

My Friends at Brook Farm

John Van Der Zee Sears

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[Illustration: John Van Der Zee Sears]

MY FRIENDS AT BROOK FARM

BY

JOHN VAN DEE ZEE SEARS

TO MY FRIEND

JOSEPH HORNOR COATES, Esq.

OF PHILADELPHIA

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CHAPTER I. THE OLD COLONIE

In May, 1624, the Dutch packet *New Netherlands* sailed up the Hudson River to the head of navigation, bringing a company of eighteen families under the leadership of Adrian Joris. The immigrants landed at a little trading post called Beaverwick kept by one Tice Oesterhout, a pioneer hunter, married to a Mohawk Squaw. In a few days a party of Indians, probably Mohawks, waited on the newcomers and politely made inquiry as to their object in entering upon Indian lands without notice or permission; Tice Oesterhout and his wife acting as interpreters. Joris replied that they came in peace and hoped to abide in peace on friendly terms with the Indians. He was told that he and his people would be welcome if they joined the universal peace union of the Iroquois, and not otherwise. This proposition the settlers agreed to by acclamation. In due course the General Council of the Five Nations accepted the Colony as a member of the Iroquois Federation. Joris was recognized as the Civil Chief of the little community, and, as he was a Walloon, his people became the Walloon Nation of the Great Peace Alliance. The Great Peace was the treaty forming the basis of the Iroquois Federation. The Colonists, instead of making a treaty with the Indians, gave their adhesion to one already made, thereby securing safety and a practical monopoly of the fur trade on the upper Hudson. They sent annual presents to the Iroquois General Council, which were doubtless received as tribute in recognition of sovereignty, but the Walloon Nation did not seem to care very much about the sovereignty business so long as the fur business continued to prosper, as it did for the next half century.

Two score or so of Walloons did not constitute a very formidable nation but the men were reinforced by the women who had an equal voice not only in local affairs but in the General Council of the Federation.

The settlers built their houses on the Indian trail leading Westward to which they gave the name of Beaver street their grand boulevard which must have been two or three squares long. Beaver Street was the main highway of the Walloon Nation and was the center of the Old Colonie as the Dutch neighborhood was subsequently called. Under English rule, the Old Colonie or Beaverwick was merged with Fort Orange and Rensselaerwick, these, collectively, being named Albany in honor of the Duke of York, Albany being one of his titles.

The Dutch of the Old Colonie did not take kindly to the supremacy of the English. They obeyed the laws and the constituted authorities but they stubbornly maintained their autonomy as far as practicable, holding aloof from their English neighbors, keeping to their own language, their own manners and customs, and their own habits of life, generation after generation. As the Old Colonie extended its borders and new elements were added to its population, these Dutch characteristics were gradually modified and finally disappeared altogether, but they resisted modern influences many years and as late as the middle of the nineteenth century, evidences of Dutch ancestry were still to be noticed among the people of the Old Colonie.

My father's house, where I was born, stood on the south side of Beaver street next to that of the Ostranders where the last Walloon Civil Chief was said to have lived. As a child I heard Dutch spoken in the street, in the stores and the market. We spoke Dutch, more or less, at home, and no other language at my grandfather's farm. The Sears family came from Cape Cod, but my mother was a Van Der Zee, and although the first Van Der Zee came from

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Holland in 1642, the family was as Dutch as ever in 1842, two centuries later. Mother learned English, at school but spoke it very little until after her marriage, and then crooned nursery rhymes in Dutch to her children; Trip a trop a tronches, Wat zegt Mynhur Papa, etc.

My father's store was on the Pier, which is equivalent to saying he was a flour merchant. The Pier was a sort of bulkhead between the canal basin and the river, and it was occupied by a single row of buildings, all of which were flour stores. The Genesee Valley was a famous wheat growing country in the first half of the nineteenth century, and the grain was ground in Rochester and shipped down the Erie Canal to Albany, the receiving and distributing center for the trade. My father made business trips to New York, and, sometimes, as far east as Boston, in those days a long journey. He usually arranged to go down the river in the Spring, having, beside his own affairs, commissions to fill as delegate to one or more of the May Conventions.

The May Conventions were annual gatherings of religious bodies, philanthropic organizations, reform associations, literary associations, educational associations and all sorts of associations for the improvement of the human race in general and the American people in particular. The Friends yearly Meeting, the Conference of the American Anti-Slavery societies, the Grahamites or Vegetarians, the Temperance advocates and other upholders of beneficent, benevolent, and Utopian ideals assembled on these occasions, and with much eloquence, made it clear to the meanest understanding that the universal adoption of the principles especially professed by each would do away with all evil in the world and bring about a return of the Golden Age.

My mother did not always attend the May Conventions, but whenever she went, she took one of us children with her. My first visit to New York was made as an unqualified member of the Albany delegation to something or other, I forget what. One thing I do not forget, however, and that is hearing Horace Greeley make an address, and afterward being puffed up with pride when the orator chatted familiarly with his small admirer at dinner in our hotel on Barclay Street.

When my mother was absent from home, the family was left in charge of our courtesy Aunt Catholina Van Olinda who kept the house with my elder sister Althea, while I was dispatched for the time to my grandfather's farm. I was very much at home on the farm and spent many happy days there in early childhood, being regarded as a sort of heir apparent by the principal personages there, namely, my grandfather, John Van Der Zee the elder, and Tone and Cleo. The last named, Antony and Cleopatra, to speak properly, were ancient negroes born and brought up on the farm and rarely leaving it in all their long lives. They were slaves, inasmuch as they disdained to be emancipated, and free niggers they looked down on with contempt. They belonged to the Van Der Zee place and the place belonged to them, and not to belong to anybody or to any place was, to their apprehension, very like being a houseless and homeless pauper. As I was John Van Zee the younger, according to their genealogy the natural successor of Baas Hans, they extended to me assurances of their most distinguished consideration. My father, Charles Sears, was not in the line of succession, he being English or in other words a foreigner. They tolerated him, partly because he spoke to them in Dutch, the only language they knew or cared anything about, and partly because he was, after all, a member of the family by marriage. As he always brought a book in hand when visiting the farm, they made sure he was a drukker that is, a printer or bookseller or something of that vain and frivolous description. Cleo attained great age, overrunning the century mark. In her later years she came by inheritance to my mother, and so rather curiously, it happened that while my father openly professed anti-slavery sentiments, my mother was a slaveholder, presumably one of the last of that class in the state of New York.

One of our neighbors in the Old Colonie was Thurlow Weed, the Boss of the Whig party in the Empire State, and the founder, proprietor and editor of the *Albany Evening Journal*, one of the most influential papers in the country. Father was on terms of near-intimacy with Mr. Weed, and this brought him in touch with Horace Greeley. Father, though never a politician, was interested in party affairs and in constant communication with the Old Line Whigs of the Henry Clay following, and I am under the impression that the consultations of the political firm of Seward, Weed and Greeley were sometimes held in father's library. When he was editing the *Log Cabin* the party paper in the first Harrison campaign, Mr. Greeley was often a guest at our house, and at that

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period, he and father formed a warm friendship which continued during the remainder of their lives.

Having referred to Mr. Weed as the Boss of the Whig party in New York State, I think it due to the memory of an honorable man to state my belief that he never made one dollar out of politics. He gave a great deal of service and a great deal of money to the promotion of his political ideas, but never received a penny in return. He was a Boss indeed, directing party affairs with the strong hand of a Dictator, but he sought no profit and gained none, not even the thanks of those he served. So far from bettering his fortunes, his public activities involved constant demands upon his private purse. Not only party friends but party enemies called on Thurlow Weed for help when in distress, knowing that his hands would be open and his lips closed. Closed they were, but it was generally understood in the Old Colonie that the many seedy and needy applicants coming to his door must have made serious inroads on his income.

One noticeable case was that of a saloon-keeper, a Whig politician in a small way, who was supposed to control the canal vote, that is the vote of the floating population in the canal basin, among whom were boatmen ready to cast their ballots either way for a price. Mr. Weed did not approve of this man or of his methods, and the fellow went over to the Locofocos, bag and baggage. He took with him an ugly grudge against the Whig Boss and vented his spite in lies, slanders and defamations of the foulest kind. For years he made all the trouble he possibly could, but being a drinking man, he meanwhile drifted down hill, deviously but without a stop. When he had reached the bottom, in utter destitution, he came to Mr. Weed begging for aid and he got it. More than that, after his death his children were supported until they could take care of themselves, and the costs, as we could not help knowing, were paid by our Beaver Street neighbor.

A final memory of Mr. Weed lingers in my mind, to the discredit of those who should have been his grateful friends. The last time I called on him was when he was living in New York with his daughter, I think in Broome Street. On greeting him I noted that he was much disturbed by some annoyance which he could neither conceal nor throw off with his old-time buoyancy of spirit.

His agitation was so evident and so unusual that I ventured to inquire as to the trouble which so vexed his serene temper. In reply he took up a copy of a prominent New York morning paper and pointed to a sub-editorial in which he was referred to by name as a veteran lagging superfluous on the stage.

That was the most unkindest cut of all. Mr. Weed was at that time living in retirement, but he still contributed vigorous and timely articles to the editorial columns of this same journal. He was grievously hurt by the gratuitous affront to which he had been so rudely subjected, but all he said was, I may be superfluous, but no one can truthfully say I ever was a laggard.

I believe the management of the paper apologized privately for the stupid insult, ascribing the sub-editorial to one of the juniors, and expressing regret that it should have been inadvertently printed. All the same, Thurlow Weed never wrote another editorial, the untoward incident putting an end to the labor of a long and arduous journalistic career.

Across the way from Mr. Weed's residence in the Old Colonie was the Van Antwerp house, bearing the date 1640 in iron figures at the peak of the gable which fronted the street. It was built of yellow brick or at least the gable front was so built and the Van Antwerp legend was that these bricks were imported from Antwerp, the native town of their family. The last descendant was Juferouw Cornelia Van Antwerp who kept a little school in the basement of her dwelling, the family fortune having dwindled until this home was about the only property left to the Juferouw. In this school my sister Althea and I were taught the three R's and not much else. The ancient Dutch spinster was a lady, well-bred, dignified and courteous, who held a high place in the elect circle or Old Colonie society, and was not the less esteemed because of her straitened circumstances. Her walk and conversation were no doubt edifying, but the curriculum of her scholastic institute possibly left something to be desired in the departments of higher education. She had one available qualification for her position, however, being an expert

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in making and mending quill pens. She spent much of her time during school hours in shaping these writing instruments, and I imagine she eked out her slender income by supplying pens to the neighbors.

The public schools were, in those days, looked upon as public charities, and these were not attended by children whose parents or guardians could afford to pay for private instruction which, whether better or worse, did not at all events, suggest poverty. So it came about, that father, on returning from one of his journeys eastward, brought home the idea of sending Althea and myself to school at Brook Farm.

CHAPTER II. FRIEND GREELEY

When Mr. Greeley first came to our house, I was not very favorably impressed by his appearance. He was tall and strongly built with broad shoulders somewhat bent forward, a smooth face, fair complexion and very light hair worn rather long. He was near-sighted and, like other near-sighted folk had a way of peering forward as he walked, and this with his heavy lurching gait, gave him a very awkward, countrified carriage. He remarked in my presence at a later time, I learned to walk in the furrows of a New Hampshire farm and the clogging clay has stuck to my feet ever since.

His voice was thin and high-pitched, a small voice for such a big man, as we thought, and he had an abrupt manner of withdrawing attention that was to us rather disconcerting until we got used to it. His pockets were bulging with newspapers and memoranda, scrawled in the curiously obscure handwriting which I subsequently found much difficulty in learning to read, though it was plain enough when the meaning of the strange hieroglyphics intended for letters was once fully understood. He was pressed with business during his brief visits but found time to make friends with the juveniles of the family and we learned to welcome him with real pleasure. My mother noted that we made him smile, and that went far in establishing intimacy. Horace Greeley's rare smile revealed beauty of character and that charity commended by St. Paul as greater than faith or hope; a smile more nearly angelic than we often see in this mundane environment.

His peculiarities of dress have been, I think, much exaggerated by common gossip. He wanted his clothes made big and easy, and he wore them a long time and somewhat negligently, but that was because he had other things to mind and not in the least because he affected singularity. I was with him a good deal as a boy and as a young man and I am sure he spoke truly when in response to some friendly advice concerning these matters, he said I buy good cloth, go to a good tailor and pay a good price, and that is all I can do about it.

The popular phrase about Greeley's old white coat had some foundation in fact, but not much. He did wear a light drab overcoat when I first saw him, with the full pockets spreading out on each side. As it suited him he wore it many years afterward, and when it was quite worn out he had another one made just like it which he wore many years more. I doubt if he ever had more than two of these famous garments, but it is true that these two, always supposed to be the same old white coat, were known all over the Northern part of the country. As late as the first Grant presidential campaign, Elder Evans, inviting him to make an address before the Shaker community at Harvard, Mass., asked him to please bring the old white coat, that our folk may know it is you, for sure.

It is possible there may have been some little feeling of resentment against this sort of patronage expressed in the dragging on of the old white coat with the sleeves awry and the collar turned under, but I am sure that as a rule Mr. Greeley gave very little thought as to wherewithal he would be clothed.

Horace Greeley never had half a chance to develop the finer qualities of his nature and he knew it. He was a tremendous worker and as an aggressive editor, an ambitious politician and an ardent reformer, driven like a steam engine, he could give little heed to the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, but he was sensitive as a girl to rebuffs bringing to mind what might have been. Among friends with whom he felt at home and in really congenial company, he was a different being from the hard hitting fighter and eccentric philosopher known to the

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public. At our home he was with the children like a child, genial and companionable as an elder brother. In the house of the Carey sisters, where I saw him years later, he was happy and care-free. Phoebe and Alice Carey, poets and essayists, had Sunday evening gatherings at their home in New York, where the choice spirits of the literary world held converse after the manner of their kind, as at the assemblies in the Paris salons of the 18th century. In this company Mr. Greeley was at his best, animated, witty and charmingly affable. He realized, only too well, that his best was wasted in the strife which was his daily portion and which ended in the disastrous defeat that cost him his life. The flashes of aroused egotism that sometimes blazed out in red-hot words, were only signs of impatience and regret that he had been deprived of opportunity to cultivate the amenities and graces of life and to gain control of the higher powers he consciously possessed. Any one who will take the trouble to-day to read his later writings, his tribute to old friends and his essays like that on *Growing Old Gracefully*, will be led to know that Horace Greeley had the soul of a poet.

Through acquaintance with Thurlow Weed my father came to know Mr. Greeley and through Mr. Greeley he came to know Dr. George Ripley and the circle of literary folk in Boston of which he was the center. Boston was not at that time a literary city. If there was a seat of literature in America, then, it was to be found in Philadelphia, there being very little visible evidence of literary activity, in the three-hilled town; no Old Corner Book Store, no publishing house like Ticknor and Fields, no *Scarlet Letter*, no *Atlantic Monthly* and no *Evening Transcript*, subsequently one of the best newspapers from a literary point of view this country ever had. There was, however, at the period referred to, about 1840, a coterie of brilliant intellectual people in Boston and Cambridge many of whom attained, later, some degree of eminence in the literary world.

These were young men and women of fine culture, liberal in opinion and animated by a new spirit of the times which was in this country first manifested in their midst. At that period a wave of interest in what was then known as social reform swept over France and Germany and reached our shores in Massachusetts Bay, eventually extending all through the north and northwest, conveying new social and political ideas to thousands of intelligent Americans. These new ideas were discussed at the meetings of the thinking young folk above referred to, at which meetings they also held other high debates on matters philosophic, poetic, educational, etc. They eventually established a periodical as their organ called *The Dial*, a publication which immediately attracted wide attention by the admirable literary style of its articles as well as by their originality and commanding interest. *The Dial* had the effect of imparting greater cohesion to the company of editors, contributors and others interested in its publication, and these presently became known to the world as the Transcendentalists; a word borrowed from Germany and rather too formidable for general use in our busy country.

