

Manuscript of an Old Bachelor.—No 10.  
REMINISCENCES OF ALEXANDRIA.

In perpetuum rei memoriam.  
"To keep alive the remembrance of the day and celebrate its return."

The people of Alexandria were always patriotic and public spirited, and never negligent in celebrating the returns of the public days which are usually kept as secular holidays.—If such a phrase can be allowed. In the times of which I write, there were a number of excellent volunteer companies, well officered and drilled and handsomely uniformed and equipped—so that festivals and parades were always easy to be prepared, and generally passed off with considerable eclat. There was, I remember, when I was a boy—a large cavalry troop—an artillery corps with some brass field pieces—a rifle company—and three or four infantry companies—the Independent Blues—the Lafayette Guards—the Independent Volunteers, &c., &c. Who can ever forget the "Muster Days," as we used to call them, when, in addition to the Volunteer Companies, the County militia turned out, and were "Reviewed" on the Catalpa lot, at the north end of the town? At the "general muster," muskets were furnished to the militia from the armory at the lower end of King street, to be used for the day only, and returned when the parade was over. The "flat feet," as the boys called them, (I never knew why,) shouldered their firelocks and went through the fatigue of their brief campaign, with as much zeal, if not with the same regularity, as their uniformed comrades—and always "enjoyed the joke"—they were hilarious and sometimes uproarious—while the volunteers, as in duty bound, were very serious in the whole business.—Tents were spread over the green turf of the parade ground—a marquee for the officers raised—and refreshment tables scattered all around—and when the order to "dismiss," during the heat of the day, was given, I have seen more eating and drinking, then and there, than I have ever seen since, at any public gathering—not excepting a Whig barbecue or a Democratic meeting, in the woods. As to the military manoeuvres on the field—the wheeling to the right when the word was given to wheel to the left—the musketry practice, when the platoons fired, one man after another, and never altogether—the inextinguishable confusion into which companies were thrown by the incorrect orders of officers—the despair of the generals, colonels, and majors at the strange and complicated evolutions before their eyes—and the desperation of the captains, when they would cry out—"d—n you, why don't you stop," when they had been calling in vain for a halt—of all these, "it becoms me not to tell." The pen of Dickens could have been kept busily engaged in sketching the scenes and incidents of one of these days—nor do I know where a better idea of the appearance, actings and doings of the spectators of the scene, can be found, than in one of his Pickwick papers, where he gives an account of a military review in England, at which the venerable chief, and his suite, Winkle, Snodgrass, &c., were present, and where they received the charge of a whole regiment, and awoke to consciousness, flat on their backs, and their heels in the air!

The great day with us, in old Alexandria, was Washington's Birth Day—the 22d of February—the anniversary of the birth of our fathers' friend and neighbor, as well as the Father of his Country—"clarum et venerabile nomen." There was a more general, public, united celebration of that day, than there was even of the 4th of July. On the latter occasion, the heat of midsummer—the dusty streets—the danger of exposure to the sun's rays, and the natural yearning for shade, air, and cool springs, scattered the population, and sent them, in companies, and parties, to seek the woods adjacent to town, or other "sequestered retreats" in the country. There was almost always a 4th of July Oration and a Parade—but, as soon as these were over, the military separated, and went to their respective places of enjoyment for the day, where a good dinner, and plenty of punch and wine, were discussed to every body's full content. At the dinners, the "toasts" were always a part of the entertainment; and these were collected, and afterwards published in the Alexandria Gazette, the authors frequently priding themselves upon the wit, or satire, or eloquence, or patriotism they were thus allowed to exhibit—and they, at least, furnished, frequently, one means of forming an idea as to the current of public opinion, on the political and other national questions of the times. But, as I have said, the 22d of February was the day. Then the military paraded,

and kept together. A long procession was formed, consisting of the Town Authorities, the reverend clergy, the civic associations—and there were several, then, of the highest respectability as to character and numbers—the Fire Companies—the Free School children—the latter all neatly dressed, headed by their teachers—the most interesting part of the pageant—the volunteer companies with their bands of music—followed by a long line of citizens who made it a rule always to unite in the ceremonies of the occasion—and escorted the Reader of the Farewell Address and the Orator of the Day, to some one of the Churches, where the exercises took place. There was always a fine Ode sung—an appropriate prayer made—and then succeeded the reading, and the speech. The Church was crowded in all its parts, pews, galleries, and aisles; and such a collection of beautiful ladies as attended, could hardly any where else have been seen in the whole country. Flags were hoisted, cannon fired, and huzzas shouted in every direction, throughout the day. And, when night fell, its shadows came upon a happy, peaceful, town, and a contented people!

