



Picturesque America; or, the land we live in

a delineation by pen and pencil of the mountains, rivers, lakes, forests, water-falls, shores, cañons, valleys, cities, and other picturesque features of our country ; with illustrations on steel and wood, by eminent American artists

Bryant, William Cullen

New York, 1874

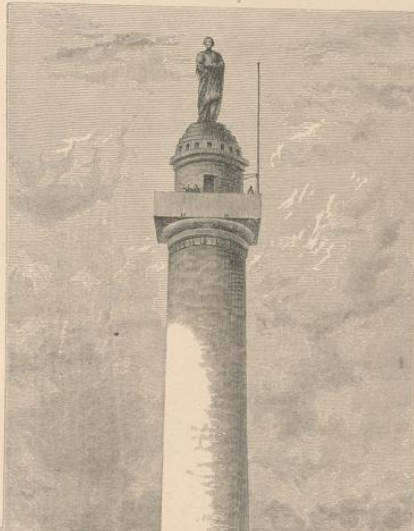
Baltimore And Environs.

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BALTIMORE AND ENVIRONS.

ILLUSTRATED BY GRANVILLE PERKINS.

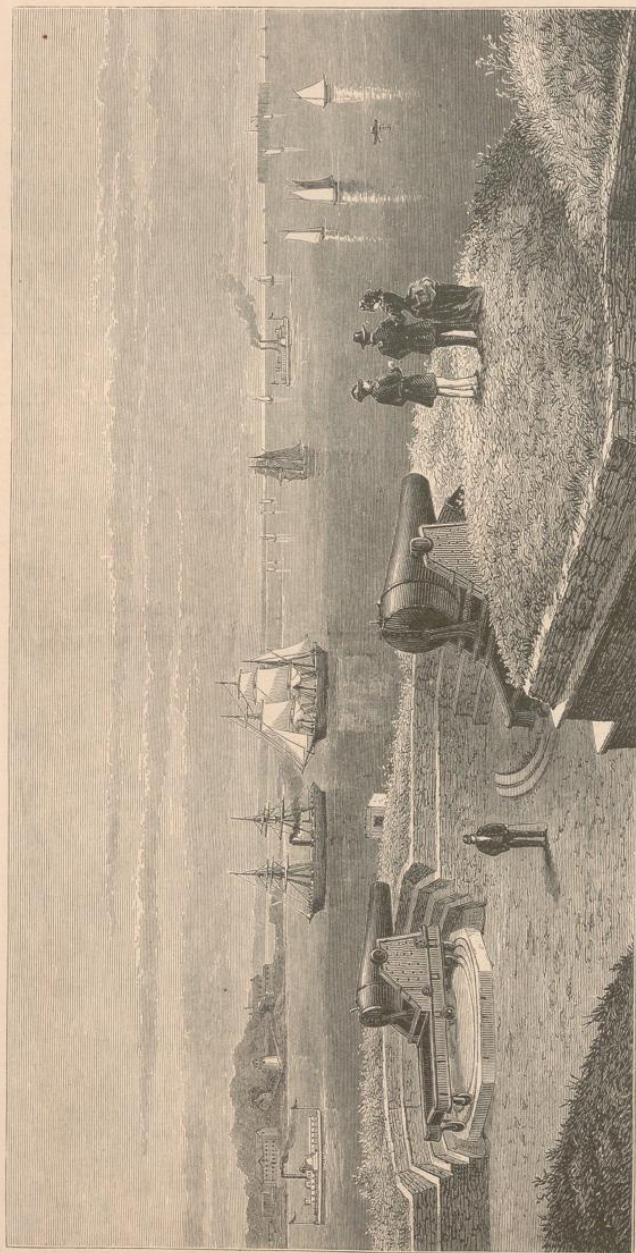
WHEN Captain John Smith adventured upon the wide waters of the Chesapeake Bay in two frail, open boats, we do not find that he explored the broad estuary now known as the Patapsco River. Beaten by storms and driven astray by adverse winds, praying and singing psalms in



the old, sturdy Puritan fashion, punishing rigorously all oaths by pouring a can of cold water down the sleeve, he put back hurriedly to Jamestown. On a second expedition he entered the Potomac and the Patuxent, but went no farther. Even when, in 1634, the Ark and the Dove, after a stormy



Washington Monument.



Fort M'Henry, at Entrance of Baltimore Harbor.

voyage, landed the Pilgrims of Maryland at St. Clement's Isle, the Potomac was regarded as the future seat of government. The first of the colonists who, either overland through the wilderness, or, as is more probable, entering the river from the bay, stood upon the future site of Baltimore town, is unknown. No romantic legends attend the city's birth. It is certain, however, that it was not until some time after 1634 that the colonists ventured to leave the older towns on the Potomac and brave the dangers supposed to coexist with proximity to the warlike Susquehannas. Even these first settlers had no forecasting of the advantages a city at the head of such an immense stretch of inland water would offer. Their only desire was to be on a navigable stream, where ships could anchor with safety.

