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T. H. STOCKTON—EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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 PICTURESQUE NARRATIVES.

PENCIL NOTES.

BY REV. T. B. BALCH.

THE writer has no allusion to the brush which is used by artists in coloring the works they have designed. Were this his reference, a volume rather than a paper would be the consequence. The works of painters would open a field at least ten miles square, and it would be variously tinted. What a charming field—embellished all over by men of refinement, who have lived from the time of Apelles down to West, and taking in groups of Flemish, Italian, and Gallic artists. And what a diversity of productions! One might see on that field the defiles of Grecian battle, or the costume of the old Romans; or how knights were attired in the middle ages. Or we might hold a *long talk* with Indian chiefs, or go on a foray with Moorish kings. We might read the history of castles, abbeys, and priories, without number. We might pause on the best features of English landscape or among the vines and villas, and by the emerald waves of Italian lakes—or we might climb among the most shaggy heights of nature. We might behold the sea wrought into tempest, or reclining among its own myriad slopes. We might rove among the plants and fruits of rural life, or range far and wide with all animals, whether of the park or of the forest. Where has not the pencil touched? It has acted the part of an opal to all points of the compass, and of course has reflected all its hues over the circle of human life.

My allusion, however, is to a small but useful instrument, through which runs a vein of lead, and so cut down that it answers for a pen. The writer has used such an instrument more than once in his life, and he finds it quite an aid to the memory. After the lapse of years, it can tell whether a clump of woods were brown or green—whether a forest were composed of oak or ash—whether the leap of a cascade were ten or twenty feet—or whether a lake had any islands, or a mountain any towers. It can measure the depth of a valley, the height of a house, or the breadth of a river. But its marvellous achievements need not be told, for they are known to all sentimental people. Mine may be worth very little to other persons, but to me it is worth a great deal. We certainly would not give it up for the ivory horn of Charlemagne, for Oliver Goldy's flute, for Gay's chair, for Franklin's staff, for Gray's plano convex mirror, for the crook of the Ettrick Shepherd, or for the dog whistle of Sir Walter Scott. The writer is sure if he know any thing of dates, events, kings, queens, nobles, decayed castles, or grey monasteries, that he owes the small amount to his lead pencil, and all the pay it demands is to confess the debt.

The praise here bestowed on a very small affair, has been prompted by a circumstance. A short time since, a rainy day fell out in this latitude. There was no such thing as going abroad, and there were none of the late publications about my grassy home. McCauley's *Miscellanies*, or *American Notes for General Circulation*, might have chased away my ennui, but unfortunately neither of the above works was come-attable. The one would no doubt have enlightened me, and the other would have been well to laugh at during a misty spell of the weather. Whilst the rain was pat-

tering on my windows, it struck me that there was somewhere about the establishment a roll of lead Pencil Notes, and that they would serve to enliven a tedious hour. And then, perhaps, said I, a paper may be got out of them for my friend Stockton. If so, they will be worth a search, and after rumaging a full hour, they came to light from a worm-eaten chest in the garret. They were found to relate to sundry spots which the scribbler of them had visited at divers times. They are not over and above important. Certainly they fall far short of the celebrated Rowley Papers which made such a disturbance in England about 1768. These were said to have been found in the Radcliff Church, at Bristol, by Chatterton, and the dispute enlisted the learned world on opposite sides. The same may be said of the Ossian Manuscripts, which McPherson professed to have got up in the Highlands of Scotland, at the same time. We do not dream that the genuineness or authenticity of our parchments will ever be called in question, and we proceed accordingly to decypher their meaning, or rather the meaning of about one sheet of the roll.

