THE DISPATCH
BY JAS. A. COWARDIN.

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THE DISPATCH.
SATURDAY MORNING.....NOVEMBER 6, 1858.

ADDRESS OF EX-PRESIDENT TYLER,

Delivered before the Mechanics' Institute on Thursday Night, Nov. 4th.

The President of the Institute, Mr. Jos. Hall, having introduced President TYLER to the audience, he spoke as follows:

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Mechanics' Institute:

I am here to-night, in compliance with your repeatedly urged request, that I would deliver a Lecture before you in aid of your praiseworthy undertaking. You have kindly left the subject to my own selection, and memory, the privilege of age, carries me back to the days of my youth, when for the first time I walked your streets, looked upon your beautiful eminences, and formed some acquaintance with the men of that day, who have long since "travelled the road to dusty death," leaving their names and high deeds deeply impressed on the mind of Richmond. My theme, to night, is Richmond and its Memories.

A brief glance at the early history of the site on which the city stands, will neither be uninstructive or unprofitable. The first daring adventurers in the settlement of Virginia, lost no time in exploring the river, on whose shore that noble band had cast their hopes and fears. They visited the great Werowance, who, by his arms and policy, had subjected to his sway the numerous tribes who inhabited the tide-water region, at his chief residence, now the hospitable home of Mr. Robt. A. Mayo, below the falls—that residence, bearing the name of Powhatan, attracts the attention of all who travel up and down the river, and may be regarded as constituting one of the features, and by no means the least interesting one, of the city. The falls of the river were for many years the *ultima thule* of the early adventurers. Formidable tribes of savages ranged over the country above this locality, and these falls, whose evening echoes constitute the nightly tattoo of the inhabitants, lulling them to repose after each day of toil, and whose morning resoundings make their revellis, summoning them to their daily labor, formed a barrier over which the white man, for long years, dare not pass. The first actual settlement in the neighborhood of which we have a well authenticated account, was that of Nathaniel Bacon, whose possessions were watered on the South by the stream universally known as "Bacon's Quarter Branch," on which is now settled a frugal and industrious population, which is embraced within the expending limits of the city. At that early day, the colonists were thrown into violent agitation by reason of the frequent inroads made upon the settlements, and murders committed by the Indians. Among others, the overseer of Bacon was cruelly and shockingly murdered, and the embers, which the Governor, Sir Wm. Berkeley, had tried to smother, broke out into a flame that nothing could resist. In despite of the Governor's extraordinary influence, and his proclamations, denouncing as traitors all who should undertake to prosecute war against the Indians without his consent, the people hastened to embody themselves into military corps, and unanimously elected Nathaniel Bacon as their chief, to lead them against their border enemies. I go no farther into the history of those times than to say, that, ultimately, that talented and indomitable leader, with his patriotic band, encountered the combined forces of the Indians almost within sight of this city, and took of them a terrible retribution. Their blood encrimsoned the waters of the stream on the margin of which the battle was fought, so that from that day to this that stream has borne the name of the "Bloody Run," and will, for ages yet to come constitute a memorial of the victorious leader, and his intrepid band. The way-farer, wandering on the banks of that stream, looks in vain for the evidences of that bloody day. Nearly two centuries have passed away since then, and instead of treading on dead men's bones, the wild violet is pressed beneath his footsteps; the stream runs limpidly beside him, and as it steals quietly its way to mingle with other waters, dimples its surface with smiles and glides laughingly on.—And yet that bloody day effectually broke the power of the Indian, who, from that day to this, has been driven by a resistless current to the place of the setting sun, where he is destined to sink beneath the horizon, to be remembered in the tales of tradition, which, as the world grows older, will be classed with fable, or only mentioned in poetry and song.

Notwithstanding the signal defeat, the rovers of the wilderness, coming from a distance, and belonging to powerful tribes, often stole in upon the settlements and rendered them insecure. To guard against this, the Grand Assembly, as it was called in those days, granted to Capt. William Bird, in 1679, a tract of land on both sides of the river, including, on the North side, the greater part of what is now the city of Richmond, upon condition that he would seat on the granted land, fifty able men, armed and constantly furnished with sufficient ammunition and provisions; and a number of tytheable persons, not exceeding 250 in the whole, and made him the commander in chief of the settlement. He is supposed to have built Belvidere as his place of residence, and to have had a store and a mill, lower down, in what is now the city. He was a valuable acquisition to Virginia, and a man of great thrift and enterprise. He manifested a far-reaching sagacity in seizing upon the advantages which this location offered. He, doubtless, foresaw in the future what is now realised—a large and populous city springing up on his domains. That he was a man of great thrift is not only proven by the large possessions he left behind, but established by his correspondence, preserved in the 1st and 2d volumes of the Virginia Historical Register. A postscript to one of his letters will sufficiently attest this. He writes to Thomas Grendon, by a regular coincidence, *per the Zack Taylor*," and in a postscript says, "Jack Warren and Will Randolph, our worthy Burgessers, frequently drink your health.—*Pray be mindful of my boots and shoes, &c*" He dealt largely in tobacco, and carried on a successful trade with the Indians, in skins and furs, and thereby preserved the peace better than by the use of guns and gunpowder. Such was the original settler of the city of Richmond—a man of bold and hardy adventure. Possessed, in the beginning, of ample means, and greatly enlarging them by thrift and economy; often the representative in the House of Burgesses from the county of Henrico, and for sametime Treasurer (as it is expressed upon his tombstone in the public burial ground at Westover) *of this Royal Province*. He died at the age of 52, on the second of December, 1704, leaving to his heir at law "the more celebrated Colonel Wm. Byrd, large and valuable possessions," who erected and adorned the beautiful seat called Westover, now in the possession of my friend John Selden, Esq. The inscription on his monument which is in the garden at Westover will best explain his character and important public services. It reads as follows:

