

Ms. C. B. Smith

JANUARY 15, 1872.

C. B. 34
THE

ED DOMINION

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

OF

LITERATURE, SCIENCE AND ART.

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

	PAGE.
Grosmere Inn.....	1
The Blue and the Grey.....	10
After Twelve Years.....	20
Words and Hearts.....	26
The Street Organ.....	34
Renie.....	37
Morning.....	41
Historical.....	43
Notes and Queries.....	49
Editors' Table.....	52

M. W. HAZLEWOOD, Publisher.
1011 Main Street, Richmond, Va.

Subscription \$2.50 per annum.

Single copy 25 cents.

THE



A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

OF

LITERATURE, SCIENCE AND ART.



VOLUME VI.

RICHMOND, VA:

M. W. HAZLEWOOD, PRINTER.

The Old Dominion Magazine.

VOL. 6.

RICHMOND, VA., JANUARY 15, 1872.

No. 1.

GROSMERE INN.

BY REV. T. B. BALCH, D. D.

The reader may ask whether there be a Virginia Inn bearing the above designation. Perhaps not; for our State is not famous for any beautiful Lake, though a Welsh Pool may occur at times, either in our mountains or tide water country. The fact is that the caravansera bore a name more in accordance with the contour of the Old Dominion, to the regal government of which a worthless Stuart was once invited. Glad he didn't come.—Glad, too, that Queen Anne never sent Dean Swift to be our Bishop, for the contrast would have been great between the gentility of the people and the coarseness of their Ecclesiastical ruler. Why then do we call our little rustic box by the name of Grosmere, a miniature lake in that old ancestral country, from which we Virginians have drawn

our being. Because one of the wayfarers led me into a talk about the Lake School of the Poets, at the head of which stands Wordsworth. He lived on Rydal Mount; but the waters of Grosmere, whether awake or asleep, were easily reached by the eye of the patriarch.

My story can be told in a few words, for it will consist of but one or two characters. Demosthenes used to say of an Athenian orator, "Yonder rises the pruner of my superfluous verbiage." Well, then, the writer, years before the late war, was strolling out from Otter Inn in the direction of the Peaks. It was just twenty minutes before the setting of the sun, and the Peaks seemed to wear a more violet hue than the rocks of Hymettus. Oh, evening! at times thou art lovely, and we prefer the tints shed forth

0021
57125
116
(RECAP)

from thy censer, for in depth, variety and fullness they surpass all morning colors. A young man was approaching. He was weary, for the pedestrian paused on his staff.

"How far to the Inn?"

"But a sort distance," I replied. "Let me turn and show you the way, for the chequered stairs of light have escaped from the Western sky, and darkness will soon cover the earth."

"It is time," he rejoined, "to find a shelter; but my purse is light enough to be carried by a mouse."

"Never mind that," answered I, "for a mouse fed Baron Trenck in the prison of Magdeburg. Take out your flute and give us an air at the gate of the Otter. The landlord is an enthusiast about musical sounds."

He took my advice, and his fife was quite equal to the reed of Tityrus, *patulæ sub tegmine fagi*, though there was no beechtree on the immediate premises.

Didn't know the name of the stranger. It would have looked like rudeness to ask. We only *guessed* that he was a New Englander; but after supper confidence enough was mustered to say:

"I presume that you ascended the Peaks this morning."

"Yes," he replied, "and it would be worth while for Queen Victoria to cross the sea, not to hear the wisdom of Solomon, but adore the Power that rears such sublimity, to look down on the boundless prospect composed of the winding James, the furtive Otter, the Roan-

oke, golden harvests and eagles, whose plumes are flashing in the sun."

I interrupted. "You need not describe. We have been among those immense masses of rock, and romantic ladies were along. We can sympathize in your admiration. The Peaks are bare of snow, at least in summer, but Byron says that Mont Blanc was crowned with that commodity by the angels.—Rather cold work for angels who are clothed in purple raiment, and who are employed about the glowing urns and the fiery altars of the upper Temple. We could wonder at the Savoy Mountain in the distance, but have no disposition to trudge over the snows on its summit. Summer nights are short, and after the fatigues of the day your eyelids must be heavy. Retire. We have secured your free ticket for to-morrow, and we will begin our talk in the morning, and not end it till another bedtime."

