REV. JOHN N. McJILTON, D. D.
GRAND MASTER, 1862.

From: History of Freemasonry in Maryland... by Edward T. Schultz, 1887, Vol. III.

As the Grand Lodge of Virginia will meet again in Richmond on the 2nd Monday in December next, I desire to incorporate in my report to the Grand Lodge, the further facts in relation to the subject.

I, therefore, Most Worshipful Sir, request that the furniture, warrant and records be forwarded by Adams Express Co., to me at the earliest convenience, as the proper custodian of such articles, by laws of the Grand Lodge of Virginia.

On behalf of the Masonic Fraternity of this State, and especially the members of St. Tammany's Lodge, No. 5, let me thank you Most Worshipful Sir, and Lieutenant Chase, for the care and preservation of these articles. A circumstance which beautifully exemplifies the principles of our noble Order, amidst the fierce and sanguinary warfare now raging.

I will communicate to the Grand Lodge of Virginia, the noble action of yourself and the brethren who rescued the articles from pillage and destruction.

I am, M. W. Sir, Yours Fraternally,
(Signed,) JAMES B. CAMPBELL,
District Deputy Grand Master, District No. 1.

Bro. McJilton from the Committee of Correspondence made a report, which was received, the reading dispensed with, and ordered to be printed with the proceedings.

The Grand Lodge at 8 o'clock proceeded to elect the Grand Officers, when

Bro. JOHN N. McJILTON, *was elected* *M. W. Grand Master.*
" W. L. W. SEABROOK, " *R. W. D. Grand Master.*
" JAMES LOGUE, " *R. W. S. Grand Warden.*
" WILLIAM H. JORDAN, " *R. W. J. Grand Warden.*
" JOSEPH ROBINSON, " *R. W. Grand Secretary.*
" FRED'K FICKEY, JR., " *R. W. Grand Treasurer.*
" JAS. D. McCABE, D. D. " *R. W. Grand Chaplain.*
" WM. McCLYMONT, " *R. W. Grand Marshal.*
" S. E. RICE, *was appointed W. Grand Stand. Bearer.*
" L. A. THOMAS, " *W. Grand Sword Bearer.*
" C. M. JAMISON, " *W. S. Grand Deacon.*
" J. H. NANTZ, " *W. J. Grand Deacon.*
" J. F. EHLEN, " *W. S. Grand Steward.*
" JAS. BRUSTER, " *W. J. Grand Steward.*
" JOHN WALKER, " *Grand Pursuivant.*
" G. I. KENNARD, " *Grand Director Ceremonies.*
" DAVID MARTIN, " *Grand Tyler.*

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been accustomed to use the lower Susquehanna and Chesapeake Bay in carrying on their trade with the Iroquois, one trading post at Palmer's Island would have sufficed for them and for the Susquehannocks. Evidently they did not use this route.

The trade route between English Virginia and the Five Nations, via the Anacostans, as it existed before 1632, is unknown; but it seems highly probable to me, in view of the data herewith submitted, that it made use of Potomac River between the Eastern Branch and the mouth of Conococheague Creek; of Conococheague Creek and its main, or eastern, branch to a point not more than three and a half miles above the site of Chambersburg; of the lower part of Herron's Branch, and of Conodoguinet Creek from the mouth of that "branch" down to Susquehanna River. Between Conococheague Creek and Herron's Branch of Conodoguinet Creek there was a "carry" of about eight miles over gently rolling land. In my opinion this was a very ancient route for canoe travel, known, perhaps, long before 1632, and still in use in 1721. Assuming it to be proved that the "Carrying Place" was on Herron's Branch, and that my inference, that this place was the northern end of the portage path, is correct, I do not maintain that the contribution of Herron's Branch towards shortening the "carry" could have been anything but a minor one. It saved, maybe, a mile or so, since its lower course lay in the desired direction. A heavily laden canoe might have been towed up the "branch" and eased over the shallows, to the "Carrying Place," where it was unloaded for the trip overland to the Conococheague. I offer these data and theories to the reader, trusting that not only the facts, but the surmises, may seem worthy of serious consideration. There is good reason to believe that a "back way" for canoe travel between the Susquehanna and the Potomac formerly existed and was used by the natives of the country. Here we have indications of such a frequented route as the one we seek to identify. Was there another? Perhaps; but on topographical grounds it seems hardly likely.

JOHN NELSON McJILTON.

HUMORIST, DIVINE, EDUCATOR.

By W. Bird Terwilliger.

In the days before residence in New York City became a prerequisite to any degree of literary pretension, Baltimore, like Boston and Philadelphia, maintained her own literary coteries, published her own magazines, and even achieved some reputation as a publishing center, giving to the world no inconsiderable number of books which are now collectors' items. In the second quarter of the last century, the Monumental City was the scene of prodigious literary activity, and among her writers were several of no little ability, who, either through their writing alone or through their achievements in various fields, profoundly influenced the development of their state, and, directly or indirectly, of their nation. However, Poe's four years in the city, his longer association with its literary life, and his tragic death and burial there have been the subject of so much research and discussion that little attention has been given to the host of other writers who, through all or part of their lives, contributed to the thought and culture of Maryland.

Among the better of these were some who, had they constituted a similar group in Boston, would not today be virtually unknown. John P. Kennedy, cabinet member under President Fillmore and representative of Baltimore in both state and national legislative bodies, established a magazine, the *Red Book*; published several novels, among them two, *Swallow Barn* and *Horse Shoe Robinson*, of better than average quality; and was Mr. Peabody's chief aide in the preparation of his plans for the Peabody Institute. To Kennedy also belongs the singular distinction of having written the fourth chapter in Volume Two of Thackeray's *The Virginians*.[1] Rufus Dawes was

[1] *Dictionary of American Biography*, IX, 335.

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the editor of the *Emerald*, one of the two Baltimore magazines to attain a high degree of literary excellence.[2] Timothy Shay Arthur, who lived in Baltimore from 1817 to 1841, was not only the author of *Ten Nights in a Bar-Room*. He wrote creditable poetry, edited several magazines in Baltimore and Philadelphia, published a score or more of novels, and collaborated with William H. Carpenter, another Baltimore poet, in preparing school histories of various states.[3] There were also Brantz Mayer, Secretary of Legation in Mexico, editor of the *American*, executor of the McDonough estate, president of the Baltimore Library Company, and one of the founders of the Maryland Historical Society;[4] James Hungerford, one of the finest poets of the group and the author of *Old Plantation*, a narrative of life in Virginia;[5] John Hill Hewitt, composer, critic, and writer, who edited the *Saturday Morning Visitor*, submitted a poem in a contest conducted by his own paper, which won in competition with Poe's *Coliseum*, and is said to have come to blows with Poe over the matter;[6] and John Nelson McJilton, humorist, divine, and educator.[7]

Born in Baltimore on February 9, 1806,[8] John Nelson McJil-

[2] J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Baltimore City and County from the Earliest Period to the Present Day*, II, 647.

[3] *Dictionary of American Biography*, I, 377.