"Here lyeth the Honorable William Bird, Esq., being born to one of the amplest fortunes in this country, he was sent early to England for education where, under the direction and care of Sir Isaac Southwall and ever favored with his particular instruction, he made a happy proficiency in polite and varied learning. By the means of the same noble friend, he was introduced to the acquaintance of many of the first persons of that age for knowledge, wit, virtue, birth or high station; and particularly contracted a most intimate and been friendship with the learned and illustrious Charles Boyle, Earl of Orrery. He was called to the Bar in the Middle Temple—studied for some time in the low countries, visited the Court of France, and was chosen Fellow of the Royal Society. Thus eminently fitted for the service and ornament of his country, he was made Receiver General of His Majesty's revenues here; was thrice appointed public agent to the Court and Ministry of England, and being thirty-seven years a member, at last became President of the Council of this Colony. To all this was added a great elegance of taste and life—the well-bred gentleman and polite companion—THE SPLENDID ECONOMIST, and prudent father of a family, with the constant enemy of all exhorbitant power and hearty friend to the liberties of his country. Born the 28th March, 1674; died May 26th, 1744—aged 70."

It is to be hoped that the proprietors of the place will consider it a solemn duty to see that that monument, so full of the history of the past, shall be preserved from decay.

The paternity of cities is often lost in the mirth of the past. Fable sometimes supplies the place of history, and the she-wolf has been made the foster mother of high imperial Rome. Richmond has no obscurity connected with its origin. It presents a fair scroll, and that is indelibly recorded on the page of history.

With a wise forecast of the future, Col. Bird saw the advantages of his possessions here, and, in 1736-7, resolved to lay off his lands on the north side of the river, in suitable and convenient streets and lots for the foundation of a large city. The Indian power had been broken by the sanguinary affair of Bloody Run, sixty years before, and the white population had extended to the base of the Blue Ridge. Fredericksburg had already been laid off, at the foot of the falls of the Rappahannock, and courted the trade of all the country watered by that river. A more extensive country calls for a town at the falls of the James, and the far seeing proprietor resolved to open this spot for settlement. His advertisement is to be found in the Williamsburg Gazette of that day. A town of some pretentions speedily arose, and its increase in population soon placed it alongside of older towns, while its greater centrality caused, at an early day, the General Court, which was then a court of almost unlimited jurisdiction, to be transferred to it from Williamsburg, and along with it came much of the high forensic talent which, at that day and long afterwards, gave celebrity to the bar of Virginia. Tradition tells that the great hotel, where the learned judges, lawyers and jurists assembled, was a wooden building which still stands opposite the Union, which for years past, has been appropriated to greatly different purposes. It was at an after day, when the aspiring city had clambered up the steep and, then, difficult ascent of its *mons capitolinum*, that the City Hotel had to surrender its claim of being considered *the hotel par excellence*, to the Columbian and Swan, which even now, I believe, maintain a fair rivalry with the more palatial buildings of the Central, Exchange and Ballard House, American, St. Charles and Union. Richmond soon aspired to metropolitan honors, and the increase of the population, along with the more vulnerable position of Williamsburg to invasion by sea, soon caused it to be selected as the seat of Government for the State of Virginia. It found however, in Hanover town on the Pamunkey, a formidable competitor, a single vote decided the majority in favor of Richmond. How striking the contrast which now exists between the two! Here has sprung up an important mart of Commerce, with its numerous warehouses, its flour mills—the largest probably known in the world—its crowded and daily extending streets, its beautiful private residences, and its public establishments adorning its lofty hills. The whistle of the steam engine, and the ringing of bells, announcing the arrival and departure of cars and boats; its basin crowded with canal coats, which come loaded with productions of the soil and of the mines; vessels loaded at its wharves for distant cities of the Union; the useful barge, conducted to its Pirous, by tow-boats propelled by steam, with tobacco and flour, and other important articles to be transported to far distant countries by the noble ships, which there await the arrival of their cargoes; its importing houses yearly increasing, and competing with the large Northern cities, in supplies for the interior institutions of public utility continually arising, among the noblest of which is this, the Mechanics' Institute, over which it is, gentlemen, your high privilege to preside—inaugurated but a few years ago, it has already won a position entitling it to the greatest consideration. Under its influence, the mechanic arts are developing results of which an older city might well be proud. Schools and Colleges, under admirable preceptors, abounding in every direction. The periodicals and political press, the sensitive pulse of public feeling and opinion, numerously and ably conducted;—these, with many other, denote the prosperity of Richmond, and bespeak for it a future full of expansion and wealth. Hanover town, on the contrary, it gives me pain to say, has shared the fate of numerous other towns and villages, consequent upon the culture of the cereals in place of tobacco. Its former existence, once so full of promise, has passed away,—no hum of industry is heard along its deserted streets, and ruin has riloted among its once comfortable dwelling, until nought remains but their rubbish to mark the spot where the formidable rival of Richmond for metropolitan honor once stood.