In the Minstrel Dr. Beattie has described a Scotch "morning" better than any other of his contemporaries. We wish he could have seen how the sun approached the Peaks, and with what reverence those elevations awaited his advent. Being far above the level of the sea there were no Forfar or Aberdeen mists to be dispersed. We will not enlarge. Of course we took breakfast. But it is always mawkish to be over particular when scribbling.

"If you will give me yours," said I to the stranger, "my name shall be at your command."

"A fair bargain," he replied.—
"Dow is mine, all the way from Connecticut, a State, one of whose Valleys has produced several poets."

"Then you may possibly be connected with Lorenzo Dow, that queer mortal, but great pedestrian."

"Distantly," he remarked; "but if you know anything about him shall be happy to hear of my fifth cousin."

"Saw him once in the Rotunda of our Capitol. He and his consort, Peggy, were looking at the Shinn piece of a Connecticut artist alias the Declaration of Independence. He was a lank looking man, shabby in his dress, and a great iron comb confined the hair on the back of his head. His consort was not so handsome as the Peggy, who sat to the dramatic pencil of Allan Ramsay. She was a fright. After his lifelong travels he arrived in Georgetown, on Rock Creek, a place founded in 1751 by George Beall who owned the lots. There the wanderings of this modern Ulysses ceased, and he was laid down in Holmeads graveyard. We know this to be so because Georgetown, on Potomac, was the place of my own nativity."

"But are there not some anecdotes in circulation about my kinsman?" asked my new acquaintance.

"There are, but the most of them are apocryphal. Anecdotes are fabricated about all curious out of the way men. It has been my lot to hear many predicated of John Randolph, which had occurred in Eng-

land at least a hundred years before the Roanoke orator was born. That great statesman needed no such occurrences to help on his reputation."

A lull took place in our colloquy, which was subsequently renewed.

"Before proceeding on your pilgrimage, it is my wish, friend Dow, to know as much of you as possible. Answer my questions. A son of New England cannot find fault with my inquisitiveness. Did you walk all the way from Connecticut?"

"No; took a vessel through Long Island Sound, landed at the Knickerbocker City, and by various expedients worked on to Washington, and there formed a fixed resolve to accomplish three thousand miles on the ten steeds which are hitched to my feet. Ambitious to set an example to the young men of the South."

"You must not dream," I replied, "that there are no pedestrians in the grand Old Dominion. But a few days since Professor Minor, of the University, told me that he had walked over all the New England territory. That was a great achievement. But his ten toe steeds are now at rest among the bosky bournes of learning. He boasts in the way of pleasantry that he has put off his pedestrian harness.—You can do the same when your vow is fulfilled, for three thousand miles would take you among magnolias, and we will excuse you from swimming over to Cuba, though Byron, in my opinion, very foolishly floundered across the Hellespont.

But tell me, did you come by the way of New London over in Bedford?"

"Exactly so," he replied, "but New tucked away into the English London wouldn't amount to a cambric needle in a haystack."

"You should have come by Thornton's Gap which overhangs Massonuten Vale, and then you might have seen the Natural Bridge and Weyer's curious Cave."

"Hope to see them on my return."

"You don't know," I rejoined, "that you will ever return. The gentle people of the South will not kill you as a carpet bagger. They will never touch a hair on the head of a man like Oliver Goldey, who plays on his flute as the Tyrolese peasants play on the zether at sundown. But the time may come about 1865 when the polished Southrons may be set down by some scribbling clerk in Congress as wild *outlaws*, suited only to the pencil of Salvator Rosa who took the robbers of the Appennines.—Keep from getting drowned, for your ten toes are not tall enough to wade our rivers. But a summer day is long, and when my unruly member shall take a repose of fifteen minutes we will resume our talk with a new gusto."

Here the consort of our landlord entered her little parlor with two glasses of buttermilk fresh from the churn.

"We get our knowledge partly by association. It just occurs to my recollection that a great divine was

born in the haystack town of New London. He was of Dutch extraction and wrote a book called the 'Mountaineer,' and promised to write 'Buttermilk, a Poem,' but it has never yet been found among his papers. It would have been a delicious poem, for to him the staff of the churn was exactly like *bread*. But as a pedestrian you ought to have called on Major Steptoe, living near New London, who would have schooled you in the art of walking. That was an omission, my young, inexperienced friend."

