

# Literary Hearthstones of Dixie eBook

## Literary Hearthstones of Dixie

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## LITERARY HEARTHSTONES OF DIXIE

"The poet of the night"

## EDGAR ALLAN POE

"I am a Virginian; at least, I call myself one, for I have resided all my life until within the last few years in Richmond."

Thus Edgar A. Poe wrote to a friend. The fact of his birth in Boston he regarded as merely an unfortunate accident, or perhaps the work of that malevolent "Imp of the Perverse" which apparently dominated his life. That it constituted any tie between him and the "Hub of the Universe," unless it might be the inverted tie of opposition, he never admitted. The love which his charming little actress mother cherished for the city in which she had enjoyed her greatest triumphs seemed to have turned to hatred in the heart of her brilliant and erratic son. In his short and disastrous sojourn in Boston, when his fortunes were at their lowest ebb, it is not likely that his thought once turned to the old house on Haskins, now Carver, Street, where his ill-starred life began.

The reason given by Poe, "I have resided there all my life until within the last few years," suggests but slight cause for his love of Richmond, the home of his childhood, the darkening clouds of which, viewed through the softening lens of years, may have shaded off to brighter tints, as the roughness of a landscape disappears and melts into mystic, dreamy beauty as we journey far from the scene.



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The three women who had been the stars in the troubled sky of his youth irradiated his memory of the Queen City of the South. In the churchyard of historic old Saint John's, that once echoed to the words of Patrick Henry, "Give me liberty or give me death!" Poe's mother lay in an unidentified grave. In Hollywood slept his second mother, who had surrounded his boyhood with the maternal affection that, like an unopened rose in her heart, had awaited the coming of the little child who was to be the sunbeam to develop it into perfect flowering. On Shockoe Hill was the tomb of "Helen," his chum's mother, whose beauty of face and heart brought the boyish soul

To the Glory that was Greece  
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Through the three-fold sanctification of the twin priestesses, Love and Sorrow,  
Richmond was his home.

So Virginia claims her poet son, the tragedy of whose life is a gloomy, though brilliant, page in the history of American literature.

There are varying stories told of Poe's Richmond home. The impression that he was the inmate of a stately mansion, where he was trained to extravagance which wrought disaster in later years, is not borne out by the evidence. When the loving heart and persistent will of Mrs. Allan opened her husband's reluctant door to the orphaned son of the unfortunate players, that door led into the second story of the building at the corner of Fourteenth Street and Tobacco Alley, in which Messrs. Ellis & Allan earned a comfortable, but not luxurious, living by the sale of the commodity which gave the alley its name. As it was customary in those days for merchants to live in the same building with their business, the fact that he did so does not argue that Mr. Allan was "down on his luck," but neither does it presuppose that he was the possessor of wealth. But it was a home in the truest sense for little Edgar, for it was radiant with the love of the tender-hearted woman who had brought him within its friendly walls.

From this home Mr. Allan went to London to establish a branch of the Company business. He was accompanied by Mrs. Allan and Edgar, and the boy was placed in the school of Stoke-Newington, shadowy with the dim procession of the ages and gloomed over by the memory of Eugene Aram. The pictured face of the head of the Manor School, Dr. Bransby, indicates that the hapless boys under his care had stronger than historic reasons for depression in that ancient institution.

England was thrilling with the triumph of Waterloo, and even Stoke-Newington must have awakened to the pulsing of the atmosphere. Not far away were Byron, Shelley, and Keats, at the beginning of their brief and brilliant careers, the glory and the tragedy of which may have thrown a prophetic shadow over the American boy who was to travel a yet darker path than any of these.

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Under the elms that bordered the old Roman road, what forms of antique romance would lie in wait for the dreamy lad, joining him in his Saturday afternoon walks and telling him stories of their youth in the ancient days to mingle with the age-youth in the heart of the dual-souled boy. The green lanes were haunted by memories of broken-hearted lovers: Earl Percy, mourning for the fair and fickle Anne; Essex, calling vainly for the royal ring that was to have saved him; Leicester, the Lucky, a more contented ghost, returning in pleasing reminiscence to the scenes of his earthly triumphs, comfortably oblivious of his earthly crimes. What boy would not have found inspiration in gazing at the massive walls, locked and barred against him though they were, within which the immortal Robinson Crusoe sprang into being and found that island of enchantment, the favorite resort of the juvenile imagination in all the generations since?

At Stoke-Newington the introspective boy found little to win him from that self-analysis which later enabled him to mystify a world that rarely pauses to take heed of the ancient exhortation, "Know thyself." In the depths of his own being he found the story of "William Wilson," with its atmosphere of weird romance and its heart of solemn truth.

Incidentally, he uplifted the reputation of the American boy, so far as regarded Stoke-Newington's opinion, by assuring his mates when they marvelled over his athletic triumphs and feats of skill that all the boys in America could do those things.

At the end of the year in which the family returned from Stoke-Newington Mr. Allan moved into a plain little cottage a story and a half high, with five rooms on the ground floor, at the corner of Clay and Fifth Streets. Here they lived until, in 1825, Mr. Allan inherited a considerable amount of money and bought a handsome brick residence at the corner of Main and Fifth Streets, since known as the Allan House. With the exception of two very short intervals, from June of this year until the following February was all the time that Poe spent in the Allan mansion.

The Allan House, in its palmy days, might appeal irresistibly to the mind of a poet, attuned to the harmonies of artistic design and responsive to the beauties of romantic environment. It was a two-story building with spacious rooms and appointments that suggested the taste of the cultivated mistress of the stately dwelling. On the second floor was "Eddie's room," as she lovingly called it, wherein her affectionate imagination as well as her skill expended themselves lavishly for the pleasure of the son of her heart.

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A few years later, upon his sudden return after a long absence, it was his impetuous inquiry of the second Mrs. Allan as to the dismantling of this room that led to his hasty retreat from the house, an incident upon which his early biographers, led by Dr. Griswold, based the fiction that Mr. Allan cherished Poe affectionately in his home until his conduct toward "the young and beautiful wife" forced the expulsion of the poet from the Allan house. The fact is that Poe saw the second Mrs. Allan only once, for a moment marked by fiery indignation on his part, and on hers by a cold resentment from which the unfortunate visitor fled as from a north wind; the second Mrs. Allan's strong point being a grim and middle-aged determination, rather than "youth and beauty." Not that the thirty calendar years of that lady would necessarily have conducted her across the indefinite boundaries of the uncertain region known as "middle age," but the second Mrs. Allan was born middle-aged, and the almanac had nothing to do with it.

It was in the sunshine of youth and the warmth of love and the fragrance of newly opening flowers of poetry that Edgar Poe lived in the new Allan home and from the balcony of the second story looked out upon the varied scenes of the river studded with green islets, the village beyond the water, and far away the verdant slopes and forested hills into the depths of which he looked with rapt eyes, seeing visions which that forest never held for any other gaze. Mayhap, adown those dim green aisles he previsioned the "ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir" with the tomb of Ulalume at the end of the ghostly path through the forest—the road through life that led to the grave where his heart lay buried. Through the telescope on that balcony he may first have followed the wanderings of Al Araaf, the star that shone for him alone. In the dim paths of the moonlit garden flitted before his eyes the dreamful forms that were afterward prisoned in the golden net of his wondrous poesy.

[Illustration: *Edgar Allan Poe* From the daguerreotype formerly owned by Edmund Clarence Stedman]

To these poetic scenes he soon bade farewell, and on St. Valentine's day, 1826, entered the University of Virginia, where Number 13, West Range, is still pointed out as the old-time abiding place of Virginia's greatest poet, whose genius has given rise to more acrimonious discussion than has ever gathered about the name of any other American man of letters. The real home of Poe at this time was the range of hills known as the Ragged Mountains, for it was among their peaks and glens and caverns and wooded paths and rippling streams that he roamed in search of strange tales and mystic poems that would dazzle his readers in after days. His rambles among the hills of the University town soon came to a close. Mr. Allan, being confronted by a gaming debt which he regarded as too large to fit the sporting necessities of a boy of seventeen, took him from college and put him into the counting-room of Ellis & Allan, a position far from agreeable to one accustomed to counting only poetic feet.

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The inevitable rupture soon came, and Poe went to Boston, the city of his physical birth and destined to become the place of his birth into the tempestuous world of authorship. Forty copies of "Tamerlane and Other Poems" appeared upon the shelf of the printer—and nowhere else. It is said that seventy-three years later a single copy was sold for \$2,250. Had this harvest been reaped by the author in those early days, who can estimate the gain to the field of literature?

Boston proving inhospitable to the firstling of her gifted son's imagination, the Common soon missed the solitary, melancholy figure that had for months haunted the old historic walks. Edgar A. Poe dropped out of the world, or perhaps out of the delusion of fancying himself in the world, and Edgar A. "Perry" appeared, an enlisted soldier in the First Artillery at Fort Independence. For two years "Perry" served his country in the sunlight, and Poe, under night's starry cover, roamed through skyey aisles in the service of the Muse and explored "Al Araaf," the abode of those volcanic souls that rush in fatal haste to an earthly heaven, for which they recklessly exchange the heaven of the spirit that might have achieved immortality.

A severe illness resulted in the disclosure of the identity of the young soldier, and a message was sent to Mr. Allan, who effected his discharge and helped secure for him an appointment to West Point. On his way to the Academy he stopped in Baltimore and arranged for the publication of a new volume, to contain "Al Araaf," a revised version of "Tamerlane," and some short poems.

Some months later No. 28 South Barracks, West Point, was the despair of the worthy inspector who spent his days and nights in unsuccessful efforts to keep order among the embryo protectors of his country. Poe, the leader of the quartette that made life interesting in Number 28, was destined never to evolve into patriotic completion. He soon reached the limit of the endurance of the officials, that being, in the absence of a pliant guardian, the only method by which a cadet could be freed from the walls of the Academy.

Soon after leaving the military school Poe made a brief visit to Richmond, the final break with Mr. Allan took place, and the poet went to Baltimore.

Number 9 Front Street, Baltimore, is claimed as the birthplace of Poe. There is a house in Norfolk that is likewise so distinguished. There are other places, misty with passing generations, similarly known to history. Poe, though not Homeric in his literary methods, had much the same post-mortem experience as the Father of the Epicists.

At the time of the Poet-wanderer's return to Baltimore his aunt, Mrs. Clemm, had her humble but neat and comfortable home on Eastern Avenue, then Wilks Street, and here he found the first home he had known since his childhood and, incidentally, his charming child cousin, Virginia, who was to make his home bright with her devotion through the remainder of her brief life.

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In these early days no thought of any but a cousinly affection had rippled the smooth surface of Virginia's childish mind, and she was the willing messenger between Poe and his "Mary," who lived but a short distance from the home of the Clemms, and who, when the frosts of years had descended upon her, denied having been engaged to him—apparently because her elders were more discreet than she was—but admitted that she cried when she heard of his death.

In his attic room on Wilks Street he toiled over the poems and tales that some time would bring him fame.

Poe was living in Amity Street when he won the hundred-dollar prize offered by the *Saturday Visitor*, with his "Manuscript Found in a Bottle," and wrote his poem of "The Coliseum," which failed of a prize merely because the plan did not admit of making two awards to the same person. A better reward for his work was an engagement as assistant editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, which led to his removal to Richmond.

The *Messenger* was in a building at Fifteenth and Main Streets, in the second story of which Mr. White, the editor, and Poe, had their offices. The young assistant soon became sole editor of the publication, and it was in this capacity that he entered upon the critical work which was destined to bring him effective enemies to assail his reputation, both literary and personal, when the grave had intervened to prevent any response to their slanders. Not but that he praised oftener than he censured, but the thorn of censure pricks deeply, and the rose of praise but gently diffuses its fragrance to be wafted away on the passing breeze. The sharp satire attracted attention to the *Messenger*, as attested by the rapid growth of the subscription list.

Here Poe was surrounded by memories of his childhood. The building was next door to that in which Ellis & Allan had their tobacco store in Poe's school days in Richmond. The old Broad Street Theatre, on the site of which now stands Monumental Church, was the scene of his beautiful mother's last appearance before the public. Near Nineteenth and Main she died in a damp cellar in the "Bird in Hand" district, through which ran Shockoe Creek. Eighteen days later the old theatre was burned, and all Richmond was in mourning for the dead.

At the northwest corner of Fifth and Main Streets, opposite the Allan mansion, was the MacKenzie school for girls, which Rosalie Poe attended in Edgar's school days. He was the only young man who enjoyed the much-desired privilege of being received in that hall of learning, and some of the bright girls of the institution beguiled him into revealing the authorship of the satiric verses, "Don Pompioso," which caused their victim, a wealthy and popular young gentleman of Richmond, to quit the city with undue haste. The verses were the boy's revenge upon "Don Pompioso" for insulting remarks about the position of Poe as the son of stage people.

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On Franklin Street, between First and Second, was the Ellis home, where Poe, with Mr. and Mrs. Allan, lived for a time after their return from England. On North Fifth Street, near Clay, still stood the cottage that was the next home of the Allans. At the southeast corner of Eleventh and Broad Streets was the school which Poe had attended, afterward the site of the Powhatan Hotel. Near it was the home of Mrs. Stanard, whose memory comes radiantly down to us in the lines "To Helen."

Ever since the tragedy of the Hellespont, it has been the ambition of poets to perform a noteworthy swimming feat, and one of Poe's schoolboy memories was of his six-mile swim from Ludlam's Wharf to Warwick Bar.

On May 16, 1836, in Mrs. Yarrington's boarding-house, at the corner of Twelfth and Bank Streets, Poe and Virginia Clemm were married. The house was burned in the fire of 1865.

In January, 1837, Poe left the *Messenger* and went north, after which most of his work was done in New York and Philadelphia. "The Fall of the House of Usher" was written when he lived on Sixth Avenue, near Waverley Place, and "The Raven" perched above his chamber door in a house on the Bloomingdale Road, now Eighty-Fourth Street.

When living in Philadelphia Poe went to Washington for the double purpose of securing subscribers for his projected magazine, and of gaining a government appointment. The house in which he stayed during his short and ill-starred sojourn in the Capital is on New York Avenue, on a terrace with steps to a landing whence a longer flight leads to a side entrance lost in a greenery of dark and heavy bushes. On the opposite side is a small, square veranda. The building, which is two stories and a half high, was apparently a cheerful yellow color in the beginning, but it has become dingy with time and weather. The scars of its long battle with fate give it the appearance of being about to crumble and crash, after the fashion of the "House of Usher." It has windows with gloomy casements, opening even with the ground in the first story, and in the second upon a narrow balcony. A sign on the front of the building invites attention to a popular make of glue.[1]

[1] Since this was written the old house has been torn down.

In 1849, about two years after the passing of the gentle soul of Virginia, Poe returned to Richmond. He went first to the United States Hotel, at the southwest corner of Nineteenth and Main Streets, in the "Bird in Hand" neighborhood where he had looked for the last time on the face of his young mother. He soon removed to the "Swan," because it was near Duncan Lodge, the home of his friends, the MacKenzies, where his sister Rose had found protection. The Swan was a long, two-storied structure with combed roof, tall chimneys at the ends, and a front piazza with a long flight of steps leading down to the street. It was famous away back in the beginning of the century,

having been built about 1795. When it sheltered Poe it wore a look of having stood there from the beginning of time and been forgotten by the passing generations.



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Duncan Lodge, now an industrial home, was then a stately mansion, shaded by magnificent trees. Here Poe spent much of his time, and one evening in this friendly home he recited "The Raven" with such artistic effect that his auditors induced him to give it as a public reading at the Exchange Hotel. Unfortunately, it was in midsummer, and both literary Richmond and gay Richmond were at seashore and mountain, and there were few to listen to the poem read as only its author could read it. Later in the same hall he gave, with gratifying success, his lecture on "The Poetic Principle."

In early September, with some friends, he spent a Sunday in the Hygeia Hotel at Old Point. At the request of one of the party he recited "The Raven," "Annabel Lee," and "Ulalume," saying that the last stanza of "Ulalume" might not be intelligible to them, as it was not to him and for that reason had not been published. Even if he had known what it meant, he objected to furnishing it with a note of explanation, quoting Dr. Johnson's remark about a book, that it was "as obscure as an explanatory note."

Miss Susan Ingram, an old friend of Poe, and one of the party at Old Point, tells of a visit he made at her home in Norfolk following the day at Point Comfort. Noting the odor of orris root, he said that he liked it because it recalled to him his boyhood, when his adopted mother kept orris root in her bureau drawers, and whenever they were opened the fragrance would fill the room.

Near old St. John's in Richmond was the home of Mrs. Shelton, who, as Elmira Royster, was the youthful sweetheart from whom Poe took a tender and despairing farewell when he entered the University of Virginia. Here he spent many pleasant evenings, writing to Mrs. Clemm with enthusiasm of his renewed acquaintance with his former lady-love.

Next to the last evening that Poe spent in Richmond he called on Susan Talley, afterward Mrs. Weiss, with whom he discussed "The Raven," pointing out various defects which he might have remedied had he supposed that the world would capture that midnight bird and hang it up in the golden cage of a "Collection of Best Poems." He was haunted by the "ghost" which "each separate dying ember wrought" upon the floor, and had never been able to explain satisfactorily to himself how and why, his head should have been "reclining on the cushion's velvet lining" when the topside would have been more convenient for any purpose except that of rhyme. But it cannot be demanded of a poet that he should explain himself to anybody, least of all to himself. To his view, the shadow of the raven upon the floor was the most glaring of its impossibilities. "Not if you suppose a transom with the light shining through from an outer hall," replied the ingenious Susan.

When Poe left the Talley home he went to Duncan Lodge, a short distance away, and spent the night. The next night he was at Sadler's Old Market Hotel, leaving early in the morning for Philadelphia, but stopping in Baltimore, where came to him the tragic, mysterious end of all things.



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Poe knew men as little as he knew any of the other every-day facts of life. In the depths of that ignorance he left his reputation in the hands of the only being he ever met who would tear it to shreds and throw it into the mire.

*"The sunrise poet"*

### SIDNEY LANIER

In my memory-gallery hangs a beautiful picture of the Lanier home as I saw it years ago, on High Street in Macon, Georgia, upon a hillock with greensward sloping down on all sides. It is a wide, roomy mansion, with hospitality written all over its broad steps that lead up to a wide veranda on which many windows look out and smile upon the visitor as he enters. One tall dormer window, overarched with a high peak, comes out to the very edge of the roof to welcome the guest. Two, smaller and more retiring, stand upon the verge of the high-combed house-roof and look down in friendly greeting. There are tall trees in the yard, bending a little to touch the old house lovingly.

Far away stretched the old oaks that girdled Macon with greenery, where Sidney Lanier and his brother Clifford used to spend their schoolboy Saturdays among the birds and rabbits. Near by flows the Ocmulgee, where the boys, inseparable in sport as well as in the more serious aspects of life, were wont to fish. Here Sidney cut the reed with which he took his first flute lesson from the birds in the woods. Above the town were the hills for which the soul of the poet longed in after life.

Macon was the "live" city of middle Georgia. She made no effort to rival Richmond or Charleston as an educational or literary centre, but she had an admirable commercial standing, and offered a generous hospitality that kept her in fond remembrance. In the Macon post-office Sidney Lanier had his first business experience, to offset the drowsy influence of sleepy Midway, the seat of Oglethorpe College, where he continued his studies after completing the course laid out in the "Cademy" under the oaks and hickories of Macon.

January 6, 1857, Lanier entered the sophomore class of Oglethorpe, where it was unlawful to purvey any commodity, except Calvinism, "within a mile and a half of the University"—a sad regulation for college boys, who, as a rule, have several tastes unconnected with religious orthodoxy.

Lanier carried with him the "small, yellow, one-keyed flute" which had superseded the musical reed provided by Nature, and practised upon it so fervently that a college-mate said that he "would play upon his flute like one inspired."

Montvale Springs, in the mountains of Tennessee, where Sidney's grandfather, Sterling Lanier, built a hotel in which he gave his twenty-five grandchildren a vacation one



summer, still holds the memory of that wondrous flute and yet more marvellous nature among the “strong, sweet trees, like brawny men with virgins’ hearts.” From its ferns and mosses and “reckless vines” and priestly oaks lifting yearning arms toward the stars, Lanier returned to Oglethorpe as a tutor. Here amid hard work and haunting suggestions of a coming poem, “The Jacquerie,” he tried to work out the problem of his life’s expression.

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\* \* \* \* \*

When the guns of Fort Sumter thundered across Sidney Lanier's dreams of music and poetry, he joined the Macon volunteers, the first company to march from Georgia into Virginia. It was stationed near Norfolk, camping in the fairgrounds in the time that Lanier describes as "the gay days of mandolin and guitar and moonlight sails on the James River." Life there seems not to have been "all beer and skittles," or the poetic substitutes therefor, for he goes on to say that their principal duties were to picket the beach, their "pleasures and sweet rewards of toil consisting in ague which played dice with our bones, and blue mass pills that played the deuce with our livers."

In 1862, the Company went to Wilmington, North Carolina, where they indulged "for two or three months in what are called the 'dry shakes of the sand-hills,' a sort of brilliant tremolo movement." The time not required for the "tremolo movement" was spent in building Fort Fischer, until they were ordered to Drewry's Bluff, and then to the Chickahominy, where they took part in the Seven Days' fight.

Even war places were literary shrines for Lanier, for wherever he chanced to be he was constantly dedicating himself anew to the work of his life. In Petersburg he studied in the Public Library. In that old town he first saw General R.E. Lee, and watched his calm face until he "felt that the antique earth returned out of the past and some mystic god sat on a hill, sculptured in stone, presiding over a terrible, yet sublime, contest of human passions"—perhaps the most poetic conception ever awakened by the somewhat familiar view of an elderly gentleman asleep under the influence of a sermon on a drowsy mid-summer day. Writing to his father from Fort Boykin, he asks him to "seize at any price volumes of Uhland, Lessing, Schelling, Tieck."

