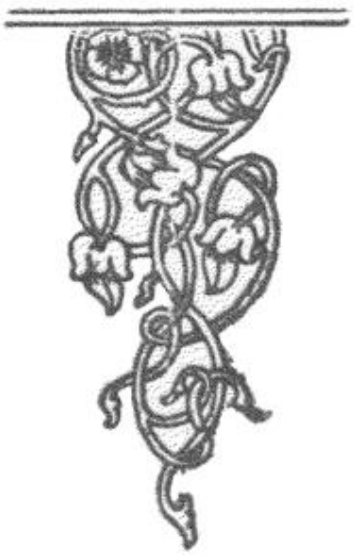
ADDRESS

THE CHESAPEAKE AND OHIO RAILWAY

By

James Poyntz Nelson



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THE CHESAPEAKE AND OHIO RAILWAY

THE REALIZATION OF THE DREAM OF GEORGE WASHINGTON, THE SURVEYOR ON THE BANKS OF THE KANAWHA.

"Your old men shall dream dreams,
and your young men shall see visions."
(Joel II, 28.)

DELIVERED BY

JAMES POYNTZ NELSON,

Member Valuation Committee, The Chesapeake & Ohio Railway Co.

Member Land Committee of the President's Conference Committee.

BEFORE THE

RAILWAY MEN'S IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY,

New York City, January 27, 1916.

MITCHELL & HOTCHKISS
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The Realization of the Dream of George Washington, The Surveyor on the Banks of the Kanawha.

The nineteenth day of July, 1869, a party of Engineers, under Major Channing Moore Bolton, left Richmond, Virginia, to undertake the location of the extension of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad westward. Our Division extended from the mouth of the Greenbrier River, where it enters the New River, down New River about forty-two miles, to Bowyer's Ferry, now Sewell Station. Thus my touch with the life of this great System began one month after I had received my two Engineering Degrees at Washington College, now Washington & Lee University, and has continued to this time. There have been breaks in this touch, but, when I think of myself, I must think ever of this Railroad to whose service I have given my best years. When, after an absence, I returned to this service, I came back as one coming home again.

The growth of this Road from an iron-laid line of about 227 miles in 1869, then not completed, to its present place of honor, shoulder to shoulder with the other great Public Carriers of our Country, is to me as a dream. Its mileage has been multiplied by ten. Its service to the people, to serve whom is its duty, has been so increased that it is as a wide-spreading tree, the child of the little mustard seed, and under its branches are sheltered great industries, many people. It is as to something, not all, of this great growth, that I speak tonight. It is of this as the realization of the dream of the men now called Fathers of our Nation, that I speak. Although I must deal in facts possibly dry to some of you, yet my theme might well challenge the imagination and the pen of an Epic Poet.

Doubtless this story is not unique. Elsewhere Engineers, and their bold associates, have been the vanguard of Progress. Elsewhere they have met and endured hardships and dangers not nominated in the statement of their accounts. Elsewhere

have been silent, unseen heroes who laid the line, tore down forbidding hills and mountains, harnessed mighty torrents, built monuments to those whose names are not carved, if carved at all, except on some simple, voiceless slab in the City of the Dead.

But before Agamemnon was, were heroes, who perished because they had no Homer.

" Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona,
Multi; sed omnes, illacrimabiles,
Urgentur ignotique longa
Nocte, carent quia vate sacro."

Before lived Agamemnon,
Many brave have lived;
Tho' men of action, all unwept, unknown, they sleep,
In the long night,
Wanting a sacred singer.
(Horace: Odes. Bk. IV, Ode 9: Line 25.)

Out of what meagre clay moulded Homer his deathless figures, we shall never know. It is the Poet who makes us immortal, not our deeds. With a silence almost contemptuous the Pyramids meet our questions, and point us for answer to the Sphinx. Therefore, tonight as I try in my way, all too weak, to tell my story, I beg you to let your imagination bring here with me those splendid fellows, my once companions in some hardships, and some dangers, dear friends now gone, whose story is a large part of the story that I must tell.

I feel their presence, even as I see yours.

"But we cannot tarry here,
We must march, my darlings, we must bear the brunt of danger,
We the youthful, sinewy races, all the rest on us depend,
Pioneers! O, Pioneers!

