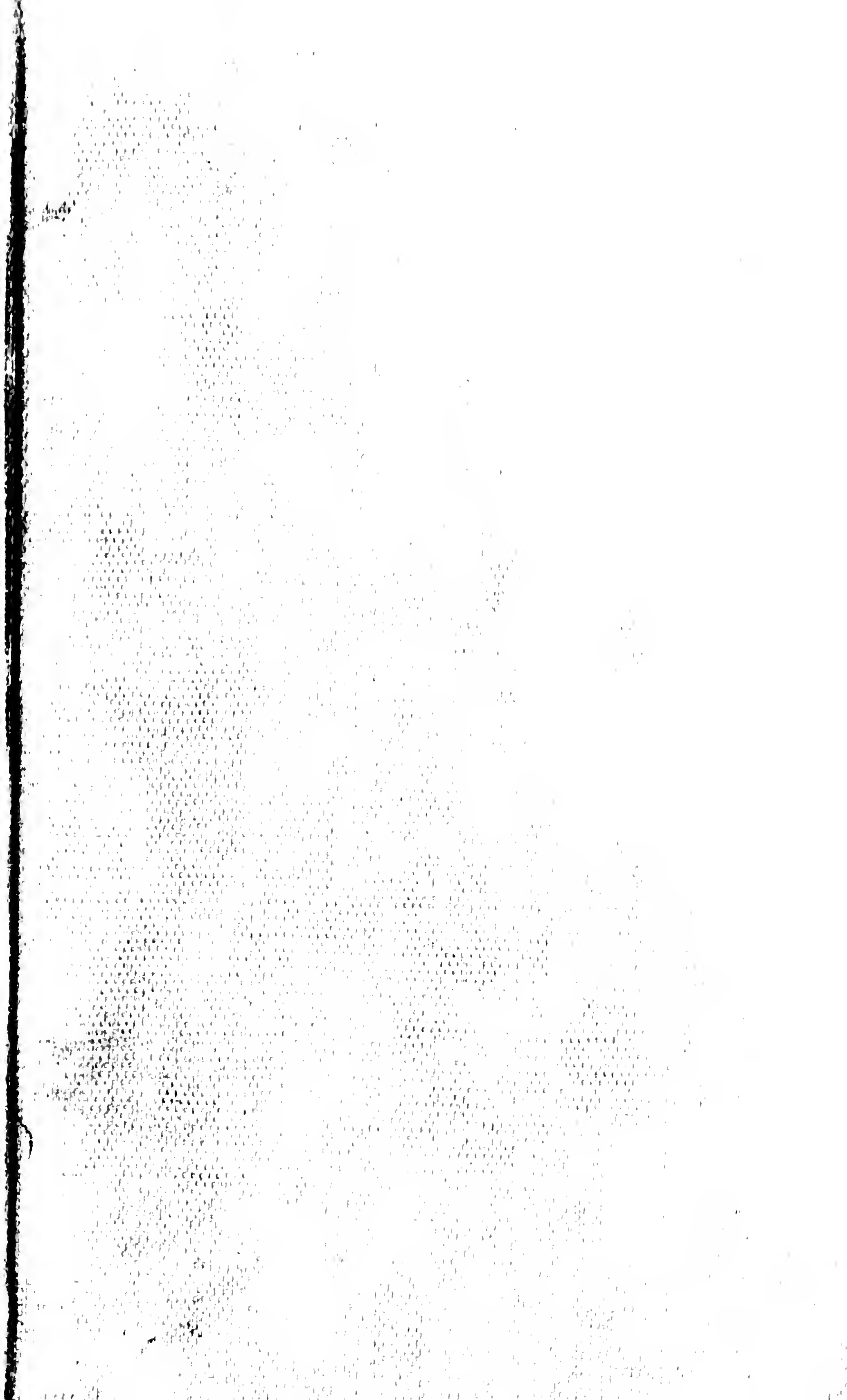

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G P O

The House of Worship

A COUNTRY PARISH

ANCIENT PARSONS AND MODERN INCIDENTS

BY

FRANK SAMUEL CHILD

Author of "*An Old New England Town,*" "*An Unknown Patriot,*" etc.

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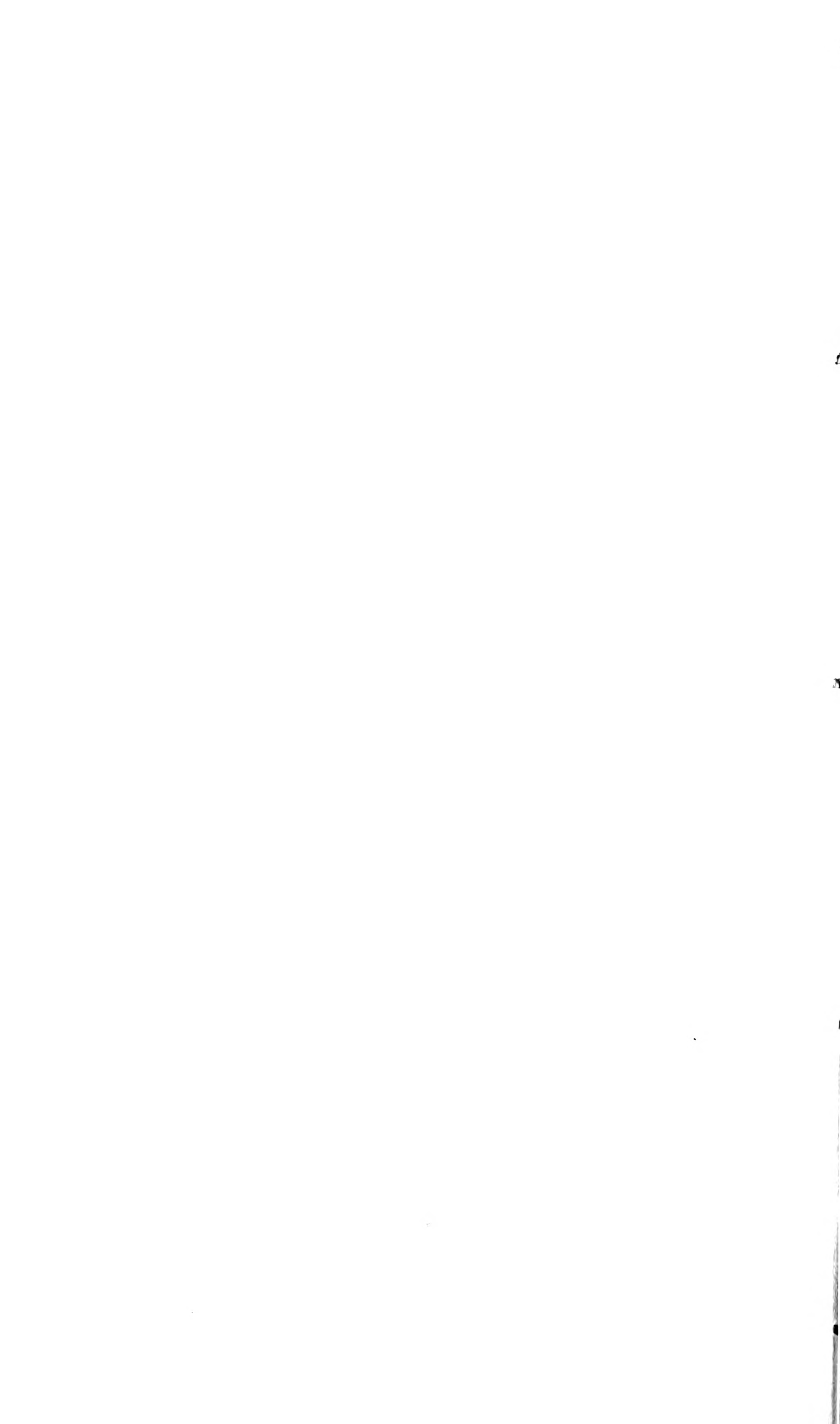
TO

MY FRIEND

J. SANFORD SALTUS



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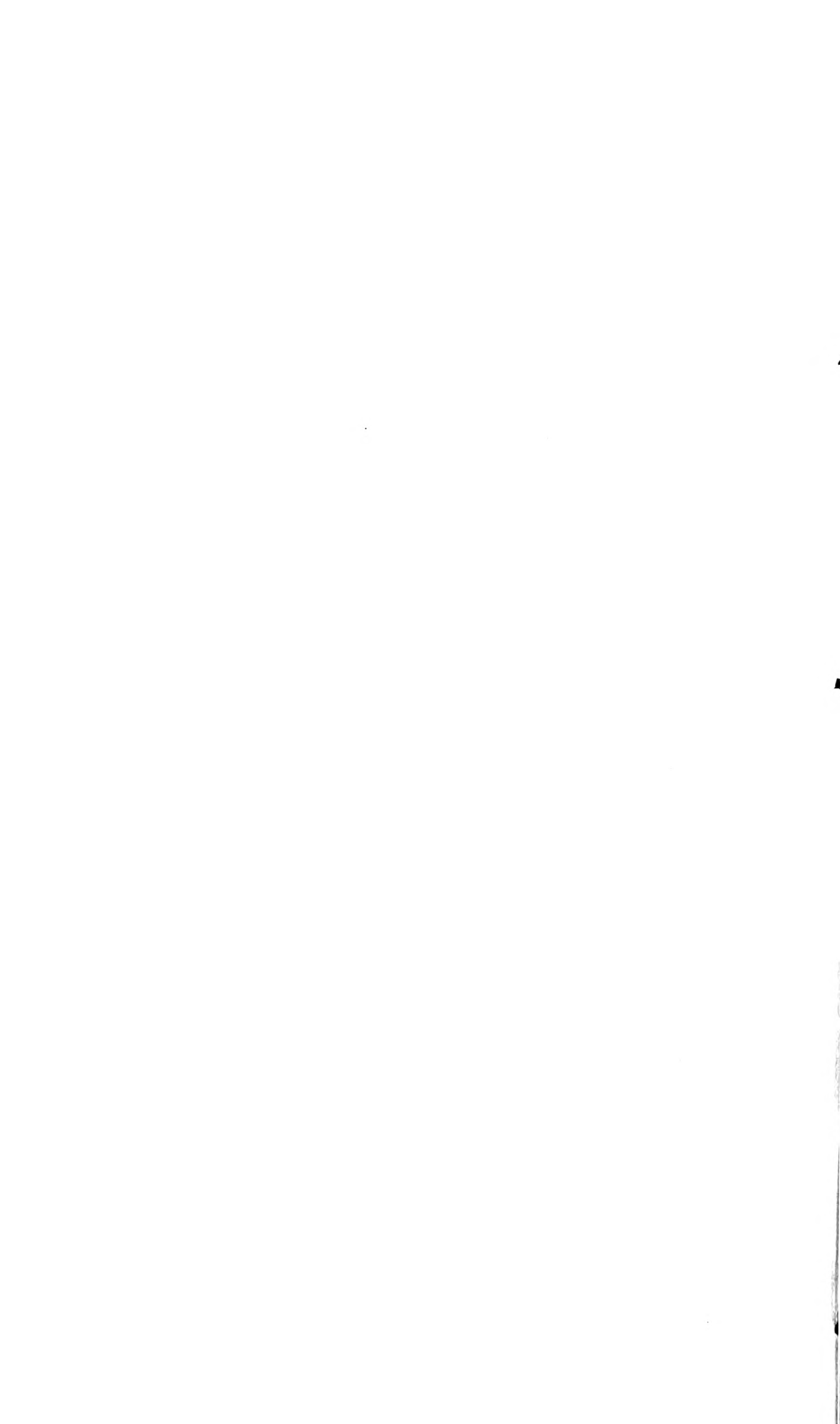

FOREWORD

At a recent convention of Christian workers representing churches in city and country, the request was made that those who were born and bred in rural districts rise. The members stood upon their feet almost to a man. "It is evident," said the speaker, "that unless the country church is revived, our church will die out in the next generation."

