

Recollections of a long life on the Eastern Shore

RECOLLECTIONS OF A LONG LIFE ON THE EASTERN SHORE

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Dedicated to THE EASTERN SHORE OF MARYLAND

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AN APPRECIATION

“There is a land of every land the pride. Beloved by heaven o'er all the world beside,
Where brighter suns dispense serener light And milder moons emparadise the night.

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There is a spot of earth supremely blest. A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest.

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Where shall that land, that spot of earth be found? Art thou a man? A patriot? Look around; O! thou shalt find, howe'er thy footsteps roam, That land thy country, and that spot thy home!"

IF questioned, most of the dwellers in these nine counties of Maryland known as the Eastern Shore would acknowledge that their lives are laid in pleasant places.

We are almost at the doors of several great cities, but are happily free from the rush and hurry found in them.

Life here is not lived at the pace that kills, as the physicians tell us is being done in the great centers of population. We still have time to be neighborly; when sorrow comes we can go to our 6 friends and say we are grieved for them; when joy comes we have time to rejoice with them. In truth, we have what is perhaps even more important, time, to do what Senator John Sharp Williams gave as his reason for refusing an unanimous renomination and re-election to the United States Senate. Time to sit down, take counsel with ourselves and know our own souls. To enjoy the beauties and gifts of nature, so bountifully bestowed, to listen to the birds and know their calls.

We have in this favored section a homogeneous population, more purely of the original American stock than any other part of these United States, having escaped the rush of immigration which threatens to submerge the original stock in the country as a whole.

Perhaps it would be pleasant to glance back to the origin of this life as it began.

In 1627 an Englishman, William Claiborne by name, a member of the Virginia Colony, was given by that Colony a patent for Kent Island. He took possession and gave grants to some of his followers who accompanied him. He, however, reserved to himself a considerable tract of land, upon which he built a modest home. He and his followers were the first homemakers to settle on these favored shores.

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In 1634 Governor Leonard Calvert sent a force under Giles Brent to take possession of Kent Island in the name of the Maryland Colony, making Giles Brent Governor General of Kent Island and giving to him the home that Claiborne had built for himself. Claiborne fought this invasion of his rights, sending a force by water to the lower Bay, where a hot fight took place in Tangier Sound. This was the first fight which occurred within the waters of the United States. The forces of the Maryland Colony won out and Claiborne and his followers lost, but a number of the Claiborne men transferred their allegiance to the Maryland Colony, and thus held their land and were given grants for them by Giles Brent.

In 1608 Capt. John Smith, of the Virginia Colony, in making a survey of the Chesapeake Bay had gone up to the mouth of the Susquehanna River. On his return he stopped for a day or two in the Sassafras River. Since the building of the State roads his visit has been commemorated by a pretty little monument which stands at the north end of the bridge crossing the Sassafras River. He paid high tribute to the beauties and climate of the Eastern Shore.

After the Maryland Colony took possession of Kent Island the settlers came in steadily. These men were all English, and the present population is largely descended from them. Any slight new strain which gradually worked in came from the north of Europe, so we see the *raison d'etre* of the congenial, kindly people we find in these nine counties.

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If we take a few minutes to glance at other sections, we will realize more and more how fortunate we are in having no race questions. All the great cities now have this question in an acute form, for hordes of immigrants from the South of Europe have rushed in, segregating themselves in separate communities, bringing with them their old habits and ideas of life and age-old race animosities, which they carefully keep alive by a press printed entirely in their old language. This trouble is not confined to the cities, for we find it more or less in all parts of the country. In New England, the home of the Pilgrim

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Fathers, which was of course English in its settlement, the situation is sad indeed for the descendants of the Fathers. They, perhaps worn out by the long struggle to wrest a living from their stony soil, have given way before the more recent hosts of immigrants and in many cases we find the original American population have drifted into the pauper class, or in the country districts have abandoned their farms and moved elsewhere, leaving the newer immigrants on top.

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The original settlers here found themselves in a beautiful fertile country. The forests were full of game, the rivers and bays teeming with fish. They soon learned the art of living in their new surroundings and developed a delightful home life of comfort and plenty. From that day to this the life has been characterized by comfort, abundance, and kind, neighborly living.

Up to this time there is little or no dire poverty and want, and there need be none, for abundant food is grown on the fertile farms. There is also plenty of work for those who will work, and it is only just to say that the vast majority are honest workers. Slaves were held here from the early days of the Colony until the Emancipation Act, but they lived under a paternal, kindly rule. It is, therefore, not strange that we have had no bitter race feeling between the whites and the negroes, and have been able to live together in peace.

Churches were early established in the Colony, and since that day have exerted a profound influence upon the lives of the people and helped to build up a fine body of citizens.

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OLD DAYS AND OLD WAYS

“Who can undo What time has done? Who can win back the wind? Beckon lost music from a broken lute? Renew the redness of a last year's rose? Or dig the sunken sunset from the deep?”

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IT has been frequently said that the golden period of the social life of this country was between the years 1750 and 1850. In settling the country there was a struggle to secure land, and every settler who had procured a goodly holding undertook to improve it with a mansion house of more or less pretension according to his means. 12 These homes were greatly prized and were usually bequeathed to the oldest son after the manner of the English estates, thus founding and perpetuating the family.

There were no towns of importance; social life was confined to these estates, which were the scenes of the most open-hearted, generous hospitality. No traveler was turned away. Both friend and relative always found the latchstring out. I have heard of several much-prolonged visits, one lasting eleven years. Perhaps it was one of these record visits that inspired Saxe's line, "The Lord defend us from the friend who comes, but never goes!" The master's family was usually large, often numbering eight or ten, and in the quarters there were large numbers of slaves. Among these there could always be found several who picked the banjo and played the fiddle. These happy-go-lucky musicians often furnished the music for the dances at the master's house, calling out the figures with great spirit.

"Ladies to de rite!" "Gemmen to de lef!" "Ladies to de centre!" "Gemmen hans roun de ladies!" "Balance all!" "Grand change!"

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It was rollicking music, the musician patting time with his feet, and swinging and swaying his own body in time with the lively music. The most hardened misanthrope would become infected with the spirit of the dance. When the pretty girls in their befurbeled gowns and their gallant escorts in their long-tailed coats danced the stately minuet or the lively lancers, the beautiful old parlors rang with mirth. They were the scenes of many delightful parties.

Down in the quarters the same musicians served and a night rarely passed without the negroes dancing the ho-down or patting the juba. They were happy under the kindly rule

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of their masters and were fresh enough after the day's work to put wonderful life into their dancing. One who has never seen the juba patted and danced has missed a real pleasure. The zest and life thrown into it was infectious, making everyone's feet itch to keep time. This was all very different from the modern exaggerated cakewalk. These negroes often had beautiful singing voices. I recall very real pleasure in listening to them in the quarters and in the fields, for they often sang at work. Life, both in the great house and the quarters, was leisurely and happy. This phase of life in this country has gone forever!

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BOYHOOD

“Ah happy years! Once more Who would not be a boy!”

TO enjoy golden days a child should be brought up from infancy in the country. He needs room to expand and develop not only his body and its faculties, but his imagination and his soul. He learns to love nature and from it he gets many wholesome lessons. The city child knows nothing but the backyard and the streets and rarely has opportunity, amid the glare and noise of the city, to know even the moon and stars. I was happy and fortunate to come into the world on an Eastern Shore farm. My father was one of a family of twelve and my mother of a family of ten. They were each born early in the nineteenth century and at a time when it was the ambition of parents to raise large families, and children in those days did not suffer from loneliness. My parents gave us the most loving care and their children revered them. I recall with tenderness and love their gentle but firm control. The census of 1810 showed an average of eight children to the family; 1900 showed less than two! Poor lonely children they are very often.