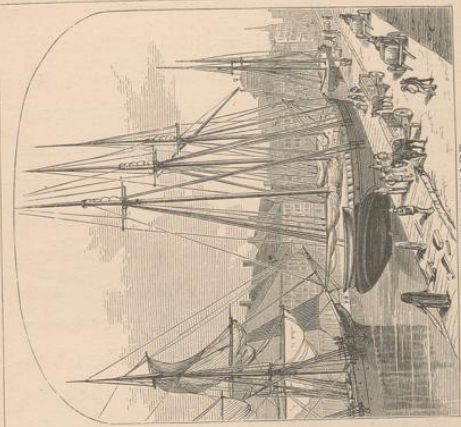
The immediate surroundings of this sheltered cove on the Patapsco were nevertheless such as to render its borders remarkably attractive. The fresh natural beauties of the land which greeted and delighted those who built here upon the edge of the wilderness are lost to their later descendants. Jones's Falls, which is now a great and ever-recurring nuisance, was then a pure and limpid forest-stream, the basin and the harbor as quiet and peaceful as any far island-shore in the depths of ocean. The woods came down to the water's edge and clothed the broken hills that rise, interlaced by small but rapid streams far into the interior. So even without that extraordinary foresight of future growth with which some historians would endow the founders of the city, they had good and sufficient reasons for their choice. Here, then, in the latter part of the seventeenth century, the va-



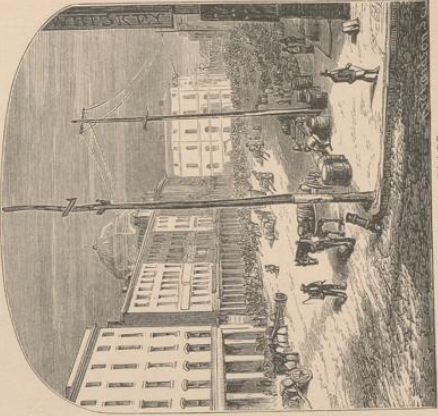
Baltimore from Federal Hill.

rious "points" and "necks" which run out sharply into the river were successively patented. Prosaic Jonestown arose, the chief production of which, judging from the old maps, appears to have been almost preternaturally symmetrical rows of flourishing cabbages. Huge hogsheads of tobacco, stoutly hooped, and with an axle driven through the middle so as to form a huge roller, and drawn by horses driven by negroes, were trundled over what are still known as "rolling roads" to town; flourishing mills, tanneries, and other manufacturing industries, soon became established; trade with the neighboring States and with the West Indies increased; and with this prosperity came the demand that the name of Jonestown be discarded, and the cities east and west of the Falls be consolidated under a new title, that of the first proprietary—Lord Baltimore. A picture of this worthy gentleman exists in Washington, painted by Vandyck. It was bartered off by a Legislature of Maryland for a series of portraits of the early governors by Peale. This sponsor of the city could not but have been a conspicuous figure at a brilliant court. His portrait is that of a man tall and finely formed; his smallclothes are of blue velvet, the coat embroidered elaborately, having open sleeves lined with blue silk, and brocaded in the same color; his doublet is worked in gold and colors; his sash is of orange silk; his breastplate of blue steel, inlaid; and the broad sash around his waist shows above it the hilt of a sword studded with jewels. He wears the heavy powdered wig of his times, and black shoes with box-toes and gold buckles. Such, in rich array, as bodied forth by the hand of a master, is the stately figure of Lord Baltimore, the city's patron. There were fitness and propriety in the choice other than that of historic gratitude. Baltimore was long an English provincial town in many of its characteristics. In its society the founder of Maryland would have been at his ease. Gentlemen of the old school, its citizens danced their solemn minuets and cotillons; talked much, but read little; and were eminently sociable, kind-hearted, hospitable, and happy in the repose of unhurried lives. It was a picturesque day for the city when gallants wore the three-cornered cocked-hat, powdered hair and cue; coats many-pocketed, narrow, light-colored, and curiously embroidered; smallclothes, striped stockings, and shoes with wide silver buckles. And then the ladies, witty, sprightly, gay—the Carrolls, the Catons, the Pattersons, the Ridgeleys, and their fair companions. From that time to this Baltimore has never lost its reputation for the beauty and attractiveness of its women, nor for the hospitality and cordial, frank courtesy of the homes they grace.

We find in a scarce pamphlet by a pleasant writer, who visited Baltimore just before the War of 1812: "It is computed that the city under the general name of Baltimore contains forty thousand inhabitants. The people of opulence seem to enjoy the good things, and even the luxuries of life, with greater *gout* than their neighbors to the eastward; the *savoir vivre* is well understood; and their markets, of course, are yearly improving in almost every article that adds to the comfort and splendor of the table."