I need not dwell on the stirring incidents which were here enacted soon after Virginia had begun in earnest to buckle on her armour for that conflict with the parent country which eventuated in independence. The old Episcopal church wherein the General Assembly held its councils, the edicts which thence issued against infidelity and arbitrary sway, the high resolves against tyranny and oppression, the promulgation of Virginia independence in advance of the celebrated declaration by the States, through the adoption of the first written Constitution of civil government ever promulgated, and at an after day, when "the battle had been fought and won," the assembling here of that great convention which had to determine the future of America in the adoption or rejection of that Constitution, under which it has been so far, our happiness to live. These things are matters of history and are imperishable. In the text books of the schools, they are written, and every boy is familiar with them. Great incidents give immortality to places. Time passes by on rapid wing, generation succeeds generation, and cities and empires crumble into dust, and yet the places where great deeds have been enacted live in the memories; and after the lapse of centuries, the pilgrims from distant lands visits them as consecrated spots, and their dust is regarded as sacred from profanation. And what spectacles could have been more august than those to which I have alluded? The first led the way to the disfranchisement of a continent. The last gave the assent of Virginia, after a severe contest (there were giants in those days) between its advocates and opponents, to a government and bond of Union for the States, which undisturbed in the harmony of its motions by sinister influences, might, like the planetary system, revolve forever in its proper orbit, giving light, and heat, and prosperity and happiness to countless millions.

Nor need I dwell on incidents of a still later day, occurring during the second Presidency of the United States, when party spirit ran mountains high and mingled with its waters the bitterness of personal enmity. The French renovation had broken out, and like a tremendous earthquake, had shaken the foundation of political systems which had withstood the storms of centuries, the stirring strains of the Marseillaise resounded throughout France, and were re-echoed from America. A deep sympathy was felt for the country that had aided America in her struggle for independence. The gallant conduct of La Fayette, of Rochambeau, of De Grasse and Vilomiel, and other gallant Frenchmen who had assisted our fathers in the day of their severe trials, was written on the hearts of the people in letters of fire. France was now battling against all Europe combined, and it was but natural that she should have possessed the sympathies of this country. Virginia gave those sympathies with unrestrained enthusiasm, and no place furnishes stronger evidences of fraternization of feeling than did the city of Richmond. The President, who was supposed to be inimical to France, was assailed by the press, and in all public assemblies, as well as in private circles, with a bitterness of invective rarely ever surpassed. In a moment of weakness Congress gave way to the adoption of the sedition law, and the press, so far from being constrained, seemed rather to increase in its bitterness. The government resolved upon prosecutions against the most violent. Judge Cooper was put on trial for libel in Philadelphia, and Mr. Ligon elsewhere. Nor did Richmond go unscathed. Callender, who edited the "Prospect before us," in a style of abuse never surpassed, and with whom, personally, no one really sympathised, was thrown into jail. The law of libel, it was said, was made to be more potent than the letter of the Constitution, which guaranteed the freedom of speech and of the press, and the fires of popular indignation blazed brightly and fiercely. I cannot here forego relating an anecdote which I received from the lips of Governor Mahlon Dickenson, of New Jersey, as illustrative of the violence of the times. Stephen Thompson Mason, then a Senator from the State of Virginia, repaired to Philadelphia, attended by the enthusiastic Dickenson, then a young man, to attend the trial of Judge Cooper. They took their seats on the right and left hand of Cooper at the bar, and when the jury returned their verdict of 24 hours' imprisonment, and a fine of $1,000, they each rising in the court, shook hands most cordially with the prisoner. The next morning, Fenno, who published the administration paper, came out with an article of the following tenor: "The Republican party is always committing some act of excess, but what occurred in court on yesterday surpassed anything that has yet occurred, upon the conviction of Cooper; Stephen Thompson Mason, a senator from Virginia, shook hands with the culprit in the very face of Justice." Judge Chase, somewhat remarkable for the rotundity of his person, and a florid complexion, presided at the trial. The following morning Dickenson prepared and published in Dunne's paper, the "Aurora," the following reply to Mr. Fenno's article: "Mr. Fenno is evermore committing great mistakes—but of all the errors into which he has yet fallen, that in his paper of yesterday is the greatest. He states that Stephen Thompson Mason, a senator from Virginia, shook hands with the culprit in the very face of justice, mistaking the bacon face of old Chase for the face of Justice."