Whether they were overweighted by their ponderous title or whether they created an artificial atmosphere too ethereal for common mortals, the first generation of Transcendentalists was also the last. They had no successors and *The Dial*, as their organ, was short lived. It undoubtedly exercised a considerable influence in its day; and individual members of the long-named fraternity did much to mould the thought of the American people in after years. Among these were Ralph Waldo Emerson, Bronson Alcott, George William Curtis, Francis George Shaw, translator of Eugene Sue and of George Sand, and father of Colonel Robert Shaw, Margaret Fuller, Theodore Parker, Dr. Howe and his fiancée Julia Ward, Charles A. Dana, John S. Dwight and perhaps a score of other bright spirits. Occasional attendants at their gatherings and contributors to *The Dial* were Horace Greeley, William Page, afterward President of The National Academy of Design, Thomas Wentworth Higginson and my father, Charles Sears. Their acknowledged leader was the Rev. George Ripley, the founder of Brook Farm.

I do not know anything more about this old time Transcendentalism than I do about the Pragmatism of our day, and that is not much. I believe the two schools of thought were alike in this, they both held that modern civilization has gone sadly and badly astray in the pursuit of wealth. Not money but the love of money is, now as ever, the root of all evil. The first work of the makers of America was necessarily the creation of property, the accumulation of the means of life, but we have pushed this pursuit too far, have gone money mad not knowing when we should stop trying to get rich and give our time and attention to higher things.

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There is another matter to be noted as of some significance namely that leading Transcendentalists were, and leading Pragmatists now are, scholars and university men. It is true America was not turning out university men in the '40's and it might perhaps better be said that the Transcendentalists were college men, but as several of them were educated in Germany the connotation may be allowed to stand. It was said of these learned students that at their meetings they read Dante in the original Italian, Hegel in the original German, Swedenborg in the original Latin, which language the Swedish seer always used, Charles Fourier in the original French, and perhaps the hardest task of all, Margaret Fuller in the original English. Margaret was an honored member of the illustrious company and was held in high esteem; but her writings are mighty hard reading. I can quite understand James Russell Lowell's judgment in his *Fable For Critics* where he condemns a certain literary offender to severe punishment, sentencing him to 30 days at hard labor, reading the works of Margaret Fuller.

It was, as above said, after one of his visits to Boston that my father came home with the suggestion of sending Althea and myself to school at Brook Farm. The idea met with a good deal of opposition from the Dutch side of the house, which was my side for all I was worth, but I suppose father opined that it was time some of the provincialism of the Old Colonie should be rubbed off. Through his acquaintance with Thurlow Weed he came to know Mr. Greeley and through Mr. Greeley was introduced to Dr. Ripley and the Transcendentalists, gaining, by the way, broader views and a wider range of ideas than those which had prevailed in Beaver Street for two hundred years. Such, I take it was the sequence of events, not as noted by a little boy but as partly imagined and partly reasoned out at a later time. Partly imagined, too, is the presumption that my father was attracted by the philosophic ideals presented by his Boston friends. A tired business man might well be impressed by the Transcendental teaching that our civilization has gone wrong in forcing all human energy into the one pursuit, that of getting riches. They held that while hard work rarely harms any one, the monotonous grind in the money making mills results in arrested development. Work as hard as you please, spend all the energy, all the talent, all the skill you have but not in seeking wealth. That is not worth while, and it prevents the doing of what is worth while. Do your best in the world; give all you can, but be sure to get a fair return, not in money but in better things. Seek culture, seek knowledge, seek character, seek friendship, good will, good health, good conscience, and the peace that passeth understanding shall be added unto you. Be content with a small measure of this world's wealth and do not crave costly luxuries to make a show withal. To this end, go out into the country; raise what you need as far as possible with your own hands, and enough more to exchange for such things as you cannot produce. Abandon the world, the flesh and the Devil and go back to the soil and find the Garden of Eden.

My father accepted these teachings in good faith and gave in his testimony with those who in *The Dial* and through other agencies were propagating the new philosophy. His engagements with others were such that he could not break away at the time to put these novel ideas to the test of actual experiment but no doubt he thought it wise and well to give his children an early initiation into the new life that was to regenerate the world.

Dr. Ripley was, as said, the leader of the Transcendental coterie and he had all the vitalizing enthusiasm that a leader must necessarily possess. He was a solidly built man of medium height with brown hair and beard and the kindest eyes in the world. He was a Unitarian clergyman, a scholar learned in all the learning of the Egyptians and all the other learned peoples of every age and clime, and a gentleman of the most engagingly courteous address; his good manners rested on bed rock foundations, too, and could not be corrupted by evil communications. I saw him more than once in straits harsh enough to try the patience of a saint, and noted with surprised admiration that his perfect poise was not in the least disturbed.

It was Dr. Ripley who, having the courage of his convictions, bravely suggested putting in practice the principles he and his Transcendental friends advocated in theory. We talk well, he said, in effect, why not try to do the thing which we say? And he did. With a few of these friends, like-minded, he went out to West Roxbury; six miles from Boston, and bought a farm of 200 acres. Being unusually bright folk, remarkably intelligent, highly educated and, as may be said, brilliantly enlightened, they succeeded, almost beyond belief, in making a woefully bad bargain. I do not know how much they paid for the land but whatever the price it was too high. The property was picturesque to look at but its best herbage was sheep-sorrel. Next the brook, which gave the name, Brook

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Farm, there was a fair bit of meadow, with a rounded hill called the Knoll rising sharply on the north. The land rolled unevenly on, one-eighth of a mile or so, to higher ground and then fell off again to a level plateau covered with pine woods, beyond which were two or three fields of plow-land. The soil was thin, sandy where it was not rocky, and rocky where it was not sandy. It was a poor place, indeed, and had been poorly farmed until it was as lean as Pharaoh's second herd of kine. It speaks well for these unsophisticated philosophers that in four years they made this desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose; cultivating the finest market gardens and flower-gardens in Roxbury, planting orchards and vineyards, and growing pasturage for a profitable dairy.

If the amateur farmers were dismayed on finding what a hard row they had to hoe on this impoverished estate, they never complained, so far as I have heard, but resolutely set about the work they had to do. They came out to try a certain social experiment; an experiment in living a higher kind of life than that of their day and generation, resting on the faith that such a life can be lived here and now as well as heretofore in the legendary Golden Age of the past, or as hereafter in the good time coming of the future. The one purpose they entertained was to dwell together in unity near to the heart of nature, a phrase attributed to Margaret Fuller. All other considerations, whether of hardship, or bad beginnings or disappointments were but secondary if they could succeed in demonstrating the practicability of their high ideals.

Perhaps it is not a matter of much interest to the present generation but to us it has always seemed that these Brook Farmers deserve to be favorably remembered. They were not martyrs, being, on the contrary, an unusually joyous and happy company, but, all the same, they gave the best of their lives to the service of humanity. They honestly and earnestly believed they could demonstrate the practicability of their theories, to the advantage of their fellow-beings, and they faithfully tried to accomplish that purpose. If the Pilgrims of Plymouth deserve honor for unselfish devotion to religious reform, why should not the Brook Farm pioneers of social reform receive correspondingly suitable recognition. It is true they did not immediately attain the ends they sought but neither did the Pilgrims; and the end is not yet.

It should be said that not all the Transcendentalists joined Doctor Ripley in his Utopian undertaking. Ralph Waldo Emerson for example was not of our company. Indeed, he was not of any company. An inspiring preacher he gained early fame as a pulpit orator in the First Unitarian Church of Cambridge, Mass., but even the liberal communion of that free congregation was too close for his independent spirit, and he abandoned a career of brilliant promise in the ministry, as he said, for his soul's peace. *Sui generis*, to be himself he must stand alone, and alone he stood during the remainder of his life.

A stanza of his poem, *The Problem* doubtless expresses something of his sentiments with regard to religious affiliation:

I like a church, I like a cowl,
I love a prophet of the soul,
And on my heart monastic aisles
Fall like sweet strains or pensive smiles,
Yet not for all his faith can see
Would I that cowed churchman be.

Of all the visitors coming to Brook Farm, I think Emerson was the most welcome. He was beloved by everyone from Dr. Ripley, dear friend and brother clergyman, to Abby Morton's little ones. The messages of cheer and the words of wisdom he brought were received and treasured with intelligent appreciation. I have heard it said that Emerson was at his best when talking in monologue of an evening at the Hive, or in more formal discourse in the grove on Sunday. He was companionable and entered into the life of the place with evident enjoyment happy but not jovial. He smiled readily and most charmingly, but never laughed. As a young man his personality was most attractive, serene loving-kindness illumining his comely countenance! My mother, also a serene spirit, thought his face the most beautiful she ever saw; and she was sure that laughter would be unseemly and disturbing.

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Emerson liked to be with us at times, but never to be one of us. In the beginning Dr. Ripley wrote him a cordial invitation to join the association, the only invitation of the kind he ever gave, I believe. The invitation was declined in a note quoted by Rev. O. B. Frothingham in his admirable biography of Dr. Ripley, as follows:

It is quite time that I made an answer to your proposition that I should venture into your new community. The design appears to me noble and generous, proceeding as I plainly see from nothing covert or selfish or ambitious but from a manly heart and mind. So it makes all men its friends and debtors. A matter to be entertained in a friendly spirit and examined as to what it has for us.

I have decided not to join it, yet very slowly and I may almost say, with penitence. I am greatly relieved by learning that your coadjutors are now so many that you will no longer attach that importance to the defection of individuals which you hinted in your letter to me or others might possess I mean the painful power of defeating the plan.

CHAPTER III. A STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND

Racial prejudice was cherished as a virtue in the Old Colonie and the real, solid Dutch families found it anything but creditable that Van Der Zee children we had the honor of being regarded as Van Der Zees in Beaver street should be sent to an English school in far off Boston town. Massachusetts was, to them, an English colony, and the people there were English, that is to say, foreigners, strangers, and not to be trusted. However, when it was learned that we were actually going, and mother set about making the elaborate preparations considered necessary for so formidable an undertaking, kind friends came in bringing gifts deemed suitable for the occasion, knitted mittens and mufflers, pies and cakes, apples and cider, and choice stores of the cellar and pantry enough to provision a ship for a long cruise. My nearest boy friend, Gratz Van Rensselaer, gave me his knife. How close were our relations may be understood from the fact that we had a private signal, a peculiar whistle of our own which we used to call each other, as boys are wont to do when on terms of exclusive intimacy. To quote Mr. Peggotty, A man can't say fairer nor that, now, can he?

When Gratz went down into his pockets and handed me that knife in solemn silence, I fully realized that he was making a sacrifice on the altar of friendship. Any critic of this writing will be justified in objecting that I did not probably formulate the idea in just these terms, but this is about the size of it, all the same.

Whether my schoolmate ever afterward used our call, I do not know, as our parting was a finality, but for my part, I took it with me to Brook Farm where my new mates adopted it forthwith. Later, the elders took it up, and eventually it became widely known over the face of the earth as the Brook Farm call. It went to California with a young married couple in the early fifties; to China with one of our boys who became the Captain of a Pacific steamer; to Spain and to Russia with another in the United States diplomatic service; to Italy with two girls whose father was an artist; to the Philippines with students returning to their home in Manila, and to all quarters where Brook Farmers found their way, as they seem always to have remembered it.

A peculiarity which may have helped keep it in mind was that it consisted of two parts, the summons, and the response; the first part differing slightly from the second, to distinguish friend answering friend from the stranger merely imitating sounds accidentally or incidentally heard. Just what the difference was may be learned from the notation here given.

Another peculiarity of the call was that it had the quality of taking character from the person uttering it. For example, Annie Page was the girl I most devotedly admired, and when she gaed me her answer true in response to my signal, her musical little trill sounded to me like the voice of the thrush that sang down in the pine woods. Per contra, there was Frank Barlow, whom we used to call "Crazy Barlow" because of his headlong rush at whatever object he had in view, and he could make the call shrill and thrill like a fife.

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[Music: *The Brook Farm Call*]

[Music: BOY'S ANSWERING CALL]

[Music: GIRL'S ANSWERING CALL]

I met Frank one morning in the later days of the Civil War when he was striding along Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington at his usual breakneck pace. He was Major General Barlow, then, one of the great generals of the Union Army, but he was, first, last and always, a Brook Farmer, so I signaled to him with the same old call. He came to an abrupt halt, answered my greeting and dashed across the Avenue with both hands extended. Neither of us had more than a short allowance of time, but we could do no less than adjourn to a convenient resort for a good hearty talk about the old days in West Roxbury.

Other experiences with the call have come to me since then but none that I remember with more pleasure. To-day there are few or none to answer, no matter how earnestly I might sound the old appeal. As may be seen above, the little succession of notes is very simple, but they convey a world meaning to my old ear.

If two little Dutch boys in the Old Colonie composed this memorable opus they surely did better than they knew, but my notion is they must have heard something like it and repeated the sounds without being aware that they were merely memories, not original inventions. The boatmen on the Erie Canal announced their entry into the Albany basin by blowing a horn, commonly a tin horn, harsh and discordant. The passenger packets, however, having to come into port grandly sounded a bugle flourish, sometimes really melodious. It may have been these bugle notes, impressing their sweet succession on sub-conscious young minds, that afforded the first suggestion of the Brook Farm call.

* * * * *

As my readers may note with more or less patience, it takes time for New Netherland folk to get started on a long journey. Ours was a long journey, in truth, as it required two days and a night to accomplish it. The express schedule on the Boston and Albany Railroad is four hours between the two cities; but there was no express travel in the forties except by passenger packets on the Erie Canal, above referred to. These fast flyers raced along at the top speed of four miles an hour making stops only at the locks or bridges or to change horses or to take someone on board or to let someone step ashore. If my mother's visits to her relatives extended as far as Schenectady, she made the journey in one of these Swiftsure liners, perhaps the *Swallow*, or the *Gleam* or the *Alida*, usually accompanied by one or two of us children; and a very pleasant journey it was to be sure in fair weather. To glide smoothly along through the country on the deck of a canal boat is a method of locomotion affording opportunities to view the landscape o'er with much comfort and constant though not too rapid changes of entertainment. Necessarily running as near the shore as possible, a slight shift of the tiller by an obliging helmsman would enable a small boy to effect a landing and take a quick look into the canal blacksmith shop, or to walk a stretch with the youth driving the horses, and then re-embark without attracting too much attention. In this leisurely progress through towns and villages and farming neighborhoods, something like a real acquaintance could be made with persons and with places not otherwise to be formed except perhaps on a tour afoot. Lasting friendships and even romances have resulted, before now, from the exchange of greetings and gossip between packet-passengers and people on the canal bank waiting for papers, packages, or messages, or merely interested in seeing the Swiftsure boat go by.

