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VARIOUS

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TO OUR READERS.

IN entering upon our new duties, we deem it unnecessary to make any promises, or to offer any plans. Our cheerful acceptance of the station which the partiality of our classmates has assigned us, is a sufficient pledge of devotion to our trust; while precedent has, to some extent, established the limits within which our aims must be confined.

The nature of the position in which we are placed, ought, in justice, to supersede the necessity of urging our claims upon your patronage. We are not unconscious of the many difficulties which we must unavoidably meet; yet, we doubt not, that they, who have imposed a difficult task upon us, will manfully aid in bearing us successfully through it.

As long as the Magazine can be well sustained, and conducted in a manner consistent with the original design, there can be but little danger of over estimating its value. It will be useful, as conducing to the development of talent; it will be interesting, as a kind of mirror of college mind.

The age of this periodical renders it an anomaly among American college publications—a fact which reflects credit on the undergraduates of Yale. Its success, in the future, will depend partly upon our exertions, and partly upon yours. We have, therefore, a common interest at stake, which involves

our common credit ; and let it not ever be said of the present college generation, that through unfaithfulness or want of ability, it proved unworthy of the heritage which had come down to it, through so long and illustrious a line of predecessors.

Allow us, then, to engage in our labors with the confidence of your kind assistance and encouragement.

We remain yours, with profound respect,

E. W. EVANS,
B. F. MARTIN,
A. H. CARRIER, } *Editors for the*
J. W. NOBLE, } *Class of 1851.*
S. McCALL,

YALE COLLEGE, JUNE, 1850.

THE
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No. VII.

Wyoming.

THIS name designates a spot of our country, of which much is imagined, but little generally known. A secluded place, seldom visited—often described in terms partaking of the air of exaggeration, as some transcendently beautiful vale hidden among rugged mountains—invested with a classic charm by the sweet muse of Campbell—barely mentioned in our common national histories, yet celebrated in legend and song, as some smiling abode of innocence and blessedness, that was once turned into a frightful waste by the hand of war; we are apt to associate with it the idea of an airy region of fable, rather than a real locality. Few, indeed, ever dream of finding, in any vulgar hamlet among the Allegany hills, the identity of that romantic vale in which Gertrude and Waldgrave loved, and

“Old Outalissa woke his battle song.”

Yet charming as is the picture, it does not transcend the reality. The imaginary Wyoming differs little from that which has a geographical position on the banks of Susquehanna. When the cursory narrator of strange events has erred, he has seldom erred by exaggeration. When the poet has indulged in fiction, his fiction has been strangely like the truth. They, indeed, must have a tolerably correct, however imperfect an idea, of Wyoming and its history, who have read the romantic story of the Lost Sister, the Legends of Queen Esther, and the Bloody Rock, and the sweet lay of the Caledonian bard.

We should not attempt a recital of what is already familiar to all, were it not for the hope of also telling some things, which to many may possess, at least, the interest of novelty.

This far-famed valley, is a deep oval basin of the Susquehanna, with a rich alluvial bottom twenty miles long and three wide, here gently undulating and there spread out into beautiful plains, all irrigated by deep streams, and clothed with a luxuriance of vegetation that reminds the traveler of scenes in tropical climes. It is hemmed in by a double range of mountains, towering up on the east side in a series of rugged and craggy steeps, but on the west receding with a

gentle slope and stretching along, north and south, in a continuous ridge of richly wooded highlands. At the northern extremity, the river breaks in through a deep narrow chasm, cleaving a mountain in twain; whence it flows down the valley in a smooth, beautiful, majestic sheet, pursuing a serpentine path, now laving the granite base of the mountains, and now meandering through fertile meadows and flowery lawns, embracing in its broad bosom many green islands, and finally making its egress through a wild rocky pass, like that through which it entered. Such is Wyoming valley, a hamlet abounding in historical incidents of a painfully interesting character.

So eminently adapted by nature for the abode of man, it seems to have been a favorite possession of the aborigines, from a period indefinitely remote. An unknown and primitive race, receding far back into antiquity, farther than tradition penetrates—a race of which nothing is told but the simple fact of its past existence, and that not told by human tongue, has left here, as in some other parts of the continent, a few lasting foot-prints. Near the centre of the valley, on opposite banks of the stream, the remains may still be seen, not quite obliterated by the hand of cultivation, of two large mysterious-looking mounds, which were found by the first white settlers in a tolerable state of preservation; though the age of a superincumbent growth of trees, assigned to one of them the antiquity of a thousand years.