The first pencilling seems to relate to a broken chain and to Paley's Watch, which means that as the Archdeacon of Carlisle constructed a logical book on the fact of finding a time-piece in an old field, so we may reason about a lost link in the continuous run of any thing. Let us suppose that we were out in a desert, and were to lay hold on a chain and follow it for hundreds of miles till we came to a rupture in that chain. And let us suppose that the lost link were lying in a shattered condition a few feet from the breach, and upon getting it that we found it fitted the open space. What conclusion ought we to draw from the facts? Let us apply this reasoning then to that remarkable rupture which we find in the Blue Ridge Mountain at Harper's Ferry, in Jefferson county, Virginia. Here is a mountain running north and south, and on its southern peaks it unfolds its umbrella palm trees, whilst its northern spurs mingle with the oaks and waterfalls of Wyoming. But at the point of which we speak, the chain has been so rent as to answer to the description of Sir Walter Scott—

"Crag, knolls, and mounds, in wildness hurl'd,
The fragments of an earlier world."

We are far from being certain that could these dismembered fragments be re-collected, but that they would fill the gap. How the convulsion took place, it is not in my power to say; but that it did take place is more of a truism than a theory. The opinions of Volney and Jefferson are well known, and we would rather be influenced by them in our philosophy than in our religion. The junction of the Potomac and Shenandoah, and their passage hand in hand, or rather wave in wave, through the opening, is very beautiful: and a prodigious gateway that opening is, rising on each side to twelve hundred feet. The rivers meet with each other as quietly as the two doves that met at Delphi, which the Greeks had dismissed from the supposed ends of the world. From Jefferson's Rock the sight of the whole assemblage of objects is very imposing. Here are the islands of the Potomac, and the willowy margin of the Shenandoah, and the cedars of the mountain, glittering in the sun—and the skills of red capped anglers moving far below—and the breadth, height and depth of the opening, and the field of azure sky beyond it, which looks like a soft roof over a temple, filled with the rockiest altars. Still we cannot but think that this curiosity is inferior to the Peaks of Otter, to Weyer's Cave, and beyond all

question to the Natural Bridge. This last mentioned object is a master piece of nature. Queen Victoria for one sight of it might for a time at least relinquish her diadem, and it would say to her what in its dumb eloquence it says to all—

“The hand that made me is divine.”

My Notes seemed here to call for a word about General Morgan. He was a native of New Jersey, but early emigrated to Frederick County, Virginia. He there became possessed of a fine estate, now called Saratoga, and at present occupied by Nathaniel Burwell, Esq. He acted a distinguished part at the time that Burgoyne surrendered, and subsequently left the army in disgust. But one day who should ride up to his house, cap a pie, but General Greene. He found Morgan at his plough—just where *Cincinnatus* had been found. The Rhode Island General had no difficulty in persuading him off to a southern campaign, in which Morgan became the hero of the Cowpens. After the surrender of Cornwallis, he went back to his farm, but in his latter days he resided in Winchester. He there died, and he lies buried in the ground of the old Presbyterian Church, which stands on a hill that overlooks the town. His tomb is shaded by a locust. He was brave and patriotic, but his education had been limited. He probably could read, write, and cypher in the rule of three, and that was all, but he had that species of talent which was in great demand in our revolutionary contest. He became some years before his death, a decided soldier in the Christian cause.

After making out the dim Notes thus far, we saw the entries of Cathedral, Abbey and Addison, and we take the meaning to be that had our country a Cathedral like that of Iona, or an Abbey like that of Westminster, that then our great men might be buried together, and some Addison, like the one born in Wiltshire, England, might muse round about, and disperse over their cemeteries some little portion of picturesqueness.

My white paper seemed now to demand more copy, but the day was cloudy, and of course dark, but the paper became clamorous even to interjections. It kept saying O—and then O H—and then A, only pronouncing the last as it's called in Latin. This was enigmatical, and so small were the Notes, that it was necessary to place them before a microscope. Then what the paper meant became plain, and we will eject the interjections. One of them means Oak Hill, and the other Oatlands, and the other Aldie. These places are all near each other in the County of Loudon, and lie under the shelter of the Katocton mountain. Oatlands is the seat of George Carter, Esq. The mansion is situated on a hill, but the view is too open, which arises from the destitution of trees, and the establishment has nothing of the antique look which belongs to a chateau. The Virginians don't make their seats sufficiently accessible. In England any person can see the green house and park—the lake—the statuary or the pictures of a nobleman, by a guide. The author of *Espriella's Letters* was the guest of a nation, and instead of journeying on the outline of England, he made his way to the centre, from which all the circumference was visible. Oak Hill, the seat of ex-president Monroe, is in sight from Oatlands. It is a large brick mansion on a rolling farm, under which the fifth president of the United States reposed, when done with the cares of empire. There is a row of locusts leading to the house. This spot the ex-president reclaimed from the ruggedness of nature. We know how men act in public, and we