The unsuccessful rebellion in Ireland, which had consigned Emmet and many of his compatriots to the scaffold, had caused to fly to the United States in order to escape the dungeon and the halter, many of those who had borne a part in the troubles of the times, and many ultimately found their way to this city. These, with an uncalculating boldness, joined in the outcry against the Administration. They were fervid in their advocacy of the French cause. The tri-color was blended into a cockade and worn openly in the streets and displayed in public processions. The advocates of the Administration, mounted on their part the black cockade, and thus was engendered a bitter feeling of hostility between men which went nigh to destroy all social intercourse. But the refugees from Ireland became objects of Governmental vengeance. The alien law had been passed under the apprehension of a French invasion. An army of 6,000 men was created with a view to repel it, and an order was given to remove all foreigners from contiguity to the seaboard, lest they should play the part of spies, and hold improper intercourse with the expected enemy—an enemy that never came, and who already had its hands full, with the combinations that existed against it among the crowned heads of Europe. Meriwether Jones edited the anti-administration paper, called the "Examiner," and while he did not fall under the premunire of the sedition law, he co-operated boldly and manfully with the opponents of the Alien and Sedition laws, and maintained the tri-color against the black cockade. The General Assembly soon after met, and signalized its session by the passage of the celebrated resolutions, which since that day have been adopted as the standard of political faith by a controlling party in the State. I pass over these incidents hurriedly. At the time of their occurrence I was a mere child, and they come to me borne on the stream of tradition. In giving memories of Richmond, I could not pass them over in silence.

I hasten to speak of Richmond as I first knew it, and of some of its prominent men as I found them, when, at the age of 18, I joined my venerated father, who was at the time Governor of Virginia. The population of the city did not exceed 5,000 in 1808. The surface on which the city stood was untamed and broken. Almost inaccessible heights and deep ravines everwhere prevailed. The Capitol Square was *ruda indigesta que moles*, and was but rudely, if at all, enclosed. The ascent to the building was painfully laborious. The two now beautiful valleys were then unsightly gullies, which threatened, unless soon arrested, to extend themselves across the street north, so as to require a bridge to span it. If a tree had sprung up in the grounds, it obtained but a scanty subsistence from the sterile earth—soil there was little or none. The street west of the square was impassible for much of the way, except by a footpath.

The Governor's house, at that time called the palace, was a building that neither aspired to architectural taste in its construction, or consulted the comforts of its occupants, in its interior arrangements. A wooden enclosure separated it from the commons. It was some years after removed to make way for the present edifice, which, I suppose, it would be regarded as little short of high treason to call by its former name, although "right royal men" have occupied it for many years past. The brick row, now known as the Main street, which terminated at the cross street below the American, and had its origin near the market place, was the chief pride of the city. The streets were unpaved, and sad was the fate of the unluckly wight, who, otherwise than on horseback, undertook to pass through the lower part of the city—nor was it for many years after, that the hand of the laborer went busily to work in the improvement of the city. Dr. John Adams, whose name should ever be held in grateful remembrance by the people of Richmond, during his Mayoralty, graduated the streets, regulated the ascents to its beautiful hills, and, in many particulars, embellished and adorned the city.—He was a gentleman of refined taste, of much erudition, and highly cultivated manners.

At the time of which I have been speaking, there were but three churches in the city—the Baptist, Methodist and Episcopal church, on Church Hill. The Episcopalians and Presbyterians had a minister each—parson Buchannan and parson Blair. I never knew two better men. They preached on alternate Sundays at the capitol and at the old church on the hill. No difference in the forms of service were permitted to interrupt their perfect harmony. The same congregations attended on their ministrations. They taught the same sublime doctrines, and were too intent on the execution of their holy mission to dispute about mere external forms and ceremonies. Their lives were unitedly devoted to the high and important task of making men good citizens and good Christians; nor did they esteem it necessary, in order to accomplish these ends, to make war upon those innocent amusements which serve as a respite from labor and toil. Buchannan's Spring is identified with the Quoit Club, in the innocent festivities of which the good old man sometimes participated. There were illustrious men associated with him in these harmless relaxations, whose memories will ever live in the heart of Richmond. Mr. Buchannan lived in a small, wooden house, situated in the neighborhood of Mayo's bridge, suited to his condition of old bachelorship, all trace of which, I suppose, has long since passed away. Under that roof he was once honored by the presence of another divine, who, bringing on suitable credentials, and wearing suitable canonicals, officiated in the place of the two eminent ministers at Church Hill and the Capitol. During his stay in Richmond, he was hospitably entertained by Mr. Buchannan. By some arrangement of the toilet, it was, however, accidentally discovered that the new minister was a woman dressed in canonicals. Some time thereafter, the two aged ministers dined at the Governor's, when brother Blair indulged in innocent railery at the expense of brother Buchannan, to the infinite amusement of all present. Mr. Buchannan had, but a few days before, received a letter from his quondam guest, apologizing for her conduct, and signing herself the patronimic of Dianna Smith. She was the first woman in America who practically put in force the doctrines of woman's rights.

