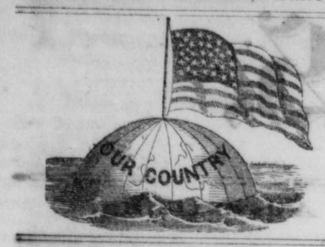
msa_sc2901_scm1621-0234 copyright Maryland State Archives

The Kent News.

PLUMMER & USILTON,.. Editors.



Chestertown:
Saturday Morning, Jan. 11, 1862.

The New Governor.

HIS INAUGURAL.

Hon. A. W. Bradford, was on Wednesday inaugurated in the Senate Chamber at Annapolis as Governor of Maryland for four years. The ceremony was witnessed by the Legislature, and by as large an assemblage as the chamber would accommodate. The able and eloquent Inaugural Address of the Governor was received with much satisfaction. It commences with an appropriate allusion to the devotion of the people of the State to the cause of the Union, as exhibited in the result of the late election, and intimates that the Federal Administration may rely with confidence upon the support of Maryland so long as it shall continue to exert its powers "with the single and sacred purpose of sustaining the supremacy of the Constitution." The misapprehension which exists abroad in relation to the real sentiments of our people on the question of Secession, are also alluded to, and the true cause assigned therefor in the actions of legislators and other prominent officers elected before the beginning of the present troubles. This is evidently an important fact, which it would be well for those in the Rebel States who are lamenting over the "down-trodden condition of Maryland," to seriously ponder.

On the subject of slave property, which enters largely into the present strife, he uses the following conclusive argument. It is as sensible as its conclusions are rational and true:

"We are admonished by our Southern advisers that we must seek a security for this property; we are entreated by others nearer home to lay down our arms, accede to the proposals of the South, and secure the blessings of a lasting peace. And so completely can Secession delude its victims that the means by which both these ends, we are told, can be accomplished, is a division of the Republic. Not only so, but in running the line of that division we are sedulously to keep in view, as an imperative call controlling course and distance, natural boundaries and all other considerations, that very subject matter the fruitful source of our present troubles.

A subject so skilfully shaped already into engines of mischief—by meddlers on both side the line referred to—that a common country and a Constitution for which we professed a common reverence could not save us from the implacable war that we now witness, is to become, we are asked to believe, a subject of indifference as soon as the contending sections are organized into separate Governments. Maryland and Pennsylvania, still as near together as ever, but allies no longer—the same sensitive subject of discord between them, without any common tie or Constitution by which that discord may be restrained or adjusted—and yet the imaginary line, which is still all that separates them, is become, by some miraculous agency, hereafter a mighty barrier, across which the emissary of Northern fanaticism will never venture to set his foot!

Instead of then the wildest of all fancies being ever realized, should such a separation take place, the mind recoils from a contemplation of the feuds which would inevitably fololw such a partition; feuds embittered by mutual criminations and reminiscences perpetually rankling in the minds of each, the very first subject falling a sacrifice to their influence would be the very one for whose security this separation is prescribed. And whilst those inaugurating the reckless experiment would be comparatively exempt from its disasters, we, upon whom they will be precipitated, will furnish but another illustration of the past history of the subject—they ever the loudest in complaints of aggression, and we the only ones to suffer by its infliction."

In regard to the result of the war and the reunion of the States, we are pleased to find the Governor hopeful. He argues this point in an able and masterly manner, and shows conclusively that the interests of the entire country are mutual and identical. He says:

"The question is frequently asked, and with national solicitude—when will these things end? How long will this war last? and how and when may we look for returning peace?

To harbor a doubt of the proper answer of these questions is to protract this war. In the very nature of things there can be but one solution of the problem. The geographical condition of our country, the character of our people, their indispensible necessities, and their not less indispensible duties, alike forbid the possibility of any other.

Their very existence depends upon their nationality. It never can, therefore, be surrendered. To surrender it is to admit a failure of Republican institutions—is to confess before the nations of the earth that we are powerless for self-government, and to transmit our names to future generations to stand forever in ignoble contrast with the glorious sires from whom we have descended. At such a suggestion we might almost expect to see the guardian spirit of this venerable chamber, hallowed as it is by such memories of the past, rise up to rebuke the recreant thought.

