

TALES OF OLD TIMES

GEORGETOWN'S GLORY AND THRIFT BEFORE WASHINGTON WAS BUILT.

The Semi-Annual Fair—Reminiscences of Sutor's Tavern—Joseph Semmes and His Scheme for Rapid Transit—The Plague of Black Ants in the Old Town.

In the long ago when Georgetown was in the first flush of her youth, when the canny Scotchman settled in Duck Lane, tilling the ground and building for themselves quaint, low-roofed dwellings, when the good old days of our forefathers were in full swing, the little place was of goodly import and beautiful to the eye of the stranger in the spring time and the summer. What is now "the heights," and justly the pride of the townspeople for its beauty, was then but a wilderness, through which wandered game of all description, and resounded now and then to the voice of the Indian hunter, whose hunting ground it was.

By the act of the Maryland legislature of 1751, when the location of the town was fixed at the mouth of Rock creek, provisions were made for the holding of a semi-annual fair in the month of April and October. This custom our English cousins borrowed originally from the Germans, whose great yearly fair at Leipzig was a matter of such moment that the authors from all parts of the fatherland sent to this gathering their precious manuscript there to find sale. The people of Montgomery county generally were in the habit of attending these fairs for the purpose of disposing of their country products and having a good time generally. To this goal the youths from the adjacent counties pursued, and were flagging steeds to be in time for the long-talked-of festival whose heats, as well as greetings, were given in exchange for those of the fair's neighbors.

Into this sparsely settled place, this little "town of George," booted and spurred, came riding the many form of our first president in all speed to reach his destination, where awaited L'Enfant and those few chosen ones who were to hold long conclaves over the surveying and laying out of the sister city to be named in his honor. In those early days there had come from Scotland one John Sutor, who upon arriving on those shores built an inn after the fashion of those in his native country. The house, a long, low, wooden structure, one and a half stories high, with a porch on each side, spreading porches on both sides, stood on the west side of Congress, below Bridge street, in what is now the bed of the canal. When this day advanced this far, and it was decided to build the canal, Sutor's inn shared the fate of many another historic building, and was ruthlessly leveled to the ground.

It was to this inn, morning after morning, that Gen. Washington came after the long ride from his home at Mount Vernon. The sitting room witnessed many a distinguished gathering, and here were propounded and discussed affairs of weight and import. Gen. Washington having conceived a liking for the place, and finding mine host an honest, good fellow, made this house his headquarters whenever through business or pleasure he should be called from his country seat at Mount Vernon. Only upon occasions of state, when the general was each used, the general's favorite speed bearing him along at a goodly pace, thundering over the road to Alexandria, out into the open country, and thus to Annapolis—the first of the many journeys from here, by ferryboat, which plied from this point to Goddard's landing at the junction of Water and Market streets, or rock later, as it was called, upon an immense number of these boats allowed to roam at large by the inhabitants of that section.

Directly adjoining Sutor's inn was Semmes's tavern, which, after passing from the hands of the original proprietor, was called the White House Hotel. After selling this property, Joseph Semmes built and kept the large brick structure now known as the Morgan house. The same Joseph Semmes appears in his day to have been quite a noted character, full of queer crochets and ideas, the giving voice to which not few times made him a trouble for his neighbors. Full of his strange ideas, ever quick to adopt new systems and modes of thought, it is small wonder that he grew to be looked upon by his neighbors as a man of addition—one to whose counsel it was well to lend a listening ear. Flattered by the consideration thus willingly accorded, the old fellow one day electrified his comrades by propounding a startling theory. The earth he declared was round; that fact having been demonstrated beyond a doubt by persons of veracity and learning. Something beyond this, which had never yet been thought of, were the splendid capabilities offered by this very rotundity for increased facility in traveling from one distant point of the earth to the opposite side. The tardy method of going to sea in great ships was to be abandoned, superseded entirely by the new plan, leaving the former one for the use of oil-fueled machines that would not keep pace with advanced ideas. Tanned the earth! His auditors sat dumb at the magnitude of the great scheme—lost in admiration of the mighty brain whose workings could evolve such stupendous enterprises. To begin simultaneously at the Arctic and Antarctic poles until, working over to the center, the great globe was divided, a brother should meet brother face to face in the bowels of the earth and give in greeting hearty hand shake.

At the present day such ideas would seem to bear absurdity upon its very face, until for an instant to be entertained by men of sense. Yet it was not only tolerated by such, but regarded as sufficient cause to induce staid merchants to think seriously of throwing up their business, turn every available thing into cash, and embark all in the hazardous enterprise.