"It was," he replied, "but one mistake may prevent future blunders."

"Just so," I answered. "Your last remark is worthy of a niche in the gallery of Lord Bacon's aphorisms. Call on men of distinction. Such will never give the cold shoulder to a Wilson or an Audubon, both of whom were afoot from the timbers of St. Croix to the everglades of Florida and the jumping off place of Patagonia. They were after birds, and the circumambient air would be a lonely desert were it not filled with those pictured creatures that emerge from the woods for our entertainment. The ornithologists ought to have lived when the birds made their graceful entrance into the programme of creation, for the gush of melody would have been equal to that of ten thousand flutes all sounding in concert. How delighted they would have been with the blue pigeons of Mecca, the ring-doves of Palestine, and the speckled whippowill of this

Old Dominion, and they would have bestowed a lingering gaze on the gorgeous dress of the Baltimore bird. But, friend Dow, tell us the specific object of a tramp extending to three thousand miles. We have noticed your scrip. It is not the wallet of a beggar: but for the stowing away of Southern plants."

"Guessed right," he replied.— "The people of Virginia will not take for a spy a young man, smitten with a touch of enthusiasm for the science of Botany, who wishes to collect a few specimens of your woodbines, grotesque orches or magnificent picturesque flowers.— They would not send me to Botany Bay for so innocent a pursuit."

"No," I rejoined, "you will be smiled on along your way. Call on Mrs. Wirt, near Tallahassee, who is fond of flowers, for she published a volume about those ornaments of our world, and instead of transporting you to Botany Bay she will lead you into a Floridian Eden. May you find many plants in our Flora worthy of a place among the twenty-four classes of the illustrious Swede who explored the margin of Lulean Lakes, and taught pupils in the gardens of Hammarby and the halls of the Upsal University. We remember, when a boy, looking at a likeness of Linnæus mounted on a pony in the act of setting out for Lapland."

"How was he caparisoned?" asked the woodland enthusiast.

"Why, he had a cap on his head, a rose in his botton hole and a rope for his bridle. I revere that man

for one act of his life. He was in Surry, England, near the birth place of Deist Gibbon, and coming on a meadow dotted all over with blossoms when he dropped on his knees to adore our great Creator. It was an act of which Spinoza and Humbolt were incapable. He ascended from the effects to the Cause, and in each step of the ascension he was regaled by the fragrance of Heaven. Go thou and do likewise in the deep retreats you may visit."

"Suppose that we resume," said my interlocutor. "You have catechised your guest. Allow me to return the compliment. Are you not the author of twenty-four Picturesque Narratives, which appeared in a Philadelphia periodical. They were about inns at which you called, and seats in Virginia of which you were domesticated."

"Guilty," I replied, "of the writing; but not guilty of calling them picturesque. That designation was prefixed by a too partial friend."

"There was no guilt," he rejoined. "They were innocent affairs. What harm could there be in writing about the Orange Manse, the Ivy Bridge, the Otter Peaks, or the Wigwam and Mount Airy, in the lowlands of the Old Dominion?"

"Why, then, did you ask about that parcel of playful lucubrations scribbled off at Ringwood, over in Fauquier?"

"For the following reason," he replied. "In those Picturesques you often allude to the Lake School

of Poets. When a man is ignorant it is a mark of wisdom to seek for light. Locke was taught many things by questions propounded to the swains who lived about Oats, the seat in Essex, at which the close of his life was spent. Tell me then how this new school of poetry was brought into being? Why are they dubbed Lakers? for not long since this question addressed to myself put me to a nonplus. A man is not entitled to a scollop who ignores his considering cap, and some of the Georgia or Alabama ladies might stump me by the same question. Happy to learn from one so venerable."

"What," I answered rather briskly, "do you mean by such a title to liken me to old Bede, who died in the eighth century?"

"Beg pardon. No offence was meant."