This anecdote brings forcibly to my recollection another of your citizens of that day, who was the worthy cotemporary of the two parsons, who, I afterwards met at the hospitable board of his estimable son, Col. John Rutherford. It was a source of great pleasure with me to have seen him in the latter days of his life, when the conversation between us ran upon early reminiscences of Richmond. I adverted to the two good Parsons and Dianna Smith. It was a gleam of the past, which had not crossed his pathway for many years. He enjoyed it heartily, and narrated all its most minute circumstances. Thomas Rutherford was a man of high intellect, and went down to his grave at an advanced age, honored and lamented by all who had known him. Shortly after I went into Congress as the representative of this district, an honor of which I have ever been proud, those questions arose which tore asunder the old Republican party, and have since been, to a great extent, the dividing line between subsequent parties.—The citizens of Richmond were not backward in the expression of their opinions upon those interesting and absorbing topics which sprung up between 1816 and 1821; and the memorials and remonstrances which they presented to Congress were chiefly from the pen of Thomas Rutherford. They were admitted to be the ablest papers presented to Congress during those eventful times; and, amid the crowd of similar papers which came up from the country, were uniformly selected for review by the advocates of the measures which they opposed—the strongest evidence of their power and force. I hope that, in some form, they have been preserved among the records of the city.

The transfer of the General Court from Williamsburg to Richmond brought along with it men of high eminence—and among others Edmund Randolph. He was soon after followed by Charles Copeland, John Wickham and many others, who made the city their place of permanent abode. It was my happiness to have become acquainted with those I have mentioned, at the early period to which I have referred. I was admitted, by Mr. Randolph, as a law student in his office, and can never be too grateful for the instruction he afforded me. He was the son of Sir John Randolph, formerly the King's Attorney General, who, in his brief day, (he died at the age of 45,) filed a large space in the affairs of the Colony. His monument is to be seen on the walls of the chapel of William and Mary College, and his remains, along with those of Peyton Randolph, the first President of Congress, and others of distinction, are entombed in vaults connected with the chapel. Edmund Randolph entered upon life with every prestige of success; which it was his good fortune not to disappoint. He ran a most brilliant career. Under the Colonial Government he succeeded his father, or soon afterwards became the Attorney General of the Colony, and attained the highest eminence at the legal forum. Clients flocked around him in vast numbers, and his opinions exerted great influence, not only over the Courts, but over the people. When the disturbances with Great Britain broke out, he took his stand firm y on the side of the Colony. What offices he filled, and what services he rendered, both before and after the Declaration of Independence, are recorded in history. It is no part of my purpose to give biographies.—My design is the more humble one of presenting pencil sketches, in which the more outline is exhibited. When I became personally acquainted with Mr. Randolph, age had made its inroads upon him; but he, nevertheless, had been gently dealt with by time. His person still bore its manly and majestic mien—his full, black eye, still beamed with intelligence, and one left him in doubt which most to admire, his commanding person, his elegrace of manners, or his sparkling, and, at the same time, massive intellect. He required all these combined to restore him to his position at the bar, after having repeatedly abandoned it for high political station, and yet he achieved the difficult task; and, although surrounded by strong and powerful *athletæ*, he maintained his footing firmly, and enjoyed a large share in the profits of his profession.

Charles Copeland remained in Williamsburg for several years after the transfer of the General Court. That old city still furnished a large theatre for forensic labors, and Mr. Copeland became the leading counsel in all cases of interest. To secure his services was regarded as equivalent to securing the result of the case. About that time, John Wickham, quite a young man, appeared at the bar, and soon became a man of mark. It was in my twenty first year that I came to Richmond, as counsel in a case which had been sent from a county below, and which I had conducted in the court of that county. I consented, after much urgency, to come here with the understanding with my client, that I should not be expected to do more than furnish Mr. Wickham, who had been employed by my client, with a statement of the case. Mr. Wirt had been employed by the defendant. I stated to Mr. Wickham the simple purpose with which I had followed the case. He drew me without the court-room to expostulate with me. Upon my declaring to him my utter confusion at the idea of speaking in a case wherein Mr. Wirt and himself were employed, he said:

"That is a mere bugbear. When I went to the bar, (said he) I became engaged in a case in which my fee, dependent on success, was a large one. The lion in my way was Chas. Copeland. When the day arrived for the trial of the case, the terror increased upon me, and so continued until I fell in with your father, who was one of the Judges of the court, who inquired as to my success at the bar. I replied that I had on that day a case coming on which would yield me a good fee, but that I was terrified in having to encounter Mr. Copeland. 'Pooh, pooh,' said the Judge, 'all nonsense, if the law is with you, the court will take care of the balance.' Thus encouraged I entered on the argument, and gained the cause—so much, (said he) for high sounding names at the bar. You must open the case."