The project was the theme of general conversation, high and low alike became interested. Like a contagious fever the great scheme swept through the departments, infecting the clerks, many of whom declared themselves willing to join the noble band of pioneers in their undertaking of tunneling the globe. While at fever heat, the great scheme was upon all tongues, might also be to be thought of as talked about as a mad idea, as it rose into prominence came the awakening. Like the breaking of the furious south sea bubble, away went the scheme, scattered into nothingness, swept

THE WEALTH OF THE VALLEY.

Agricultural and Manufacturing Resources of Frederick County, Virginia.

WINCHESTER, VA., Nov. 20.—Frederick county, Va., one of the Shenandoah Valley counties, is, strictly speaking, best adapted for grain growing, though grazing, dairy farming, and truck raising receives considerable attention, and is found to be very remunerative. The county is well watered by streams, upon which are many valuable water powers, which are utilized for flouring mills, woolen mills, paper mills, tanneries, and other manufacturing enterprises. Besides the fertile soil there are well developed thrifty villages. Stephens City has a clear factory, employing fifty to seventy hands. Middletown has a daily paper and a monthly educational journal, with a normal school, where many of the young people, male and female, are fitted for the different walks of life. There are two watering places of note in this county—Jordan's White Sulphur Springs and Rock Run, both well known for the healing quality of their waters. Rock Run is well patronized by Washington city and Georgetown people.

Winchester, the county seat, has a population of 5,000, is supplied with water by a single limestone spring, which is said to be unfathomable; is one of the oldest towns in the state, and is probably more widely known and better known than any other town in the State. Earthworks thrown up by George Washington before the revolutionary war to protect the infant settlers against the attacks of hostile Indians are well preserved. A well of limestone water over 100 feet deep, located in the center of the fortifications, which supplied the colonial troops with water, is still sending forth its cooling draught, and many of the graves of their descendants. Earthworks were once armed with cannon, and filled with armed men during the late war between the north and south, and their peaceful shadows over the city at eventide.

Winchester is a thrifty manufacturing city, her products finding markets in nearly every state in the union, and some of her products are shipped to foreign countries direct. She manufactures boots and shoes, sams, quercitron, cigars, gloves, carriage, furniture, leather, paper, machinery, and many other articles. She has a steam flour mill capable of turning out 150 barrels of patent process flour every day. Her educational facilities are shown in the fact that she has a school building capable of entertaining her whole white school population. The colored people have equal educational facilities. The private institutions of learning are shown in the fact that she has an academy for young men. Hundreds of young ladies from the south, north, and west are educated at these institutions.

Inspector General Sackett's Report. Brig. Gen. Delos R. Sackett, inspector general, U. S. A., in his annual report to Lieut. Gen. Sheridan says that the supply departments are reported upon in most cases favorably. The health of the men generally good; discipline and instruction has improved, and much attention has been given to rifle practice. Much of the report is given to extracts from the reports of department and regimental commanders. Of particular interest is that of Capt. George B. Russell, 9th infantry, of the Missouri, who points out how easily, on a large reservation, a soldier can be made to stray from a post to some distant point where bad men sell liquors of such vile quality that they get so drunk that they become "without leave," and "desertion follows without any original intention to commit that crime. Maj. Russell thinks that authority to accept any of the soldiers of the post commanders and councils may prescribe would be far better for the men and for the service than the present prohibitory regulations. Gen. Sackett does not accept any of the theories of causes of desertion, and thinks it would be decreased if the service went back a step or two and forced a deserter, when caught, to perform the arduous work of his own post under guard for the rest of his term of service, wearing a heavy ball and chain, and having only the discomforts of the post guard house. He thinks the great cause of desertion is the indifference for the "heinous crime" now customary, and thinks his plan would be more effective.

The West Point Academy. The report of the board of visitors to West Point pronounces the general condition of affairs there as highly satisfactory, if not beyond criticism, and characterizes it as an honor to the country. The administration is very highly commended, and the conduct of the officers and instructors. The examinations for admission and in progress of studies are not deemed too severe. More attention should be given to the study of Spanish. The board unqualifiedly endorses the recommendation that Capt. Wm. F. Spurgin, 21st United States infantry, be detailed for another term of years as treasurer of the academy, and as quartermaster and commissary of the cadet corps. Various recommendations to build a gymnasium and chapel, to increase the band to forty pieces, and the pay of the men increased, and that one of the light batteries be permanently stationed there.