"Granted," I rejoined. "You are the very youth to acquire knowledge. You interrupt no person whilst he is talking. Listen, therefore, to the imperfect response to your question which a man away from his authorities, and depending solely on his memory, may be able to give. Do not forget that my words must be somewhat continuous. Wish it were in my power to hum out the story like Zenophon, that Attic Bee. About 1768 there was a part of England which had never been scanned by the British Minstrels. Other portions of England had been repeatedly sung since the times of Chaucer and Gower. But the localities

which have acquired renown from the lyre are so numerous that a bare mention of them would detain you from the information you seek. But the Shires of Cumberland and Westmoreland remained a kind of terra incognita to English tourists and sentimentalists. And yet they were stocked with some of the most remarkable objects in nature. There are mountains like Skiddaw, Cross Fell, Helvellyn, and others beside, which rise nearly to the height of the Otter Peaks. Then there are lakes over which islands are lavishly dispersed, some of which are large and others of rather miniature dimensions. There are Derwent, Bassenwarthe, Ulls and Windermere, supplied by brooks and cascades that bid defiance to the heat of summer. In short the waterfalls filled the mountain bowls with contributions that present an azure hue to the eye of the looker on in Venice. To this summary add ferries from side to side—villas on the margin of each lake—moors the wild grass of which acts as a border to the tarns—mountain and low-down inns, churches, parks, and an occasional hunting lodge, and the fish that better specked over than the trout of which tourist are remarkably fond. Well, about 1770 Gray, who was an old bachelor, had travelled over Cumberland and Westmoreland. He brought the district into notice, and no man was better calculated to ferret out the hidden charm of a landscape. After the publication of Gray's

unpretending letters, tourists began to visit the Eldorado, which had been brought into view by the Cantabrigian Recluse. They rented cottages, hired rooms, employed fishermen, purchased umbrellas and overcoats to turn off the rain, engaged ferry boats, and made a prodigious fuss. They looked from mountain tops, reclined in green hollows, and urged their skiffs round the reaches of the longest tarns in sight of sheep grazing on the hills, and herds browsing in the valleys. But it is time to add up this fractional description that you may receive an integral answer to your question. Some desired to turn all this scenery to account in the way of literature. Wordsworth was born at Lockermouth, in Cumberland, but Southey was the first to move into the district and deposit his huge library at Keswick, on the Derwent. Wordsworth subsequently settled at Ambleside, not far from the beautiful, but restricted tarn of Grosmere. Coleridge was driven in by stress of weather.—He was rich in opium, but poor in the dimes with which that soporific is bought. Lamb became a visitor, who was disgustingly addicted to puns. Christopher North built a cottage near Ambleside. The Ettrick Shepherd sojourned occasionally in the enchanted territory. Hartley Coleridge, who forfeited his Fellowship at Oxford, because he did not like the abstemious family of the Rechabites, retired to Grosmere, and in 1787 Mrs. Ratcliffe

made the tour of the lakes, after feeding her morbid imagination by products from the castles of the Rhine.

“This is a prosy narrative to which you have lent an ear, but learn from it how the genius of literature can impart an additional interest to the objects of nature. What might not our men of letters achieve for Virginia if they would only tell the Muses that her curiosities are very striking—her inns quite romantic, and her mountains the most sky-blue of any in the world. Her objects want nothing but the pencils of our artists to give them celebrity, and the flowers of the mercurial imagination to festoon them for the use of our sentimentalists.”

“Thank you,” said my friend Dow, “but who fixed on the men of whom you have told me, the appellation of Lakers?”

“I believe it was Frank Jeffrey, one of the best judges of poetry ever known. His quill was impatient for the attack, and as Gifford ridiculed the Della Cruscans, so the Scotchman by his sarcasm nettled the Lake School, and made a whirring among the pheasants of the moors. But not being posted up in polite literature excuse me from giving an opinion about the merits of this new school. It commands a large class of admirers. Lady Montague was a great *rebel* against Johnson’s estimate of Lord Lyttleton’s poetry, and the public eventually sided with the critic. Perhaps that same public

may agree with Jeffrey after the lapse of half a century. We have read the works of the Lakers; but any descanting about them would be out of place unless you would agree to give us another day.— Can get you another dead head ticket if you feel like staying.”

“Much obliged, but the King’s business requireth haste.”