"All the past we leave behind,
We debouch upon a newer, mightier world, varied world.
Fresh and strong the world we seize, world of labour and the march,
Pioneers! O, Pioneers!"
(Walt Whitman.—"Pioneers! O, Pioneers!")

I

The Chesapeake & Ohio Railway stretches its System from Norfolk, Virginia, and Fortress Monroe, to Hammond, on the dividing line between Indiana and Illinois. At Newport News, Virginia, at the mouth of the James River, is its splendid Port. Here, with modern facilities, are handled its vast outbound traffic of coal and merchandise, and its inbound shipments for a Nation's needs. Thence its line threads its way through the historic Peninsula of Virginia, a narrow neck of land, bounded south by the James River, and north by that beautiful stream, the York River, an estuary in fact.

The history of Virginia, the story of our Nation, begins with Old Point Comfort, Cape Henry, the old City of Williamsburg, where sat the House of Burgesses that declared for Independence, and William & Mary College, the second oldest College in our Country.

On York River, four miles away, is York Town, where yet remain the battlements, the walls, that could not protect Cornwallis. Seven miles from Williamsburg is James Town Island, on the James, where can be traced the homes of the ancient Capital of the Old Dominion.

From Old Point to Richmond it is the Battle Ground of two wars. Here England met its final defeat. Here our Liberty was determined. Here, later, great Armies fought in 1862.

"The place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

Two lines of track bear the burden of traffic from Richmond to Clifton Forge, on the Jackson's River, the beginning of the James, a distance of nearly 200 miles. The first line built was the northern one, that passes, by tunnels, through the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Alleghanies, crossing the head of the Shenandoah Valley, with a maximum grade each way of 80 feet to the mile.

The southern line follows the banks of James River, supplanting the old James River & Kanawha Canal, using, at times, what was the Tow Path. This is the low, water-grade line along which goes the heavy traffic of coal and merchandise.

Thus is linked together the story of the Canal, and the history of our System.

Westward from Clifton Forge we climb the Alleghanies, to the dividing line between Virginia, and its stolen, but lusty, child, West Virginia. Thence we go down the Greenbrier River to its junction with New River, noting along New River busy branches that extend into the region of the soft, coking, steam coals, passing also on New River the busy tipples that serve the drift mines.

Through the Canyon of New River we go, until the Great Conglomerate that towered at times a thousand feet above us has dipped to form the Falls of the Great Kanawha, a continuation, in fact, of New River, now, under its own name, "Beautiful River of the Woods," to thread its quiet way along fertile valleys, through the region of the Splint Coals of the Upper Measures, to its bridal with the Ohio at Point Pleasant.

From our line along the Kanawha go branches south and north, into regions of seemingly exhaustless Coals, and abundant Forests. Coal River, and its branches, the Guyandot River, and its branches, and other confluent streams, all send down to the main line their products in a stream almost as ceaseless as the flow of their waters.

Leaving the Kanawha at the mouth of Coal River, we cross "Teay's Valley," about thirty miles, to the Guyandot River, and, thence, ten miles to the City of Huntington, on the Ohio River. Here was begun in 1871 the City that bears the name of its founder, Collis P. Huntington, the builder of Cities, he, too, a dreamer of great dreams.

A short distance more, and we cross the Big Sandy River into Kentucky. Turning, for a moment, up the Sandy, we see our Big Sandy Line, 134 miles long, that takes us into the great Elkhorn Coal region, famous because of the fine quality and the vast extent of its coals, rivalling the Connellsville region.

It would please me could I take you with me "Up Sandy." I know its territory, know its people, rugged, brave, shrewd, sometimes a law unto themselves, but loyal as friends, even as they are hostile to the contemner of their rights. I am their grateful debtor for kindness and hospitality, loyal friendship, when most needed. To the Kentuckian of Big Sandy I pay this passing tribute of affection and admiration. But I must hasten on.

Leaving the Big Sandy, we go on down the Ohio River to Cincinnati. Between the Big Sandy and Huntington we crossed Four Pole Creek, and Twelve Pole Creek, so named by the young Surveyor, George Washington. Seven miles below Big Sandy, is Ashland, Kentucky, whence goes off our Branch to Lexington, and Louisville, Kentucky, in the heart of the Blue Grass, on the crest of the Cincinnati Arch, made fertile by the uplift of the soft, Trenton Lime Stone, a thousand feet above the Sea. Here I should love to tarry with you, because that is my home.