have some desire to scan their pursuits after the curtain has been drawn between them and the high places they have filled. We know from his own account the avocations of Dioclesian, when he retired to Salona in Dalmatia; and the followers of Napoleon have left us at no loss to conjecture what he did in St. Helena. Many distinguished men have been associated with rural cares, and it is stated in the *Journal of Las Casas*, that Napoleon turned one furrow during the period of his exile. We could not help fancying the emotions of the ex-president upon his arrival at this secluded spot, after the interests he had once taken in the chequered affairs of life. He had been the architect of his own fortunes. He had experienced the treachery as well as the constancy of men. He had been in foreign courts when the political world was full of fiery ploughshares. He had occupied the chair of executive power. He had strengthened the pinions of the American Eagle in its attempts to escape from British oppression. And this was the place he chose for the evening of his life. Here, among his books and maps, he revolved the past, and still studied in the gallery of these States the noble forms of freedom, with which that gallery is filled.

Whilst ruminating in this way we unexpectedly met with Col. Mercer, who then lived at the romantic village of Aldie. The place is called after a village in Perthshire, Scotland, and it led me to think of the river Tay, and the Grampian Hills, and of the admirable Chrichton. It called to mind the Reformation in 1559—the murder of James the First by his Barons, and the fair maid of Perth. About forty years since, the Colonel graduated at Nassau Hall, and was one of the favorite pupils of that distinguished philosopher, Dr. Smith. In 1803 he went over to England. After legislating for his native State, he served in Congress for the fifth of a century. He has been called visionary, but his indignantly repelling this charge was in strict conformity to the rules of rhetoric, and the same would have been done by Sheridan, Burke or Tully. Col. Mercer has never grown rich on the public. He has a simple lodge at his gate, a few rows of boxwood, and a covert for a lonely deer. His place is incomparably plainer than Beacon's Field, where Edmund Burke resided. My partiality for Col. Mercer is great, because he once declined a challenge to single combat, and in that position he ought to have been sustained by all the virtuous.

Happily, my next pencilling had been made in large capitals, and of course related to something of vast importance. It related, then, to no less personages than Petrarch and Laura, and no less places than Argua, Avignon and Vacluse. In Frederick County, Virginia, there is a seat called Vacluse, and owned by Strother Jones, Esq. We recollect having once passed several days quite agreeably at this sweet retirement. It commands a view of Fort Powell Mountain. This mountain is not devious or serpentine, but runs twelve miles in a line perfectly straight. Vacluse is a kind of yellowish stuccoed building, on an elevation, with a large garden on one side, that shines when the sun is shining, but seems at twilight to shut up its sylvan avenues, and its flowery gates. From the house there is an illustrious mountain panorama, of which the general constituent coloring is blue; but we have watched it at sundown, when purple clouds were veering over an evergreen rural sea. But the most remarkable affair about the establishment is a fountain, which gushes from under a huge rock, and we doubt whether a thirsty Persian army could reduce its liberal wave. Certainly it could supply the men, women and camels of an

