh what a name. A Court House. It makes one think of litigation. When will Virginians learn to drop such appellations? Why not call it Auburn, for it stands on a plain and would be a pretty village when the cherry, peach and apple trees have blossomed? There was a perfect jubilee in the grand convention of the people when by a unanimous vote Richmond Court House became Warsaw. Returned to Belleville.

It seemed next to impossible that a stranger domesticated for ten days in Gloster could resist the current of Indian associations flowing in upon the mind. It could have been turned back in the mountains, but not in the position we then occupied. For ages before an English foot had pressed the soil between James and York rivers the Aborigines had held these

forests. My ruminations went back to the period when the liege subjects of Powhatan tracked their game on wintry snows, and launched their canoes in the tide of summer, and plied their rude nets in spring, and stripped their miniature corn in autumn. The realms of Powhatan extended to the Rappahannock and to the mountains, and from his wigwam below Richmond to the Capes. In fact, his empire was all abroad, and like Selkirk, he was monarch of all he surveyed. He ruled over a people interesting from their mysterious origin, their manners, wars, dances and ornaments. They would have been more interesting still could their language have been secured; but it has perished unless some remnants of it may have been preserved by Moravian Missionaries. Some of the names bestowed by the Indians on objects and localities have been deciphered, and white men could not have surpassed the red in the appropriateness of the nomenclature. Potomac with them was the River of Swans, and we have seen caravans of those graceful birds crossing and recrossing that stream. Shenandoah with them was Daughter of the Stars, for in their fishing by night they had seen the stars doubling themselves in the reflection of its wave. Roanoke with them was Dark Water, for it rises in cypress swamps. Mississippi was the Father of Waters, a fit designation for the length of its course and the number of its tributaries. In nam-

ing places these sons of the forest always hit the nail on the head and drove it into a sure place. For once they missed it, in the naming of Alabama. Here we rest. Alas, their weary feet are still in motion, and yet Pontiac, Ocoola, Black Hawk and Tecumseh were brave men. Catlen thought Indian chiefs worthy of his pencil, and that he might secure their noble forms, he plunged into their deserts and became familiar with their palaces. By the extinction of their language we have lost volumes of beauty which men of imagination and taste would have studied with the profoundest interest. Among Indian chiefs Powhatan was a man of mark. Before the advent of the English he had formed the scattered tribes of Indians into a strong confederacy, probably for the defence of his territory. This measure might have been dictated by some suspicion, that ere long strangers would arrive in his dominions, though second sight is far more common in the Valley than in Lower Virginia. A shadow seems to hang over coming events as Campbell has written. This kind of anticipation was not absent from the Halls of Montezuma before the arrival of Cortes, and among the Incas of Peru before Pizarro made his appearance. Accordingly, in 1607, the dark ships with snowy sails came in sight, when April had strewed with violets the margin of the Powhatan. An Indian from below hurried on to the palace of Powhatan that he might apprise

the monarch of the startling events. What a surprise. Who can they be? From what land have they come? What can their object be in disturbing these quiet rivers and sequestered woods? Have they no fish of their own, no birds, no stags, no canoes that they should come to rob us of lands the gift of the Great Spirit. Such thoughts would be more likely to occur to savage than to civilized men. But the time had drawn nigh in the mysterious arrangements of heaven when civilization was to supplant savage life and the Norman was to spur his steed over the plains of Jamestown, and in due time the Anglo-Saxon was to climb into our mountains and hew out a pathway to our rich and extensive valleys. And yet it was no easy task which the colonists had undertaken, to wrest the sceptre from the grasp of the Indian king. They were few in number—poorly supplied—reduced by famine and often on the eve of starvation. The struggle was long and doubtful, but at last civilization triumphed. We need not enter into details, for the story has been often told, and all the facts have become household in Virginia. The colonization of what is now called Virginia had been determined on by the Ruler of all events. What He determines must soon become a foregone conclusion, whether it be the rise or fall of an empire. The agents were provided by whom the work was to be achieved, and these agents, beyond a question, were Captain Smith,