In the spring of 1863, on a visit to his old home in Macon, Lanier met Miss Mary Day and promptly fell in love, a fortunate occurrence for him, in that he secured an inspiring companion in his short and brilliant life, and for us because it is to her loving care that we owe the preservation of much of his finest work. On the return to Virginia, he and his brother Clifford had as companions the charming Mrs. Clement C. Clay and her sister, who wanted escorts from Macon to Virginia. She claims to have bribed them with "broiled partridges, sho' 'nuf sugar, and sho' 'nuf butter and spring chickens, 'quality size,'" to which allurements the youthful poets are alleged to have succumbed with grace and gallantry. I recall an evening that General Pickett and I spent with Mrs. Clay at the Spotswood Hotel, when she told us of her trip from Macon, and her two poet escorts. I remember that Senator Vest was present and played the violin while Senator and Mrs. Clay danced.

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Sidney Lanier said of his experience at Fort Boykin, on Burwell's Bay, that it was in many respects "the most delicious period" of his life. It may be that no other young soldier found so much of romance and poetry in the service of Mars or put so much of it into the lives of those around him. There are old men, now, who in their youth lived on the James River, in whose hearts the melody of Sidney Lanier's flute yet lingers in golden fire and dewy flowering. At Fort Boykin he decided the question of his vocation, writing to his father so eloquent a letter upon the desirability of pursuing his tastes, rather than trying to follow the paternal footsteps in a profession for which he had no talent, that his father relinquished all hope of making a lawyer of his gifted son.

In Wilmington, North Carolina, Lanier served as signal officer until he was captured and taken to the prison camp at Point Lookout, in which gloomy place was developed the disease which in a few years deprived literature and music of a light that would have sparkled in beauty through the mists of centuries. Imprisonment did not serve as an interruption to the work of the student, for even a prison cell was a shrine to the radiant gods of Lanier's vision. Probably Heine and Herder were never before translated in surroundings so little congenial to those masters of poesy. One of his fellow-prisoners said that Lanier's flute "was an angel imprisoned with us to cheer and console us." To the few who are left to remember him at that time, the waves of the Chesapeake, with the sandy beach sweeping down to kiss the waters, and the far-off dusky pines, are still melodious with that music.

After his release he was taken to the Macon home, where he was dangerously ill for two months, being there when General Wilson captured the town and Mr. Jefferson Davis and Senator Clement C. Clay were brought to the Lanier house on their gloomy journey to Fortress Monroe. In that month Lanier's mother died of consumption, and he spent the summer months at home with his father and sister. In the autumn he taught on a large plantation nine miles from Macon, where, with "mind fairly teeming with beautiful things," he was shut up in the "tare and tret" of the school-room. He spent the winter at Point Clear on Mobile Bay, breathing in health with the sea-breezes and the air that drifted fragrantly through the pines.

As clerk in the Exchange Hotel in Montgomery, the property of his grandfather and his uncles, he may have found no more advantageous a field for his "beautiful things" than in the Georgia school-room, but even in that "dreamy and drowsy and drone-y town" there was some life "late in the afternoon, when the girls come out one by one and shine and move, just as the stars do an hour later." But Lanier was as patient and self-contained in peace as he had been brave in war, and he accepted the drowsy life of Montgomery as he had accepted the romance and adventures of Fort Boykin, on Sundays playing the

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pipe-organ in the Presbyterian Church, and spending his leisure in finishing “Tiger Lilies,” begun in the wild days of '63, on Burwell's Bay. In 1867 he returned to Macon, where in September he read the proof of his book, his one effort at romance-writing, chiefly noticeable for its musical element. The fluting of the author is recalled by the description of the hero's flute-playing: “It is like walking in the woods among wild flowers just before you go into some vast cathedral.”

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The next winter Sidney Lanier was teaching in Prattville, Alabama, a town built on a quagmire by Daniel Pratt, of whom one of his negroes said his “Massa seemed dissatisfied with the way God had made the earth and he was always digging down the hills and filling up the hollows.” Prattville was a small manufacturing town, and Lanier was about as appropriately placed there as Arion would have been in a tin-shop, but he kept his humorous outlook on life, departing from his serenity so far as to make his only attempts at expressing in verse his political indignation, the results of which he did not regard as poetry, and they do not appear in the collection of his poems. His muse was better adapted to the harmonies than to the discords of life. Some lines written then furnish a graphic picture of conditions in the South at that time:

Young Trade is dead,

And swart Work sullen sits in the hillside fern  
And folds his arms that find no bread to earn,

And bows his head.

In 1868, after Lanier's marriage, he took up the practice of law in his father's office in Macon. In that town he made his eloquent Confederate Memorial address, April 26, 1870.

Lanier, to whom “Home” meant all that was radiant and joyous in life, wrote to Paul Hamilton Hayne that he was “homeless as the ghost of Judas Iscariot.” He was thrust upon a wandering existence by the always unsuccessful attempt to find strength enough to do his work. At Brunswick he found the scene of his Marsh poems in “the length and the breadth and the sweep of the marshes of Glynn,” in which he reaches his depth of poetic feeling and his height of poetic expression.

From Lookout Mountain he wrote Hayne that at about midnight he had received his letter and poem, and had read the poem to some friends sitting on the porch, among them Mr. Jefferson Davis. From Alleghany Springs he wrote his wife that new strength and new serenity “continually flash from out the gorges, the mountains, and the streams

into the heart and charge it as the lightnings charge the earth with subtle and heavenly fires." Lanier's soul belonged to music more than to any other form of art, and more than any other has he linked music with poetry and the ever-varying phenomena of Nature. Of a perfect day in Macon he wrote:

"If the year was an orchestra, to-day would be the calm, passionate, even, intense, quiet, full, ineffable flute therein."

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In November, 1872, Lanier went to San Antonio in quest of health, which he did not find. Incidentally, he found hitherto unrevealed depths of feeling in his "poor old flute" which caused the old leader of the Maennerchor, who knew the whole world of music, to cry out with enthusiasm that he had "never heard de flude accompany itself pefore."

That part of his musical life which Sidney Lanier gave to the world was for the most part spent in Baltimore, where he played in the Peabody Orchestra, the Germania Maennerchor, and other music societies. An old German musician who used to play with him in the Orchestra told me that Lanier was the finest flutist he had ever heard.

It was in Baltimore, too, that he gave the lectures which resulted in his most important prose-writings, "The Science of English Verse," "The English Novel," "Shakespeare and His Forerunners."

In August, 1874, at Sunnyside, Georgia, amid the loneliness of abandoned farms, the glory of cornfields, and the mysterious beauty of forest, he wrote "Corn," the first of his poems to attract the attention of the country. It was published in *Lippincott's* in 1875. Charlotte Cushman was so charmed by it that she sought out the author in Baltimore, and the two became good friends.

At 64 Centre Street, Baltimore, Lanier wrote "The Symphony," which he said took hold of him "about four days ago like a real James River ague, and I have been in a mortal shake with the same, day and night, ever since," which is the only way that a real poem or real music or a real picture ever can get into the world. He says that he "will be rejoiced when it is finished, for it verily racks all the bones of my spirit." It appeared in *Lippincott's*, June, 1875.

Lanier was at 66 Centre Street, Baltimore, when he wrote the words of the Centennial Cantata, which he said he "tried to make as simple and candid as a melody of Beethoven." He wrote to a friend that he was not disturbed because a paper had said that the poem of the Cantata was like a "communication from the spirit of Nat Lee through a Bedlamite medium." It was "but a little grotesque episode, as when a catbird paused in the midst of the most exquisite roulades and melodies to mew and then take up his song again."

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In December of that year he was compelled to seek a milder climate in Florida, taking with him a commission to write a book about Florida for the J.B. Lippincott Company. Upon arriving at Tampa, he wrote to a friend:

Tampa is the most forlorn collection of little one-story frame houses imaginable, and as May and I walked behind our landlord, who was piloting us to Orange Grove Hotel, our hearts fell nearer and nearer towards the sand through which we dragged. Presently

we turned a corner and were agreeably surprised to find ourselves in front of a large three-story house with old nooks and



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corners, clean and comfortable in appearance and surrounded by orange trees in full fruit. We have a large room in the second story, opening upon a generous balcony fifty feet long, into which stretch the liberal arms of a fine orange tree holding out their fruitage to our very lips. In front is a sort of open plaza containing a pretty group of gnarled live-oaks full of moss and mistletoe.

[Illustration: *Sidney Lanier* From a photograph owned by H.W. Lanier]

In May he made an excursion of which he wrote:

For a perfect journey God gave us a perfect day. The little Ocklawaha steamboat *Marion*—a steamboat which is like nothing in the world so much as a Pensacola gopher with a preposterously exaggerated back—had started from Palatka some hours before daylight, having taken on her passengers the night previous; and by seven o'clock of such a May morning as no words could describe, unless words were themselves May mornings, we had made the twenty-five miles up the St. John's to where the Ocklawaha flows into that stream nearly opposite Welaka, one hundred miles above Jacksonville.

It was on this journey that he saw the most magnificent residence that he had ever beheld, the home of an old friend of his, an alligator, who possessed a number of such palatial mansions and could change his residence at any time by the simple process of swimming from one to another.

On his return to Baltimore he lived at 55 Lexington in four rooms arranged as a French flat. He makes mention of a gas stove "on which my comrade magically produces the best coffee in the world, and this, with fresh eggs (boiled through the same handy little machine), bread, butter, and milk, forms our breakfast." December 3 he writes from the little French flat, announcing that he "has plunged in and brought forth captive a long Christmas poem for *Every Saturday*," a Baltimore weekly publication. The poem was "Hard Times in Elfland." He says, "Wife and I have been to look at a lovely house with eight rooms and many charming appliances," whereof the rent was less than that of the four rooms.

The next month he writes from 33 Denmead Street, the eight-room house, to which he had gone, with the attendant necessity of buying "at least three hundred twenty-seven household utensils" and "hiring a colored gentlewoman who is willing to wear out my carpets, burn out my range, freeze out my water-pipes, and be generally useful." He mentions having written a couple of poems, and part of an essay on Beethoven and Bismarck, but his chief delight is in his new home, which invests him with the dignity of paying taxes and water rates. He takes the view that no man is a Bohemian who has to pay water rates and street tax.

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In addition to supporting his new dignity he finds time and strength for his usual work, and he writes on January 30, 1878, "I have been mainly at work on some unimportant prose matter for pot-boilers, but I get off a short poem occasionally, and in the background of my mind am writing my *Jacquerie*." Unfortunately, "*Jacquerie*" remained in the background of his mind, with the exception of two songs—all we have to indicate what a stirring presentation our literature might have had of the fourteenth century awakening of "*Jacques Bonhomme*," that early precursor of the more terrible arousing in 'Ninety-Three.

In the latter part of the year Lanier was living at Number 180 St. Paul Street, and in December he wrote to a friend:

"Bayard Taylor's death slices a huge cantle out of the world.... It only seems that he has gone to some other Germany a little farther off.... He was such a fine fellow, one almost thinks he might have talked Death over and made him forego his stroke."

At Bayard Taylor's home, where Lanier visited, were two immense chestnut trees, much loved by the two poets. Mrs. Taylor wrote that one of the trees died soon after the death of its poet owner. The other lingered until a short time after the passing of Lanier. It was in connection with the lines of the "*Cantata*," written in the Baltimore home of the Southern poet, that the poet friends began a long-continued series of letters which one loves to read on a winter night, when the winds are battling with the world outside, and the fire gleams redly in the open grate, and the lamp burns softly on the library table, and all things invite to poetic dreams.

November 12, 1880, Sidney Lanier wrote to his publisher a letter of appreciation of the beautiful work done upon his volume, "*The Boy's King Arthur*." It is dated at Number 435 North Calvert Street, the latest Baltimore address that we have.

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The distinction Sidney Lanier achieved as first flutist in the orchestra of the Peabody Institute led to an offer of a position in the Thomas Orchestra, which the condition of his health did not permit him to accept.

In the summer of 1880 his "*Science of English Verse*" was published. "*Shakespeare and His Forerunners*" resulted from his work with his classes in Elizabethan Poetry. "*The English Novel*" is the course of lectures on "*Personality Illustrated by the Development of Fiction*," delivered at Johns Hopkins University in the winter of 1880-'81. As we read the printed work in its depth and strength, we do not realize that his wife took the notes from his whispered dictation, and that his auditors as they listened trembled lest, with each sentence, that deep musical voice should fall on eternal silence. All this while he had been working at lectures and boys' books, when, as he said, "a thousand songs are singing in my heart that will certainly kill me if I do not

utter them soon.” One of the thousand, “Sunrise,” he uttered with a temperature of 104 degrees burning out his life, but it is full of the rapture of the dawn.

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To the pines of North Carolina the poet was taken, in the hope that they might give him of their strength. But the wind-song through their swaying branches lulled him to his last earthly sleep. On the 7th of September the narrow stream of his earthly existence broadened and deepened and flowed triumphantly into the great ocean of Eternal Life.

“THE POET OF THE PINES”

### PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE

“Why are not your countrymen all poets, surrounded as they are by beautiful things to inspire them?” I asked a young Swiss.

“Because,” he replied, “my people are so accustomed to beauty that it has no influence upon them.”

They had never known anything but beauty: there were no sharp contrasts to clash, flint-like, and strike out sparks of divine fire.

Had the beauty of old Charleston produced the same negative effect, Southern literature would have suffered a distinct loss—if that may be regarded as lost which has never been possessed. For centuries the Queen of the Sea stood in a vision of splendor, the tumultuous waves of the Atlantic dashing at her feet, eternal sunshine crowning her royal brow. Her gardens were stately with oleanders and pomegranates, brilliant with jonquils and hyacinths, myrtle and gardenia. Roses of the olden time, Lancaster and York and the sweet pink cinnamon, breathed the fragrance of days long past. The hills that environed her were snowy with Cherokee roses and odorous with jasmine and honeysuckle. Her people dwelt in mansions in the corridors of which ancestral ghosts from Colonial days kept guard.

In old Charleston that goes back in history almost a century before the Revolution and extends to the opening of the Sixties—the old Queen City by the Sea, which now few are left to remember—was a circle of congenial creative souls just before the first shot at Fort Sumter heralded the destruction of the old-time life of the Colonial city. William Gilmore Simms was the head and mentor of the brilliant little band, and the much younger men, Paul Hamilton Hayne and Henry Timrod, were the fiery souls that gave it the mental electricity necessary to furnish the motive power. Through all the coming days of trial and hardship, of aspiration and defeat, of watching from the towers of high achievement or lying prone in the valley of failure, not one of that little circle ever lost the golden memory of those magic evenings in the home of the novelist and poet, the thinker and dreamer, William Gilmore Simms, the intellectual father of them all.

At that time in the old city was another picturesque home that harked back to Colonial days—stately, veranda-circled, surrounded by that fascinating atmosphere of history

and poetry known to those old dwellings alone of all the structures of the New World: the home of the Southern poet of Nature, Paul Hamilton Hayne. Its many-windowed front looked cheerfully out upon a wide lawn radiant with flowers of bygone fashion, loved by the poets of olden times, and bright with the greenery that kept perpetual summer around the historic dwelling. This beautiful pre-Revolutionary home was burned in the bombardment of Charleston, and with it was destroyed the library that had been the pride of the poet's heart.

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In this old home the Poet of the Pines was born of a family that looked back to the opening days of the eighteenth century, when Charleston was young, glowing with the beauty of her birth into the forests of the New World, wearing proudly the tiara of her loyalty to King and Crown. Looking back along the road that stretched between the first Hayne, who helped to make of the old city a memory to be cherished on the page of history and a picture on the canvas of the present to awaken admiration, and the young soul that looked with poetic vision on the beginning of the new era, one sees a long succession of brilliant names and powerful figures.

Paul Hayne was the great-grand-nephew of “the Martyr Hayne,” who has given to Charleston her only authentic ghost-story, the scene of which was a brick dwelling which stood till 1896 at the corner of Atlantic and Meeting Streets. Colonel Isaac H. Hayne, a soldier of the Revolution, secured a parole, that he might be with his dying wife. While on parole he was ordered to fight against his country. Rather than be forced to the crime of treason, he broke his parole, was captured and condemned to death. From her beautiful, mahogany-panelled drawing-room in that old home where the two streets cross, his sister-in-law, who had gone with his two little children to plead for his life, watched as he passed on his way from the vault of the old Custom House, used then as a prison, to the gallows. “Return, return to us!” she called in an agony of grief. As he walked on he replied, “If I can I will.” It is said that his old negro mammy, to whom he was always “my chile,” ran out to the gate with the playthings she had fondly cherished since the days when they were to him irresistible attractions, crying, “Come back! Come back!” To both calls his heart responded with such longing love that when the soul was released, the old home knew the step and the voice again. Ever afterward when eventide fell, one standing at that window would hear a ghostly voice from the street below and steps upon the stairs and in the hall; footsteps of one coming—never going.

Paul Hamilton Hayne’s uncle, Colonel Arthur P. Hayne, fought under Jackson at New Orleans, and was afterward United States Senator. Paul was nephew of Robert Y. Hayne, whose career as a statesman and an orator won for him a fame that has not faded with the years. With this uncle, Paul found a home in his orphaned childhood.

Of his sailor father, Lieutenant Hayne, his shadowy memory takes form in a poem, one stanza of which gives us a view of the brave seaman’s life and death:

He perished not in conflict nor in flame,  
No laurel garland rests upon his tomb;  
Yet in stern duty’s path he met his doom;  
A life heroic, though unwed to fame.

Though he pathetically mourns:

Never in childhood have I blithely sprung  
To catch my father's voice, or climb his knee,

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still

Love limned his wavering likeness on my soul,  
Till through slow growths it waxed a perfect whole  
Of clear conceptions, brightening heart and mind.

That clear conception remained a lifelong treasure in the poet's heart.

Through a great ancestral corridor had Paul Hamilton Hayne descended, with soul enjewelled with all the gems of character and thought that had sparkled in the long gallery through which he had travelled into the earth-light.

In the school of Mr. Coates, in Charleston, he was fitted to enter Charleston College, a plain, narrow-fronted structure with six severely classic columns supporting the facade. It stood on the foundation of the "old brick barracks" held by the Colonial troops through a six-weeks siege by twelve thousand British regulars under Sir Henry Clinton.

Hayne satisfied the hunger and thirst of his excursive and ardent mind by browsing in the Charleston Library on Broad and Church streets. It may be that sometimes, on his way to that friendly resort, he passed the old house on Church Street which once sheltered General Washington; a substantial three-storied building with ornamental woodwork which might cause its later use as a bakery to seem out of harmony to any but *chefs* with high ideals of their art.

The Library of old Charleston was composed chiefly of English classics and the literature of France in the olden time when Europe furnished us with something more than anarchy, clothes, and bargain-counter titles. A sample of the Young America of that early day asked an old gentleman, "Why are you always reading that old Montaigne?" The reply was, "Why, child, there is in this book all that a gentleman needs to think about," with the discreet addition, "Not a book for little girls, though." If we find in our circle of poets a certain stateliness of style scarcely to be looked for in a somewhat new republic that might be expected to rush pell-mell after an idea and capture it by the sudden impact of a lusty blow, after the manner of the minute-men catching a red-coat at Lexington; if we observe in their writing old world expressions that woo us subtly, like the odor of lavender from a long-closed linen chest, we may attribute it to the fact that aristocratic old Charleston, though the first to assert her independence of the political yoke, yet clung tenaciously to the literary ideals of the Old World.

On Meeting Street was Apprentices' Library Hall, where Glidden led his hearers through the intricacies of Egyptian Archaeology. Here Agassiz sometimes lectured on Zoology, and our youthful poet may have watched animals from the jungle climb up the blackboard at the touch of what would have been only a piece of chalk in any other hand, but became a magic creative force under the guidance of that wizard of science.



Here he could have followed with Thackeray the varying fortunes and ethic vagaries of the royal Georges.

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His poetic soul may have kindled with the fire of Macready's "Hamlet" when, thinking that he was too far down the slope of life to hark back to the days of the youthful Dane, he proved that he still had the glow of the olden time in his soul by reading the part as only Macready could. In this old hall he may have looked upon the paintings which inspired him to create his own pictures, luminous with softly tinted word-colors.

Meeting Street seems to have been named with reference to its uses, for here, too, was the old theatre, gone long ago, where Fannie Ellsler danced with a wavering, quivering, shimmering grace that drove humming-birds to despair. In that theatre it may be that Paul Hayne heard Jenny Lind fill the night with a melody which would irradiate his soul throughout life and reproduce itself in the music-tones of his gently cadenced verse. There the ill-fated Adrienne Lecouvreur lived and died again in her wondrous transmigration into the soul of the great Rachel.

When a boy, Hayne's heart may have often thrilled to the voice of the scholarly Hugh Swinton Legare, as he made the heart of some classic old poem live in the music of his organ-tones.

A sensitive soul surrounded by the influences of life in old Charleston had many incentives to high and harmonious expression.

That the Queen City of the Sea did not claim the privilege of the fickleness alleged to be incident to the feminine character is illustrated by the fact that she had but two postmasters in seventy years, a circumstance worthy of note "in days like these, when ev'ry gate is thronged with suitors, all the markets overflow," and the disbursing counter is crowded with claimants for the rewards due for commendable activity in the campaign. One of those two was Peter Bascot, an appointee of Washington. The other was Alfred Huger, "the last of the Barons," who had refused to take the office in the time of Bascot.

In old Charleston the servants were the severest sticklers for propriety, and the butlers of the old families rivalled each other in the loftiness of their standards. Jack, the butler of "the last of the Barons," was wide awake to the demands of his position, and when an old sea captain, an intimate friend of Mr. Huger, dining with the family, asked for rice when the fish was served he was first met with a chill silence. Thinking that he had not been heard, he repeated the request. Jack bent and whispered to him. With a burst of laughter, the captain said, "Judge, you have a treasure. Jack has saved me from disgrace, from exposing my ignorance. He whispered, 'That would not do, sir; we never eats rice with fish.'"