The last of the Swiftsure boats went by, long, long ago, and the later generations of New Netherlander know not the joys of journeying on the canal. Fortunately in the old Netherlands the water-highways are still ways for travel as well as for traffic. The easygoing people of the Low Countries, never in a hurry, are content to move at a moderate pace, without fretting about speed, taking their comfort as they go. The American, in their country, can find a diversion well worth considering by setting aside a few days from the usual routine, and entering the life of

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these good folk, far enough to take a trip or two in a treckschuyt on the canals that form such an important factor of their transportation system. Landing at Antwerp, for example, one could not do better than to take a treckschuyt excursion at once, before the bloom of anticipation has been rubbed off by the friction of much sight-seeing. Antwerp is in Belgium, to be sure, but it is one of the best of fair ports for arrival at the end of a Transatlantic voyage, and from its crowded port a passage can be taken to almost any point in the Netherlands, or, for that matter, in the four quarters of the globe. From here, take a treckschuyt ride to Bruges, and another to Ghent and anywhere else, as fancy dictates. Or suppose a stop is made at The Hague everyone goes to The Hague short trips can be made to Delft, Rotterdam and Dordrecht, right in the middle of Holland, or, in the other direction, to Leyden and on up to Amsterdam. However, it is needless to write out an itinerary, as there are guide books enough already. All places are interesting and all are accessible. The one thing to be thought of is the going from one place to another by treckschuyt. To have a good time, the traveler must be capable of adjusting himself to his environment. He must put up with the ways of the people as he finds them and not expect them to adjust themselves to his ways, after the manner of the Englishman at the Pyramids, who insisted that his Arabs should give him beef-sandwiches and Bass for lunch. The Dutch are courteous and hospitable, but they have their own notions, and by these they abide as against anything and everything foreign and strange. If the American traveler can make a treckschuyt voyage in the right spirit, he can have a pleasurable and valuable experience, and he will be thankful for the suggestion here given.

* * * * *

It was a cold day, literally, and, for me, a cold day, figuratively, when we finally set forth on our journey to Boston town. We made the passage of the Hudson by Van Alstyne's Ferry, landing at Bath, and finding our way, somehow or other, to Greenbush, the terminus of the railroad. The friends gathered to see us off, watched on the bank with anxiety until we reached Bath in safety as there was ice running in the river. The ice was about as thick as paper, but it was enough to awaken new fears in the maternal heart as to the perils of the dreaded journey.

Van Alstyne's Ferry consisted of a scow, propelled by horsepower, and equipped with a hinged platform at each end which, when let down to touch the shelving shore, afforded the means of ingress and egress. It was a good big scow, big enough, indeed, to carry two teams at once if due care was taken in getting on and off over the swinging platform. It was steered by a great oar in the competent hands of Myndert Van Alstyne who navigated the craft, while his brother Wynant collected the fares and kept the machinery in motion with the aid of a hickory gad.

We arrived at Springfield toward evening and took rooms for the night at the Massasoit House. It was here we found the first evidences of being strangers in a strange land, which my Dutch relatives predicted would of necessity prove annoying. We were hungry, and the hotel supper was anything but satisfying. As everyone knows, the New Netherlanders are hearty good trencher-folk. At our house, we always had a full table, and at Grandpa Van Der Zee's there had to be more on the board than could possibly be consumed or there was not enough to please the Baas. At the Massasoit, there was a fair show in the dining-room, but on trial the things provided were not acceptable. The milk was thin, and the butter and eggs not at all like those at home, fresh from the farm. This, however, could be understood and allowed for. The cows and the hens were English and, therefore, naturally inferior to ours, so that couldn't be helped. What could not be condoned and what I indignantly resented was the barefaced fraud practiced on unwary travelers in the matter of the piece de resistance, the main feature of the meal as it appeared to me. This was a good sized cake or possibly plum pudding, piled up in round slices on a large salver in the middle of the table. Counting on this delectable looking, rich brown confection to make up for the shortcomings of the supper, I secured a generous section, and eagerly took a boy's big bite. Consternation and dismay were at once realized for all the words could mean! The cake-pudding did not turn to ashes in my mouth it was already ashes ashes, sawdust and molasses. Althea, seeing my disappointment and disgust, declined partaking of the delicacy, but father managed to eat some of it, explaining that it was Boston brown bread.

CHAPTER IV. A BAD BEGINNING

Mr. Jonas Gerrish, or familiarly, just plain Gerrish, was the United States Mail, the Express, the Freight Line and the rapid transit system for Brook Farm. He made two trips daily between the Hive and Scollay's Square, covering the distance, six miles, in about an hour and a half, going out of his way to accommodate his patrons, as occasion required. We found Gerrish waiting at the depot when we arrived in Boston, half-an-hour late. He was a little impatient, as he said there was snow coming and he feared delay in getting back to the city. Gerrish was apt to be impatient, but that was all on the surface as he was really very kind-hearted and obliging. The snow began to fall before we were beyond the streets, and we reached our destination in the midst of a driving storm.

Father decided to return at once with Gerrish, having business in Boston which might go amiss if he should be storm-stayed in West Roxbury. His apprehensions were only too well founded, the Brook Farm community being snowbound in the Hive during the next three days. He hastily left us in charge of good Mrs. Rykeman, the house-mother at the Hive, promising to come out on Saturday for the week-end at the Farm though I don't know, come to think of it, that the weekend of our present day outings was known to us at that period.

[Illustration: THE HIVE"]

Mrs. Rykeman had two forlorn, cold and tired children on her hands, one of whom at most was a very miserable youngster, indeed, far from mother and home and everything that makes life worth living. Our hostess took us to her own room and made us comfortable as she could, and, presently, as the bell rang for supper, conducted us to the dining-room. This was a long, bare room, containing ten or twelve square tables, also bare, save for the napkin, knife and spoon and bowl at each place. As we entered at one end of the room, a group of girls came in at the other end bringing pitchers of milk and piles of Boston brown bread. There was also Graham bread or, as we now call it, whole-wheat bread, and apple-sauce, but the meal consisted mainly of brown bread and milk. I then and there learned that the foreign milk was poor and thin because it was skimmed. The idea of putting skimmed milk on the table was unknown in the Old Colonie.

I could not or would not touch the abominable brown bread, and, while waiting for the girls to serve the eggs or chops or whatever there was for supper, passed the time in trying to make out the meaning of the chatter and laughter that filled the room with merriment. There seemed to be a gleam of sense discoverable now and then, but, on the whole, it was impossible to catch the significance of the rapid-fire talk volleying from table to table. Indeed, it was always difficult for a stranger to swing into the current of general conversation at Brook Farm. The bright young enthusiasts there were all of one mind, in a way; in close sympathy and quick to understand each other. A word, a look, a gesture expressed a thought. An allusion, a memory, an apt quotation suggested an idea which was clearly apprehended by ready listeners; and a flash of wit was instantly followed by a peal of mirth, echoed to the limit.

It goes without saying that these reflections were not in my young noddle at the moment, but being of later date, are the findings of longer observation. I must have been in a sort of maze, wondering at the fun going on which I could see and hear but could not comprehend, and wondering too when supper was coming. I was about to ask Mrs. Rykeman how long we would have to wait, when, whiz! the whole business of the meal was over and done with. Everybody sprang up at once, and away they all flew like a flock of birds, leaving an astonished little boy looking for something to eat.

Althea took flight with the others, presently returning to look after her forlorn brother, but, finding I had been taken to the kitchen for something that might at least alleviate the pangs of hunger, she rejoined the girls in the parlor, where there was already a dance under way. Althea was a bright-spirited girl, vivacious, alert, appreciative and companionable. She forthwith took her place in the Brook Farm community with the best grace. She readily made friends with Abby Ford and her sister, with Annie and Mary Page, with the Barlow brothers and with the

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Spanish students of about her own age. Of these latter, Ramon Cita or Little Raymond became subsequently her particular cavalier. Ramon was the youngest and smallest of the Spaniards, besides being the best looking according to our standards, and a very charming little gentleman he was, too. There were eight of these boys and young men, and they were all courteous and polite to a degree that we American youngsters could admire, but to which we could hardly attain. They must have been members of distinguished families, as they more than once received visits from high officials of the Spanish legation in Washington.

It may as well be said here that these students were sent from Manila to prepare for Harvard in Dr. Ripley's school in Boston; a school which was of the first repute in the early forties. The Doctor transferred it with several of the teachers to West Roxbury, where it became the nucleus of the Brook Farm school. The Ford girls, with their aunt, Miss Russell, the Barlow boys and their mother, and the Manila youths were, I believe, among those migrating from the Boston school.

We all liked the young Spaniards very much, and I have ever since liked the people of their nationality I have met at home and abroad. They can teach us good manners every day in the week; but they have one peculiarity that must strike the average American as certainly rather strange. This is their common and familiar use of words and names which we regard as sacred and hardly to be spoken outside of the meeting-house. As an example, it may be allowable, at this late day to mention without giving family names, that one of our students was baptized Jesus Mary, and another by the same rite was designated Joseph Holy Spirit.

* * * * *

Before bedtime the snowstorm had risen to the height of a terrific tempest, the heaviest and hardest of the winter, and what the New England winter can do when it tries can only be known by experience, as no description can convey any adequate idea of the fierce blasts, the drive of hard-frozen snow and the terrible cold forced straight through clothes and flesh and bones by the piercing spears and pounding hammers of the Northeast gale fiends. Three days and three nights the raiding powers of the arctics raged about us and blockaded all but the hardiest and strongest of us in the close quarters of the Hive. To venture out of the house was to risk life and limb. No one was allowed to run such risks alone, as, in case of a fall, the chances would be against getting up again without help, but parties of twos and threes of the young men went to the barns to look after the cattle or up to the Eyrie, the Cottage and Pilgrim Hall to see that all was right and to bring down a sled-load of bedding for the shut-ins. In their services, the vegetarians matched themselves against the cannibals as they disdainfully called those who were still in bonds to the flesh-pots of Egypt, but I do not believe there was beef enough eaten on the place to warrant any comparisons being made, and, at any rate, they all came out alike, pretty much exhausted.

Next morning I awoke on a sofa in the upper hall, where I had stretched out, along toward midnight, for a moment's rest. Althea had carefully taken off my shoes, and had covered me over with cloaks and shawls, without my knowing it. The swarm in the Hive had exemplified the poet's idea of the tumultuous privacy of storm fairly well as to the tumult, but as to the privacy, that was what could be had in a house overcrowded with excited young folk. Frolic and fun were to the fore, and everybody bore the troubles of that tempestuous evening with high good humor; one weary, cross and fretful little chap being left out of the account. Left out he was, for sure. Always at Brook Farm, anyone not strictly in it, to use a phrase of later date, was absolutely out of it. One had to be aboard the train or find himself standing alone on the platform.

I was in better case after what had to serve as a morning toilet, as Mrs. Rykeman had promised to make up for a scanty supper by a treat of good hot brewis. Brewis was a new word and I was more than ready to test the merits of the unknown aliment, as, in my experience, anything commended as good to eat, was sure to prove palatable. The dining-room was occupied as a shake-down dormitory for women and girls, and breakfast was taken standing in the parlor or hall or anywhere places could be found outside of the kitchen where work was going on. When my bowl was handed me it was filled with the everlasting brown bread boiled in milk. That was brewis. I was just mad!

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Wednesday and Thursday of that first week at Brook Farm were sad days indeed. I made a bad beginning! Shut up indoors by the most violent tempest of the year, I sulked in corners, alone in a crowd, the loneliest kind of solitude. The teachers did their best to keep classes going in the bedrooms, but, in the irregularity of the sessions, I was allowed to be absent without remark. Althea and some others tried to draw me into the continuous picnic performance going on all over the house only to learn there was nothing doing in brother's retreat. At meal time the exasperating brown bread was invariably offered for my delectation, and that I regarded as a personal affront. Resorting to alliteration's artful aid, it may be said I seemed bound to be bothered by Boston brown bread. I brooded morning, noon and night over the one idea that when my father came, I would beseech him to take me back home.

It appeared, later, that I was not being altogether neglected by the authorities during this trying period, as they had kept their eyes on the new boy and were seriously considering this same idea, thinking it would perhaps be better to advise his father to take him away. The dour youker was plainly enough so unhappily out of place that they were inclined not to try to keep him. Truly, a bad beginning!

This was not a decision adopted to meet the special case in hand, but rather an unwritten rule of the community. Brook Farm was a solidarity, a company united to put in practice certain principles and to accomplish certain results, and only those were wanted who could enter into the spirit of the movement and aid in carrying on the great work. Those who did not help, hindered, and to hinder the task of reforming society could not be permitted. As with the community, so also with the school. The school was an independent organization, but it was likewise an experimental organization, being, practically, a first attempt to inaugurate industrial education, and only pupils suited for such an education were wanted. It was not a place for the feeble-minded, the deficient or the intractable, but for bright children capable of responding to instruction directed to certain ends. The teachers, earnestly devoted to these selected courses of instruction, could not afford to give time and attention to incompetents.

These matters are worth mentioning for the reason that Brook Farm in general and Dr. Ripley in particular have been censured for refusing to accept members of the community and pupils of the school not suited to the forwarding of undertakings held as almost sacred. This exclusiveness was neither hard-hearted nor uncharitable, but was simply necessary under the circumstances. To charge Brook Farm with being heathenish and unchristian on this account, as certain Puritan critics have done, is as unjust as it would be to blame Luther Burbank for discarding a thousand plants to cultivate the one growth giving promise of answering his purpose. For any experiment the careful selection of material is not only proper but indispensable.

On Friday the storm abated and things began to mend all around as the sides cleared. In the afternoon Dr. Ripley and Charles Hosmer made their way home from Boston, hailed with rejoicings by everyone except Master Grampus, who should have been more than thankful for their timely arrival, had he only known it. Saturday morning regular lessons were resumed in the classroom, but I held aloof in out-of-the-way coverts; one hiding place being the cow-stable. Here Charles Hosmer happened to find me, just incidentally, as it seemed, but really by kindly design no doubt, and gave me a hearty greeting which I couldn't be so churlish as not to return.

Are you the boy who came from Albany? he asked.

From the Old Colonie, in Albany, I replied.

I suppose, he continued, you have not yet been assigned to your classes?

I accepted this account of what was in fact absence without leave, and he then suggested that if I had nothing else on hand I might help him in making a toboggan-slide. Never having heard of such a thing I accepted the invitation. Securing a couple of shovels we cleared a path to the knoll; and, on the way, Mr. Hosmer explained that Angus Cameron, another new pupil, hailing from Canada, had brought to the school a toboggan, a kind of

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sled, and we were to make a smooth path or slide for it, so the boys and girls could try it in the afternoon when there were no lessons.

We went to work with a will, spanking the snow down with the shovels, leveling uneven places and forming a clear, hard track from the top of the Knoll to the brook. On the edge of the bank we piled up an inclined plane, wetting down the snow and building a mound perhaps five feet high. From this elevation, Mr. Hosmer stated, the toboggan, flying down the slide, would shoot upward and forward and land on the far side of the brook. That seemed to me a very desirable thing to do, and, while I finished up the shovel-work, my companion went back to the Hive and brought out the toboggan.

This conveniency, well enough known to-day, was new to us, and we did not quite know how to manage it. However, we got onto the thing somehow, and away we went down the slide. The slide was all right and the inclined plane was all right, so we made the descent and the ascent all right, soaring over the brook like a bird, but the landing on the far side was all wrong. We hit the snowbank like a battering ram, the snow piling up in front of us as hard as stone; the shock was terrific! Mr. Hosmer got the worst of it as he catapulted into the drift, while I alighted in a heap on his shoulders. He scrambled out of the drift on all fours, concerned only with learning whether I was badly hurt. On my assurance that unless his back and legs and arms were broken, there was no damage done, he straightened up and declared he was unhurt but dreadfully humiliated. How could a man be such a condemned idiot as to plunge head-first against a barricade like that? This was the question suggested to his mind, only he did not say condemned idiot exactly, but he apologized for the emphatic words he did use, and as they do not look well in print, they need not be repeated.