This book does not attempt to solve the problem of the country church. A loyal son whose ancestors long flourished in this parish has placed some exquisite jewel glass in the House of Worship—a commemoration of the first six ministers who served our people. This praiseworthy act has made occasion for the writer to adventure into the past and meet these old-time parsons and their friends in a social way. Such adventure has not only quickened a profound appreciation of the men and their mission, but it has likewise kindled a

genuine enthusiasm for the country parish—its opportunities, its fascinations, its insistent obligations. The discursive pages which follow, picture life—a parson's life—in a typical New England parish dating back to pioneer days. The outcome of faithful generations—the fruit of earnest, consecrated labors—is perpetuated today by the service of men eminent in the great field of public action as well as by the places and institutions that adorn the venerable parish which cherishes the memory of these honored people. There are many country parishes whose record of service will prove to be an inspiration. May the reader catch something of the spirit which has revealed itself in happy devotion to the life which enriches these great fields of promise.

F. S. C.

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A COUNTRY PARISH

I

LAND AND SEA

In the order of this quiet narrative, I must give first place to a description of the parish which makes the setting of these pictures.

The Prime Ancient Society was a name given by our Puritan forefathers to many of these early parishes, a name dignified and historic, speaking straight to the imagination. Primacy, antiquity—on this "rock-bound coast"—the glamour of sentiment is evoked and fancy throws pictures athwart the vision. Quaint costumes, staid manners, sober looks, a formal style of address, log cabins, endless forests, little fields of Indian corn, the squat, crude meeting-house, long prayers and longer sermons, the shrill cry of the panther and the blood-curdling war whoop of the Indian, wilderness struggles and triumphs—these are things which the

conjuror brings vividly before us by the strange magic of a few words.

When Roger Ludlow settled our town in 1639, there was no preacher immediately available, but John Jones came to the Prime Ancient Society in 1644 and stayed until death parted him from the parish; the four succeeding ministers served a life period, each dying in the harness—the sum total of their pastoral years attaining the number one hundred and sixty-one.

They were stalwart hearts—the first settlers, men of considerable substance, more than a fair degree of education—sincere and earnest in their convictions—like Abram lifting up their eyes to fair prospects, responsive to the high demands of circumstances, purposeful, self-reliant and obedient to the heavenly vision. The parish soon assumed a character reflecting the spirit, manhood, service of these worthy, unique pioneers.

* * * * *

For many years Fairfield was the shire town, an attractive center of social activity, third or fourth in relative importance among the early settlements of the

colony. Law, trade, fishery, commerce, farming, manufactures throve apace, and then one day the drift set in other directions; there was a better harbor five miles to the east and in 1779 a calamitous fire, the scathe and fury of British assault, swept over the village, devouring every kind of structure, leaving less than half a dozen homes unconsumed. It was many years before the little county capital regained anything like its former prosperity and by that time a lively, industrious, enterprising city had grown up by its side which a few years later claimed the court, the county buildings and all the galaxy of legal luminaries accustomed to shine in the small firmament of local fame. So the prestige and importance of the place waned and the days of glory seemed at an end.

It is the same story of change repeated in many a New England town. Business, social life and higher institutions of learning gravitate to the city. The village struggles to hold its own for a few years and then resigns itself to a sort of living on the past—an atmosphere of antique gentility perchance still lingering in the neighborhood, or more likely the neighborhood

assumes an aspect of decadence, the original settlers chiefly remembered by some name given to a crossroads, a schoolhouse, a hill-top highway, or other old landmark.

There were other changes which made serious drain upon the Prime Ancient Society. Five daughter churches swarmed from the mother hive, and each swarming caused many a heartache, for they not only weakened the home parish but parted families asunder, broke up old-time intimate Sabbath fraternization, created new interests and something of rivalry, and pointed to the fact that the dear, venerable town might soon become an anachronism.

This atmosphere of disheartening transition necessarily fostered a spirit of unrest among the young men. They were driven west to seek their fortune or they brought up in the nearby metropolis where opportunity greeted them with open hand.

We must not forget, however, one favorable, mitigating sign of the times. The ambitious boys who launched their little crafts upon the open sea of adventure a generation gone or more recall the sweet, bright days of youth. Some snatch of song, a long-treasured memento of school

days, the picture of an old homestead, a happy family reunion revives the past, awakens a great, surging love of the streets, the trees, Beach Lane, Round Hill, the village Green, the fitful waves chasing each other along the sinuous sea-shore, and then comes a glad return, the homestead is restored, acres upon acres are added to the estate, a freshened interest in town and state and in church and society bursts into flame. The generous prospered patriot builds new macadam roads and presents them to the public, erects a monumental high-school building, drains the ponds and the marshes, puts up a noble library edifice, adorns the Green with a beautiful fountain,—does any of a hundred things which signify loyalty to precious memories and an inspiration to coming ages.

A host of generous, noble men and women are giving love and treasure in this restoration of many a New England town—imparting fresh hope and courage to struggling workmen, planting the seeds of a vigorous, fruitful intelligence, contributing untold spiritual wealth to the country parish. May the host increase!

May their good deeds be like the sands upon our shores for number!

* * * * *

On the crest of the beach is a little copse —a half acre of scraggy plum trees, choke cherries and mixed wild shrubbery, haunted by brown threshers in May time. The songsters play hide and seek amid the fresh, green foliage—perching now and again on certain favorite boughs—delicious melodies gushing from their throats with sweet and enviable spontaneity, an overflow of care-free, joyous life.

The man who cherishes the friendship of Nature is always winning some, tender, significant refrain borne to him on the wings of the wind as he lingers along the sands, rests under the shade of the trees or climbs the mountain trail or flings himself flat upon the lush young grass. Nature is songful and enchanting—the air is filled with strains of music infinitely varied, woven into perfect harmony by the brooding Spirit.

Happy the man who living in the country lives up to his matchless privileges. The time comes when he awakens to a profound sense of ministering grace in sun-

shine and trees, glorious clouds, jubilant birds and merry crickets, restful verdure of fields, endless patches of flowers and resounding sea.

The friendship of men does not necessarily find its most congenial soil in country life. Love flourishes amid all ranks, places and conditions for "love is the life of men." But there is something in rural atmosphere—its frankness, leisure and invigoration—something in the amplitude and serenity of fields and woods, wide, shaded streets and witchery of pleasant associations which works upon mind and heart so that one gets close to his fellow, the inmost spirit gives intimations of its character; and if affinity exists friendship bursts into bloom and freights the air with fragrance.

"A friend is worth all hazards we can run." And these noble intimacies are tenderly fostered by the kindly moods and sweet uplifting offices of Nature. What hours of heart interchange came to David and Jonathan in the gladness and liberty of the "open fields." How trees, flowers, birds—the placid lake and the encompassing hills enriched the friendship of Wordsworth and his sister, Coleridge and Southey

—the little circle of Lake poets! Is it true —as Emerson says—that friendship "requires more time than poor busy man can usually command"? Let us retire into the quiet and simplicity of rural life, be friends and make friends!

It is also granted the country parson to take the elect books of all ages into the chosen, quiet realm of rural sojourn and there live the life of an exalted spirit in constant fraternity with the good and the great—Moses, Job, David, John, Paul, makers of Old Testament and New Testament literature— Homer, Æschylus, Plato and the builders of Greek letters—Virgil, Plutarch, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton and their noble peers. Is he not cultivated and well-equipped who daily adds to his school training the enrichment and inspiration afforded by these wise and immortal leaders? What matters it that he does not put upon his study table the endless succession of new books—the tiresome number of latest periodicals! He has all the more time to converse with the chosen and faithful comrades who guide to the loftiest heights.

"The true end of learning," says Milton, "is to repair the ruin of our first parents

by regaining to know God." So the friendship of books comes into life—a friendship whose praises cannot be sung too often or too long. "There is a priceless grandeur in every human being," says Frederick Maurice. Literature "seeks to awaken the sense of it." The country presents quiet and leisure for study, meditation and loving familiarity with the masters.

And this vital, enfranchising friendship with books, which may be cultivated to the heart's content by the worker who orders his hours of labor in the largeness of rural freedom, enables one to fill his storehouse with the vast wisdom riches of all time and walk in perpetual goodly company through every highway and byway of the land.

"What thou seest," says Carlyle, "is not there on its own account; strictly speaking is not there at all. Matter exists only spiritually and to represent some idea and body it forth." A deepened consciousness of the Unseen Presence is our heritage. In the volume of Lowell's Letters the poet describes one of these supreme evidential experiences: "I never before so clearly felt the Spirit of God in me and around me. The air seemed to

waver to and fro with the presence of Something I knew not what."

But these experiences do not come in crowded streets or the mad rush of the strenuous career. The friendship of the All-Father is best cultivated apart from the search and curiosity of men. The Master withdrew how many times into the privacy of hillside and wilderness that he might find himself and God. Has not Sidney Lanier put it into exquisite verse?

"Into the woods my Master went
Clean forespent, forespent.
Into the woods my Master came
Forespent with love and shame.
But the olives, they were not blind to Him,
The little gray leaves were kind to Him,
The thorn tree had a mind to Him
When into the woods He came."

"Out of the woods my Master went,
And He was well content.
Out of the woods my Master came
Content with death and shame.
When death and shame would woo Him last
From under the trees they drew Him last
'T was on a tree they slew Him last
When out of the woods He came."

Life in Ur of the Chaldees did not conduce to the higher knowledge—the knowledge of the Eternal—so Abram went forth

a pilgrim to live in the magnificent open and sleep beneath the tell-tale stars and learn the mysteries of the Unseen through the Voices that sounded sweet and clear from pasture-lands, mountain-tops and adown the valleys.

Driving tasks, the fret of innumerable duties, the pressure of public burden and private demand not only sap vitality but reduce hours to petty, disjointed fragments.

"Come apart into a desert place and rest awhile." This means a cultivation of the higher friendships; and the country with its beauty, spaciousness and manifold parables of life—the country with its manifest presence of the living, reigning God—recent science "positively affirms creative power and makes one feel a miracle in himself" says Lord Kelvin—the country with its fruitful leisure and alluring opportunities, speaks to the sensitive spirit hopefully, inspiringly in respect to the great friendships which dignify and perfect man.

So the mind's eye sees a quiet home embowered in vines, trees, shrubbery and a lawn restful and alluring with its velvet turf and old-fashioned flowers. The garden lies half hidden behind the privet hedge that sets it in luxuriant framing at

the rear. There is a bit of pasture and meadow with orchard extending down a gentle slope. All the domestic activities prosper amid favorable surroundings. The low of cattle, a drowsy hum of bees, children's voices and the infinite medley of summer days—the sound of hoe or scythe, the singing of birds, blithe speech of winds in restless trees and merry chatter of familiar squirrels peeping down from rank foliage—the mind's eye holds the picture and a sense of tranquillity possesses the soul.

Mill River Ford

II

THE FIRST PARSON IN TOWN

THE Reverend John Jones, first minister of the Prime Ancient Society in Fairfield, was one of the Puritan brethren "harried" out of the mother country by Archbishop Laud. He sailed from Gravesend August 10th, 1635, in the ship Defence, among his fellow-passengers being three other Church of England clergymen driven from their benefices. The Reverend Thomas Shepard was settled over the church at Cambridge.

> "His name and office sweetly did agree,
> Shepard by name and in his ministry."