I was born on a farm situated on Harris Creek, in Talbot County, Maryland, which is a salt, tidewater stream about three-quarters of a mile in width, running parallel with the Chesapeake Bay and two miles from it. This is a beautiful stream with banks free from marsh. In summer it is a good fishing ground and in winter has excellent gunning. I was

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one of five boys and stood in the middle. Among the slaves there were three boys about our ages—John, Thomas, and Charlie— 17 who were our faithful companions, taking part on equal terms in all our play and boyish mischief. I taught these boys to read and write, and one of them, Charlie Frasier, when grown went into the ministry, going to Africa with Bishop Taylor. He spent three years there and on his return he told me he was shocked by the conditions of ignorance that existed there and the primitive rudeness of living. The people made no attempt to grow crops, depending entirely on what nature supplied. They would live in one territory until food became exhausted, then move on to another region in search of a new food supply. If they found another tribe in possession of a tract yielding food, they would attempt to take it away, and, if met with resistance, war ensued.

Charlie said he realized the great benefits and advantages he and his family had received by being brought up under a humane master, even though in slavery.

In my youthful days every day was a round of happy hours. We played hide and seek, we rode stick horses made of cornstalks, we harnessed our pet dogs to our homemade wagons, and played many innocent games, as it takes so little to make the country child interested and happy. He is never bored, there is so much to do and so many 18 wonders to explore. We boys went in swimming at an early age, learned to paddle a boat, to crab and fish, all of which add much to the joy of a boy's life. One of our chief joys was to go barefooted, and we took off our shoes and stockings just as early in the spring as mother would allow, and put them back very sadly when the time came in the fall to put them on again.

Vividly do I remember my terrible experience with a certain pair of brand new hand-knit wool stockings—an experience that then seemed to my mind to put me in the true martyr class. My mother said I must put on my shoes and stockings and go to church with her. I was dressed and the new stockings put on. Now, I was blessed with a very thin skin, and when the new wool and I came in contact my troubles began. To church we went, but, to my mother's exasperation, my time there was spent in rubbing one leg against the other

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and shedding tears of self-pity. On my return home I got a scolding and was told that I ought to be a braver boy and must stick it out. My sufferings went on until at last my father plead for me and a compromise was made. An old pair of thin cotton stockings were put on under the wool and I was a happier small boy. From that day to this I have avoided wool stockings.

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At the age of seven I accompanied my brothers to the little red schoolhouse two miles away on the Shore of the Bay. At that time my brothers and I, like many of the other little boys, were dressed in gingham aprons, worn over our jackets and trousers. They came below the knee just about the length worn by the 1925 flappers. I was very much given to freckling and could boast of more freckles than any boy in school, indeed was accused of being one big freckle and was much teased about them. My first teacher was Absolum Americus Vespuccius Christopher Columbus Thompson. He taught this school for two years then went to Georgia to practice medicine. We found this "little red schoolhouse" an excellent school and popular under its teachers, who were all men. During the time I attended there the roll ran up to eighty-three scholars. The community felt itself well served by this simple educational institution.

The situation of the schoolhouse was such that we frequently saw the large ships passing up and down the Bay as they sailed between Baltimore and the ocean and I became greatly interested in watching them.

In April, 1857, the new U. S. Frigate called the "Merrimac" came in and passed up the Bay to Annapolis Roads. This is the point where all 20 large vessels anchor when desiring communication with Washington. The "Merrimac" was a wonderful war vessel in size for that day, being three thousand tons burden. The "Roanoke," the next in size, was but one thousand tons. The "Merrimac" lay at Annapolis Roads for a week while being inspected by Government officials. Her visit caused great interest and during her stay she was visited by many excursions from Baltimore and other parts of the State. I went with my father and

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uncles on an excursion from Talbot County, at which time I was eleven years old. It was the first gunboat I had ever been over and I was greatly excited by all I saw. She carried forty guns, which seemed a great armament in those days. We little dreamed then what a strange career she would have, playing as she did, such an important part in the Civil War, and that while in Confederate control should be commanded by our much-honored Admiral Buchanan.

Three years later, in 1860, another ship of immense size came into the Bay overshadowing the "Merrimac" and all other ships, for it was the "Great Eastern," an English vessel, then the largest ship in the world. Her coming to the United States was a great event in the whole country. Her entry into New York harbor was 21 a triumph. Norfolk gave her a great reception, so when she sailed up the Chesapeake she was eagerly looked for and there was great excitement on the Eastern Shore. Visitors were invited to inspect her, and large parties were made up in all sections to take advantage of the invitation. Our school was in a wild state of excitement over the event and I was much disappointed that my father did not visit her and take me with him.

I have recently come into possession of the log of that great ship and it may be interesting to follow her visit in a few extracts from it, written more than sixty years ago. Her log keeper wrote: "Two pilots from Annapolis came on board Sunday, the 5th, at 4 A. M. Commenced hauling in cable at 5 A. M. The steamer came alongside with a few passengers from Annapolis at the low rate of \$3 per head.

"Six A. M., our eight tons of iron being once more at the bow, steamed out of the Bay at seven, stopped and discharged the Hampton Roads pilot, and at eight we were off Cape Henry with fine weather and smooth sea, ship steaming gallantly ahead at the rate of seventeen miles an hour. We are now in the waters of the famous Chesapeake Bay, which extends as far as Baltimore, about 190 miles.

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“On our way we passed several vessels, the crews of which lustily cheered us as we steamed by; two steamers from Baltimore crowded with people to meet us, and the advertisements had it to accompany us up to our anchorage. They had the presumption to try their speed with us, but by the time we anchored a faint line of smoke on the horizon marked their ‘whereabouts.’

“We anchored at 5 P. M. in seven fathoms of waters, six miles from Annapolis, in the State of Maryland. The other side of the Bay is about ten miles distant, so that we are anchored nearly in the middle, there not being sufficient water to allow us to approach nearer the town. From Cape Henry, which we passed at 8 A. M., to our anchorage 155 miles the whole distance at over 17 miles per hour.

“The Rivers Potomac, Susquehanna, and others find their outlets in this beautiful Bay. Baltimore is distant about forty miles and approached from the head of the Bay by the Patapsco River. This day has been exceedingly warm, the night close and sultry with much forked lightning.”

On Friday, the 10th the Great Eastern hove anchor and made her return trip down the Bay.

Our teacher allowed the school to adjourn to the Bay shore and watch her as she passed down. 23 She was a great ship, being 680 feet in length, 83 feet in breadth, and 58 feet in depth, and 22,500 registered tons. She was designed to carry 10,000 persons.

The “Great Eastern” was ahead of her time. She had great carrying ability, but international trade did not justify a ship of that character and she could not gather sufficient freight or passengers to justify her operation. Subsequently she was used to lay the first Atlantic Cable.

I have been greatly surprised to find that the recollection of these two ships and the two incidents of their visits to Annapolis have in less than three generations practically gone into oblivion. I sought to recall them at the libraries and newspaper offices and could get

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no information about them, but finally found the information in the Congressional Library. This, in spite of the fact that their visits caused great interest and excitement.

Father allowed us to use a gun at an early age and we learned to be good marksmen. He was an excellent shot himself and attributed this in part to the training given him by his mother, who taught her sons to be economical and careful. She would give them a charge of powder and shot in the morning and if they brought home game they were allowed another charge, 24 but if they failed, no more was given them for that day. My father confessed to his boys that in their great anxiety for more powder and shot he and his brothers were tempted, sometimes when it happened they brought down more than one piece of game with one shot, to save the extra pieces out and bring them in when they failed to get any and thus deceived their good mother.

When I was six years old I recall what to us small boys was a most exciting event. A man drove in, offering to take our pictures, daguerreotypes, they were. We stood on the lawn and had them taken—our first pictures. My picture I still have. I think all of us who can look back to the pleasant days on the farm will feel with me that the old song is true, “How dear to our hearts are the scenes of our childhood.”