Crossing the Ohio River at Cincinnati, we are on our Chesapeake & Ohio of Indiana, a separate Corporation, but part of our System, carrying us into Chicago by trackage rights over other lines, from the Indiana border line at Hammond.

Behind us we have left scenery worthy of the canvas of the Artist. We have passed through thriving Cities, people who labor with splendid industry for the uplifting of our Nation. Lovers of Peace, they did not fail to answer with magnificient courage, and self-abnegation the stern call to arms. Divided for a time from those now their brothers, battling for what was to them a sacred duty, they stand today united as a Nation, ever lovers of Liberty, ever loyal to their faith, expecting and demanding the sanctity of our Flag, hostile to no other Nation, and fearing none.

Had time permitted, we could have rested at some of the beautiful places where flow waters famed for their healing powers. Nestled in the Warm Spring's Valley at the end of the Branch line that takes us 25 miles up the Jackson's River, are the Hot Springs, with the delightful Homestead Hotel.

Just within West Virginia is the classic White Sulphur Springs, historic, because here gathered year by year such men as Henry Clay and his associates, and here linger fine traditions of fair women and gallant fellows, who wrote of themselves immemorial tales when the nights were Ambrosial. Then they came only under summer skies. But, today, with generous hand, the Chesapeake & Ohio, owner of a large area of land, has provided the luxurious Greenbrier Hotel, where each month rest and healing can be found, and the marvelous beauty of the place can be enjoyed.

From Newport News and Fortress Monroe to Richmond we have gone over a line of double track, 85 miles, its condition, as elsewhere on our System, one hundred percent., beyond reproach. A single track, well seasoned by long use, covers the northern, older route from Richmond to Clifton Forge. Up James River are stretches of double track. From Clifton Forge to Cincinnati, 489 miles, is a double track, excepting a few, short Gauntlets.

As of June 30th, 1915, rail 100-lbs. a yard covered 534 miles of First Track, and 529 miles of Second Track. The entire length of all tracks covered by this weight of rail, inclusive of Branch Lines, was 952 miles. Today, rail of 125-lbs. a yard will replace, experimentally, some stretches of lighter rail to meet the heavy traffic.

As of the same date, of the total mileage of 2625 miles of main tracks, first and second, and Branch Lines, nearly 2000 miles were laid with Stone or Slag Ballast, the remainder covered by other material.

We have seen equipment of the most modern types, Mallet Engines, Mikadoes, Shay-Geared, Consolidation; Steel Cars, Freight and Passenger, and the well-known "Yellow Trains" *de luxe*, the "F. F. V's," that enter daily the Pennsylvania Station here, through from Cincinnati and Louisville.

Long trains burdened with Products of Mines, Forests, and other industries have lined our way.

We have seen nearly 2200 miles of operated line, of which over 2100 miles are owned directly by our System, the remainder leased. Besides this are more than 200 miles of line over which our trains go under generous trackage rights. Add to this our second track, side-tracks, and tracks jointly used, and we have spread before us, used for Public Carrier purposes, a total trackage of nearly 4000 miles, all serving the great needs of great industries, thriving communities, regions whose products even the far future will call inexhaustible.

Going west with the freight traffic by the low grade, James River Line, we here meet, as we pass from Jackson's River to the Alleghany summit, a single maximum adverse grade of 60 feet to the mile.

On the northern route, over the old Blue Ridge line, our fast, through Passengers, with their great locomotives, easily go up from the beautiful Piedmont region, along the slope of the Blue Ridge, over a maximum grade of 75 feet to the mile, to the Summit at the eastern boundary of the Valley of Virginia.

Crossing this Valley, verily a land of the fairest beauty, to its western wall, the North Mountain, our trains move swiftly to the Summit over a maximum grade of 80 feet to the mile.

Turning eastward with our heavy traffic on its way to Tidewater, our maximum adverse grade for about 15 miles is only 30 feet to the mile as we go from the Greenbrier to White Sulphur Springs, near to the Alleghany Summit.

On the plains and hills high above the main line, are the mines whose coal goes all the time down grade to the assembling yards on New River, the Kanawha, Coal River, the Guyandot, the Big Sandy, and other tributary waters.

Thus our System challenges comparison, as to grades, with its friendly companions and competitors, who must cross the Appalachians from the Ohio waters to the sea by heavier grades.