The leaders of the rebellion may assert over and over again that the South never will submit to this National rule—that it will resist to the last the proposed reunion. So far as those leaders are concerned, we may not doubt the sincerity of their protest. Their offences against free institutions are too rank and too recent to allow them willingly again to submit to the will of the majority. But, to say nothing of the popular voice—which they have for the present stifled—to admit for argument sake that but one sentiment pervades the entire South, and that it clamors for a separate Government, earnest as that purpose may be there is a still stronger force opposed to it; not merely the force of a vast numerical superiority, but a power made irresistable by the force of necessity; a controlling and decisive power, growing out of the demands which the laws of self-preservation make imperative. Nationality wiih us, therefore, is a necessity, and peace, anxiously as we may await it, can never come until that necessity is recognized, and our whole country once more united under its old established rule. Who can doubt that such will be the ultimate result of the war, if it is confined to the faithful pursuit of that object?

THE LEGISLATURE.

But few bills of a general character have been acted upon, but the various committees are busily occupied in maturing their recommendations. A joint committee has been appointed to report a law imposing an oath of allegiance upon all persons holding office in the State. The bill repealing the act passed by the late Legislature, relieving the Mayor of Baltimore and others from prosecution for certain acts committed during the conspiracy of April last, has been passed.

Joint Resolutions of thanks to Governor Hicks passed the House on Wednesday, with but three negative votes. The preamble recites that "the practice of all nations points out the wisdom of rewarding eminent public services by marked tokens of admiration and gratitude;" and the resolutions speak in flattering but truthful terms of the loyalty and firmness of the retiring Governor, and of the important services which he has rendered the State. The compliment was well deserved, and is not an idle bestowment of honors where no actual service has been performed.

IMPORTANT MOVEMENTS.

Movements are making, says the New York *Times*, which must compel the evacuation of the lines at Manassas under penalty of certain and irreparable disaster. We have the highest reason to believe that ten days will not elapse before retreat will present itself to the minds of the rebel leaders as the alternative of hazards they will never choose to encounter; and the retreat will be followed vigorously and without pause by the National forces. If, as we do not believe, this retrograde movement shall ever have pause enough to render a general engagement possible, the rebel army will be in no condition to make a successful stand. They will have no leisure to repeat elsewhere the impregnable intrenchmets of Manassas; and in the open field, and upon equal condition, they have never in a single instance held their own against the arms of the Republic.

Maryland Patriotic and Just.

In his recent message to the Legislature of Massachusetts, Governor Andrew thus refers to the honorable conduct of Maryland in striving to make some atonement for the lawless and murderous act of the mob which sought to force her from the Union, against the will of her patriotic citizens:—

"I gladly point you to one oasis in the midst of all the resentments of the hour. A Committee of the House of Delegates of the Legislature of Maryland, acting under instructions of that body, have addressed the executive of Massachusetts, seeking to learn the condition of the widows and orphans of the patriots who were murdered at Baltimore on the nineteenth of April, and to be informed of any persons who were dependent on them for support, in order that the State of Maryland may take such action in that connection as befits its sense of justice and honor. Cordially appreciating the honorable and humane sentiments of the House of Delegates of Maryland, the letter of their Committee is herewith communicated to the General Court, and I have directed the necessary investigation to be made to answer its inquiries."

This action of the Maryland House of Delegates, says the Philadelphia Inquirer, is in the highest degree praiseworthy, and shows that her loyal people are not only honest and earnest in their patriotism, but just and generous towards those brave men who nobly risked their lives to resist the invasion of her soil by the armed hordes of the Rebel Confederacy.

An election for State Senator to represent the city of Baltimore, and to fill the vacancy occasioned by the expulsion of Coleman Yellott, took place on Thursday. Mr Denison, the Union nominee, had no opposition.

Geo. B. Westcott, and Wm. F. Smyth, Esqs., of the House of Delegates, will accept our thanks for copies of the daily journal of proceedings of that body.

Local Matters.

The Home Guards at Camp Vickers.—The soldiers at this camp, numbering five hundred, and with a prospect of an addition of one hundred in a few days, have received orders to be in readiness to remove to the lower part of this Shore, and they will probably leave in a week or less. These troops have been tented during the fall and winter—they have become inured to and fond of camp life; they are cheerful and contented, and we regret the necessity that calls them away. They are well drilled. Colonel Massey has taken great pains to bring them into good discipline and perfect drill exercise. He has succeeded admirably. All the officers have done their duty faithfully, and this regiment will bring no discredit on their name or their country.