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YOUTHFUL DAYS

“How beautiful is youth, How bright it gleams, With its illusions, aspirations, dreams!”

I WAS too young in the fifties to appreciate political questions, but, even so, I saw the foreshadowing of trouble. The military spirit ran high and in 1858 there were three uniformed military companies in Talbot County. Added to these there were two companies of cadets, one at Trappe, commanded by George M. Jenkins, and one at St. Michaels, commanded by myself, then 26 about thirteen years old. My company was very martial in spirit, though we were very juvenile, the members ranging in age from ten to fifteen years. Our uniforms were very fine, we thought, being blue jackets and white trousers with a blue

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cap decorated with a big red and blue pompom. We had wooden guns. We possessed a splendid flag, given us by Col. Joseph P. Warner, of Baltimore, who took a great interest in us. We had regular drills and occasionally went on trips to other towns to join in the parades. Once, when marching on parade through town, we met a bunch of excited cows. They charged down the street on our company and scattered the cadets, as our wooden guns were useless against such an enemy. This incident amused our public very much.

As war drew near feeling ran high in Maryland. Abolitionists were working among the slaves, persuading them to desert. During the year 1859 it is believed that John Brown was on the Eastern Shore secretly inciting the slaves to rise and attack the whites. At this time an excited slave confessed to her mistress that there was a plot to attack the whites that night. This news spread rapidly and precautions were taken at once by the men to protect their homes and families.

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Our cadet company was called on to do duty and set to guard some of the roads. We were proud to undertake the task and on this occasion we were provided with real guns. I am glad to say there was no need of guns of any kind, as no attack was made.

After war was declared, Maryland, as it was a border State, was under the control of the Federal Army for the duration of the war. The soldiers and abolitionists continued to stir up the slaves. The ones most affected were those who were dissatisfied with their masters, or were opposed to work on general principles. Federal agents also went among them, inducing them to volunteer for service in their Army.

For a number of years there had been an active movement in the Abolition party to get the slaves freed and sent back to Africa. They had secured control of the territory called Liberia and had a colonization association in this country which was endeavoring to induce the slaves to go to Liberia and build up a country under their own control.

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One of our neighbors, Mr. John Stevens, a man of wealth, in about the year 1856 built a ship costing him \$30,000, which he named for his daughter, "The Carrie Stevens." He presented this ship to the Colonization Society to be used for the purpose of taking the colored slaves to Liberia. She made a few trips, but they were never able to secure a passenger list sufficient to justify running her.

Strange to say, this society is still in existence, its headquarters being in Washington, where it has its corps of officers drawing good salaries derived from the endowment funds of the society. I am told they have sent only two men to Liberia in the past twelve years. In this section many slave owners were manumitting their slaves. This is clearly shown by a reading of the wills made from 1800. Some were freed at thirty years of age, quite a number at twenty-five, and a few as early as twenty-one.

The bulk of the slaves were devoted to their masters and their families, taking great interest in everything concerning them. They considered themselves a part of the family and their devotion was so great that they would run any risk to protect them. The families were equally devoted to the slaves and with the whole Southland had the tenderest affection for the faithful old Mammies and Uncles.

Such a devoted Uncle was Perry, who belonged to a dear friend and neighbor of ours. On a sad day during the Civil War, but some time before the Emancipation Act, there arrived at our friend's home a party of Federal recruiting officers who had come up the river in boats, landing at the different homes, persuading the slaves to desert their masters and go off with them to join the Federal Army. By many rosey promises they succeeded in inducing many to join them. At Perry's home every grown male slave, leaving behind them their wives and families, joined the Federal officers except Uncle Perry, faithful Uncle Perry. It was known that he would not willingly leave his master, but just at the time the other slaves were embarking he was lost to sight. One of the sons of the house went to look for him. After searching some time he found him near the shore, hidden behind a big

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bush, watching his brothers go, weeping bitterly, but never faltering for a moment in his loyalty to his master. At that time he was in his early forties, an able man in his prime.

As time went on the Emancipation Act went into effect and Perry became free, but always stayed and served his old master's family, devoted to them all. The family returned his affection and loved him dearly. His master was always "Marse Tom" and he was the faithful coachman and general factotum the year round until election day came. On that one day he asserted his independence; "Marse Tom" became 30 "Mr. Brown," with an accent on the Mr., and his much-worn seat in the carriage was deserted. He preferred to walk seven miles to the polls rather than ride beside a *Democrat!*

My grandfather, who died in the early eighties, was the owner of a small colored woman, Mabel Turner by name, who was very black and lame. In order to take care of her he freed her, built a house at the edge of the forest, and gave her her son to work for her and protect her. This boy was physically a perfect man, tall, broad shouldered, strong, and as black as the ace of spades. His name was Perry Denby John Turner, but the people of the neighborhood, on account of his color, named him "the Black Knight." He was a drunken, good-for-naught. Instead of helping his mother, as was intended, he abused her, took any money she might have, often breaking up her china, and furniture. But in spite of this he was a great character in the neighborhood. He had a fine voice and when drunk would walk the roads singing and shouting "My name's Perry Denby John Turner, Bayside's my station, Jesus Christ's my salvation, Mr. Alex Seth's my stopping place." Both Mabel and her Perry became helpless and had to be brought up to the quarters to be taken care of and nursed.

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Another slave belonging to my grandfather had a weird story which was true. We boys loved to hear it and often persuaded her to repeat it, as it gave us delightful chills up and down our backbones. She could give no name, except a sound, like suck, so she was known as "Suck" all her days. My grandfather bought her from a slave ship which had

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come up the Chesapeake Bay. At that time she was very thin. She told us the African tribe to which she belonged was defeated in battle with another tribe and numbers of her people were captured and held. Many of them were shut up and fattened as we do chickens. When they became fat they were killed and eaten, their captors being cannibals. The slave buyers would land from their ships on the coast and get into communication with the tribes holding prisoners and slaves. Suck, knowing she would be eaten should she become fat, refused the offered food, starving herself, and kept her body very thin and uninviting to the cannibals. So when the tribe sold slaves to the buyers she was included as being hopelessly skinny. When taken by the buyers and put on shipboard she had no idea what was to become of her. The ship brought her to Chesapeake Bay and she became the property of my grandfather. She soon learned from the other slaves that she 32 was to have a very different life in this country and would not be eaten. Being convinced of this fact, she began to eat heartily and kept it up all her days, becoming enormously fat.

Some of the colored people had very quaint ways. I recall one who frequently used to amuse us. On one occasion some callers drove up to the house. They were told that the family had driven out after dinner and would be away all afternoon. As the guests were about to depart she began to insist that they should come in and take some dinner. They, however, declined and drove away. I had just driven up and heard the conversation. I said to her, "Aunt Lizzie, how in the world were you going to give them dinner when you had none prepared?" She replied, "Law, Mr. Joe, I didn't ax em once tell I seed de had turned de hawses haid strate out de lane!"

This section was the birthplace and home of Fred Douglas, so notorious during the war and afterwards. He ran away from his home in Talbot County when a young man. Today he is practically unknown.

The colored people were full of superstitions and had innumerable reasons for bad luck. I remember on one Sunday I was driving with my brother James, an older brother, who was a physician. We were stopped at a crossroad where 33 there were two or three houses

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occupied by colored people. These people gathered on the roadside and stopped us, telling us that Mrs. Pindell, the wife of Dr. Pindell, wanted my brother to come to see her husband, who was quite ill, in fact his illness proved to be typhoid fever. One of the colored men standing by said, "Why can't Dr. Pindell doctor hisself, he's a doctor?" An old woman in the group replied, "Laws, honey, ain't you know a doctor's medicin's rank pison to his ownsef?"

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THE CHANGING YEARS

"So rolls the changing year And so we change Motion so swift We know not that we move."