The Reverend John Wilson was the second comrade in exile. He organized the church at Charlestown and later associated with John Cotton as Teacher in the church at Boston. It was he who, in the heat of political discussion when Winthrop was candidate for governor, climbed a tree and earnestly urged the people to vote for his friend and fellow-laborer. The third cleri-

cal exile accompanying Mr. Jones was the Reverend Hugh Peters who took charge of the Salem church for a brief period and then returned to England to pursue a remarkable career in the army of Parliament. At Cromwell's funeral he walked beside the honored poet John Milton. He was arrested for complicity in the death of Charles I, condemned, executed, and his head set upon a pole on London Bridge.

Doubtless these men engaged in much learned discourse during their voyage to the new world and encouraged each other with high hopes and bright prophecies.

Mr. Jones with a company of friends adventured into the wilderness as far as Concord, where he assisted Reverend Peter Bulkley in the pastoral care of the first church—being set apart by re-ordination with his colleague to this new work. But a restless spirit possessed him, and after a few years' activity among the brethren of Concord he gathered his friends about him and migrated into the wilderness, arriving at Fairfield in the season of 1644. A letter which he wrote to his good friend, the Worshipful Mr. John Winthrop, dated March 5th, 1646–47, shows that restlessness still possessed him:

"Sr, Yors of Feb. 22 I received, being very sorrye yt my absence from home at ye time when yor messenger came hither, hath deprived of soe fit an opportunity of returning an answeare. I perceue by yt letter yt Adam, ye Indian hath informed yow how ye case stands with me. And indeed I, despairing of a convenient passage vnto yow before spring, did engage myself to keepe a lecture here vntill ye season of ye yeare would permit me to remouve soe that my engagements here being ended with the winter, it is my desire & full resolution, if God permit, to take ye first opportunity of coming to yow, either by land or water. For other passages in yr letter, I hope to answeare them by word of mouth shortly. In ye meantime, I desire yr praires for ye guidance of heawen, & with my seruise & respects being duly rendered to yraelfe & Mrs. Winthrope, with love to al ye little ones & little Margaret, I remaine

Yors in all observance

JOHN JOANES"

It appears that Mr. Jones was inclined to visit his friend the Worshipful John Winthrop and possibly make his permanent abode at Pequot or in that neighborhood. But the need of service in Fairfield pressed heavily upon his heart, temporalities were satisfactorily adjusted and Mr. Jones remained in this parish to the day of his death.

It is not difficult to draw a pen-portrait of this man, although the material is scant.

We see first the young student coming up from his beloved Wales to attend the University. He will prepare himself for

high service as a scholar and clergyman, following the example of his reverend father, his fountain head of spiritual impulse. The work finished at Jesus College Oxford, he is Episcopally ordained to the ministry. The questioning mind, however, breeds dissent, controversy, antagonism in respect to the established order. The young scholar is caught in the swirl of opposition and non-conformity. Conscience will not allow him to obey the commands of his bishop. He casts in his lot with the men who seek to purify the methods and practices of the church. He is driven from home, friends, native land, and made to brave the sea, the wilderness and pioneer deprivation.

We must remember that Mr. Jones and many of his compatriots loved the Church of England. They were children of a mother most dear and precious. The break between mother church and these devout children was one of the saddest and most pathetic incidents in the history of our religion. Viewed in the light of these times—when divergences of opinion are frankly tolerated and respected, when diversities of method occasion friendly comment, viewed in the light of these later times

such a break and conflict evokes sorrow and amazement inexpressible. Why should these devout, high-minded churchmen become the objects of such assault? Why did this spirit of unwonted cruelty and harshness strike them? Alas for our poor, human nature, blind, proud, self-willed, opinionated, using religion itself as a channel for passionate speech and action! The break ought never to have occurred—the children should never have been driven from mother church—kindliness, tolerance, charity and all Christian forbearance might have reigned in the hearts of all concerned and the world saved from much bitterness, misery, anguish and desolation. But the king and the church did persecute these non-conforming Puritans and Separatists. And these harried champions of a pure faith bade a mournful farewell to loved, familiar scenes and adventured into a hostile wilderness beyond the sea.

The exchange of the old for the new was one of those great transitional movements whose meaning and importance time alone reveals.

The associates of Mr. Jones were people of culture and standing. Many of them had graduated at Oxford or Cambridge.

They brought with them books, precious mementoes and souvenirs of gentility, the impulses and aspirations of the best English society. Ludlow the founder of Fairfield was one of the most intelligent and cultivated men—a lawyer of great merit, a scholar in jurisprudence, aggressive, adventurous, masterful. He had gathered into his company a goodly number of congenial people, moved by a like spirit of lofty purpose and noble hopefulness.

We think of these men and women as separated from the sweet intercourse of high-toned English fellowship—as shut away from university privileges and the means of education and refinement peculiar to old England; but let us not forget that they brought with them the fruits of such life and that their associations among themselves conserved that spirit which bloomed in the form of Harvard College, the common school, the grammar school, and the Christian Church with its open Bible and learned ministry. Theology, literature, history (the adventures of Captain Cook and John Smith) the science of the day, the ordinary practises and observations of men skilled in farming, navigation, mechanics—these and kindred things

were familiar to them. It was a community of select and high grade ability, all the evidences of worth, station, property, culture manifesting themselves on every side.

But it was a narrow life which these people were forced to live. Governor Ludlow might discuss the problems suggested by the new Code which he prepared for the little colony of Connecticut, the Rev. Thomas Hooker and Mr. John Winthrop might advise with Mr. Jones upon the questions which agitated the Cambridge Synod, Major Gold might contrast the tone of John Milton's poetry with that of William Shakespeare, Cotton Mather's prolific pen might invite frequent comment in the neighborhood, comets, storms, Indian assault and Dutch annoyance might serve as perpetual topics of conversation so that society would never stagnate—nevertheless the life was inevitably restricted, and a man of leadership, education, exalted ideals like Mr. Jones revealed a grand spirit of self-sacrifice, a fine, true spirit of loyalty to principle in committing himself to the upbuilding of church and people.

Communication with the river settlements, with New Haven, Stamford and

Boston was not frequent, but mail and messengers passed back and forth with sufficient frequency to unify the life in respect to religion, self-defense and social fraternity. Mr. Jones entered heartily into the customary pursuits and obligations. He was a farmer by virtue of the town grant of land,—the parsonage settlement and glebe being one portion of this grant. He was foremost in organization and oversight of the school. All local problems and conditions shared his thought.

His intimacy with Roger Ludlow reminds us of the trials to which the impulsive, irascible, learned statesman was subjected. At threescore and four years of age Ludlow withdrew from the scene of his arduous, pioneer struggles and returned to his native land. He was a kinsman of Sir Edmund Ludlow—at one time Lieutenant-General of Cromwell's forces in Ireland. In 1654 he was appointed with other eminent lawyers to serve on a commission "to determine all claims in and to forfeited lands in Ireland." The Ludlow family were friends of Cromwell and doubtless Roger Ludlow was invited to return to his home country by the Lord Protector with the hope that he might render eminent service to the

cause. Cromwell desired to bring back many New England emigrants and establish them in Ireland. It is remarkable that so few responded to the overtures of the great leader.

Ludlow, it will be remembered, did not leave Fairfield under the most agreeable circumstances. The suit for defamation of Mrs. Staples' character was impending at the time of his departure.

Goody Knapp had been executed for witchcraft in 1653. In the suit against Ludlow it came out that Goody Knapp had told him that "Goodwife Staples was a witch." He repeated this accusation confidentially to Rev. John Davenport and wife of New Haven and like numerous other confidences reposed in people it was scattered broadcast. The charge against Ludlow was to the effect that Mrs. Staples "had laid herself under new suspicion of being a witch," that "she had gone on in a tract of lying." The judges found against him and imposed a fine of ten pounds "by way of fine for reparation" with five pounds additional for "trouble and charge in following the suit."

Mrs. Staples was indicted for witchcraft several years later with various other un-

popular members of the community. Both Mistress Knapp and Mistress Staples had the sympathy and pastoral instruction of Mr. Jones. Like Governor Ludlow and many fellow citizens the shepherd of the flock was a believer in this strange delusion, albeit his kindness of heart and liberality of faith prompted him to do what lay in his power for the mitigation of the terror which prevailed. One of the severest trials in Mr. Jones' ministry came when Goody Knapp was convicted of witchcraft and sentenced to be hanged. It fell to his lot to minister consolation to her in the last days and to prepare her for death. It is sad reading, the testimony given in the case. So far as we are able to judge, this woman merited the compassion and forbearance of people. When pressed to reveal any knowledge of witch-work in the community, the popular mind being directed toward Mistress Staples, Goody Knapp had replied that she "must not say anything which is not true," she "must not wrong anybody." Her spirit flamed with indignation when on the way to the scaffold some one shouted to her that the devil would have her quick if she didn't reveal what she knew. "Take heed," was her reply, "the devil have

not you, I cannot tell how soon you may be my companion."

Poor, storm-tossed souls, weary, frightened, harassed, pinched with the poverty caused by small crops and much sickness, taught by superstitious Europe and pagan America that witches killed cattle and blighted harvests and crippled or destroyed unfortunate people, what tragical conditions prevailed and how difficult it was to breast the current of common fear and prejudice!

There are few personal glimpses given of Mr. Jones, but the pen-portrait is distinct and lifelike. A pioneer with all the faith, earnestness and bravery of the typical Puritan minister, he was domestic in his taste and blessed with six children who attained maturity, the two sons becoming faithful and beloved preachers. A learned and thoughtful man with a scholar's reverence for books, charitable and sympathetic in watchcare over the people, rugged, workful, respected, he commanded the good-will and confidence of townsmen and the universal esteem of his colonial coworkers throughout New England. Governors, ministers, teachers—the elect of the land were his intimate friends. In May,

1662, it was recommended by the General Court that the people of Fairfield engage an assistant for "their reverend and ancient minister, Mr. Jones."

I suspect that there were not infrequent interruptions to the even tenor of his life on the edge of the town green. Almost in front of his house, diagonally across the sward stood the stocks and the whipping post—instruments of punishment put to service "without fear or favor."

On the left of the parsonage property there was a pond, long known as the witch pond; for in this small body of water more than one person accused of consorting with the Blackman had been thrown by way of trial. It was here that Mercy Desborough and Elizabeth Clawson were subjected to the ordeal by water—a sinking the indication of innocence, a floating the indication of guilt. It is said in respect to these two unfortunate women that "they buoyed up like cork"—conclusive evidence that they belonged to the witch fraternity. At the rear of Mr. Jones' homestead there extended a wolf-infested marshy piece of wilderness. Black bears, wild-cats and Indians likewise emerged on occasion from the ghostly recesses of this dark, mysterious region.

It was even claimed that the witches made a rendezvous of the place and there hatched their nefarious mischief for the community.

It required much faith and prayer on the part of the worthy pioneer to exorcise his particular domain and create a healthy, spiritual atmosphere such as was mete for a Christian minister and his people.

The rugged, hopeful adventurer, "being weak of body but of perfect memory," having crossed the line of threescore years and ten, laid him down to rest in 1664, dividing his considerable property equitably among the members of his family and leaving to his people a heritage of honest, loyal service in behalf of colony and kingdom.

III

A LOVER OF MEN AND BOOKS

It was during the period of Mr. Jones' physical decline that his friend Governor John Winthrop made his remarkable voyage to England; he there obtained from King Charles II the democratic Charter which gave Connecticut a government lasting until the adoption of the new constitution in 1818. The wise, courteous Winthrop—the diplomatic, cultivated Winthrop—the handsome, tactful Winthrop won a great victory and put the colony of Connecticut under peculiar obligations by this eventful service. The little republic—for Connecticut was practically a republic—enjoyed rare liberty of thought and freedom of action politically.