On the night of the 22d, there was the "Birth Night Ball." This "ancient institution," as it may be almost called, was common during the life time of the illustrious man, in whose honor it was held. I have before referred to it, and need not, therefore, dwell upon the subject—although the recollection of many happy hours would induce me to linger upon the pleasing theme. Washington, himself, more than once attended the balls—and there is, or was, in the Museum, an autograph letter of his, framed, sending his apology, on one occasion, for not being able to come into town to visit his friends, at this, the most delightful of their social meetings. Fashion, youth, beauty, intellect, shone resplendent at these balls; they were conducted in the most admirable manner; and the courtesy, refinement, and gaiety of the company were "known to all the country round." At 12 o'clock precisely, supper was announced—and these suppers were equal to any of the feasts ever prepared at the old City Hotel, then and since famous for the excellence and taste of its entertainments. After the ladies had retired, the gentlemen remained to drink a few regular toasts—and I remember, that for several years, in succession, after "Washington"—and the "Constitution"—and a few others were given, one of the most honored of our lawyers, gave the "Navy"—and then one of our merchants gave the "Ladies"—and then all returned to the Ball-Room, to go on with the merry dance.

By general consent, for many years, the Washington Society, whose President was Mr. G. W. P. Custis, selected the 22d of February orator—appointing him at one anniversary to speak on the next. He thus had a whole year in which to prepare his address. The selection was confined—with occasional rare exceptions—to the young men of our own town or neighborhood—and was the means frequently of bringing before the public the literary abilities of very able scholars. Some of these orations were very admirable performances, and a collection of them would show that they are far superior to most of the productions on similar occasions at the present day. Those few who still remain here and remember the orations of Wm. H. Fitzhugh, Peter Cruse, Philip R. Fendall and others, will agree with me in this opinion.—With regard to Mr. Custis, I may say, that the best oration he ever delivered—with the exception of his address on the death of Gen. Lingan—was an extempore one, on a 22d of February, when the regularly appointed speaker, who happened to be on the Maryland side, could not come over to fulfil his engagement, owing to ice in the river, Mr. C. was prevailed upon, to prevent a public disappointment, to take the place of the gentleman thus unavoidably detained—and he, with great animation, and with many touches of natural eloquence, spoke to a crowded audience for more than an hour, to the great satisfaction of all his hearers. He was much applauded for this effort.

While I am upon the subject of celebrations I will mention that the reception and welcome of Lafayette (on his visit to this country, I think in 1824), in Alexandria, were pronounced by J. Q. Adams as equalling any, in any part of the country, in design and execution. I have often wished that the beautiful arches thrown over Washington street, near its intersection with King street, could have been built of more indestructible materials, and thus preserved. Lafayette was much interested in the many associations connected with Washington surrounding Alexandria, and spoke of it as Washington's town, which he well remembered.

The celebrations of Washington's birthday, of which I have spoken, were, as has been remarked, united in with pleasure by all our citizens, old and young, rich and poor. The grave and quietest seemed to enter into the spirit of the thing. If money was wanted, it was given freely, and no man was backward in his efforts to make the old town show to the best advantage. Numbers of Members of Congress used to come down from the Metropolis, to look on, to listen, to catch some of the patois which beamed in the eyes, and was heard in the voices, of these around them, and to shake off, for one day at least, "the dust of the political arena," in which they were engaged. Every intelligent Senator and Representative acknowledged that "it was good to be here."

I believe the "22d of February," though "shorn somewhat of its ancient splendor," is still honored in Alexandria. Thus, in all the changes and mutations of men and things—through all convulsions and revolutions even—through every vicissitude of time and fortune, may it ever be! May the day never come when the people of Alexandria cease to honor the memory of Washington!