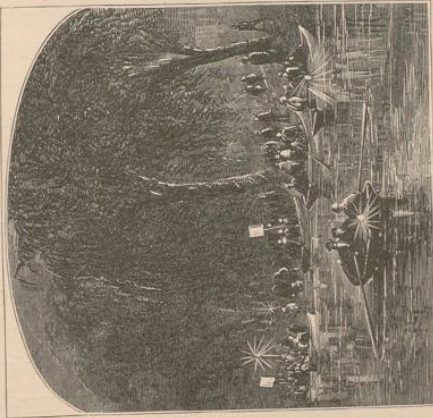
SPEARS WHARF.



EXCHANGE PLACE.



PUNGIES COMING UP THE CHESAPEAKE.



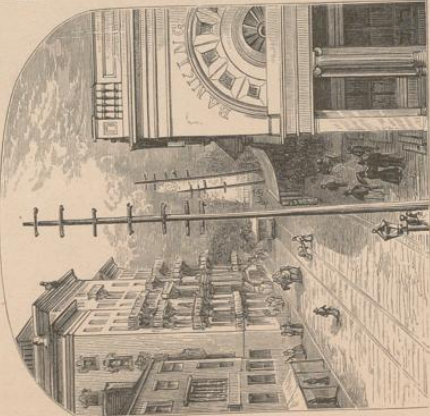
NIGHT SCENE IN PATTERSON PARK.



FORT M'HENRY.

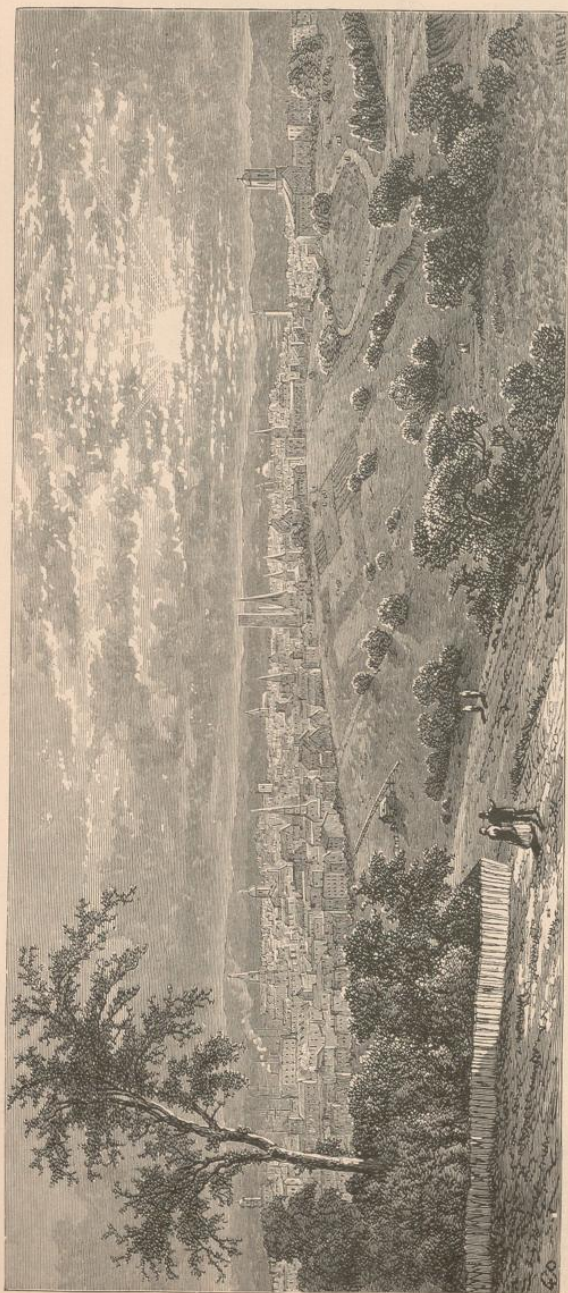


LOCUST POINT.



CALVERT STREET.

SCENES IN BALTIMORE.



Baltimore from the East.

Market — now Baltimore—Street was, in the time of which we are speaking, the favorite promenade. Then the avenue was resplendent with “dames and damsels—some with hooped-skirts; some in brocade, luxuriously displayed over hoops, with comely bodices supported by stays, disclosing perilous waists, and with sleeves that clung to the arm as far as the elbow, where they were lost in ruffles that stood off like feathers on a bantam. And, then, such faces—so rosy, spirited, and sharp—with the hair drawn over a cushion, tight enough to lift the eyebrows with a slight curve, giving a somewhat scornful expression to the countenance; and curls that fell in cataracts over the shoulders. Then they stepped along with a mincing gait, in shoes of many colors, with formidable points at the toes, and high, tottering heels, delicately cut in wood, and in towering peaked hats, garnished with feathers that swayed aristocratically backward and forward at each step, as if they took pride

in the stately pace of the wearer." In the muddy ruts of the unpaved streets, great, clumsy, capacious Conestoga wagons rumbled past, drawn by teams of the finest draught-horses in the country. They were bound for the old inns, with spacious enclosed yards and swinging signs, a few of which, peculiarly English, and comically out of place, still refuse to be improved off the city streets. At night the oil-lamps threw yellow gleams over the galloping gallants who came in from the family seats on the neighboring hills to attend the balls at the old Assembly Rooms, still standing at the corner of Holliday and Fayette Streets.