Meanwhile one of her young men had been pursuing his studies at college preparatory to such field as Providence might indicate. In 1655 several students made trouble at Harvard in respect to the length of time required for residence at the college in order to obtain the Bachelor of Arts

degree, so that, as Sibley records it, "though they were accounted as good as any before them" they went off "and never took any degree at all." The historian continues—"There were at least five of them who after made a very shining Figure in New England viz.: Gov. Josiah Winslow, the Rev. Mr. Samuel Torrey, the Rev. Mr. Ichabod Wiswell of Duxbury, agent for the Plymouth Colony at the Court of England upon the Revolution, the Rev. Mr. Samuel Wakeman of Fairfield, and the Rev. Mr. Brinsmead of Marlborough, who would all have been a great honor to our Harvard Catalogue."

Samuel Wakeman was New Haven born, son of John, a prosperous adventurer and descendant of a long line of honorable English gentry.

The will of John Wakeman, on file in the probate office of Hartford, has a passage worth quoting: "First, I commend my soul into the hands of my Lord Jesus Christ my redeemer, trusting to be saved by his merits and intercession, and my body to be buried at the discretion of my executors and friends, in hope of a joyful resurrection; testifying my thankfulness for the free manifestion of his grace to me

in Christ, and for the liberty and fellowship vouchsafed me with his people in his ordinances in a Congregational way, which I take to be the way of Christ, orderly walked in according to his rules; but I do testify against absolute independency of churches, and perfection of any in light or acting, and against compulsion of conscience to concur with the church without inward satisfaction to conscience, and persecuting such as dissent upon this ground, which I take to be an abuse of the power given for edification by Christ who is only Lord of the Conscience."

Here is manifest a spirit of toleration and largeness of sympathy worthy of the twentieth century. And this Puritan adventurer is unconscious prophet of that broader and better organized Congregationalism which the present generation aims to achieve.

The son Samuel, inheriting his father's eagerness for knowledge and love of truth—stimulated likewise by the vigorous intellectual life of his mother, a daughter of Deputy-Governor Goodyear—struck into the wilderness path for Cambridge when he obtained proper equipment. They were long journeys back and forth between

New Haven and Harvard College but he resolutely braved Indians, wild beasts and all perils of travel.

There is a sense in which it proved no disadvantage to Mr. Wakeman that he failed to get his degree at Harvard. Business opened to him and he developed a thriftiness and practicality which served admirably in his later administration of affairs. He took "the oath of fidelity" February 7, 1657—a fact recorded in the New Haven Colony Records. During these preparation years, while attending to business, books were by no means neglected. A scholar as well as a man of business, he learned to combine happily meditation and enterprise, theology and trade.

His reputation as a young man of excellent scholarship and rare administrative abilities was known to the people of Fairfield. They considered themselves fortunate to find a successor to Mr. Jones so well equipped and so popular. He entered upon his work in the parish the 30th of September, 1655.

A man of kindly disposition, tolerant of others' opinions, seeking the things which make for peace, he found himself

in a position which afforded him rare opportunity to exercise his peculiar gifts. Now and again the people of the town and the colony chose him as their counsellor—their referee—their commissioner. In ecclesiastical matters and civil matters he acted a conspicuous part, bearing himself with discretion and dignity, discharging his various offices with satisfaction to private individuals and public institutions. When in 1668 the General Court requested several conspicuous and dependable ministers to meet together "to consider of some expedient for our peace, by searching out the rule and thereby clearing up how far the churches and people may walk together within themselves and at one with another in the fellowship and order of the Gospel, notwithstanding some various apprehensions among them in matters of discipline respecting membership and baptism," Mr. Wakeman was chosen as one member of this important commission and rendered acceptable service on the occasion.

The first urgent and hearty religious zeal of the colonial planters had waned. Many of the original settlers had passed to their reward, their places being filled by sons who never knew the hardships of

persecution in the mother country. The inevitable reaction had set in, and spiritual life drooped. The election sermon preached on May 14th in Hartford by Mr. Wakeman shows the temperature of religion during this period. "Sound Repentance the Right Way to escape deserved Ruin" was his subject and the long discourse is addressed to the conditions of moral decadence which prevailed throughout New England. Mr. Wakeman had become "exceeding tremendously suspicious" that "christian defections and rampant, colonial sins" would invite the scourge of the Almighty to visit them. "New England's name hath been much set by; much more than now New England's credit and repute is brought many pegs lower." The courteous vote of thanks offered by the General Court for this frank and soul-stirring rebuke to the spirit of the times might awaken in us the hope that something was done to save the colony from its threatened plunge into immorality and irreligion.

A close view of the social life in the Connecticut of Mr. Wakeman's day discloses perplexing conditions. There was not only the reaction from early enthu-

siasm, hopefulness and agitation over the theological and ecclesiastical problems of the day, but there were King Philip's war with its attendant perils, the sharp contest in respect to the Charter granted by King Charles II, and the attempted wrenching of her liberties from the democratic people of the colony. There were seasons of great depression—seasons when a failure of crops moved the people to fast and pray—seasons when violent fevers raged up and down the coast. The text of Mr. Wakeman's Election sermon seems quite appropriate for the times. "Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee; lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited." (Jer. vi: 8.)

The generous, kindly spirit of Mr. Wakeman was finely illustrated in his attitude toward the people in the eastern part of the town when they desired to swarm and build another meeting-house. The majority of Fairfield citizens opposed this movement for separation. It would increase their taxes. But Mr. Wakeman believed that it was for the moral and intellectual improvement of people near the Pequonnock to organize a new parish and institute the ordinances of religion in that part

of the town. This characteristic spirit of liberality and good-will made perpetual exhibition of itself and won for him a wide regard.

The town in a bestowment of various grants and gifts evinced its cordial appreciation of Mr. Wakeman's services. And the industrious, far-sighted minister managed his property with such shrewdness that he became one of the most prosperous citizens of the vicinage.

The inventory of his estate is an interesting document. A thousand pounds—the appraisal made by Thomas Hill, Nathan Gold, Jr., and Eliphalet Hill—constituted a very considerable heritage. There were swamp lands, pasture lots, wood lands, wolf swamp, Sasco fields, Round Hill acres, interest in the commons, the homestead lot with buildings, wheat lands, and several meadows—which shows that the minister was much engaged in farming. He had fifty sheep, numerous cattle, horses, pigs and bees. Tallow, honey, flax, shingles, corn, malt, wheat, tow yarn and homespun linen are reckoned among the items. The usual farm tools and carpenter's outfit had a place. Pots, kettles, kitchen utensils, elaborate bed-

room fixings, one set valued at thirteen pounds, looking-glasses, chests, parlor furniture, much pewter, numerous chairs and tables, table-linen and bedding with various necessary furnishings for comfort and elegance—these things are all carefully enumerated and appraised. The wearing-apparel had evidently been well worn; no waste or extravagance in this department, although it was put at eleven pounds!

The item which seems most significant these days was the item of books. Literature was a luxury. The home which possessed half a dozen volumes gained distinction. When a will or inventory used the word library it meant that here was an individual who had accumulated a large collection of valuable and standard works. The appraisal of this notable library was an important matter and Mr. Hanford, Mr. Walker and Mr. Chauncey—men associated with Mr. Wakeman in service—were asked to estimate their worth. Between fifty and sixty pounds was a very large sum to spend on books; but this was the appraisal, frank testimony to the culture and scholarship of the revered man.

I have no doubt that many of these books passed freely among the brethren of western Connecticut. Mr. Hanford would fasten a plump volume to his saddle or slip it into a capacious pocket and follow the shore road to Norwalk, resting a little under the shade of a tree and improving the moment by reading a few pages of Milton or Mather or some other Puritan writer. Mr. Chauncey, in whose veins flowed the blood of scholars, must often have borrowed the precious treasures which he had the privilege of appraising. The fact that he loved books and these particular books must have given him a sort of heartache when engaged in this friendly examination. The library of Mr. Wakeman, one of the largest in New England, was willed to his son Jabesh, a book-loving member of the family, who was "to be brought up in learning," and sent to college. A Bible was willed to each child.

The good man gave his Indian servant, Jane, her liberty with five pounds in money. There was also a bequest to the Grammar school and one of three pounds to Captain John Burr for the purchase of a silver bowl to be presented to the church; this precious piece of silver continues to serve its sacred

purposes in the communion of the Lord's supper.

An efficient and well beloved minister, Mr. Wakeman guided the parish through various difficulties, making a happy record of genial, prosperous, beneficent citizenship. It was creditable to be a successful farmer. His fame as general administrator extended far and wide. He attained enviable reputation as a collector of books. As friend, companion, adviser there were few men in the colony who stood higher in public regard. But his chief honor, delight and accomplishment was in the sphere of pastoral service; he was an all-around man who knew his people, who taught, lived and illustrated the "Good-News" of the kingdom.

IV

ONE OF THE TEN TO FOUND A COLLEGE

The Fairfield Historical Society preserves among its valuable papers the sermon preached by the Rev. Joseph Webb on the Sunday following the death of Major Nathan Gold. It is a commemorative discourse although the name of the "Eminent and Worshipful" citizen is not mentioned and the sermon contains no biographical sketch of the gentleman.

Mr. Webb expatiated upon "The Social Values of Character." The sermon was long—extraordinarily long—so that it was divided into two parts. The First Doctrine as it was termed filled the morning hours of worship. This was on the fourth of March, 1694. At the conclusion of this morning service the congregation withdrew to their nearby homes or to the little Sabbath day houses which stood near the meeting-house. Having warmed themselves and eaten their frugal mid-day lunch, the congregation returned to the meeting-house and listened attentively to the

Second Doctrine which extended into the late afternoon.

When Major Gold was buried the minister conducted no religious service over his body—the prevailing custom of the parish. Summoned by the sound of horn, friends gathered at the home of the deceased, placed the coffin with its heavy pall upon the common bier and then marched solemnly to the place of burial. It was a dumb, cold farewell. Why should prayers be used for the dead or over the dead, inquired our protesting ancestors? Whatever religious ceremony was associated with such an event naturally came on the Lord's Day. But even then the minister was chary of eulogistic words—the lesson of a life being set forth preferably by inference and impersonal instruction.

So this ancient manuscript, written upon small sheets of yellow paper, closely written so that the reader was obliged to hold the paper high in hand, compactly written since paper was a rare and expensive commodity—this ancient manuscript with its clear, regular, handsome penmanship introduces its author, the third pastor of the Prime Ancient Society—a man in the vigor and hopefulness of his early, happy

labors. If that fourth day of March was like the average March weather of colonial winters, the footstoves and the hot round cobblestones must have been especially welcome to the shivering women and children.

The young man who pronounced this suggestive discourse proved by its delivery that he was a minister of excellent promise. The sermon has peculiar value for the later generations in that it emphasizes the worth of Mr. Webb and Major Nathan Gold and at the same time is a sort of window through which we gaze upon scenes passing before us two hundred years ago.

The Webb family held an honorable position in the colony of Massachusetts. This branch of the old stock did not possess any large abundance of worldly gear so that when Joseph entered Harvard at the early age of fourteen, he matriculated with the expectation that the institution would remit a portion of his bills. The boy was a lively lad and living in the neighborhood of Boston he had seen something of life and had imbibed ideas that seemed "advanced" for those staid times. In return for the help or pension granted him, the boy promised to do certain work connected

with the institution—a fair exchange under the circumstances.