Camp Vickers is near Chestertown, and of ready access, but we can bear testimony, as can all of our citizens, to the good order of our town. We believe that better order and more quiet have prevailed since the encampment than was previously observed. The soldiers have not molested any one, and tranquility has prevailed.—They go down the peninsula, whether to relieve others or add to the force already there, we do not know. The country is said to be a very pleasant one, healthy, and the climate mild and less variable in winter than ours. It may be important to guard that section and prevent communication between a portion of the disaffected there and Virginia proper. We do not suppose active duties in battle will devolve upon our men, but if duty calls they will be found at their post, with their faces to the foe, and we predict they will give an account of themselves that will do credit to their country. They have the good wishes of our community, and the hope that Col. Wilkins, his officers and men, may soon return to their homes in health, and join in the general rejoicing over a subdued rebellion, an unbroken Union, and a country restored to peace and prosperity. There can be but two parties among us—one for, the other against our country. That the stars and stripes will continue to float over the whole expanse of our beloved nation, we cannot doubt.—In less than six months rebellion will hide its head, and its now secret supporters will seek to cover up and explain the treason in their hearts which they have so long nourished.

Resignation of a Military Officer and Appointment of his Successor.—Capt. Simon Wickes, Company B, (Reed Rifles,) Second Regiment of E. S. Home Guards, tendered his resignation a few days ago, on account of severe indisposition and consequent physical inability to discharge the duties of his command. He is suffering from a pulmonary affection, which renders it necessary that strict attention to the laws of health should be observed, which the active duties of camp life at this inclement season do not allow, in order that complete restoration may be attained.

Neither of the other commissioned officers aspiring to the captaincy, the company expressed a desire that Charles H. Wickes, Esq., should be tendered the command, which suggestion meeting the approbation of the field officers, the appointment was accordingly made. Mr. Wickes had a Company already in process of formation, numbering some fifty men, and his present promotion only puts him into active service a little sooner.

☞ We mentioned last week that the schooner Henry Clay, belonging to Capt. Darius Coleman, had got on the knolls, near Swan Point, and that efforts had been made to get her off. We have since learned that the efforts were unsuccessful, that the vessel is fast going to pieces, and will prove a total wreck. Nearly the entire cargo has been removed, but in a greatly damaged condition. The vessel belonged to Capt. Coleman, and we are sorry to state that by this accident he loses the earnings of many years' diligent labor.

Appointment.—Mr. William S. Baker having declined to bond as Constable, for the Third Election District, the County Commissioners on Monday last, appointed Mr. Edwin L. Usilton to fill the vacancy, who has given the required bond and entered upon the discharge of the duties of the office.

☞ In our comments last week upon Post Masters and their duties, we did not design to be understood as insinuating that these officers are always at fault when subscribers fail to receive their papers. We now propose to show that in many cases subscribers themselves are properly chargeable with the omission. We know some post masters who discharge their duties with as much precision and rigidity as prudence and the law require; and our remarks were intended for those only to whom they were properly applicable.

When a paper is called for at the post office, at the request of the subscriber, by an individual to whom it does not belong, and the post master inquires if he has been requested to do so by the owner and receives an affirmative reply, then the responsibility of the officer ceases; and if the subscriber never receives it, it is plain that neither the publisher nor the post master is to blame.

But there are literary thieves, as well as thieves of other descriptions; and it will sometimes happen that with constant watchfulness on the part of post masters, a paper will occasionally fall into wrong hands. We suggest to post masters that whenever a paper is called for by a suspicious character, they make a record of it somewhat as follows: "The Kent News, (or other paper, as the case may be,) belonging to Mr. W. C. M. or Mr. T. A. H., delivered by request, on the — day of —, to Mr. ——." Then when the paper is called for by the subscriber the post master can say: "Your paper was delivered, *at your request*, to Mr. ——," &c. And if no such request had been made, the literary thief is caught, and the next time he calls the post master can significantly inform him that Mr. —— will call for his papers in person, or send an *authorized* messenger to receive them.

This plan we think would put an effectual stop to the complaints almost weekly received from some source, which are as mortifying to us as it is to be under the necessity of reminding a subscriber that he is in arrears for a year's subscription (?)

For the Kent News.

