

Sedgwick, Catharine Maria. "West Point." *Juvenile Miscellany* [edited Lydia M. Child] (November and December 1833): 237-45.

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WEST POINT.  
BY MISS SEDGWICK.

My young readers have all heard of West Point. Many of them must have visited it; and they will agree with me that it is the most interesting of all our summer resorts. In the first place, it is rich in historic associations. It was for a long period the head quarters of the heroes of our Revolution. It was considered the most important position in the country; and as such was anxiously and jealously guarded. Names, at the very mention of which our hearts beat quicker, are indelibly written there. "*Washington Valley*" is a quiet spot, deeply indented by the river, where at one time was *his* station, whose presence has consecrated and set it apart as a shrine. "*Fort Putnam*," whose picturesque ruins and position remind the traveller of the crumbling castles on the Rhine, recalls to us the brave, blunt old German, who, though he fought single-handed with a wolf in his own dark rocky den, and with men on many a battle field, "never was afraid, because he never saw anything to be scared at." "*General Knox's house*" the haunt of social pleasure, even during the

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anxious period of war. "*Kosciusko's garden*," a rocky, and deeply-shaded nook in the bank of the river, completely sequestered from the plain above, and irregularly sloping to the water's edge. In the midst of this little area, which nature seems to have formed for her favorites, bubbles up a clear fountain. Colonel T \_\_\_\_\_, the late superintendent, caused a marble basin to be made to receive it, on which, with the taste and refinement

that marks all his works, he had inscribed simply the name of Kosciusko. I have seen one, young and beautiful, kneel and kiss this name, while a tear softened her eye, — one of the brightest that genius ever kindled. Do my young friends ask why is this homage? Kosciusko was a devotee to liberty. He was one of our most generous friends in the day of adversity. And, to give him a larger claim upon our hearts, he was a *Pole*. Tradition informs us that the garden we have described was his favorite resort. There, no doubt, while reposing from his labors for us, he has seen glorious visions of the future freedom and happiness of his own beloved country. The deepest shades of tyranny, midnight, and starless darkness, has settled over Poland. We can do nothing to disperse the clouds, but [p. 239]

we *can* do something to succor the countrymen of our Kosciusko! We *can* assist those brave exiles, who, having sacrificed all in the glorious cause of freedom, are now penniless in our cities.

But I have been led far away from West Point. There is the Military Academy, surpassed by no school in America; and its friends say, equalled by none but the Polytechnic School at Paris. Our young lady-friends, who do not care to investigate the abstruse pursuits of the cadets, may be gratified with the fine specimens of scientific drawings in their Academy. They may learn in the model-room, better than even My Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim could teach them, the mysteries of attack and defence; for there is accurately moulded, a battered town, a fortress, curtains, bastions, glacis, and all those things, whose names puzzle the readers of old histories, and Scott's novels. In the same room are beautiful models of the Colisseum, Diogenes's lantern, and many other classic wonders. If these same young ladies are not, as the old woman said she was,

"afear'd of a gun without lock, stock, or barrel ; " — if they blend a little antiquarianism with their patriotism, — they will do well to look

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into the gun-house, and survey the venerable pieces that were surrendered to us by the unfortunate Burgoyne, at Saratoga. But if young ladies hate "these vile guns"; if they care not for the military art, and have no enthusiasm about dead heroes, we can assure them their ears will tingle at the far-famed music of the West Point band; at the evening gun, answered from hill to hill by the spirits of the highlands; and, (alas! we must descend to vulgar animal life, the air and the walks at West Point are such whetters of the appetite,) and at the sound of Mr Cozzens's dinner-bell. This bell will summon them to a table, spread with the luxuries and elegance, and conducted with the refinement of the best private table.

"There be divers gifts." Some are blind to the scenery of West Point. Some care not about the School; and others have no historic associations; but none are insensible to the charms of Mr Cozzens's hotel; a pattern hotel, a model landlord. Mike Lambourne says truly, "there is something about the real gentry, that few men come up to, that are not bred and born to the mystery." But who shall deny to our friend Cozzens "the true grace of it"? And

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who will deny that his luxurious table might content gourmands, and epicures, and even English travellers? But this is no theme for our young lady readers, who, doubtless, like a cracker, as well as a truffle, and a glass of the pure element better than the best champagne. At West Point there are festival hours, and days for the most refined and

intellectual appetite. The eye devours unsated the beautiful pictures nature has spread, before it, and which she varies every moment by her magic change of light and shade. This is a feast that does not pass away like the table, which is removed and forgotten. Who that ever sat in Mr Cozzens's piazza, has not a most lovely cabinet-picture on the tablets of memory. Who cannot, by a single impulse of the mind, see those bold precipices, that seem to have withdrawn their rocky portals to give a passage to the river, and to stand, its gigantic guardians, while it playfully glides on its permitted course? And what a rough, but sublime, and well-defined frame work these same stern rocks form for the smiling picture beyond! Polypus Island, the pretty town of Newburg, and the blue soft back-ground of the Kaatskills!