from the Shire of Lincoln, and Pochahontas, an Indian princess.—Smith was taken prisoner and probably carried to the wigwam on York river, where his life was saved in a way so romantic that the recital of it has thrilled many hearts. Except for this deed wrought out by a child thirteen years of age, the colony would, in all probability, have been extinguished. She was the uniform friend of the settlers. Even in the darkest hours of their fortunes she was bent on their safety. We do not charge her with the want of filial attachment or with being untrue to her own people, for a child could not have dreamed that acts of kindness might lead to the subversion of her father's throne, and the dispersion of the tribe to which she belonged. In all the mythological fables of the Greeks, or the stories of the deacon, or the lost tales of Miletus, or the ballads of Spain or Caledonian songs, can we find a legend so rich as that which her deeds have created on the banks of the James. Like some gazelle she emerged not from the Park of Windsor, but from a dense wilderness, and threading the labyrinths of the forest, warned the colonists of coming massacre by her dumb eloquence enforced by her pensive features. It was a dreary night in which she went forth on this pilgrimage of sixty miles to arrest the tomahawk and scalping knife. Her buskin was gilded neither by moon or star, but this wondrous, untutored dam-

sel saved the colony by her brief message. Prepare, prepare—they come, they come—

Now let me take my homeward way,  
By that same path I hither came,  
And reach it ere the evening gray  
Shall fill our wigwam rude with game.  
And may no lonely white man fall  
For the same Spirit loves us all.

And yet this child of the forest sleeps beneath the murky clouds of the Thames, and not by her native river, which needs no prism to flush its waves and where the plumage of the blue bird is so often seen amid the green foliage of its summer trees. No marble pillar has been reared to her memory, but her monument is broad and long, deep and high as Virginia the mother of an illustrious progeny. Her capes, bays, rivers, azure mountains that look down on undulating hills, her antique bridges and stalactite caverns that draw the footsteps of admiring pilgrims, her towering peaks, Rockfish gaps, fragrant valleys constitutes the monument of Pochahontas.

Joined at that moment by my host.

"You seem to have fallen," he remarked, "into a brown study. You were just in such a reverie when I first saw you on the verandah at Rapida Springs."

"Yes," I replied, "but the brown study has come to a conclusion. It was about the poor Indians who have been hunted down like deer in the woods or game on the uplands. In all our enjoyments let us

never forget the unfortunate. Must leave you to-morrow, as Ledyard the traveller said when asked how soon before he could make ready to start for the sources of the Nile." Took leave of the family. Met

my host once since that time in Fredricksburgh and found him in tonstrina Tonsoris to be the same perfect gentleman he had been at Belleville.

T. B. BALCH.

## A SKETCH OF THIERS.

Translated from "Die Gartenlaube," No. 19, 1867.

BY MARY W. CABELL.

"The boundaries of the Rhine!" This was a short time ago the battle-cry of most of the French journals, and is still so more or less.

In the year 1821, there came a young man from the south of France to Paris, with the declared aim of making his fortune in that city which draws and absorbs within itself all talents and all powers. He had just received his lawyer's diploma from the University of Aix in Provence, and thought that in Paris, he could more quickly obtain practice and clients, and honor with money and influence than at his home. This young lawyer who occupied a little room on the passage Montesquieu, furnished in the simplest style was no other than the afterwards powerful minister, the historian and academician, Adolph Thiers, who is to be considered as the proper originator of the French battle-cry, which continues to arise anew from

time to time. Recently, in a much famed oration, he has brought up again on the carpet this watchword of French vanity and boastfulness; and so we must regard him as the main instigator of the extremely ridiculous German greed, now so prevalent and so vehement in France.

Scarcely escaped from the school bench at Marseilles, Thiers knew already that he was destined to be a minister of France. One day he saw the poor old woman who sold fruit before the buildings of the Faculty, dragging herself along more wearily than usual, and he consoled her with the words, "Have patience, good mother; when I am minister, you shall ride in my carriage." In Paris, he soon found out that journalism leads more rapidly to name and consideration than the law. Through the intervention of a deputy, he succeeded to the co-editorship of "The Con-