SHOULD we glance back a hundred years, for a few minutes, we will see the many changes that have taken place in living conditions and the great gains in the methods of cultivating the land.

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A hundred years ago we had had no change in the mode of harvesting our wheat since the days of Abraham and Sarah, his wife. We were still using the old sickle.

It was in 1820 that the first scything cradle was introduced for the purpose of saving wheat and was speedily adopted, being used generally. In 1850 Mr. Huzzy, of Baltimore, and Mr. McCormick, of Virginia, each patented a machine for reaping wheat. It was very crude, but was soon improved. In 1884 the self-binders were introduced, which now seem to have reached perfection. The farmers eagerly bought these machines, which improved their farming methods and the foundations of great fortunes were made through their sale. This was the beginning of the great International Harvester Company.

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In the early part of the last century the only plows in use were those with the wooden mouldboards. They only scratched the surface of the ground and required continual sharpening. Iron mouldboards were introduced about 1820 and were continually improved.

I read today, in my copy of *The Sun*, of the invention of a manless plow, which digs a twelve-inch furrow, guides and turns itself, and simply needs a steady supply of gasoline. Once started the farmer can turn his back on it and busy himself with other things, his plowing going on automatically.

We seem to be fast approaching the time when the farm will be almost entirely machine run, and likewise our households will be scientifically managed, with fireless cookers in our cookless kitchens, and vacuum cleaners where once the cheery negro boy scrubbed the floor with sand from the creek.

And yet a doubt arises in my mind and I wonder if in spite of all the wonderful laborsaving devices these days are as happy as those simpler days of the past that held so many kindly and faithful human relationships, developed by working out together the problems of the farm and the home.

In those days of no factories all the ironwork needed on the farms was done at the village smithy, often the unofficial village club, where farmers and villagers came together to gossip and talk over affairs of State.

Carriages were very scarce seventy-five years ago and were crude and burdensome. Traveling was done on horseback, the roads often running through farms, with gates which had to be opened and closed.

In the well-to-do families each member of the family, even the boys and girls, had individual riding horses at their command at any time and all were accomplished riders.

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When the girls of the family rode out they were frequently accompanied by an attendant colored servant and were always faithfully protected.

Oxen were much used on the farms, though very slow in their motions, but as colored servants were plentiful, time was not such a vital matter as it is today.

The roads and fields were often made lively by the vociferous "gee's" and "haw's" of their picturesque drivers, as they urged their stately and ponderous steeds along. I recall comparatively a few years ago attending a sale of farming implements of an old gentleman who had died, and among them were seven ox carts.

In the last sixty years, perhaps, the greatest change of all has taken place in the value of money, for the value of money after all is only what you can get in exchange for it.

In those happy days twenty-five cents would buy more in country produce than one dollar will now. A good frying chicken could be bought for fifteen or twenty cents each. Now it has become a luxury very frequently at fifty cents a pound. Old hens sold at twenty cents apiece, weighing five or six pounds. Now they are selling at thirty-five cents per pound. Turkey, the 39 king of table birds, could be bought for seventy-five cents to one dollar each; now, to our grief, they are held at five or six dollars each. These comparisons can be kept up ad infinitum. We consumers can sing with the college boys "The old grey mare, She ain't what she used to be, She ain't what she used to be, She ain't!"

Up to 1850 the land in these counties of the Eastern Shore was well furnished with homes and every farm was occupied by its owner. There was nothing in which to invest money except land. By 1850, however, corporations were beginning to be formed to finance railroads, canals, and for other purposes. People began to make other investments. The war came on, the slaves were freed, which revolutionized the farming situation. Many of the slaves hired to their masters for modest wages, but gradually were weaned away. The farmers had difficulty securing help and as a result rented their farms and went into the towns to live. As a rule, the tenant farmer took little interest in the land, except to get as

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much money as possible out of it. As a result, in many cases, the farms and buildings were neglected. The owners generally lost their attachment for their property and allowed the old houses to run down sadly.

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“In that mansion used to be Free hearted hospitality, His fires up the chimney roared The stranger feasted at his board.”

In recent years, however, a new interest in the old estates has developed among people of large means from other sections of the country. They have purchased many of the old colonial homes, restored and improved them. In their desire to furnish these fine old houses suitably and revive the atmosphere of the past, many of them have become deeply interested in Colonial furniture and have scoured this whole section in their search for it. Much of this furniture had been discarded by the original owners during the period from 1850 to 1875 and replaced by most ordinary factory-made pieces, usually maple or golden oak, etc.

There was no spot too humble for the beautiful old mahogany and black walnut pieces, so little appreciated then. Much of it was given to the colored people, and used in their homes. But such was the quality and grain of the old wood that no matter how dirty and abused it had become, it would, under skilled hands, come back to its original fascinating beauty. I have in my possession several pieces which go to prove this. A rare mahogany peacock hatrack was actually rescued from a chicken house, where the chickens had found it a very comfortable roosting place. After this experience the original surface of the mahogany has been restored, soft and beautiful, unhurt by its rough usage. An old Heppelwhite sideboard, with a secret drawer, now in our possession, reached such a low estate that it was actually sold at a public auction for 90 cents. Later I secured it, but not at that price.

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The beautiful old black walnut pieces, black with age, are rarer and almost more valuable than the mahogany. Recently a very old black walnut desk was found in a neighboring county and bought at a low price. It got into the hands of a dealer and showed such beauty and unusual value when polished that it was bought by a wealthy visitor to this county for \$1,400 and could not be bought now for much more than that.

I am happy in possessing the old curly maple high-post bedstead which belonged to my mother and her mother before her. When I look at it the past rises up and I remember many a night's sound sleep in the trundle bed that hid itself under the great bed during the day and the flight of steps up which I used to climb to reach the much-desired spot at my mother's side.

43

OUR FORESTS AND BIRDS

"I think that I shall never see A poem lovely as a tree."

HOW well I remember the delights of our shady, grassy lawn, and even as a boy I realized in my heart "that only God can make a tree," and as I grew to manhood and now 44 to old age my love and reverence has increased, not lessened, for one of God's most beneficent gifts to man, a beautiful tree. Our lawn was chiefly shaded by forty beautiful locust trees, which had been planted by my great-grandfather and had grown to an immense size. Also there were English walnuts and cherry trees which had attained a size that they do not seem to reach in these days. Our county has been noted for its large trees, particularly in the white oaks and tulip poplars. I recall a tulip poplar that stood near a farmhouse and on a public road about two miles from Easton. It was said to have measured twenty-seven feet around the trunk six feet from the ground, and that a man could ride a horse beside it and he and the horse would be hidden from people on the other side of the tree. The lowest limbs were forty-five feet from the ground and it carried the size of its body well up from the ground. Its exposed position in recent years made it a mark for lightning and

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it was repeatedly struck until it was destroyed. Our trees naturally grew to great size if allowed to do so.

Governor Leonard Calvert, in writing home to England a description of this new country, spoke of the forests, and said that the trees grew so large he could drive his coach around among them. Our beautiful shady roads that were so 45 adorned by our original forests are now only memories. I feel sure but few of the older members of society can fail to remember delightful drives through their sylvan beauties. In the spring, when the woodland flowers were in their glory, the dogwood, the judas tree, the honeysuckle, the laurel, the lovely arbutus, and the wood violet made a fragrant fairyland. A spring walk through the woods in those days was to feast on beauty under the peaceful trees.

Or, when autumn with its red and gold foliage and beautiful dreamy days had come and the pines and other evergreens had put on their fresh, green dresses; when the squirrels and other forest inhabitants were busily storing away their winter food supply, a walk through the woods on the ground, so softly carpeted by the spicy pine needles, was an inspiration and delight.