To meet the pressing demands for its own way to the Lakes, our System is building to Columbus, Ohio, from a point on the Ohio River just above Portsmouth, at Sciotoville, a line under the name of The Chesapeake & Ohio Northern. This line will meet, at Columbus, The Hocking Valley Railway, owned by this System, which thus will secure its own direct line from Newport News to Toledo. The congestion of traffic at Cincinnati is well known. There the restrictions upon all Carriers are unbearable. From this hindrance to our traffic, our new line will liberate us.

The Bridge across the Ohio River is 1550 feet long, approached by two viaducts, 823 feet long on the Ohio side, and 1063 feet long on the Kentucky side. The Bridge itself consists of two spans, each 775 feet long, riveted-steel trusses.

II

And had we time to study the personnel of the organization under whose management this vast plant lives, moves, and has its being, we should have seen intelligence, fitness, loyalty, from the President on along the line to the man whose nightly, lonely vigil makes for the safety of our traffic, human and

material. Automatic Signals have flashed before and behind us, and the dream of George Washington, and of those other great dreamers who labored for the realization of their dreams, often when the days seemed dark, and the nights were white, because of doubts and fears, and forbidding mountains blocked the path, is no longer a dream.

Thus I have tried to give you a Bird's Eye view of our System, leaving out many details that might well be described.

III

Behind is a story of a dream. Further back began the story that Nature has left for us to study, if, perchance, we can read her writing in Rocks and Rivers, Canyons and Pene-Plains, majestic and slow uplifting of vast areas, her storehouses where, for our use, are the Coals and the Oil that are the result of the work of ages too long for man to think. Here we can see how New River has eroded its way through the Great Conglomerate Series, the Number VII of Virginia's Great Geologist, William B. Rogers. And there are the softer measures; first the Greenbrier Shales, No. XI, and, higher up, but by the great north-westerly dip brought beneath us as we descend the River, XIII and XIV, the "Lower Productive Measures," and the "Lower Barren Measures." Those who love to play the game of the correlation of Measures, find pleasure in bringing to this region the words "Clarion," "Freeport," and "Kittaning." But "the proof of the pudding is in the chewing of the string." These coals go into Ovens and Furnaces unafraid of the test.

Nature is indifferent to the history of man. She wipes away his work, so that later generations may "strut and fret their little hour upon the stage, and then be seen no more." None of us "make history." He who writes our history, makes our history, and often it is false. Herodotus, Thucydides, Livy, Caesar, Tacitus, they, and their followers, have made our history. Even about our own George Washington cluster myths and fables.

Emerson, in his Essay on "Character," says:

> "We cannot find the smallest part of the personal weight of Washington in the narrative of his exploits."

Therefore, it pleases me, an Engineer, to speak of him, the Surveyor, the dreamer of the wedding of the waters of the Chesa-

peake with those that flow into the "Gulf of Florida," the Surveyor, the Soldier, the Statesman, who, when he passed to the quiet of his home, turned his thoughts to his early dream, the welding together of his Country by peaceful measures.

The 30th day of October, Anno Domini 1753, in the twenty-seventh year of the reign of his Majesty, George the Second, King of Great Britian, etc., etc., Robert Dinwiddie, Governor of the Colony of Virginia, gave to George Washington, Esquire, a commission instructing him to proceed to Logstown, on the Ohio River, for the purpose of procuring information as to the hostile movements of the French forces posted there. Washington was then twenty-one years old.

During the three years prior to this commission, Washington had been engaged surveying wild lands in Western Virginia claimed by Lord Fairfax. You can well picture the dangers and hardships that attended this task. Later came Braddock's Defeat, and the Battle of "Great Meadows."

In 1758, Washington resigned his commission in the British Army, and, in 1759, was elected a Member of the House of Burgesses from Fairfax County.

In 1770, 1772 and 1774, he made several tours to the source of the Potomac River, looking to the best route from the east to the navigable western waters. His life as a Surveyor had already carried him as far down the Ohio River as the mouth of the Big Sandy. Doubtless with the prevision that often illumines the lonely hours of the Pioneer he saw, as in a dream, the way opened by which the restless men and women of the Tide-water region could go West.

The House of Burgesses, in October, 1765, passed an Act providing:

> "For the clearing the great falls of James River, the River Chickahominy, and the north branch of James River." (Henning, VIII; Page 148.)

