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PENMAR

and the Caverns of

LURAY.

A GUIDE BOOK.

BY E. S. RILEY, JR.

PRICE 25 CTS.

ANNAPOLIS, MD.

DAILY RECORD PRINTING OFFICE.

1882.





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TO

PEN-MAR

and the Caverns of

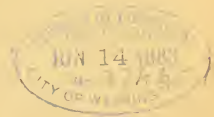
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TO PEN-MAR AND LURAY.

CHAPTER I.

FROM ANNAPOLIS TO PEN-MAR.

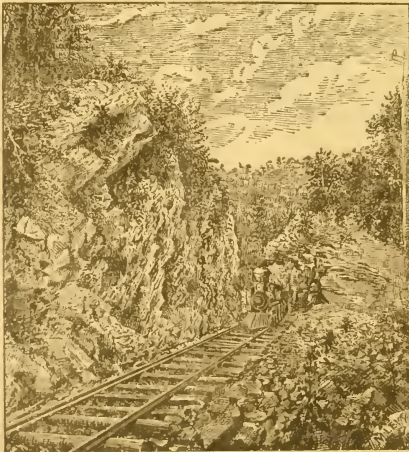


MOUNTAIN VIEW.

A ride by rail from Annapolis to Odenton is not interesting; but the road from Odenton to Baltimore is decidedly. Here we sweep along great fields of melons and sweet potatoes, the sentinels of a huge truck region that fills the markets of Baltimore with the best vegetables in the land; there we see the picturesque mill that has refused to give up the silvery stream for its motive power, for the stronger arm of steam, and far away slope the lovely valleys of Baltimore county, dotted with luxuriant fields, noble groves, and handsome houses of the thrifty farmers and wealthy merchant princes of that rich section. Trimming the very edge of the city for a few moments, passing in quick succession the fine buildings St. Agnes Hospital, St. Mary's Industrial School, and the House of Refuge, the train darts suddenly into the first of those magnificent tunnels that undermine Baltimore and give ingress and egress for teeming thousands that daily travel hither and thither over the groaning tracks of the Baltimore and Potomac, the Western Maryland, and Northern Central Railroad. These companies use this tunnel in common—the two last roads by paying a royalty to the Baltimore and Potomac. Just before the train reaches the mouth of the tunnel, there is a great



OLD MILL, GERMANTOWN GORGE.



GERMANTOWN GORGE.

banging as the windows come down. A novice does not understand it, but should he leave his window up, the suffocating smoke would enlighten his understanding. How well we recollect the first trip we made through the tunnel with the window up. The smoke was intolerable but the withering, indignant look of an habitue of the road was a great deal worse. One interesting fact connected with these tunnels is that they cost \$4,000,000.

At Charles street station, Baltimore, the traveler to Pen-Mar has forty minutes to wait, and though it gives a good opportunity for a short walk in the northern section of a growing city and the sight of fine houses and a few public buildings, it is advisable for passengers who wish a pick of seats in the Pen-Mar train to go on to Calvert Station, and walk three squares to the Hillen street Station of the Western Maryland Road. This train starts at nine and there is plenty time for all this—otherwise you may have to take a back seat.

After one false alarm, suddenly the train snorts up. At the gate a stupid and stubborn official looks at our tickets and said that was not our train. We knew better, pushing past our well informed railroad man, we appealed to the conductor—the true type of a Western Maryland farmer, brushed up with railroad knowledge and polished down with a railroad uniform. It was right, of course, whoever knew an editor to be wrong.

Under headway fairly and steaming swiftly up the beautiful valley that spreads out on either side of the Western Maryland road, the first thoughtful act of the railroad officials begins—maps of the surrounding country of our destination, filled with tabular and other information, are distributed to the passengers.

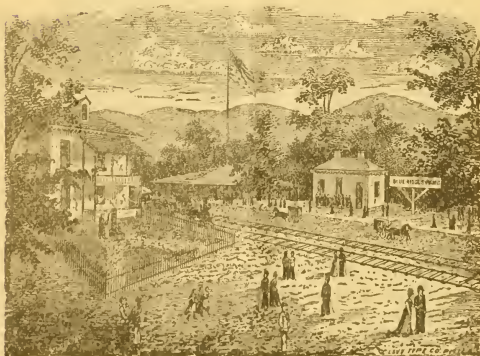
For over an hour we sweep by garden spots, green hills and fertile meadows, each ornamented with neat houses, or hamlets and villages. Reisterstown appeared the trimmest of all. It is not surprising that this section, with all the pastoral delights and country dainties should accommodate hundreds of summer boarders.

Thirty miles up the road the first huge red barn was seen—the sign we were fully in the heart of Western Maryland and not still another that we were not so far from Pennsylvania either. Great barns, large houses, some substantial bricks that looked like they had represented more than one generation of prosperity now came in sight.

Just above the Union Bridge the faint glimmer of blue along the western horizon presents the first glimpse of the mountains. How excited the passengers become; leaving their seats and stretching their necks to view the engaging scene. Here it seemed as if the Western Maryland road had



GERMANTOWN GLEN.



BLUE RIDGE STATION.

like some great anger bored its way through the rock ribbed-hills—"eternal as the sun." A few miles more and we approach the foot of the mountains. Now the range is divided. No longer the blue crests and lofty summits appear alone on our left—they stretch out before us on our right, and bar our passage to the clouds, but the locomotive Samson, carrying our train and seven handsome cars, is not discouraged. He plants his feet strongly in the ground and bowing his head and bending his huge back to the task, fairly groans in spirit as he begins the task of ascension. The vistas open. Miles to the right is a great gap in the everlasting hills, and between them lie the teeming vales of Northern Maryland and southern Pennsylvania, beyond is another range of sea-blue mountains which lift their heads to heaven and kiss the clouds. Another stretch of a few miles and the second gap opens to view Gettysburg and yet another blue line of mountains.

The ascent has fairly begun—the train groans, and the engine puffs and blows as upward we move—once so slowly that we were merely creeping. The mountains can now be almost touched with our finger ends for we are no longer hard by—we are on the Blue Ridge themselves.

Even on these hill-tops the silvery streams of gurgling water that we had seen below continue merrily to course their way to the Chesapeake, lingering long enough however on the way to make green the meadow and fertile the field. Side by side with nature's courses, the industrious hand of man has opened up roads from valley to hill-top, and from hill-top to valley again.

Near the summit of the mountain two little girl mountaineers stood on the road side, in exceedingly humble apparel, and waived us on and appeared as much delighted in giving us their futile encouragement as the excursionists were amused to receive it.