Camp Hoffman, Jan. 6, 1862.

"The day *before* and the day *after* pay day." Before pay day, every face seems animated with some resolve, some scheme in perspective. Many are happy in the idea of soon meeting parents, brothers or sisters; and others are radiant with the prospect of soon clasping to his heart the girl he left behind him—all are busy building castles in the air, bubbles that are soon to burst in disappointments, regrets, heartburnings and disgrace. Whilst you hear several say, "Well, I'll pay Mr. so and so, and then I am clear of debt," you will hear others say that they will be darn'd if they pay any person this hitch; that they must wait until *next pay day*, &c. Others again are speculating as to what they will purchase, who they will send their "daguerreotypes" to—what presents they will take to a favorite sister or brother, etc. Before pay day tavern keepers open their hitherto hard hearts and give the soldier a liberal credit, which they as liberally promise to pay punctually on the morrow. Creditors visit the encampment and their debtors, as if their presence was on purpose to remind you they expected pay to-morrow! Washerwomen, who have been proverbial for keeping your clothes over time, are now bringing them in *ahead* of time. Pedlars of sundry notions are prowling around the camp. Everything betokens the near approach of *pay day!*—at last it comes!—What a rubbing and scrubbing, cleaning and combing, combined with the noise and confusion consequent upon some five or six hundred men preparing to go home.—There is a regular Babel of tongues—English, Irish and Dutch predominating. There is a number of little bills to settle, however, before he leaves the camp. The Sutler is most anxious to have his, and the soldier is decidedly averse to paying him.

There is a universal feeling of dislike towards Sutlers. As a class they are the most exorbitant of extortioners; they charge double prices for a very inferior article. They are calculated to be a great public convenience in a regiment, but in the large majority of instances they are just the reverse.

A number of "*druthy*" souls are prepared to take a little spree—just a *little* one—before leaving Baltimore, and then they will go home. Alas! fatal resolution! As soon as it became known that they had just been paid off, they were surrounded by those who were determined to fleece them of their last red. And so it turned out. These greedy cormorants left them nothing. Where is now the money that he so faithfully promised his aged mother or beloved wife? Oh, the agony that bursts from his breaking heart, how he blames himself for giving way to temptation, and how many sincere resolutions are made, that another pay day will find him at home in the bosom of his family, &c. Numbers are now dropping into camp, with black eyes, cut faces, torn clothing, and evident symptoms of the station house about them. A great many cousins of the feminine gender are prowling around the camp and making enquiries for dear relatives and friends—invitations are freely given to select parties, *expressly got up on their account*, &c. So much disinterested kindness is fully appreciated, but the unfortunate recipient is made to pay dearly for his whistle. I could enlarge upon this subject *ad infinitum*, but I shall conclude.

We are now busy erecting winter quarters, and expect to be in them in two weeks. The health of the men is good. We expect to get paid off to-morrow.

I remain yours sincerely,
J. W., Co. A.

A despatch to the Charleston Mercury says that the Federal troops have landed in large force on the North Edisto and taken possession of Station No. 4, on the Charleston and Savannah Railroad. If so this breaks railroad communication between the two cities, except by the circuitous route by way of Augusta.

The Secretary of the Treasury recommends, at the suggestion of merchants having large invoices of the articles in store, that the act imposing increased duties on tea, coffee, sugar and molasses, be so amended as to relieve goods previously imported and warehoused from its operations.

The News.

The steamer Vanderbilt arrived at New York on the 6th instant, bringing three thousand seven hundred bales of Sea Island cotton, and intelligence from Port Royal to the 3d inst. Gen. Stevens' brigade of Federal troops had advanced upon the mainland from Port Royal Ferry, and assisted by the gunboats, took possession of the Rebel batteries after a short resistance. The advance was prosecuted to within six miles of the Charleston Railroad. The Rebels sent a flag of truce asking permission to bury their dead.—One hour was granted. The Rebels then fell back on their fortifications and reserves, said to be twelve thousand strong Gen. Stevens retained possession of the position on the mainland, and awaited reinforcements. Our force was but 4,500 strong, of whom eight only were wounded. The Southern accounts of the affair admit a loss of six killed and twelve wounded on the first day, and the driving back of Gen. Gregg's South Carolina Brigade on the second day with heavy loss.