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Russell's book-shop on King Street was a favorite place of meeting for the Club which recognized Simms as king by divine right. From these pleasant gatherings grew the thought of giving to Charleston a medium through which the productions of her thought might go out to the world. In April, 1857, appeared *Russell's Magazine*, bearing the names of Paul Hamilton Hayne and W.B. Carlisle as editors, though upon Hayne devolved all the editorial work and much of the other writing for the new publication. He had helped to keep alive the *Southern Literary Messenger* after the death of Mr. White and the departure of Poe for other fields of labor, had assisted Richards on the *Southern Literary Gazette* and had been associate editor of Harvey's *Spectator*. For Charleston had long been ambitious to become the literary centre of the South. The object of *Russell's Magazine* was to uphold the cause of literature in Charleston and in the South, and incidentally to stand by the friends of the young editor, who carried his partisanship of William Gilmore Simms so far as to permit the publication of a severe criticism of Dana's "Household Book of Poetry" because it did not include any of the verse of the Circle's rugged mentor. *Russell's* had a brilliant and brief career, falling upon silence in March, 1860; probably not much to the regret of Paul Hayne, who, while too conscientious to withhold his best effort from any enterprise that claimed him, was too distinctly a poet not to feel somewhat like Pegasus in pound when tied down to the editorial desk.

This quiet life, in which the gentle soul of Hayne, with its delicate sensitiveness, poetic insight, and appreciation of all beauty, found congenial environment, soon suffered a rude interruption. As Charleston was the first to throw off the yoke of Great Britain and draw up a constitution which she thought adapted to independent government, so did she first express the determination of South Carolina to break the bonds that held her turbulent political soul in uncongenial association.

Hayne heard the twelve-hour cannonade of Fort Sumter's hundred and forty guns echoing over the sea, and saw the Stars and Bars flutter above the walls of the old fort. He saw Generals Bee and Johnson come back from Manassas, folded in the battle flag for which they had given their lives, to lie in state in the City Hall at the marble feet of Calhoun, the great political leader whom they had followed to the inevitable end. General Lee was in the old town for a little while. A man said to him, "It is difficult for so many men to abandon their business for the war." The general replied, "Believe me, sir, the business of this generation *is* the war." In the spirit of this answer Charleston met the crisis so suddenly come upon her.

All the young poet's patriotic love and inherited martial instinct urged him to the battle, but his frail physique withheld him from the field, and he took service as an aide on the staff of Governor Pickens.

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At the close of the war, wrecked in health, with only the memory of his beautiful home and library left to him, with not even a piece of the family silver remaining from the “march to the sea,” Hayne went to the pine-barrens of Georgia, eighteen miles from Augusta, to build a new home.

When the first man and woman were sent out from their garden home, it was not as a punishment for sin, but as an answer to their ambitious quest for knowledge and their new-born longing for a wider life. It was not that the gate of Eden was closed upon them; it was that the gates of all the Edens of the world were opened for them and for the generations of their children. One of those gates opened upon the Eden of Copse Hill, where the poet of Nature found a home and all friendly souls met a welcome that filled the pine-barrens with joy for them. Of Copse Hill the poet says:

A little apology for a dwelling was perched on the top of a hill overlooking in several directions hundreds of leagues of pine-barrens there was as yet neither garden nor inclosure near it; and a wilder, more desolate and savage-looking home could hardly have been seen east of the prairies.

What that “little apology of a dwelling” was to him is best pictured in his own words:

On a steep hillside, to all airs that blow,  
Open, and open to the varying sky,  
Our cottage homestead, smiling tranquilly,  
Catches morn’s earliest and eve’s latest glow;  
Here, far from worldly strife and pompous show,  
The peaceful seasons glide serenely by,  
Fulfil their missions and as calmly die  
As waves on quiet shores when winds are low.  
Fields, lonely paths, the one small glimmering rill  
That twinkles like a wood-fay’s mirthful eye,  
Under moist bay-leaves, clouds fantastical  
That float and change at the light breeze’s will,—  
To me, thus lapped in sylvan luxury,  
Are more than death of kings, or empires’ fall.

Here with “the bonny brown hand” in his that was “dearer than all dear things of earth” Paul Hayne found a life that was filled with beauty, notwithstanding its moments of discouragement and pain. We like to remember that always with him, helping him bear the burdens of life, was that wifely hand of which the poet could say, “The hand which points the path to heaven, yet makes a heaven of earth.”

On sunny days he paced to and fro under the pines, the many windows of his mind opened to the studies in light and shade and his soul attuned to the music of the drifting winds and the whispering trees. When Nature was in darkened mood and gave him no

invitation to the open court wherein she reigned, he walked up and down his library floor, engrossed with some beautiful thought which, in harmonious garb of words, would go forth and bless the world with its music.

The study, of which he wrote:

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This is my world! within these narrow walls  
I own a princely service

was perhaps as remarkable a room as any in which student ever spent his working hours, the walls being papered wholly with cuts from papers and periodicals. The furniture was decorated in the same way, even to the writing desk, which was an old work bench left by some carpenters. All had been done by the “bonny brown hands” that never wearied in loving service.

Many of his friends made pilgrimages to the little cottage on the hill, where they were cordially welcomed by the poet, who, happy in his home with his wife and little son, lived among the flowers which he tended with his own hands, surrounded by the majesty of the pines whose

Passion and mystery murmur through the leaves,—  
Passion and mystery touched by deathless pain,  
Whose monotone of long, low anguish grieves  
For something lost that shall not live again.

Hither came Henry Timrod, doomed to failure, loss, and early death, but with soul eternally alive with the fires of genius. In the last days of his sad and broken life William Gilmore Simms came to renew old memories and recount the days when life in old Charleston was iridescent as the waves that washed the feet of the Queen of the Sea. Congenial spirits they were who met in that charming little study where Paul Hayne walked “the fields of quiet Arcadies” and

... gleamings of the lost, heroic life  
Flashed through the gorgeous vistas of romance.

Hayne had the subtle power of touching the friendliness in the hearts of those who were far away, as well as of the comrades who had walked with him along the road of life. Often letters came from friends in other lands, known to him only by that wireless intuitional telegraphy whereby kindred souls know each other, though hands have not met nor eyes looked into eyes. Many might voice the thought expressed by one: “I may boast that Paul Hayne was my friend, though it was never my good fortune to meet him.” Many a soul was upheld and strengthened by him, as was that of a man who wrote that he had been saved from suicide by reading the “Lyric of Action.” His album held autographed photographs of many writers, among them Charles Kingsley, William Black, and Wilkie Collins. He cherished an ivy vine sent him by Blackmore from Westminster Abbey.

Hayne’s many-windowed mind looked out upon all the phases of the beauty of Nature. Her varied moods found in him a loving response. He awaited her coming as the devotee at the temple gate waits for the approach of his Divinity:

I felt, through dim, awe-laden space,  
The coming of thy veiled face;  
And in the fragrant night's eclipse  
The kisses of thy deathless lips,  
Like strange star-pulses, throbbed through space!

Whether it is drear November and

But winds foreboding fill the desolate night  
And die at dawning down wild woodland ways,

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or in May “couched in cool shadow” he hears

The bee-throngs murmurous in the golden fern,  
The wood-doves veiled by depths of flickering green,

for him the music of the spheres is in it all. Whether at midnight

The moon, a ghost of her sweet self,

\* \* \* \* \*

Creeps up the gray, funereal sky wearily, how wearily,

or morning comes “with gracious breath of sunlight,” it is a part of glorious Nature, his star-crowned Queen, his sun-clad goddess.

To no other heart has the pine forest come so near unfolding its immemorial secret. That poet-mind was a wind-harp, and its quivering strings echoed to every message that came from the dim old woods on the “soft whispers of the twilight breeze,” the flutterings of the newly awakened morn or the crash of the storm. “The Dryad of the Pine” bent “earth-yearning branches” to give him loving greeting and receive his quick response:

Leaning on thee, I feel the subtlest thrill  
Stir thy dusk limbs, tho’ all the heavens are still,  
And ’neath thy rings of rugged fretwork mark  
What seems a heart-throb muffled in the dark.

“The imprisoned spirits of all winds that blow” echoed to his ear from the heart of the pine-cone fallen from “the wavering height of yon monarchal pine.”

When a glorious pine, to him a living soul, falls under the axe he hears “the wail of Dryads in their last distress.”

In the greenery of his loved and loving pines, with memories happy, though touched to tender sadness by the sorrows that had come to the old-time group of friends, blessed with the companionship of the two loving souls who were dearest to him of all the world, he sang the melodies of his heart till a cold hand swept across the strings of his wonderful harp and chilled them to silence.

In his last year of earth he was invited to deliver at Vanderbilt University a series of lectures on poetry and literature. Before the invitation reached him he had “fallen into that perfect peace that waits for all.”

“THE FLAME-BORN POET”



## HENRY TIMROD

A writer on Southern poets heads his article on one of the most gifted of our children of song, "Henry Timrod, the Unfortunate Singer."

At first glance the title may seem appropriate. Viewed by the standard set up by the world, there was little of the wine of success in Timrod's cup of life. Bitter drafts of the waters of Marah were served to him in the iron goblet of Fate. But he lived. Of how many of the so-called favorites of Fortune could that be said? Through the mists of his twilight life, he caught glimpses of a sun-radiant morning of wondrous glory.

Thirty years after Timrod's death a Northern critic, writing of the new birth of interest in Timrod's work, said: "Time is the ideal editor." Surely, Editor Time's blue pencil has dealt kindly with our flame-born poet.

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In Charleston, December 8, 1829, the “little blue-eyed boy” of his father’s verse first opened his eyes upon a world that would give him all its beauty and much of its sadness, verifying the paternal prophecy:

And thy full share of misery  
Must fall in life on thee!

In early childhood he was destined to lose the loving father to whom his “shouts of joy” were the sweetest strain in life’s harmony.

Henry Timrod and Paul Hayne, within a month of the same age, were seat-mates in school. Writing of him many years later, Hayne tells of the time that Timrod made the thrilling discovery that he was a poet; that being, perhaps, the most exciting epoch in any life. Coming into school one morning, he showed Paul his first attempt at verse-writing, which Hayne describes as “a ballad of stirring adventures and sanguinary catastrophe,” which he thought wonderful, the youthful author, of course, sharing that conviction. Convictions are easy at thirteen, even when one has not the glamour of the sea and the romance of old Charleston to prepare the soul for their riveting.

Unfortunately, the teacher of that school thus honored by the presence of two budding poets had not a mind attuned to poesy. Seeing the boys communing together in violation of the rules made and provided for school discipline, he promptly and sharply recalled them to the subjects wisely laid down in the curriculum. Notwithstanding this early discouragement, the youthful poet, abetted by his faithful fellow song-bird, persevered in his erratic way, and Charleston had the honor of being the home of one who has been regarded as the most brilliant of Southern poets.

When Henry Timrod finished his course of study in the chilling atmosphere in which his poetic ambition first essayed to put forth its tender leaflets, he entered Franklin College, in Athens, the nucleus of what is now the University of Georgia. A few years ago a visitor saw his name in pencil on a wall of the old college. The “Toombs oak” still stood on the college grounds, and it may be that its whispering leaves brought to the youthful poet messages of patriotism which they had garnered from the lips of the embryonic Georgia politician. Timrod spent only a year in the college, quitting his studies partly because his health failed, and partly because the family purse was not equal to his scholastic ambition.

Returning to Charleston at a time when that city cherished the ambition to become to the South what Boston was to the North, he helped form the coterie of writers who followed the leadership of that burly and sometimes burry old Mentor, William Gilmore Simms. The young poet seems not to have been among the docile members of the flock, for when Timrod’s first volume of poems was published Hayne wrote to Simms, requesting him to write a notice of Timrod’s work, not that he (Timrod) deserved it of Simms, but that he (Hayne) asked it of him. It may be that Timrod’s

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recognition of the fact that he could write poetry and that Simms could only try to write it led to a degree of youthful assumption which clashed with the dignity of the older man. The Nestor of Southern literature seems not to have cherished animosity, for he not only noticed Timrod favorably, but in after years, when the poet's misfortunes pressed most heavily upon him, made every possible exertion to give him practical and much needed assistance.

Upon his return from college, Timrod, with some dim fancies concerning a forensic career circling around the remote edges of his imagination, entered the office of his friend, Judge Petigru. The "irrepressible conflict" between Law and Poesy that has been waged through the generations broke forth anew, and Timrod made the opposite choice from that reached by Blackstone. Judging from the character of the rhythmic composition in which the great expounder of English law took leave of the Lyric Muse, his decision was a judicious one. Doubtless that of our poet was equally discreet. When the Club used to gather in Russell's book-shop on King Street, Judge Petigru and his recalcitrant protege had many pleasant meetings, unmarred by differences as to the relative importance of the Rule in Shelley's Case and the flight of Shelley's Lark.

Henry Timrod was thrust into the literary life of Charleston at a time when that life was most full of impelling force. It was a Charleston filled with memories quite remote from the poetry and imaginative literature which represented life to the youthful writers. It was a Charleston with an imposing background of history and oratory, forensic and legislative, against which the poetry and imagination of the new-comers glittered capriciously, like the glimmering of fireflies against the background of night, with swift, uncertain vividness that suggested the early extinguishing of those quivering lamps. But the heart of Charleston was kindled with a new ambition, and the new men brought promise of its fulfilment.

Others have given us a view of the literary life of Charleston, of her social position, of her place in the long procession of history. To Timrod it was left to give us martial Charleston, "girt without and garrisoned at home," looking "from roof and spire and dome across her tranquil bay." With him, we see her while

Calm as that second summer which precedes  
The first fall of the snow,  
In the broad sunlight of heroic deeds  
The City bides the foe.

Through his eyes we look seaward to where

Dark Sumter, like a battlemented cloud,  
Looms o'er the solemn deep.

We behold the Queen City of the Sea standing majestically on the sands, the storm-clouds lowering darkly over her, the distant thunders of war threatening her, and the pale lightnings of the coming tempest flashing nearer,

And down the dunes a thousand guns lie couched,  
Unseen, beside the flood—  
Like tigers in some Orient jungle crouched  
That wait and watch for blood.

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We see her in those dark days before the plunge into the darkness has been taken, as

Meanwhile, through streets still echoing with trade,  
Walk grave and thoughtful men,  
Whose hands may one day wield the patriot's blade  
As lightly as the pen.

Thus he gives us the picture of the beautiful city of his love as

All untroubled in her faith, she waits  
The triumph or the tomb.

Hayne said that of all who shared the suppers at the hospitable home of Simms in Charleston none perhaps enjoyed them as vividly as Timrod. He chooses the word that well applies to Timrod's life in all its variations. He was vivid in all that he did. Being little of a talker, he was always a vivid listener, and when he spoke, his words leaped forth like a flame.

Russell's book-shop, where the Club used to spend their afternoons in pleasant conversation and discourse of future work, was a place of keen interest to Timrod, and when their discussions resulted in the establishment of *Russell's Magazine* he was one of the most enthusiastic contributors to the ambitious publication.

While Charleston was not the place of what would be called Timrod's most successful life, it was the scene in which he reached his highest exemplification of Browning's definition of poetry: "A presentment of the correspondence of the universe to the Deity, of the natural to the spiritual, and of the actual to the ideal."

In the environments of Charleston he roamed with his Nature-worshipping mother, who taught him the beauties of clouds and trees and streams and flowers, the glory of the changeful pageantry of the sky, the exquisite grace of the bird atilt on a swaying branch. Through the glowing picture which Nature unfolded before him he looked into the heart of the truth symbolized there and gave us messages from woods and sky and sea. While it may be said that a poet can make his own environment, yet he is fortunate who finds his place where nature has done so much to fit the outward scene to the inward longing.

In Charleston he met "Katie, the Fair Saxon," brown-eyed and with

Entangled in her golden hair  
Some English sunshine, warmth and air.

He straightway entered into the kingdom of Love, and that sunshine made a radiance over the few years he had left to give to love and art.

In the city of his home he answered his own “Cry to Arms” when the “festal guns” roared out their challenge. Had his physique been as strong as his patriotism, his sword might have rivaled his pen in reflecting honor upon his beautiful city. Even then the seeds of consumption had developed, and he was discharged from field service. Still wishing to remain in the service of his country, he tried the work of war correspondent, reaching the front just after the battle of Shiloh. Overcome by the horrors of the retreat, he returned to Charleston, and was soon after appointed assistant editor of the *Daily South Carolinian*, published in Columbia. He removed to the capital, where his prospects became bright enough to permit his marriage to Kate Goodwin, the English girl to whom his Muse pays such glowing tribute.

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In May, 1864, Simms was in Columbia, and on his return to “Woodlands” wrote to Hayne that Timrod was in better health and spirits than for years, saying: “He has only to prepare a couple of dwarf essays, making a single column, and the pleasant public is satisfied. These he does so well that they have reason to be so. Briefly, our friend is in a fair way to fatten and be happy.”

This prosperity came to an end when the capital city fell a victim to the fires of war, and Timrod returned to the city of his birth, where for a time the publication of the *South Carolinian* was continued, he writing editorials nominally for fifteen dollars a month, practically for exercise in facile expression, as the small stipend promised was never paid. With the paper, he soon returned to Columbia, where after a time he secured work in the office of Governor Orr, writing to Hayne that twice he copied papers from ten o'clock one morning till sunrise of the next.

With the close of the session, his work ended, and in the spring he visited Paul Hayne at Copse Hill. Hayne says: “He found me with my family established in a crazy wooden shanty, dignified as a cottage, near the track of the main Georgia railroad, about sixteen miles from Augusta.” To Timrod, that “crazy wooden shanty,” set in immemorial pines and made radiant by the presence of his poet friend, was finer than a palace. On that “windy, frowzy, barren hill,” as Maurice Thompson called it, the two old friends spent together the spring days of '67—such days as lingered in golden beauty in the memory of one of them and have come down to us in immortal verse.

Again in August of that year he visited Copse Hill, hoping to find health among the pines. Of these last days Paul Hayne wrote years later:

In the latter summer-tide of this same year I again persuaded him  
to visit me. Ah! how sacred now, how sad and sweet, are the memories  
of that rich, clear, prodigal August of '67!

We would rest on the hillsides, in the swaying golden shadows, watching together the Titanic masses of snow-white clouds which floated slowly and vaguely through the sky, suggesting by their form, whiteness, and serene motion, despite the season, flotillas of icebergs upon Arctic seas. Like lazzaroni we basked in the quiet noons, sunk into the depths of reverie, or perhaps of yet more “charmed sleep.” Or we smoked, conversing lazily between the puffs,

“Next to some pine whose antique roots just peeped  
From out the crumbling bases of the sand.”

But the evenings, with their gorgeous sunsets, “rolling down like a chorus” and the “gray-eyed melancholy gloaming,” were the favorite hours of the day with him.

One of those pines was especially his own, by his love and his choice of its shade as a resting place. Of it Paul Hayne wrote when his friend had passed from its shadows for the last time:



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The same majestic pine is lifted high  
Against the twilight sky,  
The same low, melancholy music grieves  
Amid the topmost leaves,  
As when I watched and mused and dreamed with him  
Beneath those shadows dim.

Such dreams we can dimly imagine sometimes when we stand beneath a glorious pine and try to translate its whisperings into words, and watch “the last rays of sunset shimmering down, flashed like a royal crown.” Sometimes we catch glimpses of such radiant visions when we stand in the pine shadows and think, as Hayne did so often after that beautiful August, “Of one who comes no more.” Under that stately tree he

Seemed to drink the sunset like strong wine  
Or, hushed in trance divine,  
Hailed the first shy and timorous glance from far  
Of evening's virgin star.

In all his years after, Paul Hayne held in his heart the picture of his friend with head against that “mighty trunk” when

The unquiet passion died from out his eyes,  
As lightning from stilled skies.

So through that glowing August on Copse Hill the two Southern poets walked and talked and built their shrine to the shining Olympic goddess to whom their lives were dedicated.

When summer had wrapped about her the purple and crimson glories of her brilliant life and drifted into the tomb of past things, Timrod left the friend of his heart alone with the “soft wind-angels” and memories of “that quiet eve”

When, deeply, thrillingly,  
He spake of lofty hopes which vanquish Death;  
And on his mortal breath  
A language of immortal meanings hung  
That fired his heart and tongue.

[Illustration: HOUSE WHERE TIMROD LIVED DURING HIS LAST YEARS 1108  
Henderson Street, Columbia, S.C.]

Impelled by circumstances to leave the pines before their inspiring breath had given him of their life, he had little strength to renew the battle for existence, and of the sacrifice of his possessions to which he had been forced to resort he writes to Hayne: “We have

eaten two silver pitchers, one or two dozen silver forks, several sofas, innumerable chairs, and a huge bedstead."

We should like to think of life as flowing on serenely in that pretty cottage on Henderson Street, Columbia, its wide front veranda crowned with a combed roof supported by a row of white columns. In its cool dimness we may in fancy see the nature-loving poet at eventide looking into the greenery of a friendly tree stretching great arms lovingly to the shadowy porch. A taller tree stands sentinel at the gate, as if to guard the poet-soul from the world and close it around with the beauty that it loved.

But life did not bring him any more of joy or success than he had achieved in the long years of toil and sorrow and disappointment, brightened by the flame of his own genius throwing upon the dark wall of existence the pictures that imagination drew with magic hand upon his sympathetic, ever responsive mind. On the sixth of October, after that month of iridescent beauty on Copse Hill, came the days of which he had written long before:

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As it purples in the zenith,  
As it brightens on the lawn,  
There's a hush of death about me,  
And a whisper, "He is gone!"

On Copse Hill, "Under the Pine," his lifelong friend stood and sorrowfully questioned:

O Tree! have not his poet-touch, his dreams  
So full of heavenly gleams,  
Wrought through the folded dulness of thy bark,  
And all thy nature dark  
Stirred to slow throbblings, and the fluttering fire  
Of faint, unknown desire?

Near the end of his last visit he had told Paul Hayne that he did not wish to live to be old—"an octogenarian, far less a centenarian, like old Parr." He hoped that he might stay until he was fifty or fifty-five; "one hates the idea of a mummy, intellectual or physical." If those coveted years had been added to his thirty-eight beautiful ones, a brighter radiance might have crowned our literature. Or, would the vision have faded away with youth?

On the seventh of October, 1867, Henry Timrod was laid to rest in Trinity Churchyard, Columbia, beside his little Willie, "the Christmas gift of God" that brought such divine light to the home only to leave it in darkness when the gift was recalled before another Christmas morn had gladdened the world. The poet's grave is marked by a shaft erected by loving hands, but a memorial more fitting to one who so loved the beautiful is found in the waving grasses and the fragrant flowers that Nature spreads for her lover, and the winds of heaven that breathe soft dirges over his lowly mound.