[4] Scharf, II, 650.

[5] Scharf, II, 646.

[6] *Dictionary of American Biography*, VIII, 606.

[7] The writers mentioned above, and the magazines referred to later, will be treated more adequately in the study of which this paper is a part.

[8] My chief sources of information during the preparation of this biographical study were the following: *The Poets and Verse Writers of Maryland*, by George C. Perine, *Shadows on the Wall*, by John Hill Hewitt, *History of Baltimore City and County from the Earliest Period to the Present Day*, by J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Freemasonry in Maryland*, by Edward T. Schultz, the files of the *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, *The Baltimore Athenaeum and Young Men's Paper*, the *Baltimore Monument* (also called the *Baltimore Literary Monument*), and the annual reports of the Board of School Commissioners of Baltimore City. The main facts concerning McJilton's life are given by both Perine and Scharf, and where they are in accord, I have not given specific references.

No month and day are given by any of the sources for McJilton's birth. All give the year as 1805. The headstone at his grave, however, in Green-

ton began public life in the double capacity in which his father had served the people of Baltimore for many years: that of cabinet maker and Methodist lay preacher. Apparently more bookishly inclined than his father, however, or at least more fortunate in his opportunities for advancement, he studied to prepare himself for orders, in the meantime contributing to the various ephemeral literary periodicals which blossomed in Baltimore during the twenties and thirties.

In 1834 he entered the field of periodical literature in his own right. On June 6 of that year, he, with William T. Leonard and J. L. Cary, edited the first number of the *Baltimore Athenaeum and Young Men's Paper*, a magazine of some literary and great moral pretensions, and the semi-official organ of the Young Men's Society, which was at that time a strong organization devoted to the moral and intellectual welfare of youth. It was not until November 27, 1834, that the second number of the *Athenaeum* appeared, with T. S. Arthur replacing Cary on the editorial staff. A few weeks later, Leonard also withdrew, leaving the work in the hands of McJilton and Arthur. The *Athenaeum* was published regularly on Saturdays for two years, until, in spite of its popularity, publication was stopped on account of financial difficulties. McJilton had, however, because of the press of other business, relinquished the editorship in January, 1836, although he was a frequent contributor until the end.

In spite of the failure of his first venture, McJilton was confident that Baltimore would support a literary weekly, and on October 8, 1836, brought out the first number of *The Baltimore Monument, a weekly journal devoted to polite literature, science, and the fine arts, embellished with engravings and music.* David Creamer, the hymnologist, was his publisher and co-editor, but it is evident that his duties in the latter capacity were nominal, as McJilton's personality is stamped on every page.

mount Cemetery, Baltimore, gives the date of his birth as February 9, 1806, and I have taken this to be the correct date.

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The contents of the *Monument* ran the gamut from homilies on gambling and drink to recipes for tomato pie. "Embellished with engravings and music" was no idle publisher's boast, and these embellishments were not without merit. The literary level of the magazine surpassed that of the earlier *Athenaeum*, for in addition to T. S. Arthur, there were numerous gifted contributors. Among the better ones were E. Y. Reese, whose *Methodist Protestant* became one of the more literary religious journals a few years later, Brantz Mayer, John Hill Hewitt, who, besides writing articles and verse, composed excellent lyrics for the *Monument*, and James Hungerford and J. G. Percival, whose poetry even today makes rather pleasant the reading of those magazines of a century ago. There was a column of book reviews, the work of McJilton, in which appeared many sound criticisms, with occasionally, however, the customary eulogies of tenth-rate productions by authors then in fashion, such as Lucy Seymour and Miss Sedgwick.

After two years, the *Monument* also proved unprofitable, whereupon it was changed to a monthly, with T. S. Arthur succeeding Creamer as co-editor. The character of the magazine was little changed, certainly not for the better. There were more long stories than formerly; there was less verse, and that of a very inferior quality; and there were almost no editorials or critical reviews. It, likewise, folded up at the end of two years, sharing the common fate of literary periodicals in Baltimore. John Hill Hewitt, in his *Shadows on the Wall*, an entertaining but inaccurate volume of reminiscences, says in this connection:

I have hinted at the opinion I have always cherished, that no strictly literary journal published in the city of Baltimore will pay; and, if it does not pay, it cannot continue to exist.[9]

In reference to the *Monument* in particular, Hewitt reprinted the following extract from an editorial he had written for the *Baltimore Clipper* of October 20, 1840:

[9] *Shadows on the Wall*, p. 56.

We will name these shipwrecked editors, in the order given them by the *Visitor*, not presuming to rank them according to their desserts.

J. N. McJilton, Esq., late editor of the *Monument*. This should have read, editor of the late *Monument*, for that literary work, reared on so stupendous an intellectual foundation, did not prove its durability equal to the towering memento which overlooks our city. It was a beautifully printed work; and in saying that, we give it all the praise it deserves. After a brief struggle it died. Verdict, too much pedantry.[10]

It may be that the gradual decline in the quality of McJilton's editorial judgment, with the eventual collapse of his periodicals, was due to the increasing amount of attention required by his other interests: namely, education and the church. Throughout his editorial career he manifested an interest in education, writing frequent editorials on the subject, and in 1835, while he was still editing the *Athenaeum*, he was elected teacher of Male School No. 1, then as now located at Fayette and Greene Streets.[11] In the same year he had married Miss Sarah Davis, and he was already established in the community as a man of upright and dependable character, as is shown by the following extract from the report of the Baltimore Board of School Commissioners for 1835:

The recommendations by which the latter gentleman [McJilton] was sustained in his application, shew that he possesses the confidence of the inhabitants of the section of the city in which the school is situated, and induce a belief that in a short time, the number of scholars in that institution will be largely increased. The discipline at present enforced, is one of lenity and firmness, and cannot fail, as the Board believe, to render the school permanently popular and promote the best interests of the pupils.[12]

In his second year in this position, McJilton submitted, at the request of the Board, an outline of the organization and routine of his school, which was incorporated in the annual

[10] *Shadows on the Wall*, p. 57.
[11] School Reports, 1829-1848. Report for December 31, 1835, p. 66.
[12] *Ibid.*

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report for 1836. Until 1839 he held this position, performing his duties with so much satisfaction to the Board that he came to be regarded by that body as a sort of senior teacher, and his school, the standard by which others were measured.

His preparations for the church were now complete, however, and in 1840, a few months after resigning his teaching position, he was ordained by Bishop Whittingham a deacon in the Protestant Episcopal Church, having forsaken the humble followers of Wesley. A year later he was ordained priest, and made assistant rector of Christ Church. He was also made rector of St. James Church, African, in the same year. He resigned from Christ Church at the beginning of 1842, but retained his rectorship at St. James. In 1844, he was made rector of St. Stephen's, but remained also as rector at St. James. He had already attracted attention as an eloquent and powerful preacher to the extent that, at public request, the church published for distribution his sermon delivered on the Sunday succeeding the presidential election of 1844.