The batteries at Fort Pickens opened fire on the 1st instant on a Rebel steamer at the Navy Yard. Bragg's batteries replied, and the firing continued all day.—The firing was not resumed next day.

From Annapolis we learn that the embarkation of the troops of Gen. Burnside's expedition had been completed, and the vessels sailed on Thursday morning for rendezvous at Fortress Monroe. On Tuesday night seven Massachusetts soldiers, in a row boat in Annapolis harbor, were run over by a steam tug and all drowned. It is believed that another body of troops will immediately be assembled at Annapolis to reinforce the expeditions that have already gone from that place.

Gen. Sigel has resigned his position in the army; and we learn from a St. Louis paper that this is to be followed by the resignations of other officers attached to his brigade, who think he has been unjustly treated in being superseded in the command of the army of Rolla.

From the Eastern Shore of Virginia.—Colonel William H. Purnell arrived in Baltimore from the Eastern Shore of Virginia in the early part of the week. He gives a very cheering account of the state of things there. The troops under his command have complete and undisturbed possession of that Rebel district, and exercise a strict and effectual surveillance over the coast on both sides. The troops are in excellent health and spirits. The command on Tuesday night, 31st ultimo, captured a boat, belonging to the Rebels, containing some eight or ten persons and twenty four boxes of tobacco, and a mail bag containing a large number of papers and letters and much valuable information. All the officers of the county have come forward and taken the oath of allegiance.

Army of the Potomac.

[Correspondence of the Richmond Examiner.]

Manassas, Dec. 27, 1861.—To-day our whole army is engaged in building log houses for winter quarters, or in moving to sites already selected. Several brigades will remain where they now are, near the fortifications in Centreville, and the remainder will fall back a mile or two upon Bull Run. Gen. Kirby Smith's brigade is at "Camp Wigfall," to the right of the Orange and Alexandria road, near the run. A few brigades are scattered down toward the Occoquan, where wood and water are plenty, the furthest being by Davis' Ford. The artillery, with the exception of Walton's battalion, has already been located between Cub Run and Stone bridge. The cavalry has fallen back a little, and they are now building stables and houses near Centreville

Gen. Stuart will remain in the advance. It is probable that Gen. Johnston will occupy the Lewis house, on the battle-field, and Gen. Beauregard Wier's, his old head quarters before the 18th and 21st. The artillerists detailed to man the guns in the batteries will also remain by the fortifications. In case of an attack by the Yankees, it will take about two hours to get the main strength of the army across to Bull Run. Information of an approach would be given at least two hours before an enemy could come up, and in that time we could be well prepared to resist any force that can be brought up. This is about the situation of affairs for the winter, and it remains to be seen whether our men are to have an opportunity of a brush with the Yankees, or whether they will be allowed to enjoy their new houses in quietness.

Release of Union Prisoners of War.

The steamer Louisiana brought up to Baltimore from Fortress Monroe, on Saturday, 240 Federal prisoners, who were captured at Bull Run, and exchanged a few days since for a corresponding number of Confederates taken at Hatteras Inlet. The prisoners looked supremely happy, and were loud in their expressions of gratification at again stepping on the soil of the Union. They were welcomed with cheering at the wharf, and other joyous demonstrations, by the large concourse of persons assembled, to which they responded with great enthusiasm. The returning patriots were taken in charge by the Union Relief Association, and escorted by a large body of police with the old flag of the Maryland Guard at their head, they preferring to walk instead of occupying the carriages in waiting for them.

They were all dressed in new uniforms, furnished them by the Government, some being supplied at Fortress Monroe.

They complain that not half the uniforms sent them by the Government ever came to hand, and that the money sent them in letters was abstracted, and Confederate shinplasters put in their places. Those who succeeded in obtaining the Union notes sold them for 25 per cent. premium. Some of them sold the Government boots furnished them for $25.

They were escorted up through Lombard street to the rooms of the Union Relief Committee, on Eutaw street, where a sumptuous breakfast was prepared for them and where they were most cordially welcomed.

Important from South Carolina.

BATTLE at PORT ROYAL FERRY.

The U. S. steam transport Vanderbilt from Port Royal January 3, arrived at New York on Monday. She has 3,697 bales of Sea Island cotton consigned to government. The Vanderbilt brings the news of the battle at Beaufort Ferry.—Gen. Stevens, brigade advanced on the main land on the 1st inst., and took possession of the rebel batteries after a short resistance on the part of the rebels; the brigade being assisted by gun-boats, which shelled the batteries.