Arabian caravan, without feeling that its waters had been touched. It was natural whilst at Vaucuse to think a good deal about Petrarch; and one of his Poems, in which he celebrates the glory of Africa, fell in my way, and also one or two lives of the bard of Argua. Campbell's had not then been published. My impression is that Petrarch's passion was ideal. If it were not, he must have been a great sinner to have loved a married lady for so many years. At least we know one who would have found as good a water nymph in the sea, as had ever been taken out. We must either believe thus charitably, or that Petrarch, like Tasso, was crazy; and certainly the most of poets are half cracked. A lawyer will ride over a mountain with his dangling green bag, and think of Blackstone and Coke; or he will call the evening star a point in the law of nature; whilst the poet finds a Venus in that same star, or a tower for his imagination in that same mountain. Be this as it may, at the Vaucuse, of which we are speaking, the writer experienced a great deal of kindness. We had curious shells and petrifications, books, paintings, views of Tyrolese scenery, and pleasant conversation. The lawn, the porch, the garden, the chapel, the library or saloon, were alike open to my footsteps. The dwelling was the abode of that piety which reveres the Creator: and we there felt the stillness of rural life, divested of its drowsiness. Mrs. Jones was very inquisitive about Lynch and Horsey; for they had called at Vaucuse on their way to Weyer's Cave, and she was glad to hear tidings of that picturesque pair. We left Vaucuse, and its inmates were in fine health and redundant spirits; but it grieves me to add that in a few days we received a letter, that a new tomb had been opened in the garden for a son, young, mercurial, and studious.

Forget him not, though now his name
 Be but a mournful sound;
 Though by the hearth its utterance claim
 A stillness round.

My Notes here assumed a pensive look, and the mirror in which we viewed them was placed on a black foil, and the reflections were sombre. Lights and shadows seem to belong to the same families, in the natural world, and they are not strangers to each other in the moral world. The reader then probably knows that there is a Church in Richmond, called the Monumental—and of what is that church a memorial? Why, of one of the saddest events that ever took place, and that jarred many a chord which was playing its part in the melody of Virginia life. We speak not of the number of lives extinguished on one fatal night. The destruction of human life was much greater on board the steamers Lexington, Mosselle, Ben Sherrod, and Pulaski. But there is in the event at Richmond a thrilling contrast between the pursuit of pleasure, and the suddenness and terror in which that pursuit terminated. All was gaiety: and the pulses of life were running with electric swiftness, but in a few minutes—what! We leave the reader to his own meditations. The Richmond Theatre was burnt in December, 1811. The assembly on that night was unusually crowded. The building was of wood, and sparks of fire were glittering among its curtains, ceiling, and windows, before the audience realized their danger. Then there was a rush, but a rush immediately succeeded by the stillness of death. Seventy men, women and children were wrecked and lost in that miniature sea of fire. Many brave and noble deeds were done on that

night, but the Angel who walked through the Chaldean furnace seemed to be absent. The battle of Waterloo is said to have clothed all England in mourning, and this event clothed all Richmond in the attire of wo. Just in front of the Church stands a monument over the ashes of those who perished. My temples leaned long on that monument. The hum of the city had ceased—and the Falls of the James, were descending in mournful sounds—and the moon was rising on her most pensive car—and we will here say to our reader what Sir Walter Scott says to his—

“If you would see fair Melrose aright,
Then visit it by the pale moonlight.”

