

THE OLD WILLOW.

ON the campus about 100 yards south of the College building, at the forking of the drives and walks that lead, on the one hand to the president's house, and on the other hand to the college, may be found at all times a friend of the afflicted. Approach that spot in June or January and we find that friend in mournful silence bowing his myriad heads with Nature's grace, as if to drop the balm of peace into every aching heart and weary soul that perchance might pass beneath his spreading arms.

Not only the sorrowful, but even hearts with joyful faces have given expression to sentiments of love in praise of this old comforter, who unconsciously inspires the admiring soul with the grandeur of Nature's forms and facts, and proves our god a certainty.

What is there to admire? The old *weepi g Willow!* The name itself will send a thrill through every heart that ever beheld this venerable landmark on our beautiful campus. The ancients loved its species and poets sang praises in immortal verse. If we turn to 138th psalm we find an allusion to this species of the willow in those oft repeated words which the psalmist used to express the sorrow of the children of Isreal in their captivity. "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof." From the fact that the species is a native of the above country, it is known to botanists as *Salix Babylonica*, while we who are less precise in our discernment prefer to know it simply as the weeping willow. The tree is found also in various parts of Europe and China, and frequently may be seen occupying a place of prominence in drawings and paintings made by the Chinese.

The tree is planted almost universally by the enlightened people of Asiatic and European nations, in their cemeteries, as expressive of

a pensive melancholy,—The long and slender lanceolate leaves appended to the thin and wiry drooping branchlets moving slowly and softly to the light breezes that sweep over the dead and afflicted, fill the air as it were, with a moving stillness like that which attends the "still small voice." It is said that Alexander Pope introduced the first weeping willow into England by planting a withe that had been used in tying a package sent to him from Spain. The wounded twig grew in the poet's garden and became a fine old tree that was much prized by Pope. In his verses he frequently sang of the willows or osiers as some are called.

"Let vernal airs through trembling osiers play,
And Albion cliffs resound the Rural lay.
His drooping swans on every note expire
And on his willows hung each muse's lyre."

The willow is emblematic also of desertion, as we find expressed in the following quotations from different writers:—

"A willow garland thou didst send
Perfumed last day to me;
Which did but only this portend,
I was forsook by thee."

—HERRICK.

"I must wear the willow garland,
For him that's dead or false to me."

—CAMPBELL.

But let us turn to the specimen of this note, the only tree of its kind on the grounds, and undoubtedly one of the few that date their existence with that of this institution. From the ground rises three trunks measuring respectively three feet, five feet, and six feet 9 inches in circumference. These spread and rise to a height of fifteen feet, from which they divide and sub-divide into the final branchlets that reach a height of thirty feet, and spread over a surface of fifty feet in diameter. Three years ago, that portion of the tree on the smallest trunk became too heavy for its support, and the slender trunk split longitudinally at a point about ten feet from the ground. It was then tied to the heavier trunk by an iron rod, thus saving a large section of the tree. The willow