Looking back we find that the train has crossed one range, and mountains are behind us, but we are pressing on to still greater achievements. The panorama below is always changing—delightful views come and disappear for other pictures, as we cling to the side of the mountain, plunge through a cut, or tremble on the height of a "fill-up."

In going up the mountains the best views are on the right; the thoughtful traveler will take this side up and the left coming down.

The train has stopped at Pen-Mar. There is something exciting in standing on the borders of two lands. These Western Maryland road officials have acted on this common thrill that makes on a small plane "all mankind akin," and have erected a sign post just at a station bearing the legend "Mary-



HIGH BRIDGE ABOVE MECHANICSTOWN.



SCENERY NEAR DEERFIELD.

land" on one side, and "Pennsylvania" on the other, and who is so dumb and insensate as not to take one step from "Dixie" into Pennsylvania?

Sign-posts and State lines fade before the magnificence of the view before us. We do not stop here however, resisting even the inviting dinner bells, (yes, the proprietor comes down the hill with one in each hand,) of a side restaurant that enterprisingly offers ham, and bread and coffee for twenty cents. A walk of several hundred yards on a road, always on the ascent, brings us to the hotel, the dancing pavillion and to the vehicles whose owners vie with each other in dilating upon the superiority of their equipages to take you up to High Rock, yet two miles away.

High Rock has no charms now until dinner has been discussed. It is noon by the sun, it is evening by the appetite. At the hotel a good dinner, well served and cooked and sufficient in quantity, is provided for a half dollar.

For a quarter for adults and fifteen cents for each child, you can select any team you wish to take you to High Rock. All tickets are purchased at the pavillion, and these are recognized for passage by any of the conveyances. As you go up a fifteen-cent coupon is taken from the adult's tickets, and a ten cent one from the child's. When you return you give the balance to the driver, and that pays your passage down on any team you may select. It you walk down, rather a dusty and uninteresting road, you can go to the pavillion and have half tickets redeemed in money.

The ride to High Rock is a dusty ascent. High Rock is appropriately named—a high bolder that in the convulsions that built these backbones of the earth, made a frantic leap for air and liberty from the seething cauldron that fused its elemental parts. Stopped on its progress to the Heavens, it fell back upon the mountain top—a huge monument of its own folly.

The enterprising managers of Pen-Mar have not left nature unaided. They have built a large and substantial observatory upon it—three stories high. The highest point exposes one too much to the glare of the sun—the second story is the best for observation.

From this stupendous elevation the valley of Cumberland is before the eye of the observer. To the east and right a great blue spur of the Blue Ridge barely shuts from sight the town of Gettysburg—immortal in history. As the eye comes up the valley toward the west, Waynesboro, Pennsylvania, can be distinctly seen like a toy town in the distance, northward Greencastle is faintly discerned at the foot of the south mountains, westward the smoke from Hagerstown rises in



VIEW NEAR SABILLASVILLE

the hazy atmosphere, and some other smaller towns near the Virginia line, nestles at the foot of the Blue Ridge. Between all these interspersed with railroads, lie hundreds of farms whose trim fields look like little garden spots from the elevation from which we view them. Everything speaks of happiness, thrift, peace, prosperity. Down the rocky heights of the Blue Ridge we look upon trees rooted in the unfriendly rocks, and on and on the eye goes till the identity of trees are lost save where some solitary monarch holds the field alone. Over village, town, field, farm, farm house, woodland, the eye sweeps, down the valley fifty miles, and over it for thirty more, the eye goes on and on until the sapphire wall of the South Mountains rise to the clouds and stop the advancing vision.

What a stupendous idea this prospect gives of the Almighty! Here on the dizzy heights of this sublime peak, an awe steals in the breast that makes one think he has drawn closer to the Creator and can feel as he has never felt before His omnipotence.

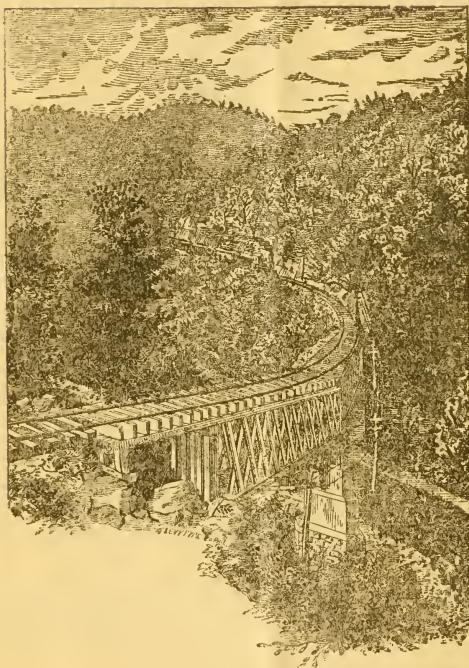
One look more—and we leave the sublime prospect, the delightful mountain breeze, the cheerful chatting of friendly but unknown companions, and ride down the rugged sides of the mountain to Pen-Mar.

Here the mazy waltzers were at work; now the sober quadrille—but he who has seen a ball at the Naval Academy, can only smile at the efforts of these novices.

There are many agreeable features of this resort, there were plenty of seats and drinking fountains every where.

A review of the Cumberland Valley from Pen-Mar, a listless waiting of a few minutes at the station, a rush for a good seat, and the train is off down the mountain side, taking in with it the view from Horse Shoe Curve; and a hundred other smaller but delightful scenes of meadow, field, grazing cattle and growing crops.

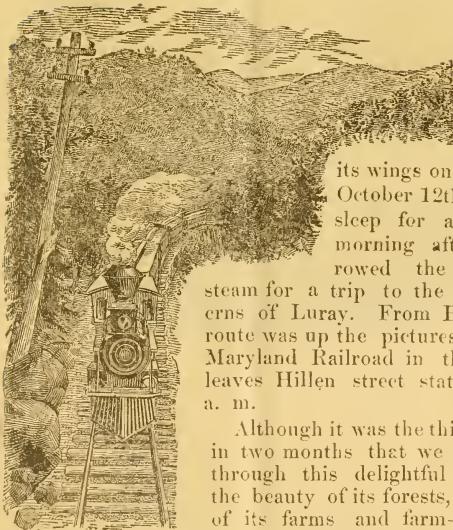
Night closes in before Baltimore is reached, and the cheerful line of sentinel lamps is hailed with a faint glow of pleasure. As the train darts through the tunnel at Pennsylvania avenue, we bid adieu to fellow-travellers but retain the most delightful guests in the halls of recollection.



SCENERY ABOVE MECHANICSTOWN.

CHAPTER II.

FROM BALTIMORE TO HAGERSTOWN.