Remember that he was only a stripling of fifteen in his sophomore year—in the sophomore year when boys come into a certain enviable self-importance and assertive leadership. Remember that he was not a puny, spiritless, inoffensive lad, but a fellow of fire and passion, eager, boisterous, irrepressible with a predilection for fun and frolic, noisy and sometimes mischievous. So trouble beset him. For he showed an exacting and vexatious spirit toward the freshmen. The unfortunate boy who did fag service for Webb—they followed the English practises and had fags, those days in Cambridge—did not please his master, who poured out vials of wrath upon the subordinate. The result was serious and painful to Joseph Webb. His conduct became a matter of public notoriety. His hardness of heart in respect to freshmen attracted the attention of the college faculty, in consequence of which fact his college life suddenly halted. The History of Harvard states the case in these words: "Whereas great complaints have been made and proved against Joseph Webb for his abusive carriages in requiring some of

the freshmen to go upon his private errands and in striking such freshmen, and for his scandallous negligence to those duties.... he is therefore sentenced in the first place to be deprived of the pension heretofore allowed him and also to be expelled the college."

Alas, for poor, stricken Joseph Webb! What a sad and serious affair! And thrice alas for his wounded and amazed parents! Their straitened circumstances gave poignancy to the family grief and misery.

I have no doubt that the family circle felt as if the heavens had fallen upon them. A young life, full of promise, seemed forever blasted.

But Joseph was not the boy to be pushed one side by such an event. He thought out the matter and bravely faced the situation. He must right the wrong done and square himself with the reverend authorities of Harvard: "I do with grief and sorrow humbly acknowledge these my great offences and the justice of your proceedings against me for them," he writes, "and crave pardon and pray that I may be restored unto my former standing in the college, promising unto it labor and diligence in my study and most dutiful obser-

vance of all college laws and orders for the time to come."

Such manly confession and purpose to regain an honorable stand pleased the gentlemen managing the affairs of Harvard and the boy was speedily readmitted. He graduated with his classmates, after completing a full course of study.

It was not the custom in those days to induct young men fresh from the college curriculum into the high office of minister. The candidates often busied themselves for a considerable period in trade or labor of a secular kind while engaged in further reading and preparation for the ministry. Mr. Webb graduated from college in 1684 but he was not installed pastor in Fairfield until 1694. His legible penmanship appears on the fly leaf of one of the eight books of record belonging to the Prime Ancient Society. "This Booke of Records belongs to ye Church of Christ in Fairfield of which I am pastor. Joseph Webb. Bought in ye year 1704. Cost 6 shillings eight pence in money—paid for by ye Church."

Two important movements in the colony occurred early in the ministry of Mr. Webb. The first was the founding of Yale College.

No one felt the need of better facilities for education in Connecticut more than did this son of Harvard. The long journey through wilderness or by sea taxed the purse and endurance of the student. The time had come to provide an institution in the prosperous colony which might repeat in this region the important service rendered by Harvard to Massachusetts. So on the appointed day Mr. Webb met the other nine wise projectors of Yale and donated his small gift for the founding and endowment of a college. That was a day of small beginnings but a day which links the name of Webb and all the company with the honored university which has contributed so generously to Christian civilization in America and the far east.

During the formative years of the school Mr. Webb continued his active interest in its affäirs, serving until the day of his death on the Corporation and helping as opportunity presented itself in establishing and upbuilding the college.

The second important event of the times was the meeting for the formulating of the Saybrooke Platform and the later meetings for the organization of the various Consociations. Into the discussion of questions

bearing upon the readjustment of ecclesiastical relations Mr. Webb threw himself with his accustomed zeal. When the Fairfield Consociation was formed at Stratfield in 1709 he contributed his wit and wisdom to what was termed the Fairfield Interpretation of the new Platform. A conservative of conservatives, he stood firmly for the high church idea and preached the doctrine with consistent fidelity.

During the pastorate of Mr. Webb an incident occurred in the parish which graphically illustrates the prevalent feeling against the Quakers. Two preachers of the proscribed sect were journeying through Connecticut propagating their views. It happened that they reached Fairfield on a day when the churches of the region were holding a fellowship meeting with the brethren of the Prime Ancient Society. (The narrative is told in a manuscript detailing the journey of Roger Gill and Thomas Story in the year 1698.) There were "seven priests" present and "abundance of people." The numerous company appeared to the two Quaker brothers a providential invitation to discourse concerning their peculiar tenets. "So up to their meeting we went, but went not in

until ye singing of their song was over, then in we went, and up toward ye pulpit I went, Thomas foulling of me. I looked stidfastly up to ye pulpit wher were 5 preests sitting and two sat below."

Roger Gill and his associate listened respectfully to the sermon. "Poore man, to give him his dew, he mad it with no small labor, as wel as with no littel terer; for he drove it on like Pharoah's Charats whilees very heavily." At the conclusion of the "preests" "sarmint," Roger Gill climbed upon the bench and attempted to address the people. But "down came ye preests, out of ye pulpit, like distracted men. One cried out, wher ye powers of ye Church? Wher are ye magistrates? what, is ther no constables here to take him away? Another interrupting me said, Sur, you are not called to be a minister to this people" . . . "Then ould preest yt preached the sarmint Caught me by the hand, saying, dear Sor, I prey you come down. Who stroking my hand aded, dear sor, I prey you come down, the people are well satisfied. But about this Constable Came and would have pulled me down backward, then up steps one of the hearers. . . . and pulled him from me. So by

this time the first preest, whos name is John Davenport (of Stamford) had mustered up one Justes and two Constables, who by vilence pulled me down, halling me out of meeting."

This serious interruption stirred up the people mightily and when they were dismissed for physical refreshment, the two Quaker agitators followed the "preests" to the house on the Green where they had gathered. "I do believe," continues Roger Gill, "an hondred of ye heds of ye seven perishes followed us." The minister courteously invited the Quakers to sit with them at the table and enjoy the good things prepared for entertainment. But they refused saying "inasmuch as we did not meet with a Spirit of humanity, how could we hav any society? . . so we would withdraw to our inn, tel ther diner was ended, and come up to them ageyn."

Meanwhile the people waited in the dooryard, discussing the event of the day, watchful as to the ultimate issue of the Quakers' visit. When "preest" John Davenport appeared in the yard Thomas Story attacked him on the subject of baptism. There were bantering words from the Stamford minister and a great eager-

ness on the part of the shifting company to catch every word from "preest" or Quaker. Friend Story said, "we are here to vindicate ye truth agenst all untruth." He then elaborated his argument against baptism. "But not one man mad one word of an answer, all being silent. So after a litel pawes, they sad they had a select meeting—therefore they desired us to withdraw—their time was spent. So then after a few words wee parted with them, ye people wer Loving to us and one Justes of ye peece folloed and sad, friends, you have incountered with a body of divinity to-day."

I can see the "ould preest" stroking gently the hand of Friend Gill and urging him kindly to cease this interruption of a solemn religious service. I can hear the rustle of garments, the smothered whispers, the agitation expressed by movement of feet and nervous twitchings. Men were arrested and severely punished for such irreverent behavior in the meeting-house. The Colony was opposed to these fruitless assaults upon the faith of a quiet and contented people. "So we took hors and away we came yt night to Stratford, and had

great peece with ye Lord." The conclusion of a memorable day in the town.

But the pleasantest pictures of Mr. Webb are those which show him as the bright and genial companion—the old time jollity and fun-loving spirit re-appearing in witty conversation and social fellowship. Many of these ancient parsons were famous in jest and repartee, scattering light and kindliness in many homes, bringing cheer and uplift to many fainting hearts.

The various public offices which Mr. Webb filled gained for him the affection or respect of the colony. When infirmities crept upon him the General Court took the matter in hand and requested the town to provide a helper for him—"he being now disabled and through weakness and infirmity not able to carry on the work of the gospel ministry among his people, to the great grief of the good people in that Society."

The age and infirmity of Mr. Webb gave occasion for hope on the part of the brethren connected with the Church of England mission that a day favorable for the rapid growth of Episcopacy in town had finally dawned. But it was an illusive hope for his successor proved to be one of the strong-

est and staunchest champions of the "Standing Order."

The personal testimonies in respect to the character of Mr. Webb are well worth remembrance. "He was hospitable in his house, steady in his friendships, free and facetious in conversation and most tenderly affected toward his relations," says the ancient record. Another eulogist described him as "A gentleman of Probity and Piety; and of distinguished erudition in Grammar, Rhetoric, Logic, Theology; a firm Calvinist in Principles and accounted a most Eminent preacher—excelling in correct diction, clear, sound Scriptural method, manly style, appearing most free of affectation."

For thirty-eight years he labored here and died in the harness according to his often-expressed wish.

V

A FAMOUS CONTROVERSIALIST

"The Sabbath immediately preceding his death"—I am quoting President Dwight in his remarks upon Mr. Hobart—"he preached twice and with more than his usual animation." A vigorous body supported a vigorous mind and spirit through the forty years of his notable pastorate in Fairfield. There appeared slight diminution of force or abatement of zeal in his long ministry. Mr. Hobart talked with serenity and freedom in the very hour of his departure—advising the members of his family, arranging his affairs, bidding friends good-bye like one beginning a long, eventful journey. Some one said to him that he was going to receive his reward. "I am going," said he, "I trust, to receive the mercy of God through Christ."

There was a frankness in speech, manner and spirit which revealed itself even in this hour of change and rest.

When he came to Fairfield fresh from

Harvard in 1733 he embarked upon a sea of theological discussion and ecclesiastical disturbance which often became exceedingly rough and tempestuous during the years of his pilot service. But he was admirably adapted to the particular kind of service required.

Noah Hobart was born in Hingham, Massachusetts, January 12, 1706. He came of stalwart Puritan stock. His grandfather the Reverend Peter Hobart was the first pastor of the Church of Christ in Colonial Hingham, his father Edmund emigrating from the English town of Hingham in 1633. The Reverend Peter Hobart "much valued that rule—Study Standing," observes Cotton Mather in his notice of him, "and until old age and weakness compelled him he would rarely study sitting." Four sons of this first clerical Hobart became ministers. But the father of our subject chose a secular pursuit and passed the ministerial heritage down to the grandson.

The social environment of his youth favored this choice of the ministry. A Colonial parson was the central figure on the stage. Preacher, teacher, adviser, leader he largely shaped the life of the

community so that the profession attracted the most virile and ambitious young men. When Mr. Hobart went courting Priscilla Thomas of Plymouth he was described as a divinity student of great promise—an individual destined to play no mean part in his day. But, as he was not blessed to any great extent with worldly goods, the father of Priscilla Thomas objected to the match and urged his daughter to marry a Plymouth gentleman of some fortune. When the situation was explained to Mr. Hobart he reflected upon it for a season. Then he voluntarily released the young lady from her engagement to him and urged her marriage with the fellow-citizen of substance, which advice she ultimately followed. This illustrates the matter-of-fact, common sense way in which Mr. Hobart regarded the affairs of life. It is pleasant, however, to recite the further history of this early romance. Thirty years later, when Priscilla Thomas had been twice a widow and Mr. Hobart had lost Ellen Sloss, his wife, the love of youth was renewed and these two people became united in wedlock. This happy union was sweetened by the marriage of Priscilla Lothrop's son to

Noah Hobart's daughter. The font which is used in our baptismal service was given to this Church in memory of this daughter, the lady just named.

Mr. Hobart's only son sustained the high character and service which marked the career of his father. Following the law he became an eminent jurist in New York, was made a judge of the state Supreme Court, received an election to the United States Senate, an office which he, however, declined, and later served his term as United States District Judge.