Despite his bluff I saw he was in pain and wanted him to return to the Hive, but he insisted on finishing our job. Under his direction I wallowed through the snowdrift, back and forth, trampling down a passage, and then pressed the snow hard and flat, using the toboggan like a plank. Meanwhile Mr. Hosmer had turned very white and now dropped onto the toboggan, limp and sick. The shock had upset his digestion. How to get him home? Borrowing rails from the roadside fence I laid them across the streak of open water in the middle of the brook, piled snow over them, and dragged my patient across on the toboggan. I attempted to haul him up the Knoll, but he protested, asserting that he was much better and fully able to walk. He managed to crawl up the hill and left me with directions to find Angus Cameron and join him in taking charge of the slide in the afternoon.

After making half-a-dozen or more flying leaps over the brook on the new conveyance, with as many jolts and tumbles in the snow, I managed to get the hang of the thing, and could steer it over the course with delightful ease, suggesting the flight of a bird.

CHAPTER V. A GOOD ENDING

Saturday's dinner dispelled all fears of starvation from Brook Farm's meager fare, the table being abundantly supplied with boiled beef, vegetables, Graham bread and good, sweet butter like home, and, best of all, baked Indian pudding, a real luxury. Mr. Hosmer did not appear, being confined to his room in the cottage. Learning that Dr. Ripley intended calling there, I asked leave to go with him, and was told to be in the library, which was also the President's office, at four o'clock.

Not being accustomed to Brook Farm's quick changes, my little talk with Dr. Ripley made me a few minutes late at the Knoll, where I found two-score or so of children and half as many grown-ups engaged in a snowball scrimmage. Inquiring for Angus, I turned over the toboggan to him for the first ride. He asked if the slide was all right, if I had made the jump over the brook, and if Mr. Hosmer was badly hurt. As he was a little backward about coming forward, so to speak, I took the initiative, inviting any girl to join me who had courage enough to face the music. Urged by my sister Althea, Annie Page took the offered seat, and down the slide we plunged like a shot, all the company watching our venture with intense interest and not a little anxiety. The flight took the breath away,

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but we sailed over the brook and out to the thin snow on the meadow in one grand swoop, without a bump or a break on the way. Annie was delighted and thanked me, over and over for giving her such a surprising pleasure.

Under the circumstances I thought Althea might be the next girl to make the trip, and, on the way up the hill, I gave the Old Colonie call, which she recognized and answered. Annie noticed the whistle and the reply, and asked what it meant, and when I explained the signal, she said, I would like to learn that. I immediately repeated it until she caught the notes, and presently the strain was echoed all over the Knoll, and from that moment it became the call of the school. From that moment, too, Annie Page became the one girl of the place for me. She held that position in my regard until three years later, when she and her sister went to live with their parents in Italy. She was a year and a month and a day younger than myself, but was far my senior in the school. That was an advantage to me, as it had the effect of driving me ahead in my studies in order to reach her classes. We were together a good deal out of school hours, taking the same work to do, when that was practicable, as feeding the rabbits in the warren back of the Eyrie, and cultivating the herb-garden where we raised mint, anise and cummin, sage, marjoram and saffron for the Boston market.

One other incident occurred on the Knoll perhaps worth recording, as it gave me a name. Annie insisted on helping me pull the toboggan up the slide, and, on the way, she remarked, I did not know boys liked perfumery.

That, said I, is from the cedar chest our clothes are packed in.

Just as we reached the group at the top of the hill she answered, Oh, cedar! So it is.

As she spoke, a little toddlekins, three or four years old, came running to me, exclaiming, Cedar, can't I ride on the 'bog-gan?

That settled it! My Brook Farm name was thenceforth Cedar, and would be Cedar, still, were there any of my companions left to remember it. I never had any other nickname, save that of late years some dear and intimate friends have made syllables of my initials and called me Jay Vee.

At four o'clock my sister and I trudged up to pay our call at the Eyrie. This was a square house of the suburban villa type, two-and-a-half stories high, and the handsomest building on the place, though plain, enough, as compared with villas in the neighborhood to-day. Doctor and Mrs. Ripley received us very kindly and gave us a most cordial welcome to Brook Farm. Mrs. Ripley, born Sophia Dana, was a slender, graceful lady, belonging to what Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes calls the Brahmin class of Boston; charming in manner, animated and blithe, but profoundly serious in her religious devotion to what she regarded as the true Christian life. She had, informally, the general charge of the girls in the school, and she at once made Althea feel at home under her motherly care.

Dr. Ripley gained my confidence by claiming old acquaintance, recalling a former meeting that I had quite forgotten. Several years previous, when I was a very small boy indeed, my father had taken me with him on a flying trip from New York to Boston, deciding to do so, I suppose rather than to leave mother in a strange city with two children on her hands. During that brief visit Dr. Ripley had taken father to call on an illustrious artist, and he now recalled the circumstances to my mind. With his prompting I could remember riding in a carriage; seeing a tall silvery old gentleman wearing a black velvet robe lined with red, and tasting white grapes for the first time; but I could not think of the silvery gentleman's name.

Well, said my mentor, perhaps you will be glad sometime to know that the gentleman you saw was Washington Alston.

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Leaving Althea with Mrs. Ripley, we presently went over to the cottage, a small house near the Eyrie, occupied by Miss Russell and her two nieces; Mr. Dana, Mr. Hosmer and Mr. Hecker, finding the latter in Mr. Hosmer's room.

Isaac Thomas Hecker was a religious enthusiast who came to Brook Farm for the same reason that Emerson left the Unitarian Church, namely, for his soul's peace. He belonged to a well-to-do family in New York, engaged in the manufacture of flour specialties, but the restraints and the questionable practices of business were irksome to him, and he eagerly sought a home among the congenial spirits who were trying to live a higher life on their sterile little property in West Roxbury. Being one of the thoroughgoing kind, he had learned all the uses of flour from beginning to end, and this knowledge he gladly made available as baker-general for the Brook Farm community. He was a faithful and competent baker for several months; usually happy and cheerfully interested in all that was going on, but occasionally taking a day off for fasting and prayer. Early in the spring, Annie Page and I were hunting arbutus, or Mayflower as we called it, on the far side of the pine woods, when we came upon Mr. Hecker walking rapidly up and down in the secluded little dell that served him as a retreat. He was wringing his hands and sobbing so violently that we two scared children stole away, awed and mystified. Intruders on a scene that should not have been witnessed, we said nothing about it at the time, and I have never mentioned it until now.

Not long after this strange happening, Henry D. Thoreau came to the Farm, and Mr. Hecker found in him a sympathetic companion. Presently the two went away together, for the purpose, I think, of determining by experiment the minimum amount of nourishment actually required to sustain life. They never came back. Thoreau took to the solitude of Walden, I suppose, and our baker found himself attracted to the Catholic Church, eventually going abroad to study for the priesthood. On taking orders he returned to New York, and during the rest of his life was an earnest and influential, though somewhat independent toiler in the vineyard of Rome; gaining, unsought, fame as Father Hecker. His monumental work was the founding of the Paulist Fathers, a strong organization, influential in the religious life of New York, though the church and the home of the fraternity are located across the Hudson river, in New Jersey.

* * * * *

On seeing Dr. Ripley and Mr. Hecker and Mr. Hosmer together, it seemed to me they must be the dearest friends in the world. And they were very near friends indeed, having many vital interests in common. Dr. Ripley was a true minister of the Gospel; Mr. Hosmer had studied for the ministry, and Mr. Hecker, as indicated, was a predestined priest. But, as I learned later, sincere and even affectionate cordiality was the distinguishing characteristic of the Brook Farmers in their relations with each other. Their communications were yea, yea, and nay, nay, but they were really glad to meet, glad to exchange greetings, glad to give and to take the good word which was always forthcoming, and glad to frankly manifest pleasure in their walk and conversation together. This was the outward showing of the inward spirit of Brook Farm. It was lovingkindness exemplified; and to appreciative visitors the recognition of this Christian Spirit in the encounters of everyday life was exhilarating as a draught of new wine, wine from the press of Edom and Bozrah.

* * * * *

After a little chat, Dr. Ripley and Mr. Hecker went away together, leaving me alone with Mr. Hosmer, with whom I stayed until supper-time. He questioned me as to all the details of the toboggan slide venture, which I was quite proud to report as eminently successful and, after I had told him everything, even to my gaining a new name, he said, Well, you have arrived all right. You have been initiated. These young uns don't take anyone up and give them a name like that unless things go suitably.

I did not know what being initiated meant, so he explained that while there was no such thing as hazing at Brook Farm, it was sometimes a little hard for new pupils to take their right places until the older ones found out what they were like.

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Hazing had to be explained, too, so he told me that when he first went to boarding school, the elder boys teased and tormented him, putting him through a course of sprouts, as they termed it. They made him spend what money he had in buying goodies which he was not permitted to taste. They threw him into the canal, to see if he could swim, and then dragged him around in the sand to dry his clothes. These and similar delicate attentions they bestowed upon him to try his metal.

I ventured to hope that he being, of course, furiously angry, had vented his rage upon them afterwards, as chance offered, but he said, no, that would not do at all. The ordeal was to test a boy's temper and to find whether he could stand fire without getting mad or at least without showing it. You have passed your examination, he added, and have been given your place among your companions, and I'm very glad of it.

Mr. Hosmer had general oversight of the boys as Mrs. Ripley had of the girls. He informed me that I was to be quartered in Pilgrim Hall under the guardianship of Miss Marian Ripley, and my mate was to be Bonico, otherwise Isaac Colburne. Why Bonico? Well, just because he was Bonico. A good friend he was, too, and Miss Ripley was a kind, judicious and conscientious guardian; though we called her the grenadier, because she was tall, very straight and rather stern looking.

On the way down from the Eyrie with the Page girls and John Cheever, Annie informed me that my sister was to be called Dheelish. Mr. Cheever was from Ireland, she said, and he had told the girl that Dheelish was the Irish word for dear, and they had adopted it in place of Althea, which, though a very nice name, very nice indeed, was, as they thought, too old and too formal; and besides, added my companion, she is a dear, you know.

I did know, and knew, too, there was another girl, not far away who was also a dear. Sentimental? Well, yes. All boys are more or less sentimental, only they are, mostly, too shy to admit it or even perhaps to be aware of it.

On reaching the Hive we found Gerrish arriving bringing father and the Rev. William H. Channing. At supper I bravely disposed of my bowl of brown bread and milk, taking it as a matter of course, but secretly hoping father would notice my improved appetite.

Sunday proved to be a blessed day in my calendar. Dr. Channing held service in the dining-room and every person on the place was present, with many more from the neighborhood and from Boston. The subject of his sermon was the New Commandment:

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love to one another.

Father always remembered that sermon, and referred to it many times in later years. What I remember about it is that it awoke a new sense in my dull mind of what practical Christianity really is. I realized that I had been a selfish, stupid cub; trying my worst to make the worst of everything, while every one else was trying their best to make the best of everything. That was a good ending of what had been a threatening phase of my first experience at Brook Farm.

CHAPTER VI. ENTERTAINMENTS

Our slide down the Knoll proved very popular, and, with occasional repairs, lasted all winter, making a welcome addition to our outdoor diversions during the season when these were necessarily limited. Living in the open was one of the salutary customs of the community, a custom faithfully followed even in comparatively bad weather. Rain or shine, snow or blow, save only in real storms, every one spent a good many of the twenty-four hours under the broad skies. There was always some work to be done, cutting wood, digging peat the main reliance for fuel mending stone walls, and attending to the tree-nurseries. Then for fun, there was coasting, skating,

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sleigh-riding and taking long tramps over the place or to some distant point of interest. Exposure to the elements seemed to harm no one, and coughs, influenzas and rheumatics were unknown.

Withal, however, indoor pleasures took the most prominent place, during the winter months. After the reorganization of the Association as a Phalanx, Mr. John Dwight was the Chief of the Festal Series, and as he was, first of all, a musician, it followed that music formed the principal feature of our entertainments. Vocal and instrumental music was thoroughly taught in the school, and, as nearly all the members of the community were music lovers, and many were singers and players, the place was melodious from morning until night. There was always some new song or perhaps some very old one to be tried, some local composition to be heard, or some preparation for future musical events to enlist attention. Selections from the operas then known and now forgotten, were given in the dining room; parts, with all the characters and choruses, from *Zampa*, *Norma* and the *Caliph of Bagdad* recur to my mind. Two public concerts were given to pay for a new piano, and as the proceeds did not quite fill the bill, we all gave up butter, selling the entire product of the dairy for three months to make up the deficit. That was just like Brook Farm. The most ambitious performance in my time was the rendition of the Oratorio of Saint Paul, which was given twice by request, but this was in the summer when we had ample room and verge enough in the pine-grove amphitheater.

We had another theater, a very little one, please, where light plays, tableaux, readings and recitations and similar entertainments were offered by the Dramatic Group during the winter. One member of this group, Mr. John Glover Drew, was ambitious, and urged the presentation of something more serious and edifying than merely amusing trifles, and, accordingly, an excursion was made into the realm of the melodrama. Glover, as he was called, was intensely Byronic, after the fashion of the times, and he prepared a succession of thrilling scenes from Byron's sensational poem, *The Corsair*, for presentation by his fellow players. This melodramatic production was staged with all the pasteboard pomp and secondhand circumstance the little workshop theater could afford and was given with all the fire the high-toned author could impart to his company. The result was disastrous.

Glover was a very genial, jolly young man, a fellow of infinite jest, and always full of fun, but his play was distinctly dismal. The spirit of Brook Farm being as distinctly joyous, the melancholy drama went against the grain, and the performance fell dolefully flat. It was the one failure among the many successful entertainments offered by the Festal series, and the members of the cast including the author, were greatly depressed when the curtain went down with the auditorium already nearly empty. Glover undoubtedly had his bad quarter-of-an-hour that night, but the next morning he regained his usual equipoise, and cast off his chagrin with a characteristic gibe, at his own expense. A sympathetic friend ventured to ask if the fiasco was caused, perhaps, by too much blood and thunder in the piece.

Not blood and thunder, but thud and blunder, was Glover's quick come-back.

We had two or three other plays in the shop, that season, in one of which my father took a small part. This was *The Rent Day*, by Douglas Jerrold, I think. The play opens with a tableau reproducing Wilkie's picture of *The Rent Day*, and the most important thing my father had to do was to sit at the head of the table in the character of Master Crumbs, the steward. Peter Baldwin, who succeeded Mr. Hecker as baker-general being therefore given the title of General usually did the first old man business, but as he was suddenly called to Boston, my father, who happened to be visiting us at the moment, was asked to fill the role of Master Crumbs, which he consented to do, on short notice. There never was such a thing as a theater in the Old Colonie and I can imagine the disturbed feelings of the good Dutch burghers could they have known that their respected fellow citizen, Charles Sears, Esq., of the pier, was actually appearing on the stage as a play actor.

One play was given by the boys and girls, or rather by two boys and one girl, Dolly Hosmer, Craze Barlow and myself. We did *Box and Cox*, a short farce, produced to piece out a vaudeville program.

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The first hour of our winter evenings at the Hive was, by common consent, assigned to the younger generation, and story-telling was regularly made its most attractive feature. Mr. Dana was one of our best story tellers, and his narrations were instructive as well as interesting. In an extended series he gave us accounts, partly imaginary, of the beginnings of things, of the discovery and the first use of iron, the evolutions of the boat, of primitive pottery, of glass, etc.