In Washington Square, Charleston, stands a monument erected in 1901 by the Timrod Memorial Association of South Carolina to the memory of the most vivid poet the South has given to the world. On the west panel is an inscription which expresses to us the mainspring of his character:

Through clouds and through sunshine, in peace and in war, amid the stress of poverty and the storms of civil strife, his soul never faltered and his purpose never failed. To his poetic mission he was faithful to the end. In life and in death he was "not disobedient unto the Heavenly vision."

On the panel facing the War Monument are three stanzas from his own beautiful Ode, sung at the decoration of Confederate graves in Magnolia Cemetery in 1867—such a little time before his passing that it seems to have mournful, though unconscious, allusion to his own early fall in the heat of earth's battle:



Sleep sweetly in your humble graves;  
Sleep, martyrs of a fallen cause,  
Though yet no marble column craves  
The pilgrim here to pause.

In seeds of laurel in the earth  
The blossom of your fame is blown,  
And somewhere, waiting for its birth,  
The shaft is in the stone.

Stoop, angels, hither from the skies!  
There is no holier spot of ground  
Than where defeated valor lies,  
By mourning beauty crowned!

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The shaft which the prophetic eye of Timrod saw “in the stone” was in time revealed, and years later that other shaft, awaiting the hour for doing homage to the poet, found the light. To-day the patriot soldiers asleep in Magnolia, and their poet alike, have stately testimonials of the loving memory of their people.

[Note: The quotations from Henry Timrod found in this book are used by special permission of the B.F. Johnson Publishing Company, the authorized publishers of Timrod’s Poems.]

“FATHER ABBOT”

### WILLIAM GILMORE SIMMS

Woodlands, near Midway, the half-way stop between Charleston and Augusta, was a little kingdom of itself in the years of its greatness when William Gilmore Simms was monarch of the fair domain. It was far from being a monastery, though its master was known as “Father Abbot.” The title had clung to him from the pseudonym under which he had written a series of letters to a New York paper, upholding the view that Charlestonians should not go north on health-seeking vacations when they had better places nearer home, mentioning Sullivan’s Island where the hospitable Fort Moultrie officers “were good hands at drawing a cork.” Of course, he meant a trigger.

Rather was Woodlands a bit of enchanted forest cut from an old black-letter legend, in which one half expected to meet mediaeval knights on foaming steeds—every-day folk ride jogging horses—threading their way through the mysterious forest aisles in search of those romantic adventures which were necessary to give knights of that period an excuse for existence. It chanced, however, that the only knights known to Woodlands were the old-time friends of its master and the youthful writers who looked to “Father Abbot” for literary guidance.

Having welcomed his guests with the warmth and urbanity which made him a most enjoyable comrade, Father Abbot would disperse them to seek entertainment after the manner agreeable to them. For the followers of old Isaac Walton there was prime fishing in the Edisto River, that “sweet little river” that ripples melodiously through “Father Abbot’s” pages. To hunters the forest offered thrilling occupation. For the pleasure rider smooth, white, sandy bridle-paths led in silvery curves through forests of oak or pine to the most delightful of Nowheres.

[Illustration: WOODLANDS, THE HOME OF WILLIAM GILMORE SIMMS By courtesy of D. Appleton & Company]

Having put each guest into the line of his fancy, the master of Woodlands would betake himself to his library to write his thirty pages, the daily stint he demanded from the loom

of his imagination. Sometimes he had a companion in Paul Hayne who, not so much given to outdoor life as many of the frequenters of Woodlands, liked to sit in the library, weaving some poetic vision of his own or watching the flight of the tireless pen across the page.

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By and by the pen would drop upon the desk, its task finished for that morning, and the worker would look up with an air of surprise at becoming aware of his companion and say: "Near dinner time, old boy. What do you say to a sherry and soda?" As there was only one thing to be said to a sherry and soda, this was the signal for repairing to the dining room. By the time the sherry and soda sparkled hospitable welcome the sportsmen returned and after doing justice to the genius of the host in mixed drinks, they were seated around a generous table, most of the good things with which it was laden having come from the waters and fields and vines of Woodlands. For if a world-wide war had closed all the harbors of earth Woodlands could still have offered luxurious banquets to its guests. The host beguiled the time with anecdotes, of which he had an unfailing store that never lost a point in his telling, or declaimed poetry, of which his retentive memory held an inexhaustible collection.

The feast was followed by cigars, Simms having begun to smoke of late years to discourage a tendency to stoutness. Then all would join in the diversions of the afternoon, which sometimes led to the "Edge of the Swamp," a gruesome place which the poet of Woodlands had celebrated in his verse. Here

Cypresses,  
Each a great, ghastly giant, eld and gray  
Stride o'er the dusk, dank tract.

Around the sombre cypress trees coiled

Fantastic vines  
That swing like monstrous serpents in the sun.

There are living snakes in the swamp, yet more terrifying than the viny serpents that circle the cypresses, and

The steel-jaw'd cayman from his grassy slope  
Slides silent to the slimy, green abode  
Which is his province.

Now and then a bit of sunny, poetic life touches upon the gloomy place, for

See! a butterfly  
That, travelling all the day, has counted climes  
Only by flowers ...  
Lights on the monster's brow.

An insecure perch for the radiant wanderer. The inhospitable saurian dives with embarrassing suddenness and dips the airy visitor into the "rank water." The butterfly finds no charm in the gloomy place and flies away, which less ethereal wanderers might

likewise be fain to do. Now and then the stillness that reigned over that home of malign things was broken by the sound of a boat-horn on a lumber raft floating down the Edisto.

A song written by Simms chants the charms of a grapevine swing in the festoons of which half a dozen guests could be seated at once, all on different levels, book in one hand, leaving the other free to reach up and gather the clusters of grapes as they read. After supper they sat on the portico, from which they looked through a leafy archway formed by the meeting of the branches of magnificent trees, and discussed literature and metaphysics.

The Christmas guests at Woodlands would be awakened in early morning by the sound of voice and banjo and, looking from their windows, could see the master distributing gifts to his seventy dusky servitors. In the evenings host and guests met in the spacious dining room where Simms would brew a punch of unparalleled excellence, he being as famous for the concoction of that form of gayety as was his friend, Jamison, down the river, for the evolution of the festive cocktail.



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Life flowed on pleasantly at Woodlands from October till May in those idyllic years before death had made a graveyard of the old home and fire had swept away the beautiful mansion.

William Gilmore Simms first opened his eyes upon the world of men in Charleston, at a time when to be properly born in Charleston meant to be born to the purple. William Gilmore, alas! did not inherit that imperial color. He sprang from the good red earth, whence comes the vigor of humanity, and dwelt in the rugged atmosphere of toil which the Charleston eye could never penetrate. Politically, the City by the Sea led the van in the hosts of Democracy; ethically, she remained far in the rear with the Divine Right of Kings and the Thirty-Nine Articles of Aristocracy.

So Charleston took little note of the boy whose father failed in trade and fared forth to fight British and Indians under Old Hickory and to wander in that far Southwest known as Mississippi to ascertain whether that remote frontier might offer a livelihood to the unfortunate. The small William Gilmore, left in the care of his grandmother, was apprenticed to a druggist and became a familiar figure on the streets of Charleston as he came and went on his round of errands. Small wonder that the Queen of the Sea, having swallowed his pills and powders in those early days, had little taste for his literary output in after years.

In Charleston he not only learned the drug business, but took his first course in the useful art of deception, reading and writing verses by the light of a candle concealed in a box, to hide its rays from his thrifty grandmother, who was adverse not only to the waste of candles but to the squandering of good sleep-time.

Fortunately, she had no objection to furnishing him with entertainment in off hours. For the material of much of his work in after life was he indebted to the war stories and ancient traditions that she told her eager little grandson in those 'prentice days. But for her olden tales, the romances of Revolutionary South Carolina and the shivery fascination of "Dismal Castle" might have been unknown to future readers.

All the region around Charleston, so rich in historic memories, was an inspiration to the future romance writer. The aged trees festooned with heavy gray moss lent him visions of the past to reappear in many a volume. In his boat in Charleston harbor, and on the sands looking out over the ocean, he gathered that collection of sea pictures which adorned his prose and verse in the years to come.

Over on Morris Island glowed the Charleston light, "the pale, star-like beacon, set by the guardian civilization on the edges of the great deep." Lying on the shore he watched "the swarthy beauty, Night, enveloped in dark mantle, passing with all her train of starry servitors; even as some queenly mourner, followed by legions of gay and brilliant courtiers, glides slowly and mournfully in sad state

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and solemnity on a duteous pilgrimage to some holy shrine." He saw "over the watery waste that sad, sweet, doubtful light, such as Spenser describes in the cathedral wood: 'A little glooming light, most like a shade.'" Drifting about in his boat he might pass Long Island, where in 1776 the ocean herself fought for Charleston, interposing an impassable barrier to the advance of Sir Henry Clinton.

While sea and shore and sky and earth were giving him of their best, his father came back with innumerable stories of adventure that would of themselves have set up a young romancer in business. Having talked his mind dry of experiences he returned to Mississippi to make another collection of thrilling tales, leaving William Gilmore, Jr., with a mental outlook upon life which the glories of Charleston could never have opened to him.

Drugs, considered as a lifelong pursuit, did not appeal to the youth who had been writing verses ever since he had arrived at the age of eight years and now held a place in the poet's corner of a Charleston paper. He went into the law office of his friend, Charles E. Carroll, where his perusal of Blackstone was interspersed with reading poetry and writing Byronic verses.

While thus variously engaged he received an invitation to visit his father in the wilds of Mississippi, a call to which his adventurous spirit gave willing response. Were there not Indians and other wild things and the choicest assortment of the odds and ends of humanity out there, just waiting to be made useful as material for the pen of an ambitious romancer? Through untrodden forests he rode in a silence broken only by his horse's feet and the howl of wolves in the distance. To all the new views of the world he kept open the windows of his mind and they were transmitted to his readers in the years to come. If he did not sleep with head pillowed upon the grave of one of De Soto's faithful followers, he at least thought he did, and the fancy served him as the theme of verse. And those varying types of human nature and beast nature—do they not all appear again upon the printed page?

When the end of his visit came his father pleaded:

"Do not think of Charleston. Whatever your talents they will there be poured out like water on the sands. Charleston! I know it only as a place of tombs."

There came a time when he, too, knew it only as a place of tombs. Just now he knew it as the home of the Only Girl in the world, so—what was the use? And then, Charleston is born into the blood of all her sons, whether she recognizes them or not. It is better to be a door-keeper in Charleston than to dwell in the most gorgeous tents of outside barbarians. So he who was born to the Queen City would hang on to the remotest hem of her trailing robe at the imminent risk of having his brains dashed out on the cobble-



stones as she swept along her royal way, rather than sit comfortably upon velvet-cushioned thrones in a place unknown to her regal presence. Simms came back to his native city with her “unsociable houses which rose behind walls, shutting in beautiful gardens that it would have been a sacrilege to let the public enjoy.”

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Soon after his return he was admitted to the bar and proved his forensic prowess by earning \$600 in the first year of his practice, a degree of success which enabled him to unite his destiny with that of the Only Girl, and begin housekeeping in Summerville, a suburban village where living was cheap. For, though "Love gives itself and is not bought," there are other essentials of existence which are not so lavish with themselves.

The pen-fever had seized upon Simms with great virulence and he followed his fate. Soon after his return from Mississippi, General Charles Coates Pinckney died and Simms wrote the memorial poem for him. When LaFayette visited Charleston the pen of Simms was called upon to do suitable honor to the great occasion. Such periodical attacks naturally resulted in a chronic condition. Charleston was the scene of his brief, though not wholly unsuccessful, career as a play-wright. In Charleston he edited the *Daily Gazette* in the exciting tunes of Nullification, taking with all the strength that was in him the unpopular side of the burning question. In the doorway of the Gazette office he stood defiantly as the procession of Nullifiers came down the street, evidently with hostile intentions toward the belligerent editor. Seeing his courageous attitude the enthusiasts became good-natured and contented themselves with marching by, giving three cheers for their cause.

In that famous bookshop, Russell's, on King Street he was accustomed to meet in the afternoons with the youthful writers who looked upon him as their natural born leader. In his "Wigwam," as he called his Charleston home, he welcomed his followers to evenings of brightness that were like stars in their memory through many after years of darkness. When he made his home at Woodlands he often came to the "Wigwam" to spend a night, calling his young disciples in for an evening of entertainment. His powerful voice would be heard ringing out in oratory and declamation so that neighbors blocks away would say to Hayne or Timrod next morning, "I noticed that you had Simms with you last night." In 1860 the "Wigwam" was accidentally burned.

At Woodlands, Simms awaited the coming of the war which he had predicted for a number of years. There he was when the battle of Fredericksburg filled him with triumphant joy, and he saw in fancy "Peace with her beautiful rainbow plucked from the bosom of the storm and spread from east to west, from north to south, over all the sunny plains and snowy heights." Unfortunately, his radiant fancy wrought in baseless visions and the fires of the storm had burned away that brilliant rainbow before Peace came, as a mourning dove with shadowy wings hovering over a Nation's grave.

In May, 1864, Simms went to Columbia and was there when the town was destroyed by fire, the house in which he was staying being saved by his presence therein. "You belong to the whole Union," said an officer, placing a guard around the dwelling to protect the sturdy writer who counted his friends all over the Nation. He said to friends who sympathized with him over his losses, "Talk not to me about my losses when the State is lost."

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Simms describes the streets of Columbia as “wide and greatly protected by umbrageous trees set in regular order, which during the vernal season confer upon the city one of its most beautiful features.”

The *Daily South Carolinian* was sent to Charleston to save it from destruction. Its editors, Julian Selby and Henry Timrod, remained in the office on the south side of Washington Street near Main, where they prepared and sent out a daily bulletin while bomb-shells fell around them, until their labors were ended by the burning of the building.

From the ashes of the *Carolinian* arose the *Phoenix* and Simms was its editor through its somewhat brief existence. Selby relates that Simms offended General Hartwell and was summoned to trial at the General's headquarters on the corner of Bull and Gervais Streets. The result of the trial was an invitation for the defendant to a sumptuous luncheon and a ride home in the General's carriage accompanied by a basket of champagne and other good things. The next day the General told a friend that if Mr. Simms was a specimen of a South Carolina gentleman he would not again enter into a tilt with one. “He outtalked me, out-drunk me, and very clearly and politely showed me that I lacked proper respect for the aged.”

The *Phoenix* promptly sank back into its ashes and Simms returned to Charleston to a life of toil and struggle, not only for his own livelihood but to help others bear the burden of existence that was very heavy in Charleston immediately succeeding the war. Timrod wrote to him, “Somehow or other, you always magnetize me on to a little strength.”

In 1866 Simms visited Paul Hayne at Copse Hill, the shrine to which many footsteps were turned in the days when the poet and his little family made life beautiful on that pine-clad summit. Hayne welcomed his guest with joy and with sorrow—joy to behold again the face of his old friend; sorrow to see it lined with the pain and losses of the years.

Of all their old circle, Simms was the one whose wreck was the most disastrous. He had possessed so many of the things which make life desirable that his loss had left him as the storm leaves the ruined ship which, in the days of its magnificence, had ridden the waves with the greatest pride. The fortnight in Copse Hill was the first relief from toil that had come to him since death and fire and defeat had done their worst upon him. His biographer says, “He was as eager as ever to pass the night in profitless, though pleasant, discussions when he should have been trying to regain his strength through sleep.” To a later visitor Paul Hayne showed a cherished pine log on which were inscribed the names of Simms and Timrod.

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Upon the return of Simms he wrote to his friend at Copse Hill that no language could describe the suffering of Charleston. He said that the picture of Irving, given him by Hayne, served a useful purpose in helping to cover the bomb-shell holes still in his walls. "For the last three years," he writes, "I have written till two in the morning. Does not this look like suicide?" He mentions the fact that he shares with his two sons his room in which he sleeps, works, writes and studies, and is "cabin'd, cribbed, confined"—"I who have had such ample range before, with a dozen rooms and a house range for walking, in bad weather, of 134 feet." The old days were very fair as seen through the heavy clouds that had gathered around the Master of Woodlands.

In 1870, June 11th, the bell of Saint Michael's tolled the message that Charleston's most distinguished son had passed away. His funeral was in Saint Paul's. He was buried in Magnolia Cemetery, at the dedication of which twenty-one years earlier he had read the dedication poem. The stone above him bears simply the name, "Simms."

On the Battery in Charleston a monument commemorates the broken life of one who gave of his best to the city of his home and his love. Verily might he say: I asked for bread and you gave me a stone.

"UNCLE REMUS"

## JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS

Seeing the name of Joel Chandler Harris, many people might have to stop and reflect a moment before recalling exactly what claim that gentleman had upon the attention of the reader. "Uncle Remus" brings before the mind at once a whole world of sunlight and fun, with not a few grains of wisdom planted here and there. The good old fun-loving Uncle has put many a rose and never a thorn into life's flower-garden.

Being in Atlanta some years ago, when Mr. Harris was on the editorial staff of the *Constitution*, I called up the office and asked if I might speak to him. The gentleman who answered my call replied that Mr. Harris was not in, adding the information that if he were he would not talk through the telephone. I asked what time I should be likely to find him in the office.

"He will be in this afternoon, but I fear that he would not see you if you were the angel Gabriel," was the discouraging reply.

"I am not the angel Gabriel," I said. "Tell him that I am a lady—Mrs. Pickett—and that I should like very much to see him."

"If you are a lady, and Mrs. Pickett, I fear that he will vanish and never be found again."

Notwithstanding the discouragements, I was permitted to call that afternoon in the hope that the obdurate Uncle Remus might graciously consent to see me. I found him in his office in the top story of the building, an appropriate place to avoid being run to covert by the public, but inconvenient because of the embarrassment which might result from dropping out of the window if he should have the misfortune to be cornered. To say that I was received might be throwing too much of a glamour over the situation. At least, I was not summarily ejected, nor treated to a dissolving view of Uncle Remus disappearing in the distance, so I considered myself fortunate. I told him that I had called up by telephone that morning to speak to him.

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"I never talk through the telephone," he said. "I do not like to talk in a hole. I look into a man's eyes when I talk to him."

When Uncle Remus was fairly run to earth and could not escape, he was quite human in his attitude toward his caller; his only fault being that he was prone to talk of his visitor's work rather than his own, and a question that would seem to lead up to any personal revelation on his part would result in so strong an indication of a desire for flight that the conversation would be directed long distances away from Br'er Rabbit and the Tar Baby. He was a born story-teller, and had not the made author's owl-like propensity to perch upon high places and hoot his wisdom to the passing crowd. The expression "literary" as applied to him filled him with surprise. He called himself an "accidental author"; said he had never had an opportunity of acquiring style, and probably should not have taken advantage of it if he had. He was always as much astonished by his success as other people are by their failures.

\* \* \* \* \*

I met him once at a Confederate reunion in Atlanta, where I took my little grand-children, who had been brought up on Uncle Remus, to see him. Having heard their beauty praised, he cautioned them not to think too much of their looks, telling them that appearance was of little consequence. He gave each of them a coin, saying, "I don't believe in giving money to boys; I believe in their working for it."

"Well," said little George, "haven't we earned it listening to Uncle Remus?"

"If that is so, I'm afraid I haven't money enough to pay you what I owe you."

He was at ease and natural and like other people with children. He invited them to come to his farm and see the flowers and trees, telling them how his home received the name of "The Wren's Nest." As he sat one morning on the veranda, he saw a wren building a nest on his letter-box by the gate. When the postman came he went out and asked him to deliver the mail at the door, to avoid disturbing Madam Wren's preparations for housekeeping. The postman was faithful, and the Wren family had a prosperous and happy home.

"You must never steal an egg from a nest," he told the boys. Curving one hand into an imitation nest holding an imaginary egg, he hovered over it with the other hand, rubbing it gently, explaining to the boys, who watched him with absorbing interest, how the egg would change to a beautiful fluff of feathers and music, and after a while would fly away among the trees and fill the woods with sweet sounds. "If you destroy the egg, you kill all that beauty and music, and there will be no little bird to sit on the tree and sing to you." The boys assured him that they had never taken an egg, nor even so much as looked into the nest, because some birds will leave their nests if you just look into them.



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At the reception given to Mrs. Jackson, Mrs. Stuart, Winnie Davis, and myself, Mr. Harris was invited to stand in line, but declined. It would be difficult to imagine him as standing with a receiving party, shaking hands with the public. He was asked to speak, but that was even less to be expected. The nearest he ever came to making a speech was once when he sat upon the platform while his friend, Henry O. Grady, was addressing a large assemblage with all that eloquence for which he was noted. When he had finished, the call for "Harris" came with great volume and persistency. He arose and said, "I am coming," walked down from the platform and was lost in the crowd.

[Illustration: JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS At Home]

Uncle Remus wrote his stories at "Snap Bean Farm," in West End, a suburb of Atlanta. They filled his evenings with pleasure after the office grind was over. If no one but himself had ever seen them, he would have been as happy in the work as he was when the public was delighting in the adventures of Br'er Wolf and Br'er B'ar. In that cosy home the early evening was given to the children, and the later hours to recording the tales which had amused them through the twilight.

A home it was, not only to him but to all who came in friendship to see him in his quiet retreat. There was no room in it for those whom curiosity brought there to see the man of letters or to do honor to a lion. The lionizing of Uncle Remus was the one ambition impossible of achievement in the literary world. For everything else that touched upon the human, the vine-embowered, tree-shaded house on Gordon Street opened hospitable doors.

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Joel Chandler Harris was born in Eatonton, the county-seat of Putnam County, Georgia, and in his early days attended the Eatonton Academy, where he received all the academic training he ever had. His vitally helpful education was gained in the wider and deeper school of life, and few have been graduated therefrom with greater honors.

At six years of age he had the good fortune to encounter "The Vicar of Wakefield," than whom, it is safe to assert, no boy of such tender years had ever a better and more inspiring friend. This beloved clerical gentleman led young Joel into a charmed land of literature, in which he dwelt all his life.

In the post-office at Eatonton was an old green sofa, very much the worse for wear, which yet offered a comfortable lounging place for the boy Joel, adapted to his kittenish taste for curling up in quiet retreats. There he would spend hours in reading the newspapers that came to the office. In one of them he found an announcement of a new periodical to be published by Colonel Turner on his plantation nine miles from Eatonton. In connection with this announcement was an advertisement for an office

boy. It occurred to the future “Uncle Remus,” then twelve years old, that this might open a way for him.