The names of those appointed "Trustees" of this work sound like a roll-call of today in Virginia:

> "Peter Randolph, William Byrd, Esquires, Archibald Cary, John Fleming, Richard Adams, Robert Bolling, Jr., William Cabell, Richard Carter Nicholas, John Wayles, Samuel Jordan, and Thomas Bolling, Gentlemen."

The "Great Falls" are at Richmond, marking severely the line between the Tidewater Region, the latest Geological Formation, and the Archaic, that sinks to a depth of nearly 2000 feet at Old Point. Daily the pendulous tide rests against the Granite of the Falls before it turns again home. Here began the work that would some day link the East with the West.

In February, 1772, appear two Acts of the House of Burgesses. One:

> "An Act for opening the falls of James River by subscription, and for other purposes." (Henning, VIII; Page 564.)

The other:

> "An Act for opening and extending the navigation of the Potowmack from Fort Cumberland to Tide-Water." (Henning, VIII; Page 570.)

Both Acts authorized subscriptions, but the "Potowmack" Act authorized, in much detail, a "Lottery."

I call the roll of the Managers of the "Lottery," because, but for certain of these church-going, God-fearing, law-abiding citizens, Patriots too, I had not been with you tonight.

> "William Nelson, Thomas Nelson, William Byrd, John Page, Peyton Randolph, Robert Carter Nicholas, Richard Bland, Benjamin Harrison of Berkeley, Benjamin Walker, Charles Carter of Shirley, Archibald Cary, George Wythe, John Blair and Patrick Henry." (Henning, VIII; Page 570.)

Soon these gentlemen were to take a large part in momentous deeds.

The Proceedings of the House of Burgesses, June 5th, 1775, show that Mr. Mercer introduced a Bill for the establishment of:

> "A Company for the opening and extending the navigation of the River *Potowmack.*"

And the Bill was read the first time.

These Proceedings also show that Thomas Nelson, on June 20th, 1775, submitted a Bill for Services by certain Surveyors in connection with opening the Falls of James River. He was uncle of the Nelson whose name is part of our Revolutionary History, whose statue stands in the Capitol Square, at Richmond. What fine dreamers were those Fathers of our Nation!

The plan to improve the navigation of the "Potowmack" aroused jealousy and hostility in the central part of the Colony, with the result that steps were taken for the waters of the James. Maryland was to co-operate as to the "Potowmack," but the James was Virginia's own.

Navigation matters gave way to the War. But when Washington became a private citizen, his mind returned to his early dream, and, until called, in 1789, to the Presidency, he was active in this work, seeking the best route for the realization of his dream. In a long letter, dated October 10th, 1784, addressed to Benjamin Harrison, Governor of Virginia, he develops his reasons for connecting the East and the West by a great highway. His reasons are political, as well as commercial. He notes that "the flanks and rears of the United States are possessed by other powers, and formidable ones too." He fears the allurements of Spain for the Western States, that "stand as it were on a point. The touch of a feather would turn them any way." He foresaw that movement, known as "The Spanish Rebellion," that stirred Kentucky so as to awake animosities that destroyed friendships, and divided households, even after Spain and France no longer threatened our "flanks and rears."

On the 17th of May, 1785, he was elected the first President of The Potomac Company, and took an active part in its affairs until he became the first great President of our Country.

His letters show his continued, and earnest interest in the development of the James River route on across the Appalachians to the Ohio.

In 1784, the General Assembly of Virginia passed the Act incorporating the James River Company, to whose stock the State was authorized to subscribe, even as it undertook a subscription to the Potomac Company.

At the same session of the Assembly, an Act was passed directing the Treasurer of the State to subscribe in the Potomac

Company for fifty shares, and in the James River for one hundred shares, these to be vested in George Washington, Esquire, his heirs and assigns, forever. The preamble to the Act declares that this gift was in recognition of the "unexampled merits of George Washington, Esquire, towards his Country," and that

> "Those great works for its improvement, which both as springing from the liberty which he has been so instrumental in establishing, and, as encouraged by his patronage, will be durable monuments also of the gratitude of his Country."

Washington, in a memorable letter, declined the gift for himself, but prayed the General Assembly to permit him

> "To turn the destination of this the fund vested in me, from my private emoluments, to objects of a public nature."