Our people must be educated to the facts which attend the destruction of our timber, resulting now in the lack of our home supply, both of necessary timber and firewood. Highly important to us, too, is the fact that the denuding of the forests exposes us to the ravages of storms and curtails our rainfall, and this in turn lessens the fertility of the soil, thus reducing the yield in crops. I wish I could have power to rouse the 46 public conscience to the necessity of the conservation of our home forests, which will mean so much to future generations.

Up to 1870, and even later, we still had our beautiful forests of virgin timber. Since then they have been cut off and sold at what we now know was a very great sacrifice of their value. We are importing the lumber necessary for our use, much of it from the Pacific Coast, necessarily at very high prices both for material and transportation.

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Between the seventies and nineties the woodlands of the Eastern Shore were cut and sold for the cheapest uses, the owners getting very little profit, often getting only eight or ten dollars per thousand feet. Were those woodlands standing now they would be worth from thirty to forty dollars per thousand feet.

It has been suggested by some scientists that in the destruction of our forests we have brought upon ourselves the plague of insect enemies, which beset our gardens and crops. They claim while the forests stood these insects found their food supply among the trees, but since the cutting off of our forests they have betaken themselves to our field crops, fruit orchards, and gardens, and established a permanent residence with us. Everyone who now grows either food crops, 47 fruits, or flowers well knows how desperate the fight is with these insect pests.

Dr. Woods Hutchinson, in an article published in a magazine with a national circulation, advanced the theory that mankind will finally perish from the earth by starvation as a result of losing his fight with this insect kingdom. This, to a man in the city streets, sounds very foolish, but the man who is growing things *knows* and feels sometimes like telling his city neighbor that he is living in a fool's paradise.

“Hear how the birds, on ev'ry blooming spray, With joyous musick wake the dawning day!”

One of my earliest interests and one which continues to this day to give me great pleasure is the study of bird life. As the years have gone by I have realized its enormous importance to man. By the time I was ten years old the names of many varieties of our native birds were familiar to me. I knew their calls and songs, I could identify their eggs by their shape and color, and their nests by the material and style of their building.

My mother loved the birds very much and enjoyed their nesting in the trees around our home. Particularly dear to her were a pair of English mocking birds which nested in a holly tree between the house and the water. These same birds apparently returned

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each season for years. 48 The male was a beautiful singer. He would take a position not far from our windows and sing enchantingly, often on moonlight nights prolonging his song into the small hours. As children we were devoted to them and regarded them as cherished members of the family.

We were early taught not to rob bird nests of eggs or to imprison the young birds in cages, which is often a temptation to small boys. At that time little thought was given to the question of teaching children the duty of protecting bird life. There was general indifference to their extermination, but the actual danger of extermination has brought about a change.

This change is largely the result of the intelligent educational work done by the Audubon Society, John Burroughs, and many women teachers in our public schools.

As the years have passed I have become more deeply interested in bird life and have learned to appreciate more keenly the vital part they play in man's fight for existence, especially in defending all his food crops from the depredations of insects.

Scientists tell us there is no exaggeration whatever in the statement that if for ten years these insects should develop entirely unchecked by our friends, the birds, man would perish from the earth.

49

I do not let a summer go by, even though I am a town dweller, without providing houses for wrens and purple martins, and they never fail to accept my invitation. In my library today, sitting beside the open window, I very much enjoy their sweet songs, cheerful chatter, and the warbling of the purple martins. How friendly they are, how eager to serve man in his most vital needs, if we will only protect them and give them a chance.

In the wilds they have innumerable enemies, common among which are the crows, hawks, owls, blue jays, cuckoos, together with squirrels, and many other creatures. To escape these many will come around our homes apparently seeking our protection.

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A member of our family has told me of an incident which seems an apt illustration of this. She and her husband had taken a bungalow in the country for the summer months. When they took possession she went through the house, at last reaching the kitchen. On entering it she noticed that a pane of glass was broken in the upper sash of the window, and as she walked into the room she saw a little bird fly out through the broken windowpane. In a few minutes the bird came back through the window. This aroused her curiosity, and on looking she found that a 50 pair of wrens had built their nest in a corner of the kitchen cabinet and set up housekeeping there. At once she and her family determined that they must not be disturbed any more than possible. In the end it turned out happily for both families, as the gentle little wrens went right on hatching their eggs, taking care of the young birds, and finally teaching them to fly. They always used the broken windowpane in going out and coming in, making innumerable trips.

My cousin said they never seemed to be at all afraid of the family, but trusted them and looked to them for protection. This experience, she told me, had been most interesting, and a real pleasure to them all.

It is a sad fact, however, that the birds often fail to find the protection they apparently seek, for in many houses there lurks their worst enemy, the cat, particularly the pet cat. They learn to know more about the birds' habits than we do, and they know exactly how to climb to their nests when the mother bird is feeding her young. I recently visited a lady who showed me two nests she had put on her porch for wrens. At the time the mother birds were feeding their young in both nests. She had in her lap a pet cat which I noticed was watching the birds most intently.

51

I asked her what the cat would do about the young birds when they ventured out, and she could only admit that her pet would eat them all. It seemed to me it was very difficult to

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discover in this any real love for the birds. She was really betraying them without giving much thought to it.

There are dozens of birds that come about our homes in the spring for their nesting. I very much doubt if there are so many to go south in the fall, even including the young birds hatched during the summer. This loss is largely due to the depredations of the cats.

53

SPORTS I LOVED

“O! it sets my heart a clickin', Like the tickin' of a clock When the frost is on the pumpkin
And the fodder's in the shock!”

OF all the sports, I loved best to hunt with my dog and gun. The dog and his hunting abilities was an important element in the sport. Several of my dogs rise in my memory—fine, loyal to their duty, and devoted to me. Sport, a pretty yellow setter, was a wonder, often showing great sagacity. He needed little training, hunted 54 briskly, stood his birds firmly, and retrieved perfectly. On one occasion when my cousin with a gentleman from Philadelphia and I were gunning, a bird was shot and flew off wounded. Sport was off at once to look for it, and as he returned to us with the dead bird in his mouth he jumped on a rail fence. Just as he reached the top of the fence he scented a bird on the ground and made a stand on the fence, still holding the dead bird in his mouth. We were all charmed with the picture.

Another dog, Nick, showed at times real reasoning ability, and had a great reputation as a hunter. Mr. —, a young neighbor of mine, asked his loan for a day's shooting. I let him take him, and Nick obeyed me and went off with him. It happened that Mr. D— was a very poor shot. He gunned all day, Nick finding and standing covey after covey of birds for him, but in spite of many shots he failed to bring home a single bird. The next morning he begged again that I would lend him Nick, hoping for better luck. I consented and Nick went off with him obediently. It seems that morning the dog very soon found a large covey of birds for

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him and stood them beautifully. Mr. D—shot many times but failed to get a single bird. Again Nick went through the same experience, showing the 55 gunner the birds, standing them perfectly, but again Mr. D— failed to get a single partridge. Then Nick made his decision: he quietly left the man and trotted home. He refused to go out with him afterward, clearly reasoning that it was useless and discouraging for him to work so hard finding birds and standing them for a hunter who was such a poor shot.

Recently I knew a fine hunting dog, an English pointer, owned by a friend and called Danny Boy. His large, handsome head made one stop and admire him as his face showed unusual intelligence and the soft, brown eyes bespoke love and kindness. His life was one of marked contrasts, as when young he was badly neglected and became almost a tramp, going from house to house begging to be fed, harshly spoken to, and asked to pass on his way, no one caring what became of him. At that time he belonged to a busy man, who had no time to care for him. One day a gentleman saw this poor, thin dog, and said to the owner, "I will give you one dollar for him." This generous offer was quickly accepted and Danny Boy at once started in his new life. He was taken to an old homestead where dogs had always been much loved. As a result of his changed treatment he developed into a wonderful dog in many ways—a strong hunter—always retrieving 56 perfectly and invariably bringing all birds to his master whether he killed them or not. He loved to hunt from morn till night. On one occasion his master was preparing to go out gunning and had put on his gunning coat. Just then he was called to the telephone and the call proved a long one. Danny Boy waited patiently for a few minutes, then he went to his master, and taking the edge of his coat in his mouth gently pulled it, whining and barking all the time. He kept this up for several minutes, begging him to go with him. At last he realized he was getting no result from the efforts he was making, so he left Mr. H—, went over to the table, where his hunting cap lay, and jumping up he took it in his mouth and approached his master again, this time pawing him and offering him his cap, as if to say, "Surely you will come with me now!" It is safe to say, his master dropped the phone and went with his devoted dog.