It was a few months later and we were again on the road. The Baltimore Oriole folded its wings on the night of October 12th and went to sleep for a year. The morning after we borrowed the pinions of steam for a trip to the famous Caverns of Luray. From Baltimore our route was up the picturesque Western Maryland Railroad in the train that leaves Hillen street station at 7.35, a. m.

Although it was the third time within two months that we had traveled through this delightful country, yet the beauty of its forests, the neatness of its farms and farm-houses, and the grandeur of its mountain scenery did not fail in attractiveness.

The train was loaded with healthy specimens of paterfamilias of Western Maryland and their families returning from the Oriole. Among them we saw a quaint looking young



ASCENDING THE BLUE RIDGE.

girl—evidently of the Wynbrennarian sect—if one is to judge by the ancient pattern of her bonnet and the sad sombreness of its colors. Her whole attire was unique, but in spite of its tints, that made its singular—there was nothing repulsive about it. There were three of these young ladies together—two were robust and rotund in form, the third lithe—but all were ruddy and cheerful children of the saints.

While the train waited at Union Bridge on account of a slight accident ahead everybody, it seemed, wanted rations. It is a physiological fact that there is great sympathy between revolving car-wheels and a traveling stomach. The male owners of these useful organs began almost immediately a system of foraging around the town of Union Bridge. The stores, the single restaurant near the depot, and the railroad hotel were scoured for something to eat. As these failed to supply the necessary rations, a wider range was made, and the grocery stores next fell under tribute, and then the outskirts of the village were reconnoitred.

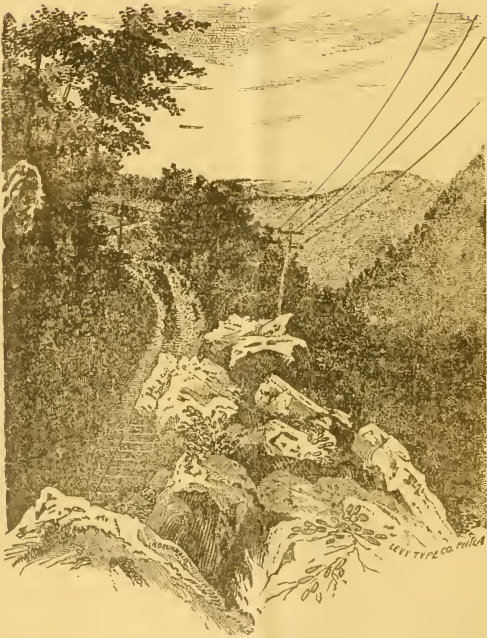
An hour and more's waiting and we were off. As we passed along the mountain's wooded sides, we had opportunity to observe the trees of the woods now turning to resplendent foliage under an autumn sun. The cedar, that evergreen of Southern Maryland, was not to be seen on the mountain side. In its place was the shapely spruce pine, sycamore, pine, chestnut, oak, maple and dog wood.

The Valley between Horse Shoe Curve, with its autumn tints and foliage, lying today as peaceful as the summer ocean, suggested the Happy Valley of Rasselas.

We sweep rapidly pass Pen Mar. Before us opens the fertile valley of Cumberland. As the train dashes in and out of skirts of woods, the valley, like the pictures of a kaleidoscope, changes in scene and vista. The garden spots that, a few weeks ago, we saw from High Rock, are now large, well-tilled fields, giving plenty and prosperity to their industrious owners.

A mile or so beyond Pen-Mar, we reach Edgemont. Here a branch of the Western Maryland Road runs up to Waynesboro, Five Forks, Attenwald, N. Franklin, Chambersburg and Shippensburg. This with other enterprises and connections of the Western Maryland management shows the ability of its able President, J. M. Hood, and it does not take a prophet to see, if he remains at the head of the company, the Western Maryland has a magnificent future before it.

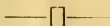
At one o'clock, two hours behind time, we reached Hagerstown. The engine of the Western Maryland road is shifted—and without the passengers changing cars, the locomotive of the Shenandoah Valley Railroad, is coupled to our train, and it dashes towards Sharpsburg.



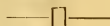
APPROACHING PEN-MAR.

LEVI TYPE CO. PHILA

CHAPTER III.



FROM HAGERSTOWN TO LURAY.



I do not believe any locomotives have a shriek that can rival the Shenandoah's in unearthliness.

The approach to Sharpsburg is bounded by mountain ranges right and left. Beside us lay the memorable battle ground of Sharpsburg. How peacefully the fields sleep today! how green the grass grows fertilized by the blood of gallant men and nameless heroes, where

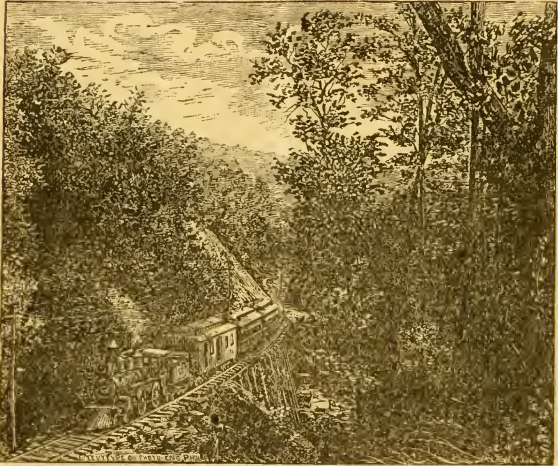
‘Glory guards with solemn round
The bivouac of the dead!’

A ride of fifteen miles through lands rich, reddish, rocky, brings us to the blue Potomac and “the raging canal” about which the Maryland politicians squabble so much.

Over the bridge, with a delightful prospect of water, and bank, and green, on either side, and we are on sacred soil. It is true the war is over and the passions of that contest have given way to a new burst of sanctified patriotism, but, in spite of these, there is something about the land of Lee that thrills us when we touch it.

Shepherdstown is the first place we reach in West Virginia. At this place a sharp fight occurred in 1862, Gen. A. P. Hill making a successful assault upon two corps of the Federal Army and driving them in the river. Shepherdstown is noted for the beauty of its ladies; but we did not tarry long enough to test the truth of this gallant assertion. We passed so rapidly through it, that we had time only to notice a very fine church, and a sign on a blacksmith shop with this legend—“No Loten.”

In this section wild grasses grow with a luxuriance that rival harvests in other places.



OWINGS' CREEK.

Seven miles from Shepherdstown is the Shenandoah Junction. As we reached this place and looked out the ear-window, we could see below us the beautifully graded and bedded Baltimore and Ohio, (Metropolitan Branch,) winding its way from the arteries of the west to the heart of the East—Baltimore.

Passengers can reach Luray by the Baltimore and Ohio also, by tapping the Shenandoah Valley at Shenandoah Junction.