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He wrote to Colonel Turner, and a few days later the Colonel drove up to town to take the unknown boy to his plantation. So beside the editor Joel Chandler Harris rode to the office of the *Countryman* and to his happy destiny. It has been said that but for the Turner plantation there would have been no Uncle Remus, but what would have become of the possibilities of that good old darky if the little Joel had not enjoyed the acquaintance of a good-natured post-master who permitted him to occupy the old green sofa and browse among the second-class mail of the Eatonton community?

Surely there was never a better school for the development of a budding author than the office of the *Countryman*, and the well-selected library in the home of its editor, and the great wildwood that environed the plantation.

Best of all, there were the “quarters,” where “Uncle Remus” conducted a whole university of history and zoology and philosophy and ethics and laughter and tears. Down in the cabins at night the printer’s boy would sit and drink in such stores of wit and wisdom as could not lie unexpressed in his facile mind, and the world is the richer for every moment he spent in that primitive, child-mind community, with its ancient traditions that made it one with the beginning of time.

At times he joined a ‘coon hunt, and with a gang of boys and a pack of hounds chased the elusive little animal through the night, returning home triumphant in the dawn. He hunted rabbits in the woods, and, maybe, became acquainted with the character of the original Br’er Rabbit from his descendants in the old plantation forest.

From the window near which his type-case stood he saw the squirrels scampering over trees and roofs, heard the birds singing in the branches, caught dissolving views of Br’er Fox flitting across the garden path, and breathed in beauty and romance to be exhaled later for the enchantment of a world of readers.

In Colonel Hunter’s library, selected with scholarly taste, he found the great old English masters who had the good fortune to be born into the language while it was yet “a well of English undefiled.” In that well he became saturated with a pure, direct, simple diction which later contact with the tendencies of his era and the ephemeral production of the daily press was not able to change.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was in the office of the *Countryman* that Joel Chandler Harris made his first venture into the world of print, shyly, as became one who would afterward be known as the most modest literary man in America. When Colonel Hunter found out the authorship of the bright paragraphs that slipped into his paper now and then with increasing frequency, he captured the elusive young genius and set it to work as a regular contributor. In this

periodical the young writer's first poem appeared: a mournful lay of love and death, as a first poem usually is, however cheerful a philosopher its author may ultimately become.

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This idyllic life soon ceased. When the tide of war rolled over central Georgia, it swept many lives out of their accustomed paths and destroyed many a support around which budding aspirations had wound their tendrils. The “printer’s boy” sat upon a fence on the old Turner plantation, watching Slocum’s Corps march by, and amiably receiving the good-natured gibes and jests of the soldiers, who apparently found something irresistibly mirth-provoking in the quaint little figure by the wayside. Sherman was marching to the sea, and the Georgia boy was taking his first view of the progress of war.

Among the many enterprises trampled to earth by those ruthless feet was the *Countryman*, which survived the desolating raid but a short time. It was years before the young journalist knew another home. For some months he set type on the *Macon Daily Telegraph*, going from there to New Orleans as private secretary of the editor of the *Crescent Monthly*. When the *Crescent* waned and disappeared from the journalistic sky, he returned to Georgia and became editor, compositor, pressman, mailing clerk, and entire force on the *Forsyth Advertiser*.

A pungent editorial upon the abuses of the State government, which appeared in the *Advertiser*, attracted the attention of Colonel W.T. Thompson and led him to offer Mr. Harris a place on the staff of the *Savannah Daily News*. Happily, there lived in Savannah the charming young lady who was to be the loving centre of the pleasant home of “Uncle Remus.” The marriage took place in 1873, and Mr. Harris remained with the *News* until ’76, when, to escape yellow fever, he removed to Atlanta. He was soon after placed on the editorial staff of the *Constitution*, and in its columns Uncle Remus was first introduced to the world.

\* \* \* \* \*

In his home in West End, “Snap-Bean Farm,” he lived in calm content with his harmonious family and his intimate friends, Shakespeare and his associates, and those yet older companions who have come down to us from ancient Biblical times. Some of his intimates were chosen from later writers. Among poets, he told me that Tom Moore was his most cherished companion, the one to whom he fled for consolation in moments of life’s insufficiencies.

Mr. Harris had no objection to talking in sociable manner of other writers, but if his visitor did not wish to see him close up like a clam and vanish to the seclusion of an upper room it was better not to mention Uncle Remus. Neither had he any fancy for the kind of talk that prevails at “pink teas” and high functions of society in general. Anything that would be appropriate to the topics introduced in such places would never occur to him, and the vapory nothingness was so filled with mysterious terrors for him that he fled before them in unspeakable alarm.

[Illustration: SNAP-BEAN FARM, ATLANTA, GEORGIA The residence of Joel Chandler Harris]

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“Snap-Bean Farm” was all the world that he cared for, and here he lived and wove his enchantments, not in his well-appointed study, as a thoroughly balanced mind would have done, but all over the house, just where he happened to be, preferably beside the fire after the little ones had gone to bed, leaving memories of their youthful brightness to make yet more glowing the flames, and waves of their warmth of soul to linger in enchantment about the hearth.

It was a sunny, happy day when I visited “Snap-Bean Farm.” A violet-bordered walk led me to the pretty frame cottage, built upon a terrace quite a distance from the street—a shady, woodsy, leafy, flowery, fragrant distance—a distance that suggested infinite beauty and melody, infinite fascination. When the home was established there, the rumbling and clang of the trolley never broke the stillness of the peaceful spot. A horse-car crept slowly and softly to a near-by terminus and stopped, as if, having reached Uncle Remus and his woodsy home, there could be nothing beyond worth the effort. There were wide reaches of pine-woods, holding illimitable possibilities of romance, of legend, of wildwood and wild-folk tradition. It was a country home in the beginning, and it remained a country home, regardless of the outstretching of the city’s influences. Joel Chandler Harris had a country soul, and if he had been set down in the heart of a metropolis his home would have stretched out into mystic distances of greenery and surrounded itself with a limitless reach of cool, vibrant, amber atmosphere, and looked out upon a colorful and fragrant wilderness of flowers, and he would have dwelt in the solitudes that God made.

As I walked, a fragrance wrapped me around as with a veil of radiant mist. It came straight from the heart of his many-varied roses that claimed much of his time and care. The shadow of two great cedar trees reached protecting arms after me as I went up to the steps of the cottage hidden away in a green and purple and golden and pink tangle of bloom and sweet odors; ivy and wistaria and jasmine and honeysuckle. Beside the steps grew some of his special pet roses. Their glowing and fragrant presence sometimes afforded him a congenial topic of discourse when a guest chanced to approach too closely the subject of the literary work of the host, if one may use the term in connection with a writer who so constantly disclaimed any approach to literature, and so persistently declined to take himself seriously.

In the front yard was a swing that appealed to me reminiscently with the force of the olden days when I had a swing of my very own. As I “let the old cat die,” we talked of James Whitcomb Riley’s poem, “Waitin’ fer the Cat to Die,” and Mr. Harris told me of the visit Riley had made to him not long before. Two men with such cheerful views of life could not but be congenial, and it was apparent that the visit had brought joy to them both.

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I did not see the three dogs and seven cats—mystic numbers!—but felt confident that my genial host could not have been satisfied with any less.

The charmed circle in which Br'er Fox and Br'er Rabbit shone as social stars is yet with us, and we shall not let it go out from our lives. The mystic childhood of a dim, mysterious race is brought to us through these beings that have come to us from the olden time "when animals talked like people."

"The Sign of the Wren's Nest" is peopled by these legendary forms with their never-dying souls. They lurk in every corner and peer out from every crevice. They hide behind the trees, and sometimes in the moonlight we see them looking out at us as we walk along the path. They crouch among interlacing vines and look at us through the lacy screen with eyes in which slumber the traditions of the ages.

We look for the Magician who, with a wave of the hand, made all these to live and move before us. We know he must be there. We "cannot make him dead"; but he can make himself and us alive in the life of the past. A little door, with one shutter of Memory and one of Faith, opens before us, and he comes to dwell again in the world which he created in "The Sign of the Wren's Nest."

"THE POET OF THE FLAG"

## FRANCIS SCOTT KEY

Away back in the years, Terra Rubra, the colonial home of John Ross Key, spread out broad acres under the sky of Maryland, in the northern part of Frederick County. Girt by noble trees, the old mansion, built of brick that came from England in the days when the New World yet remained in ignorance of the wealth of her natural and industrial resources, stood in the middle of the spacious lawn which afforded a beautiful playground for little Francis Scott Key and his young sister, who lived here the ideal home life of love and happiness. Among the flowers of the terraced garden they learned the first lessons of beauty and sweetness and the triumph of growth and blossoming. At a short distance was a dense line of forest, luring the young feet into tangled wildernesses of greenery and the colorful beauty of wild flowers in summer, and lifting great gray arms in solemn majesty against the dun skies of winter. Through it flowed the rippling silver of Pipe Creek on its sparkling way to the sea. At the foot of a grassy slope a spring offered draughts of the clear pure water which is said to be the only drink for one who would write epics or live an epic. Beyond a wide expanse of wind-blown grass the young eyes saw the variant gray and purple tints of the Catoclin Mountains, showing mystic changes in the floodtide of day or losing themselves in the crimson and gold sea of sunset.





In this stately, old, many-verandaed home, looking across nearly three thousand acres of fertile land as if with a proud sense of lordship, the wide-browed, poet-faced boy with the beautiful dreamy eyes and the line of genius between his delicately arched brows passed the golden years of his childhood.

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It is said that President Washington once went to Terra Rubra to visit his old friend. General John Ross Key, of Revolutionary fame. It may be that the venerated hand of the “Father of His Country”—the hand that had so resolutely put away all selfish ambitions and had reached out only for good things to bestow upon his people and his nation—was laid in blessing upon the bright young head of little Francis Scott Key, helping to plant in the youthful heart the seed that afterward blossomed into the thought which he expressed many years later:

I have said that patriotism is the preserving virtue of Republics.  
Let this virtue wither and selfish ambition assume its place as  
the motive for action, and the Republic is lost.

Here, my countrymen, is the sole ground of danger.

Seven miles from Annapolis, where the Severn River flows into Round Bay, stands Belvoir, a spacious manor-house with sixteen-inch walls, in which are great windows reaching down to the polished oak floor. In this home of Francis Key, his grandfather, the young Francis Scott Key spent a part of the time of his tutelage, preparing for entrance into St. John’s College, the stately buildings of which were erected by a certain early Key, who had come to our shore to help unlock the gates of liberty for the world.

The old college, with its historic campus, fits well into the atmosphere of Annapolis, standing proudly in her eighteenth-century dignity, watching the rest of the world scramble in a helter-skelter rush for modern trivialities. Its old walls are in pleasing harmony with the colonial mansions poised on little hillocks, from which they look down on you with benevolent condescension and invite you to climb the long flights of steps that lead to their very hearts, grand but hospitable, which you do in a glow of high-pitched ambition, as if you were scaling an arduous but fascinating intellectual height. Having reached the summit, you stop an instant on the landing, partly for breathing purposes, but more especially to exult a moment on the height of triumph.

The four-storied college at the end of Prince George Street—regal Annapolis would not be content with a street of less than royal dignity—looks down with pleased approval on its wide expanse of green campus, for that stretch of ground has a history that makes it worthy of the noble building which it supports. It spread its greenery to the view of those window-eyes decades before the Revolution, and when that fiery torch flamed upon the country’s record the college green furnished a camping place for the freedom-loving Frenchmen who came over the sea to help set our stars permanently into the blue of our national sky. In 1812 American troops pitched their tents on the famous campus, and under the waving green of its summer grasses and the white canopy of its winter snows men who died for their country’s honor lie in their long sleep.

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On the grounds east of the college buildings stands the Tulip Tree which sheltered the first settlers of Annapolis in 1649, and may have hidden away in the memory-cells of its stanch old heart reminiscences of a time when a bluff old Latin sailor, with more ambition in his soul than geography in his head, unwittingly blundered onto a New World. Whatever may be its recollections, it has sturdily weathered the storms of centuries, surviving the tempests hurled against it by Nature and the poetry launched upon it by Man. It has been known by the name of the "Treaty Tree," from a tradition that in the shade of its branches the treaty with the Susquehannoghs was signed in 1652. In 1825 General La Fayette was entertained under its spreading boughs, and it has since extended hospitable arms over many a patriotic celebration.

In "the antient citie" Francis Scott Key found many things which appealed to his patriotic soul. On the State House hill was the old cannon brought to Maryland by Lord Baltimore's colony and rescued from a protracted bath in St. Mary's River to take its place among the many relics of history which make Annapolis the repository of old stories tinged by time and fancy with a mystic coloring of superstition. He lived in the old "Carvel House," erected by Dr. Upton Scott on Shipwright Street. Not far away was the "Peggy Stewart" dwelling, overlooking the harbor where the owner of the unfortunate *Peggy Stewart*, named for the mistress of the mansion, was forced by the revolutionary citizens of Annapolis, perhaps incited by an over-zealous enthusiasm but with good intentions, to burn his ship in penalty for having paid the tax on its cargo of tea.

If Francis Key had a taste for the supernatural, there was ample opportunity for its gratification in this haven of tradition. He may have seen the headless man who was accustomed to walk down Green Street to Market Space, with what intention was never divulged. Every old house had its ghost, handed down through the generations, as necessary a piece of furniture as the tester-bed or the sideboard. Perhaps not all of these mysterious visitants were as quiet as the shadowy lady of the Brice house, who would glide softly in at the hour of gloaming and, with her head on her hand, lean against the mantel, look sadly into the faces of the occupants of the room, and vanish without a sound—of course, it is undeniable that Annapolis would have only well-bred ghosts.

After graduation from St. John's, in that famous class known as the "Tenth Legion" because of its brilliancy, Francis Scott Key studied law in the office of his uncle, Philip Barton Key, in Annapolis, where his special chum was Roger Brooke Taney, who persuaded him to begin the practice of his profession in Frederick City. In 1801 the youthful advocate opened his law office in the town from which the Revolutionary Key had marched away to Boston to join Colonel Washington's troops. Francis Key invited his friend to visit Terra Rubra with him, and Mr. Taney found the old plantation home so fascinating that many visits followed. Soon there was a wedding at beautiful Terra Rubra, when pretty, graceful Ann Key became the wife of the future Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

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In 1802, at Annapolis, in the mahogany wainscoted drawing-room of the old Lloyd house, built in 1772, Key was married to Mary Tayloe Lloyd.

After a few years of practice in Frederick City, Francis Scott Key removed to Georgetown, now West Washington. Here at the foot of what is known as M Street, but was Bridge Street in the good old days before Georgetown had given up her picturesque street names for the insignificant numbers and letters of Washington, half a block from the old Aqueduct Bridge, stands a two-storied, gable-roofed, dormer-windowed house, bearing in black letters the inscription, "The Key Mansion." Below is the announcement that it is open to the public from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily, excepting Sunday. On a placard between two front doors are printed the words, "Home of Francis Scott Key, author of The Star-Spangled Banner," the patriotic color-scheme being shown in the white placard and blue and red lettering.

For more than a century the house has stood there, and the circling years have sent it into remote antiquity of appearance, the storms of time having so swept it with their winds and beaten it with their rains and bombarded it with snow and sleet and hail as to make difficult the realization that it was once the home of bounding, scintillant life, and that its walls in the years gone by were radiant with the visions and hopes and ambitions of a happy group of youthful souls. It stands at the foot of what is now a street of shops, and the wearing away of the decades have taken from it all suggestion of home surroundings.

Through a door at the left I passed into a wide hall, on the walls of which are some patriotic inscriptions. There is one, a quotation from President McKinley, that conveys an admonition the disregard of which leads to consequences we often have occasion to deplore: "The vigilance of the Citizen is the safety of the Republic."

At the right of the hall are two rooms, locked now, but serving as parlors when the sad old house was a bright, beautiful home. A steep Colonial stairway leads to a hall on the second floor, where again there are inscriptions on the walls to remind the visitor of his duties as a citizen of the nation over which the Star-Spangled Banner yet waves.

On the second floor the first sign of life appeared. A door stood slightly ajar, and in answer to a touch a tall woman with a face of underlying tragedy and a solitary aspect that fitted well with the loneliness of the old house appeared and courteously invited me to enter. She is the care-taker of the mansion, bears an aristocratic old Virginia name, and is wrapped around with that air of gloomily garnered memories characteristic of women who were in the heart of the crucial period of our history. I am not surprised when she tells me that she watched the battle of Fredericksburg from her window as she lay ill in her room, and that she witnessed the burning of Richmond after the surrender. I recognize the fact that life has been a harder battle, since all her own have passed over the line and left her to the lonely conflict, than was ever a contest in those days of war.

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She tells me that the Key relics have all been taken to the Betsy Ross house in Philadelphia. What they were she does not know, for they were all packed in boxes when she first came to the Key mansion. The only object left from the possessions of the man who made that old dwelling a shrine upon which Americans of to-day ought to place offerings of patriotism is an old frame in a small room at the end of the hall. On the bottom of the frame is printed in large black letters the name, Francis Scott Key. Some jagged fragments within the frame indicate that something, either picture or flag, has been hastily and carelessly removed.

Finding no relic of the man whose life once glorified the now dark and gloomy house, I hold with the greater tenacity the mental picture I have of the old flag I used to see in the National Museum. Faded, discolored, and tattered, it is yet the most glorious piece of bunting our country owns to-day—the flag that floated over Fort McHenry through the fiery storm of that night of anxious vigil in which our national anthem was born.

In this old house on Bridge Street Francis Scott Key lived when he was Attorney for the District of Columbia, and in a small brick office adjoining his home he did the work that placed him in the front rank of the American bar.

St. John's Episcopal Church, not far away, where he was vestryman, has a tablet to the memory of Reverend Johannes I. Sayrs, a former rector, on which is an inscription by Key. In Christ Church is a memorial window dedicated to Francis Scott Key.

"It is a pity that the old house is to be sold," said a resident of Georgetown.

"Is it to be sold?" I asked. For a long time this fate has been hovering over the old Key home, but I had hoped, even when there was no hope.

"Yes," was the reply. "The ground is wanted for business buildings."

"A pity?" I said. "It is more than a pity; it is a national shame." Is there not patriotism enough in our land to keep that shrine sacred to historic memory?

It was from this house that Key set out September 4, 1814, to negotiate for the release of Dr. Beanes, one of his friends, who, after having most kindly cared for British soldiers when wounded and helpless, was arrested and taken to the British fleet as a prisoner in revenge for his having sent away from his door-yard some intoxicated English soldiers who were creating disorder and confusion. Key, in company with Colonel John S. Skinner, United States Agent for Parole of Prisoners, arrived at Fort McHenry, on Whetstone Point, in time to witness the effort of General Ross to make good his boast that he "did not care if it rained militia, he would take Baltimore and make it his winter headquarters."

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They were on the ship *Surprise*, and, upon making their plea for their captive friend, were told that he had inflicted atrocious injuries upon British soldiers, and the Admiral had resolved to hang him from the yard-arm. The eloquence of Mr. Key, supplemented by letters written by British officers to Dr. Beanes, thanking him for the many kindnesses which they had received from him, finally won Admiral Cochrane from his vengeful decision. After the release of the captive the Americans were not permitted to return to land, lest they might carry information detrimental to the British cause. Thus Admiral Cochrane, who enjoyed well-merited distinction for doing the wrong thing, placed his unwilling guests in their own boat, the *Minden*, as near the scene of action as possible, with due regard for their physical safety, in order that they might suffer the mortification of seeing their flag go down. Two hours had been assigned, in the British mind, for the accomplishment of that beneficent result, after which "terms for Baltimore" might be considered.

For three days Key and his companions watched the landing of nine thousand soldiers and marines at North Point, preparatory to the attack on the fort, which was defended by a small force of raw militia, partly composed of the men who had been so easily defeated at Bladensburg. They were under command of Colonel George Armistead, who faced a court-martial if he should not win, for the Washington administration had peremptorily ordered him to surrender the fort.

Through the long hours of the 13th Key paced the deck of his boat, watching the battle with straining eyes and a heart that thrilled and leaped and sank with every thunder of gun and flash of shell. The day was calm and still, with no wind to lift the flag that drooped around its staff over Fort McHenry. At eventide a breeze unfurled its folds, and as it floated out a shell struck it and tore out one of its fifteen stars.

Night fell. His companions went below to seek rest in such unquiet slumbers as might visit them, but there was no sleep in the heart of Key. Not until the mighty question which filled the night sky with thunder and flame and surged in whelming billows through his own soul found its answer in the court of Eternal Destiny could rest come to the man who watched through the long hours of darkness, waiting for dawn to bring triumph or despair.

Silence came—the silence that meant victory and defeat. Whose was the victory? The night gave no answer, and the lonely man still paced up and down the deck of the *Minden*. Then day dawned in a glory in the east, and a glory in the heart of the anxious watcher. In that first thrill of joy and triumph our majestic anthem was formed.

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Key took from his pocket an old letter, and on its blank page pencilled the opening lines of the song. In the boat which took him back to Baltimore he finished the poem, and in his hotel made a copy for the press. The next day the lines were put into type by Samuel Sands, an apprentice in the office of the *Baltimore American*, who had been deserted in the general rush to see the battle as being too young to be trusted at the front, and that evening they were sung in the Holliday Street Theatre. The next day the air was heard upon the streets of Baltimore from every boy who had been gifted with a voice or a whistle, and "The Star-Spangled Banner" was soon waving over the musical domain as victoriously as it had floated from the ramparts of Fort McHenry.

[Illustration: FRANCIS SCOTT KEY At the age of 35]

It is in the great moments of life that a man gives himself to the world, and in the giving parts from nothing of himself, for in the gift he but expands his own nature and keeps himself in greater measure than before. May not he to whom our great anthem came through the battle-storm smile pityingly upon the futile efforts of to-day to supply a national song that shall eclipse the noble lines born of patriotism and battle ardor and christened in flame?

