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Original Poetry.

THE VALLEY I LOVE.

BY PRIVATE J. W. GILMORE, CO. E, 114TH N. Y. V.

Far away is a sweet little valley,
The fairest, methinks, upon earth,
Where I spent the sweet years of my childhood
In seasons of pleasure and mirth.
And though beautiful scenes I have witnessed,
None seems so enchantingly sweet
As the vale where the cherished old homestead
Nestles hid in a leafy retreat.

The noble old elm shades the pathway
That leads from the neat little gate,
And near to the house are the willows,
That bathe their green bows in the lake.
The lake winding through the dark forest,
Is spanned by a rude, rustic bridge,
And the waters below are e'er leaping
In falls o'er a wild, rocky ridge.

I loved those bright, beautiful waters,
And their sweet, gentle murmurs to hear,
Methinks it was far sweeter music
Than since has enchanted my ear.
I loved, in the bright hours of summer,
By the side of the river to roam,
And watch the waves leap o'er the ledges,
Then sink into snowy foam.

I am far from those bright, pleasant waters,
I am far from the dear homestead now;
I am far from the friends that I cherished,
Ere sorrow had darkened my brow.
But still is that dearly loved valley,
With a halo of loveliness crowned,
And my thoughts often wander in fancy
Over the fairy-enchanted ground.

O! would I could see the dear cottage,
With the vine-covered porch by the door,
And the dahlias their crimson buds dropping—
And the friends that I cherished of yore.
Yes, memory delights to wander,
'Mid scenes I can never forget,
Dear friends, grant me now this assurance,
That I live in your memory yet,
Rendezvous of Distribution, Va., Jan. 10, 1865.

Miscellaneous Reading.

A BORDER TALE.

BY MONROE GUY CARLTON.

It is not necessary, in these latter times, for
the seeker after glorious instances of individual

proress, to wander back into the dead centuries
of the past for illustrious examples to excite his
wonder and admiration; nor is it essential to
conjure up the memorable deeds of Alcmena's
immortal son, nor those of the hero that blessed
the loves of Ægene and Æthra, as being the
most glorious ever performed upon the earth,
and therefore the most worthy of human adula-
tion; for the history of the comparatively recent
past, the annals that have to do with the occupa-
tion of this continent by the Anglo-Saxon race,
present us with some of the most daring instances
of individual valor that can be found in the re-
cords of mankind. As seen through the magic
lens of ancient mythology, the actions of the
deliverer of Prometheus shine with transcendent
lustre, and as our eye traces the wonderful nar-
rative to the end, our chief regret is, that after
all, it is but a poetic dream—a charming fable.
And when the youthful hero was born to sway
the kingly sceptre over Athens, upheaved the
mighty stone beneath which lay the sword and
sandals of his loyal sire, and drawing the keen
blade went forth upon his brilliant career, slay-
ing the gigantic Periphates, tossing the cruel
Sciron into the sea to be devoured by the ever-
hungry tortoise, and performing the most pro-
digious acts of valor conceivable, we follow him
with intense interest, and our sympathies are
almost as naturally wrought upon as if the
tale were not a fiction, but a real, undeniable
truth.

However, even were they true, the records of
these ancient single-handed contests would fail
to create that interest in the human mind now,
that the fearful rencounters of our forefathers
excite; because the events in which the latter
participated, are, comparatively speaking, a part
of the history of our own times. Nor were the
deadly contests of our fathers with their dusky
enemies less exciting than the most valorous
achievements of which we have any chronicle,
either in sacred or profane history. To be sure
the American pioneer had no Lernaean Hydra to
meet, no awful Minotaur to overcome; it was
not his to slay a thousand men with the jaw-
bone of an ass, nor strike down a giant with
stone and sling; but he had the craftiest of foes
to fight, whose treachery and wary cunning
were of the most refined and subtle kind, and
whose life was spent in the perfecting of these
attributes, which seemed in time the offspring
of instinct.

The white man often fell a victim to his stealthy
adversary. They were always at enmity. It
was victory or annihilation on either side, and
both aimed at the destruction of the other. The
never-absent danger that encircled the settler
made him wary and cautious, but his practiced
ear could not always detect the presence of a foe
whose tread was lighter than air. Whether fol-
lowing the peaceful furrow, or engaged in the
exhilarating pursuits of the chase, the shadow
of the tawny savage was liable to darken his

pathway at any instant. But the borderer was
a man of expedients as well as of courage;—
oftentimes the exigencies of his situation de-
manded instant and artful action; and frequent-
ly his stratagems outwitted the cunning of his
dusky adversary.

During the Indian wars of 1690, the celebrated
pioneer, "Big Joe Logston," as he was univer-
sally called, and one of the most fearless and pow-
erful men of his day, removed from Randolph
county in the Old Dominion, to Kentucky, and
soon after his arrival there was chief actor in one
of the most terrible affrays of this dark and
bloody period.

One beautiful Autumn morning, mounting his
horse and armed with his rifle, he set out to
visit a log fortification some miles from his cabin
to obtain necessaries and a fresh supply of ammu-
nition. The road he was pursuing led through a
dense undergrowth of low bushes for some miles,
when it suddenly emerged from the exuberant
shrubby that arose like a wall on either side,
and he found himself in a growth of large oaks
shooting up from no tangled copse, but spread-
ing their broad branches over a carpet of emer-
ald sward; presenting a picture so unusual and
refreshing that Logston involuntarily drew rein
and paused beneath their ample shadows to gaze
upon the beautiful prospect. Depending from
the tree which shielded him from the sun's rays
was a huge grape-vine loaded with rich clusters
of purple fruit, and with his admiration of the
picture of nature unrolled before him, he united
the luxury of a luscious repast upon the sweet-
pulp grapes.

Having partaken of the good cheer of the vine
to his heart's content, he started on his way, but
almost instantly the shrill report of two rifles,
accompanied by a piercing sensation in his breast,
and the fall of his horse, warned him of the pres-
ence of Indians—the mortal enemies of the white
man. He was struck by a bullet in the breast,
but the slight wound threatened to be of no im-
mediate inconvenience, and disentangling him-
self from his dead horse he resolved not to be
taken alive, nor to leave the field until victorious
over his foes. He had but two Indians to op-
pose.

The largest of these, a fellow of herculean size,
as soon as he had discharged his piece sprang
forward with upraised tomahawk in the hope of
taking his foe by surprise. Logston's rifle was
at his cheek in an instant, at which the Indian
dodged behind a tree for protection. Meantime
the other Indian, shielded by a sapling that was
scarcely large enough to conceal his body, was
hurriedly loading his rifle; but in driving home
the ball he unconsciously exposed a small por-
tion of his person which Logston's watchful eye
catching, he leveled his gun and fired with aim
so accurate as to break the Indian's back. His
rifle being now empty the large Indian once
more leaped yelling towards him, and summon-
ing all his energy, threw his tomahawk at the