THE WEALTH I'VE GOT.  
Not houses and lots in a principal street;  
Nor rich fields waving with golden wheat;  
Nor darksome mines deep stored with gold,  
Nor piles of ingots in coffers old;  
Not these, though they may fill many a lot—  
These form no part of the wealth I've got.  
I'm poorer to-day than a year ago—  
I was poorer then than I cared to know;  
The future has nothing but struggle and care;  
For the bread to eat and the raiment to wear;  
Yet I still look onward and murmur not,  
For I'm very rich in the wealth I've got.  
I've kind ones to love me, rich or poor—  
I've friends whom I hold with friendship sure;  
And pleasures and duties, day by day,  
And work for each hour that passes away;  
I've a home with its treasures—earth's dearest spot—  
Where I board like a miser the wealth I've got.  
I've a heart, thank God, that loves mankind;  
I've a spirit, thank God, that can be resigned;  
I've a hope to finish some trifle of good  
Before I lie down for the grave worm's food;  
I've a hope that neither stain nor blot  
Will cling, when I've gone, to the wealth I've got.  
I've a trust in the Master, whose tender care  
For the bread to eat and the raiment to wear;  
I've a firm stout heart that He giveth me  
To bear whatever my fortune may be;  
For each can be ne'er a sorrowful spot  
While kind Heaven will bless the treasures I've got.

GENERAL NEWS.  
The Maryland Board of Public Works have not yet elected the President and Directors of the C. & O. Canal.  
After the Executive session of the U. S. Senate on Thursday, a quorum could not be obtained to vote upon the "recess" resolution.  
The N. Y. Evening Post says that about \$300,000 will go forward by the steamer Africa.

The House of Delegates of Md., has adopted resolutions in favor of the Union, but against a war on slavery.  
The Old Point boat at Baltimore yesterday morning brought up Capt. Ricketts, of the First Artillery, who was wounded and taken prisoner at Bull Run. He is released on parole and will be exchanged.  
The latest Canada papers are filled with calls for volunteers to turn out, and militiamen to arm and equip. The provinces are in a ferment.  
It is stated in diplomatic circles that the British government do not at present demand reparation for the Trent affair in any specified and offensive form, but in general terms. They say in effect, you have done us a wrong and we expect you to make reparation.

Secretary Seward addressed a letter to the Treasury Department, requesting that the arrears of pay of Hon. Geo. W. Jones, late Minister to New Granada, should be withheld, as he is alleged to be not loyal to the government. But the payment had been made an hour or so before the receipt of Mr. Seward's communication.

Richard T. Hardesty, a young man, son of Richard C. Hardesty, Esq., both residing near South River, Anne Arundel county, was yesterday released from Fort M. Henry, by order of Gen. Dix. Young Hardesty and his brother were arrested on the 27th of November by some Federal soldiers stationed in that neighborhood, upon some vague charge, since ascertained to be unfounded.

Only \$194,000 in specie was sent out in Africa. There is said to be active preparations making for large shipments in case the events of the next few days warrant them.

A special Washington telegram to the N. Y. World says:—The government despatches concerning the Mason and Sidel difficulty will not be of a dignified but most conciliatory nature. They will satisfy the English Cabinet no insult was intended.

George W. Jones, of Iowa, Ex-Minister to Bogota, has been arrested in Washington, by order of Secretary Seward, and sent to Fort Lafayette.

A large number of regulars are stationed along the Canada frontier, and the fortifications at Toronto, Sackett's harbor, and other points are undergoing either an entire reconstruction or a thorough repair.

Both Houses of the U. S. Congress have adjourned until Monday. In the Senate yesterday a stringent bill was adopted concerning selling liquor to soldiers. Several anti-slavery measures were proposed in both houses, and referred to committees.

One of the reports in Washington is that the gunboat Landrail, which sailed yesterday from New York, bore dispatches to Admiral Milne, directing him to repair at once with a large fleet to Boston harbor, to receive the Southern Commissioners.

Last Monday there were 37 resignations of volunteer officers in the army of the Potomac, and on Wednesday 24, or about 75 during the week. A few of them resigned for the purpose of accepting higher appointments in regiments other than those to which they were originally attached.