The Church and Society gave Mr. Hobart a unanimous call to this pastorate and on February 6th and 7th, 1732–33 (Old Style), the Consociation met in this place to ordain the young man to the gospel ministry. We read in the records that Mr. Hobart "produced a certificate under the hands of sundry ministers who from their personal acquaintance with the said Mr. Hobart do signify his being one of virtuous conversation in full communion with their Churches, and of desirable ministerial accomplishments." The Council "after a serious and impartial examination" appeared well satisfied "in respect to the orthodoxy and ministerial qualifica-

tions" of the candidate. The Reverend Mr. Stoddard "performed the prayer by which the said Mr. Hobart was set apart to the work of the ministry"—I quote the Council records—while Rev. Mr. Cooke "performed the first prayer and Rev. Mr. Graham the last."

The Prime Ancient Society needed the services of an aggressive advocate and champion of the Established Religion in order to "hold its own" and continue leadership, for it was a time of transition politically and ecclesiastically. Old Lights and New Lights had their battle to fight. The presence of Whitfield and itinerant preachers stirred the Churches to great activity. The work of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel was widely extended so that there was frequent occasion for energetic and faithful labors on the part of men who represented Congregationalism. The defections from the Prime Ancient Society alarmed Mr. Hobart and his fellow-workers. A twofold task fell to the lot of the new minister. He must face the disruptive tendencies of the New Light brethren—that movement which ultimately resulted in the multiplication of sects in the Colony and

the organization of Baptist, Methodist and other churches. And he must face the prestige and activity of the missions connected with the Church of England. The first-named part of the task was not so difficult as the second. The support and encouragement of a sympathetic Colonial Legislature helped the ministers of the Established Religion to break the force of the New Light movement. It was made illegal for itinerant preachers to venture into other parishes and there disturb the peace of generations by their new doctrines and strange fashions. Mr. Hobart was violent in his opposition to these fearless, vexatious brethren.

But the strength of his polemical zeal was turned in the direction of the mission work done by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. Four small books were the fruit of his pen while contending for the faith delivered to his Puritan ancestors. These brochures are exceedingly interesting in their revelation of social and religious conditions. We find in the books vivid pictures of community life, sketches of individuals and recitals of local events which enable us to throw upon the canvas a fair reproduction of

the times. The amenities of discussion were conspicuous by their absence. It was a day of plain speech. Men did not hesitate to say what they thought of each other. Good men and true handled the English language with vigor.

The typical New England preacher of his day was a man consulted on all the affairs of life. Mr. Hobart's contemporaries speak of him as a man of rare judgment. The neighborhood looked to him for the adjudication of difficulties. He was judge and jury on many an occasion. This legal aptitude and judicial spirit doubtless had its influencein the determination of his son's choice of a profession. The father did much legal business as a matter of friendship, without pay or position. The son decided that pay and position should accompany the service in his own case and thus strike a sort of balance.

Mr. Hobart was a book-lover and book collector, exceptionally well read in history and theology. The wide range of his reading is shown in the wealth of quotation and illustration distributed through his writings. But the literature of the day—the popular literature of New England—was polemical, bristling with

the controversial spirit—very dry, dull, dreary reading for our day, although the pen of Mr. Hobart was so caustic and alert that a smile is often evoked. Certain it is that his opponents felt the force of his argument and brought all their batteries to bear upon this champion of the Established Religion.

The acrimony and tempestuousness of these assaults and counter-assaults amaze us. But when we read on a later day how Washington for example was maligned and roughly treated—how the leaders of the American Revolution and the framers of the new Government were consigned to infamy by a host of bitter foes, we are reminded that this mode of conducting controversy was habitual to the colonies. Religion, politics and literature alike practised the popular methods of the day. In fact, we have not risen to a standard greatly advanced in these later years. Sharp, cruel, malignant are the charges often made against the public men of this generation. The yellow journals are more flamboyant and sensational than the most virulent speeches or pamphlets of Colonial and Revolutionary times.

We take these heated discussions and

stinging personalities with many grains of salt. Although Mr. Hobart handled without gloves opponents like Mr. Caner rector of Trinity, and Doctor Johnson rector in Stratford, and Mr. Wetmore and Mr. Beach and various other champions of the Church of England, yet he was a man of kindly heart and very genial disposition. Sociability was one of his chief characteristics. They did real pastoral visitation in his day. The minister and his family drove to one or another homestead and stayed with the people until they had visited to their heart's content. The whole realm of theology, politics, agriculture, Indian wars, and local affairs were canvassed from house to house by the minister. His wife must exchange domestic news, household receipts, family experiences and the innumerable details pertaining to home affairs. Mr. Hobart was a rugged, hearty personality, able to mow and reap and hoe as well as tinker in the shop and barn. It was while lending a hand to various neighbors that he gathered material for preaching. There were many thoughtful men, men whose experience was quite as broad as that of the minister, living in the old parish. It

was an intellectual stimulus as well as a social pleasure to meet such men as Judge Silliman, Justice Burr, Governor Gold and the stalwart brethren who represented Fairfield in various places of trust. There are people who turn back to those days with a sort of envious look. Not that we would exchange the conveniences and inventions of these later times for the rude tools and hard conditions of 1740 and 1770, but that we might enjoy the old spirit of intimate fraternity—the heart to heart interchange of experience—the mutual helpfulness of neighbors—the strong consciousness of community life. We are too busy now to halt by the way and pay much heed to the tedious social amenities which enriched the simple life of our ancestors.

Mr. Hobart carried the entire parish in his heart. He knew everybody, even the stray sheep who wandered down to Mill Plain or the Old Mill Gate and worshipped according to the Church of England way. His affable manner won him a certain influence over those who were conscientiously opposed to his views and practices. His generosity and benevolence were not restricted to his own flock. He was the

father of all the parish—sympathetic with all pain, sorrow, difficulty—drawing upon his resources without distinction of party, creed or life. A careless observer might think that his denunciation of sin, his warnings against the New Lights, his incessant fire directed toward the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and its missionaries indicated a hard heart and a relentless disposition. Far from it. He was the essence of kindness, gracious service, tender consideration, manly encouragement, even among his enemies. And there were enemies not a few in town and colony. A man cannot champion a great cause without parting company with some people whom he counts dear. This is part of the price we must pay for victory. At the same time one's heart may remain pure and loyal, one's mind honorably and fraternally disposed. The virility, ruggedness and abounding high spirit of Mr. Hobart did not obscure the gentler virtues which manifested themselves in the daily walk of village fellowship and broader association with people of the world.

His reputation as a man of sense and rare good judgment brought him into

contact with men in many parts of New England. "Perhaps as a wise counsellor," remarks Doctor Welles of Stamford, one of his contemporaries, "he had no superiors in the land." This is noteworthy praise. On numerous occasions Mr. Hobart was called to exercise this gift of advice and guidance. When it came to action in cases of ecclesiastical judicature he was generally placed in the moderator's chair, the common consent agreeing that he was the most capable and efficient man for such office. Matters of uncommon difficulty gave him the opportunity to reveal a kind of genius in the way of peace-making, friendly adjustment and the successful unravelling of perplexing cases. The people connected with the Established Church in the Colony looked to him as a leader whose aims, methods and energies merited their confidence and support. They listened to his sermons and addresses with an assurance that profound convictions and clear, definite conceptions of truth ruled speech and deed so far as he was concerned. Conservative in his views, a high churchman of the times, a believer in the validity of Presbyterian ordination, a bitter antagonist of priestcraft, hierarchy

and liturgical custom, he gave a faithful witness in all places and under all circumstances. And this "native strength of genius and unabated vigor of mind" as his biographer expresses it, continued through the forty years of his ministry. Whether as one of the governing body in Yale College, or preacher before the Colonial Legislature, or writer of books or moderator of Association or public councillor or friend to men in need, he carried weight in the position—the little world of which he was a part freely recognized the commanding worth of his personality, all classes paid him honorable deference and shared to a degree in the service which he rendered society.

The rebuke by such a man even when administered with gentleness made lasting impression. There is a tradition that once on a time a neighboring minister, fresh to these pastures and unacquainted with Mr. Hobart, was chosen to preach in Fairfield. Riding across country on horse back he came flying into town at a pace which shocked the Puritan sense of propriety and was halted by Mr. Hobart who insisted that the stranger should accompany him to the parsonage and then atone

for his fast riding by going to meeting. To the amazement of Mr. Hobart and the members of the parish who had seen this fast riding Sunday morning, the fast-riding stranger, instead of sitting in a pew, marched straight into the pulpit and then explained to the pastor that he was the expected preacher for the day. Doubtless Mr. Hobart's rebuke lost none of its force by reason of the lax conduct exhibited. Probably he emphasized his admonitory words when the two ministers communed together in the quiet of the pastor's study.

But we are not to draw unfair conclusions respecting the strictness and decorum of those days. There was social amenity in abundance, delightful fellowship and good cheer, a warm, rich fraternity among the people. And the minister was first in all which contributed to the common enjoyment and benefit. There were forty years of this loyal service on the part of Mr. Hobart—forty years in this parish devoted to scholarship, education, justice, controversy, genial visitation in time of sickness and trial and domestic felicity and varied prosperity—forty years given to an unselfish and tireless fidelity in help-

ing people to a higher ideal of life and a richer fruition of their labors—forty years invested in the endeavor to transfer the Gospel from the dead pages of a book to living epistles among men.

An Old-Fashioned Garden

VI

THE SCHOLAR IN WAR-TIME

It was Sunday the eleventh of July, 1779. The people of this parish had met once again for public worship. The Meeting-House which stood on the Green no more gave them welcome. Nothing remained of it but heaps of ashes. The dwelling-houses which formerly imparted an air of good-cheer and comfort to the town had vanished—their tall, blackened chimneys looming grim and lonely against the horizon. The charred masses of debris on every side told the tale of tragedy and desolation enacted through the length and breadth of Fairfield. No bell sounded its melodious notes of invitation. There was scant attempt to appear in Sunday apparel. The worshippers came from tents, from hastily constructed sheds, from the seclusion of wooded retreats or from the distant shelter of friendly homes which had been hospitably opened to them after the burning of the town. What a motley company it was which assembled here on the

Green one hundred and thirty-two years ago on that mid-July Sabbath! Waste, blackness, destruction, misery on all sides—the very verdure of kindly nature so scorched and disfigured that it passed recognition.

One of the five houses on the Green which came unscathed through the storm of fire was the home of Deacon Nathan Bulkley, town clerk, public servant and prominent layman in the Prime Ancient Society. The brief, significant record of the old Parish Register runs as follows:

"July 11th, Lord's Day. The Church and Society met and with the pastor carried on religious services as usual, at the house of Deacon Bulkley."

The house still remains to give its silent witness as a faithful historian. It was a little band of worshippers. Many of the men belonging to the congregation were serving in the army or on the sea. Many of the women and children had not yet recovered from the strain and suffering of the British assault. We read between the lines of this short statement. It was the few who were able to gather for worship. Who can describe the weight of sorrow carried by these loyal people. Yet the minister fed the fires of patriotism which

burned brightly in their hearts and comforted them with visions of freedom, renewed life and national greatness.

For several succeeding Sabbaths the pastor sought to hearten his people and inspire them with fresh courage. Then, as the record suggestively states it, there were "no religious services, the pastor being sick." Nature gave way for a season.

You remember Mr. Eliot's account of the burning preserved in our Church Book. "Our holy and beautiful house, where our fathers praised Thee, is burnt up with fire, and all our pleasant things are laid waste."

"The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away."

"Blessed be the name of the Lord."

"All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

Alleluia!

"The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Amen."

