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LEILA CONWAY.

BY MRS. WALLACE.

CHAPTER I.

An old-fashioned country house hidden away among the hills in Virginia, has a wide, brown-roofed old porch running around it, and up the pillars and over the roof have honey-suckles and roses been clambering for the last half century until one scarcely knows whether it is the porch which supports the vines or the vines the porch.

Around the porch lies a garden filled with a perfect wealth of roses, lilacs, jasmines, altheas, hollyhocks, and all those dear old-fashioned flowers which fill the senses with a fragrance so lingering and which so clings around the memory that in after years we may forget where in the garden stood the roses and where the jasmine, but that wondrous fragrance never!

Quiet little walks glide hither and thither about that dear old garden, some completely embowered by the roses, jasmines, honey-suckle, and tall-flowering shrubs, and others again opening upon beds of pinks, flags, thyme, stocks, and lilies, from which an odor arises which leads the senses captive. A broad walk runs through the middle of the garden stopping about half-way under a quaint old summer-house and scudding away to the other end to a bower formed by lilac bushes nearly a half century old.

Upon this old porch on a sweet June evening when soft flakey white clouds were floating lazily about in the last rays of the setting sun, and with all the delicious odors exhaling

your poverty. Gold will not always fill a woman's heart and life with sunshine and contentment; but love will. I have supported myself these long years by copying. I can continue to do it. Oh, believe me, Gordon, this, for you, will be a sweet atonement for the darkened past: only receive kindly my right for yours is all I ask."

"Thank God, Christine!" he exclaimed fervently, suddenly stooping and imprinting a tender kiss upon the uplifted, beautiful brow; "you need strive no longer, for you have attained that exquisite perfection of the most glorious womanhood—forgetfulness of self! I have

found you, at last, little convert, never to lose you again. When will you give me the right to make the detention lawful?"

"When this cruel war is over," she whispered.

"My Christine, oh! no, not then, but now," he pleaded.

And now it was; for Christine Dennison could not resist her brave soldier's entreaty.

Evelyn Wild, for Gordon's sake, gave her a sister's welcome; but when "this cruel war was over," and she saw how bravely Gordon's Love assisted him in his endeavors to provide for their home comfort, she grew to love her for herself.

BELMONT.

It has occurred to the writer that some interest may be given to a visit of but a few days, provided it were made in the olden times. The incidents of current life make but a slight impression. They easily escape from the memory; but become mellow in the lapse of years. In one respect man is happily constituted. Sepulchral flowers seem to bloom on dilapidated homes, and Belmont was the seat of an elegant hospitality in days of yore.

Sorry for an allusion to self; but without an ego there can be no subjective literature. Reminiscences cannot be written in an objective way. The winter of 1814 was passed by the

reminiscent in Leesburgh, Loudoun county, Virginia. The inhabitants of the town were remarkable for their sociability. The old people were good natured, and allowed their young ones to plan what entertainments they pleased. Pianos were thumbed at a merciless rate. In addition there were several seats not far from the town. Exeter was one, Selma another, occupied by General Mason, and Coten, a third in the possession of Widow Lee, sister to the Antique Lady, whose manuscript was published in the OLD DOMINION. Politics were at a high figure. The war against England was denounced by a large majority, and in this state of things

the writer was surprised by an invitation to deliver a speech on the twenty-second of February, the birthday of Washington. The oration was published, which was antebellum as regards the war of 1861, but rather antebellum as to the war of 1812. To avoid egoism, this statement has been made short as convenience would allow.

It was owing perhaps to some coincidence of sentiment about the war, that the writer was invited to Belmont, the seat of Ludwell Lee, which was five miles from town, on the road to Bellhaven, the original name of Alexandria. A servant came into town leading a dappled pony.

"Uncle," said I, "for whom is that extra animal intended?"

"For that *thar* young gentleman who spoke that *thar* speech."

"Then it is for me, uncle. Come to my lodging. It will take but ten minutes for my toilette."

It was impossible to resist such attention from a gentleman whom the writer had never seen, but of whose colloquial powers he had often heard. We went pacing on, for it was cold, and we thought all the way of the Scotch ingleside which was eulogised by Ferguson. Winter was indeed holding its censer with its tightest grasp—snow was dispersed over field and tree; but every heartstone had become a kind of counteracting power, and above the chimnies the air was filled with curling smokes. We reached Belmont, situated on an elevation, as the name implies. Its proprietor introduced the stranger to his family. No gorgeous curtains or expensive

pictures were visible; but every thing plain and yet elegant. We discerned in a twinkle that the owner of Belmont was a gentleman of the Old Virginny type. He affected no self-consequence. Gave his guest a cordial, but not an ostentatious welcome. He struck me as having just reached the age of forty-eight—was lower in stature than we had supposed, but quite beyond the height of the Apostle Paul or of Doctor Watts. If Ludwell Lee were a gentleman, we can add with truth, that the consort he had chosen was a perfect lady.