“What, are you in the employment of a King? Surely our President has not become a regal or imperial gentleman. That would alter the whole framework of our government. Virginia gave him the right to rule four years, but were he to rule a month over the time he would be a usurper, but the science of government is entirely out of my line.”

“The King of all Kings was meant,” he replied.

“Oh! that is another thing.— You are going to look at His trees that they may be classified, and that you may determine which deserves to be the king of the forest. You are going to find out what medicinal virtues lurk in His plants, for in this respect the Indians are quite knowing. And your devotion is to revel among His flowers, which are lovely even though running wild in His sylvan parks spread over earth.”

“He requires haste on our way to His woods; but a solemn deliberation when we examine His works. He is sometimes slow in lifting the curtain which veils the interior chambers of His wisdom. In all your pilgrimage bear in mind two

all important trees. One is the tree of good and evil, and the other that of life. The first was rifled by the hand of disobedience; but the other is the brightest ornament in the upper Paradise. It stands in a garden of gold and bdellium and is watered by a river the flow of which will never cease. The angels repair to it that their banquets may be adorned by its fruits.”

“Before resuming my knapsack,” said my young friend, “permit me to ask why you have called this the Grosmere Inn?”

“One doesn’t like,” we replied, “to speak of his own scribblings, but I once wrote a Decade of Letters from this Otter Inn, and for the sake of a little variety we have given it this name. It’s a mere temporary conceit. The landlord would send us both adrift and call the eagles to pounce upon us if we conspired to change old Otter into Grosmere. Why, he would say you must have got that name out of the moon, for the otter used to abound in these creeks. The Virginians are very much attached to old things. For example, Orangeville might well supplant Orange Court House, and Paradise the Purgatory in this vicinity. We like Rockfish Gap and Mossy Creek, but don’t fancy Bull Run Mountain and Raccoon Ford. That man would be a public benefactor who could spare time to make out a list of all the uncouth names of objects that disfigure the Old Dominion.”

“Could they be changed?”

“We trow not,” I replied, “for

the Tuckahoes wouldn't consent. But the ugly group would so frighten us that we might be more choice in settling future towns. But you must go. Sorry, but here's Uncle Reuben, our waterman. Uncle," said I, "couldn't you unchain your canoe and put this gentleman across James River? You are very obliging at times. Be uniform, for unstable as water thou shalt not excel."

"Why, master, it's hot and *thar's* sich a *glitterin* on the river."

"What's that, uncle, compared to the Purgatory through which he has to walk before he can see the bridge of Buchanan. You can have one pair of my suspenders with their nice buckles, for your pains."

"Well, master, we is told to go two miles with pilgrimes, but it aint a quarter of one of dem round the ripple."

So Dow started. I supposed we had seen the last of Lorenzo's cousin, but after the lapse of six months he reappeared. The writer had left the Otter and reached Ringwood, and one afternoon he ascended the sloping hill on which the edifice stands. We met him on the stile. He had finished his allotted task on the highways and byeways. His cheeks looked perfectly radiant. He staid a week. Asked me if there were any greenhouse in my neighborhood. Gave him a letter to a lady, who pays attention to the culture of plants, residing at Rock Hill, five miles from Ringwood.— He came back very much pleased. He went Northward and got mar-

ried. The happy pair settled in Prince William, the county of that distinguished reasoner, Col. Grayson, who lived near Dumfries, at his seat called Bel Air. He was United States Senator at the time of his demise. Dow founded a school, and both he and his consort were agreeable to Virginians; but the earthquake of the war tossed them back into New England, and we hope he has invented a stove which may keep them both warm during the balance of their days.

THE father of Frederick the Great, on his death-bed was warned by M. Roloff, his spiritual adviser, that he was bound to forgive his enemies. He was quite troubled, and after a moment's pause, said to the queen, "You, Feekin, may write to your brother (the King of England) *after I am dead*, and tell him that I forgive him, and died at peace with him." "It would be better," M. Roloff mildly suggested, "that your majesty should write at once." "No," was the stern reply, "write after I am dead. That will be safet."

This may be another version of the story of a man, who supposing he was about to die, expressed to one who had injured him his forgiveness, but added: "Now you mind, if I get well the old grudge holds good."

Good advice—Give thy thoughts no tongue. We may add, think twice before you speak, and return good for evil.