The town grew slowly. For a long time large swamps existed on the low grounds, and but few of the streets ran down fairly to the harbor. Where is now Centre-Market Space, near the centre of the city, one vast quagmire spread its uninviting extent. As the limits of the town touched the bold hills of Charles Street, the prospect for health and comfort was better. When the city had once firmly planted itself on this plateau, it began slowly to thrust out its streets into the neighboring country. Old wooden buildings, dozing in shady seclusion by the side of some narrow lane, would find themselves suddenly in the embrace of pretentious brick-and-mortar, and there many of them still are embalmed, with steep, gabled hip-roofs, moss-grown and bleached.

While the business-life of the city still centred around the wharves, the fashionable quarter was constantly changing. Starting along the Falls, it came by the way of Lombard Street to Harrison—now redolent of Jews' shops, old clothes, and rusty iron—to Gay. There it remained stationary until it spread into Lexington, North, and Calvert Streets, with outlying suburbs in Barré, Conway, and Sharp Streets, to the west and east, and Franklin Street to the north.

When, however, in 1812, the pure white shaft of the Washington Monument rose in Howard Park, it drew, like a magnet of supernatural proportions, the finest private dwellings around it in four parallelograms facing the four grass plots that radiate from it. The city surmounted at one leap the steep depression of Centre Street, and occupied at once the second plateau.

As was usual with our forefathers, when they had any scheme of public interest and more than usual magnitude to manage, a lottery was the primary means of raising funds for the erection of the monument. A lottery, it must be borne in mind, was then a perfectly legitimate transaction as well as a pecuniarily profitable one. Heavy wagons brought the now well-known Maryland marble sixteen miles over a rough road from Black Rock, on the Gunpowder River.

The design of the monument is simple and effective. The pedestal is fifty feet square by thirty-five in height. Around this are briefly recorded the most notable events in the life of Washington. From it rises majestically, brilliantly clear, polished, and white, the round shaft, for one hundred and sixty feet, and crowning its capped dome is the figure of Washington, of heroic size, holding in his hand the scroll of his "Farewell



SCENES IN DRUID HILL PARK.

Address," delivered in the Senate-Chamber of the State-House at Annapolis. A winding, dark, stone stairway leads to the top, and the visitor is provided with a lantern when about to make the long and tedious ascent. The view of the city and Patapsco is peculiar and far-reaching, but is almost a bird's-eye down-look, and loses in effectiveness. Below is an innumerable multitude, a sea, of roofs, from which, like masts, rise the spires of the churches, the pointed pinnacles of public buildings, and, like huge iron-clads, the glittering rounded metal roofs of the machine-shops and market-halls. To the north and west the hills are dotted with villages and isolated dwellings, or are heavy with forest-growth. To the south the Patapsco stretches far away to the bay, and on a clear day the glittering spire of the State-House at Annapolis, forty miles distant, can be seen. The configuration of the land-locked harbor is especially well defined, the Spring Gardens to the right, the inner and outer harbor in the middle ground, the various points and necks, and the wharves and manufactures of Canton to the extreme left.

Any idea of Baltimore would be nevertheless incomplete without a better water-view. Two prominent points afford this. Patterson Park is in East Baltimore. Here still remain the earthworks thrown up in the War of 1812, when the British landed at North Point, twelve miles below. Patterson Park was formerly known by the less alliterative and euphonious name of Loudenslager's Hill. It was a sop to Cerberus, the many-headed being, represented by the people of East Baltimore, or Old Town, or the city east of the Falls, who were dissatisfied with the appropriation for Druid-Hill Park beyond the western limits of the city, and some six miles distant. The park is a great resort of the beaux and belles of East Baltimore, and many an offer of a row on its lake of a soft summer's evening carries off the lady, by no means reluctant, from the side of her more timid but watchful mother.

Federal Hill, on the opposite side of the harbor, is better known outside of the city than Patterson Park. To many the name will suggest interesting reminiscences of the war. The fortifications then constructed still remain, although guns from their embrasures no longer threaten the city, and from the flag-staff and station shown in the engraving the flag of war has been superseded by the peaceful emblems of commercial prosperity. As the signals go up with their familiar letters, it is known to the pilots that a ship is in the offing. A puff of smoke rises in the harbor, and, with quick, short snorts from her powerful engine, a pert, saucy little tug goes out on the chance of a tow.

Below Federal Hill lies Fort McHenry, and eight miles down the river the round, white, and unfinished walls of Fort Carroll rise above the water from Soller's Flats. A prisoner on board a British man-of-war, Francis Scott Key here wrote the national song of the "Star-Spangled Banner." The flag that then waved over the fort is still in the possession of a descendant of Colonel Armistead. The original flag was thirty-six feet long, with fifteen stripes and fifteen stars. One of the stars has been cut out and given away. On one of the white stripes is written the name of Colonel George Armi-



Druid-Hill Park.

stead, who commanded the American forces during the bombardment. The printer-boy who put the famous song in type still—July, 1873—survives, and the paper in which it was published yet exists. It has only been, indeed, within a few years that the British ship *Minden*, on board of which it was composed, was broken up as beyond service. Her timbers were eagerly bought by Americans as relics.