I did so in fear and trembling, however, and soon after lost myself in the ingenius sallies made during the rest of the day, between the two eminent counsel. The success in the case which he had mentioned to me was followed shortly after by the removal of Mr. Wickham to Richmond.—Here he found "foemen worthy of his steel." At the time to which my narrative chiefly relates, the Richmond bar was equal to any other in the Union. It consisted, without a metaphor, of a constellation of talent. Mr. Randolph, Mr. Wickham, Mr. Wirt, Mr. Hay, Mr. Call, Mr. Warden, along with others scarcely inferior in abilities.—Chief Justice Marshal had years before put on the robes of the Chief Justice. How he wore them is two well known to require me to say. Mr. Wickham occupied the foremost rank in the profession. The accomplishments of his mind, great as they were, were fully equalled by the accomplishments of his person. His form was light, airy and elastic, his manners highly cultivated, his address admirable, his conversational power rarely surpassed; his wit racy and sparkling, while his large lustrous eyes, accompanied by the smile that played on his lips seemed to light up all around. I never knew a man who was better suited to all the purposes of exalted station. I mean not merely those accomplishments so necessary to be cultivated by all in order to make the social circle of one's neighborhood agreeable, but something more—as a Diplomat, he would have been admirable—as a Secretary of State, unsurpassable. I have no reference to party politics, none whatever; I speak only of men and their capacity for usefulness.

William Wirt was, at the time, in the height of his fame. He had rendered himself conspicuous as well by his, writings as by his displays at the bar. His speech, some years before, at the trial of Aaron Burr, will long be cited as one of the choicest gems of American eloquence. He was the antagonist counsel of Mr. Wickham in that celebrated trial, as well as in other important cases, from time to time occurring in the courts, and it was difficult to decide which most to admire, the splendid imagery of the one, or the keen and cutting satire of the other. The idea almost universally prevails that high and brilliant eloquence is rarely associated with great reasoning power—I think there is much error in this. The garden of the mind is rendered more attractive and beautiful by the many flowers that adorn it; and where they grow without being artificially forced, they not only give lustre to the reasoning faculty, but lighten the whole pathway, and make that faculty more clear and bright; nay, often a metaphor condenses into a single sentence the entire argument.

I might illustrate this in the most forcible manner by quoting the words of Patrick Henry in the Convention of 1788, upon the subject of adopting the Constitution, without previously amending defects which all admitted to exist: "What, sir," said he, "Will you go into a dungeon? and for what? to get out again? Beware, lest the bolts and bars of Federal authority shall shut you in when you are once in." In that brief sentence he surrounds you with all the powers of the Federal Government—its forts at the mouths of all the principal rivers—its army, its navy, its power to lay and collect duties, taxes and imposts. You see, you feel, you touch the power you are parting with, and the hazard you run in conceding it, before surrounding yourself with guarantees and securities. While Mr. Wirt's style was classic, fignrative and flowing, his reasoning was powerful and often overwhelming. At an after day he changed his residence to Baltimore where he measured swords with Wm. Pinckney, of Maryland, and it is praise enough to say that he lost nothing by the conflict.

Of George Hay and Daniel Call, I can speak but briefly. Mr. Hay's manner of speaking was like himself, stately and studied. His style in writing gives a just idea of his style in speaking. His letters, published in the Enquirer about the time to which I refer, under the signature of Hortensius, were universally read and much admired. As the United States District Attorney, he prosecuted Aaron Burr with marked ability. Mr. Call pretended to no display—to no trick of oratory. He accomplished everything by his extensive and well digested legal learning, which constituted him, on all occasions, an adversary of great power.

John Warden cannot be so hurriedly parted with. Nature so generally beautiful in all her productions, sometimes apparently distorts and disfigures, as if for the sole purpose of rendering more to be admired her perfect handiwork. So had she acted in the case of John Warden—*Old Jack*, as he was familiarly called at the bar. His structure was seemingly reversed, and everything out of place. His mouth was enormously large and yet his tongue was too large for his mouth, which rendered his articulations muddy and indistinct. Any one could sketch his likeness. It was on all the walls of the Capitol. I remember one sketch particularly which was exceedingly striking, and had written over it what purported to be his epitaph—the last lines I only retain in my memory—

"Reader, tread lightly o'er his sod
For if he gapes you are gone"

He often facetiously declared that his parents had twelve children, and that he was the handsomest of the set. And yet, if nature had in a freak, so fully made up his person, she fully compensated for it in the formation of his mind. That was a gem of much value, and caused one to forget the defects of the setting. Unquestionably, the best conveyancer in the State, possessing much wit, profoundly versed in the law, and adding to all these, pleasantry and good humor, every one liked him, and he was accordingly surrounded with clients.