The next twelve years were busy ones for McJilton. He was for several years Chancellor of the short-lived Newton University. He was elected a member of the Board of School Commissioners in 1845, and was at about the same time made a Mason at Warren Lodge No. 9. In 1847 he was made chaplain at the Maryland Hospital for the Insane, in addition to the two charges he already held. During this year he found time to write a novel, *Lizzy Larkin*, for the pupils of St. Stephen's Sunday School, although the increasing demands upon his time compelled him to resign from the Board of School Commissioners. When the Maryland Association for the Encouragement of Literature and the Arts was organized in 1847, McJilton was the first president, and the opening address which he delivered before the members and their friends on January 6, 1848, shows him at his best as a thinker and orator. He resigned as rector of St. James in 1848, only to enter upon heavier duties in 1849, when he was elected Treasurer to the Board of School Commissioners, a position which at that time entailed greater duties than are implied in the title, of which more later.

In 1852, McJilton and John Monmonier, also active in public school work, compiled a textbook, *High School Literature*, for use in the schools of the city. In the same year, McJilton edited and published *The Poetical and Prose Works of John Lofland, the Milford Bard*, Lofland being a personal friend of McJilton, and a versifier of some local renown but of little poetic ability, whose bibulous inclinations and irregular mode of life had estranged him from most of the respectable citizens of Maryland.

After his initiation into Freemasonry, McJilton entered enthusiastically into the work of the brotherhood, and in 1856 he was made High Priest in Jerusalem Lodge No. 9. From 1860 to 1865 he was Eminent Commander of the Maryland Commandery of Knights Templars, and in 1862 he was Grand Master and Grand High Priest of the Maryland Freemasons. He was also Grand Chaplain for several years. It is characteristic of the man that some of the reports he submitted in connection with his various fraternal offices ran to more than three hundred pages in length.[13]

Owing to the extensive duties involved in the office of Treasurer to the Board of School Commissioners, McJilton resigned his rectorship at St. Stephen's in 1853 and devoted the greater part of his time to the service of the public schools of Baltimore, but he remained chaplain at the hospital, was an active Mason, and was frequently called upon to deliver sermons on special occasions in the important churches of the city, although, by virtue of natural ability and considerable experience as lay preacher and ordained priest, he was able to produce eloquent sermons on demand, with a minimum of effort. Among the more noteworthy of his sermons preached by request are the one delivered on the Sunday after the death of Henry Clay, and two Thanksgiving sermons preached in the early years of the Civil War.

Another circumstance which added considerable weight to his labors in these years was his connection with the *Baltimore*

[13] Edward T. Schultz, *History of Freemasonry in Maryland*, III, pp. 818-819.

Patriot, a political and commercial journal established in support of James Madison in 1811, and influential in Maryland politics until after the Civil War. McJilton participated in the financial and editorial management throughout the forties, becoming part owner in 1849. In 1854 he bought the journal outright, but sold it in 1856.[34]

The office of Treasurer to the Board of School Commissioners, McJilton's chief interest for nearly twenty years, consisted not only of the management of the financial affairs of the schools, but also of the general supervision later delegated to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. It was the Treasurer's duty to interview candidates for teaching positions, study curricula and make recommendations, supervise the choice of textbooks, visit the schools to observe their operation, and inspect new and old buildings. All these matters were included in the Treasurer's report at the end of the year, in addition to an itemized report of income and expenses for the year. Evidently McJilton thoroughly enjoyed his work in this position; he was sincerely interested in the cause of public education, and in his voluminous reports he found ample opportunity to exercise his flair for elaborate rhetoric.

He was extremely thorough in matters of detail. When, in 1836, as teacher of Male School No. 1, he was requested to submit a report of the daily routine of his school, he accounted for his school day, from nine till four, in approximately ten-minute periods. As treasurer he was no less conscientious. In 1861, he made 427 visits to he several schools, and in 1862, 559 visits. He frequently included in his reports the daily schedules of several of the larger schools, with comments upon their suitability. He submitted every two or three years a list of all textbooks used in the schools, giving the reasons for their adoption. (In 1847 he was a member of a committee of the Board, which submitted a recommendation that the Board prepare its own texts.) His reports also occasionally included essays of nearly a hundred pages in length on the science of education:

[34] Scharf, II, 612.

its purpose and the most efficient means of providing it. He was a faithful attendant at educational meetings throughout the states, and carried to and from them a wealth of ideas, some of which are today incorporated in the soundest pedagogical theories in practice.

McJilton compiled two textbooks in addition to the *High School Literature* in which he collaborated with Monmonier: *The Maryland Primary Arithmetic, designed for the use of public and private schools*, 1856, and *The Maryland Primary Grammar, designed for beginners in the study of the science*, 1857.

He was the advocate of many reforms in the school system; one of these was a reorganization of the administrative department, with the appointment of a Superintendent of Public Instruction. From 1849 to 1866 he insisted that such an office was necessary, but it was not until the latter year that he persuaded the Board and the City Council to create the position, transferring the other duties of the Treasurer to the City Register. When the office was created, the Board, as was fitting, appointed to the position McJilton, who had been performing its duties for nearly eighteen years.

A year after his elevation to the position of Superintendent, McJilton entered into a long correspondence with the Reverend John Hecker, clergyman, educator, and philanthropist, who had formerly been one of the inspectors of the public schools of New York City. He received from Hecker a copy of "his extended pamphlet, proposing a method of classifying the pupils of schools according to their temperaments."[35] In his annual report for 1867, McJilton devoted many pages to an exposition of Hecker's theories, without clarifying them or making them appear tenable. It was the first educational fad which he, for thirty-two years an active worker in the field of education, had embraced.

At about this same time, the question of the education of

[35] Annual Report of the Board of School Commissioners of Baltimore City, 1867, p. 94.

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Negro children was causing dissension in Baltimore as well as in communities farther south. McJilton, not entirely without the sanction of his Board, established two schools for colored children in 1866 and 1867. No direct appropriation for such schools had been made, however, and the City Register refused to pay the bills for building maintenance and teachers' salaries. The controversy soon attracted the attention of the general public, as well as of the school authorities, and opinion, as was to be expected in Baltimore, was sharply divided on the subject. In a letter to the *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser* for January 18, 1867, McJilton defended the supporters of public schools for Negroes, maintaining that these schools automatically became a part of the school system, and that as such they are entitled to a share in the common school funds. It was many years before the question was settled satisfactorily, but McJilton did not long remain a party to the discussion.