This was the spirit of the Reverend Andrew Eliot—submission and hopefulness, unquenchable zeal and all conquering faith. A little later it became evident that poverty, losses, taxation—all the dire

havoc and exhaustion of war had so crippled this people that they were unable to pay the minister his salary. Bravely, trustingly did he rise to the emergency and make noble sacrifice of personal needs. "I have been with you in your prosperity;" he said, "I will stay with you in your adversity." So Mr. Eliot gave a receipt for one pound to the treasurer of the Society, this being his salary in full during a period of two years. Meanwhile the people gathered "the avails of iron and nails from the old Meeting-House" that they might contribute to the metal for a new bell while the drum was beat to call them to public worship week by week.

The Reverend Andrew Eliot came of stock historic. He was the great-great-grandson of Andrew Eliot who emigrated from Somersetshire, England, the latter part of the seventeenth century and settled in Beverly, Massachusetts—which town he represented in the General Court, 1690. The grandfather of our Andrew was another Andrew who prospered as a merchant in the prosperous city of Boston. The father of our Andrew was another Andrew, the famous Doctor Eliot of the New England capital, long time pastor of the

New North Church. A man of learning—eloquent, industrious and popular—a leader of men and a generous public servant—his influence extended far and wide through city and country. In 1767 the degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him by Edinburgh University. In 1765 he was chosen a member of the Corporation of Harvard University. In 1769 he was earnestly solicited to become president of Harvard, which honor he declined. In 1773 he was actually selected for the office and again refused it, preferring to remain pastor of the Church to which he devoted his life. When Boston was blockaded he remained in the city in order to minister to his people and the isolated, beleaguered citizens of the place—his family tarrying here in Fairfield during the period. A volume of his sermons is one of the treasures of our Historical Society. It was the custom in those days to distribute mourning rings among friends of the deceased. The pastor of the New North Church possessed a large and varied collection of these strange funeral emblems.

This man of marked worth and distinction bequeathed a precious legacy of helpful associations and impulses to his son,

the pastor of this parish during the formative period of the American Republic.

Our Andrew was born in 1743, and educated in Boston and Cambridge, graduating from Harvard in 1762. He was elected Librarian of the College and became accustomed to the ravage of fire when in 1764 the old College building was burned and he lost all his personal belongings. In 1768, as a recognition of his good scholarship, young Eliot was appointed tutor and in 1773 he was elected a Fellow of Harvard. The esteem and affection of his pupils has an historic memorial in the chaste, massive loving cup presented to him on leaving College—a memorial which his descendants keep today with tender regard and devotion.

When Mr. Eliot appeared in Fairfield there were people who opposed his coming. The first meeting convened to extend a call to him was adjourned without action. When the members of the Society assembled on the second meeting one of Mr. Eliot's supporters related a dream. "I dreamt," said Mr. Bibbins, "that I was carried away and suddenly found myself in Satan's dominions. There seemed to be much confusion in the place. Soon Satan

rapped for order and said: 'Fellow-devils—tomorrow the men of Fairfield are going to make another effort to elect that young Eliot their minister. I hate him. He never misses a chance to give us hard knocks. What shall we do?' 'Send some one to stir up a fight,' cried one of the bad spirits. 'Yes, that is a bright idea,' replied Satan, and he started two of his minions for Fairfield.

"'Come back, come back,' he suddenly shouted as they were plunging into the darkness. 'Come back.' And they returned.

"'You needn't go' Satan explained hilariously. 'I recollect now that Mr. Blank' (he was the leader of the opposition) 'I recollect now that Mr. Blank is on hand. He can do more to get them fighting than a dozen like you.'"

When Mr. Bibbins finished the story of his dream, the leader of the opposition, the foe of Mr. Eliot, sprang angrily to his feet, seized his hat and stamped noisily down the aisle, muttering bitter words. The vote was put and Mr. Eliot received an unanimous "call"—which "call" was conveyed by Captain Abel on horseback to the gentleman in Boston. The young

minister entered upon his field at once and continued in service until his death.

Mr. Eliot found himself in congenial company when he assumed charge of work in this parish. A man of culture, he became the associate of a remarkable galaxy of educated, intellectual public men. At different periods it was his good fortune to meet in Fairfield many of the leaders in politics, literature, education, statesmanship and social life. Judges, Generals, Governors, Artists, Legislators, Scientists, and other men of affairs either made their home in Fairfield during Mr. Eliot's pastorate or became frequent visitors and familiar figures on the streets—among them Doctor Dwight, Joel Barlow, and Colonel Humphrey the poets, Copley and Trumbull the artists, the Burrs, the Adamses, the Quincys, the Hancocks, Franklin, Lafayette, Roger Sherman, Kent, Deane, Oliver Ellsworth, many of the men conspicuous in the pages of American history.

And Mr. Eliot was the peer of these notable public servants. They listened to his counsels and addresses with interest and appreciation. All through the years he continued in close relations with his numerous Boston friends and co-workers.

Many letters written by Mr. Eliot are preserved and they would make a valuable contribution to the illuminating epistolary writing of his day. He was a member of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences and a corresponding member of the Massachusetts Historical Society which has printed a collection of his letters in its publications. His scholarship was superior. Prof. Benjamin Silliman received early impulse in the way of science and knowledge through the friendship and instructions of his pastor, Mr. Eliot, who prepared him for Yale College. The account of the burning of Fairfield in 1779 which the minister of this parish sent to friends in Boston is a most graphic and thrilling story.

The losses which came to Mr. Eliot on this occasion are recorded in an inventory which he prepared. His library, one of the most valuable and extensive in the colony, was consumed with other household belongings. Friends in Boston expressed sympathy for his crippled condition by taking up a special collection in the New North Church with which he purchased needed books.

Mr. Eliot was a collector of historical

documents, a lover of literature, a student of events. The correspondence which he carried on for many years with relatives and friends covers the discussion of numerous questions. His sermons and addresses on Election Day and other important occasions show breadth of knowledge, firm grasp of public affairs, a progressive spirit, and a generous culture. Mr. Eliot gathered the published Election Sermons of the ministers who had preached before the Connecticut Legislature and presented the collection to the Massachusetts Historical Society. He prepared various papers on learned subjects. He was a most genial and agreeable host, entertaining a long succession of notable guests in his home. His affability, social graces, learning, toleration, abounding charity and kindly appreciation made him a commanding figure in the life of this town for a generation.

But the patriotism of this eminent minister gave him special distinction. During the critical period when he served this people, there were grave questions of Church and State to be settled. The antagonism between the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts and the

Established Religion of Connecticut was sharp and distressing. The Churches organized by the Episcopal brethren were inevitably identified with the Tory element and British sovereignty. The Congregational Churches were even more closely identified with Independence.

Yet Mr. Eliot did not enter upon controversy and wage warfare polemical and ecclesiastical as did his predecessor, Mr. Hobart. He lived on terms of friendliness and sympathy with the rector of Trinity and other people of the Church of England. This had been the relation between his father in Boston and the Episcopal brethren. The younger Eliot followed a worthy example and cultivated agreeable associations with men whose views of theology and politics were quite at variance with his own. His kindly sympathy and tolerance under the strenuous circumstances which surrounded him reveal a man of fine spirit and notable catholicity. Contending fearlessly, urgently for the religious and ecclesiastical principles of the Saybrook Platform and the political principles expressed vigorously by the popular songs, speeches and writings of the patriots, he nevertheless manifested such consider-

ation for his opponents, such good-will and generosity, such forbearance and helpfulness that he won the confidence and esteem of foe as well as friend.

His ministry here continued for life—a ministry nobly blessed in every way. The period of the American Revolution was a severe test of a man's strength and leadership; but the period which followed tested a man not less rigidly. A time of agitation and poverty, a time of renewal and transition—it taxed the powers of body, mind and soul. The strain on faith and wisdom was great. It required the vision and hopefulness of an old time seer to guide the young nation.

VII

A DAY WITH DOCTOR DWIGHT ON GREENFIELD HILL

It was a happy decision made by the General Association of this Colony when June was chosen as the month for their annual fellowship.

Greenfield Hill in the year 1790 has been etched by the poet:

> "As round me here I gaze, what prospects rise?
> Ethereal, matchless . . .
> Fair Verna, loveliest village of the west;
> Of every joy and every charm possessed."

This "fair Verna," "seat of peace and pleasure," place of "cheerful lawns" and sweet "bird carols," "home of industry" and "glowing faith," was a parish set off from the Prime Ancient Society of Fairfield 1725, said to contain nearly fourteen hundred inhabitants, mostly farmers. When the new pastor moved into the parish—this was the year 1783—his people pledged him a settlement sum of three hundred pounds sterling, a salary

of one hundred and fifty pounds sterling, a parsonage lot of six acres and an annual fire-wood supply of twenty cords—one of the largest stipends paid in the state. At this time the population of New Haven exceeded that of the town of Fairfield by two or three hundred people. A beautiful country district, well tilled and prosperous, it was an ideal parish of "ye olden times."

This "fair Verna" welcomed fifteen parsons who came on horses (perhaps one or two of them in chaises) from diverse parts of the state.

There was Nathaniel Taylor tall and erect, great good nature suffusing his countenance. He came across the country from New Milford. A man of excellent business habits, exact and methodical, a trustee of Yale College, he was chosen moderator. In the stress of the Revolution he had remitted to his parish an entire year's salary. Well versed in the lore of fruit trees as well as theology, he combined indoor and outdoor study, vigor of body and mind attesting the fact of this happy union. A worthy descendant was another Nathaniel, remembered as the captain of a theological host marshaled

on the training field of the Divinity Institution at New Haven.

The Association appointed Mr. Benjamin Trumbull, Scribe. This interesting gentleman was one of the chaplains in the war of the Revolution whose patriotism would not be restricted to clerical offices. He handled the musket with skill and he had his adventures. It was he and Colonel Tallmadge who were left in the river Bronx by a horse frightened into riotous activity because of a double burden on its back. Mr. Trumbull was remarkable for his agility. His workmen in the field found it no easy task to keep abreast of him as he swung the scythe.

Let us remark how this meeting of the Association 121 years ago, which we are by courtesy of remembrance attending, called to mind that the Association had sometime since "desired Mr. Benjamin Trumbull to write a religious history of the late American Revolution and as he expressed his wishes that the Association would appoint a committee to inspect said history and report their opinion concerning it to this body at the next general Association," "Voted the Rev. Drs. Goodrich and Dwight and John Trumbull Esq.

be a committee for that purpose." The religious history was never written; but the thought and desire of these men was perfectly manifest in this urgent request for Mr. Trumbull to put on record the splendid, undeviating patriotism of these Congregational leaders as opposed to the Toryism and hostility of numerous other preachers in Connecticut. The history written by Trumbull assumed broader scope and is a treasury of riches upon which all later writers on the subject draw freely if not gratefully. Large is the debt which we owe him for the literary service rendered through his long period of research and labor. "He brought me in manuscript," says Professor Silliman, "all elegantly written out in his most beautiful chirography, the entire second volume of his History of Connecticut."

Robert Ross, writer of school books and lover of freedom, rode over from Newfield, the thriving village on the Pequonnock. Six feet in height, and with ample proportions, dressed in his wig, cocked hat, ruffled shirt, black coat, white topped boots, light vest and breeches, he was a typical dignified scholar, patriot, zealot.

Rufus Hawley whose pastorate extended

over fifty-one years in West Avon was present, John Foot forty-six years pastor in Cheshire, Aaron Church who served the East Hartland church for forty-two years, and Ebenezer Kellogg pastor in North Bolton for fifty-five years. Nathaniel Bartlett rode across the hills from Redding. He was the parson who discharged pastoral duties with gun in hand, such dire threats of vengeance did the Tories fling at him during the lively days of the Revolution. There was special reason for this neighborhood hostility since the good man freely turned his house into a magazine for arms and ammunition. His pastoral service extended over a period of fifty-seven years.