From the fort the most agreeable method of getting back to the city is by engaging one of the half-amphibious young watermen that ply between the city and the opposite shore. By this means the wide, sweeping front of the harbor is seen. The water-line is exceedingly irregular, and the wharves are thrust out side by side like the projecting cogs of some vast wheel. Many of these wharves are very old—as old as the city itself, in fact. They are known by the name of the person who built them—as Bowly's Wharf, Spear's Wharf, or Smith's Wharf. The present trade of the port is becoming too great for their capacity. Larger facilities are slowly coming into use. At Locust Point the enterprising Baltimore and Ohio Railroad has built an immense pier and grain-elevator—one of the finest in the United States—for its vast business. Here the Bremen steamers land their

freight and passengers, while the immigrants for the West are taken at once on board the cars and shipped to their destination. Coming farther up the river, all the peculiarities of the harbor can be seen. Behind us is Fort McHenry; to the left is Federal Hill, with its signals flying; to the right is the wide expanse of the river, the numerous manufacturing industries that crowd the shore of the Canton Company. In front is a confused and blended mass of buildings—first, the factories and warehouses; then, more inland, the spires of churches; and the outlines, the mere suggestions, of private dwellings. Covering the water, the bay and its tributaries have sent up a peculiar class of sailing-craft; oyster-pungies and the swift-sailing market-boats—there are no better sailers anywhere than these low, rakish vessels—bay-steamers, and the crowd of sail-boats that ply on the Patapsco and the inland waters of Maryland and Virginia; the ocean-steamships and the South-American traders, whose battered sides and dingy sails bear witness to a long voyage; and ships that come from ports along the Atlantic coast from Maine to Florida.

So deep is the indentation of the harbor, from Light Street to the Maryland Institute, six squares distant, that the boats run up within a few hundred yards of the centre of the city. The regular landing-place is near the Institute, and a walk up Lombard Street opens the vista of Exchange Place and the Custom-House. This may be called the commercial centre of Baltimore. To be on Exchange Place is to be, in the majority of cases, a merchant of standing and credit. The Custom-House cost a large amount of money, is imposing, and worth a glance.

Passing out of Exchange Place and through South Street—devoted to brokers, bankers, and insurance agents—into Baltimore Street, and in one short square the restless stream of greatest travel is met. More persons pass the corner of Baltimore and Calvert Streets in the course of the day than over any other spot in the city. Near here are the largest hotels, and seen in the perspective of the sketch is the Battle Monument, erected to those who fell in the War of 1812. To the left is Barnum's, of gastronomic fame, where guests are supposed, from the city's special celebrity, to dine day in and day out on turtle and terrapin, Chesapeake oysters, and soft-crabs.

Here, also, the hackman hovers. It is a curious custom, dating from the first ordinances of the city, that certain hack-stands are established. It has become so much a right, by use from time immemorial, that, although the hacks standing around Battle Monument mar the appearance of the square, the privilege has never been interfered with by the authorities. If accosted, as will inevitably be the case, if the quick-trained eye of the hackman discovers a stranger, with the offer of a conveyance, which the world over invariably follows such recognition, let it be remembered that Druid-Hill Park is too distant for the most vigorous pedestrian, but is a pleasure-ground of which the citizens are justly proud, and one by no means to be neglected by the visitor.

In the year 1858 old Lloyd Rogers was in secure possession of an ancestral estate

on the northern suburbs of the city. It had been in the family since the Revolution, and the first owner, an officer in the Revolutionary Army, was a man of taste. Some recollection of the parks and lawns, the stately trees and wide avenues of English country-seats led him to lay out his grounds with admirable judgment. So year after year the rugged, gnarled oaks, the symmetrical chestnuts, the straight and well-massed hickories, and the tall, dome-like poplars, grew in shape and form to please the artistic eye. Down in the valleys and on the hill-slopes the untended forest-growth covered the rich soil in tangled luxuriance. Mr. Lloyd Rogers was an old man when he died, and resided almost alone on the place. Latterly he had given little thought to its improvement.



Hampden Falls.

The family mansion was sadly in need of repair, and the barns and out-buildings were leaky and dilapidated. The whole place had the appearance of having been given over to neglect and decay. When the commissioners appointed to select a tract of land to form a park for the rapidly-growing city offered what was then a high price for this place, the offer was accepted. Public opinion, hitherto divided as to the proper location, crystallized at once in favor of the purchase. So manifold were the advantages, so great the natural beauties of the estate, that dissent from its fitness was impossible.