Whether through his advocacy of Hecker's educational theories, or through his stand in regard to the education of Negroes, or, perhaps, through mere politics, which were dirty from crossroads to capital in those days, rather than through either of these circumstances, McJilton fell into disfavor with his Board of School Commissioners in 1867, and was removed from office. The facts in the case are not available. It was not until nearly half a century later that the Board began to preserve the minutes of the meetings, and the newspapers of the day were too occupied with the proceedings of Congress and the efforts to impeach Andrew Johnson to give more than passing notice to local school affairs. On the morning after one of the weekly meetings of the Board, the following appeared in the report of the meeting as printed in the *American*:

> *Whereas*, It is the opinion of this board that the efficiency of the public school system of this city will be promoted by a change in the chief executive officer of public instruction in the same; therefore,
>
> *Resolved*, That the Rev. John N. McJilton, D. D., be removed from the office of Superintendent of Public Schools, and that the removal take effect on the last day of January, 1868.[26]

In the annual report of the Board the following brief statement is the only reference made to the change in administrative officers:

> Within a few months after the election of the present Board, it was considered advisable to make a change in the office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.[27]

Mr. William R. Creery, for several years a teacher in the Baltimore schools, was elected Superintendent on January 14, 1868, and was installed in office on February 1.

Even before the inauguration of his successor, however, McJilton had removed from Baltimore to New York City, where he became Reverend Hecker's assistant. He was also made rector of the Madison Street Protestant Episcopal Chapel there, but gave up both positions within a few months on account of ill health. He died in New York on April 13, 1875, and his body was brought to Baltimore to be buried in the family plot in Greenmount Cemetery there.

It must be admitted that it is as a writer that John McJilton is least worthy of recognition. His humor is heavy and crude, save in an occasional poem, though not greatly inferior to much that won the acclaim of the critics of the past century. There is in it a mixture of Philip Freneau, Washington Irving, and Artemus Ward: there is, in fact, considerable evidence that he was a conscious imitator of Irving. He wrote prolifically, under so many pseudonyms that much of his work can with difficulty or not at all be identified. His favorite pseudonym as a humorist was "Giles McQuiggan," and, as a serious writer, "The Stranger." Unfortunately, "The Stranger" was a common signature in the magazines to which he contributed;

[26] *The Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, Wednesday, December 11, 1867.

[27] Annual Report of the Board of School Commissioners of Baltimore City, 1868, p. 1.

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consequently even the work thus signed must be identified by other means.

John Hill Hewitt says of him:

John N. McJilton . . . was one of my most industrious correspondents. [Hewitt was at that time editing the *Saturday Morning Visitor.*] His favorite signature was "Giles McQuiggan"; his style was racy, but crude. He has published a volume of poems; some of them are truly meritorious, and entitle him to rank among the first of our bards; while others want verve, and might be placed in competition with the mental efforts of a romantic schoolgirl. . . . In his associations, Mr. McJilton was an amiable man, good-humored and modest.[28]

As might be expected, he is neither so bad nor so good as Hewitt's statements indicate. He is always far below "the first of our bards," and never descends quite to the level of "the mental efforts of a romantic schoolgirl." Much of his work, however, especially of that which he had to write to fill out lean numbers of his magazines, is very bad. In his attempts at light humorous verse, he frequently exhibits all the grace of a dancing elephant, but there are passages, delicate and whimsical, not inferior to Freneau's poetry, which they sometimes resemble. Perhaps not the best of these, but certainly typical of them, is his *To a Musquito*, which appeared in the *Monument* for October 10, 1838, and was later reprinted in his collected poems. The following stanzas illustrate its best and worst qualities:

TO A MUSQUITO

By Giles McQuiggan

Be gone you starveling-illstarred creature,
So lank of limb and gaunt of feature,
You luckless, witless, foolish thing!
How dare you enter one's upstairs,
And get upon his ears to sing?
And whether he's at books or prayers,
You come with your eternal song,

[28] *Shadows on the Wall*, p. 48.

Whu-u-u-what, and who can read
Or pray with any kind of speed,
You spider-legged imp!—go long!

You tap the saint as well as sinner,
And good or bad—it's for your dinner:
Their carcasses seem all the same,
And you are no philosopher
To cant and quibble o'er a name,—
And grumble when a term you hear
Expressed a little out of rule,—
In this, the world you imitate,
You rob both rich and desolate,
Nor for the wise forsake the fool.

To rhyme much more, it's not for me to
About your manners, friend Musquito,
I've had about as much to do
With you and yours, as I could wish,
And now I must insist that you
Will go elsewhere and seek a dish,
For past misdoings no amends
Forever will I ask of thee,
But when you next may visit me
I hope you'll not invite your friends.[29]

This poem illustrates the greatest weakness of McJilton's humor, in both prose and verse: his conclusions. More often than not, after a good start, he is unable to come to a point, and the piece wilts away to an anticlimatic finish, leaving the reader with a feeling that he has been sold.

Better than average in this respect is *Eveline Torrance.*[30] Eveline had eleven suitors, none of whom pleased her mother, who, having herself married a poor man, was determined that Eveline should dismiss the whole eleven, and choose a man of means. But Eveline's affections became fixed upon one of them, Jeremiah McKinster, a mechanic. Mrs. Torrance, horrified, chose a fat man whose only qualification was that he owned a frame house, and forbade Jeremiah McKinster her

[29] Poems, p. 129.

[30] *The Monument*, October 29, 1836, Volume I, p. 25.

daughter's company. When the lovers continued to meet, contrary to her commands, she set about plotting with the fat suitor how they might dispose of McKinster. Mrs. Torrance suggested a duel, which was not to the liking of the fat one. The conclusion is one of McJilton's best.

After some discussion it was agreed upon, that Mr. Jeremiah McKinster should undergo a cow-hiding, and be compelled to renounce, before witnesses, any pretensions that he might be *suspected*—for the whole thing was yet upon suspicion—of having toward Miss Eveline Torrance. Preliminaries were soon arranged, and the duplicate of Daniel Lambert essayed to the use of his supple weapon upon the dorsal region of Mr. Jeremiah McKinster—the thing according to agreement was to be done in open day, and in sight of the Torrance house, where the glorious deed might be witnessed by the family. As Jeremiah passed the house daily, to and from his place of business, the opportunity was soon obtained, and the parties met; the fat lover, after the statement of his purposes, and the offer of a moment's time for his rival to renounce all claim to Miss Torrance, which kind offer was most indignantly refused—commenced his operations—whereupon Mr. Jeremiah McKinster seized upon the cowhide, wrested it from his hand, and whaled him in the most genteel manner imaginable. This feat was performed in the sight of Mrs. Torrance and Eveline, and while the one bit her lips with rage, the other looked upon the scene with much satisfaction. This was the last of the fat lover, for he never appeared in the presence of his mother law [sic] in *prospect* again. Jerry was complete master of the field, and one evening, when no one dreamed of such a piece of business, he and Miss Eveline walked over to the parson's, and were pronounced by him, before they left his house, "one flesh." This happy fact was announced immediately upon their arrival at home, and after a few volleys from the old lady, Mr. McKinster stated that he was the owner of three brick houses, when suddenly her tongue ceased, and the thing was made up—much to the satisfaction of *all* parties. Jerry is now a man of wealth—he has been elected to the legislature in the state in which he lives, several years in succession, and enjoys the confidence of his friends, particularly old Mrs. Torrance, who daily applauds her daughter for the discriminating powers she exercised in the choice of a husband.