I was never in Mr. Dana's classes, Greek and German being beyond my reach, but I saw something of him in the tree-nursery and the orchard where I worked under him, he being Chief of the Orchard Group. I cannot do better in trying to give an idea of him at Brook Farm than to quote from Mr. John Thomas Codman's Memoirs, as follows:

Charles Anderson Dana, when, from Harvard College he presented himself at the farm, was a young man of education, culture and marked ability. He was strong of purpose and lithe of frame and it was not long before Mr. Ripley found it out and gave him a place at the front. He was about four and twenty years of age, and he took to books, language and literature. Social, good-natured and animated, he readily pleased all with whom he came in contact. He was above the medium height, his complexion was light and his beard, which he wore full but well trimmed, was vigorous and of auburn hue, and his thick head of hair was well cut to moderate shortness. His features were quite regular, his forehead high and full, and his head large. His face was pleasant and animated and he had a genial smile and greeting for all. His voice was clear and musical and his language remarkably correct. He loved to spend a portion of his time in work on the farm and in the tree nursery, and you might be sure of finding him there when not otherwise occupied. Enjoying fun and social life, there was always a dignity remaining which gave him influence and commanded respect.

Later in life, as all the world knows, Mr. Dana attained high rank among the great editors of this country, and that at a period when personality counted for much more in the conduct of a newspaper than it does to-day. He served this nation during the Rebellion as Assistant Secretary of War, and was one of the counselors implicitly trusted by President Lincoln in that trying time.

Charles Hosmer was another first class raconteur, his musical delivery in reciting apt bits of poetry and other quotations adding to the pleasure of hearing his accounts rendered. He gave us modern versions of the Greek myths and hero legends, of Cadmus and Thebes, of Jason and the Golden Fleece, of the Trojan epic, of the Delphic Oracle, etc.

Several years after leaving Brook Farm I was presented with a copy of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Wonder Book*, and was surprised and indignant to find the author had actually taken our Brook Farm stories, told us by Charles Hosmer and printed them, and that, too, without a word of credit. Of course familiar renditions of the Greek legends have been common property with English speaking people, for ages, but the ignorant youngster who heard them at Brook Farm firmly believed the copyright belonged to Charles Hosmer.

The young folk and children were not only told stories but were encouraged to exercise their own talents in the same direction. Manuel Portales gave an interesting account of native life in Luzon; and Angus Cameron told us about the French habitants and their narrow little strips of farms fronting on the Canadian streams, every farmer wanting a littoral right, if only a few yards wide.

Our evening talks were often monologues, anyone with a word to say having attentive hearers, if interesting, otherwise not. A young lady, distinguished as a public speaker, came to us with what was doubtless an eloquent discourse on Woman's Rights, and was much put out, after orating awhile, to note that her glowing periods were falling on dull ears. Our women-folk had all the rights of our men-folk. They had an equal voice in our public affairs, voted for our officers, filled responsible positions, and stood on exactly the same footing as their brethren. If women were not so well off in the outer-world, they had only to join our community or to form others like ours.

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A leading temperance advocate undertook to lecture us on the terrible evils of rum drinking and the crying need of promoting the great cause of total abstinence. We were all total abstainers. There was not a drop of rum on the Farm. In the exhilarating life of our community there was no call for stimulants. We had none and wanted none. Rum was a curse in civilized society but that was because society was disorganized. Let reformers come and help us reform society and this evil with many others would be remedied. So it was that the popular lecturer after an hour's earnest discourse came to the conclusion that these Brook Farmers were very impolite indeed as they were all talking together about plans for the new Phalanstery or some other equally important subject.

Lectures were not on the list of our favorite pastimes. This indifference to the attractions of the Lyceum was all the more noticeable as there were several lecturers of repute among our own members. In the decade 1840–1850 a wave of interest in what was then known as Social Reform swept over Europe and America, and in the public discussions of the time the teachings of Brook Farm practical reformers were in constant demand. Dr. Ripley, John Dwight, John Allen, Ephraim Chapin, Charles A. Dana and others were called out on lecturing tours extending all over the Northern states, and, as most of this service was gratuitous, the cost to the community was a heavy tax on our limited resources. The socialistic propaganda was an educational movement of unquestionable value, and, while the immediate objects contemplated were never realized and are now lost to sight, yet the agitation had a permanent influence in awakening intelligence, giving an impetus to thought and enlarging the liberality of the public mind.

Oftentimes the long dining room was promptly cleared after supper for some minor entertainment, a dance, in which everyone took part, being always in order when nothing else demanded more immediate attention. Miss Russell was a most efficient teacher of dancing and we all took lessons, from the gaunt and grizzled old General to the little ones just able to learn their steps. It was a marked characteristic of the Farmers that they all joined hands in whatever was going on. With unflinching unanimity they all moved together, flocking like birds in whatever direction happened to be taken at the moment, even those of the most pronounced individuality preferring to go the way of the others rather than go his own way alone. The lovers of solitude, self centered folk, egoists and searchers into the mysteries of their own souls Emerson, Hawthorne, Hecker and Margaret Fuller were out of place in this united association where each person wanted, first of all, to be in harmony with the common mind.

The dance was so much a matter of course that no preparations were needed save the putting away of the tables and benches. The music was always ready, a dozen or more players of the violin and piano relieving each other in rendering sets of cotillons, waltzes and polkas, the latter dance being then just in fashion.

Next to the dance, some form of musical diversion was in favor. After the reorganization Mr. Dwight was Chief of the Festal Series, and as he and his fiancée, Mary Bullard, were, in a way, professionals there was always a musical program in reserve that could be brought forward at a moment's notice. We often had musicians of distinction visiting the place, and these gave us of their best, knowing their virtuosity would be recognized and appreciated. Carlo Bassini, an eminent violinist, played for us with great acceptance. His daughter, Frances Ostinelli, who boarded at the Farm several weeks, sang most delightfully. She had a glorious voice and, as Madame Biscacianti, subsequently attained fame as a cantatrice.

The Hutchinson Family, once widely known at home and abroad, but now pretty much forgotten, made a one-night-stand with us; and a company of Swiss Bell Ringers also favored us in the same way.

The star artist who pleased us youngsters more than any other was Christopher P. Cranch. He was not a professional, at that time, having just completed his course of study for the ministry, but he was certainly a most successful entertainer. There was nothing he could not do. He was a painter of more than fair ability, a sweet singer, a poet, a mighty good story-teller and we knew a good story-teller when we heard one and he could play on any instrument from an organ to a jewsharp. Whatever he undertook he did well, and his range of accomplishment was amazing. As Miss Russell remarked his versatility amounted to universality. We liked and

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admired Mr. Cranch very much, and with all his superficial levity he possessed sterling qualities that commanded our respect. As an old school song says:

True winter joys are many
With many a dear delight
We frolic in the snowdrift,
And then the Winter night.

The many winter joys were all that such joys could be, and young folk, not afraid of the weather, made the most of them. The winter nights at the Hive were fairly filled with dear delights, and the youngest of the young folk had their due share of the evening pleasures until nine o'clock when they went to bed, except on special occasions like the giving of a play, or a concert with some celebrity from Boston as a star attraction. The winter had its pleasures, but it was summer that was the real joyous season. There was a dear delight then, in just living in the open air, as most of us did the greater part of every day. Work in the fields with interesting companions, was an exemplification of the socialistic doctrine of attractive industry. Men and women, boys and girls, drawn together in groups by special likings for the work to be done, made labor not only light but really pleasant.

Our entertainments, too, were in these happy days almost exclusively free from the limitations of four walls and a ceiling. Rambles in the woods and fields, excursions to Chestnut Hill or Cow Island, rowing parties on Charles River, ball-games, athletic contests, swimming matches, everything the Greeks ever did and more than they ever thought of. Even our meals conveniently simple as they were, frequently took the form of impromptu picnics on the Knoll.

The center of summer festivities was a natural amphitheater in the beautiful pine-woods. Here was a little hollow, clear of trees which served admirably well as an auditorium, and a bank at one end, leveled down with very little artifice, made a spacious stage, or, if required, a suitable rostrum. Here we had plays worth seeing and concerts worth hearing. Here, too, Sunday services were sometimes held, to the scandalizing of our Puritan neighbors, though when Dr. Channing preached a saintly sermon and Mr. Dwight's quartet rendered the Gregorian chants, the service was an appropriate and impressive expression of sincere religious sentiment.

Some of our Puritan neighbors called us heretics because we did not believe in infant damnation or some equally profitable and comforting doctrine of the orthodox faith, and, furthermore, we actually sang hymns in Latin. All that was very bad to be sure, but then we kept the commandments, eleven of them, ten in the old testament and one in the new, and we dealt fairly with all men. We went to church too, either having Sunday services at home or attending Theodore Parker's church in Brookline. However, both Theodore Parker and Dr. Ripley were Unitarians, so that did not help us very much in the opinion of our critics.

It may almost be said that Brook Farm was as much an outgrowth of Unitarianism as of Transcendentalism. Nearly all the first members were Unitarians and many of the later comers were of the same faith. The congregation of the Unitarian church at Brookline usually contained a considerable percentage of Brook Farmers, and at times a Unitarian minister from the Farm officiated in that sacred edifice. Rev. Dr. Ripley, Rev. John S. Dwight, Rev. George P. Bradford, Rev. Warren Burton, Rev. John Allen and Rev. Ephraim Chapin were resident ministers, and Rev. Ralph Waldo Emerson, Rev. William H. Channing and Rev. James Freeman Clarke were warmly interested in the Association. Charles K. Newcomb and Christopher P. Cranch also immediate friends, were educated for the Unitarian ministry. Dr. Codman in his *Recollections* speaks of seeing five Unitarian clergymen dancing in the pine-grove at once.

One of the features of our holiday doings was the procession which spontaneously came into order, after dinner, when there was anything to the fore in the pine-woods. Then a parade took place like unto the wedding march of the villagers in an old fashioned opera. There was always some display of decoration on such occasions, usually floral, the girls, wearing garlands and wreaths or sprays of vine and chaplets of leaves. Headed, perhaps by the

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boys with fife and drum, or by the members of the cast if a play was to be given, the whole community, young men and maidens, old men and children, went singing from one end of the place to the other, that is from the Hive near the entrance to the Amphitheater near the far side of the grove.

When a high festival was to be celebrated, the procession took on the picturesque dignity of a pageant. A real pageant we dearly loved, but the show was too expensive to be offered more than once or twice annually. We had to hire musicians as our own were too busy to serve. Then the costumes and banners and hangings took a good bit of money, though artistic ingenuity helped out amazingly. Where all the magnificence came from was a mystery, the splendors of purple and gold, of rich draperies, fine furbelows, shining garments and glittering adornments being really splendid. Bonico and I, as Heralds, for example, once were superbly arrayed in white tabards emblazoned with red dragons and gold embroidery, cut from paper and pasted on white muslin. There was a deal of real, genuine, sumptuous finery brought out from family wardrobes for the pageant, but the hint as to the Heralds indicated how an effect could be produced at small cost.

[Illustration: THE PAGEANT.]

The finest pageant we ever had was arranged by the Festal Series, after the reorganization. It was historic in design, illustrating the Elizabethan period in England. Dr. Ripley personated Shakespeare; Miss Ripley, Queen Elizabeth, in a tissue paper ruff, which I helped to make; Mr. Dana, Sir Walter Raleigh; Mary Bullard, the most beautiful of our young women, Mary Queen of Scots, and Charles Hosmer, Sir Philip Sidney. The programme sent home to mother, at the time, gives a list of the characters represented but it need not be further quoted here.

The parade was formed on the Knoll and the line of march was up the road to Pilgrim Hall, over to the Cottage, around the Eyrie, and down the woodland way to the theater. The whole course was lined with spectators, coming from Boston and from all the neighboring towns. At the grove a series of historic tableaux presented the principal personages in significant pictures, and these were accompanied by Old English ballads and Shakespearian songs. The finale was a stately minuet, beautifully danced by four couples. They had been drilled for weeks by Miss Russell and as she was more than satisfied with the performance, it was, no doubt, nearly perfect. The audience seemed to be of that mind as they refused to disperse until the minuet had been repeated.

The following season we had a smaller pageant, the costumed personages being the characters in Shakespeare's comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. This was the most important play ever given in the grove, and as an out-door production, it antedated any similar performance in America. I have seen *A Midsummer Night's Dream* given in the open several times since, but the magic of the first impression has never again been felt.

With all our love of recreation, there were no sedentary games in our repertoire. Cards were unknown. The General was said to like a quiet game of whist in his own room, but if he had a pack of cards, it was probably the only one on the Farm. There was no prejudice against cards or chess or any other game so far as I know, but no one cared for any form of amusement that separated two or four from all the others. I imagine that even courting, the divine solitude of two, must have been handicapped by this persistent penchant for all being together.

The spell that drew these sympathetic associates like a magnet was in great part that charm of the general conversation, the memory of which still lingers wherever traditions of Brook Farm are cherished. The never failing succession of entertainments especially in summer were enjoyed to the full by the happy Farmers, but it was conversation, the mutual exchange of bright ideas that afforded their chiefest enjoyment. Not literature, not the drama, not the dance, but the fascination of human speech in its best employ attracted and held their enthralled attention. It is impossible to report in writing even the heads of this discourse, pervading as it did the atmosphere of Brook Farm as currents of electricity pervade the air in breaths. In a college-student's ditty is a strain conveying some hint of such parley:

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We'll sing to-night with hearts as light
And joys as gay and fleeting
As the bubbles that swim on the beaker's brim
And break on the lips at meeting.

The bubbles that break on the lips are past mending. The effervescence and sparkle of wine can only be known as the glass is filled. The fine art of conversation can be perfected only by choice spirits whose hearts are light, whose sprightly wit, gay good humor and alert intelligence make their utterances almost intoxicating.

Some attempts have been made to chronicle famous Brook Farm conversations but the best record could hardly be more than a jest book. The alert sallies and quick retorts, the pat allusions and apt quotations, the exaggerations, the absurdities, the shrewd witticisms, the searching satires, the puns and improvised nonsense verses might possibly have been registered on paper, but the spirit of merriment, of good fellowship and mutual understanding that made thoughts to live and words to sing the spirit of Brook Farm no snap-shot camera could ever have caught.

These talks were not all for fun, either. Happy and blithesome, the Farmers were, at heart, earnestly devoted to purposes held sacred. They were inspired by high ideals. Noble conceptions and beautiful beliefs found expression in fitting phrase. Rippling mirth flowed in an undercurrent of serious, sincere faith and hope and love.

One more matter may be referred to in connection with our recreations, namely, there was no hunting over our acres. The woods became a refuge for birds and small game. No gun was ever heard there, and the shyest creatures learned they were safe, among friends who loved them. Rabbits excepted. Under Mr. Hosmer's direction we boys trapped rabbits industriously, not for sport but to prevent them overrunning the place. From the traps they were transferred to the warren and thence either to the kitchen or to market.

Gray squirrels troubled us some by raiding the cornfield next the woods but their depredations were not very extensive. Ex-president Jefferson had the same trouble at Monticello, the squirrels destroying the outside rows of his cornfield. His feeble-minded brother conceived the brilliant idea of checkmating the little robbers by not planting any outside rows. The Farmers improved on this plan by planting an extra outside row for the gray thieves to feed on.

CHAPTER VII. THE SCHOOL

Education at Brook Farm began in the kindergarten only we did not know it. The word was not in the dictionaries of that period, and Froebel was yet to be heard of in Massachusetts; but the rudiments of the kindergarten system were devised and put in practice by our folk in response to a new demand. The little ones, too old for the nursery and too young for the school, demanded some adequate provision for their care while their mothers were at work. In the community the one person best suited to fill any requirement was directed to the undertaking by natural selection. This was one of the normal though scarcely recognized results of the organization of industry. Among the many workers there was always one who could do whatever was to be done better than any of the others, and to this one, young or old, man or woman, full charge of the work was given.