Druid-Hill Park lies immediately on the northern suburbs of the city, and embraces nearly seven hundred acres of well-diversified surface. Steep, wooded hills rise to two

hundred feet above tide, giving glimpses of the surrounding country, and views of the city and the river. Quiet, sequestered dells, and cool, shaded valleys, watered by streams and rejoicing in springs of the purest water; drives that wind through meadows and woods; bridle-paths and foot-ways that seldom leave the welcome shadow of the trees, render the park one of great rural beauty and sylvan seclusion. It is indeed not a made show-ground, but a park with all a park's natural attractiveness of wood and water, grassy lawns, with branching shade-trees and avenues that are lost in forest-depths. All the architectural ornamentation is brought together around the central point—the old family mansion, now restored and enlarged. This is the favorite place of meeting of those who



Jones's Falls.

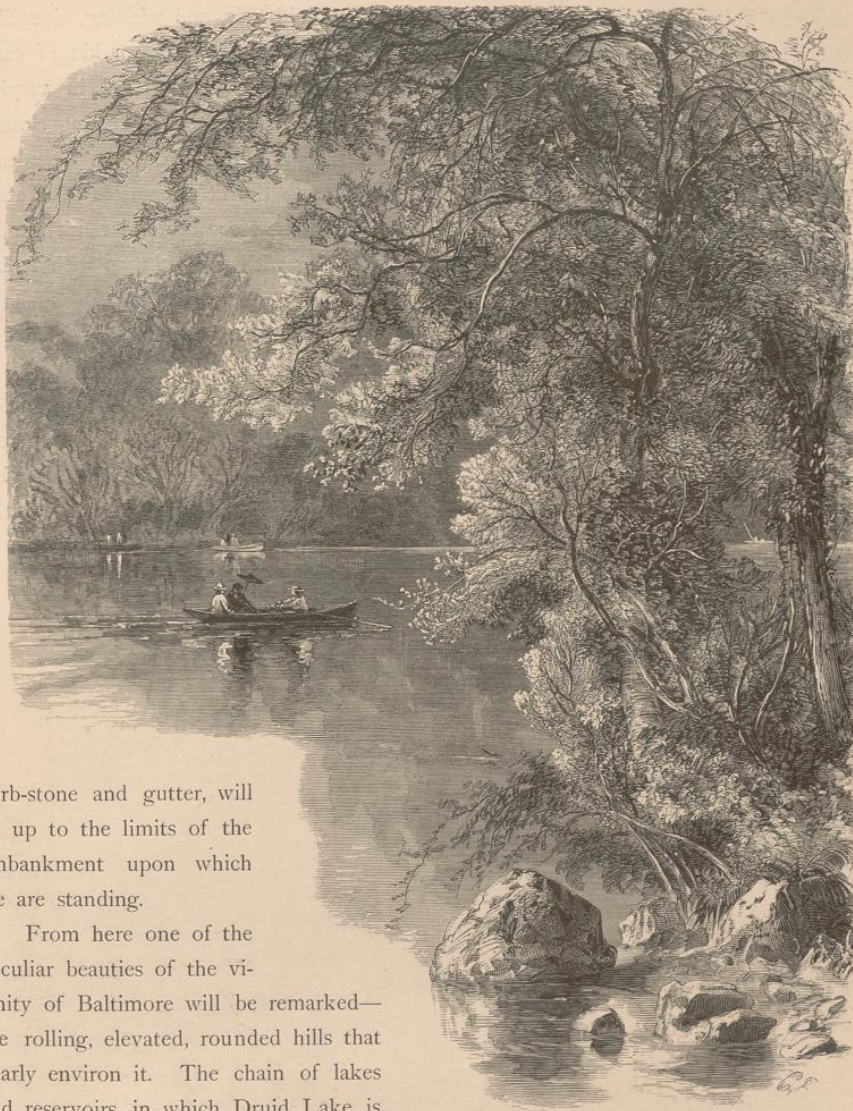
ride or drive from the city. About twilight of the evenings of early summer or autumn the scene is at its brightest, and horses and carriages, carrying much of the beauty and wealth of Baltimore, shift and change with incessant motion. The favorite drive is around by Woodberry, a sturdy little town of recent growth, and Prospect Hill, and back by the storage-reservoir of Druid Lake. On the approach to the white tower at the head of this lake, the upper part of the city gradually comes into view. To the right is Druid Lake, lying too low to be much affected by the prevailing winds, but stirring and simmering in its restless motion, glassy and reflective, shedding the light as a mirror set in rock. To the left runs the Northern Central Railroad around an abrupt curve. The foreground is

cut up by deep, gravelly ravines; the eminence on which stands the Mount-Royal Reservoir; and, immediately in front of the distant suburbs, the depression of North Boundary Avenue. The town beyond is fringed by the outlying spires of the churches upon the northern suburbs; for this northwest section is a perfect nest of churches. They emigrate here by twos and threes from Old Town, or East Baltimore, drawn by the constant



Mill on Jones's Falls.

migration of the members of their congregations to the north and westward. It is only a small segment of Baltimore that is here seen, although the distant view of the river is very extended. In this direction the town is increasing most rapidly, and, like some huge dragon, eating away the green fields of the country. Before these words are many years old the streets, the dwellings, all the unpicturesqueness of lamp and telegraph pole, of



Lake Roland.

curb-stone and gutter, will be up to the limits of the embankment upon which we are standing.