At its worst, McJilton's humor is very heavy indeed. He created abominable puns, italicized freely, and enclosed innumerable phrases in quotation marks for no apparent reason. In both style and subject matter he shows the influence of Irving, but he fails to do credit to his master, although occasionally his versions of old legends are not unpleasant reading.

In his serious writing, McJilton exhibits the same uneven qualities that are apparent in his humor. Much of his verse is inscribed to members of his family, and is even more sentimental than was warranted by the spirit of the times. *Beech Hill*,[21] a poem describing in glowing terms the country home of Robert Gilmor, and lauding Mr. Gilmor, who had presented McJilton with an engraving of the house at Beech Hill, for preserving a scene of great natural beauty, brought its author considerable attention and has since been referred to as among the best of his verse. The following are the opening and concluding stanzas:

> How many scenes of seasons past,
> The picture doth renew!
> The flowery scenes of love and truth,
> As vivid and as true
> As when their burning light was on
> My youthful heart and brow;
> And though they sleep with buried years,
> They're memory's treasures now.
>
> Long may'st thou live and bloom as now
> And treasure be to him—
> Above the sordid gains of life,
> By wiser years made dim,
> And other feet may walk on thee,
> And hearts be glad as mine;
> While worshiping the gathered past,
> At Memory's sacred shrine.

Superior to *Beech Hill*, however, are *The Triumph of Liberty*[22] and *The Tomb of Bozzaris*.[23] The former, which was read before a meeting of the Associated Literary and Scientific

[21] Poems, p. 84. [22] Poems, p. 13. [23] Poems, p. 71.

Societies on July 4, 1848, contains the bad verse found in all occasional poems, but also includes some passages of poetic quality. Its theme is one which every truly patriotic American poet of the early nineteenth century employed at least once: the glorification of Americanism. The author traces the history of mankind from Adam, who for a time enjoyed liberty, through the rise and fall of Assyria, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, to modern times. Then he pictures the Genius of Liberty seeking a new home, and eventually finding it in the New World. He concludes with the successful termination of the Revolutionary War.

The Tomb of Bozzaris is perhaps his finest poem. Although it, too, treats a hackneyed subject, it shows McJilton at his best. The following are two of the better stanzas:

> And many years o'er Greece must fly
> Ere she that freedom may attain;
> And many a valiant head must lie
> As low as her Bozzaris slain,
> Before the laurel circlet clasp
> Her brow, so mangled now, so torn,
> Still bleeding in the tyrant's grasp
> As though no jewels it had worn.
> She trembles at the tyrant's will,
> But Greece in gloom is lovely still.
>
> O Greece! thou hast indeed a name,
> A glory that may never fade;
> Though past may be thy years of fame,
> Thy heroes in the tomb be laid,
> But still there is a majesty
> About thy being, live that must,
> When nations that have trampled thee
> Are mingled with oblivion's dust.
> There is in thy proud sun though set,
> A grandeur that doth gild thee yet.

In his serious prose, McJilton is too moral, too much the old Methodist lay preacher. He wrote two novels, *Lizzy Larkin*, which I have mentioned before, and *Hester Harris, or Worth and Its Reward: a Story of Life* (1856). Both are extremely

sentimental, written with no regard for style, and both describe the tribulations of virtue, with its ultimate triumph over the powers of evil. In the preface to *Lizzy Larkin*, which purports to be a true story, the author says of his heroine:

> Her most earnest prayer was that God would bless her in her efforts to be a true and faithful Christian, so that she might always be prepared for death.[24]

This cheerful spirit is maintained throughout both novels, and McJilton's shorter stories and articles are of a similar nature. *Herbert Harris*,[25] the story of the horrible death of a young infidel, concludes with the following words:

> We thought he would die easy, and while talking of his departure, the clock struck three—then as if by some sudden convulsion of his whole body, he sprung about two feet above his bed, and crying "ah I come," fell precisely as he had lain before. For some moments we were speechless, and when we recovered from the surprise into which this strange act had thrown us, finding he was perfectly still, we proceeded to examine his body; he was still warm, a clammy sweat was on his flesh, and the terrible contortion of his countenance bespoke the agony in which his spirit had taken its flight.

The publication of literature of this kind might, at first thought, be considered cause enough for the failure of the *Monument*, but it must be remembered that the readers were accustomed to it; it was in the spirit of the times, and was considered a most wholesome literary diet.

McJilton was under no delusions as to the quality of his work. In the preface to the volume of his poems which he published in 1840, he wrote:

> While engaged in writing the poems, no thought of future fame obtruded to mar the pleasures of composition, which have been adequate to the labor expended in their production. They are the offsprings of the heart; their errors those of an inoffensive muse, which, however, is as independent as unpretending,

[24] *Lizzy Larkin*, p. 1.
[25] *The Monument*, October 8, 1836, Volume I, p. 2.

and presents its efforts alike to "cormorant and commoner," expecting each without "favor or affection" to dispose of them according to his pleasure.[26]

There was present in all his literary activity one or more of three objectives: to further the cause of education, to point a moral, or to foster a spirit of nationalism. The first will be discussed in connection with his work in that field; of the second, ample evidence has been given in the passages quoted above; as to the third, the magazines which he edited were established with the avowed purpose of providing an outlet for native genius. Hewitt diagnosed the fatal malady of the *Athenaeum* as "too much encouragement of native genius."[27] The editorial platform of all three, and of the *Patriot*, was distinctly nationalistic. In the *Athenaeum* for May 30, 1835, there was reprinted from the *Knickerbocker* an article on American Literature. The following is an extract from the editorial comment upon the article:

> There can be no question of the injurious tendency which a large portion of the popular literary productions of England has upon our social habits and feelings, and on this subject the writer's views are perfectly coincident with our own. Popular prejudice, in spite of the convictions of common sense, will gradually take its character from the tone of popular literary productions; and this is the reason why we want a literature that shall not shed an attractive but illusive glare upon aristocratic exclusiveness, nor give to rank and wealth that factitious consequence which strikes at once at the foundation of our national institutions.[28]

It is evident that literary excellence was a matter of secondary importance.

That McJilton was not devoid of literary judgment may be established through a study of his critical articles. As I have said earlier, he frequently fell into the error of mistaking moral earnestness for literary ability, as in the case of Mrs. Sigourney or of Miss Sedgwick, but he was not alone, and when he differed from public opinion, the soundness of many of his verdicts has been proved by time. He did not join in the general acclaim accorded by Americans to Edward Bulwer-Lytton. In a long article in the *Monument*, he compares Bulwer and Scott, and, while he is perhaps too kind to Scott, his appraisal of Bulwer is sound. He calls Bulwer's characters "creatures of fancy."[29] "Where is the character in all the works of Bulwer," he asks, "that will bear any comparison with Old Mortality?"[30] He says also, "Bulwer still strives to make it [his work] more perfect, and a few extra touches of his pencil renders fulsome what is unfinished without them."[31] And again, "Bulwer writes to tickle the imagination, and his work will only please so long as that subtle property of the mind is under excitement."[32]

I have said that he was influenced by Irving. Here is his judgment upon his master:

> Irving has done as much perhaps as any other American in the cause of American literature; his superior as a writer is scarcely to be found in this or any other country.[33]

This in spite of Irving's frequent choice of foreign subjects.