[Illustration: A Pioneer Kindergarten]

The one person best qualified to take charge of these toddlers was a charming young lady, Miss Abby Morton, whose sincere interest in children invariably gained their young affections. Miss Morton gathered her group of older babies on the grass or under the elms whenever weather permitted and at other times in the parlor of Pilgrim Hall. Her first object was to make them happy and contented, and to this end she invented and arranged games and songs and stories, contrived little incidents and managed little surprises with never failing ingenuity. Learning

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as well as teaching, she gradually gave a purposeful bent to her song-and-dance diversions, making them effective lessons as well as pleasant pastimes. Health and strength for the growing babies were promoted by proper exercises, a good carriage and graceful movement of little arms and legs being duly considered. Polite manners, and the correct use of language were taught by precept and example. More than all, the juvenile minds were, directly and indirectly, drilled to acquire the habit of paying attention.

The power of paying attention, of concentrating the whole force of the mind on one object, is a native gift. Those who are endowed with this gift are the men and women destined for high careers. They command confidence. They are leaders in great undertakings. Success attends them, humanly speaking, with certainty. There is, also, the faculty of taking notice, of becoming consciously aware of the impressions received by the senses. This faculty man shares with the animals below him in the scale of being, and, in both man and brute, it is susceptible to cultivation. Training the faculty of observation develops the habit of paying attention, and this habit, though less efficient than the inborn gift, may be so confirmed as to become second nature.

Whatever the community accomplished or failed to accomplish, the Brook Farm School rendered important service in educational progress by demonstrating the practicability of cultivating the habit of attention. The teachers in all classes and in all lessons throughout the school made ceaseless efforts to win and hold attention. This was not incidental or accidental, but was an integrate part of the educational plan, intelligently designed and deliberately pursued, with intent to train the pupils in the practice of concentrating their minds on the one thing before them until it became a fixed habit.

Years after the Brook Farm School had closed its doors, I was called to enter another school the awful school of war. The first word I had to learn in that school was the command, Attention!

Attention means life or death to the soldier; victory or defeat to the army. In civil life it aids incalculably in promoting prosperity, the ability to give instant attention to matters coming up for consideration being one of the first qualifications of the successful business man. And if he has not such ability originally it may be imparted to him as a habit, by early training. Miss Morton did not begin too early; and the teachers who followed her did not persist too earnestly in the endeavor to impress this habit deeply on the minds of their pupils.

When my own children were beginning to be interested in juvenile literature, they found great pleasure in reading again and again The William Henry Letters and other stories by Mrs. Abby Morton Diaz. On making inquiry I was much gratified to learn that Mrs. Diaz was our Abby Morton of the Brook Farm Kindergarten. It was no wonder she could write letters and stories appealing to children. Her understanding and her sympathies brought her in close touch with them. She knew their minds and their hearts, their likes and their dislikes and what she wrote of them and for them they accepted, knowing that every word was true to nature. It is observable too, that in her writings she still holds to the purpose of illustrating to her young readers the necessity of early acquiring the habit of paying attention.

Brook Farm was practically an industrial school, though not so named. It was the first I ever heard of where instruction in the useful arts was regularly given as a part of the educational course. The fine arts were not very extensively taught at the time, and all we had was literature, drawing, music, and dancing. These four studies were very well supplied with good teachers, everything the school promised to do being well done, but they were not given nearly so much time as the industrial arts. Every pupil old enough to work was expected to give two hours every Monday and Tuesday, and every Thursday and Friday to work under an instructor in the shops on the farm, in the garden or the household. The pupils could select their own work and could make a change of occupation with consent of the instructor. No one was obliged to take the Industrial course, but very few declined, even the aristocratic Spaniards taking hold of work like good fellows as they were. Idling was not in fashion.

I worked, for a while, four hours every day in the week. Cedar was found competent to act as first assistant to the president in the cow-stable. Care of the cow being regarded as a disagreeable duty, Dr. Ripley took it upon

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himself, just as Mrs. Ripley took the scrubbing of the kitchen floor. Mrs. Ripley had other little matters to look after, general oversight of the girls, teaching Greek, entertaining distinguished guests, writing clever musical plays for the Festal Series, etc., but she kept the floor clean all the same.

In my honorable office I succeeded Nathaniel Hawthorne. The president and Cedar arose at 5 A. M., fed and milked 18 or 20 cows, and cleared up the stable. We bathed, dressed and breakfasted at 8 A. M. At 9 A. M. Dr. Ripley was in his office and I in the school room. In the evening two hours more were given to the cows. I liked the work, liked the cows, and especially liked to be with Dr. Ripley. His flattering report that Cedar could milk like a streak secured for me the maximum wage, ten cents an hour, so that, at twelve years of age or thereabouts I was earning nearly enough to pay the cost of board and lodging.

The milkers were necessarily late at breakfast and supper and these meals we took with the waiters, the pleasantest company in the dining room. Dr. and Mrs. Ripley were charming table companions and the bright girls were merry as happy children. Perhaps Cedar did not fill Hawthorne's place quite so well at table as in the stable, but there were no intimations given to that effect. Making the most of the present moment was in order. Looking backward was not.

Nathaniel Hawthorne was one of the first members to join the community and was one of the first to leave it. He thought he could do better than to spend his time and energy in digging over a manure-pile with a dung fork. Do better he certainly did, for himself and for the world.

I have been asked more than once if the illustrious, poetic and romantic Hawthorne did actually feed the pigs at Brook Farm. My answer is that I do not know as I was not there during his residency, but I think he did not, my reason for thinking he did not being that there were no pigs to feed. The suggestion may have arisen from a passage in his Notes when he speaks of going out with Rev. John Allen to buy a litter of pigs. Minot Pratt, our head farmer, had some sort of interest in a place across the brook, and there may have been a pig-pen there, but if there was one on our place it was unknown to sharp-eyed youngsters who knew every rabbit-run in the woods, and every swallow's hole in the sand banks. Many of the farmers were vegetarians and most of them had a Hebraic aversion to pork. That viand was never seen on the table except with the baked beans always served on Sunday; Mother Rykeman managing to keep on hand a supply of middlings for the bean-pot.

Hawthorne cherished kindly memories of Brook Farm and these memories embodied in the Blithedale Romance show his warm and appreciative interest in the life of the community. I fail to find anything like the portrait-painting which others have discovered in the delineations of Blithedale characters. There are personal traits alluded to suggestive of Dr. Ripley, of Georgiana Bruce, of Orestes Brownson and others, but these hints are not definite enough to identify them with the personages of the book. As to the assumption that Margaret Fuller served as a model for Zenobia, that seems to me so far fetched as to be near absurdity.

Hawthorne visited Brook Farm occasionally, and I remember seeing him, a large, handsome man, walking up and down the Knoll or seated under the big elm, alone. He had not then attained fame and did not attract attention as a celebrity.

My industrial education was not confined to the cow-stable. At different times I worked in the green-house with John Codman, in the fields and meadows with everybody, and in the orchard and tree-nursery with Mr. Dana. On one occasion teacher and pupil were sitting on the ground, budding peach-seedlings, when a stranger approached and demanded a hearing. Gerrish had brought him out and had directed him to Vice President Dana as the authority he should consult. Free speech, here, said the vice-president, without looking up from his work.

Speaking freely, the visitor announced that his mission was to save souls, and he had a message of warning to deliver to sinners in danger of eternal punishment. What he wanted was to have the people called together that he might exhort them as to the terror of the wrath to come.

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Our people do not need to be called. They come together every evening without calling.

Can I have an opportunity to address them this evening? asked the missionary.

You can, said Mr. Dana, still busy, but they have a way of not listening, sometimes. I'll tell you what, if you are able and willing to preach a sound, old-fashioned, blue-blazes, and brimstone sermon, you will get an audience. I would like to hear a real scorcher, once more.

So far from being encouraged the missionary hastily sought Gerrish and departed on that worthy teamster's return trip to Boston.

How right was wise old Dogberry in his dictum that reading and writing come by nature. Nature surely favors some mortals, but to others she is not so generous. I was one of the others. My sister Althea picked up reading from the floor of the nursery, littered with our blocks and picture books. She needed no lesson in Webster's First Reader, but Juferouw Van Antwerp had troubles of her own in elucidating to one, at least, of her little boys, the mysteries of a, b, ab and c, a, t, cat. Althea could write a fair hand while her slow brother was still struggling with pot hooks and hangers. She could always spell correctly without the aid of a Book, while to me the spelling lesson was the hardest of tasks. Her studies at the Farm were easy and light mine, heavy and difficult.

One advantage of the high place of president's assistant was that it gave Cedar two free hours when other pupils were doing their industrial stunts. These hours were devoted to study, and they were surely needed. Manual training came, perhaps, by nature and in the industrial course I progressed rapidly, but for the rest Miss Ripley was justified in her remark that Cedar was not a smart scholar. However, steady Dutch persistence compensated somewhat for lack of alert facility, and the dull boy's lessons were fairly well learned, though at the cost of patient toil. In these out-of-school labors I was constantly assisted by kindly teachers. More than willing to aid a pupil trying to get on, these helpful instructors gave me many an hour during the four years I was with them, taking time from their own precious leisure to assist a scholar who could not be smart but who could be grateful, as he always has been.

The class rooms were in the Cottage, Pilgrim Hall and Dr. Ripley's library. We were allowed five minutes to go from one class to another but that was all. The day was not long enough for all we wanted to do, and to be sharp on time was an absolute necessity; in the classes, at meals, at work, at play, everywhere and always punctuality was required by rule and enforced by the pressure of circumstances. There was no hurry-scurry to disturb the even tenor of the way but there was not a moment lost, and, while every movement was rapid, there were no false starts made. Undivided attention was given to the matter in hand at the moment and when that was disposed of, instantly the next thing in order was taken up in the same efficient fashion, as if it were the shutting of one book and the opening of another.

School work was done as far as practicable, out of doors. Teachers and pupils, like everyone else at Brook Farm, loved to be in the open. We lived in the free air so habitually that to be shut up in the house was an irksome restraint. All summer long classes were held in the amphitheater, under the elms, on the rocky or the grassy slopes of the Knoll. Of course there were many lessons that could be given only in class rooms, but recitations, examinations and mental exercises generally were relegated to regions beyond the threshold. Botany, geology, natural history and what was then called natural philosophy were taught among the rocks, in the woods and in the fields with illustrations from nature.

In the winter the school had to be housed, but except in stormy weather we managed to see a good deal of the sky. Study of the stars with the whole population of the place standing around in the snow while Dr. Ripley discoursed on the constellations that was indeed an outdoor lesson worth remembering. Such a lesson might involve exposure to cold, but we were hardy and no one was harmed either at the moment or afterward by a little touch of temperature down toward the frost line.

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Trees and plants were studied in the woods and fields. The botany class made excursions, gathering specimens of the flora on the Farm and in the neighborhood, with peripatetic lectures by the way. Instruction in geology was given on the rocks, hammer in hand. Birds and the animal life of the locality we became acquainted with at close quarters. They were tame and friendly, being protected, cared for and never disturbed, and we learned their ways habits and characteristics by intimate association. Kindness to animals was taught and practiced first, last and all the time, and every living creature from the ox at the plow to the swallow building in the sandbank was gentle and not afraid.

The only cruel thing we ever did was to cut down through the middle of an ant's nest in the pine woods. Our Natural History Club, of which both old folk and young folk were members, made quite a thorough study of ants, at one time, and, for the purpose of illustrating a lesson, John Cheever drove a spade through the center of a nest and shoveled away, one half of it. There were several of these nests in the pines, each consisting of a pile of sand about two feet high and perhaps a yard across at the base, and the structure we examined was filled with chambers and galleries which we found were also extended a foot or so under ground. The destruction of the ant hill was regretted by some of the more scrupulous students, but the exhibit gave us more real knowledge of the industries, the habits of life, the architecture, the skill and the intelligence of the Formicidae, than we gained in any other way. We were immensely interested in these ant studies, and bought all the books about them we could find. Afterward I made a little book myself, giving the results of our investigations set forth in papers read at meetings of the Club, notes of experiments, and of Mr. Hosmer's lectures or rather talks on the wonderful works of the Formicidae. The publication of this book marked my first appearance in the literary world.

Charles Hosmer was a born naturalist. Every form of life was of surpassing interest to him. In our walks abroad he saw everything there was to be seen. His observation was not only alert but was minute and accurate. He seemed to know every plant and insect and bird and animal on the Farm, and had something worth while to tell us about anything and everything that attracted attention.

Instruction was not confined to the studies of the classes. Except in the hours when pupils were left to their own devices, there was always a teacher or a guardian at hand giving intelligent direction to whatever was going on, maintaining discipline in the fundamental requirement of paying strict attention, and imparting information respecting the subject in hand.

By way of illustration it may be noted that Minot Pratt was the head farmer during the early days and a good farmer he proved to be. He not only worked wonders with the poor soil of the place but managed at the same time to give a deal of thought and care to his industrial classes. The boys and girls who elected to work in the fields and gardens with Minot Pratt received many a valuable lesson in botany, agricultural chemistry, and the planting, cultivating and harvesting of crops.

Mr. Pratt and his family left Brook Farm when the association was reorganized as a Fourierite Phalanx, and was succeeded by John Codman, who, under the new order, was made Chief of the Agricultural Series, a post which he filled with signal ability during the remaining years of the community's existence. The Codmans were important members of the Phalanx taking responsible places in the management of affairs, and fully demonstrating the practicability of abiding by Christian principles in every day life. They were the last to leave the place, remaining to assume the sad task of winding up the details of final settlements.

At one time I worked in the flower garden and the conservatory with one of the Codman boys whom I called Baas, as he was my elder and my superior in the business of raising plants, shrubs and flowers for market. The economic worth of kindness to animals is shown by our daily use of a prize bull as a draught animal to draw the cart in hauling manure, to drag the cultivator in the garden and similar tasks. He was a magnificent creature, a gift from Francis George Shaw and was, at most seasons so gentle and docile that the Baas used to ride on his back between the barn and the garden.

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Wednesdays and Saturdays were half-holidays not only for the school but for the entire community. On Wednesday and Saturday afternoon the whole place was en-fete. Work was suspended except the simple household duties and the care of the animals, and the hours were devoted to having a good time. The pupils were allowed to do as they pleased, and it pleased us boys sometimes to be robbers and brigands and smugglers in a cavern behind the Eyrie. Here we could build a fire on condition that no fire was ever to be built elsewhere. This dark and dismal cave occupied a conspicuous place in my memories of Brook Farm for many years until in later life, I took my daughter to visit the old place, when puffed up pride had a bad fall. When we came to the cave, I could hardly believe my own eyes. That spacious den of thieves, that resort of bold outlaws was a cleft between two great boulders. One could crawl into it and turn around and that was about all, It surely must have shrunk or filled up or contracted or something, such a poor little quart-pot of a cavern it proved to be.

There was another boulder which, on the same occasion, served me a better turn, enabling me to identify the site where Pilgrim Hall had stood. This one of the many big rocks scattered about the place was located immediately in front of Pilgrim Hall, and I recognized it by a certain little pouch or pocket next the ground on its southerly side; a circumstance I had cause to remember as it cost me money. The pupils of the school were allowed a trifle of money, weekly, which we could spend in any way we liked. Occasionally we went over to the street and bought oranges or plantains bananas rarely sweets, as the sticks of candy, striped like a barber's pole in a glass jar on the end of the store counter were not very tempting. Often we chipped in our pennies, boys and girls together, and commissioned Gerrish to purchase some book we wanted or perhaps some bit of finery for festal decoration.