Five miles from the Shenandoah Junction is Charleston, the capital of Jefferson county. It is a charming little town and makes a beautiful picture with its neat houses, green avenues, and many spires. Three quarters of a mile from this place, plainly seen from the train, is the hill on which John Brown was hung. It is an elevated situation and seems to have been selected with a view to let everybody see this tragic spectacle. Some years ago a man by the name of William Wilson bought the very lot on which the execution took place and erected a house, and like the old woman "who lived under the hill," if he's "not dead, he lives there still."

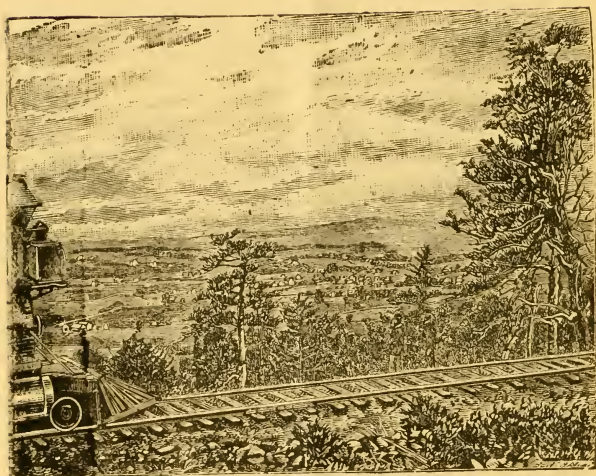
From Hagerstown to Charlestown, the same style of farming, the same thriftiness, and the same prosperity are visible as in Western Maryland. The very topography of that prosperous region is here,—mountains, mountains, everywhere, blue, lofty, inspiring.

Eleven miles from Charleston is Berryville, a neat and prosperous town of fifteen hundred inhabitants. Just as we pass Berryville, we enter Virginia—grand old Virginia. This is the fourth State we have touched since morning—Maryland, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Virginia.

We have been traveling the last hour and a half in the famous Shenandoah Valley. Rich in soil, rich in story, rich in heroes. This Valley begins at Shepherdstown and ends with the Luray—a distance of forty miles. All along this grand valley, of which it is said that when Sheridan had left it, a crow in flying across it would have to carry its rations, were seen flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, the sure signs of thrift and prosperity.

At Riverton, distant forty miles south of the Potomac, we were informed the Shenandoah Valley ends and the Luray begins.

It would be difficult to find a more picturesque place than the hamlet of Riverton. Situated at the Junction of the Northern and Southern forks of the Shenandoah, its beautiful cottages, located upon the rising hills between the rivers, are backed in the distance by a magnificent landscape that ends in a sublime range of lofty mountains. Along the river



EMBERLAND VALLEY FROM PEN-MAR STATION.

bank, the vine-draped rocks that hold the Northern Shenandoah in place, frame with beauty the teeming factory that gives, doubtless, the prosperity we notice.

The railroad in this section follows the Shenandoah, south branch, for some miles, and the scenery is delightful.

Suddenly our train stopped. A workman blasting rock had flagged that a piece of rock was on the track. In getting off the track, his foot slipped, he drew in his head to save that, and caught the blow on his shoulder. "I'm a dead man," he said when he was picked up; but in a few minutes he revived, refused the liquor proffered, and began walking towards the workmen at the blast.

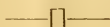
In passing over this new road, we crossed a trestle work—110 feet high. If anybody enjoyed this elevated position whilst the train crept and the timbers crackled, we did not.

At 5 o'clock two hours and a half behind time, we arrived at Luray.

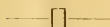


Under the Cliff of Birch Rock!

CHAPTER IV.

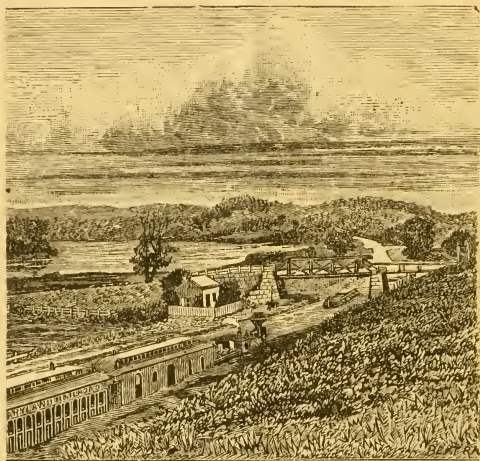


LURAY.



Nature tried its dexterous hand in creating the Luray Valley. Standing near the centre of this lovely plain, you may turn the arc of the horizon and at every point of the compass, save a small stretch in the west, great mountains toss their tops to heaven. Beginning in the North the Blue Ridge swings completely around the valley to the West. The Massenuttan mountains then take up the noble stretch of hills until the Blue Ridge is met again. The Valley appears, as judged by the eye, to be in its narrowest part six miles wide, and about twelve long. In the centre of the valley the Hawk's Bill Creek, a small but picturesque stream, meanders along and divides the town of Luray. The town of Luray! Whoever saw a quainter village? streets up-hill and down dale, pavements scarce to speak of, lamps at night none, prosperity little, inhabitants six hundred, newspapers two, churches a half-dozen, an antiquated Court House, an excellent new public school building, intelligent people, courteous manners, nobody handsome, nobody ugly, nobody apparently wealthy, and nobody suffering.

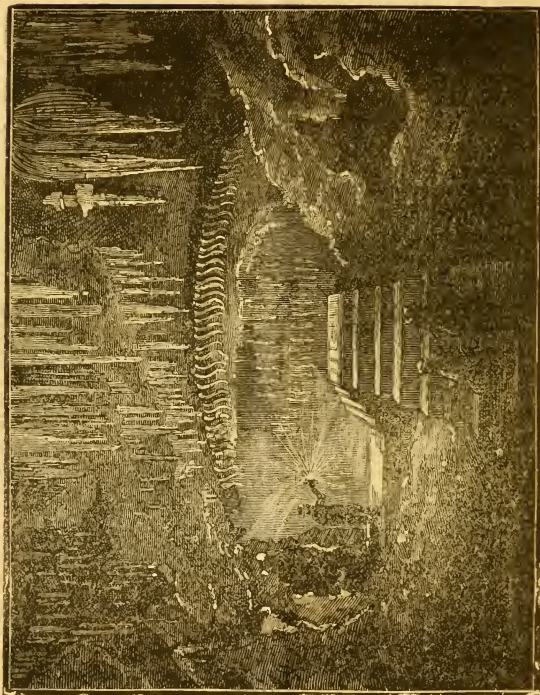
This is the old town as the Shenandoah Valley Railroad Company found it a few years ago. The old town, west of the railroad remains, but Luray "saw another sight" when the railroad company and the Luray Cave and Hotel Company put in their appearances. A large freight house has been built near the railroad, a fine Restaurant called "The Excursion House" has been erected near the depot for the accomodation of excursionists to the cave, and a splendid hotel for those who come from afar to see the caverns, and wish to spend the night or to stay any length of time to enjoy the delightful air, the picturesque scenery, and the mountain rambles that this romantic valley affords.