Although McJilton's active participation in religious work extended over a part of his life only, and at no time commanded his exclusive attention, he was not without distinction in that field. Completely orthodox, he remained, however, strangely tolerant, and while he hurled mighty thunderbolts at the evils of the day, he was never unsympathetic toward those who had fallen from the path of grace. He was an advocate of temperance, yet in one of his best stories, *The Bride of the Barrens*,[34] he good-humoredly relates how he and a brother clergyman officiated at a wedding which, thanks to an idiosyncracy of the bride, could not be solemnized until all present, including the preachers, had united in polishing off the contents of innu-

[26] Poems, p. vi.
[27] *Shadows on the Wall*, p. 68.
[28] *The Baltimore Athenaeum*, I, 222.

[29] *The Monument*, December 16, 1837, Volume II, p. 84.
[30] *Ibid.*
[31] *Ibid.*
[32] *Ibid.*
[33] *The Monument*, March 3, 1838, Volume II, p. 172.
[34] *The Monument*, November 12, 1836, Volume I, p. 42.

merable stone jugs, supplied by the bride's mother from a seemingly inexhaustible supply in the cellar.

Every event of national or local importance had for him a moral significance, and many such incidents were made the subject of excellent sermons. In one of the earliest of his published sermons, that delivered after the presidential election of 1844, he pointed out that government is a divine establishment, to which man is bound to submit; that to resist the laws, once made, when they infringe not on the laws of God, is to resist God; and that, following a political campaign in which the party spirit ran high and much wrong was done, the nation's duty now was to obey and serve God.[33]

He never allowed politics to enter his pulpit, and he rebuked severely those ministers who made use of their position to further the interests of political parties, saying of them, "The ministers of the sanctuary have become politicians and partizans."[34]

Although not in sympathy with the doctrines of Andrew Jackson, McJilton allowed no trace of his opinions to appear in the sermon which he preached on the Sunday after Jackson's death. "What we have to do with his name and actions," he said, "is to draw from them such lessons of spiritual instruction as become the sanctuary of God."[35] There was bitter sectional feeling in the land at that time, and one of the lessons McJilton drew from Jackson's death was its effect in uniting the people of the nation, though in grief. He saw it as a timely act of Providence, and plead that the people might take the hint of Providence and remain united. As a second lesson, he pointed out that Jackson died "a practical believer in the Christian faith"[36] and that we, the lowly, might profit by the example of the great. The sermon, for which McJilton chose as a text the words, "Be still, and know that I am God,"[37]

[33] *Man's Duty to the Civil Government and to God: a Sermon.*

[34] *A Nation Making Light of Religion in the Time of Its Calamity: a Sermon*, p. 10.

[35] *God Speaketh: a Sermon*, p. 9.

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

[37] *Psalms*, 46, 10.

concludes with a warning that the occasion of its delivery came as a reminder of the instability of human life: a warning to the wicked, an encouragement to the faithful.

In his sermon on the death of Henry Clay,[38] preached at St. Stephen's on July 4, 1852, McJilton made a stand for unionism, stating that Clay's greatest services to the nation had been his efforts in that direction.

Two Thanksgiving sermons, those of 1861 and 1862, both preached by special invitation, as McJilton was no longer serving a congregation, are, however, among the most powerful of those that have been preserved. The first, preached on November 28, 1861, has for its title, *Our National Degeneracy the Cause of Our National Troubles*. It is organized in a masterly fashion upon the text, "I have a goodly heritage."[39] We have a goodly heritage, he says, in a threefold way: 1. In our nationality. We have reached the highest point of attainment in the useful arts. Our constitution is perfect, the result of prayer; under it we have become great. 2. In our domestic and social privileges. We have necessities, comforts, luxuries. We are equal socially. 3. In our religious freedom. There should be no sects, but since there are, we are fortunate in being able to choose our own.

But we have abused our goodly heritage, in all its threefold aspects: 1. In our nationality, for there is no prayer now. No man is elected to office because he is pious. "The demagogue has been made the successor of the true patriot."[40] He declares that, "The worst sentiment ever introduced by partizan policy is that which declares that 'to the victor belong the spoils,'"[41] and points with contempt at the type of men who get the spoils. The only way out of this deplorable state, he says, is for us to become a religious and educated nation. 2. In our domestic and social privileges, for there have sprung up class distinctions, with the wrong class in power. The hope

[38] *God's Footsteps: a Sermon.*

[39] *Psalms*, 14, 6.

[40] *Our National Degeneracy the Cause of Our National Troubles: a Sermon*, p. 15.

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

2

of society is in the great middle class, which must neither sink nor rise, but must be enlightened, educated to be useful. 3. In our religious freedom, for the pulpits have become partizan and the churches corrupt. McJilton believed that the war was a scourge of God upon the nation to chastise it for these evils.

Probably his most powerful and eloquent sermon, though not so well organized as the one outlined above, is that which he preached on the next Thanksgiving, November 27, 1862. In it he relates how the covenant of Jehovah was broken by the Israelites, and how as a result the great Jewish people disintegrated. Then he draws the parallel provided by our own people. We have broken the covenant with God; this day, which should be a day of fasting and prayer, is devoted to gluttony; speculation (in food, stores, etc.) is rife; there is sectarianism. What other than a great national calamity is to be expected? It is only the few good people for whose sake we are spared greater evils.[44]

In a century and a country which boasted some eminent divines, these sermons are worthy of being ranked with the best.

Of the three fields in which McJilton labored for forty years, he was most faithful to that of education. He believed in education for the masses, and studied earnestly how it might be made a reality. The same motive lay behind this zeal, I believe, that directed so much of his effort in other fields, his Americanism. Six years of age at the outbreak of the second war with Great Britain, he lived through the most intensely nationalistic period in American History, not without sharing the prevalent enthusiasm concerning the future of his country. Not even Whitman surpassed him in his faith in democracy. It was this belief in the principles of democracy that made him so concerned with the welfare of the public schools, for, he reasoned, and frequently asked, how can men govern themselves well without a knowledge of the aims and purposes of government, and an understanding of the means of accomplishing these purposes? Let him speak for himself:

Humanity must be educated for intelligent citizenship. . . . Had the statesmen and editors of the past half century but directed their efforts to the enlightenment of the people upon the various subjects involved in the character and use of their free institutions, they would have secured the foundation of the Republic as laid by the patriots and patriotic heroes of the Revolution, in such strength and firmness as would have rendered it immovable for ages. Had these statesmen and editors exercised their abilities and opportunities in multiplying the number of competent teachers, and in assisting, and counselling, and encourageing them in the discharge of their obligations in instructing the youth of the times, the people had been fully prepared for their national engagements as American citizens; and it is more than probable that no sectional dangers would now [1860] be feared, nor would any crisis from internal causes be apprehended. Had the teachers of the past been sufficient in number and the right sort of men and women, and had they performed honestly and faithfully the service required of them, mental and moral power of our people would now be sufficient for any emergency that might arise. The peace of the nation would be preserved in the proper measure of its strength, and the confidence of its citizens would be established in their intelligence, patriotism, and virtue. No properly educated nation could possibly tolerate for a single moment the idea of its own destruction.[45]