By an Act, passed in 1785, this prayer was granted.

In 1795, was confirmed the appropriation of the Potomac shares to "an University in the Federal City," and of the James River shares "to a Seminary * * * in the Upper Country."

At Lexington, Virginia, was a Seminary known as "Liberty Hall Academy." The students of this school, at the beginning of the Revolutionary War, enrolled themselves in the Army under the name of "The Liberty Hall Volunteers." To this Academy the James River shares were given, and became the foundation of Washington College, now Washington & Lee University.

It is worthy of mention that when in 1861, Virginia called for soldiers, the students of this College responded with a second "Liberty Hall Volunteers," and bore a brave and memorable part in the "Stonewall Brigade," fighting from First Manassas to the End.

One of their Captains, Given B. Strickler, later a distinguished Doctor of Divinity, was my class-mate. He led his Company up the heights of Gettysburg, there fell wounded, and became a prisoner.

In 1812 the General Assembly of Virginia "appointed Commissioners to survey the head waters of James River, and the Great Kanawha, to ascertain the practicability of extending their navigation to the base of the chain of mountains that divide them." The Commissioners named were:

JOHN MARSHALL,
JAMES BRECKENRIDGE,
WILLIAM LEWIS,
JAMES MCDOWELL,
WILLIAM CARUTHERS,
ANDREW ALEXANDER.

The report of this survey is from the pen of the "Honorable John Marshall," the Great Chief Justice, expounder of the Constitution. Before me is a copy of the Report, printed in 1816. Alexander was the Surveyor of Rockbridge County, Virginia. Mr. Earl G. Schwem, the able Assistant Librarian of the State, says that, so far as he knows, the only extant copy of Alexander's Map that accompanied this Report is in the files of the Virginia Corporation Commission, and is dated 1814. It was engraved by James Thackara & Son, of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. This survey was begun September 3rd, 1812, and was completed the 9th of October. The story of the survey down the waters of the Greenbrier and the New River reads as an account of that survey of 1869, when I pulled a chain down the rugged banks of New River

In his report Mr. Marshall speaks of the Mississippi that

> "Empties itself into the Gulf of Florida, which is surrounded by foreign territory." (See Report, 1816 Edition, Page 35.)

IV

Historically linked with this old survey is the trip made by Collis P. Huntington, in 1869, when he, in company with General Williams Carter Wickham, then President of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad Company, went in a 60-foot Batteau down New River from the mouth of the Greenbrier. My first Chief, Major Channing Moore Bolton, and others were with the party. Shortly after this, Charles Nordhoff, the

well-known publicist, went over the New River route, prior to the completion of the Railroad, and wrote for the "Every Saturday Magazine" an account of "The Intermediate Section of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad." His article appeared illustrated in the eleventh volume of the magazine.

Thus great names are linked with this Washington dream. First his own, then the great Chief Justice enters. And, later, in the fullness of time, comes Collis P. Huntington, fresh from his monumental work that bound the East and the West by links of Iron, induced to undertake the building of the Chesapeake & Ohio by General Wickham, veteran and brilliant leader of Cavalry in the late War, who bore the glistering scars of two battle wounds. He gave me my first work.

I have sometimes thought that it would be most fitting were there placed at Lexington, Virginia, where Washington's name is spoken daily, if not hourly, some memorial to Collis P. Huntington. He it was who dared to venture on this great work when its result, as seen today, was unforseen. I know how the men of Virginia, young and old, found in his work, that for which they longed, an opportunity to work. Surely Virginia would welcome at her seat of learning, sacred to the names of her two great sons, a memorial that would not only bring increased helpfulness to the young men who gather there from many places for knowledge, but also dedicate to these halls of learning the name of a great American. Eloquent and deathless would be this memorial. Thus do

"Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And live forever and forever."

V

We now pass to the railroad itself.

In March, 1832, the General Assembly of Virginia incorporated The James River and Kanawha Company. This new Company was formed to complete the improvement of navigation of James River, and to connect that navigation with the navigation of the Kanawha River. A railroad was authorized, and then followed much consideration of the comparative advantages of that method of highway and of a Canal. Sharp differences of opinion were expressed, and no railroad

construction was undertaken by the Canal Company. Surveys were made for lines of railroad, but the Company was loyal to its first love; the slow, safe, water route. The Reports of the Engineers are interesting, to show their careful study of a question almost in its infancy.