It is not right in a guest perhaps to mention other members of a family besides the one for whom the visit may be principally designed. This is a rule to which the writer has strictly adhered. But in the present instance all the actors and actresses have probably left the stage of time. For this reason we may be excused in alluding to a young lady of great personal attractions, who was playing her part in the domestic drama. She was reading at the time Scott's "Lady of the Lake," which was published about 1810, but had not then fallen into the yellow leaf. Her mother asked me with a playful fondness, if there were any likeness between her daughter and the heroine of that Poem. My reply was that the advantage lay decidedly with the *Bellemont* Lady. But the Highland castle was absent, and so were the silver lake, the pebbled strand, the bewildered knight, and the horn ringing in the mountains. The young lady was subsequently united in marriage to a South Carolinian bearing the celebra-

ted name of Campbell. The name sounds Scottish, and possibly his ancestors might have lived either in Perth or Argyle. It is surprising what influence distant objects exercise over the imagination when they are brought before us by a graphic pencil. At one time the young ladies of Virginia were haunted by the Romance of the Abbotsford Minstrel. But they might have been disenchanted could they have seen Loch Katrine exorcised of the poetry which gave it a bewitching power. There's an abundance of larch trees and quarriers and rocks and knobs and dingy mountains in the Scottish Highlands. And there has been a great deal of romancing about the Vale of Shirauz; but let us try the absolute government of a Shah, or one of the gaunt famines of Persia, and how soon might we be cured of the fictitious by the sad realities of life. And yet the Creator has inserted the imagination among our mental powers, and without that grafting, life would be stocked with nothing but bitter fruits.

There was some disparity of years between the occupant of Belmont and his guest. The latter was just going out of his teens, and was far from thinking that he could maintain a conversation upon equal terms with a Gent of highly cultivated Taste. He was son to Richard Henry Lee, of Chantilly, a distinguished Virginian. He had received an excellent education at William and Mary College, and to this were added extensive stores of information. He was not ambitious of political preferment, nor of filling a niche in the gallery of author-

ship. Had he belonged to the Peerage of England he would still have sought the seclusion of Rural Life. But Erasmus was a shrewd man, and colloquies are an important means of acquiring knowledge. It was modest then in a youth, when drawn into contact with a gentleman both of position and experience, to adopt the Socratic mode—that is, to propound questions and wait the answers of Socrates.

“Is not youth a happy period of our existence?”

“Mine was preëminently so,” he replied, “and all men like to recall its enjoyments. It is a time when no clouds arise—perplexities stand off at a distance, and young Gents build airy castles. Chantilly in Westmoreland is indelibly impressed on my memory. Our books were imported from England—we could angle in adjacent brooks, set our sail from the coves of the Potomac—watch caravans of swans as they crossed the river or returning from Maryland with green mosses in their mouths. We could explore forest lands, but it was never my penchant to be a deerstalker or even to shoot at birds, for they were the ornaments of the Westmoreland woods. The sound of the huntsman's horn was congenial to the auditory nerve of old Colonel Beale; but it was not harmonious to the ear of myself or to that of my sire. The latter was devoted to history, and Chantilly was associated with Merovingian and Carlovingian Kings. But middle life is not without its pleasures, which consist in diligence, enterprise and success. In short, the Great Supreme has chained a golden bowl to each

well of individual existence, and even octogenarians can send down the bowl into the depths of that fountain from which the living are supplied. Such is Divine benignity."

The weather was still unpropitious. Winter nurses no greenhouse in which to cultivate the roses of June. Each month in the circle of the year seems to hold its own peculiar censer. Autumn fills our Virginia woods with varied tints and chequered dyes, but winter is sure to obliterate all those crimson colors. My host could not invite me to a stroll over snow and sleet or to a chair in his porch where the woodbine was leafless. Of course we kept near the fireside.

"At what time," I asked, "were you made Bachelor of Arts by the College of William and Mary?"