Boycott by the Bricklayers. The Bricklayers' union passed a resolution last evening refusing to work for the firm of Emmert & Hooley on account of that firm employing laborers to do their brick work. This resolution also endorsed the action of the Carpenters and Joiners' union in boycotting the Washington and Georgetown Railroad company for employing "scab" labor on the new station now being erected.

Fire on a Canal Boat. An alarm was turned in from box No. 315, at 10 o'clock last night, for a fire in a canal boat owned by George Dowling, lying at the foot of Rock creek. The fire was damaged to the extent of \$100.

DEKREE'S BALD DRESSING AND COLD MEAT SAUCE is made from the freshest, purest, and choicest condiments obtainable. It is a waste, labor, anxiety, and disappointment are prevented.

ARMY AND NAVY NEWS. Maj. James C. McKee, surgeon, U. S. A., has been granted one month's extension of leave. Lieut. Daniel L. Howell, 7th infantry, has been granted two months further extension of leave. Lieut. Henry W. Lyon, U. S. N., has been promoted to lieutenant commander, to date from Nov. 8, 1884.

The leave granted Maj. Joseph C. Breckinridge, assistant inspector general, U. S. A., for one year has been extended to two years.

A WESTERN POINT OF VIEW.

A Gentleman Thoroughly Competent to Speak Gives His Opinion on Matters of Universal Importance.

During the past year over 3,000,000 acres have been entered in southern Dakota and 160 postoffices established; the daily newspapers have increased from forty-three to sixty-three, and weeklies from 100 to 343; emigration is pouring in at a rapid rate; a nation is being born in a day, and a short time only can elapse before two or three large states will grow out of this land of the Dakotas.

The Rev. Stewart Sheldon, of Yankton, superintendent of Home Missions for southern Dakota, a gentleman who has lived in the territory for the past sixteen years, has traveled over it many times, and is fully competent to give a trustworthy opinion, is very enthusiastic over Dakota's prospects. "Look at the area of the state," he exclaims, "160,000 square miles. Enough to make over three New England states, to make twenty-eight Connecticut; to hold all the inhabitants of the world, with only six acres of a fraction to the acre; to be a belt around the globe six miles wide. In a single year 1,500 miles of railroad are built, and on a single farm 1,000,000 bushels of wheat are raised; its possibilities are almost boundless."

"How about the planting of churches?" "It keeps pace with the needs of the people. In my own denomination about fifty organizations have been effected during the past year, and other religious bodies have probably done equally well." "May I ask what originally brought you west into this country with its necessary hardships?" "First, the pursuit of health; secondly, the great and growing field for religious influence. I am on the road most of the time, and know it is not a mere task, and were it not for a circumstance which I believe saved my life, I should even now be compelled to forego the pleasure I find in being instrumental in an humble way of doing some little good."

"Would you be willing to publicly state your experience?" "Yes, sir. If you care to publish the matter in your paper, for the good of the public, I will give you a written statement. And suiting the action to the word, the superintendent immediately wrote out the following statement: REV. M. M. BARROWS, J. SECRETARY. REV. J. E. CLARK, REV. A. H. CLAPP, TREASURER. AMERICAN HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY, BIBLE HOUSE, NEW YORK CITY. REV. STEWART SHELDON, SUPERINTENDENT FOR DAKOTA. YANKTON, DAKOTA, Sept. 26, 1884. To whom it may concern: This is to certify that I have used Warner's Safe Cure and Safe Pills more or less for a year past, and I find them to be most excellent remedies. I intend to do the work when other medicines fail. I have reason to believe that they have saved my life, and it gives me pleasure to state that they have cured my liver complaint, general debility, and constipation they have been a specific in my own case, as they have been to others to whom I have recommended them. It gives me pleasure to add my testimony to the many already given in the hope that others afflicted as I have been may experience like benefit. REV. STEWART SHELDON. 522 Tenth Street Northwest.

Endorsement from such a source is but another proof of intrinsic merit, and we give this to our readers solely for the most excellent reasons. The testimonial is in its own words, and unqualifiedly indorsing the reverend gentleman and the work in which he is engaged. Dinner Among the Clouds. As a fitting sequel to their privileged participation in the laying of the keystone of the Washington monument, Messrs. Rose and Somerville tendered a banquet to the hardy-handed sons of toil and skill engaged on the monument, and difficult work of putting the finishing touches to the conchop. The affair was strictly private, and only the hosts and such guests as could be found above the 500 feet level were invited. The banquet setting down to the highest banquet ever given was supplemented by the substantial fact that the dinner was an excellent one, and skill engaged on the monument, and difficult work of putting the finishing touches to the conchop. 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