There was one boy who did not take part in our financial ventures. What he did with his money we did not know, but we never saw a cent of it. He was ready enough to share our goodies but carefully kept his cash in his own hands. One day when we were playing three-old-cat in front of Pilgrim Hall, we lost the ball and searched for it in vain. Steediwink, as one of the older boys was familiarly called, in groping around the foot of the boulder above referred to, found a hole in the rock into which he thrust his hand. At the far end of the hole was a sort of shelf and thereon was piled a hoard of small change. If everyone knew whose treasury we had opened, no one named any names, and the find was forthwith confiscated for the benefit of the festival fund.

Some days later, Mr. Hosmer in his evening talk to the children very significantly stated that one of the scholars had lost a sum of money and asked us to try and find it and bring it to him that he might restore it to the rightful owner. It took all our allowances for several weeks to make up the needed amount, but finally the lost cash was found, and Mr. Hosmer thanked us, again very significantly, for aiding him in squaring up a somewhat grievous account. The miserly boy was of course to be commended for thrift, but he was not of our kind and did not remain long in our company. He took care of his pence and his pounds took care of themselves, no doubt in later life, but that is only surmise as he was one of the few that we others did not try to keep track of after Brook Farm became a thing of the past.

CHAPTER VIII. ODDMENTS

John Cheever was our eccentric character; not a crank, not an egotist, not an enthusiast and not a Socialist, but just a plain, good-natured, shrewd-witted Irishman, who, for some reason, liked to live at the Farm. He never joined the Association or the Phalanx but just stayed on as a permanent boarder. He was the newsman and general gossip of the place, going about from house to house and from group to group, working a little here and a little there, as he pleased, and always having something interesting or amusing to tell, his brogue giving a comic twist to his ever ready jest. Taking no part in the regular industries except as his humor dictated, he was yet a very busy person and very helpful in many ways. When there was any out-of-the-way job to be done it was John Cheever who did it, and especially in the work of preparing for entertainments, he was the handy man of the Festal Series, Stage carpenter, scene shifter, door keeper, painter and utility man on the stage. Though not attached to any of the industrial groups, he took upon himself certain duties which he never neglected. In winter he took care of the fires

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at night, going the rounds from the Hive to the Eyrie, the Cottage and Pilgrim Hall in all kinds of weather with faithful regularity. Our main dependence for fuel was peat, or turf, as John Cheever called it, and to keep the rooms warm with this low-grade fuel, the fires had to be renewed every five or six hours.

Another of John Cheever's self-imposed tasks was the care of cranks. Though somewhat peculiar himself he had no use for odd fish queer folk and the like and kept a sharp look-out for erratic strangers. Of these there was a constant succession coming to the Farm; reformers of everything under the sun; fanatics demanding the instant adoption of their nebulous theories; mental aliens not quite crazy but pretty near it; egotists, wild to be noticed, freaks and fakirs and humbugs of every description, and, worst of all, wrecks of humanity seeking refuge from the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. These creatures, all and sundry, John Cheever made it his business to look after. The moment Gerrish landed one of the tribe at the Hive, the watchman spotted him, so to speak, and presently managed to steer him off the place.

Gerrish brought a chap to the Hive one cold winter evening who announced to the assembly gathered in the parlor after supper, that he had discovered a method of living without sleep. Sleep was unnecessary, a habit that could be overcome and he had succeeded in demonstrating that life could be sustained perfectly well without that needless waste of time. He had not slept during more than a year past and he purposed to remain wide awake during the years to come.

It may be taken for granted that John Cheever kept an eye on this fellow. He was treated as a favored guest, his host accepting his theory and putting it in practice with him that same night. Toward morning he was comfortably settled in the library with an interesting book to while away an hour when his entertainer made the rounds to look after the fires. Returning to the library, the fireman found the theorist sound asleep in Dr. Ripley's big armchair. Giving the man a vigorous shake, John Cheever politely requested him not to snore quite so loud as he was disturbing the family. After that there was nothing for the sleepless person to do but wait for Gerrish to take him away.

Bonico and I trapped another fakir soon afterward though by accident rather than design. This specimen was a genius inspired by the belief that cooking is the source of all the ills that flesh is heir to. He lectured us on the folly of eating boiled and roasted and toasted food, declaring that we must subsist on nature's products as she gives them to us, just as other animals do. Nature affords an abundant supply of grains and fruits and nuts and roots, and it is our place not to change these things by fire but to take them as they are offered to us.

As heretofore noted, our fare was simple enough, and after our spare meals there was very little left on the tables to be cleaned away. What small leavings of scraps and crumbs there happened to be, were brushed onto a big salver and placed outside the kitchen door. My chum and I had to go out in the evening and take this salver out to the chicken run behind the barn. We had seen the dietetic reformer wandering about the place for a day or two, constantly chewing wheat which he carried in a bag hanging conspicuously from his belt. He did not come into the dining room or take regular meals, claiming to be sufficiently nourished by the raw wheat he masticated so industriously. We had not noticed him especially no one took much notice of pretentious faddists but on going around to the back door for the chicken-feed one evening Bonico and I recognized the wheat-muncher bending over the salver eagerly picking up whatever bits and pieces he could find to eat. He was so engaged in this employ that we did not disturb him but quietly slipped away and reported the case to John Cheever. That guardian of the peace immediately trotted off to the kitchen, gathered up a plate of food and rushed out to the diet reformer, exclaiming: Here is your supper! No one need go hungry at Brook Farm. That was the last of this particular specimen; but there were others, so many others that they would have been intolerable but for the watchful care that protected us from too troublesome invasions.

John Cheever's most appreciated service to the community was his addition of Irish oatmeal to our scanty bill of fare. He did not care for brewis and brown bread any more than I did and for his own satisfaction he wrote to friends in the old country to send him a consignment of Irish oatmeal. In due time Gerrish delivered a hundred

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weight of this new provender, sealed in tin cans. It made such a surprisingly good breakfast that we went through those tins cans in short meter. A larger supply was sent for at once, and thereafter oatmeal was always on the breakfast table. We presently found that when a can was opened the contents very soon turned rancid; and thereupon Glover Drew hunted up a grist-mill that ground our own oats for us. Making more than we needed, Glover Drew tried to find a market for the surplus, but no one would have it at any price.

John Cheever was the one person in all West Roxbury who sympathized with my sister and myself in the most grievous trial we ever encountered as children. The Brook Farmers and all their neighbors ignored Christmas. They knew nothing and cared nothing about that wondrous season of joy for the little ones, and could not in the least understand how it was that Althea and I were so sorely hurt by such a trifle as the neglect of an old and forgotten custom. John Cheever did understand. He was a Catholic and while not at all devout, he still held in reverence the sacred observances of the church. He it was who explained to us that the New England Puritans were bitterly hostile to anything and everything savoring of what they called Popery, imposing severe penalties on misguided wretches who dared to show respect for old beliefs. He said that the General Court of Massachusetts had enacted a special law against the keeping of Christmas, visiting with fine and imprisonment the transgressors who dared to celebrate that Popish festival. It was the misfortune and not the fault of the Brook Farmers that the Bethlehem Birthday was no more to them than Saint Jude's day or the Feast of the Tabernacles.

In the Old Colonie Christmas was the one great day of all the year for children. We did not have the Christmas tree, but we had the Bethlehem manger in the Dutch Reform Church at the foot of the high pulpit and dominie Bogardus told us the story of the Birthday of Our Lord in simple words which we could all understand. Early in the morning we ran down to the sitting room where our stockings were hanging from the mantel shelf filled by Santa Claus with Christmas gifts, with more piled on the table for our friends and for poor families. That was what an effusive writer once called the halcyon and vociferous beginning of the day.

In the afternoon the boys went abroad bearing gifts, and the girls kept open house at home receiving visitors bringing more Christmas presents. In the evening, children's parties were in order, with traditional games brought over from the old country by the Walloons. Old fashioned costumes were worn at these parties, Utrecht velvet being much in favor. My velvet suit proved available in more than one of our Brook Farm costume shows only it was not worn at Christmas time.

It must have been one of the last days of December when Gerrish brought us a belated Christmas box and Christmas letters from home. That was the first intimation coming to Althea and myself that our most precious holiday was at hand. Dumfounded, we realized too late that Christmas Day had passed without our knowing it. It was simply incredible! We could not comprehend, much less be reconciled to, such an inconceivable state of affairs. Our trouble, however, was all our own. No one else had any part or lot in it except John Cheever. Our dearest friends and companions were politely sorry we had missed something, they did not know what and that was all. They had no more conception of what Christmas meant to us than of what the Passover means to Israel.

Our box was filled Christmas goodies, olecokes and crullers, candies and cookies and all the fifty-seven varieties of Dutch dainties proper to the season; and on New Year's eve good Mrs. Rykman made this store of sweets the nucleus of an impromptu feast designed for our comfort and consolation. It was well meant and well managed and the kindly feeling manifested made up in part for the disappointment we had experienced; but the Christmas of that year was a dead loss a loss that I regret to this day.

At Brook Farm, however, there was small chance to indulge in regrets and the Christmas trouble had to give place to more immediate interests. The Farmers were, first of all, Transcendentalists which is to say they were philosophers and not given to repining. Their philosophy was not stated in their public announcements but was expressed in their lives. It may be formulated as the philosophy of Here and Now.

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Here and Now; on the spot, with the goods, at the moment. Not yesterday; not to-morrow, but to-day, this hour, this instant is the appointed time to live for all you are worth. Put your heart in your work right Here. Give your mind, your skill, your energy to whatever you have in hand just Now. Respect for the past, for its traditions and its memories is all right but never look back intently enough to prevent seeing what is before you Here and Now. Hope for the future is all right, but let not dreams of the good time coming becloud clear comprehension of the realities at hand Here and Now. That was the philosophy of the Brook Farmers, not set forth in words, but set forth in deeds. To be on the spot, with the goods at the moment this was their ideal and they lived up to it every day and all day long.

Their Puritan neighbors professed a philosophy of the hereafter, and although they did not live up to it constantly, they proclaimed it all the more vehemently. Not in the life of this wicked and weary world but in the life of the world to come their hopes and especially their fears were centered. Miserable sinners, born into total depravity could only employ their brief sojourn on earth in striving to save their souls. Mortifying the flesh and holding all pleasures to be foolish if not impious, they deferred happiness to the realms beyond the skies. To them Here was nothing and Now was nothing. The eternal hereafter was all. Looking at life as merely a preparation for death, their point of view was diametrically opposite to that of the Farmers who looked upon life as a phase of existence to be made the most of and to be enjoyed to the full with every breath from first to last. Naturally enough, perhaps, the devout pietists regarded the cheerful worldlings as lost beyond hope of redemption. The same sentiments that prompted the whipping and hanging and persecuting incidents of Puritan history were entertained by the orthodox elect of Roxbury and were manifested Brook Farmward sometimes with sullen hostility. The young folk of the neighborhood came to our entertainments gladly enough, but some of the harsh-visaged elders would have found greater satisfaction in administering stern old-fashioned discipline if their power to deal with malignants had only been what it was in the days when their kind ruled Massachusetts Bay Colony with a rod of iron.

It was these pleasurings of ours that brought down on us the severest anathemas. We were idlers forever singing and fiddling and dancing when honest folk were at work. This criticism was in part true. We certainly did devote more time and more attention to recreation than was customary among working folk. The two half-holidays of the week were set apart for diversions. All care and toil came to a full stop, and everyone was free to do exactly as he or she pleased. Usually all hands pleased to be together, after the Brook Farm fashion, everyone joining in whatever scheme of amusement was on foot for the day.

After the reorganization the Festal Series took systematic charge of the holidays and there was always something worth while provided for the afternoon or evening or both, in which all of us were ready to take part and eager to enjoy.

The Brook Farm Association was at first organized as a joint stock company. The stated objects of this company were the conduct of a school, a farm, a printing and publishing business and other light industries. The unstated purpose was the carrying out of a social experiment; a practical attempt to form a community living what we would now call the Simple Life. Incidentally there was a deliberate intent to make the most of opportunities for promoting happiness. These bright, intelligent, cultured young people set out to have a sane, sensible, joyous good time in the world, and they certainly succeeded wonderfully well in this endeavor. I can truly say I have never known any company anywhere who enjoyed this earthly existence more thoroughly than did these Brook Farmers. They believed the Good Lord meant this life to be beautiful and harmonious and they set out in good faith to make it conform to the Divine idea. They were happy, on principle, so to speak. To this end they consistently demonstrated the worth of good cheer, good companionship and good entertainment. Recreation and amusement were as much a part of their programme as tilling the soil, teaching school or keeping house. To wake up every morning eager to begin an active, interesting, joyful day, without a thought of anxiety that was their ideal, and, like their other ideals, this was fairly realized.

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Our critics held that we had no moral right to give up a whole day each week just for fun. This might have been true had we been trying to get rich, but getting rich was not the first object we contemplated. Other things came before wealth-seeking, but, all the same, in competition with those who thought ill of our ways, we beat them all to pieces. In Boston markets Brook Farm products were at a premium and found quicker sale at better prices than the West Roxbury farmers and gardeners could command. They sent potatoes in the bottom of a wagon; apples in a soap box; berries in a battered tin pail and butter in an old cracked crock; none of these things being particularly clean. Our girls put up our garden stuffs in neat, regular parcels. The quality of the orchard and farm and dairy products was invariably the best; and everything was fresh as possible, and neat and attractive in appearance. I will venture to say we got more money from an acre of ground in five days than any of our neighbors did in six. Perhaps that was another reason why they did not like us.

CHAPTER IX. FOURIER AND THE FARMERS

In the language of the time the Farmers were Socialists, but the Socialism of 1840–50 was a very different proposition from the Socialism of to-day. The earlier socialists were not in politics. They had no party, politically speaking, and took only a remote and indirect interest in political affairs. What they wanted was to reform the world; to reconstruct civilization on a scientific basis. That was what President Lincoln was wont to call a big job. However, faith will move mountains, and the socialists certainly had faith. Their purpose was far reaching, to be sure, but, after all, it rested on a very simple basis. Reduced to a syllogism it might be stated as follows: Major premise: Every human being desires happiness. Minor premise: Socialism provides for the happiness of every human being. Conclusion: Demonstrate this truth and every human being will become a socialist. Q. E. D.

The socialists were at first called Fourierites but this rather long title very soon gave place to the more convenient word here used. The science of right living was evolved by Charles Fourier, a French savant who gave his life to humanitarian studies. His fundamental concept was that the Creator and Ruler of the Universe instituted one law; one edict of the Divine Will, one all-inclusive order, regulating and controlling everything that is. This is the Law of the series. The stars in their courses move in the serial order, and the leaves clothing the trees obey the same cosmic code. Fourier's first axiom was: The series distribute the Harmonies. That is to say, the operation of the Law of the series brings about harmonious results. The stars traverse serenely their proper orbits, influencing each other in a perfect balance of harmonious relations. The leaves burgeon on the branches in the serial order that gives to each its share of sun and rain. Human society to reach its highest development must come into harmonious relations with the stars, with the leaves, with everything that exists in the universe, under the Divine Law of the series. To this end society must be reconstructed in the order of the series.

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Organization of Labor

Labor is the prime factor of human affairs. By Labor the race is to subdue the earth that the earth may be our heritage. This is the first command with a promise given in the Bible. To fulfill the Divine purpose Labor must be brought under the Divine Law, the Law of the series.

Disorganized Labor cannot subdue the earth, hampered as it is by waste, by loss, by repulsive and dangerous tasks, by fruitless toil, by class hostilities, by warring communities, by the monopoly of gains, and by the thousand penalties incurred by disorderly opposition to Law.