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I forbear. I know how imperfectly the pen paints such a scene, even in a hand far more skilful than mine; and I will finish this sketch with some particulars of an old friend, in whose company I lately visited West Point. Agrippa Hull (why should I not give the true name? Though unknown to fame, it has never been sullied, during a life of seventy years;) Agrippa Hull is one of the most respectable yeomen of a village in the western part of Massachusetts. He has "fleecy locks and black complexion," but beneath them, a mind as sagacious as Sancho's, and a gift of expression, resembling in its point and quaintness that droll sage. He is, however, far superior to Sancho; for with his humor he blends no small portion of the sentiment and delicacy of Sancho's master. More than fifty years ago, Agrippa was the servant of Kosciusko. The impression that hero made on the mind of his humble friend does him almost as much honor as his immortal record on the page of history. Grippy (this is the affectionate contraction by which we know him,)

concludes all his stories of the General, by saying, "he was a lovely man!" These stories are so characteristic of the playful humor and gentleness of

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Kosciusko, that at the risk of marring the tale in the telling, I will repeat one, as nearly as possible in Grippy's own words.

Imagine a colored man, seventy three years old, slightly bent by the rheumatism, and his locks somewhat grizzled, but still retaining a striking resemblance to the picture of Prince Le Boo, of the Pelew Islands, leaning on his staff, and beginning in the doggerel rhyme, with which he usually interlards his discourse, to please his young and uncritical auditors: "If you wish it, young ladies, you shall have a tale; for when it's about the General, love and memory never fail.

"The General was going away to be gone two days. ' When the cat 's away, the mice will play!" as the proverb says. The servants wanted a frolic. They persuaded me to dress up in the General's Polish clothes. So I put on his laced coat, his Polish cap, sash, sword and all. His boots I could not wear; so they black-balled my legs and feet. Then I strutted about, took a book, and stretched myself on the sofa, ordered the servants here and there, and bade one of them bring me a glass of water. He did not return soon ; and I, to play my part well, rang, and rang again ; the glass of water came, brought

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by General Kosciusko himself! I was neither red nor pale; but my knees began to fail.

" ' I deserve to be punished, sir,' said I.

" ' No, no, Grippy,' said he, 'come with me. I'll take you round to the officers' tents, and introduce you as an African Prince. Don't speak, but mind my signs, and obey them.'

" ' I shall die, sir,' said I.

" ' Oh, no Grippy, you will not die; follow me."

“ The General had his beautiful smile on; but I was past smiling. I looked solemn enough. The General took me from one tent to another, called me by a long name, made me shake hands, and sit down by the first of the army. Mercy on us! the blood run through my heart like a mill-race. One officer gave me wine, and another brandy, and another offered me a pipe. General Kosciusko motioned to me to take them all. (Poor Agrippa! this was the hardest trial of the gauntlet he had to run; for smoking and drinking were ever odious to him.)

" My heart was sick, and dizzy grew my head, and I looked to the General, wishing I were dead; and he took pity on me; for he was not a man to enjoy riding on a lame horse. So he laughed out; clapped me on my back, and told me to go about my business.

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"From that day to this, I have never tried to play any part but my own. I have made many mistakes in that; but a kind Master is forgiving." As he spoke, he raised his eyes reverently towards Heaven.

After the lapse of more than fifty years, Agrippa revisited West Point, a pilgrim to a holy shrine!

Time and art have so changed the aspect of the place, that when the old man had ascended the step, he looked mournfully around him, and said, "I see nothing here that I know, but Fort Putnam, and the North River!" He soon, however, recognised Washington Valley; and memory gradually restored many forgotten haunts.

Agrippa was one of a large party that included the young, the gay, and the beautiful; but he was, as was most fitting, the most noticed and honored of them all.

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