"In 1783," was his reply. "Bishop Madison was then the President, who was appointed in 1777. But in my day there was scarcely a handful of students. My alma mater had received a shock from the American Revolution, from which it was thought for a time there could be no recovery. But after the peace of '83 the friends of the Institution rallied anew to its support. It had lost ground in England. Our English ancestors had been generous to the College in donations both of land and money. A very valuable library was collected, especially in the way of antiquarian lore. The Earl of Burlington and his brother, Sir Robert Boyle, were fast friends to William and Mary College. The portrait of Sir Robert is among the pictures of the institution, and it always inspired me with fresh venera-

tion for his character. The salient points of that character have been taken by Bishop Burnet in the History of his own Times. Burnet held the 'Pen of a ready writer.' His eye peered into every shire of England, and where he found a nobleman or a Gent who was vicious he never failed to condemn, but if virtuous he was willing to applaud. An Artist, we suppose, would rather have taken the beautiful Lady Stuart than the ugly Witch of Endor, and the Bishop of Salisbury selected his best colors for the handsome character of Sir Robert Boyle, and the most forbidding hues for that of the Duke of Somerset. But when the Revolution of 1776 became an accomplished fact, the fountain of English liberality was hermetically sealed. The College of James City received no more favors. The students who left for the War were regarded in England as thankless rebels. Gowns yielded to arms for seven years, and some reluctance was felt in returning even to Halls of Learning. The Colony of Virginia was crippled in its resources; but the Constitution of 1789 was adopted in our State, but only by a meagre majority. It was regarded by its opponents as a kind of Heptaglot or Book so loosely made that it spoke seven Languages. Indeed my immediate progenitor was jealous of its provisions. Patrick Henry, Mason and Grayson probably thought that from the extensive powers vested in the President he may seize the Navy, assemble Armies, suspend the right of Habeas Corpus, imprison freemen, ring his tinkly bell, call his innu-

merable serfs, and overrun the South, but as you have chosen the Pulpit perhaps you are indifferent about Politics."

"True," I replied, "we leave Politics to the Clerical charlatans who may arise about 1860 and turn their Pulpits into Political Tubs."

It was not my design to task the powers of my refined host by needless questions. But it is an advantage to any young man to be a listener. It enlarges his information. We have seen some young men of so disputatious a temperament that they are always playing at cross purposes even with their seniors. But the best way is simply to tap the head of an experienced Gent and await the fall of the intellectual fountain. It may resemble a Geyser and cover you with a crust, from which you may cull even costly pebbles. Of an evening after tea, my chair was nudged tolerably near the one occupied by my interlocutor.

"Give me your views," said I, "as to the influence which William and Mary College has exercised on the literature of Virginia."

"At the time of its foundation," he replied, "our State was nothing more than a Colony, and there was quite a prevalence of aristocratic feeling among the higher circles. When a student presented himself for matriculation the question was generally asked, whose son is he? His sire was recorded as well as his offspring. Is he from Chatsworth, Rosewell, Blenheim, Chatham, Sabine Hall, or from any one of the opulent seats which then abounded in Virginia. The

owners of such properties were more able than others to give their sons a liberal education. In this way the influence of the College among the Gents was highly beneficial. The liberal Arts gave polish to their minds and blandness to their manners, besides fitting them for many important public stations. But education can never be restricted to the rich. Talent annihilates the distinctions of rank. The rolls of Biography are crowded with proofs that a boy from a hut may more than rival the boy of the saloon. All the successive Princes of Wales had they been at Cambridge would have succumbed to Newton, Barrow and Milton, or at Oxford to Johnson, Sir William Jones and Locke. This sonship is a thing of little consequence among the Problems of the Mathematics, or in the Hesperian Garden of Classical Learning. Shepherd boys have become eminent artists, and swineherds obtained crowns, and though Peerage has been ignored among us since the Revolution, this sonship is still kept up from habit on the rolls of William and Mary. But if your enquiry be about the Law Literature of William and Mary, or the influence of the College on Political Science, my answer can be decided and even positive. Virginia—the whole South, and the Federal Government have derived great advantage from that institution of learning which stands between York and Jamestown. We cannot individualize the able Lawyers, the accomplished Jurists, and profound Judges which have gone forth from its Halls. Their name is Legion, but Chief Justice Marshall is