Thus it was that Francis Scott Key reached the high tide of life before the defences of the Monumental City, and to Baltimore he returned when that tide was ebbing away, and in view of the old fort, under the battlements of which he had fallen to unfathomable depths of suffering and risen to immeasurable heights of triumphant joy, he crossed the bar into the higher tide beyond. On a beautiful hill Baltimore has erected a stately monument to the memory of the man who linked her name with the majestic anthem which gives fitting voice to our national hopes.

Away on the other edge of our continent, in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, another noble shaft tells the world that "the Star-Spangled Banner yet waves" over all our land and knows no distinctions of North, South, East, or West.

In Olivet Cemetery, in the old historic city of Frederick, Maryland, is the grave of Francis Scott Key. Over it stands a marble column supporting a statue of Key, his poet face illumined by the art of the sculptor, his arms outstretched, his left hand bearing a scroll inscribed with the lines of "The Star-Spangled Banner," while on the pedestal sits Liberty, holding the flag for which those immortal lines were written.

Thus, perpetuated in granite, the noble patriot stands, looking over the town to which he long ago gave this message:



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But if ever, forgetful of her past and present glory, she shall cease to be “the land of the free and the home of the brave,” and become the purchased possession of a company of stock-jobbers and speculators; if her people are to become the vassals of a great moneyed corporation, and to bow down to her pensioned and privileged nobility; if the patriots who shall dare to arraign her corruptions and denounce her usurpations are to be sacrificed upon her gilded altar,—such a country may furnish venal orators and presses, but the soul of national poetry will be gone. That muse will “never bow the knee in mammon’s fane.” No, the patriots of such a land must hide their shame in her deepest forests, and her bards must hang their harps upon the willows. Such a people, thus corrupted and degraded,

“Living, shall forfeit fair renown,  
And, doubly dying, shall go down  
To the vile dust from whence they sprung,  
Unwept, unhonored, and unsung.”

“THE POET-PRIEST”

## FATHER RYAN

My first meeting with Father Ryan was at the Atlantic Hotel in Norfolk, in which town he had spent the first seven years of his life, his parents having emigrated from Limerick and found a home there a short time before his birth. He has been claimed by a number of cities, and the dates of his nativity, as assigned by biographers, range from 1834 to 1840, 1839 being the one best established. He told me that his early memories of his Norfolk home were especially associated with figs and oysters, the oysters there being the largest and finest he had ever seen, they and the figs seeming to “rhyme with his appetite.” Then he told me an oyster story:

“A negro boatman was rowing some people down the river, among them two prominent politicians who were discussing an absent one. ‘He has no more backbone than an oyster,’ said one. The boatman laughed, and said, ‘Skuse me, marsers, but if you-all gemmen don’ know no mo’ ’bout politicians dan you does ’bout oyschers you don’ know much. No mo’ backbone dan a oyscher! Why, oyschers has as much backbone as folks has, en ef you cuts into ’em lengfwise a little way ter one side en looks at ’em close you’ll see dar backbone’s jes’ lak we all’s backbone is. De only diffunce is de oyscher’s backbone is ter one side, jes’ whar it ought ter be, ’stead er in de middle. Dat’s de reason I t’ink de debbil mus’ er tuck a han’ en he’ped ter mek we alls, en you know de Lord says, Let *us* mek man; dat shows dat He didn’ do hit all by Hese’f; ef He had He’d a meked we all’s backbone ter de side whar de oyscher’s is, ter perfect us, en put our shin bones behime our legs, whar dey wouldn’t all de time git skint, en put our calfs in de front.’”



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My impression of Father Ryan was of being in the presence of a great power—something indefinable and indescribable, but invincibly sure. He was of medium height, and his massive head seemed to bend by its own weight, giving him a somewhat stooped appearance. His hair, brown, with sunny glints touching it to gold, was brushed back from his wide, high forehead, falling in curls around his pale face and over his shoulders. I recall with especial distinctness the dimple in his chin, a characteristic of many who have been very near to me, for which reason it attracted my attention when appearing in a face new to me. His eyes were his greatest beauty,—Irish blue, under gracefully arched brows, and luminous with the sunshine that has sparkled in the eyes of his race in all the generations, caught by looking skyward for a light that dawned not upon earth. His expression was sad, and the beautiful smile that illumined his face, radiating compassion, kindness, gentleness and the humor of the Kelt, made me think of a brilliant noontide sun shining across a grave.

We discussed Folk Lore, and he said that some of the best lessons were taught in the Folk Lore of the plantation negro. One of his sermons was on “Obstinacy,” illustrated by a story told him by an old colored man:

“Marser, does you know de reason dat de crab walks back’ards? Well, hit’s dis away: when de Lord wuz mekin’ uv de fishes He meked de diffunt parts en put ’em in piles, de legs in one pile, de fins in anudder, en de haid in anudder. Do’ de crab wan’t no fish, He meked hit at de same time. Afterwards He put ’em tergedder en breaved inter ’em de bref er life. He stuck all de fishes’ haid on, but de crab wuz obstreperous en he say, ‘Gib me my haid; I gwine put hit on myse’f.’ De Lord argufied wid him but de crab wouldn’ listen, en he say he gwine put hit on. So de Lord gin him his haid en ’course he put hit on back’ards. Den he went ter de Lord en ax’ Him ter put hit straight, but de Lord wouldn’ do hit, en He tole him he mus’ go back’ards all his life fer his obstinacy. En so ’tis wid some people.”

[Illustration: FATHER RYAN From the portrait in Murphy’s Hotel, Richmond, Virginia]

Father Ryan told me that one of the greatest obstacles with which he had to contend in his dealings with people was the lack of ethic sensitiveness which rendered them oblivious to the harm of deviations from principle which seemed not to result in great evil. People who would not steal articles of value did not hesitate to cheat in car-fare, taking the view that the company got enough out of the public without their small contribution. He said, “They are like two very religious old ladies who, driving through a toll-gate, asked the keeper the rate. Being newly appointed, he looked into his book and read so much for a man and a horse. The woman who was driving whipped up the horse, calling out, ‘G’lang, Sally, we goes free. We are two old maids and a mare.’ On they went without paying.”

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When Abram Ryan was seven years old the family moved to St. Louis, where the boy attended the schools of the Christian Brothers, in his twelfth year entering St. Mary's Seminary, in Perry County, Missouri. He completed his preparation for the work to which his life was dedicated, in the Ecclesiastical Seminary at Niagara, New York. Upon ordination he was placed in charge of a parish in Missouri.

On a boat going down the canal from Lynchburg to Lexington, where he was a fellow-passenger with us, he met his old friend, John Wise, and entered into conversation with him, in the course of which he made the statement that he came from Missouri. "All the way from Pike?" quoted Mr. Wise. "No," replied Father Ryan, "my name is *not* Joe Bowers, I have *no* brother Ike," whereupon he sang the old song, "Joe Bowers," in a voice that would have lifted any song into the highest realms of music.

He recited his poem, "In Memoriam," written for his brother David, who was killed in battle, one stanza of which impressed me deeply because of the longing love in his voice when he spoke the lines:

Thou art sleeping, brother, sleeping  
In thy lonely battle grave;  
Shadows o'er the past are creeping,  
Death, the reaper, still is reaping,  
Years have swept and years are sweeping  
Many a memory from my keeping,  
But I'm waiting still and weeping  
For my beautiful and brave.

The readers of his poetry are touched by its pathetic beauty, but only they who have heard his verses in the tones of his deep, musical voice can know of the wondrous melody of his lines.

When I said to him that I wished he would write a poem on Pickett's charge at Gettysburg, he replied:

"It has been put into poetry. Every flower that blooms on that field is a poem far greater than I could write. There are some things too great for me to attempt. Pickett's charge at Gettysburg is one of them."

A lady who chanced to be on the boat with us repeated Owen Meredith's poem of "The Portrait." At its close he said with sad earnestness, "I am sorry to hear you recite that. Please never do it again. It is a libel on womanhood."

It may be that he was thinking of "Ethel," the maiden whom, it is said, he loved in his youth, from whom he parted because Heaven had chosen them both for its own work,

and his memories deepened the sacredness with which all women were enshrined in his thought. She was to be a nun and he a priest, and thus he tells of their parting:

One night in mid of May their faces met  
As pure as all the stars that gazed on them.  
They met to part from themselves and the world;  
Their hearts just touched to separate and bleed;  
Their eyes were linked in look, while saddest tears  
Fell down, like rain, upon the cheeks of each:  
They were to meet no more.

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The “great brown, wond’ring eyes” of the girl went with him on his way through life, shadowed like the lights of a dim cathedral, but luminous with love and sacrifice. How much of the story he tells in pathetic verse was his very own perhaps no one may ever know, but the reader feels that it was Father Ryan himself who, after “years and years and weary years,” walked alone in a place of graves and found “in a lone corner of that resting-place” a solitary grave with its veil of “long, sad grass” and, parting the mass of white roses that hid the stone, beheld the name he had given the girl from whom he had parted on that mid-May night.

“ULLAINEE.”

Those who were nearest him thought that the vein of sadness winding through his life and his poetry was in memory of the girl who loved and sacrificed and died. When they marvelled over the mournful minor tones in his melodious verse he made answer:

Go stand on the beach of the blue boundless deep,  
When the night stars are gleaming on high,  
And hear how the billows are moaning in sleep,  
On the low-lying strand by the surge-beaten steep,  
They’re moaning forever wherever they sweep.  
Ask them what ails them: they never reply;  
They moan on, so sadly, but will not tell you why!  
Why does your poetry sound like a sigh?  
The waves will not answer you; neither shall I.

At the beginning of the war Father Ryan was appointed a chaplain in the Army of Northern Virginia, but often served as a soldier. He was in New Orleans in 1862 when an epidemic broke out, and devoted himself to the care of the victims. Having been accused of refusing to bury a Federal he was escorted by a file of soldiers into the presence of General Butler, who accosted him with great sternness:

“I am told that you refused to bury a dead soldier because he was a Yankee.”

“Why,” answered Father Ryan in surprise, facing the hated general without a tremor, “I was never asked to bury him and never refused. The fact is, General, it would give me great pleasure to bury the whole lot of you.”

Butler lay back in his arm-chair and roared with laughter. “You’ve got ahead of me, Father,” he said. “You may go. Good morning, Father.”

One of the incidents of which Father Ryan told me occurred when smallpox was raging in a State prison. The official chaplain had fled and no one could be found to take his place. One day a prisoner asked for a minister to pray for him, and Father Ryan, whose parish was not far away, was sent for. He was in the prison before the messenger had

returned and, having been exposed to contagion, was not permitted to leave. He remained in the prison ministering to the sick until the epidemic had passed.

Immediately after the war he was stationed in New Orleans where he edited *The Star*, a Roman Catholic weekly. Afterward he was in Nashville, Clarksville, and Knoxville, and from there went to Augusta, Georgia, where he founded and edited the "*Banner of the South*," which was permanently furlled after having waved for a few years.

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Unlike most Southern poets, Father Ryan did not take his themes from Nature, and when her phenomena enters into his verse it is usually as a setting for the expression of some ethic or emotional sentiment. He has been called “the historian of a human soul,” and it was in the crises of life that his feeling claimed poetical expression. When he heard of Lee’s surrender “The Conquered Banner” drooped its mournful folds over the heart-broken South. In his memorial address at Fredericksburg when the Southern soldiers were buried, he first read “March of the Deathless Dead,” closing with the lines:

And the dead thus meet the dead,  
While the living’ o’er them weep;  
And the men by Lee and Stonewall led,  
And the hearts that once together bled,  
Together still shall sleep.

June 28, 1883, I was in Lexington and saw the unveiling of Valentine’s recumbent statue of General Lee in Washington and Lee University. At the conclusion of Senator Daniel’s eloquent oration Father Ryan recited his poem, “The Sword of Lee,” the first time that it had been heard.

In Lexington I was at a dinner where Father Ryan was a guest. He told a story of a reprobate Irishman, for whom he had stood godfather. Upon one occasion the man took too much liquor and, under its influence, killed a man, for which he was sentenced to a term in the penitentiary. Through the efforts of the Father he was, after a time, pardoned and employment secured for him. One evening he came to the priest’s house intoxicated and asked permission to sleep in the barn. “No,” said the Father, “go sleep in the gutter.” “Ah, Father, sure an’ I’ve shlept in the gutter till me bones is all racked with the rheumatism.” “I can’t help that; I can’t let you sleep in the barn; you will smoke, you drunken beast, and set the barn on fire and maybe burn the house, and they belong to the parish.” “Ah, Father, forgive me! I’ve been bad, very bad; I’ve murdered an’ kilt an’ shtole an’ been dhrunk, an’ I’ve done a heap of low things besides, but low as I’m afther gettin’, Father, I never got low enough to shmoke.” The man slept in the barn and the parish suffered no loss.

One evening at a supper at Governor Letcher’s we were responding to the sentiment, “Life.” I gave some verses which, in Father Ryan’s view, were not serious enough for a subject so solemn. He looked at me through his wonderfully speaking eyes and answered me in his melodious voice:

Life is a duty—dare it,  
Life is a burden—bear it,  
Life is a thorn-crown—wear it;  
Though it break your heart in twain  
Seal your lips and hush your pain;  
Life is God—all else is vain.

“Yes, Father,” I said, and there was silence.

[Illustration: ST. MARY’S CHURCH, MOBILE.  
FATHER RYAN’S LATE RESIDENCE ADJOINING  
By courtesy of P.J. Kenedy & Sons]

Always a wanderer, our Poet-Priest found his first real home, since his childhood, when pastor of St. Mary’s Church in Mobile. To that home he pays a tribute in verse.

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It was an enchanting solitude for the “restless heart,”—the plain little church with its cross pointing the way upward, the front half-hidden by trees through which its window-eyes look out to the street. A short distance from the church and farther back was the priest’s house, set in a bewilderment of trees and vines and shrubbery from which window, chimney, roof, and cornice peep out as if with inquisitive desire to see what manner of world lies beyond the forest.

Up into the silent skies  
Where the sunbeams veil the star,  
Up,—beyond the clouds afar,  
Where no discords ever mar,  
Where rests peace that never dies.

Here, amid the “songs and silences,” he wrote “just when the mood came, with little of study and less of art,” as he said, his thoughts leaping spontaneously into rhymes and rhythms which he called verses, objecting to the habit of his friends of giving them “the higher title of poems,” never dreaming of “taking even lowest place in the rank of authors.”

I sing with a voice too low  
To be heard beyond to-day,  
In minor keys of my people’s woe,  
But my songs will pass away.

To-morrow hears them not—  
To-morrow belongs to fame—  
My songs, like the birds’, will be forgot,  
And forgotten shall be my name.

But a touch of prophecy adds the thought:

And yet who knows? Betimes  
The grandest songs depart,  
While the gentle, humble, and low-toned rhymes  
Will echo from heart to heart.

So the “low-toned rhymes” of him to whom “souls were always more than songs,” written “at random—off and on, here, there, anywhere,” touch the heart and linger like remembered music in a long-gone twilight.

In 1872 Father Ryan travelled in Europe, visited Rome and had an audience with the Pope, of whom he wrote:



I saw his face to-day; he looks a chief  
Who fears nor human rage, nor human guile;  
Upon his cheeks the twilight of a grief,  
But in that grief the starlight of a smile.

In 1883 he began an extended lecture tour in support of a charity of deep interest in the South, but his failing health brought his effort to an early close.

The fiery soul of Father Ryan soon burned out its frail setting. In his forty-eighth year he retired to a Franciscan Monastery in Louisville, intending to make the annual retreat and at its close to finish his "Life of Christ," begun some time before. He arrived at the Convent of St. Bonifacius March 23, 1886. The environment of the old Monastery, the first German Catholic establishment in Louisville, built in 1838, is not attractive. The building is on a narrow side street filled with small houses and shops crowded up to the sidewalk. But the interior offered a peaceful home for which the world-weary heart of the Poet-Priest was grateful. From a balcony where he would sit, breathing in the cool air and resting his soul in the unbroken silence, he looked across the courtyard shaded by beautiful trees, filled with flowers and trellised vines, his heart revelling in the riot of color, the wilderness of greenery, all bathed in golden floods of sunshine and canopied with an ever-changing and ever-glorious stretch of azure sky.

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Father Ryan was never again to go out from this peaceful harbor into the tumultuous billows of world-life. He had been there but a short time when his physician told him that he must prepare for death. "Why," he said, "I did that long years ago." The time of rest for which he had prayed in years gone by was near at hand.

My feet are wearied and my hands are tired,  
My soul oppressed—  
And I desire, what I have long desired—  
Rest—only rest.

\* \* \* \* \*

The burden of my days is hard to bear,  
But God knows best;  
And I have prayed—but vain has been my prayer  
For rest—sweet rest.

In his last days his mind was filled with reminiscences of the war and he would arouse the monastery and tell the priests and brothers, "Go out into the city and tell the people that trouble is at hand. War is coming with pestilence and famine and they must prepare to meet the invader."

On Thursday of Holy Week, April 22, 1886, the weary life drifted out upon the calm sea of Eternal Peace.

"BACON AND GREENS"

## DR. GEORGE WILLIAM BAGBY

We, the general and I, were the first to be informed of the supernal qualities of bacon and greens. All Virginians were aware of the prime importance of this necessary feature of an Old Dominion dinner, but that "a Virginian could not be a Virginian without bacon and greens" was unknown to us until the discoverer of that ethnological fact. Dr. George William Bagby, read us his lecture on these cheerful comestibles. We were the first to see the frost that "lies heavy on the palings and tips with silver the tops of the butter-bean poles, where the sere and yellow pods are chattering in the chilly breeze."

In the early days after the war Dr. Bagby had a pleasant habit of dropping into our rooms at the Exchange Hotel in Richmond, and as soon as the ink was dry on that combination of humor and pathos and wisdom to which he gave the classic title of "Bacon and Greens" he brought it and read it to us. I can still follow the pleasant ramble on which he took us in fancy through a plantation road, the innumerable delights along the way never to be appreciated to their full extent by any but a real Virginian brought up on bacon and greens, and the arrival at the end of the journey, where we were taken

possession of as if we “were the Prodigal Son or the last number of the *Richmond Enquirer*.” My eyes were the first to fill with tears over the picture of the poor old man at the last, sitting by the dying fire in the empty house, while the storm raged outside.

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Though so thoroughly approving of “bacon and greens,” there was another feature of Virginia life, as well as of Southern life generally, that met with Dr. Bagby’s stern opposition—the duel. I once had opportunity to note his earnestness in trying to prevent a meeting of this kind. Two young men of whom General Pickett was very fond, Page McCarty, a writer for the press and an idol of Richmond society, and a brilliant young lawyer named Mordecai became involved in a quarrel which led to a challenge. The innocent cause of the dispute was the golden-haired, blue-eyed beauty, Mary Triplett, the belle of Richmond, who had long been the object of Page McCarty’s devotion but had shown a preference for another adorer. Page wrote some satiric verses which, though no name was given, were known by all Richmond to be leveled at Miss Triplett. Mr. Mordecai resented the verses and the dispute which followed resulted in a challenge. Dr. Bagby came to our rooms when Page McCarty was there and made an unavailing effort to secure peace. Both he and the general were unsuccessful in their pacific attempts, the duel took place and Page McCarty, who bore a name that had in former times become famous in the duelling annals of Virginia, killed his antagonist at first shot.

Though so strongly opposed to the practice, Dr. Bagby twice came near taking a principal part in a duel. Soon after the close of the war he wrote an editorial on prisoners of war, in which he took the ground that more Southern soldiers died in Northern prisons than Northerners in Southern prisons, giving figures in support of his statement. A Northern officer in Richmond answered the article, questioning its veracity. The doctor promptly sent a challenge to combat which the officer declined, saying that he had fought hard enough for the prisoners in war-time, he did not intend to fight for them now that hostilities were over.

The second time that our genial humorist came near the serious reality of a duel he was the party challenged. The cause of the misunderstanding that promised to result so tragically was a magazine article in which the doctor caricatured a peculiar kind of Virginia Editor. The essay was a source of amusement to all its readers except one editor, who imagined himself insulted. Urged on by misguided friends, he challenged the author of the offending paper who, notwithstanding his opposition to the code, accepted. A meeting was arranged and the belligerents had arrived at historic Bladensburg with blood-thirsty intent, when one of those sunny souls, possessed of a universality of mind which rendered him a friend to all parties, arrived on the scene and a disastrous outcome was averted.

Dr. Bagby has been called “a Virginia realist.” To him, receiving his first views of life from the foot of the Blue Ridge, one realism of the external world was too beautiful to admit of his finding in the ideal anything that could more nearly meet his fancy-picture of loveliness than the scenes which opened daily before his eyes. Years later a memory of his early home returns to him in the dawn:

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Suddenly there came from thicket or copse of the distant forest, I could not tell where, a “wood-note wild” of some bird I had not heard for half a century nearly, and in an instant the beauty, the mystery, the holiness of nature came back to me just as it came in childhood when sometimes my playmates left me alone in the great orchard of my home in Cumberland.

He avows himself

—a pagan and a worshipper of Pan, loving the woods and waters, and preferring to go to them (when my heart was stirred thereto by that mysterious power which, as I conceive, cares little for worship made stately and to order on certain recurring calendar days) rather than to most of the brick and mortar pens that are supposed to hold in some way that which the visible universe no more contains than the works of his hands contain the sculptor who makes them; for I take it that the glittering show revealed by the mightiest telescope, or by the hope mightier even than the imagination of the highest mind, is but as a parcel of motes shining in a single thin beam of the great sun unseen and hidden behind shutters never to be wide opened.

Our “Virginia Realist” needed not to call upon his imagination for personalities with which to fill his free-hand sketches of nature, for there was in his kindly humor and geniality a charm which drew forth from all he met just the qualities necessary to fill in his world with the characters he desired. A wide and deep sympathy enabled him to make that world so real and true that his readers entered it at once and found therein such entertaining companionship that they were fain to abide there ever after.