But it was not only for the sake of the state that McJilton desired a nation of educated men and women; he was interested in the individual as well. He regretted that literature and learning tended to raise a man above labor, rather than to qualify him for it, maintaining that in whatever position, the artisan or laborer would benefit by the acquisition of knowledge, and that all labor would, by the infusion of knowledge into its performance, be raised to a higher level. Business men could profitably learn psychology; farmers, chemistry, and there

[44] *Our Nation Making Light of Its Religion in the Time of Its Calamity: a Sermon.*

[45] *Importance of the Teacher's Calling, Nationally Considered*, an address delivered before the National Teachers' Association in the city of Buffalo, August 10, 1860, p. 17.

would result, not only greater efficiency in these fields, but, for their practitioners, a higher niche in the social scale. All labor would be dignified by a knowledge of the literature which belongs to it.[46]

With these ends in view, he set about making the education of the children of Baltimore as thorough and as useful as possible. Believing that the foundation determined to a great extent the pupil's attainments, he emphasized the instruction of beginners, and compiled two texts for use in elementary schools, a primary arithmetic and a primary grammar.[47] Both are small volumes, likely to be scorned by the compilers of today's elaborate and well-padded textbooks, but they leave out nothing that is essential to a knowledge of the fundamentals of their respective subjects. Although modeled after the texts then in use, they show McJilton's dissatisfaction with the prevalent system of teaching, and the thoroughness with which he wished his teachers to drill their pupils. There is endless repetition, and each lesson is followed by specimen exercises, with the suggestion that the teacher supply additional ones as required to establish the principles firmly in the pupil's mind.

From a study of these texts alone, it might be inferred that too great a reliance was placed upon the memory in the schools supervised by McJilton, but such was not the case. He seldom missed an opportunity, either in his addresses before educational groups or in his reports to the Board of School Commissioners, to disparage the rote system of learning, and to extol the process by which the student learns by reasoning. In one of his annual reports he wrote:

> To cram the memory with facts without communicating or developing the power of using them is not to educate the pupil. The evidence of the pupil's attainment is in the power of using his knowledge. . . . Let the pupil be taught to express his thoughts, to communicate what he knows, and it will increase his desire to think, and to know more; and the more he experiences the improvement of his powers, the more will he increase his capabilities, and give evidence that he has not studied in vain. . . . By such process as is here commended, the memory itself must be encouraged in connection with the other faculties of the mind, which ought to be employed in common with the memory, in the apprehension, understanding and use of all the subjects of study.[48]

[46] *Opening Address*, delivered before the Maryland Association for the Encouragement of Literature and the Arts, p. 19.

[47] See above, p. 13.

In the same report, McJilton related how he, on his visits to the schools, had frequently examined the pupils to determine the efficiency of the system of instruction. He found that the pupils could recite perfectly the rules for which he asked, but upon further questioning he learned that the rules and definitions conveyed no more meaning to them than would so much Greek. It was against this type of teaching that he inveighed furiously upon every opportunity. In his opening address before the Maryland Association for the Encouragement of Literature and the Arts, in 1848, he criticized the educational system then in favor, saying:

> The process of the schools is for the master to instruct from books, and this duty may appear to be faithfully enough performed, but the mind of the student is crammed rather than expanded; it is burthened with a weight under which it is crippled, rather than taught to soar. The student should not only be taught to use his books, but should be taught also to use the information he obtains from them. He should be instructed in the employment of his own powers. He should be drilled in the use of the knowledge he acquires; and the drilling process should be performed while he is acquiring it. The substance of every lesson he studies should be made a part of his own mind, and the proof that it is so, should be required by the actual practice. What he learns should be drawn from him in such a manner as to make it his own communication.[49]

The years which McJilton spent in charge of Male School No. 1 acquainted him with the teachers' problems, and he was always their champion against attacks from within and without

[48] Report of the Board of School Commissioners for 1866, p. 108.

[49] *Opening Address*, delivered before the Maryland Association for the Encouragement of Literature and the Arts, p. 18.

the school system. When he was a member of the Board, in 1847, there was proposed a reduction in the salaries of the teachers. McJilton opposed the measure with all his energy, and in a long speech before the board pictured the evils that must result from such an action. Teachers would be dissatisfied, he said, and hence, uninspired. Capable men and women would be able to command better salaries in other fields, and would forsake teaching. There would be a continual shifting among personnel, a condition inimical to the welfare of the pupils. To reduce the already inadequate salaries, he maintained, would reduce the teaching profession to the level attributed to it by its enemies: the last resort of those who had failed at everything else. The following is a part of his plea:

> It is said that we can get male teachers for five hundred dollars, and three hundred dollars, to supply the places of those for which we are now paying eight hundred and fifty and six hundred dollars. And it is said that we can get female teachers for two hundred dollars, and one hundred fifty dollars, to supply the places occupied by those to whom we pay four hundred and fifty, and two hundred and fifty. Sir, I do not doubt at all but that this may be the case. And I will say further, sir, that I do not doubt but that we can get teachers in both the departments for any prices we may be pleased to offer. But I would ask what kind of teachers will they be? Will they be persons of education, and ability, and character? No, sir, such they cannot be. It is impossible. They will be anything else. If persons are capable of discharging the high and important obligations of the school-room, they will be able to command prices much nearer the equivalent of their services. Competent and faithful teachers cannot be obtained for anything like the sums named. I have said the labor will be according to the pay, and I may add, so will the laborer. The principle comes from high authority that "the laborer is worthy of his hire," and whatever contravenes that principle must be injustice and oppression.[50]

It is characteristic of McJilton's thoroughness that in preparation for this defense he made extensive research into the school systems of other cities and states, particularly that in Boston, which was outlined for him in detail in a letter from Horace Mann.[51]

He concluded by submitting a plan whereby expenses might be reduced without injury to the teachers, through systematized and centralized buying of supplies, establishment of a more graded system of schools, with correspondingly graded requirements for teachers (both of which recommendations were later adopted), and an increase in the tuition, which was then one dollar per head per quarter for all pupils.

The salaries were not reduced.