worthy of special mention who held the scales of *meum* and *tuum* between man and man with an unflinching hand. He was awed by no power outside the Temple of Jurisprudence over which he presided, and he could have been seduced by no flattery, whilst the gold of Peru and the diamonds of Golconda might have been strewed harmlessly at his feet. We do not claim for him the vast general intellect of Lord Verulam; but he won and wore through life that laurel of purity which was basely forfeited by the High Chancellor of England. The College was equally successful in the production of Legislators and Statesmen. Some of the Pupils became Presidents of the Confederacy, Governors of States, Senators, Officers of the Cabinet, Foreign Ambassadors and Representatives in the Lower House of Congress. William B. Giles, of Amelia, was a remarkably expert and fluent debater, and a very strict constructionist. No Senator was more jealous of the bearing of the Federal Government on the States. He looked on each State as fenced round by its own boundaries—its Governor and Legislature—and that the General Government could not effect an ingress except by consent of each individual State. He did not finish his education among us, but left and was graduated in 1782 at Nassau Hall. He was prepared at any time to defend the celebrated Resolutions of 98, offered by Taylor, of Caroline. Madison was for a time at William and Mary, but he also took his degree at the New Jersey College in 1772. John Randolph we regard

as one of our greatest Statesmen; but of a unique kind, for genius, it has been said, is always erratic. It is my belief that History and Moral Philosophy were favorite branches of study at our College, and they are important to all aspiring to be Politicians. It is my opinion that the Moral Philosophy Lectures had great influence in moulding the habits of our Virginia Gents and their sons, though some of the great Writers of Scotland had not then appeared, and Dugald Stewart had not clothed his Ethics in elegant Language. In Moral Philosophy England is confessedly far inferior to the half-island of North Britain. Possibly the defect of all Colleges is, that sufficient time is not bestowed on Composition. There is a charm in style when simple, unpretending and somewhat artistic. There was knowledge enough among men in the mediæval times, but men did not understand the mode in which it ought to be expressed. We have many Histories of Virginia in which musty documents have been searched, facts stated, legends alluded to, but we need an ample record embellished by artless eloquence. Literature is an occupation totally distinct from Law and Politics. A man acquainted with the Latin tongue, who is prompt in calculation, well posted up in English History, and conversant with one good volume of Ethics can make a first-rate Barrister. He may ride in his carriage drawn by a pair of Arabian steeds; but let him diverge into the fields of general Literature, and he had better be sent to the Vale of Cashmere, where roses are common.

to Borneo, where spices abound, or to Florida, where the woods are redolent with Magnolia perfume. Only imagine Gibbon and Milton to have been Lawyers, and their impatient clients would have thought that the one stayed too long in Eden, and the other spent too many years on the Leman Lake. It is true that the great Selden supposed that the Lady Law need not dwell alone; but Blackstone was the wiser man, who determining for Law, indited his long farewell to the Muses. A Lawyer turned Poet is nothing more than a bird darting at every cluster of miscellaneous fruit from the tree of Literature, for that tree is laden with mental ornaments from all lands, the scions of which have been engrafted by the hand of Taste."

These views of my Belmont Host are undoubtedly correct, but they surprised me at the time. That surprise was subsequently increased by the fact that a number of the Books belonging to his sire, Richard Henry Lee, fell into my possession and compose a part of my present Library.— Among them we notice the Poems of Prior, the most of which are exceedingly puerile, the works of Alexander Pope, and six volumes by noble authors of England. The verses of the last make a queer Olla Podrida about all sorts of subjects, for example, on Fans held by Ladies, or on some stray curl on their heads, about rottoes, balls, meadows and shepherds. But we suppose that they were imported from England for the amusement simply of that great statesman and brilliant orator. But my anxiety

was great to propound another question to my mentor in the following terms:

"What are your views about an indigenous Literature for Virginia, instead of a supply of that commodity from England and our Northern States?"

"A very important subject," he replied. "English Literature is harmless. Though coming from a Monarchical Government it could exercise not a morsel of influence in supplanting our Republicanism. The Peerage is probably intended to nurse meritorious deeds, and lend a little picturesqueness to the country. But as we are an offshoot from the Mother of us all, the importation of her books may confine us to nothing beyond a sheer imitation of her authors. Imitation indeed is not to be condemned provided the copy be superior to the original. If a man surpass the works of Bacon we would not care about any points of resemblance. If an Artist could be more true to Nature than Sir David Wilkie, we should not object to his depicting the same objects; but imitators may fall short of those they copy and remain satisfied with what they have done. The Northerners will in due time become wonderful book-makers, for they are a people of great mechanical tact. They will introduce grotesqueness into their literature, and it will degenerate into a mere system of merchandise. Meritorious works which might slowly bring a profit, will be sacrificed to those from which temporary gain will be derived. A morbid taste may be the consequence. Chaste and elegant