The Organization of Labor will evolve Attractive Industries; Harmonious Communities, and will ensure the Equitable Distribution of Gains and the protection afforded by Mutual Guarantees.

These communities will illustrate Fourier's second axiom. Attractions are Proportioned to Destinies. Every being

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born into this world has a place in the work of subduing the earth, suited to his abilities and to his tastes. In the Organized Community this place will be open to him. He will be attracted to those industries in which he is destined to do his best work.

The Series Distribute the Harmonies, and, under the Law communities will be drawn together by natural attraction. The Law ensures harmonious relation and there will be no competitions, no grasping monopolies, no clashing of opposing forces. The welfare of each individual will be identified with the welfare of all. The community of Organized Laborers, living together and working together in Attractive Industries, will be a solid Phalanx of united interests. The Phalanx will assume responsibility for the welfare of each member from birth to death. The provision of Mutual Guarantees will insure to each a good home, good living, good education for the young, good care for the aged and good opportunities for work and for recreation while life lasts. Each one will be perfectly free to follow those congenial pursuits the attractions of which are proportioned to his destiny. The final consummation as announced by Fourier in his third axiom, will be the Unity of Man with God, with Man, and with Nature.

The apostle of Fourierism in America was Albert Brisbane. By nature a humanitarian and by earnest study a profound scholar, he recognized a germ of truth in the theory of the Transcendentalists that humanity is suffering from evils which if not remedied must result in disaster. The remedy he found in Socialism. While sojourning in France he came under the personal influence of Charles Fourier and, was a member of the circle of converts drawn around the founder of Socialism not the political Socialism of to-day, be it again said, but the Socialism of 1840, devoted to the reorganization of civilized society, on a scientific basis; the re-formation of human institutions under the universal Serial Order.

Returning home, Mr. Brisbane established a socialistic propaganda which for ten years or more exercised a wide influence on the public mind of this country land awakened an intense interest in the socialistic movement. He translated the works of Fourier and published them at his own cost. He had a column in Horace Greeley's *Tribune* where he expounded the new doctrines and gave practical instruction to his followers. An eloquent and persuasive speaker, he lectured constantly all over the country, and formed socialist clubs and societies and made converts with whom he maintained an active correspondence. At flood tide he estimated that the socialists in the United States numbered more than 200,000. I believe the records show forty-two communities organized on the socialistic plan during the decade above referred to. There were two in the state of New York; two in Pennsylvania, two in Ohio; two in New Jersey, and two in Massachusetts, namely Hopedale and Brook Farm.

Of course Mr. Brisbane came to Brook Farm. I remember him as a tall, rather slender young man, somewhat bent forward, alert and impulsive in manner, quick of gesture and of speech, and a charming talker. Filled with enthusiasm, glorying in the great cause he stood for, self-sacrificing, giving himself absolutely to the redemption of humanity, he converted the Farmers to the Fourierite theories and induced them to put these theories to the test of actual experiment. Minot Pratt and one or two other skeptics left the Association, but the rest of the members unanimously voted to reorganize as a Fourierite Phalanx.

When this was accomplished Mr. Brisbane made Brook Farm a sort of headquarters for the Socialistic propaganda, and enlisted several of the members as lecturers and teachers of humanitarian science. *The Harbinger* was established as the Fourierite organ in this country. Dr. Ripley and Mr. Dana were the editors, and it was a Brook Farm publication. There was, however, very little of Brook Farm news in its columns, and no advertising. Besides the exposition of socialistic doctrine there were book reviews, musical notes, and fiction, the most important novel being George Sands' *Consuelo*, translated for the paper by Francis George Shaw. *The Harbinger* never paid expenses, and the editors and contributors gave their services in aid of the cause it advocated. Among those who wrote for the journal were Ralph Waldo Emerson, Albert Brisbane, Wm. H. Channing, Elizabeth Peabody, and Margaret Fuller.

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Elizabeth Peabody, though not a member of the Association was warmly interested in its work and in its welfare. In one of her contributions to *The Dial*, the organ of the Transcendentalists, she wrote, in part, as follows: There are men and women who have dared to say to one another, 'Why not have our daily life organized on Christ's own idea? Why not begin to remove the mountain of custom and convention?' In order to live a religious and moral life, they feel it is necessary to come out in some degree from the world and form themselves into a community of property so far as to exclude competition and the ordinary rules of trade, while they preserve sufficient private property for all purposes of independence and isolation at will. They make agriculture the basis of their life, it being most direct and simple in relation to nature. A true life although it aims beyond the stars, is redolent of the healthy earth. The perfume of clover lingers about it. The lowing of cattle is the natural bass to the melody of human voices.

Miss Peabody was one of the children's friends at the Farm. She was much interested in the school and when she had something to say to us, the classes all came together and listened to her pertinent words with earnest attention. I cannot say as much for her co-worker, Margaret Fuller. Her monologues in the parlor at the Hive failed to attract the notice she evidently thought they deserved, and I am afraid, on the whole, her experiences at the Farm were rather disappointing to her. She occupied a room in the cottage, and I have heard that the little house has since been called the Margaret Fuller Cottage, but no one ever thought of so naming it in the early days.

Let not this record of a boy's impressions be read as detracting from the luster shining about the memory of Margaret Fuller. She was highly respected and esteemed by all Brook Farmers and the friends of the community during her life of faithful service, and her tragic death was a source of grief deep and sincere to all who knew her worth. After the community broke up, she went to live in Italy, and there was happily married to the Count d'Ossoli. Returning to America with her husband and child, a happy wife and proud mother, the vessel on which they were passengers was wrecked off Fire Island, and all on board were drowned. Almost within sight of home, and almost within reach of help from the shore, Margaret Fuller and her dear ones perished together. There was no Life Saving Service at that time, and watchers on the beach had no means of rescuing the voyagers who met death as they were drawing near to the end of their journey.

When the Brook Farm Association became the Brook Farm Phalanx, the industries of the place were organized in the serial order. The tilling of the soil was conducted by the Agricultural Series, with special work assigned to different groups, as the Farming group, the Orchard group, the Garden group, etc. The household affairs were in charge of the Domestic Series, comprising the Kitchen group, the Laundry group, the Waiters' group a very jolly group, that, and two or three others. The Manufacturing Series directed the work of the trades; and the Festal Series had charge of recreations and entertainments. The last named series had attractions proportioned to the destinies of every member of every group in the industrial organization, and a deal of care and attention were deliberately given to its functions. Six days we labored and did all our work and did it well. We did not labor the same number of hours each day but took two half-holidays every week for having a royal good time under the management of the Festal Series.

No one was closely confined to any of the specialized groups but, as a rule, every one found his right place and attended strictly to business therein; subject, however, to an emergency call in case of need. In the planting season and the harvesting season, for example, we could put fifty hands in the field, or more if required. Agriculture was our main interest and farming became a very attractive industry when potatoes were to be quickly put in the ground or when hay was to be rushed to the barns.

On the whole it can be truly said that the serial order worked first rate in agriculture, which I happened to know most about, and the practical experiment of organizing industry was immensely successful so far as getting work done was concerned. As to profit and loss that is a matter about which I am not informed.

Agriculture is the basis of support for the human family and will continue to be the basis in the new dispensation. The Organization of Labor in agriculture will necessitate the drawing together of workers in communities, each

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neighborhood uniting to dwell at a convenient central location. At this central home, all the problems of the isolated household will be provided for by this organized community, by the conduct of domestic affairs in the scientific order of the series. Such a community will be a Phalanx, and the Phalanx will be the unit of Organized Society.

Fourier anticipated many inventions, mechanical devices for taking the place of handiwork in the household, among others. The hard and the disagreeable tasks now assigned to servants, would in the Phalanx be performed on a large scale by machinery.

There were no servants at Brook Farm. Every one served but no one was hired to serve. Household drudgery was reduced to the lowest practicable minimum. We did not live on the fat of the land, and that made a wonderful difference in the kitchen work, that was at first. Later we had to employ farm-laborers and mechanics and as they needed meat for strong men, it became necessary for greasy Joan to keel the pot, and Joan was imported for that purpose.

Our plain fare very plain indeed it was occasioned a good deal of comment among our friends. They were afraid we would starve but we didn't. We were all splendidly well, kept in fine condition and in the best of high spirits. The very few-cases of sickness on the place were every one of them brought there from elsewhere, until the advent of the scourge and that too, we brought or was possibly sent, from outside our healthful borders.

On the whole, again, from the social point of view, the Brook Farm experiment was eminently successful. We were happy, contented, well-off and care-free; doing a great work in the world, enthusiastic and faithful, we enjoyed every moment of every day, dominated every moment of every day by the Spirit of Brook Farm.

CHAPTER X. UNTO THIS LAST

There were two funerals at Brook Farm, during my time, and I think there were no more afterward. A young woman named Williams came there with incipient tuberculosis and after being tenderly cared for and made as comfortable as possible for several months, peacefully passed away. That was the only death. The deceased was buried with simple but impressive services in a quiet nook at the far end of the pine woods. This was the retired spot where the members of the community expected to be interred when their labors in this world came to an end. That expectation was not fulfilled. The Brook Farmers have nearly all joined the congregation of the beyond, but they are sepulchred in the four quarters of the globe. Theodore Parker's monument is visited by tourists in Italy. Captain John Steel made his last voyage to the port of Hong Kong. John S. Dwight lies in Mount Vernon; Dr. and Mrs. Ripley in Greenwood. The young couple who went to California never came back and never will. Robert Shaw fell at Fort Sumter and shares a place in the trenches with his men; and the battlefields of the South hold all that was mortal of three others. Not one found final shelter under the sod of Brook Farm.

The Rev. John Allen on resigning his pastorate to become a member of our community, was detained for a time by the illness of his wife. When she died he brought her remains for burial in the little cemetery among the pines. This was the second funeral I witnessed, and I think there were no others during the existence of the community.

Some years since I visited the old place with Dr. Codman, and, among the other well remembered localities we sought out the place where we had attended two funerals in the long-ago of our boyhood, but the mementos of these two occasions were not to be found. During the war of the Rebellion Brook Farm had been used as a convalescent camp, and many of the sick and wounded were mustered out there by the last general orders which we must all obey. Among the numberless soldiers' graves it was impossible to identify the two mounds for which we were looking.

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As noted, the Phalanx had several of its members in the lecture field to aid in forwarding the socialist movement. The cost of this propaganda and the publication of *the Harbinger*, the Socialistic organ, must have been a tax on the slender resources of the community, but to make sacrifices for the great cause was quite in accordance with the spirit of Brook Farm, and, so far as I know the burden was cheerfully borne. The Rev. John Allen was one of those engaged in this educational work and much of his time was given to it. He was affectionately devoted to his motherless child, a charming little girl of perhaps four years, and when the conditions favored he took her with him on his lecturing tours. One evening he came home unexpectedly, bringing the child as she was not feeling well, and leaving her in Mrs. Rykeman's care. The baby and I were dear friends, and, the next day, she being confined to Mrs. Rykeman's rooms, I spent the afternoon trying to entertain her. Toward night, as she was evidently very sick, a doctor was called in from Brookline. The physician examined the little one and pronounced the dreadful verdict that we had on our hands a case of virulent smallpox.

That was the beginning of the end. As Mrs. Rykeman and I had been exposed to contagion, we were quarantined in her rooms and every precaution was taken to prevent the spread of the disease. Neither Mrs. Rykeman nor I had a single symptom of the disorder, but presently, other cases appeared, one after another, and during the next few months, the scourge ran through the community.

Thanks, no doubt, to the sturdy good health of our people, the invasion by this enemy of mankind and a terrible enemy the smallpox then was did not prove directly calamitous. The baby was the only one seriously sick, and she made a rapid recovery, as indeed did all the others who were attacked. There were not more than a dozen cases from first to last and not one suffered much more than inconvenience, and not one had a pit or spot such as the smallpox leaves to mark its victims.

After the first shock of surprise and alarm, the affliction was endured without a murmur. It was a hard trial and we all knew it, but it was borne with courage and equanimity as all trials and hardships were borne by this high-souled company, imbued with the true spirit of Brook Farm.

There were seldom more than two or three on the sick list at a time these, by the way, usually taking care of themselves or of each other and the rest of us went about the daily affairs of life very much as though all was well with us. There was no more seclusion, and work and study were presently resumed in regular order.

We were, however, shut off from communication with the outer world. Gerrish left the mail and other things at the bridge, but he took nothing away, as we were not allowed to send anything off the place. No one could cross the brook from our side, and no one came to us from the other side. That was a grievous misfortune, but it was not the worst.

The smallpox killed the school.

Several of the elder pupils fled on the first alarm, before we were shut in, and these did not return. No others came to take the vacant places and, presently, the higher classes were suspended. At the end of the term the Brook Farm School was permanently closed.

This was the second step toward the final dissolution of the community. Like unto the first, the second step was forced upon us as one of the results following the return home of Mr. Allen's stricken daughter.

How was it that such an affliction could have come to this poor innocent little victim? No one ever knew. She was her father's darling and he watched over her with the most faithful care. He was obliged to leave her during lecture hours but always in charge of trustworthy friends. At no time, so far as he could find, had she been in danger of contagion. Of course that danger might possibly have been incurred without his knowledge, but another possibility was that the scourge might have been visited upon us through her infection by malignant design.

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We knew there was bitter feeling against us among the old Puritans of Roxbury. They hated us and took occasion to annoy and injure us in many mean ways. Very little heed was given to these neighborly attentions and very likely the matter would not have been thought of in connection with the smallpox had that been all we had to suffer, but it was not.

When three mysterious fires occurred, one after another, destroying the three principal houses on the domain, Pilgrim Hall, the Eyrie and the Phalanstery, it was impossible to account for the origin of any of them. Then it was that memory inevitably recalled manifestations of hostility that could be accounted for with absolute certainty.

Pilgrim Hall was the main dormitory for pupils, a plain but substantial structure, the first one erected for school purposes. The Phalanstery was intended to be the home of the Phalanx. It was a comparatively large and costly wooden building, with public rooms on the first floor and accommodation for about one hundred and fifty people on the second and third floors. To put up the Phalanstery was the biggest job undertaken by the community and it taxed all available resources to the last dollar. When nearly finished it was set on fire and burned to ashes. This last loss bankrupted Brook Farm. There was no money left to go on with, and the socialistic organization at West Roxbury had to be abandoned. The Fourierite experiment was a failure. The joyous life of the happy companions, grown so dear to each other, was ended. The congenial company, united by such intimate ties was broken up. The loving brothers and sisters said farewell to their trusted friends and to their sunny home, going their widely separated ways, few of them ever to meet again.

The failure of Brook Farm was rightly attributed to a succession of inexplicable disasters. That was true as to direct causes, but it seems apparent to-day that the Socialistic movement could not possibly have been carried to ultimate success. The world was not ready to accept Fourier's theories far enough to abandon civilization and live the Simple Life. The era of the millennium had not arrived. That era has not yet arrived, for that matter, and while there are enthusiasts who assure us the dawn of the glorious morning is almost within sight, we others are not quite able to see it. There are not many of the Socialists of 1840 now living, but the few of us left to those later days have not much interest in the Socialistic dogmas now current. None the less, we who can look back to the Socialism of the early times, still cherish memories of Brook Farm as among the dearest this earth affords.

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[*Transcriber's Note:* Four illustrations are listed in the Table of Contents but were missing from the copy this text was derived from. They are the portraits of Horace Greeley, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Charles A. Dana, and Nathaniel Hawthorne. An entry was inserted in the Table of Contents for the musical notation titled "The Brook Farm Call" found in Chapter Three.]