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My hunting was usually done with a cousin and frequently we each would get a bag of two or three dozen birds. During the winter months we did much ducking from blinds. The ducks were very plentiful. We used frequently to get up at daybreak and go down to the Point, get into the blinds and shoot ducks as they came in from the bay to their feeding grounds in the river. This 57 was sometimes very cold work. I remember one shooting experience I had when the cold was particularly bitter. The river and bay were covered with ice, but a tide hole of considerable size had been kept open, to which flocks of ducks were coming. My two cousins and I went out on the ice to the edge of the hole and threw decoys into the open water. We cut blocks of ice and set them up for a blind and sat out on the ice for several hours, shooting ducks as they came in. The wind was blowing from the northwest, making a ripple on the water in the hole. It was so bitterly cold that the water froze on the bills of the ducks as they dipped them in and out until it became so heavy that they would turn over in the water from the weight of the ice. We got a quantity of fine ducks. I stayed in the blind all the time, but my cousins went to the shore several times to a fire which they had built there.

There was one shore on the bay that belonged to an uncle of mine to which we would go sometimes when the wind blew heavily from the northwest. Ducks and geese would pass from one point to another. In passing they would fly very low and near our shore. We shot them with heavy shot. I recall one class of ducks called brant, which flew well at this point. They were large, often being half the size of a goose. We 58 always got great bags of game at this shore. Sometimes we baited our blinds with corn for the smaller ducks and could kill a quantity when we desired, but there was no game shooting in this. It seemed almost like slaughtering your own poultry.

As a youth there was nothing I enjoyed more than riding to the hounds. My good horse, Nellie, was a fine hunter and foxes were reasonably abundant. The hunting season was in the autumn, the season of our most beautiful days. When a hunt had been arranged we arose early, so as to be on the ground by sunrise. The crisp morning air, the jolly

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companionship of friends, the restless horses, for they loved the hunt, the impatient dogs, all put us in fine spirits for the day's sport.

I recall an incident in fox-hunting when I was quite young. A party was arranged to go to another part of the county. We were to take our dogs with us and join the hunters at a designated point. We started in the evening and spent the night before the hunt with friends, so we could get out early next morning. Very soon after the hunt started we struck a trail which gave us a good run of about three hours, then the fox went into his den. We gathered around the den and sent to the neighbors near by to borrow shovels and picks to dig him out. The den was eight or ten feet below the surface of the ground. The mode pursued was to get a small pole and push it in the den as far as it could go, then take it out and lay it on the surface of the ground in the direction the den was running and dig a pit three by six feet at the point to which the pole reached; then take a second measure from that pit and get the direction the den was running from there, digging another pit in accordance with that measurement, repeating this operation until you had come to the fox. When we had come near him we would take a stick with its end split and push it in hard against him, twisting it in his skin. This would hold him so we could pull him out. Then we would get him by the back of his neck and legs, put him in a bag to keep for the purpose of turning him out for another day's sport.

On this occasion there were fifteen or twenty in the hunting party. The farmer came down with a bushel basket filled with cold ham, sweet potatoes, bread, and other good things. While we were enjoying this feast, the dogs resting quietly, scattered around in sunny spots, the fox suddenly came out of his hole, jumping out of the last pit we had dug and making off at a high rate of speed. The hounds nearest the pit quickly caught the scent and gave chase with a roar. This brought the whole pack into cry and the hunters rushed for their horses, leaving everything in confusion. When the fox had made a run of an hour he started off on a straight course for twelve miles down another neck. After running that distance pretty hard he turned and came back, making a beautiful run straight with the country road, the dogs following him so closely that at times we could see the fox and the

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hounds in the same field. This was a terrible run for the fox, the hounds, and the horses. As the afternoon wore on the fox managed to confuse the hounds and hold them back until night was approaching, when we blew the hounds in and gave up the chase. The hunters and hounds were a hungry, tired set. The day of the hunt had been beautiful, but the next morning dawned with high north winds, and snow which fell all day to a depth of about twelve inches, banking up the roads in many places. There was nothing for it but stay in the house. The next day we started and took the dogs back home, with twenty miles to travel. It was slow progress, for where the roads were blocked we had to take down fences and go through the fields.

Tournaments were quite a pleasant diversion in the past and they were held yearly in every 61 county, often in different sections of the same county. To this day the congregation of one church adheres to the habit and holds a tournament annually for the benefit of the church. In fact all tournaments were held for the benefit of a church or charitable object. I recall one tournament which was the largest ever held in this county. It was fifty years ago and was arranged by some of the leading society people of Talbot County. The citizens of Queen Anne and Caroline Counties were asked to participate in the event. It was held on the Woodstock Manor, in Goldsborough Neck, at that time the property of Mr. James N. Goldsborough. The young men of the community were then all owners of good saddle horses. For the privilege of entering the lists a good fee was charged and invitations were general. A prize cup was given to the winning knight and the privilege of crowning "the queen of love and beauty" at the ball to be held in the Town Hall the night after the tournament. There were four maids of honor to be crowned by the knights making the next best scores in the order of their positions. A number of knights entered the lists, being principally from the society young men of three counties. It was a decided event, being looked forward to with great interest and prepared for with great care.

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The young men practiced for the tournaments most industriously, one leading knight having his leg broken in a collision between two horses. The community was settled upon

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the idea that one of two or three knights would be the winner and that any one of them would surely select a queen that would be a real society favorite. It turned out, however, that a very young man of modest pretensions applied for permission to enter the lists and asked what privileges he could claim. He was told if he paid his fee he would be entitled to equal privileges with all others. He rode and won, greatly to the disappointment of all concerned. The managers subsequently asked him to give way, allowing the next knight on the list to crown the queen. This he declined to do. They then asked him to crown the queen which they would select. This he likewise declined, insisting upon selecting his own queen. This was a great damper on the ball and all subsequent proceedings. One young lady, one of five sisters, members of a leading county family, accepted the position of maid of honor, and with a great deal of grace and good feeling tried to stem the tide of disappointment and chagrin. Her efforts were greatly applauded, but nevertheless the result of it all was that no county affair of that kind has ever been attempted since that day.

63

OUR BEAUTIFUL WATERS

“The world turns softly Not to spill its lakes and rivers,
The water is held in its arms And the sky is held in the water.
What is water That pours silver And can hold the sky?”

64

NO pleasanter memories arise in my mind than those associated with the beautiful sheet of water upon which our home was situated. The water was salt, it being tributary to Chesapeake Bay, and flowed in and out twice a day. It was not a rapid tide, but amply sufficient to keep the water pure. My great-grandfather had the property resurveyed in 1780 by a warrant from the State. One of the boundaries which marked a spot on the edge of a marsh is a red oak cedar post, standing four feet above the ground. It is twelve inches at the base and is square, the four sides being worked to a point at the top, making a spire. On the western face of this post is carved the figures 1780. Nothing has been done either to preserve or to disturb it, yet after nearly a century and a half the wood shows no

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sign of decay and the figures are still perfect. This boundary, standing at the foot of the lawn, has been an object of admiration to me during my entire life.