These brilliants lights of the bar have all passed away. They have been succeeded by others, and these others have had their successors, and yet it may well be questioned whether any of the more modern knights of the forum, could poise a lance with more skill, or strike an adversary a heavier blow.

I might, gentlemen, continue to draw the portraits of others not less eminent in the various departments of life than those I have so hurriedly sketched. Of the judges eminent and learned, who sat daily as impartial umpires between these great contestants—of St. George Tucker who has illustrated the science of the law by his able commentaries on Blackstone, as well as by numerous law decisions—of Wm. Fleming, whose integrity, in public and private life, no man ever questioned—and of Spencer Roane, whose opinions were alike oracular on politics or law. I might speak of the learned faculty of physicians, who presided at the bed side of the good genii, or over the health of the city—of Doctors McClaine, Lyons, McCaw, Foushee, Greenhow and others, their compeers—of many of your merchants, who gave impulse to trade; and left behind them honorable names—of your industrious mechanics, whose merit has been in building up your city, and giving it its present shape and character, among the foremost of whom is that day, was Col. Tompkins, the strokes of whose hammer are seen in all your streets and avenues. But time is not allowed me to do more than mention their name s—names that should be precious to the memory of Richmond, and abide with it always. I might also speak of occurrences of after years, and in some degree throw a gloom over the evening by adverting to that terrible night, on which, from festivity and enjoyment, Richmond was plunged into an abyss of woe. I might awaken anew the flood of grief by depicting the deaths of two hundred of the citizens by fire and smoke. I might exhaust panegyric in detailing the heroism of George Wm. Smith the noble Governor of Virginia, who perish d in the effort to save others, regardless of himself and reckless of the fate that befell him. I turn away from the past and hasten to greet you on your present prosperity. In less than a century Richmond has grown up from a handful of settlers into a population of forty fiva thousand.—Steam comes now to its aid, and already converts it, in all but in name, into a port of the sea. The interest taken in this Institute, where is collected so great a display of machinery, so replete with fibre and nerve and muscle, as seemingly to require nothing but the Pomethean fire to give it life and motion and being and vitality—the unlimited and unslinted power of water to constitute this city the Manchester of America in innumerable manufacturing establishments which at no distant day are certainly to arise—all seem to concur in holding out for Richmond a bright and prosperous future. All hail to that future, when the city of the lofty hills shall be clothed "in raiments of fine linen and pearls of great value."

FROM WASHINGTON.

THE VERIFICATION OF NATIONALITY—THE ENGLISH FLEET AND THE FILLIBUSTERS.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 4.—It will be recollected that several months ago, the government of Great Britain suggested in general terms, that some mode ought to be adopted for verifying the nationality of vessels, which could be easily used by both parties, without offence to either. But the distinct form of the proposition has not been made, nor is it known what arrangement Her Majesty's government will recommend.

It is not, however, considered to be necessary for the United States to make the initiative in this matter, as the law of nations is acknowledged by Great Britain to mean that for which our Government has always contended, and this to the latter is satisfactory. If England desires any modification of it, her proposition will of course be entitled to consideration.

The substance of the dispatch of Lord Napier to the State Department, is represented to be, in effect, that the Nicaraguan government will avail itself of the aid of the British fleet to prevent the landing of fillibusters.

Our Government considers itself able to enforce the neutrality laws. Should, therefore, Walker and his followers fall into the hands of the British and thus be prevented from carrying out their designs, it would prove an occurrence much to be deprecated, as it would produce an unpleasant state of feeling against the British government.

ARMY AND NAVY NEWS.—First lieutenant Wm. W. Burns, Fifth infantry, has been appointed Commissary of Subsistence in the army, with the rank of captain.

G. T. Pierce, of Wisconsin, has been appointed a Purser in the navy.

Army orders are issued, calling attention to general orders issued in June of last year; requiring officers arriving at the seat of government to report to the Adjutant General, and during their sojourn in Washington to wear the prescribed dress, this regulation not having been hitherto strictly observed. When military posts are established—fortifications excepted, or camps not of a temporary nature—commanders are ordered to transmit to Washington a description of the locality and a sketch of the country in the immediate vicinity.

The district of the Platte will be considered a separate command, and the officer commanding will correspond direct with general headquarters. Brevet Colonel John Monroe, Fourth artillery, commanding the district of the Platte, is assigned to duty, according to brevet rank of colonel.