From here one of the peculiar beauties of the vicinity of Baltimore will be remarked—the rolling, elevated, rounded hills that nearly environ it. The chain of lakes and reservoirs, in which Druid Lake is but a link, and which supplies the city with pure water, extends through one of the most beautiful portions of this broken country. Druid Lake itself is but a storage-lake, with the capacity to afford the city, if needful, sixty days' consumption. Nearer the city lies Mount-Royal Reservoir, and, above, Hampden Reservoir. We now follow Jones's Falls, which presents us with some water-views—Hampden Falls, and the Cotton Mills of Mount Vernon—little sketches that are but suggestive types; and then

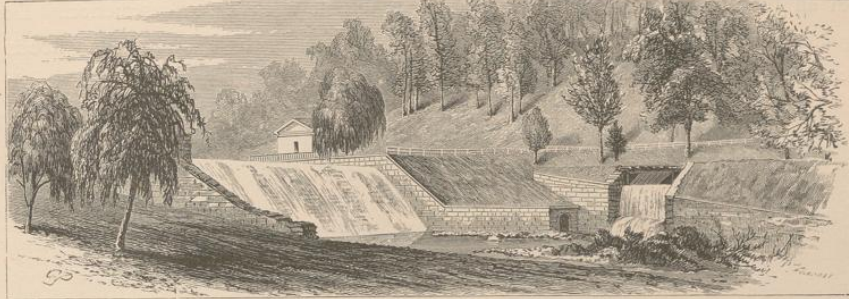
we come to Lake Roland, clasped in the embrace of bold hills, and winding, river-like, around jutting peninsulas. It is a charming scene. In the fresh, dewy sparkle of early morning, or in the soft closing-in of the evening shadows, it is beautiful in varying moods as the ever-changing, ever-new face of the waters answers to the drifting clouds; the heavy hill shadows, the trees that sentinel its margin, or come down a disorderly, irregular troop to mirror themselves in its bosom; or to the fitful caprices of Nature around, now bright with glint and gleam of sun or stars; now sombre and murky under driving winds and masses of low, drifting clouds, pelting with the rain, as with falling shot, the gray surface.

The lake is very deceptive as to size, as only bits of it can be seen from any one point. The official measurement gives it seven miles in circumference and a mile and a half in length. Even this, the fifth in the series, is not the last of the complicated system by which the Baltimore Water-works, costing over five million dollars, are rendered efficient. Seven miles farther up, where the Gunpowder River cuts its way between two narrow hills, is derived, by means of expensive works, a supplementary supply,



Scene on Lake Roland.

yet to become one of the principal sources upon which the city will depend, by an aqueduct ten miles long. Pardon us for being statistical for a moment, as thereby we can best show the extent of the present works. Druid Lake has a capacity of four



Lake Roland Dam.

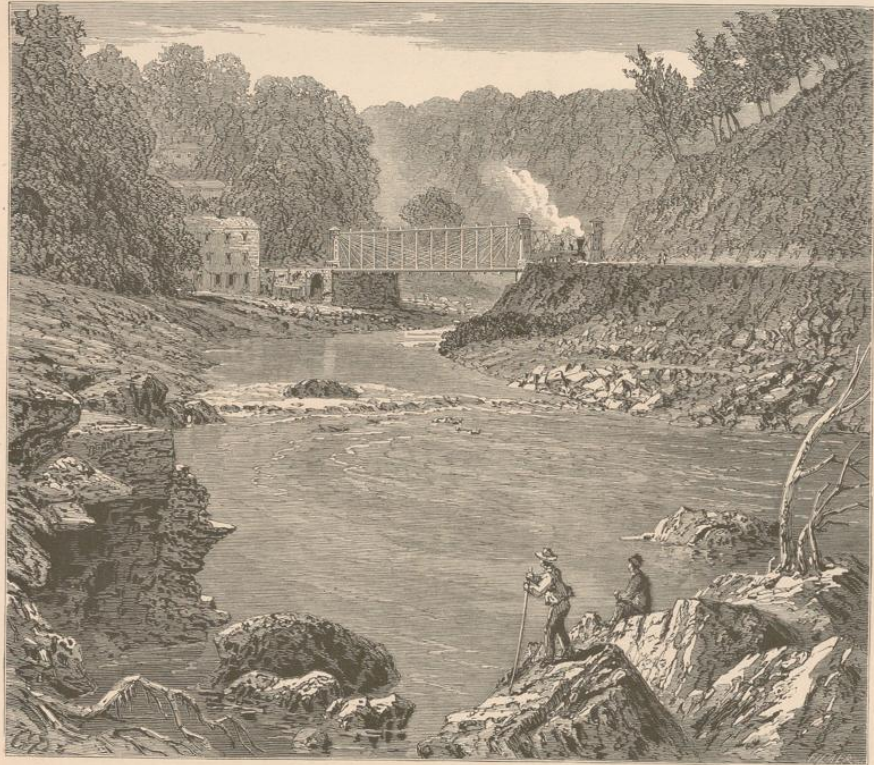
hundred and twenty million gallons; Lake Roland, three hundred and twenty-five millions; Hampden Reservoir, fifty-two millions; Mount-Royal Reservoir, thirty-two millions; and a new high-service reservoir, twenty-seven millions. The Gunpowder works, when completed, will be capable of supplying the city with more than three times the quantity now given by Jones's Falls and Roland's Run.