In all the years that our family has lived beside these waters we have been able to find a good supply of fish, crabs, and oysters. Five varieties of good fish predominate—rock, perch, trout, crocus, and the taylor or blue fish.

This water offered untold pleasure every day during the season. Well do I remember a fishing 65 trip of mine which has been prominent in my memory for almost seventy years. When a boy ten years of age I went with an uncle on this fishing expedition. There were four of us in the party and we were fishing for rock. I caught a greater number of fish than any member of the party, one of my catch measuring thirty-three inches in length. I was as proud as Pompey and have told this story a great many times when with fishing parties. It was quite a task for me to take this great fish home, but I insisted upon doing it. I was too proud of my catch to permit anyone else to carry it, fearing they might be given the credit. I put a string in its mouth and slung it over my shoulder, trudging the long way home, and arrived at last nearly exhausted. That fish must have weighed at least twelve pounds.

My mother was a great lover of fishing. Her five sons doubtless inherited their fondness for the sport from her. It was her almost daily custom in August and September to paddle out on the water in her special rowboat about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, stopping to throw over her lines not more than twenty-five yards from the foot of the lawn. Here she would fish for two hours. Her luck was proverbial, as she rarely failed to bring home a good catch. These fish were often used for our supper, literally almost going into the pan alive and kicking. Good fish eaten under these conditions made delectable food.

It now seems almost unbelievable when we are told that in the old days diamondback terrapin was so plentiful that they were largely used as food for the laboring people. This, however, is true, for we find that an act of Assembly restrained the employers from forcing the laborers to eat terrapin more than twice a week. In my boyhood they had become

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scarcer and were beginning to be regarded as a choice dish served to specially favored guests. As the years have passed the terrapins have passed into the rare luxury class and we are lucky if we see a dish of them once in a year.

The oyster has shared somewhat the same fate. Fifty years ago they could be bought for ten or fifteen cents a bushel, the choicest being not more than twenty-five cents. In fact my father and the farmers living near the water used to buy them at two to two and one-half cents per bushel, caught up as they came without culling. These were brought to the shore and thrown out in piles, which were burned in kilns by the thousand bushels to make lime to fertilize the fields. Now the choicest are worth from one to two dollars a bushel.

With terrapins and oysters both rapidly disappearing 67 we have gone blindly on trusting, until very recently, that nature would remedy the results of our badly mistaken policy. We have followed the example of Alice's Walrus and Carpenter for many years:

“O oysters come and walk with us,’ The Walrus did beseech! ‘But wait a bit,’ the oyster cried, ‘Before we have our chat; For some of us are out of breath And all of us are fat!’ ‘I weep for you,’ the Walrus said, ‘I deeply sympathize!’ With sobs and tears he sorted out Those of the largest size. ‘O oysters,’ said the Carpenter, ‘You’ve had a pleasant run, Shall we be traveling home again.’ But answer came there none, And this was scarcely odd, because They’d eaten every one!”

The sports associated with the water help to develop children physically and broaden them mentally. We used to talk of the wonderful connections the water in our streams' had with all the waters of the world, and I remember well the thrill I felt as a small child when told if we threw a stone into the water that the ripple caused by it would continue uninterrupted to the shores all over the world.

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The body of water we loved so much lay directly to the east of our home and furnished an opportunity for the sun and moon in their rising to present a beautiful picture. I recall

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spending a night at the old homestead two years ago. I waked about 2 o'clock. The weather was very quiet, and as I looked from my window I saw the opposite shore reflected in the water, showing clearly trees and other objects, among them a beautiful grove of pines. The sky and stars were likewise reflected in this mirror which lay before my window, making it an enchanting sight, a vivid reminder of other days. It was a picture that could not be surpassed of nature's choicest gifts, land clothed with fine trees and a beautiful sheet of water all illumined by the quiet stars.

The Chesapeake Bay has been very generous to the Eastern Shore of Maryland in giving to it its numerous tributaries, which contribute so much to the comfort and happiness of its people.

In the early days of the colony these tributaries furnished highways for intercourse. In Talbot County there is hardly a homestead that does not border directly on these waters, and prior to 1870 the shipment of grain and all other produce, in fact all commercial relations, were handled directly from the shores of the streams. The sailboat, which served us for so long, is a thing of beauty and looks when in motion almost alive. It has now been subordinated to steam and gasoline. These boats are a great advantage commercially, but lack the beauty and delightful associations of a fine sailboat.

When the colonists came they found the Indians using what they called a canoe, which was built from birch bark and propelled by wooden paddles. The colonists imitated these canoes by taking the trunk of a tree and hollowing it out, which made a much more substantial boat. The great abundance of large trees, particularly pine, afforded opportunity of building much larger boats and these were equipped with sails.

Our people became very expert in building these sailing canoes and learned to join three, and sometimes as many as five or six, logs together, making a boat of considerable size. These boats were swift sailers and have never been surpassed for beauty of line. They have since that day played an important part in all regattas. Even the small ones were

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equipped with sails and almost every family possessed one. My father had a very pretty one, which we named "The Flying Fish." We learned, in our early days, to handle and sail her. "The Flying Fish" could accommodate five or six people comfortably. The cutting of our forests has destroyed 70 the large trees and canoes are now seldom built. These boats, when properly equipped with sails, are grace personified, and to sail one of them with a moderate wind gives one a sensation of joy that is hard to surpass.

Our sailing canoes were the forerunners and prototypes of the American racing yacht, our proud, undefeated champion and cup defender.

Our good sporting friend, Sir Thomas Lipton, has three times brought over the very finest yacht the English builders could design, quite sure he would defeat us and take the cup triumphantly back to England. Three times he has gone back defeated, but in great good humor, proving himself a good loser and fine sportsman.

The days spent in our "Flying Fish" were some of the happiest of my life. I recall particularly sailing parties by moonlight. The union of the beauty of the night and the graceful flying canoe were the essence of poetry and romance. This romantic atmosphere helped many a lover to woo and win his fair lady while they sailed together under the soft, bewitching light of the moon.

71

LOVE OF NATURE

"A voice of greeting from the wind was sent
The mist enfolded me, in soft white arms,
The birds did sing, to lap me in content,
And every little daisy, in the grass,
Did look up in my face, to see me pass."

FOR a number of years I have had close to our house several dogwood trees, that in their growing and blooming have been a great 72 pleasure to me, but perhaps my most

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interesting experience with them has been with the beautiful red berries they bear in the Fall.

They have always been regarded as delicious food by the birds. My advice to them has been to hold this food supply in reserve for their time of dire need, when snow covers the ground and they are cut off from all other food supplies.

In some years they have followed my advice, and many birds have turned to them in severe winter weather, particularly our beloved cardinals.

This year, however, they have not been so wise. The food treasure has been consumed in October, to my regret. The raid was started by that pestiferous fellow, the English starling.

On discovering the berries he sat on the limbs and gorged and gobbled them to an amazing amount, and was joined by some blackbirds that ate in the same way. I felt quite discouraged, thinking the birds we love would get none.

But about ten days ago I heard, early in the morning, a lovely song, and knew the singer was very close to the house.

I soon located him and found he was a beautiful mocking bird with a wonderful repertoire of songs in his throat. Ever since he has daily eaten some of the berries in dainty fashion, but, like the troubadore of old, he is a gentleman and feels an obligation, so pays for his feast with lovely songs. I have never heard a finer singer. The Metropolitan stars would have to look to their laurels should he compete with them, and he has been a very real delight to us. Today has been a day of storm and rain, but the brave little singer, in spite of it, has given us a fine concert of happy lilting songs.

It is wonderful how much pleasure and comfort our human hearts can draw from nature if we love and understand her. Theodore Roosevelt knew this, great nature student and lover that he was.