THE DOUBLE TRAGEDY OF PHILADELPHIA.—We published an account of the suffocation of Dillon in a chimney in Philadelphia. He seemed to have had more than one paramour. Anne Smith, the other one, had been threatened by Dillon; he quarrelled with her and threatened to kill her; and she had threatened to kill herself. When she heard that Dillon was dead, she said "good bye" to those about her and went away. The next morning she was found floating in a dock in the Delaware. One of the locals of the city thus describes the scene at the wharf where the body lay:

The body of the wretched woman was tied to a boat in the dock, and the water as it rippled over her face, wafted her scarcely dishevelled hair about upon its surface. Upon the wharf hundreds of curious gazers were gathered, and among the throng many of the frail sisters of the poor suicide were drawn as if by some irresistible attraction. Mothers were there, too, with their little children, all pushing and struggling to look upon the body of the

One more unfortunate
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death.

The body was finally dragged out of the river, and laid upon the wharf until the dead cart should arrive.

NEW THEATRE IN WASHINGTON.—A new theatre is about to be built in Washington, under the auspices of Messrs. Ford & Kunkle. The former gentleman has already gotten up a subscription of $50,000 towards the enterprize. The design is to make a house capable of holding 1500 to 2000 people.

LOCAL MATTERS.

CLOSE OF THE EXHIBITION.—Owing to the extreme inclemency of the weather yesterday, the Hall of the Mechanics's Institute was not opened to visitors last night. The address of THOS. H. WYNNE, Esq. on "Mason and Dixon's Line," will be delivered to-night at 8 o'clock, when all who wish to hear the subject thoroughly explained, should be in attendance.

On Monday night at 8 o'clock, Rev. Mr. PETERSON, Pastor of Clay Street Chapel, will address the Institute. Those who know the Reverend gentleman will need no second invitation to be present.

On Tuesday night, at 8 o'clock, the list of premiums will be read, after which, the Institute will be formally closed.

Those who have not yet visited the Institute, and examined the vast collection of useful and beautiful articles, on exhibition, including machinery, paintings, sculpture, and needle work, have but three days left to do so. The Hall will open every morning at 10 o'clock, close at 5 in the afternoon, to open again at 7, P. M. and close at 10, P. M.

SINGULAR ROBBERY.—The office in the City Hall of Mr. Thomas U. Dudley, City Sergeant, was entered yesterday morning or the evening before, by some unknown person, who forced open a money drawer and abstracted therefrom the pocket book stolen from Mrs. Carpenter, by a female thief, calling herself Griffith, who is now in jail awaiting trial, and the knife with which Atkinson is said to have stabbed Bowles. In the same drawer were checks and bank notes amounting to $800, none of which were disturbed. The pilferer entered the office by means of the door key, which was left hanging in reach of any one. The object of the thief seems to have been to destroy the evidence against Mrs. Griffith, which we take it was a fruitless one.

PERMANENT FIXTURES.—While the results of the late Agricultural Fair in this city, are yet fresh in the minds of members of the Central Society and the public at large, it may not be amiss to say a word in relation to the future, and to urge the commencement of preparation for another year. As far as we have been enabled to ascertain, there seems to be very little if any hopes, of ever securing the use of the horse lot, adjoining the Western Square, for another exhibition, and our readers know, that without the *horses* no other attraction, could bring the people together. This being conceded, it is important that another location should be selected at once, and as there are several beautiful sites near the city that might readily be secured, some plan should be adopted to effect that end.

We understand from a gentleman, who has given the subject much thought, that fifty acres of land can be purchased, near the city, on such terms as can readily be complied with by the Central Society; and that by holding the Fair in the centre of this track, and having control of the land surrounding it, the rents from outsiders might be made to pay not only the interest on the land and improvements necessary for the Fair, but to create a sinking fund by which the principal could be wiped out in a few years. If this be so, and we have no reason to doubt it, the Central Society should not hesitate a moment in making the purchase, and begin at once to prepare for a grand exhibition on its own hook, or in conjunction with the State Society, next fall. There are enough men of wealth and liberality in the Central Society, to put any scheme through that may have for its object the good of the State, and we therefore invite their attention to the importance of immediate action.

DARING THIEF.—Yesterday afternoon, a drunken negro fellow, in passing along Main street, grabbed half a dozen pair of shoes from the store of Marcus Harris, and made off, but being top heavy, was soon overtaken and carried to the cage, where he will be dealt with by the Mayor this morning.

ORPHANS.—The Teachers and children of the Female and Male Orphan Asylums have been invited to visit the exhibition Rooms of the Mechanics' Institute to day, between 9 and 1 o'clock; and those of St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum between 1 and 5 o'clock, P. M. We trust the weather may be suitable for their "turn out," and that the invitations will be accepted.

FIRE.—Yesterday morning between the hours of 1 and 2 o'clock, the blacksmith and wheelwright shop, owned by L. H. Dance, a short distance West of Richmond, on the Westham plank road, was set on fire and burned to the ground—The loss from the shop and materials is about $1200, on which there was a partial insurance in the Virginia Fire and Marine office.

VIRGINIA ITEMS.

PETERSBURG.—Howard, the individual arrrested on Wednesday mor