In a history of Central High School, now Baltimore City College, he indulged in one of his bursts of rhetoric, and paid tribute to the teaching profession in his second-best pulpit style:

> Beyond this vale of tears there is a purer society than here. The limits of time are not our limits. When these times shall be ended; when this generation shall have passed away; yes, when time shall be no longer; when the name by which we now designate man shall be forgotten; shall I see the work which has been commenced here, continuing to prosper! Is not the material with which I work immaterial, immortal, invisible, eternal? as a teacher I would then cast my eyes all along the avenues of society; here and there I see a temple of knowledge, which has been erected as a monument to what common schools have done for our race. How noble then is our calling, how honorable, how lofty! The faithful teacher, why ought not he to hold, in the sight of the community, the highest position in point of respectability? Yet among us he is a proverb and a byword to the *respectable* classes of people.[52]

Education in its more general aspects also claimed his consideration. He read widely in educational literature, and followed with interest the progress of the various state systems which were established long before that of Maryland. This tardiness on the part of his native state was a constant source

[50] *Speech against the Reduction of the Salaries of the Teachers in the Public Schools*, p. 22.

[51] *Ibid.*, Appendix A.

[52] *Historical Sketch of the Central High School of Baltimore*, p. 46.

of shame to him, for which he apologized when abroad and which he strove to mend when at home. The final establishment of a state school system in Maryland, in 1865, was due in no small degree to his efforts. There had been for years a state appropriation for an "academical fund" (There is a strikingly modern note in McJilton's lament that the counties each received $800.00 annually from this fund, while Baltimore, paying one-third of the taxes of the state, received nothing), but this money could be spent by the counties as they saw fit, and there was no state organization until 1865.

McJilton also critically examined the various foreign systems of education, and particularly admired that employed in Prussia. In 1837, in an editorial in the *Monument*, he wrote:

> Reports which have been circulated, exhibiting the system of education practised upon in the Prussian government, which is without doubt the best in the world, have done much toward the advancement of the cause in this country, and the day may be not far distant when the opportunity of obtaining a liberal education will be afforded every child in the land.[53]

On various other occasions he cited the Prussian system of teacher training in normal schools, recommending its adoption in Maryland.

In thus pushing aside for a moment the curtains of oblivion which have, in the lapse of more than half a century, obscured the figure of John McJilton, we see that he was the man of his time: nationalist, optimist, apostle of *Democracy*, champion of the great middle class. We should seek far to find a better composite picture of "man thinking" in America between 1830 and 1870. As a writer, he was not quite good enough to reach posterity, even in the textbooks and literary histories. His failure to do so was no doubt due in part to lack of talent, for his works do not bear the mark of genius, but it was also due to indifference. He was, I believe, sincere when he wrote the preface to his published poems. He wrote for pleasure, not

[53] *The Monument*, January 28, 1837, Volume I, p. 136.

for laurels. He was content, in his magazines, to provide, for those who might have talent, an opportunity to reach an audience, and to stimulate culture in his city and state. That much of the writing appearing in their pages was superior to his own caused him no rancor. It was enough for him to be able to present it to the public, and, in his editorials, to further the causes of nationalism and education.

The success that attended McJilton's efforts in the pulpit, however, and a study of those of his sermons which have been preserved, indicate that in that calling he was far from being the amateur that he appears in literature. His rapid promotion in the Maryland Diocese, his frequent calls to preach sermons for special occasions long after his retirement from active church work in Baltimore, his call to a New York charge immediately after his arrival there—all these circumstances are measures of his ability and popularity as a preacher. The sermons he delivered are the products of a mind singularly even and tolerant in a day of great sectional and partizan jealousy. Although he followed with keen interest the trends of worldly affairs, he never allowed himself to be carried away by the fervor of his opinions upon them, into petty rabble-rousing and recrimination. While he felt that from the pulpit he could exert an influence for the betterment of his city and nation, he remained an able minister of the gospel; when he felt that in the field of public education he could exert a greater influence, he devoted all his powers to that cause.

In his deep concern for the future of the American people, he put aside any inclination he may have had to divide his attention among three congenial spheres of activity, and singled out public education as the instrument which he could employ to the greatest advantage in laying the foundations for future national success. In a democracy, to the principles of which he clung tenaciously, the responsibility for the government rests upon the common people, the great middle class, and he saw clearly that in his day the greatest handicap under which these people labored in governing themselves was unenlightenment.

It was to this end, then, that these people might, through the public schools, receive that enlightenment which would enable them to govern themselves wisely and independently, that he expended his greatest efforts in that direction. The citizens of Baltimore and Maryland do not today realize their indebtedness to John McJilton for many of the educational advantages which they now enjoy. Almost single-handed he strove to build up an educational system comparable to those in other localities, and in Baltimore City he succeeded so well that at the time of his death, her system was inferior to none.

McJilton was a man with a purpose, and that purpose was not to attain literary perfection, or to win, through his eloquent sermons, the adulation of his fellow Baltimoreans; it was to improve the lot of his fellow man, and in his educational work, at least, if not in his ecclesiastical and literary endeavors, he achieved it.

Chronological Table.

1806. February 9. John Nelson McJilton was born in Baltimore, Maryland.
1834. Started the *Baltimore Athenaeum and Young Men's Paper* with Wm. T. Leonard and J. L. Cary.
1835. Married Miss Sarah Ann Davis, of Baltimore. Was elected teacher of Male School No. 1.
1836. January 23. Left the *Athenaeum*.
October 8. Started the *Baltimore Literary Monument* with David Creamer.
1838. Changed the *Monument* to a monthly.
1839. Resigned as teacher.
1840. Was ordained a deacon.
Published his *Poems*.
1841. Was ordained a priest.
Was made assistant rector of Christ Church.
Was made rector of St. James.
Resigned at Christ Church.
1844. Was made rector at St. Stephen's.
1845. Was elected a member of the Board of School Commissioners of Baltimore City.
Was made a Mason.
1847. Was appointed Chaplain of the Maryland Hospital for the Insane.

Resigned from the Board of School Commissioners.
Published *Lizzy Larkin*.
1848. Resigned at St. James.
1849. Was elected Treasurer to the Board of School Commissioners.
Bought a part interest in the *Patriot*.
1852. Published *High School Literature*, with John Mounonier.
Published Lofland's Poems.
1853. Resigned from St. Stephen's.
1854. Bought the *Patriot* outright.
1856. Sold the *Patriot*.
Published *Hester Harris* and the *Maryland Primary Arithmetic*.
1857. Published the *Maryland Primary Grammar*.
1866. Was appointed Superintendent of Public Instruction in Baltimore.
1868. Was removed from the office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.
Moved to New York City.
1875, April 13. Died in New York City.

THE SIZES OF PLANTATIONS IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY MARYLAND.

By V. J. Wyckoff.
St. John's College, Annapolis, Md.

Until one has examined the land records of the colonial period of Maryland there is apt to be some misconception of the *sizes* of the individual holdings. Manors of thousands of acres fit into the mental picture of a virgin continent more readily than the division of Lord Baltimore's palatinate into thousands of farms of several hundred acres. In one of the standard references on Maryland there is printed a list of many of the lords of the manor with their original surveys and also abstracts of one thousand early land surveys.[1] Of equal sig-

[1] Hester Dorsey Richardson, *Side-Lights on Maryland History*, pp. 263-267, 287-355, Baltimore, 1913. For Virginia, see Nell M. Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers, Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants, 1623-1800*, Richmond, 1934.