POTOMAC RIVER AND CANAL AT WILLIAMSPORT.

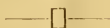
The Hotel, built by the Luray Cave and Hotel Company, together with the Railroad improvements, has connected ancient Luray with the living present. The hotel is situated upon an eminence immediately in front of the passenger depot and about 200 yards from it. It is approached by a plank walk five feet wide, up an easy incline. It is built after the model of inns of Queen Anne's time, and being thoroughly in harmony with the quaintness of its ancestors at once attracts attention. The picturesque irregularity, the absence of sides, the abundance of corners and nooks, in fine, the very shapelessness of the building charms the visitor. The first story is built of lime stone quarried in the near vicinity, and the second and third stories are built of the best seasoned wood material to be found. It is entered through a neat, covered carriage drive, which at night is illuminated by four bright gas jets, one at each corner. A veranda twelve feet in width, runs over two hundred linear feet around the building—a most delightful place for promenading in all sorts of weather as it is protected from storm and sun. The hall or large vestibule in which is the office, and into which open the parlor, and dining room, is roomy. The ceiling of this entrance is panelled in chestnut wood, and around the walls there is a beautiful wainscotting of the same material. A huge fire place large enough to burn whole logs of wood adds to the appearance of the room.

From the veranda on the morning of Friday we could see the clouds rolling up the mountain sides as the sun increased in power, and then lingering on the summit of "Stoney Man" refuse for a moment to leave its earthly tenement for a flight into everlasting space.

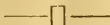


THE FISH MARKET, LURAY CAVE.

CHAPTER V.



ENTERING THE CAVE.



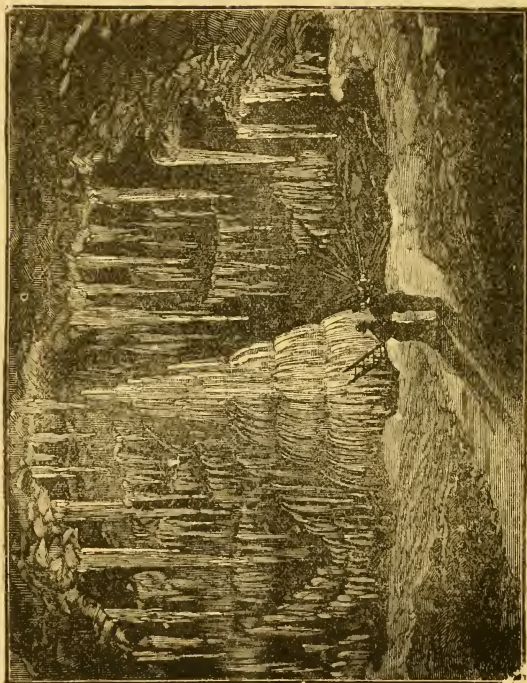
In the morning I walked out upon the veranda. The elevation of the hotel gives a fine view of Luray and the surrounding country. The town looked like a little gem set in aasket of silver—a pearl that had dropped from the hand and had fallen into a bowl of sapphire. The clear atmosphere brought out everything with distinctness, and the irregular village with its ancient architecture, sitting upon the hillside, surrounded with Titanic walls of mountain, made a scene of entrancing beauty.

After telephonic communication from the Hotel to the Cave, Mr. R. R. Corson, the energetic and polished manager of the Luray Hotel and Cave Company, informed us that he had engaged Mr. Andrew J. Campbell, one of the discoverers of the cave, as our guide. Soon the carriage arrived and we were driving in a bracing air through the quaint streets of Luray, over the Hawk's Bill, and by an ancient water wheel that made its slow revolutions with the decrepid movement of age.

A mile and a half's ride brings us to the mouth of the caverns. Over them has been built a house containing a parlor for ladies, rooms for the guides, and a ticket office.

The fee for entering the Cave is one dollar.

An accident to the engine prevented the use of the electric light. Our guide gave each of the adults of our party a candle-stick with three candles in each.



THE GRAND GULCH, LURAY CAVE.

We went down a stairway of one hundred feet and entered *Infernes*, but without its fires, and smoke, and torments. At the bottom of the steps we were informed that we were in

THE GRAND ENTRANCE.

The roof rises thirty-five feet above us, and is almost lost to sight in the feeble flicker of our penny candles. The ceiling is solid limestone, and the Avenue stretches along the impenetrable darkness for one hundred feet. Anticipation generally o'erleaps realization, but the almost tangible darkness, the great number of wonderful forms, and the grim shadows and undefined nooks far exceeded expectancy. One of the sights of this chamber is Washington's column, a pillar, nearly twenty-five feet in diameter and very highly fluted and beautifully tinted. Above our heads hung myriads of stalactites, at our feet and above us rose mighty stalagmites. The first emotions on entrance are those of surprise and awe, influences engendered by our surroundings. We are in a new world—wonderful and weird. Inconceivable shapes attack our visions, new sights burst upon, and things before unimagined appear to our well-nigh dazed comprehension. Darkness and shimmering beams fight for mastery, glowing columns rivet our admiration, flowing fountains and crystal streams excite our delight, whilst grotesques images surprise our imagination on every hand. We are in wonderland.

Beyond this vestibule, through a natural pathway in the cave, to the left, rises a plot of ground studded with fungoid and stalactites. This has received the name of

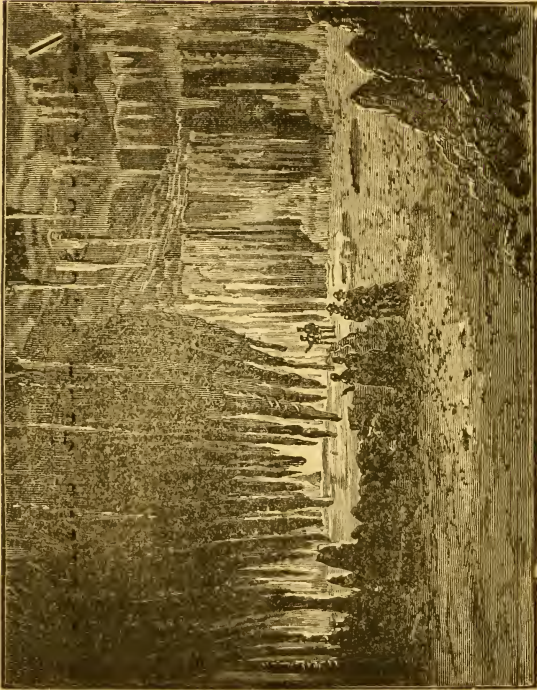
THE FLOWER GARDEN,

From the beautiful varieties of its incrustations.