My rainy day was now growing dark, and my Pencil Notes appeared to be in a state of confusion. They looked something like a slate full of improper, instead of proper, fractions, with here and there an integer and a broken number appended; and a parcel of proper fractions, that had a look quite impudent, as if ambitious of becoming whole numbers. And indeed they are worth something if we had time to put them all right. They meant such Virginia things as Shanondale, Rapidale, Rockfish Gap, Capon Spring, Ice Mountain, Butterfly Rock, Natural Well, and Cowpasture River, *et cetera*. But among the helter skelter Notes was one thing which stood out by itself, and looked every inch an integer; and we shall devote the balance of our sheet to its consideration. We regret to reject the petitions of those affairs above, that they might have a place among these picturesque papers, but we can't help it. How often are kings and queens asked for things they can't grant. Therefore we will ask our readers to go for a few moments, not to Mount Pausilippo, where Virgil is buried, but to Mount Vernon, where Washington slumbers on his bed of glory. Engravings of this spot have been circulated through the civilized world, and one of them recently fell in the way of the Rev. William Jay, of Bath, England, and he wrote about it some lines highly creditable to his head and heart. It has been visited by men from off the English downs—from the hawthorn vales of Caledonia—from the sham-rock fields of Erin—from among the lilies of France—from the Spanish sierras—from among the tints of a Florence sky—and from among the ripe olives of Greece. It is a spot in proximity to which the mariner lowers the banner of the nation, and the boatman suspends his oar. Before his decease, Mrs. Macauley, the female historian of England, visited the hero. She came just to see the chief, and then returned. We recollect a visit which we once made to Mount Vernon, and the Rev. E. Harrison and the Rev. Dr. Neill, of Germantown, will recollect the same, for they were along. We drove by the lodge, and we three stood musing at the vault. We visited the green-house, which held some superb fruits. We entered the room where all the furniture is kept as at the demise of the chief. There was the key of the bastille, and some rural implements which had been sculptured out of Parian marble, and sent over by an Italian artist. The plough and horses reminded me of poor Burns—and the marble sheep of the Etrick Shepherd. Nor could we help thinking of the shield of Achilles. It was divided into various compartments. Some of these compartments represented States at war; and others, masses and assemblages of the people; and others, senates engaged in profound council; but some displayed the harvest, the vintage, the reaper, the flock, the fold. How like the shield of Washington! He directed the storm of war—senates

listened to his voice, and then he turned to his country a buckler which held nothing but the pastoral tent—the vintage hook—the green-house—and the war-horse stripped of his crested pomp, and ranging among olive woods.

Here we folded up our roll of Notes, for it was nearly night. Not being Bank Notes, we sent them back to the garret from whence they had been taken. The rain had now stopped, which was a good hint to the writer. We trimmed up the Ringwood fire, and wheeled round the sofa. But my little son Linnæus, found on the floor a Pencil Note which had dropped out from the rest, and is as follows—

And let me still Virginia's charms invoke,
Land of blue hills and many a green gloss'd oak—
From where she turns herself in mountain shapes
And winding vales—all down to her twin capes.

Ringwood Cottage, Va.

L I T E R A R Y N O T I C E S .

I. MEMOIRS of the Life, Character, and Ministry, of WILLIAM DAWSON—late of Barnbow, near Leeds. By JAMES EVERETT, author of "The Village Blacksmith." "The Wall's End Miner," "The Polemic Divine," &c. &c. First American Edition. Philadelphia. Sorin & Ball, 311 Market street.

HERE is another book of more than ordinary interest—at least to us. The subject of the Memoirs was a man of genuine piety, strong mind, happy eloquence, and great usefulness. Our design is to run hastily over the pages, pausing now and then to copy some of the paragraphs or sentences which most struck our attention, on the first reading:

EJACULATIONS.

"Oh, may I be moulded, blessed Lord, into thy likeness, so that as thou art the *express image* of thy Father, I may be the *express image* of thee, my Redeemer!"

"Lord, have mercy upon me, and help me to walk before my family agreeably to thy will. Make me a HOME CHRISTIAN!"

"Alas! at night, I felt, in consequence of some untoward things, a violent start of angry grief, which made me groan. Oh, what must I do? what must I do? Lord, help me! Lord, help me!"

"My spirits are depressed while reflecting on my past life. God raise me up! I would not sin against thee. My heart seems to say,—though I may not wish what is said,—I would rather be in hell without sin, than be in heaven with it."

PREACHING UNDER GROUND.

He was no less active below, than above ground. His office, as steward, sometimes made it necessary for him to descend into the bowels of the earth, to examine the working of the coal mines. He had a dress for the occasion; and after finishing his survey, he was often accosted by the colliers on leaving, with—"Come, give us a word: there are some of your children here, and they want a bit of bread." This appeal to his ministerial character, made by those whom he had "begotten through the gospel," and who were anxious for the bread of life, was rarely made in vain,—never,