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It is told of him that during his trip through Europe after his retirement from the Presidency of the United States, when all countries were vying to do him honor, he gave one whole day of his crowded itinerary for a walk through England's quaint lanes. Earl Grey, Britain's great Liberal Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who a few years later made a noble fight to save Europe from falling into the abyss of the World War, was his companion.

The purpose of this walk was to listen to the songs of the English birds. It was in May, when they sang their sweetest love songs in seeking their mates.

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I am sure that this day with nature outlived in the memories of those two busy men many gorgeous social functions, many important meetings.

“What a beautiful world we live in!

“The Lord must have loved us, I say when I see, The bloom of the rose and the green of the tree, The flash of the wing of a bird flitting by— The gold of the grain, and the blue of the sky— The clover below and the tall pines above Oh, there's something about us the good Lord must love.”

What wonders the orderly progress of the seasons holds for us. Spring, with its tender, new life, the budding leaf, the tiny blade, brings its glorious promise of wonders to come, for this life is springing forth from an earth that but yesterday was dead and cold. Before one's eyes the buds begin to form, and on a sunny morning in April will be heard a familiar call, and I will know the first robin has come. He is hopping across the lawn, with his head on one side, watching for the worm that he knows is waking from its long sleep, and beginning to stir under the surface of the ground.

Each day will bring forth new marvels of life and development, and then one wakes some morning and suddenly finds one's self in a world of almost bewildering beauty of blossoms and flowers, for the promise of the early Spring day 75 is being fulfilled, and everywhere

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there is abounding life and almost unbelievable loveliness. The robin has found his mate and is building his nest in the apple tree close to my windows.

Then comes Summer, and harvest time of the grains for the feeding of mankind, and of fruits for his comfort and pleasure.

The robin and all his friends have hatched their eggs and are busy teaching their children to fly and get strong for the long flight South that will come before long. Autumn steals on almost unawares, but the red and gold of the trees, the falling leaf, hint of the coming rest that is nature's law.

Man, as well as the creatures of the wild, begins to store up supplies for that time of rest.

Then comes winter, with its ice and snow, and all the wonderful life that has clothed the earth with such beauty is gone as if by magic.

The robin is on his way South, and man draws into the shelter of his home and fireside, and sustains himself on the stores he has saved from Nature's generous harvest. This is a happy, peaceful time in family life, human ties grow closer, and man waits patiently, for he knows that all the desolation around him is not death, but sleep and rest, holding in it sure promise of life, abounding life to come.

76

"The Lord must have liked us I say at the dawn, When diamonds of dew gleam and glow on the lawn, And the birds from their throats pour the red wine of song, As if life held no burden of sorrow or wrong. The Lord must have loved us, I whisper just then, To give such a world to the children of men."

77

OLD GARDENS AND HOMES

A quotation from Swift often rises in my mind:

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“I’ve often wished that I had clear, for life, Six hundred pounds a year, A handsome house,
To lodge a friend, A river at my garden end, A terrace walk, And half a rood of land, Set
out to plant a wood.”

78

I think in this the poet has expressed the necessary adjuncts of a home. One of the most charming attributes of our Eastern Shore is its atmosphere of home. It is home for “the little house by the side of the road” and for the stately mansion retired from the public gaze. Its smiling, sunny landscape, its peaceful waters, make a strong appeal to the home instinct, which Mother Nature has planted in the heart of every good man and woman. This is true now and I believe it has always been so.

The early settlers, after building their manor homes, soon turned their attention to beautifying the grounds lying around them, and we still find in the old gardens reminders of their work which proves them no mean landscape gardeners. English ivy, the roots of which they often brought from the old country with the bricks that built their homes, clothed the walls and boxwood bordered the walks, adding dignity to the old gardens. The sunniest spot, and often the center of the more formal gardens, was reserved for the sundial, frequently regarded by the family as its most reliable timepiece. The crepe myrtle, that lovely shrub, was much used; the coral honeysuckle found a congenial spot to grow around many a modest door.

I think if the Eastern Shore could have a flower of its own as the States do, I would suggest either the crepe myrtle, a flame of beauty, whose blooming lasts through August and September, or the coral honeysuckle, so dainty and graceful.

Those old gardens were lovely spots. The lady slipper was much beloved for its delicate coloring. In direct contrast to these, sweet williams, massed in great spots of red; coxcomb, towering high over its neighbors, helped to make a bright picture, which was toned down by borders of dainty sweet alyssum and candytuft. We must not forget the

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rose geranium, particularly loved for its aromatic perfume. The simple cakes allowed her little charges and made so carefully by their devoted mammie were frequently flavored with its leaves.

In the old gardens there, too, could be found in profusion the much-loved lavender, rosemary for remembrance, mignonette, heartsease and the fragrant heliotrope, and lemon verbena. The parrot-tailed tulips of brilliant hues made a vivid study in color against the dark-green boxwood. On sunny days the air was scented by the tiny old-fashioned pinks, so sweet, that grew in profusion everywhere. Further on, the beds of pink and white phlox waved in the soft breezes.

Our fine climate is conducive to the easy growth of all flowers, but to me it seems the real home of the rose. In the old gardens could always be found the hundred leaf, treasured for its use in the linen chest, where the spicy petals laid between the linen sheets made a delightfully scented bed, so fragrant that it lulled the sleeper to sweet dreams.

There is still in a certain old garden a rose arbor one-quarter of a mile in length. I have walked in this arbor when every step was a delight. The house is situated upon a beautiful river and the rose arbor extends from the entrance of the garden near the house to the water's edge. A lovely memorial to the mistress of the manor, now long at rest, who made its first planting.

In the old days the mycrophilla, lovely climbing white rose, together with the pink and red tea roses, often covered completely the summer house, then found in almost all gardens and considered their most fascinating spot. Here one always found comfortable seats. What better spot can be imagined to which an anxious lover could conduct his coy, uncertain lady love, or a maiden her halting, timid swain? Amid the beauties of the garden, shielded from the world by the lovely bower of roses, I am sure hard hearts grew tender and timid hearts grew brave.

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It must be admitted, too, that the old gardens 81 always had a flourishing mint bed. For in those days the warm, sunny day usually found a smiling man servant serving a fragrant mint julep to the visiting friend, and when wintry winds closed the doors and lit the much-loved open fire, the guest, who sat so comfortably beside it, could often find within his easy reach a steaming bowl of apple toddy. And this reminds one of the old orchards.

These home orchards were planted entirely for the family's use, as the fruit was never sold. In them could be found varieties of fruit for all seasons. Apple trees especially were planted so as to supply the early June apple and the midsummer varieties, and in the fall were gathered the Grindstone, the Pippin, and the Carthouse apples, which were stored away in cellars and attics for the winter supply. Great keepers they were, too. Who of us can forget lying before the open fire in the sitting room, munching crisp apples and roasting chestnuts? Or who forget the juicy apple pie that mother tucked into our lunch baskets before we started on our long walk to school?

The master of the house almost always was the owner of a cider press and made fine cider. It was a very popular beverage, served freely by mine host to all his guests in those naughty days.

82

Many of the fruit trees in the orchard of my boyhood had been planted there by our great-grandfather. They were very large trees and bore full crops of fruit, I recall grafting a Grindstone apple tree in our orchard when I was ten years old. It grew well and bore fine fruit and would be standing there still but for the havoc of a recent cyclonic storm.

One of the most endearing qualities of the old orchards was that they served in so many ways the life of the home. A favorite playground for the children, a fragrant retreat for the elders, its fruits always ministering to their health and happiness.

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The spirit that has dwelt on our Eastern Shore in the old manor, in the simple cottage, in the lovely gardens and sunny orchards was the spirit of home, and I believe she still dwells among us a happy influence. When we think of city life, or indeed life anywhere else than on these blessed shores, we can most of us say with real feeling, "Stay, stay at home my heart and rest, Homekeeping hearts are happiest, For those that wander They know not where, Are full of trouble and full of care. To stay at home is best."

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