We now pass through the Amphitheatre, a high chamber, suggestive of an audience hall; over the Muddy Lake, upon an artificial cement walk; see the Natural Bridge, a small rock hanging overhead, and suddenly come to the

FISH MARKET.

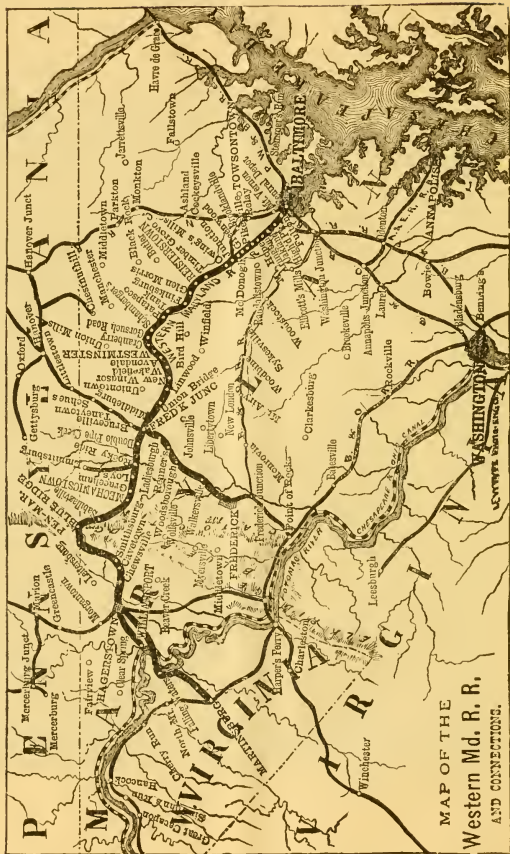
This, like the Flower Garden, is on the left, and is one of the most perfect representatoin's of things in and above the upper world that we saw in the entire Cavern. Here on the side of the wall hang hundreds sheetlike stalactites, representing with great naturalness rows of fish, exposed for sale. We suggested that they would not sell so well as the fish in our market—a place noted for the abundance of the finey tribe. "Yes, they would," retorted the intelligent guide, whose pet-lamb had been attacked, "they would sell for more." Probably they would to curiosity hunters, but we had reference to them as articles of diet.



THE VIRGIN FONT, LURAY CAVE.

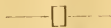
The Smithsonian party who visited the cave in July, 1880, said of this part of the Cavern :

“Indeed, one has no difficulty about the identification of the species of bass, perch, snad, mackerel, &c. ; some being gray all over, others having black backs and white bellies, and the illusion being perfected by a sufficient trickling to give a slimy, fishy appearance to the objects. All pronounced this to be the most curious, though not by any means the grandest and most impressive, object in the cavern.”

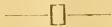


MAP OF THE
Western Md. R. R.
AND CONNECTIONS.

CHAPTER VI.



FROM THE FISH MARKET TO SKELETON GORGE.



After leaving the Fish Market, the guide took us by a few steps to the

ELFIN RAMBLE.

This is the only part of the cave in which there are no formations upon the ceiling. The roof the Elfin Ramble was so low, a path had to be dug some three or four feet deep to enable an adult to pass without crawling. As we walked along the guide pointed us to two pillars about two feet high and several inches thick, and warned us not to break them, as they supported the entire roof! We found on going through the cave the next day with another guide that this Munchausen was a stock story, for the other made us the identical statement.

PLUTO'S CHASM

Is the next object of interest shown to us—a mighty fissure in the earth, 75 feet deep and 500 feet long. The guide, as was his wont when he came to any object of especial interest, lighted a magnesium tape, and as its sulphurous fires lit up the awful magnificence of the chasm's mammoth proportions, one found the yawning abyss fitly named. This rift is ten feet wide, and looking over the balustrade into this mighty chasm, one is filled with awe and astonishment.

The guide leads us down a long flight of steps. Here we may as well remark that the Cave Company has built over dangerous places, platforms and steps, and it is perfectly safe

for any one to visit the Caverns, and beside one can go in with ordinary clothes on, though it would be well for gentlemen to turn up their pants, and for ladies to wear dresses reaching within an inch or two of the ground. The floor is not muddy but damp enough to bedraggle a trailing skirt.

We have now reached the bottom of the chasm, and the spectre "a tall, now-white stalagmite," looms up in the darkness like a veritable ghost. At the far end of the Cavern, numbers of long stalactites present the appearance of an organ. Our guide did not seem musical and played us no tune, but the next day when out of sight of the performer we heard some one striking a sounding stalactite. As the rhythmical notes rolled up the dark caverns, it seemed as if we were in some vast cathedral,

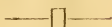
"Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault,
The pealing anthem swelled the note of praise."

We now retrace our steps to the Fish-Market because we had left the main avenue to take a view of Elfin Ramble, and Pluto's Chasm. As we go by the rocky ledge that leads to the Fish Market, a small lake called the "Crystal Spring," is seen in which the formation of calcite crystals is yet going on. It is a very beautiful object, the snow white crystals forming a pleasing contrast with the brown color of the surrounding rock. Now we come to

SKELETON GORGE.

Here embedded in carbonate of lime, are seen the bones of what science tells us was a youth of eighteen years. The guide picks up and hands us the larger bone of the arm. To us it appears a human fossil—what conjectures it creates. How did it come here? Have the drifts that made this vast vault, invaded the sanctuary of the dead above and floated this skeleton into this stupendous sepulchre, or did in the ages primeval some venturesome soul, filled with heroic endeavor, attempt to explore its unknown labyrinths and perished in the attempt?

CHAPTER VII.



The next object of particular interest is the IMPERIAL SPRING, about six feet long and several wide, deep and pellucid. The swinging of our tallow torches above it makes the far edge appear like a bridge and we seem to look in depths crystal and luminous. The guide then shows us the BRANCH CASKET, a formation several feet high, and the same in width, of pure white stone, in shape as if the rippling waters of spring had been caught in their playful frolics by the stern grasp of winter and frozen to eternal ice. PROSERPINE'S PILLAR follows and in distance looms the white form of "THE SPECTRE," a huge stalagmite of carbonate of lime.

We have now reached the head of Pluto's Chasm, and are shown a curious formation in the shape of a MAMMOTH TOOTH.

Now we come to

OBERON'S GROTTA.