Meantime, a line of railroad had been constructed from Richmond to Fredericksburg, feeling its way to the Potomac. Not until 1872 was the line completed to Washington.

In 1836 was incorporated The Louisa Railroad Company, parent corporation of our System. Its first President was Col. Edmund Fontaine. The very name brings to my mind the Huguenot, elegant and princely in bearing, brave, courteous. He gave two sons to die in battle. This was succeeded in 1850 by the Virginia Central Railroad. Among the incorporators, is the name of Captain Thomas Nelson, my father's father. The route set forth was from a point on the line of the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad to a point in the County of Orange, near the eastern base of the Southwest Mountains, the range that is seen on the west between Gordonsville and Charlottesville. The road was headed for the western region of the Valley of Virginia, and the waters of the Potomac. Slowly this line was constructed to Gordonsville from a junction with the Fredericksburg line at old Hanover Junction, now called Doswell. The old name is preserved in the records of the War of 1861 to 1865. The present name is a memorial to a household honorably connected with the noblest Sport of Gentlemen and Kings. With that name are linked "Planet" and "Fanny Washington."

By piecemeal the construction went on, and the early Washington dream turned Virginia's thoughts to the waters of the Kanawha. The first purpose of its road was changed at Gordonsville and the line was bent sharply westward towards Charlottesville.

For a time the road was almost a dependent on the Fredericksburg line, but, after a fierce contest decided by the Supreme Court of the United States, an extension was built from Hanover Junction to Richmond, and the road became independent.

The State subscribed to the stock of the Company, and the Board of Public Works, under the name of The Blue Ridge Railroad Company, actually constructed the line from the eastern to the western base of the Blue Ridge under the dis-

tinguished Engineer, Colonel Claudius Crozet, whose name is given to our Blue Ridge, or Rockfish Gap, Tunnel, seven-eighths of a mile long.

Little by little the line crept westward until 1861, when the War found it in operation to Jackson's River, ten miles west of what is now Clifton Forge, the western junction of the old and new lines. Here it rested until the close of the War.

Meantime the State had chartered the Covington & Ohio Railroad, to build westward from Covington, Virginia, to the Ohio River. When the War brought activities to a close, much work had been done through the heavy Alleghany region, and some work on the far western end. This line was distinctly a State undertaking. Therefore, when the close of the War found Virginia dismembered, and her western territory a separate State, that State owned what in its borders was the Covington & Ohio Railroad.

The Virginia line found itself pitiably dismantled by the War. It was run on Pine-poles, and even they were hard to get because money was scarce. Bridges had been destroyed by raids. Rolling stock had been sequestered by the invading Army. All seemed gone except determination and hope.

By concurrent Acts, the two States appointed Commissioners to revive the work of construction, but there was no money to meet the various demands. General Wickham had become the President of the Company, succeeding Colonel Fontaine. He turned to Mr. Huntington for help. After much negotiation, a contract was made with Mr. Huntington on November 16th, 1869, for the completion of the line to the Ohio River, and under this contract, the connecting rail was laid January 29th, 1873.

VI

For the fiscal year ending June 30th, 1915, the revenue from freight was $31,288,536.62. In the beginning, and for years thereafter, there was no freight to yield a revenue.

For the same fiscal year the passenger revenue amounted to $5,696,699.37. In the beginning, there were but few passengers to be carried.

The Coal Mines, whose products today crowd for shipment East and West, came but slowly into existence. During the fiscal year referred to, over twenty-one million tons of

Coal and Coke passed over our rails, and the increase still goes on, until the question is not where shall we find our freight, but how shall we handle the growing traffic, and do this under the ever increasing restrictions of State and Federal regulations.

I feel as one who saw planted the little grain of mustard seed. It is with much of wonder that I see the great tree of today. I think with admiration of those who have taken part in this stupendous work, of their courage, foresight, loyalty to their trust. No Balance Sheet has ever set down as Cost of Property the boldness of those who were our Pioneers. In this work has been invested not merely the money stated in the Balance Sheet, but, also, that which is of far higher value, unrequited brains, courage and fidelity. And, as these men who labored when the issue was not assured laid down their trust, they all did so with clean hands. And, today, those who have succeeded to the trust, have hands no less clean, brains no less fitted for the work, courage undaunted, fidelity worthy of the great trust.