Gen. Stevens then followed up to within six miles of the Charleston railroad. A flag of truce was sent by the rebels to allow them to procure and bury their dead, which was granted, one hour being alloted for that purpose. They then fell back on the fortifications near the railroad.

The rebel force was estimated at from ten to twelve thousand men, under the command of General Pope, and their loss is not known. The forces of the Union troops were four thousand five hundred.

The loss on the Union side was eight wounded. Major Watson of the Eighth Michigan was mortally wounded.

The Port Royal correspondent of the N. Y. Times, describing the fight, says:

The gunboats were moored about the centre of the channel, not more than one hundred feet from shore, and I was greatly interested in watching the movements of the sailors as they briskly handled their guns. They worked as if they liked the fun, as I have no doubt they did. The effect of the fire in the woods was terriffic. Thick limbs were broken by the fragments of shell, as though they were but twigs and branches, and tree tops were mowed off as with scythes. It must have been a fearful place for human beings, if they were in the neighborhood.

Gen. Stevens had brought his men on the road within a mile of the ferry, when the enemy opened upon them from a battery of field pieces, screened in the woods to the right, and a few companies of infantry. One of the regiments were thrown out as skirmishers, and advancing to within a short distance of these woods, received a heavy fire of musketry, when it fell back, failing however to draw the enemy from their concealment. Meantime the gunboats proceeded up the river and shelled the earthworks opposite the landing.—The troops who had held them retired precipitately to the woods near by, and then were in their turn shelled by the gunboats. After the enemy had been driven from this position, our forces occupied the earthworks. They slept in the trenches New Year's night, and the next morning, having levelled the fortification, they recrossed the river, bringing with them a spiked 12-pounder, the only gun left by the rebels, and the best one which they had placed in position.

FROM WESTERN VIRGINIA.

Defeat of two thousand Rebels by a portion of General Kelly's Army.

CAPTURE OF TWO CANNON, WAGONS, TENTS, AND TWENTY PRISONERS.

Wheeling, Va., Jan. 8.—A special despatch from Cumberland says that a detachment of General Kelly's forces left Romney and attacked the Rebels, 2,000 strong, at Blue Gap, east of Romney, at daylight. The Rebels were completely routed, with a loss of fifteen killed, besides the capture of two cannon, wagons, tents, etc., and twenty were made prisoners, including one commissioned officer.

It is rumored here that the rebels are in full retreat from Hancock.

Col. Miles' Case.—Hons. Reverdy Johnson and R. H. Gillett have reviewed the proceedings of the Court of Inquiry in the case of Col. Miles, accused of drunkenness at the battle of Bull Run. They closed thus: "We are of the opinion that if this evidence had been before an intelligent jury, their verdict would have been that he was innocent of the charge of drunkenness, and that he was fully competent for the command which had been assigned to him." The finding of the Court in the case has generally been condemned as singular and contradictory.—While declaring that there was no evidence upon which Colonel Miles could be convicted of drunkenness, they nevertheless speak very freely of "the guilt of his condition." There was certainly much conflict of testimony in the case, but Messrs. Johnson and Gillet say that "much the larger number of witnesses sworn testified unqualifiedly in his favor, and they had far the best opportunities for knowing the truth." The eminent legal character of Messrs. Johnson and Gillet will give their analysis of this case much weight and influence in the relief of Col. Miles.

A Curious Development.—The London Critic, commenting on the death of Prince Albert, deplores the blow which has fallen upon the nation by his death. It says it was the Prince Consort's advice which enabled the Queen to bear up against such scheming ministers as Palmerston, who cultivated a personal acquaintance with the London editors, and had Prince Albert written down as an enemy of the country, because he did not wish England to go to war with Russia. The Critic says:

"We have reason to believe that, up to the time of his death, the Prince Consort raised his voice energetically against the haste with which England is rushing into a war with the United States—an event which he denounced as subversive of her interests, dangerous to the real sources of her power, and certain to be advantageous only to the despotic powers of Europe.—Whether that view was right or wrong, such, we believe, was the faith in which the Prince Consort died."

Robert G. Armstrong, Esq., one of the oldest publishers and booksellers of Baltimore, died in that city, a few days ago, in the 70th year of his age.