In 1835, when a boy fresh from Parley’s History of America, the future humorist made a journey from Cumberland County to Lynchburg, hearing by the way alarming sounds which the initiated recognized as the report of the blasting of rocks on the “Jeems and Kanawha Canell.” To the boy, with second-hand memories of Washington and his men tramping confusedly about his mind, the noises signified a cannonade and he waited in terrified excitement for the British bullet that was to put him beyond the conflicts of the world, trying to postpone the evil moment by hiding between two large men who were fellow-passengers with him. This was in the days when the celebrated “Canell” was a subject for the imagination to contemplate as a triumph of futurity and an object for hope to feed upon—a period in which the traveller embarked upon a fascinating batteau and spent a week of dreamy beauty in sailing from Lynchburg to Richmond and ten days back to the hill city. Time was not money in those days, it was vision and peace and color and sunshine and all wherein the soul of man delighteth itself and reveleth in the joy of living. The stream of imagination was no more dammed than the river in which “shad used to run to Lynchburg,” showing a highly developed aesthetic taste on the part of the shad. The youthful traveller went to the Eagle Hotel and took a view of Main Street and dared not even wonder if he should ever be big enough to live in Richmond. Rapt soul of youth’s dawn, with myriad dreams all to vanish when the sun rises upon the morning!

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On his return from an absence of two years in the North the great Canal was completed and, while his early impression of the unparalleled magnitude of the Queen City had suffered revision, his visions of journeying by canal were yet to be realized. At the foot of Eighth Street, Richmond, he took the packet-boat, passed under Seventh Street bridge, and with the other passengers lingered on deck to see Richmond slowly disappear in the distance. That night the doleful packet-horn, contrasted with his memory of the cheerful, musical note of the old stage-horn, brought to the lad his first realization of the inadequacies of modern improvements.

Ascending the James the traveller had a view of the best of the old Virginia life, its wealth of beauty, its home comfort, its atmosphere of serenity, of old memories, rich and vivid, like the wine that lay cob-webbed in ancestral cellars, of gracious hospitality, of a softly tinted life like the color in old pictures and the soul in old books. The gentle humorist lived to see that life pass away from the Old Dominion and all too soon he vanished into another world where, like all true Virginians, he expected to find the old home-life again.

These canal days were in the early Dickens period, and occasionally the youthful traveller could not resist the temptation to go below and lose himself in those pages which had then almost as potent a charm in their novelty as they have now in their friendly familiarity. But the river-isle, which held an interest in futurity for him because of his intention to found a romance there when he should be "big enough to write for the papers," would draw him back to the deck. There was a path across the hills that the passengers must follow, disembarking for that purpose. Near Manchester was a haunted house which he looked upon with those ghostly shivers that made a person so delightfully uncomfortable, for he, like the rest of us, did believe in ghosts, whatever he might say to the contrary. There was the ruined mill and, best of all, the Three-Mile Lock, inspiring him with the highest ambition of his life, to be a lock-keeper. Then came Richmond; the metropolis of the world, to the young voyager.

[Illustration: DR. GEORGE W. BAGBY From the portrait in the possession of the family]

Dr. Bagby studied for his profession at the Medical College of the University of Pennsylvania and from there went to Lynchburg, opening an office where now stands the opera house. Unfortunately for his professional career but happily for the cause of the literature of Virginia life, the office of the *Lynchburg Virginian* was near, and its editor, Mr. James McDonald, proved a kindred soul to the young physician. In the absences of the editor, Dr. Bagby filled his chair and fell a victim to the fascination with which the Demon of the Fourth Estate lures his chosen to their doom. In Lynchburg he first found his true calling and there, too, he met with his first failure, the demise of the *Lynchburg Express*, of which he was part owner, and which went to the wall by reason of the well-known weakness of genius in regard to business matters.

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Upon the collapse of the *Express* Dr. Bagby went to Washington as correspondent for a number of papers, and while there attained distinction as a humorist through the “Letters of Mozis Addums,” written for the *Southern Literary Messenger*, of Richmond.

His abiding place is of hazy uncertainty, one of his kinsmen saying—“He didn’t live anywhere,” He might as well have dwelt in his own “Hobgoblinopolis.” His wanderings had taught him the peculiar charm of the Virginia roads of that day, as evidenced by the aspiration of “Mozis Addums” when contemplating the limitations of his “Fifty Millions”:

I want to give Virginia a perfect system of county roads, so that one may get off at a station and go to the nearest country-house without breaking his neck, and it would take five hundred millions to do that.

It may be, as the doctor laments, that “The old Virginia gentleman, All of the olden time,” has passed away, the colonial house is modernized, and the ghost, the killing of whom would be “an enormity far greater than the crime of killing a live man,” has been laid to rest for half a century, but the old scenes and the old-time life come back to us who once knew it, in the pages of the perennial boy who recalls the time when “me and Billy Ivins and the other fellows set forth with six pine poles and a cymling full of the best and biggest fishing worms,” to fish in the Appomattox where it “curves around the foot of Uncle Jim’s plantation,” and where there is a patriarchal beech with a tangle of roots whereon the Randolphs of historic note were wont to repose in the days long gone. This fishing party is under the fair October skies when “the morn, like an Eastern queen, is sumptuously clad in blue and gold; the sheen of her robes in dazzling sunlight, and she comes from her tent of glistening, silken, celestial warp, beaming with tender smiles.” “It is a day of days for flatback, provided the moon is right.” But “Billy Ivins swears that the planetary bodies have nothing to do with fish—it’s all confounded superstition.” So they cast in their hooks, “Sutherland’s best,” and talk about Harper’s Ferry and “old Brown” until one of the party “thinks he has a nibble” and begs for silence, which at once supervenes out of respect for the momentous interests hanging in the balance. When the excitement is over the frivolous Bagby takes advantage of the relief from suspense to make an exasperating pun, after the manner of a newspaper man, and “Billy Ivins swears he will kill him for a fool.”

Oh, there were great old times on the Appomattox in the olden days, before its waves had turned battle-red and flashed that savage tint along the river-bank for all coming time.

[Illustration: “AVENEL” The home of the Burwells, where Dr. Bagby spent many happy days]

A part of the conversation shows us that this fishing expedition took place in the autumn of 1859, not a year before Dr. Bagby was called to the post of editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, taking the place of the poet, John R. Thompson, who was sent to

England to lead the forlorn hope of a magazine to represent the Southern cause in London. A banquet was given at Zetelle's restaurant as a farewell to Mr. Thompson and welcome to Dr. Bagby.



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The office of the *Messenger* was in the Law Building, a four-storied structure erected in 1846 on the southeast corner of Capitol Square, fronting on Franklin Street. Here he was hard at work, making the *Messenger* worthy of its former editors, his predecessor, Mr. Thompson, Mr. White, of early days, Edgar A. Poe, and a succession of brilliant writers, only less widely known, when the guns before Sumter tempted the new editor to the field, a position for which he was ill fitted as to physical strength, whatever might be the force of his patriotism. He was soon running risks of pneumonia from the effects of over-drilling and the chilling breezes from Bull Run Mountain, and making up his mind "not to desert, but to get killed at the first opportunity," that being the most direct route he could think of to the two prime essentials of life, a clean shirt and solitude. He neither deserted nor was killed, but was detailed to write letters and papers for one of the officers, and slept through the fight of the 18th at Manassas as a result of playing night orderly from midnight to morning.

Under the cloudless sky of the perfect Sunday, the twenty-first, he watched the progress of the battle till the cheer that rang from end to end of the Confederate line told him that the South had won. After midnight that night he carried to the telegraph office the message in which President Davis announced the victory and, walking back through the clear, still night, saw the comet, forerunner of evil, hanging over the field, as if in recognition of a fiery spirit on earth akin to its own. At headquarters on Monday, the 22d, he looked out at the pouring rain and raged over the inaction which kept the victorious army idle on the field of victory instead of following up the advantage by a march into the enemy's Capital, a movement which he thought could have been carried through to complete success.

Having watched over his wounded friend, Lieutenant James K. Lee, until death came with eternal peace. Dr. Bagby was sent with the dead soldier to Richmond and soon afterward was discharged because of ill health, "and thus ended the record of an unrenowned warrior."

He returned to his work on the *Messenger* and the editorial sanctum became the meeting place of the wits of Richmond. It was here that the celebrated Confederate version of "Mother Goose" was evolved from the conjoined wisdom of the circle and written with the stub of the editorial pencil on the "cartridge-paper table-cloth," one stanza dealing with a certain Northern general thus:

Little Be-Pope came on with a lope,  
Jackson, the Rebel, to find him;  
He found him at last, then ran very fast,  
With his gallant invaders behind him.

The various authors were astonished to find their productions in the next issue of the *Messenger* and were later dismayed when the verses were read at a meeting of the Mosaic Club, each with the name of the writer attached.

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While editor of the *Messenger*, Dr. Bagby wrote occasionally for the *Richmond Examiner*, thereby becoming associated in a friendly way with its editor, John M. Daniel, whose brilliant and continuous fight upon the administration at Richmond kept him vividly before the public. Though the genial doctor deplored the aggressiveness of the *Examiner*, he could not resist the temptation to employ his trenchant pen in treating of public affairs. This led to his possession of the famous latchkey which “fitted the door of the house on Broad Street, opposite the African Church,” a key of which he wrote that it “has its charm,” and certainly one which he made more enchanting to his readers than any other such article has ever proved.

These two men, so different in view-point and expression, so similar in principle and purpose, met in Washington in 1861 at Brown’s Hotel, that famous old hostelry dear to the Southern heart in the years before the tide of war swept the old Washington away forever and brought a new South to take the place of the old plantation life. Congenial as they were in many ways, the possession of the latchkey, Dr. Bagby tells us, did not argue an intimate personal relation, as the fancy of the brilliant editor of the *Examiner* was apparently changeable, and wavered when he discovered that his assistant neither played chess nor talked sufficiently to inspire him to conversational excellence. But the key opened to the younger man, whenever he so willed, the pleasant three-storied brick house on Broad Street where the valiant editor kept bachelor’s hall in a manner that would suggest the superfluity of complicating the situation with a wife and family.

That latchkey gave to its holder entrance to the first floor front room parlor where hung two fine paintings, the special treasures of the fastidious owner, and if he could not play chess upon the handsome mosaic chess-table he could at least enjoy its artistic beauty. The dining-room contained a set of solid antique-patterned tables to which Mr. Daniel was wont to refer as the former property of “old Memminger,” that is, Secretary Memminger of the Confederate Treasury, who had sold his household effects on leaving his home on Church Hill. Over the mantel in the bachelor’s chamber hung a miniature on ivory, “the most beautiful I have ever seen,” said the doctor, an unknown beauty whose charms mystified as well as enchanted the observer; a wondrously accomplished lady of title and wealth whom Mr. Daniel had known abroad. The visitor must have viewed with some degree of curiosity the effective arrangement of mirrors in the dressing-room, whereby the owner of the mansion surveyed himself front, rear, head and foot, as he made his toilet, perhaps reflecting humorously upon the dismay of his manager, Mr. Walker, upon being advised as to the necessity of wearing a white vest to a party: “But, Mr. Daniel, suppose a man hasn’t got a white vest and is too poor these war times to buy one?” “—— it, sir! let him stay at home,” was the decisive answer.

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On a second floor passage was an object which must have excited more envy than the magnificent mirrors and solid old furniture were capable of arousing—a bag of Java coffee, and coffee thirty dollars a pound—the latter fact not deterring the luxurious owner of this stately abode from imbuing his pet terriers with the coffee-drinking habit. A little room cut off from a passage in the third story was a library of old and rare editions of the classics. A back room, sunlit and warm, gave a view of James River, the Henrico Hills, and the spacious dells and forests of Chesterfield. To the mind of Dr. Bagby all these things were represented by “John M. Daniel’s Latchkey” and, for all the charm of “Home, Sweet Home,” is it not better to have the privileges without the responsibilities of a latchkey?

Next to the editorial office of the *Messenger* that of the *Daily Examiner* was the place with which Dr. Bagby was, perhaps, best acquainted in Richmond. There, with the fiery editor, he spent his evenings in reading proof, comforted by a mild cigar and protected by a Derringer which Mr. Daniel would put on the table when he first arrived, a not unnecessary precaution, for if there was one place more dangerous than another in the Richmond of war days it was almost any point in the near vicinity of the belligerent editor of the *Examiner*.

Dr. Bagby was married to Miss Parke Chamberlayne of Richmond, and we may be sure that she was the model from which he drew his charming study of “the Virginia lady of the best type,” who accompanies “The Old Virginia Gentleman” in his pages.

After the close of the war Dr. Bagby attained high distinction as a lecturer on Southern topics and later served his State as assistant secretary. But in all that he did there was with him the lost dream of the nation he had served so well through the dark and stormy years of strife, and in August, 1883, he passed beyond into the land where earth’s broken hearts are renewed to youth.

It was written of him: “There is no man left in Virginia fit to lift the lid of his inkstand.”

“WOMAN AND POET”

## MARGARET JUNKIN PRESTON

“Whoever has the good fortune to follow its trails and shimmering waters is already half a poet,” wrote Professor Harris of the road that leads down from the verdant hills of the Alleghanies over picturesque gorge and crag and fissure into the quiet of the valley and brings us by exquisite stages to the beautiful town of Lexington, Virginia. Making that journey in taking my boy, fourteen years old, to the Virginia Military Institute, I entered at once two charming regions—Lexington with its romantic environment, and the heart of Margaret Junkin Preston.

When I spoke of the beautiful scenery Mrs. Preston asked me if I had read Professor Maury's description of it. I replied that I had not. "I am glad," she said, "because now that you have seen our Nature-pictures you will enjoy the description so much more."

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Though the name and work of Margaret Preston had long been shrined in the hearts of a host of known friends and endeared to many unknown readers whose lives had been cheered by the buoyant hopefulness expressed in her writings, she was very modest in regard to her productions, yet held it a duty to continue writing for others the thoughts which had helped her. When we were at supper in the home of Professor Lyle, who was gifted with an unusually poetic mind, he repeated passages from favorite authors. On being asked if he did not sometimes write poetry, he replied that he had often written rhymes and loved to do it, but when he would afterward read Virgil and Shakespeare and Tennyson he would tear up his own verses, feeling that he ought not to make the effort.

"Then," replied Mrs. Preston, "the gardener should not plant the seeds that bring forth the little forget-me-nots and snowdrops. He should plant only the great multiflora roses and the Lady Bankshires and magnolias."

Mrs. Preston spent much of her time in knitting because the weakness of her eyes made reading and writing difficult. "Are you never tired of knitting?" I asked. She replied that it did not tire her, and told me that Mrs. Lee said she loved to knit because she did not have to put her mind on the work. She could think and talk as well when she was knitting for the reason that she did not have to keep her eyes nor her attention upon what she was doing. She knew perfectly well when she came to a seam. In a letter from a soldier to Mrs. Lee he thanked her for the socks she had sent him, and wrote; "I have fourteen pairs of socks knitted by my mother and my mother's sisters and the Church Sewing Society, and I have not a shirt to my back nor a pair of trousers to my legs nor a whole pair of shoes to my feet." "But," said Mrs. Lee as she concluded the story, "I continued to knit socks just the same."

The first open-end thimble I ever saw was one Mrs. Preston used when I was with her at the Springs. I remarked upon it and she said that when she used a thimble she always had that kind. "I feel about a thimble as I do about mitts, which I always wear instead of gloves, because I like to see my fingers come through. So I like to see my finger come through my thimble. It is a tailor's thimble. Tailors always use that kind. I do not know whether they like to see their fingers come through or not." I had heard it said that it takes nine tailors to make a man and now I reflected that it would take eighteen tailors to make a thimble. Upon presenting this mathematical problem to Mrs. Preston she told me about the origin of the old saying:

"It was not that kind of tailor at first. In old England the custom was to announce a death by tolling a bell. After the bell had ceased tolling, a number of strokes, called 'tailers,' indicated whether the death was of a child, a woman or a man; three for a child, nine for a man. People counting would say, 'Nine tailers, that's a man,' which in time became colloquially 'Nine tailers make a man.' When the custom became obsolete the saying remained, its application was forgotten, o was substituted for e and it was used in derogation of a most worthy and necessary member of the body politic."

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Margaret Preston was very small, in explanation of which fact she told me there was a story that she had been tossed on the horns of a cow. There was Scotch blood in the Junkin family and with it had descended the superstition that this experience dwarfs a child's growth. When she sat upon an ordinary chair her little feet did not touch the floor. She had a way of smoothing the front of her dress with her hands as she talked.

Knowing her as she was then and remembering her devotion to the South and the sacrifices she had made for her home through the dark years, one might have thought that she was a native daughter of Virginia. In the village of Milton, Pennsylvania, where her father, Reverend George Junkin, was pastor of the Associate Reformed Church, Margaret Junkin was born on the 19th of May, 1820, in a small, plain, rented house, a centre of love and harmony, with simple surroundings, for the family finances did not purchase household luxuries, but were largely expended in assisting those less fortunately placed.

In this little home, where rigid economy was practised and high aspirations reigned, our future poet entered upon the severe intellectual training which caused her at twenty-one, when the door of scholastic learning was closed upon her by the partial failure of her sight, to be called a scholar, though she sorrowfully resented the title, asking, "How can you speak of one as a scholar whose studies were cut short at twenty-one?"

She received her first instruction from her mother, passing then under the tutorship of her father, who fed his own ambition by gratifying her scholarly tastes, teaching her the Greek alphabet when she was six years old and continuing her training in collegiate subjects until she was forced by failing sight to give up her reading.

When she was ten the family removed to Germantown, where her father had charge of the Manual Labor School, and Margaret enjoyed the advantages at that time afforded by the city of Philadelphia, gathering bright memories which irradiated her somewhat sombre life then and lightened her coming years.

In Lafayette, a new college in Easton, Pennsylvania, Dr. Junkin soon found opportunity to carry on his system of training for practical and religious life and here Margaret spent sixteen happy and busy years—happy but for the gray veil that fell between her and her loved studies before those years had passed. She was obliged to prepare her Greek lessons at night, and the only time her father had for hearing her recitations was in the early morning before breakfast, which in that household meant in the dim candlelight of the period; not a wholesome time for perusing Greek text. For Margaret Junkin it meant seven years of physical pain, a part of the time in a darkened room, and the lifelong regret of unavailing aspirations. It was in Easton that she began to write in any serious and purposeful fashion, the result of her semi-blindness,

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as, but for that, she would have devoted her life to painting, for which she had decided talent. In the beautiful environment of Easton the young soul had found the poetic glow that tinged its early dawn. Hills crowned with a wealth of forests, fields offering hospitality to the world, glimmering of the Delaware waters rippling silverly along their happy way, auroral dawns and glorious sunsets, all inspired the youthful poet's imagination to melodious effort. Of Margaret as she was in the Easton days in 1836, a Lafayette freshman thus writes:

A taste for literary pursuits soon drew us together and a warm friendship sprang up, which continued unbroken to the day of her death. Her remarkable poetic talent had even then won the admiration of her associates, and to have been admitted into the charmed circle of which she was the center, where literature and literary work were discussed, admired and appreciated, I have ever counted a high privilege.

Her next home, in Oxford, Ohio, where Dr. Junkin had been elected to the presidency of Miami University, was not a dream of delight to the poetic soul of the young girl, for Scotch Calvinism, perhaps more rigid than the Calvinism of Calvin himself, which did not admit of fitting square dogmatic nails into round theological holes, insured a succession of oft-recurrent tempests for the family, as well as for the good doctor. The one letter which remains from the correspondence of Margaret Junkin at that time, though indicating a buoyant nature on the part of the writer, gives a sad view of financial difficulties, her mother's fragility, uncongenial climate, and the persecution directed against her father. Some of these misfortunes were obviated by a return to Easton, Dr. Junkin having been recalled to the presidency of Lafayette College, from which he had withdrawn a few years before because of a disagreement with the trustees on a question of government.

Not long afterward the failing health of Margaret's young brother Joseph led Dr. Junkin to accept the presidency of Washington College, Lexington, Virginia, in the hope that change of climate might bring health to the invalid. Thus in the fall of 1848 the step was taken which made Margaret Junkin one of our Southern poets, devoted to her adopted State and a loved and honored daughter thereof.

On the arrival in Lexington a younger member of the family wrote:

My first memory of Lexington is of arriving, at midnight, in a December snowstorm, after a twelve hours' ride from Staunton in an old stage coach. This was before there was a turnpike or plank road, and the ups and downs we had that night made an impression on our bodies as well as our minds.

A later memory gives us a pretty glimpse of daily life as it went on in that charming little Virginia town:



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From the time we went to Lexington we all used to take delightful, long rambles, rather to the surprise of Lexington people, who were not quite so energetic. We found the earliest spring flowers on the "Cliffs," and "Cave Spring" was a favorite spot to walk to (several miles from town) stopping always for a rest at the picturesque ruins of old "Liberty Hall."

"Liberty Hall" was the name of an old school building outside of Lexington.

Writing reproachfully to a friend for not coming to visit her, Margaret tells of the "sweet pure air of our Virginia mountains," of the morning "overture of the birds," "such as all the Parodis and Linds and Albonis in the world could never equal." She tantalizes her friend with a glowing picture of a gallop "over misty hills, down into little green shaded glens, under overhanging branches all sparkling with silvery dew." She tells her that they might take a walk "to 'The Cliffs,' to see the sun go down behind yon wavy horizon of mountains, if its setting promised to be fine, and saunter back in the gloaming, just in time to have coffee handed in the free and easy social Virginia style in the library."

In Lexington, Margaret's first sorrow came to her, the death of her brother Joseph, whose health had not improved with the change to Lexington and who had been sent to Florida, where he found a "far-off lonely grave."

A description of the young poet at this time is given by a girl admirer:

Miss Maggie was the object of my secret, enthusiastic worship. She was not exactly pretty, but her slight figure, fair complexion and beautiful auburn curls furnished a piquant setting for her refined, intelligent countenance which made up for the lack of mere beauty. I used to thrill with admiration as I watched her riding at a swift gallop, a little black velvet cap showing off her fairness, the long curls blowing about her face....We wondered that a person who could write poetry, which seemed to our limited experience a sort of miraculous gift, should condescend to talk to us about our studies and games as if she were one of us.

It was in Lexington that her power reached its full development, and she even took prizes in magazines and newspapers for some stories with what her friends called "prim heroes and pasteboard heroines," classifications which she good-naturedly accepted, as she readily acknowledged that she had no gift for story-telling.

In Lexington, Margaret's sister, Eleanor, met the grave and dignified Major T.J. Jackson, Professor of Mathematics in the Virginia Military Institute, and in 1853 was married to him. Here the death of the sweet and gentle mother brought to the life of Margaret Junkin its crowning sorrow, and shortly afterward the lovely young wife of Major Jackson left the earthly home.