This is reached by crossing Pluto's Chasm on a bridge.—Here plays a small fountain, surrounded by countless numbers of beautiful stalactites. As we leave this we come to a very curious stalactite called the Poor Man's Bacon. The guide placed his candles behind it and there shone the streaks of lean and fat. The lean was very thin. This formation has a legal history which is much better known than its geological annals. Two different persons have broken the end off it—and both were caught, one by the dexterity of Mr. J. H. Bushong, a guide, who sought his man out in a large crowd, on very little data and considerable speculation, and brought him to justice. The piece was recovered both times,

costing one thief \$14—for the laws of Virginia have provided against any disfigurement of the Cave. In spite of this the Company has suffered a great deal from depredators who want a relic. This is needless, beside dishonest, because the Company supplies youths with fine specimens from the Cave and these are hawked about the town of Laray, and can be bought for a trifle. But we have reached

TITANIA'S VEIL.

This is a delicate formation of beautiful laces and exquisite fringes, dangling gracefully from the roof. Here is the frozen Fountain. So natural is it that a little girl of our party announced that it looked "just like it is frozen up." But it is of stone. We pass on to

DIANA'S BATH.

The floor of this room is covered with water, and from it goes a path to Broddhus' Lake. This when we visited the cave was not open to visitors. This lake, probably eighty feet in diameter, received its title from a gentleman by the name of Broddhus who lost his way in that part of the cave when making some explorations on his own account. He wandered several hours in these unfathomed abysses before he found a trail that led him to the upper day.

After leaving Diana's Bath, we come to

THE SARACEN'S TENT.

the majestic sweep of whose lordly proportions linger yet in freshest impressions. The folds of its curtains fall in beautiful drapery, and its wonderful faithfulness to the home of the wild Arab sheik makes it an object of unfailing interest. It is probably the most perfect representation we saw in the Cave. The height of the ceiling is about twenty feet. The diameter of the tent about fifteen.

The ANGEL'S WING, a huge, clinging, pure white stalactite is next seen, and is a very fine representation of its heavenly title, that is, what angel wings are said to be. Now we pass under the FALLEN COLUMN. Once it clung to the ceiling above, in company with numerous stalactites but today a ponderous mass of over fifty feet in length, and weighing four hundred tons, it lies dismantled in a hall of giants for above, clinging to the roof, are many huge stalactites of even greater proportions than this fallen warrior, the man of many ages.

CHAPTER VIII.

FROM THE CATHEDRAL, TO THE BALL-ROOM AND GRAVE YARD.

From the Fallen Column we went to the organ in

THE CATHEDRAL,

This chamber is circular in form, and on its vast sides run galleries, "not made with hands," curtains fall pendant from its walls, and curving arches give beauty to its mystic proportions. From the ceilings and walls hang thin stalactitic formations, which when struck give forth delightful melody, and on this natural organ exact music can be rendered. Behind the organ is the cushioned chair, and the pulpit.

It was not usual to take visitors to some of the places that we saw, but our guide was especially accommodating and faithful to the instructions given from headquarters. So one of these that we saw was a little bowl of water, some ten feet in diameter and three feet deep in the middle, called Chapman's Lake. It received its name from a young man, Mr. Chapman, who was helping Mr. Campbell our guide, to do some work in that part of the cave. When he had finished, he blew out his torch and started to return to the main avenue. A step or two and he was floundering in this little lake, doubtless, to the amusement of the spectator. This was eighteen months before we saw it, and the print of Mr. Chapman's footsteps lay imbedded yet in the bottom of these unruffled waters.

Having made a slight detour we now return to the main passage, and pass by the Fallen Column and reach the Tower of Babel, an excellent miniature of what this ancient structure is represented to be. We still go on, for the reader has probably found by this time that to take a survey of the grandest caverns known to the world is not to be accomplished in a very brief space. Curious formations greet us everywhere; here, a bunch of small potatoes—named for the first time, a few steps on stands a mute and motionless Indian Squaw, and we reach the

HALL OF THE GIANTS.

This is a magnificent chamber filled with immense columns, that have stood in this rayless darkness, and kept each other mute company for centuries. The Double Column is in this chamber and when the magnesium tape threw its bright glare

over this weird formation the spectacle was inspiring. The Smithsonian party says that "Giants Hall is the chief d'œuvre of this fair under-world. On the verge of a towering cliff the beholder faces this chamber of wonders. Stretching away to the right is a seemingly interminable rows of prodigious, glittering columns. They rise from out of the depths of shade and are lost in the overhanging gloom. The magnesium light successfully combats these hosts of darkness and drives them into the alcoves and recesses above, beneath, and on either side, revealing forms of giant dimensions, weird outlines, and infinite variety of ornament."

The Giant's Staff, for we are yet among the Giants, is now seen as we move on to other sights. It is a high stalagmite standing alone and by its proportions suggesting its title. In this Hall also hangs the largest stalactite of the world, depending almost forty feet from the ceiling, with a diameter of about six. Here too is the Crouching Lion, a monster stalagmite, very marked in its resemblance to the king of the forest.

We leave the Giants in their silent chamber, and pass to the

BALL ROOM.

This is the largest chamber in the cave. Here the people of the neighborhood have several times enjoyed the novelty of a ball. The trial of the "light fantastic" in these vast caverns of the earth attracted many spectators. The music as it rolled away amid these deep recesses floated in unwonted harmonies, and the flickering rays of waxen tapers glared with poetic fervor over merry dancers and shone with wondrous witchery on gilded domes and spectral columns.

A trick of the guide is to put the lights out here, and then we fairly felt the darkness.

To one who did not know the paths it would be almost certain death to attempt to find the entrance to the cave from the ball room—but so familiar has Mr. A. J. Campbell become with its winding labyrinths that he can make his way, without light, from any part of the cave to the upper day.

As soon as our torches were relit, our guide observed—"You did not know you were so near a graveyard?" We turned our heads to the right, and behind lay a subterranean cemetery. "Real?" "No, not exactly, but very suggestive." There were rows of stalagmatic head stones, big and little, that bring forcibly to mind that, "Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid.

Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire,
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre."

CHAPTER IX.

After leaving the cemetery we are shown the Ladies' Riding Whip, and Cinderella leaving the ball room. Through an opening in a nave, we catch a glimpse of the mythical lady, this time in real marble. Her white robes fall gracefully from her shoulders to her feet, as she sweeps silently from the halls of gayety, and the wondering Prince.