Should not our "other values and elements of value" include something not found in the formal Balance Sheet?

In 1888 the road came under the wing of the Big Four System, and Melville E. Ingalls, whose vigorous ability had brought that System into existence, became the President of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway Company. He wrote his name large in the rapid development of the road from a single track to a double track line. Able and powerful financial support made possible the proper growth of what is now not merely a line of Railroad, but a prosperous System.

I will not burden you with the details of this growth. I have sought to give you but a sketch of what seems to me a part of myself. It is a Story that might fill many pages. I invite you to come and see for yourselves this realization of the dream of the Young Surveyor.

Let me speak a tender goodbye to the old Canal on James River. Today, in the work of Federal Valuation on our line, we are delving into the ancient records of the Canal, and they are a Story in themselves. The oldest Land record harks back to 1785, an "Inquisition."

In 1880, The Richmond & Alleghany Railroad Company, under the authority granted by Virginia, acquired all of the property and rights of the Canal Company, and, duly as au-

thorized, constructed its railroad from Richmond to Clifton Forge. The road-bed used was largely the tow-path.

In 1888, the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway Company acquired the Richmond & Alleghany Railroad Company, and, in due time, merged that Company into the corporate System of the Chesapeake & Ohio. So ended the Canal as a Public Carrier.

VII

Note, I pray you, that Washington dreamt, not for himself, but for the good of his Country, of his fellow-citizens. Even so do great dreamers sow that others may reap, plant that others may eat fruit. It is not what we do, but what we purpose with lofty design to do, that exalts us.

"All we have willed, or hoped or dreamed of good, shall exist."

I have named to you tonight some of those who not only took part in the great work that brought into being the System spread before you, but also sowed the seeds of Liberty whose harvesting is ours, if we are faithful, even as were those Fathers of our Nation, and if we do not suffer ourselves to be content with our boasted progress. Are we not in this progress destroying, often times, rather than planting?

Are we seized with the purpose, even as were those Fathers, that for those who come after us the Future shall not, because of fault of ours, be barren?

Are we trying to squeeze the lemon dry?

"No man liveth to himself. No man dieth to himself."

The men whose dreams I have told tonight still live, and their works do follow them. Surely to be the heirs of their labor is a splendid heritage. But merely to be their heirs is not to be worthy of the heritage. What will we do with it? Let us hope, yes, let us trust, let us know, even as I believe, that those who today are directing the present, and are planning for the future of this great, historic System, are imbued with the inspiration that comes to them from those who have gone before them, and that of each of these shall be said, even as it is said of the mighty dead,—"The workman not ashamed of his work."

"Lo! what a cloud of witnesses encompass us around."

It can be said of him, called to be the Master of this great System since February 1st 1900:

"One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward;
Never doubted clouds would break;
Never dreamed, tho' right were worsted, wrong would triumph;
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better;
Sleep but to wake."

As I ponder over the story that I have told, I think not so much of those who have succeeded, as of those to whom it was not given to see the realization of their dreams.

"Sic vos non vobis, nidificatis aves.
Sic vos non vobis, vellera fertis oves.
Sic vos non vobis, mellificatis apes.
Sic vos non vobis, fertis aratra boves."—(*Virgil.*)

"So ye, O birds! build nests, not for yourselves.
So ye, O flocks! grow fleeces, not for yourselves.
So ye, O bees! make honey, not for yourselves.
So ye bear yokes, O oxen! not for yourselves."

First must come the splendid dream. Then will come the realization thereof. What if the realization seems far withdrawn, beyond our sight? Shall we cease to dream, to have the lofty vision? Rather, I say to you young men, and to you, also, men of an older day, dream on.

"It may be that these lofty dreams of ours
Are the rich seeds
That shall, in some new land, bloom into flowers
Of rich deeds.

"Nor shall it be that time, or storm, or deep,
Shall wreck the silent bark
That wafts me o'er the starless sea of sleep
Across the dark.

"It may be I shall reach some happy strand,
Those blessed isles deep down the western sea;
Or, haply, that hyperborean land,
Where all the things that might have been shall be.

"Then wiser than before,
Unblinded by Earth's haze,
Like tangled ends of thread, I shall once more
Take up my labors of those yesterdays."

JAMES POYNTZ NELSON.