Previous to the immigration of the whites, the valley had long been held under the nominal jurisdiction of the Six Nations, but occupied in lawless freedom, by belligerent parties of the Nanticokes, the Delawares, and the Shawanese, who, in the intervals of war, cultivated the plains and pursued game on the mountains. Count Zinzendorf and the Moravian missionaries—the first white men that ever set foot in Wyoming—have handed down some singular accounts of the bickerings of these savage tribes, one of which is particularly worthy of mention, as a kind of satire on the warfare of more refined nations.

One day, while the Delaware and Shawanese parties, whose domains lay on opposite sides of the river, were enjoying a temporary peace, the warriors had gone out on distant hunting excursions beyond the mountains. It happened that the Shawanese children, having crossed over to the Delaware side, quarreled with the children of the other clan, for the possession of a gaudy insect. The juvenile contest grew warm. The women came as umpires, but soon took sides. The affray, becoming more and more general, was kept up with increasing violence, until night brought the warriors to the scene. Then commenced war in earnest—the first of a connected series of wars, which spread through all the neighboring tribes, and were protracted through a long term of years. In this literal strife for a butterfly the Shawanese forfeited their all, and the victorious party became sole lords of the territory.

It was about fourteen years before the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, that a band of emigrants from Connecticut, lured by glowing accounts of the fertility of the land in the valley of the Susquehanna,

pioneered their way through into the heart of the wilderness and planted a colony in Wyoming. Having brought with them a liberal supply of provisions and implements of husbandry, they took up their abode on the rich alluvial plain near the upper end of the valley. They erected comfortable dwellings, cleared away the deep tangled forest; and under the hand of industry the wilderness soon blossomed like the rose. On a soil boundless in its resources, on the most amicable terms with the savage hordes who dwelt in close proximity, this little colony for awhile went on thriving, rapidly increasing in numbers, enjoying in peace the gifts of smiling Plenty.

But a fearful blight suddenly came over the scene. The Six Nations, growing jealous at the advances of the whites into one of the most valued portions of their territory, contrived to arrest their progress by a stratagem of almost unexampled malignity. A delegation of Mohawks came to Wyoming under a false pretext, clandestinely murdered the chief of the Delaware tribe, and laid the crime to the charge of the whites. The savages were roused up to all the vengeful ferocity of which their race is capable. Falling upon the settlers as they were pursuing the daily occupations of the field and the household—without warning, without arms—unconscious of danger and even of suspicion, they massacred large numbers of the men in cold blood; the rest escaped, men, women, and children, by a confused and hurried flight to the mountains—nor dared rest there but for a moment, to look back on their property plundered and their dwellings wrapt in flames. Imagination can best picture the scene which the bleak rocks witnessed among those unhappy fugitives—the widow and the orphan wailing in the agony of fresh grief—the scattered remnants of two hundred helpless families flying in distress and consternation—their friends slaughtered before their eyes—their happy homes in a moment wrested from them—a savage foe lurking on their trail and a journey formidable as death before them. Ill-clad, ill-armed, and ill-provided with food, they pursued their way on foot through the inhospitable wilds, suffering incredible hardships over a dreary journey of two hundred and fifty miles to their native State. Such was the first act of the long and melancholy tragedy, of which Wyoming has been the scene.

When the news of these outrages reached the ears of the Pennsylvania authorities, a strong force was forthwith sent to drive away the Indians from the valley. The mandate was followed up by speedy execution, and in a few years a new swarm of emigrants from Connecticut poured into the rich fields, now ridden of the savage foe that had made them desolate.

But no sooner had these adventurers established themselves in their new homes, and, by dint of industry, made all smiling and happy with the blessings of abundance, than an unexpected difficulty arose, which threw a gloom again over the colony. The State of Pennsylvania disputed the title of Connecticut to the soil—each laying claim to it in virtue of a direct grant from the British crown. The settlers would brook no

authority but that of their native State, and a detachment of Pennsylvanians came, not to subdue, but to supplant them. Hence arose a series of civil feuds, which for years made this valley a continual scene of turmoil and violence—the new claimants obstinately assailing, and the occupants with equal obstinacy defending their own claims. At length, in a brisk battle fought in the deep mountain gorge through which the river leaves the valley, the assailants, returning after a short interval of peace, were driven back discomfited, and the commencement of the revolutionary troubles prevented an immediate renewal of hostilities.