THE CASKET SPRING

Is near, and with a few steps we reach it. We visited it when the season above was dry⁷ and it had its effect upon this underground spring, for it was almost dry, and no longer ran from rippling fountain to rippling fountain again. But the spring is a remarkable formation of this subterranean world. "Fluted stalatic columns, fifty feet in height form the back ground of the spring, and a royal canopy, fringed with the most exquisite drapery, stretches from the front, and is reflected from its glasslike surface. An opening in the back ground, near the left of the basin, reveals the small lake whence comes its supply of water."

The spring, as its name indicates, resembles very much a coffin. Below the first basin is another, and these successive terraces follow each other for twenty feet, and, in wet weather, merry ripples fall from spring to spring.

We now ascend an incline in the path, and the guide stops to take the top from a cavity in the floor, which has been appropriately named the Bird's Nest. Four tiny white pebbles do good service as eggs.

The next object of interest shown is "Collins' Grotto," named after Mr. Collins of the New York HERALD, who spent fourteen days in exploring the cave soon after it was discovered. He wrote the first extensive account of its wonders, which created a sensation at the time. It may be interesting to add that he was with the Jeannette in the Arctic ocean, and was frozen to death with Lieut. De Long, near Lena River, Siberia. The magnesium tape is again lit, and the walls grow curious, and the ceilings wonderful.

We return now to the hall room, for there is no straight course through these cavernous cells, and are shown the Hanging Rock and then reach the entrance of

CAMPBELL HALL,

And as the guide burns again the sulphurous tape, we look back, and by common consent, pronounce the view most magnificent, and the vista the most stupendous of any we have yet seen. As we pass in the hall we see a snow ball half embedded in the ground. Campbell Hall is a beautiful chamber, fifty by forty, filled with splendid statuary. From this hall to the corridor we are taken to see the single Scote Column of the cave, the Naked Foot, and the Salt Spring.

After the Double Column we leave again the main route, and are taken to see the Lost Blanket. The guide places a light behind this stalactite, and the folds of a hanging blanket are brought in sight. The folds, color, wool, and stripe of the blanket are perfect. Here are seen the Comet Column, the Hollow Column, 100 feet in circumference and 40 feet high, and the Crouching Camel. The head, hump and tail of the latter are very plainly marked. Here too is the Empress Column, a beautiful white pillar, looking as though it were a falling fountain of snowy waters. This column obtained its name from a gentleman who, on seeing this beautiful object, said "If I wished to gain the favor of the Empress of all the Russias, by making her a present, and had the whole world to choose from, I'd give her this column."

40 TO PEN-MAR AND THE CAVERNS OF LURAY.

CHAPTER X.

We were shown the Cactus Column, and returned to the main route at Titania's Veil, "a dainty, lace-like fabric, hanging gracefully from its rock support."

At this point we met another party "doing the cave," under the charge of a guide, and after leaving Skeleton Gorge we met still others. This time they were four ladies and a baby. The next day we met the guide who had this party in charge, and he observed in a good natured way:—"I caught it yesterday. That woman gave out, and I had to carry the baby the rest of the way."

Into the amphitheatre we come and are once more shown the Flower Garden. We also visit Stebbins' Avenue and see a Pyramid of Cake, with a pine apple on top. From this point we are taken to the Blacksmith Shop. Here are two very perfect anvils, the forge, and, above it, the accumulated dust of ages.

The Horner's Nest is the last object of interest shown, and then we mount the stairway and greet "the warm precincts of the cheerful day" with real delight.

The impressions of this visit were those of awe and wonder, for "the half had not been told us." It was some hours before the impressions wore off.

The next day we had the pleasure of visiting the cave in company with Thomas Moran, the artist, one of that numerous family of talented men. His son Paul accompanied him. They were on a professional tour in charge of the energetic E. F. Bond, passenger agent, B. & O. Road. From this tour came the delightful Picturesque B. & O. Mr. Panghorn the author was detained in Baltimore, probably by the singing of the Baltimore Oriole.

Mr. Moran made four sketches in the cave under the glare of electric light for the engine had been unexpectedly repaired. The change in the appearance of the cave was extraordinary. The electric beam brought out beauties that the pale glow of the magnesium tape had failed to disclose, and the sharp delineations that it made against the heavy shadows of this strange world gave new wonders and delights to those who saw this dwelling place of flies, rats, mice, bats and gnomes.

CHAPTER XI.

DISCOVERY OF THE CAVERNS.

It was not until August 15, 1878, that these interesting caverns were known to the present generation of man.

The discoverers were B. P. Stebbins of Easton, Maryland, a traveling photographer, and Messrs. A. J. and Wm. B. Campbell.

It was not an accident. They were in hunt of a cave, and as cave-hunters had excited the friendly derision of their acquaintances.

Mr. Stebbins was the originator of the suggestion, and after trying many places as the object of their search, they found on the day named, a depression, or sink-hole, on a hill side near Luray. It was about ten feet deep, and forty in diameter. It was filled with rubbish and overgrown with weeds. After much labor and no little ridicule from the bystanders a hole was made and a current of air from below told of depths beyond. After widening the aperture still more, Mr. A. J. Campbell was lowered by means of a rope, and reached the bottom and with lighted candle peered in the darkness and saw with wonder and delight, the curious formation about him. The rest of the party becoming alarmed for him, W. B. Campbell went in search of the explorer, and together they returned to the upper world. They told the bystanders they had discovered nothing, but when the three got together by themselves the Campbells told Stebbins what they had seen. At night they came with great caution and a large supply of candles and proceeded to examine the cave. They went as far as Muddy Lake, then a body of water. Returning to the world above, they concluded to buy that part of the world below that they had discovered.

They bought it soon after at an assignee's sale, and shortly opened their new wonders to the public. Then the original owners found what they had lost and began litigation to secure this valuable property.

The decision below was in favor of Stebbins, Campbell & Co. The Court of Appeals in the spring of 1881 reversed the decision, and it was no sooner recorded than the Luray Cave and Hotel Company purchased the cave for \$40,000. The tract containing the cave was only 28½ acres, and had cost Messrs. Stebbins, Campbell & Co., but \$17 per acre. Large additions have since been made by the Company to their original purchase.

The next question the thrifty will ask is, "What does it cost to go to Luray?" Round trip tickets from Baltimore to Luray, good till Oct. 31st, are sold during the summer season by the Western Maryland Road, for \$8.50, and tickets limited to five days sell for \$8.10. With an enterprise worthy of encouragement, the Western Maryland Road is now selling return excursion tickets to Luray from Baltimore good for one day at \$3.50. All these prices include the admission to the Cave.

The excursion train leaves the Hillen Street Depot, Baltimore, on certain advertised days, about seven o'clock, A. M., and reaches Luray time enough to give three hours in the Cave—a period sufficient to see it pretty thoroughly, and gets back to Baltimore about 11, P. M.

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