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The Professor of Latin in the Virginia Military Institute was Major J.T.L. Preston, grandson of Edmund Randolph. He was a man of great dignity of character and manner and of unusual scholarship. Though Margaret Junkin had at times requested her nearest of kin to seclude her in an asylum for the insane should she ever manifest a tendency to marry a widower with children, she proceeded quite calmly and with reason apparently unclouded, to fall in love with and marry Professor Preston, notwithstanding his possession of seven charming and amiable sons and daughters left over from a former congenial marriage. She proved a most devoted mother to her large family, who returned her affection in full measure. A volume of her poetry is dedicated to her eldest stepdaughter who, after the death of Margaret, was her most loving and appreciative biographer. To her great sorrow, one of the sons was killed in battle.

The marriage was followed by a visit to "Oakland" on the James River, the home of Major Preston's sister, Mrs. William Armstead Cocke, where at first the ornately dignified style of living rather dazed the bride accustomed as she had been to the simplicity of a home in which the only luxury was in giving help to others. Colonel William C. Preston, the eloquent South Carolina orator, met the "little red-headed Yankee" with distinct aversion to her "want of style and presence," but was soon heard to declare with enthusiastic admiration that she was "an encyclopedia in small print." Here among ancestral trees she found inspiration and in the society of her new sister she enjoyed the most delightful soul companionship.

In the early years of her married life writing was laid aside while she devoted herself to the care of her family, the entertainment of the many visitors who came to the Preston house and the beautification of her new home, finding plenty of space in the attractive house and extensive grounds with their noble trees, orchard, garden and meadow for the outlet of all her imagination. In this ideal home she was living her peaceful and happy life when the bugle call destroyed the serenity of the country. She suffered one of her greatest sorrows in the difference of political opinion between her Northern father and her Southern husband. The latter, holding that while secession was unwise, coercion was tyranny, followed Virginia when she cast in her lot with the seceding States. Dr. Junkin and his widowed youngest daughter, Julia, returned to Philadelphia, while Colonel Preston joined Stonewall Jackson's army.

Margaret Preston's worship of the muses was woven in with her devotion to the household goddesses, and in her journal the receiving of the first copy of her new volume of poems is sandwiched in between the making of twenty-two gallons of blackberry wine and thirty-three bottles of ketchup. House-cleaning and "Tintoretto"; pickles and "Mona Lisa"; hearth-painting and "Bacharach wine" were all closely connected in her every-day experience. From a ride through the blue hills she would return with a poem singing in her heart, radiant with sun, shaded with the mists of the darkening heights, and when it had bubbled over in laughter and dreams and tears and was safe upon the written page, she would go into the kitchen and produce such marvels of cookery as made her a housewife of more than local fame.

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One of her dearest friends was Commodore Matthew F. Maury, who was connected with the Military Institute in the early years after the war. On his death-bed his wife asked him if she might bury him in Hollywood near Richmond. "As you please, my dear," he said, "but do not carry me through the pass until the ivy and laurel are in bloom and you can cover my bier with their beauty." When the burial service was read over him lying in state in the Institute library, Mrs. Preston was not able to venture over the threshold, so she remained in the shelter of the porch, and when the family returned from the funeral she read them the lines she had composed in the hour that they had been gone:

### THROUGH THE PASS

"Home, bear me home at last," he said,  
"And lay me where my dead are lying;  
But not while skies are overspread,  
And mournful wintry winds are sighing.

"Wait till the royal march of Spring  
Carpets your mountain fastness over,—  
Till chattering birds are on the wing,  
And buzzing bees are in the clover.

"Wait till the laurel bursts its buds,  
And creeping ivy flings its graces  
About the lichened rocks, and floods  
Of sunshine fill the shady places.

"Then, when the sky, the air, the grass,  
Sweet Nature all, is glad and tender,  
Then bear me through the Goshen Pass  
Amid its flush of May-day splendor."

So *will* we bear him! Human heart  
To the warm earth's drew never nearer,  
And never stooped she to impart  
Lessons to one who held them dearer.

Stars lit new pages for him; seas  
Revealed the depths their waves were screening;  
The ebbs gave up their masteries,  
The tidal flows confessed their meaning.

Of ocean paths the tangled clue  
He taught the nations to unravel;



And mapped the track where safely through  
The lightning-footed thought might travel.

And yet unflattered by the store  
Of these supreamer revelations,  
Who bowed more reverently before  
The lowliest of earth's fair creations?

What sage of all the ages past,  
Ambered in Plutarch's limpid story,  
Upon the age he served, has cast  
A radiance touched with worthier glory?

His noble living for the ends  
God set him (duty underlying  
Each thought, word, action) naught transcends  
In lustre, save his nobler dying.

Do homage, sky, and air, and grass,  
All things he cherished, sweet and tender,  
As through our gorgeous mountain pass  
We bear him in the May-day splendor!

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The summer of 1884 Margaret Preston spent abroad in the places of which she had read with a loving enthusiasm which made them her own. "Don't show me; let me find it," she would say, and go straight to the object of her quest. Her reading had brought her into companionship with all the beautiful minds of the world, and all the places that had been dear to them were sacred to her heart. Windermere was "redolent all over with the memories of Wordsworth, Southey, Kit North, Hartley Coleridge, Harriet Martineau, Dr. Arnold." "Ambleside—Wordsworth's Ambleside—Southey's; and such hills, such greenery, I never expect to see again. Then we took carriage to Grasmere Lake, a lovely little gem."

"I walked to Wordsworth's grave without being directed, and on reading his name on his stone, and Mary Wordsworth's on his wife's, I am free to confess to a rush of tears, Dora Quillinan, his daughter's, and dear old Dorothy, whom Coleridge, you know, pronounced the grandest woman he had ever known. Suddenly turning I read the name of poor Hartley Coleridge and again I felt my eyes flow."

Perhaps few travellers have seen as much in a summer's wandering as did Margaret Preston, yet it was on her "blind slate" that she was forced to write of these things and of the "crowning delight of the summer," the tour through Switzerland. She said, "My picture gallery of memory is hung henceforth with glorious frescoes which blindness cannot blot or cause to fade."

Life in Preston House with all its enchantments came to an end for Margaret Preston with the passing of the noble and loving man who had made her the priestess of that home shrine. The first two years after his death she spent with her stepdaughter, Mrs. Allan, who lived near the old home. Then she went to the home of Dr. George J. Preston, of Baltimore, where she was the centre of the home and took great delight in his children with their pretty "curly red heads." She never walked again except to take a few steps with a crutch.

From 819 North Charles Street she wrote: "Here my large airy room faces brick walls and housetops and when I sit at the library windows I only see throngs of passers-by, all of whom are strangers to me." Her life was beautiful and content, but she must often have longed for the old friends and the "laureled avenues" and the "edges of the glorious Goshen Pass lit with the wavering flames of the July rhododendrons."

March 29, 1897, Margaret Preston died as she had wished when she expressed her desire in her poem "Euthanasia," written in memory of a friend who had passed away unconscious of illness or death:

With faces the dearest in sight,  
With a kiss on the lips I love best,  
To whisper a tender "Good-night"  
And pass to my pillow of rest.

To kneel, all my service complete,  
All duties accomplished—and then  
To finish my orisons sweet  
With a trustful and joyous “Amen.”

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And softly, when slumber was deep,  
Unwarned by a shadow before,  
On a halcyon billow of sleep  
To float to the Thitherward shore.

Without a farewell or a tear,  
A sob or a flutter of breath,  
Unharmd by the phantom of Fear,  
To glide through the darkness of death!

Just so would I choose to depart,  
Just so let the summons be given;  
A quiver—a pause of the heart—  
A vision of angels—then Heaven!

“THE ‘MOTHER’ OF ‘ST. ELMO’”

### AUGUSTA EVANS WILSON

Let me introduce to you Augusta Evans Wilson as I first met her when she was a bride, when her soul, like mine, was allied to love, faith and romance, when every day was made perfect with its own contentment and to-morrow's hope, when we were happy because we loved and were loved.

I do not know why, when she clasped my hand and said, “How young you are,” I thought of the poem of Lucas, “The land where we lay dreaming,” or why those lines should come back to me now when her feet are treading the path where silence is. It may have been because of her sweet voice, “Which did thrill until at eve the whip-poor-will and at noon the mocking-birds were mute and still,” or because of the exchange of memories of those days of shot and shell and red meteors, of the camp, of the march, of the sick and wounded to whom she ministered, and of the realization that “All our glorious visions fled and left us nothing real but the dead, in the land where we lay dreaming.”

When she remarked upon my youth the fancy drifted through my mind that she was rather old for a bride, or at least looked so, for I was accustomed to seeing very youthful brides, being only half her years when I was one, while she had passed through ageing experiences, had written many books, and looked older than she really was. I had not formed the habit of thinking of her as Mrs. Wilson, and in the confusion of the old name and the new could not recall either, so called her “Mrs. Macaria.” She laughed and told me that she was accustomed to being called “Beulah,” but this was the first time that she had been addressed as “Mrs. Macaria.”

She told me of the many adventures of “Macaria” in its early days. Camp “Beulah,” named in honor of her second book, which appeared not long before the opening of the war and brought her at once into prominence as a writer, was near Summerville, the girlhood home of Augusta Evans, and in that camp and its hospital, as well as in the many others which soon sprang up around the Evans residence, she took a Southern woman’s share in the work, the darkness and the heartache of the time. Her friend, Mr. Thomas Cooper De Leon, of Mobile, gives a picture of her in those days:

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The slim, willowy girl, with masses of brown hair coiled in the funnel depths of a poke bonnet, a long check apron and a pair of tin buckets, became the typical guardian angel of the nearby hospitals.

She was amanuensis, as well as nurse, cook and general purveyor of light and comfort, and she sent many a cheering letter to waiting hearts at home, and never was the power of her glowing pen used more nobly and helpfully than when, forced to write the last dread message of all, it wove into the sorrowful words a golden thread of love and faith and hope.

In the pauses of her work she wrote most of her war-novel, "Macaria," which, to a great extent, shared the uncertainties and excitements of the period. It was published in 1864 by West & Johnson, of Richmond, being printed on wrapping paper, and soon became a favorite with the Southern soldiers, who probably found in it more human nature and more of the logic of possible events than it revealed to the general reader, their own experience in those days having led them to grave doubts as to the accuracy of the philosophic theory that not all conceivable things are possible. At that time it stood to reason that the kind of literature popular in Southern camps would not appeal forcibly to the approval of the Northern army, and a Federal officer captured and burned all the copies of "Macaria" that he could find.

Miss Evans contrived to slip a copy of her new book across the lines to a publisher friend who, being unable at that time to bring out a new edition, took it to the J.B. Lippincott Company and arranged for its publication. Immediately afterward it was found that another publisher had come into possession of a copy and had an edition of five thousand ready to issue but, upon inquiry, expressed his intention of paying no royalty to the author. Through the efforts of Mr. Lippincott he was induced to allow a royalty. Miss Evans afterward wrote to her friend:

I have always felt profoundly grateful to Mr. Lippincott, but fate has never indulged me in an opportunity of adequately thanking him for his generous and chivalrous action in behalf of an unknown rebel, who at that period was nursing Confederate soldiers in a hospital established near "Camp Beulah."

In telling me of this she said that the kindness of Mr. Lippincott did not surprise her, as she remembered with gratitude the generosity of the Lippincott Company in regard to Southern obligations at the opening of the war.

With the beautiful voice which so enchanted me she once took captive General Bragg's army on Lookout Mountain. With her mother she had gone to visit her brother, Captain Howard Evans, just before the battle of Chickamauga. It chanced that he had been sent to the front before they arrived, but they were hospitably received and given a hut on the slope. At midnight they were awakened by steps and whispers and upon inquiry found that their unexpected visitors



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were soldiers who had crept through the lines to see Miss Evans and hear her sing. The mother was disposed to object to her appearing at a time and place not conventionally appropriate to artistic performances, but, wrapping her travelling coat and robe about her, she went out into the moonlight with her mass of hair streaming in the wind like a flying cloud, and sang that thrilling song written by her friend, Randall, "Maryland, my Maryland." As the melodious tones swelled out upon the night and came floating back in echoes from the rugged peaks and mountain walls, they filled the audience with rapt delight. When the song was finished the sobs and cheers that burst from the soldier-hearts formed an encore not to be denied, and again that battle-cry thrilled out upon the air. The moment of silence that followed was broken by the high, shrill, quavering, penetrating note of the rebel yell.

The singer has passed into the land of the higher music and most of those who thrilled to the sound of her battle-song on that war-crowned height have passed away from the melodies of earth, but somewhere in this wide land there may be hearts through which yet pulses the music of that midnight song.

Among the most valued possessions of Mrs. Wilson were the rings, bracelets and baskets fashioned from buttons and fruit-seeds by her soldiers in hospital, tokens of their grateful remembrance of her. I showed her a little cross cut from a button in a prison and given to me by my uncle, Colonel Phillips, of the Confederate Army, who had been a captive on Johnson's Island. The prisoners used the cross to certify to the validity of secret messages. It was sent with the message and returned with the answer, carrying conviction of the truthfulness of both.

I told her the story of another cross, connected with the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia. Colonel Aylett, of the Fifty-Third Virginia, a very religious man, was talking with some friends when a letter came bringing the sad tidings. "I do not believe it," he said. "If it could be true I should not have faith in God or in prayer." As he talked he took from his pocket a letter folded in the way that was followed when we had no envelopes, and, cutting it, let it fall to the floor. One of his companions took it up, placing the pieces on the table to look for an address, and found that the fragments formed a crucifix, the cross at each side to which the thieves were nailed, the block supporting the crucifix, the block on which the dice were thrown, the sponge and the reed, as if in imitation of a celebrated painting of the Crucifixion.

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"And this beautiful cross," said Mrs. Wilson, touching the one I wore, "it must have a story, too." I replied that it had been in my family for nearly three centuries, that General Pickett had worn it at the battle of Gettysburg, and that it had been blessed by the Pope three times. The last time, it was taken to Rome by Father Walter who, in his long service as Rector of Saint Patrick's Church in Washington, had by his sweet spirit of kindness and liberality endeared himself to the whole community, regardless of religious differences. Mrs. Wilson said that when she was in Washington she went to see Father Walter because of his great kindness to the people of the South. She spoke, too, of the most pathetic and tragic service of his life, his faithful attendance upon Mrs. Surratt to the last awful moment.

In 1868 Augusta Evans was married to Mr. Lorenze M. Wilson, President of the Mobile & Montana Railroad, and became mistress of the beautiful home on the Spring Hill shell road near the picturesque city of Mobile. The house looked toward the road through aisles of greenery across a yard filled with flowers diffusing a perfume blended of geraniums, roses, tropical plants and the blossoms of the North. A chorus of birds filled the air with music. Majestic old live-oaks with twilight veils of gray moss were like tall and stately nuns pausing suddenly to count their beads to the music of vesper bells. Magnolia trees in dense white blossom gave the impression that winter had aroused from his summer sleep and unfolded his blanket of snow to add his most beautiful touch to the charms of the golden days. A handsome driveway led across a lawn to a veranda, vine-wreathed and hidden in a crush of flowers. The house, divided by a wide hall, opened upon broad piazzas. Leading up to it through brilliant blossoming was a white path between sentinel lines of oak trees that reached out friendly hands to clasp each other above the broad footway. Amid such beauty one felt lost in a mystic world of which he had never dreamed and revelled in a vision from which he might hope that there would be no waking.

Augusta Jane Evans was born May 4, 1835, near Columbus, Georgia. "The Queen City of the Chattahoochee" is enthroned in a pine forest amid a range of hills that form a semi-circle about the city with its fine wide streets and magnificent shade trees. The St. Elmo Institute for girls, with its great oak grove and its beautiful lake, was the model for the school in the book, "St. Elmo." Sweet memories of the beautiful home in Columbus remained in the heart of Miss Evans and she said in after years that many of the happiest days of her girlhood were spent there. In later years she had here her "White Farm," on which all the animals and fowls were white.

In her childhood the family removed to Galveston, Texas, going afterward to San Antonio. In the two years spent here she studied under the tutorship of her mother, who never gave up her charge to the care of a professional teacher, though the responsibility of seven other children might have furnished her with an excuse for doing so.

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In the most enchanting city of Texas the future novelist was surrounded by the romantic myths of Indian lore. On a day long past, the miracle of the San Antonio River and its valley had burst upon the enraptured eyes of Tremanos, the young Apache brave, from the hilltop to which he had climbed with weary footsteps, followed by the gaunt shadow of death, dazed by the phantoms on the distant horizon, lured on by mystic spirit music brought to him on the wings of the scorching winds; and he had gone with glad heart down into the rich and verdant plains of "Tejas, the Beautiful."

Not far from the picturesque old city of San Antonio was the Huisache, one of the three springs which join to form the San Antonio River. Along its banks the gray dove's sad note was heard. When the two Indian sisters, "Flower of Gladness" and "Flower of Pity," used to come down to drink from the Spring of the Huisache the song of the dove was all of joy. A youthful Indian brave of rare enchantment came into their lives and brought love and treachery, and the assassin's knife felled the Indian youth on the brink of the Huisache. "Flower of Pity," coming to the spring, found the lifeless form of the young warrior and snatched the knife from the wound and plunged it into her own heart. A little later "Flower of Gladness" found her sister and the Indian brave dead by the water's edge and straightway went mad. Manitou graciously allowed the poor lost soul to find a voice for its woes in the note of the dove and henceforth she was the mourning dove. The lives of the youth and maiden, floating out in white clouds of mist, descended into the earth and became two living springs which united with the Huisache to form the San Antonio River.

In her story of "Inez," founded upon the most tragic event in the history of the Lone Star State, the defence of the Alamo, Miss Evans thus described the scene from the viewpoint of the newly arrived immigrant:

The river wound around the town like an azure girdle, gliding along the surface and reflecting in its deep blue waters the rustling tule which fringed the margin. An occasional pecan or live-oak flung a majestic shadow athwart its azure bosom. Now and then a clump of willows sigh low in the evening breeze. Far away to the north stretched a mountain range, blue in the distance; to the south lay the luxuriant valley of the stream. The streets were narrow and laid out with a total disregard of the points of the compass.

By this river of romantic beauty and old-time myth Augusta Evans spent two of youth's impressionable years. On Main Plaza, near the Alamo, where the Frost National Bank now stands, was the Evans store, where she, the daughter of the store-keeper, lived. Almost under the shadow of the tragically historic old mission, by the park near which Santa Ana had his headquarters, she received the incentive and gathered the material for her first novel, "Inez,"

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written in her own room at night as a gift with which to surprise her father and mother. The work of a girl of fifteen, it did not appeal to many readers, but it contained a vivid description of the inspired heroism and self-sacrifice of the men whose deeds crowned the history of Texas with the sanctity of the supreme glory of self-immolation upon the altar of patriotism. We have fallen upon commercial days now, and the traditions of the old Alamo circle around a warehouse. Alamo Plaza is now the scene of the annual "Battle of the Flowers," a joyous and beautiful occasion which throws a fragrant floral veil about the terrible memories that gloom over the place.

At the close of the two years spent in San Antonio, the family returned to Columbus and later found a home in Mobile, Alabama, the town of the "Maubila," Choctaw, Indians. It is a pleasant town of shaded streets, romantic drives and beautiful homes. Its history reaches back through the centuries to a time long before the United States had being, and it is the only American city that has seen five flags wave over it: French, English, Spanish, United States and Confederate.

While in this home Augusta Evans became widely known through the publication in 1859 of her second novel, "Beulah." Then came the war, bringing forth her one war-novel, "Macaria." "Vashti," "St. Elmo," "Infelice," "At the Mercy of Tiberius," the latter being her best, followed in quick succession, until her marriage put a close to her work, for Mr. Wilson was unwilling that she should tax her strength by close application. Life in the delightful home furnished interest enough to make resort to fiction unnecessary as an entertainment. In 1879 the death of Mr. Wilson ended the idyllic home life and she returned to her desk, writing "The Speckled Bird" and "Devota," with a pen that had lost much of its charm in the days of happy absorption.

Having no children of her own, Mrs. Wilson gave her devoted affection to the children and grandchildren of her husband, who was a widower at the time of their marriage.

It has been observed that the stories of Augusta Evans have no location. They happen in any place where the people chance to be and, given that kind of people, the story would evolve itself in the same way anywhere else. But for her there was always a place in which flowers grew and trees waved their branches to the breeze and made mystic aisles of purpled glooms, shot through with glimpses of sun amid silences broken happily by the songs of birds. There were always the wide sky and dim reaches of space and great walls of majestic mountains against the horizon. However gifted might be her maidens in roaming amid the stars or delving in philosophic depths, they, like herself, had always eyes for the beauties which Nature sets in place, and why should all these things be geographically bounded and designated by appellations to be recorded in the Postoffice Guide?

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Being in Mobile some years ago, I called upon Mrs. Wilson after her husband had passed on and left her alone in the charming home. She was in her work-room, if a place so decoratively enchanting can be connected with a subject so stern and prosaic, so crowded with every-day commonplaceness, as work. It was a bower of beauty, with light, graceful furniture, and pots of plants making cheerful greenery at every available spot. Vases of flowers cut from her garden, tended by her own care and love, were on desk and table and in sunny alcoves, filling the room with a glory of color and a fragrance as of incense from jewelled censers swung in adoration of the goddess of the exquisite shrine.

Remembering that charming study as I saw it then, blossoming and redolent with the flowers beloved of the heart of its mistress, I wonder at times if all that beauty is still there and if some bright soul, as in the dead days, is sunning itself in that warmth and glow.

The old home has passed into stranger hands, as Mrs. Wilson was persuaded to sell it after the death of her husband and her removal to the city.

In Magnolia Cemetery in the home city so dear to her, Augusta Evans Wilson rests beside the brother whom she was seeking when her midnight song thrilled the hearts of the defenders of the Stars and Bars on Look-out Mountain. On her laurel-wreathed monument are the lines written by Mr. De Leon when the dawn of one May morning brought him the sad tidings that his friend of many years had passed from earth:

Dead, in her fulness of years and of fame,  
What has she left?  
High on the roll of fair Duty, a name:  
Love, friends devoted as few mortals claim:  
A Nation bereft!