MISCELLANEOUS.  
JOHN H. DEVAUGHAN'S  
AMBROTYPE GALLERY.  
No. 111, King Street,  
OPPOSITE THE MARSHALL HOUSE.  
nov 29—1m\*  
JULIUS DINELT, DENTIST,  
Office: No. 17 Washington street, above King.  
WHERE HE CAN BE FOUND AT ALL TIMES.  
nov 22—1m\*

JOB PRINTING, HANDBILLS, CARDS,  
BILL HEADS, CIRCULARS, &c., &c.,  
neatly and expeditiously printed, on the lowest terms, at the Alexandria Gazette Office, near the corner of Prince and Fairfax streets.  
nov 6—1w

DRUGS, CHEMICALS, &c.  
JUST RECEIVED, a full supply of Brown's  
Bronchial Troches, Spaulding's Throat Con-  
fections, for coughs and sore throat, Ayer's Sarsa-  
parilla, Cherry Pectoral, and a good assortment  
of other Drugs, &c., for sale at  
MILBURN'S Drug and Chemical Store,  
dec 17—2w N. W. corner King and Wash'n-st.

DRUG STORE.  
HENRY COOK & CO., 89 King st., Alexandria,  
KEEP a constant supply of Drugs, Chemicals,  
Patent Medicines, Spices, Perfumery, Fan-  
ciful Articles, Coal Oil, Eucereat Oil, Lamp Oil, Lard  
Oil, Alcohol, Dye Stuffs, Paints and Paint Oil of  
all kinds, Window Glass and Putty, Coal Oil  
Lamps, Stove Polish, Paint Brushes, and every  
article usually found in a well regulated Drug  
Store. oct 11—1f

PORTLAND KEROSENE.  
400 GALLONS of the above, which is univer-  
sally acknowledged to be equal, if not su-  
perior, to any other, received and for sale at a re-  
duced price. HENRY COOK & CO.,  
nov 9 Sarepta Hall, King street.

OIL! OIL!! OIL!!!  
LARD OIL, Machine Oil, Linseed, both raw and  
boiled, Etheral Oil, pure Nutsfoot Coal Oil,  
Train and Tanners' Oil, received and for sale by  
nov 9 HENRY COOK & CO., Sarepta Hall.

GROCERIES.  
MINCE MEAT.  
LOOK OUT FOR SOMETHING GOOD.  
A VERY superior lot of MINCE MEAT, for  
sale in large or small quantities, at  
W. G. SIMPSON'S Bakery,  
dec 17—1w No. 149 King street.

NEW BUCKWHEAT, HAMS AND CITRON.  
THE SUBSCRIBER has just received the fol-  
lowing articles, and invites the attention of  
customers and citizens.  
2,000 lbs. new Buckwheat, in large and small  
packages;  
1,000 lbs. small Family Hams and Breast Pieces  
Raisins, Currants and Citron; also, an assort-  
ment of small family cakes and crackers, to wit:  
Jumbles, Johnny Lind Cakes, Ginger Cakes, Gin-  
ger Snaps, and Tea Cakes, Soda, Water and Sugar  
Crackers, all of which will be sold at low prices  
for cash. JOHN T. COOKE,  
dec 13 Corner below Post Office.

MINCE MEAT.—Just received, a nice article  
of Mince Meat. J. T. COOK,  
dec 19 Old Post Office Corner.

EGGS.—Fresh Eggs, just in time, for sale low  
by the dozen. J. T. COOK,  
dec 19 Old Post Office Corner.

NEW JEWELRY.—Just received, a lot of new  
Jewels, very nice. J. T. COOK,  
dec 19 Old Post Office Corner.

BOOTS AND SHOE.  
HENRY C. FIELD,  
BOOT AND SHOE MANUFACTURER,  
No. 74 King street, Alexandria,  
KEEPS on hand, and is prepared to manu-  
facture BOOTS and SHOES of all kinds.  
MILITARY BOOTS or SHOES made at  
the shortest notice, and of the best material.  
Persons in want of a good article in his  
line, will do well to give him a call. oct 7

DRY GOODS.  
DRY GOODS.  
BRYAN & ADAMS, AGENTS,  
No. 76, King street. oct

JEWELRY, &c.  
W. W. ADAM,  
DEALER IN WATCHES, JEWELRY, AND  
SILVER WARE  
All kinds of WATCHES and CLOCKS re-  
paired.