Lake Roland above the Dam.

All the streams around Baltimore afford scenes of much quiet beauty. Herring Run to the east has been honored by the brush of more than one artist; and Gwynn's Falls, a rapid stream to the west, presents many quaint old mills on its banks, which

seem to have fallen asleep listening to the ceaseless monotone of the waters flowing past. Reminiscences these, gabled, steep-roofed, weather-worn, of the time not long after the Revolution, when Baltimore was the largest flour-market in the United States. The Patapsco, in what is known as the North Branch, is also a favorite sketching-ground. With all their beauty these streams are at times terrible agencies of destruction. Down they come, bearing every thing before their resistless force, those freshets and floods of which the history of the city records many. At the Maryland Institute is a mark of

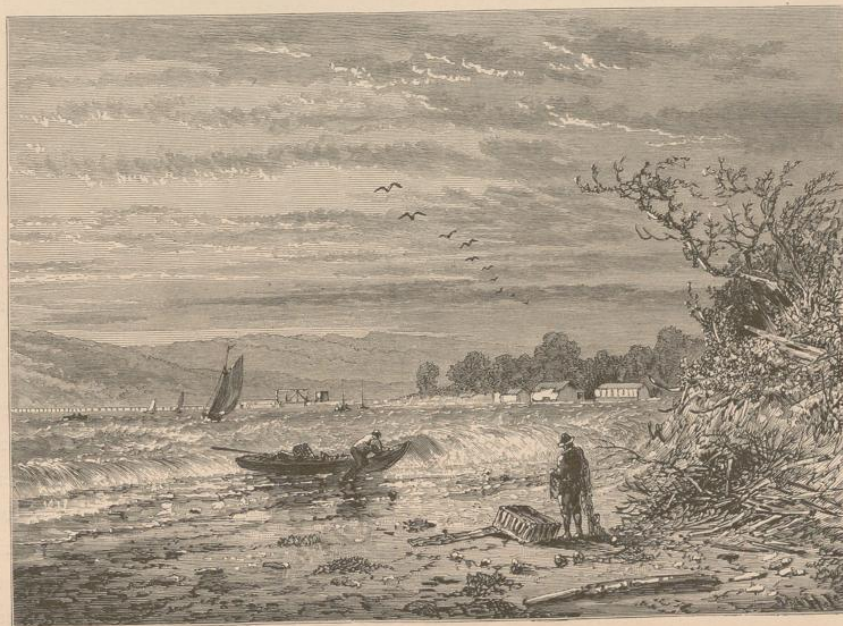


The Patapsco at Ilchester.

the height of the flood of 1868, six feet from the street, and the water backed up to within one square of the centre of the city. An impassable barrier was suddenly thrust between East and West Baltimore—all the bridges over the Falls were swept off—heavy stone mills went down with a crash—wooden buildings were undermined, whirled round, and carried away, and many lives were lost.

The charge that Baltimore, while an elevated, beautiful, remarkably clean, and unexceptionally healthy city, possesses but few places of striking interest, has been often

made. It is unjust now, as the pencil of Mr. Perkins has proved, and in a few years it will be but fair to presume that it will cease to be uttered. In addition to the objects of æsthetic or historic interest thought suitable in the preceding pages for the purposes of the artist, the Potomac Tunnel, of the Baltimore and Potomac Railway, and the Union Tunnel, of the Canton Company, are surpassed only by the more famous Hoosic, and girdle the city underground to the north and east. By the generosity of Johns Hopkins, a university, complete in all its departments, endowed with more than five million dollars, and attached to which will be a park of six hundred acres, has been already secured. The harbor channel has been deepened, so that the largest class of vessels now come up to the wharves; and, before long, a ship-canal will be cut across Maryland and Delaware to the ocean, and the voyage to Europe be shortened two days. From four to five million dollars are to be spent on Jones's Falls; the stream will be straightened, floods rendered harmless, and what is now an unsightly ditch will then, it is hoped, be an ornament to the city. Within a year the City Hall will be completed, and be one of the finest municipal structures in the United States, occupying an entire square and facing four streets, with walls of white Maryland marble, and in height, from the ground to the top of the dome, one hundred and seventy-two feet.



Scene on the Patapsco.