With the returning smiles of peace Wyoming bloomed again like a garden. Its population had already attained the number of three thousand; and now, after the dawn of a sunny day, new multitudes were thronging in upon it. Hitherto, owing to the tumults of war, and the difficulty of communication with the distant State of which they claimed to be a portion, they had lived without any regularly organized government. But at length, left free to pursue happiness unmolested, and still left dependent upon themselves by the mother colony, they formed a temporary government of their own, perhaps the most purely democratic of any that history commemorates. The people, in common council assembled, were to decide all questions of legislation. They adopted, in the main, the laws of Connecticut. Judicial power was delegated to a court, from which, however, there could always be an appeal to the sovereign people. It speaks well for the character of the citizens of this miniature republic, that its popular deliberations were conducted with order, and characterized with the spirit of an enlightened and liberal policy. We find them establishing free schools, erecting churches, equalizing the burden of taxation, providing bountifully for the relief of the widows and orphans of deceased soldiers, sending off arms and provisions and troops to the aid of the band of patriots, who were fighting the battles of their country on the eastern borders. For three years, the distant mountain fastness in which they were nestled, protected the people of Wyoming from the aggressions of the foe which had come hither from beyond the sea to shed kindred blood. But the storm lingered only to gather strength and to burst upon them with the greater violence.

"Sad was the year, by proud oppression driven,
When Transatlantic liberty arose;—
Not in the sunshine and the smiles of Heaven,
But wrapt in whirlwinds and begirt with woe."

Near the close of the war, a mingled horde of Tories and Indians and British regulars, under the command of Col. John Butler, came down the Susquehanna from Canada and the lake country, on a mission of blood, whose history will not soon be forgotten. They had selected Wyoming as the most inviting field for havoc. All things conspired to point it out as the spot, where an enemy, galled by defeat, might best vent its cowardly rage, and savage ferocity might fully glut its vengeance. The colony was defenseless. All its best arms and

most of its efficient soldiers were in the service of the Continental army. That army was too far removed to afford any protection now. Thus situated, the inhabitants were reposing in all the negligence of fancied security, when this devastator from the north came down upon them—sudden, rapacious, and terrible—like the vulture upon its helpless prey. The red men, lured by the offer of premiums for scalps, and goaded on to vengeance by the bitter remembrance of their own expulsion, were ripe for the perpetration of enormities; nor did the sequel afford ground for the belief, that the Christians who led them on and paid them, were less eager for blood than they.

It was on the fourth of July, a day associated with events of various interest, that the settlers were thrown into alarm by the tidings, that a formidable foe was lurking close at hand. Weak and terror-stricken, yet not daunted, they prepared to defend themselves as best they might. The women and children from the more exposed part of the valley were hurriedly collected into a fort. All who were capable of bearing arms went forth to battle—the young, the aged, and the infirm—from striplings of fourteen to old men of ninety. Col. Zebulon Butler, of the Continental army, who was accidentally present, took the command. Leaving a few of the feeblest to garrison the fort, this feeble band bravely but unfortunately forsook their intrenchments, to meet the enemy in the open field. They had underrated the force which they had to encounter, nor did they discover their mistake until it was, alas, too late to retreat. Then pressing on to the charge with the valor of desperation, they so struggled against fearful odds, that victory for awhile hung doubtful. But at length, after a heavy loss, they yielded the field, overwhelmed by numbers, and betook themselves to a precipitate flight.

Ah, then was the beginning of consternation and disaster, when the ravenous monster of the wilderness, now maddened with the taste of blood, was let loose upon the fugitives,

“ With all his howling, desolating band.”

The scene which followed has been described as one of barbarous atrocity, unparalleled in the history of savage wars. All that is demoniac in human nature, all that is monstrous in cruelty, all that is keen in anguish and terrible in havoc and waste, were that day united on one agitated plain,

“ Where sounds that mingled laugh and shout and groan,
To freeze the blood, in one discordant jar,
Rung to the pealing thunderbolts of war,
Whoop after whoop with rack the ear assailed,
As if unearthly fiends had burst their bar;
While rapidly the marksman's shot prevailed,
And aye, as if for death, some lonely trumpet wailed.”

The massacre was general and indiscriminate. The whole valley was turned into one vast field of blood. The fugitives scattered hither and thither in wild dismay, only to widen the scene of havoc and to