writers will go abroad, and deal not in home, but in foreign objects. Our country is too long and broad for a national literature, for we could not find a centre, and then we are not a nation, but a confederacy of States living under a constitution of limited powers. The constitution gives no power to confer pensions on authors. As our material interests advance and new territories are opened Congress will become a vast book merchant; but the productions will not be worth the reading. Vast sums will be spent on the report of some Indian agent or some commodore who may be sent to Japan, when a dime would not be laid out on the Iliad of Homer. We cannot look to the North for our intellectual supplies. The Colonists who landed on the bleak Rock of Plymouth, and they who landed on the grassy quays of Jamestown are totally different in manners, habits and modes of thought, and for this reason Virginia must cultivate a literature of her own, with Richmond as its headquarters. And so congenial are the tastes of the Southern people to those of Virginians, that our books would be acceptable to them all. Literature is like the chameleon, which is said to take its hue from the object on which it reposes. If a man write a book in Vermont he will be turned into a greenhorn, because the scenery is emerald, but if he write in Virginia, he will take the blues, because our mountains are azure."

"Don't wish to interrupt," I remarked, "but would not such a literature be entirely too local?"

"Not at all," he rejoined. "Lite-

ature loves to be local. It was so in Greece, concentrating itself principally in Athens, though Pindar was Boeotian, he attended the Corinthian games. In Italy the villas of lettered men were strung along the Tiber. The Provençals came together, on the Rhone to contend for the violet, and the poets of Spain never grew weary of the Moorish wars. The office of the Welsh bards was to fire the hearts of their countrymen and prompt the courage of their heroes. The Irish minstrels were all alive to Irish freedom when they sung in the halls of Tara. The literature of England is for the most part local, and that of Scotland is so in a preëminent sense. Local literatures may be interchanged as we commercially interchange the products of different climates. But Virginia must appear in the market bearing all her mental spices, her fragrant roses, and ripened oranges the products of that intellect for which she is celebrated, both at home and abroad. On what repasts does our Northern Cæsar feed that he should dare look to down on men who founded the government, planned the constitution, and arranged the laws. Virginia must not remain unsung. Her mountains robed in their unrivalled haze call for the descriptive poets and her radiant sunsets for the pencil of Claude. But we will not enlarge for her tints are the cynosure of sentimentalists, and their influence is felt from the Apalachian range to her twin capes."

Much gratified with my sojourn at Belmont. Took a respectful leave of the family. The weather had vast

improved. Nature was reviving under gentle winds from the South. Reached my temporary home. Uncle Plato rode the tall horse.

"Uncle," said I, "here are a couple of silverlings for your polite attention to the guest of Belmont. You bear the name of a great philosopher."

"So my master tells me," said Plato. "Has he ever been to see Marse Ludwell?"

"Never, Uncle, he died long—long before your master was born."

The faithful old servant shook me by the hand, and with a low bow bade me adieu.

T. B. BALCH.

REMINISCENCES OF PARKER'S BATTERY.

BEAN STATION—THE 1ST OF MARCH, 1863.

BY "NUMBER THREE."

"Who has not known ill fortune, never knew
Himself, or his own virtue."

Longstreet's corps had not gone farther than Rogersville, on their retreat from Knoxville, when a "right about" was ordered. The pursuing enemy was encountered at Bean Station, on the evening of December 14th, 1863, and a spirited fight ensued. Two batteries of Alexander's Battalion were engaged—Taylor's and Parker's. The Federal artillery was badly worsted and driven. The battle was continued into night, thus affording a scene of perilous beauty never to be forgotten by us. The blaze of the enemy's guns showed in glaring contrast to the deepening shadows of twilight, and the surely advancing fusé of each coming shell seemed to the gazer to be on

a direct line with his own precious self. This was certainly true of "Number Three." It is the duty of "Number Three" to "serve the vent"—that is, to keep his thumb upon the touch-hole of the cannon; and on no account must he allow it to slip from its position during the process of loading. The reader can scarcely imagine what a temptation it was to shirk this duty, when the monster shells came shrieking through the darkness, not blind nor heedless of their destination, but seemingly furnished with fiery eyes that knew too well the path of death.

In a description of the battle of Bean Station, which appeared in an Ohio paper, the writer, after noti-