Mr. Zebulon Ely represented Lebanon and the church of the Trumbulls on this occasion. It was he who officiated at the funeral of the first Governor Trumbull, and the second Governor Trumbull and William Williams, a signer of the Declaration of Independence; Mr. Ely was pastor in the historic town for forty-two years. The father of twelve children who attained maturity, he transmitted his virtues to the later generations. He had been a student at Yale when the British attacked

New Haven and had joined with Doctor Daggett and other clerical brethren in defending the city. Later, a tutor in the college, he continued a scholar's fidelity to his books.

Dr. Samuel Lockwood travelled the rough way from Andover to Greenfield. This is the rare man who modestly expressed his sorrow that Yale College, which he loved and served as a trustee, had been so kindly disposed that the degree of Doctor of Divinity was bestowed upon him. Not flattered, but pained by the honor because of his own unworthiness, he deprecated the folly of such a mistake. When his life-journey was ended he passed on to his friend Doctor Williams as souvenirs of his affection his best boots and spurs, his walking-staff and wig.

Judah Champion came down from Litchfield. It was he who told his people one Sunday morning how the Continental soldiers on the borders of Canada were suffering. As a result his congregation on that particular afternoon was all men. The women had hastened to their homes, set in motion their spinning wheels and looms, illustrating as the good man observed

on a later occasion that precious text "Mercy before sacrifice."

Elizur Goodrich was another guest. This minister had been taught to speak Latin from childhood so that he used it with the ease akin to his use of the mother tongue. What a fine record this long time pastor of the church in Durham has left us! Linguist, scientist who rarely failed to compute the eclipses, book-lover whose library literally covered the walls of three large rooms, teacher, having sometimes as many as thirty young men under his charge, member of the Yale Corporation, toilsome farmer—yes, for was it not in the hayfield one day that he suddenly cried out, "Ah, I see it! I see it! There it is."

"See what, father?"

"I see where the blunder lay. I must get back that foolish paper from Doctor Rittenhouse before he sends it to England." (A paper containing a complicated mathematical problem.) So he threw down his rake, ran into the house and sent a letter with all haste to his distant friend. This robust, virile member of the Association gave to the children much of his natural force and ability, two sons becoming

members of Congress, one a member of the United States Senate and Judge, and one a minister, the father of Peter Parley, that prolific and fascinating writer of the last century. A man eminent for his wisdom, with a lively flow of wit and humor, he carried grace with him into every life relation.

These annual meetings of the Association you remember, convened at the minister's house. On this occasion the host was Timothy Dwight, recently made a Doctor of Divinity by Princeton College.

As the clerical travellers rested upon the crest of the Hill, the undulating landscape unfolded before them like a panorama, blue waters of the Sound in the distance and Long Island pushed against the dim horizon.

"His mansion," wrote Mr. Samuel Davis in 1789 when describing a visit to Doctor Dwight's home, "his mansion is all neat and his gardens are well cultivated." The pupils in the family assisted their master in this enviable diversion of horticulture. There were old-fashioned flowers contributing their loveliness and fragrance. The strawberry patch received special attention from the proprietor of

this charming domain and his young helpers—Doctor Dwight being one of the first men to introduce the cultivation of this delicious berry in our land. The parish acreage granted the minister abounded in the fruits of the region. An orchard yielded its generous supply of well-flavored apples. And the house—the spacious house—set amid this prodigality of nature was pervaded by an atmosphere of serenity, good-cheer, fine culture, exalted sentiment. The numerous paintings done by the hand of Mr. Dunlap, his brother-in-law, the many books lining the walls of various rooms, the quiet evidences of a generous, noble life—these things all contributed to the happiness and the hospitality of the home.

The pupils instructed by Doctor Dwight in his early period of service used Gershom Hubbell's shop as a school-room—but friends soon rallied to his support and built the academy—a modest structure thirty-four feet by twenty-two feet, crowned by a cupola. There were three windows on each side of the building. The room accommodated fifty or sixty students—the number reached when the school was most prosperous. Spelling, reading, pen-

manship, declamation, composition, English Grammar, Arithmetic, Geography, Algebra, Surveying, Navigation, Natural Philosophy, Latin and Greek were all taught with equal facility and thoroughness by Mr. Dwight. Hebrew was added when some theological apprentice requested it. Many of the pupils were very young—ten years old, twelve, fifteen. Occasionally a student came down from Yale—not to cram for an examination or atone for some deficiency as is the frequent custom of these days—but to take his fourth year with Doctor Dwight in preference to the course prescribed by the faculty of the college.

Wednesday afternoons there were speaking exercises and a spelling match. The winners in the word contest had fifteen minutes extra recess in recognition of their proficiency.

It was Doctor Dwight's habit to rise early in the morning and discharge various tasks so that he might be prepared for the interruptions incident to the management of parish affairs and his teaching labors. An incurable injury to his eyes when in college had crippled him in his reading so that a large part of his book knowledge

came through the medium of helpers who read to him. Doctor Dwight employed no paid assistant in teaching the more than one thousand pupils who attended his school during eleven years' pastorate in Greenfield. Adopting the Lancastrian system of impressing the older pupils into service, they became his co-workers, fulfilling faithful offices in their attendance upon the younger learners while they disciplined themselves into a more exact and thorough knowledge of the lessons taught.

It was a sort of patriarchal household in the parsonage on Greenfield Hill. The home life was sweet, and gracious—enriched by the luxuriance of nature and the delight of healthful rural pursuits. There were a dozen boarders in the family—young men from the south and east and the middle states, youth which represented the best blood of the land; there were numerous day-pupils from the Hill and the immediate vicinity, both boys and girls; for Doctor Dwight acted as pioneer in fostering female education. He kept horses for riding. Long walks through field and forest diversified such exercises as labor on the farm and in the garden, which the boys freely shared with him after the six hours of

school tasks were ended. Then came evening hours when guests tarried for the night, guests from all parts of the land seeking advice, fellowship, inspiration, paying homage to his character and attainments, contributing something to his enjoyment and popularity. There were few homes in the young republic which diffused a nobler influence or shone with a brighter radiance than this ideal home of the country minister on Greenfield Hill. Washington entertained with ampler service and statelier ceremony at Mount Vernon, but the spirit of hospitality was matched in the scholar's humbler mansion and the spirit of culture, refinement, hopefulness was perhaps unsurpassed in all the land. "I often expressed the opinion," said Judge Roger M. Sherman, "which length of time has continually strengthened, that no man, except the father of his country, had conferred greater benefits on our nation than Doctor Dwight."

A man of noble presence, straight as an arrow, his chest broad and full, the brow open and impressive, piercing black eyes marked by peculiar powers of fascination, setting off with distinction his rather pale cast of countenance—this genial host

whose grace, animation, intelligence and friendliness won all hearts—whose strong, rich, deep, melodious voice interpreted with delicacy and effectiveness the finest gradations of sentiment and emotion—welcomed on this rare fifteenth day of June, 1790, the state Association of Connecticut.

As we meet Doctor Dwight and his guests on this occasion and hear them discuss: "Whether in the opinion of this Association, any further degree of union between the churches of this State and their brethren of the Congregational and Presbyterian churches throughout the United States of America would be expedient and desirable"—a question which suggests that the seed of Christian Union was germinating here in Connecticut more than a century ago—as we meet these men and listen to their animated talk the first impression made upon us is that we are guests with a company of scholars in a scholar's home.

Various members of the Association had households similar in general character to the household of Doctor Dwight—a greater or less number of boarding and day-pupils who prepared for college or pursued the

study of theology and the classics with the minister as teacher. Familiarity with Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Mathematics, History and Science was characteristic of these men. They or their brethren not only founded and guided Yale College, but they constituted largely the learned class of the state, the teaching force, the literary element, the students of nature. Did not these men compute eclipses, observe the phenomena of the heavens and the earth, write instructively upon botany, agriculture, mechanics, physics and the many themes of public concern? Neither did such service divert them from the absorbing passion for dogmatics. Doctor Dwight gave as Wednesday evening lectures in Greenfield Hill his great system of theology—lectures afterward used for his work at Yale College. And many a pastor in the state fed his people with like solid food for ordinary diet. Listen to the conversation! It is interspersed with quotations from Horace, Cicero, Homer, Virgil, the prophets and historians of ancient Israel in the orginal tongues. Poets, philosophers and theologians of every Christian century contribute their riches to the occasion. There is no lack of wit and humor—an

inheritance from some English divine or Latin or Greek author. Profound thought, dignified language with prodigious learning freights the very air, imparting academic tone and flavor to common life.

Scholarship, ample, sympathetic, thorough scholarship—a characteristic of our predecessors in the ministry of this Commonwealth. Can we ask for anything less today than this same generous consecration to learning? Will any narrower equipment satisfy an age which abounds in universal intelligence, and widely diffused culture?

As we meet Doctor Dwight and his guests and listen to their earnest speech on the political issues of the day—for remember that the Republic was only a struggling, uncertain infant—we are impressed by the fact that we stand in the company of ardent, high-minded patriots. I have referred to the service which these men and their brothers in the ministry rendered during the rough years of strife with Great Britain. Had not Dwight himself been a chaplain in the army and had he not written songs which kindled the soldiers' imagination and inspired them with exalted hopes of our national destiny?

"A world is thy realm; for a world be thy laws,
Enlarged as thy empire, and just as thy cause.

* * * * *

Columbia, Columbia, to glory arise,
The Queen of the world, and the child of the skies."

"I have long thought," writes a literary critic, "that his stirring ode had great influence in animating national hope and spirit in the revolutionary war, and to a degree which has not been adequately acknowledged."

Two young preachers had been associated with Dwight in the writing of patriotic rhapsodies—Joel Barlow, one time his assistant teacher in Northampton, and David Humphrey, a neighbor coming from Derby.

The patriotism of these ministers was staunch through all the period of warfare—the days of poverty and want—and the troublous season of political construction. In the pulpit and on the Green they discoursed learnedly, enthusiastically upon the great problems of state and national organization, as well as the local problems of Established Religion and parish management. They showed neither fear nor favor in their frank, illuminating discussions. The eagerness, sagacity, adaptation, self-

sacrifice, courage, endurance, manliness evinced by these New England parsons is a most inspiring memory.

As we meet Doctor Dwight and his guests we are conscious that we have passed into an atmosphere of refined and exalted spirituality. These men are breasting the waves of infidelity, materialism and attendant evils, which have begun their havoc in church and state. Remember how our friendship with France had opened the way for the subtle diffusion of doubt and sensuality prevailing in that restless country. Remember that some of our national leaders frankly avowed their sympathy with the views current in French society. Call to mind also the fact that war inevitably leaves behind it a trail of vicious tendencies and base, riotous impulses. The times bred discontent, lawlessness and immorality. These sad conditions were unduly emphasized by the heated, unbrotherly discussions on the disestablishment of Congregationalism in Connecticut, so that the ministry of our churches was chastened, disciplined, purified; their sterling worth, and piety, their quenchless faith, their indomitable zeal tried as by fire. Doctor Dwight became leader in his witness for

the things of the spirit. It was a few years later when he was President of Yale College that this leadership in the revival of spiritual life assumed its distinctive and widely influential character. But these men associated with him responded to the same inner call and wrought with a like fidelity and hopefulness in behalf of the evangelical renaissance. One of the most inspiring lessons taught by this recurrence to the meeting of four generations past is found in this expression of vital Christianity at the very time when some foolish visionaries prophesied the passing of our religion. The radiance—the glory of faith filled the hearts and minds of these brave preachers even when opposition was most rampant and aggressive. The country was saved from moral disaster and spiritual wreck largely by the spirit, character, activity of the strong, wise men, unswerving in loyalty to Christ freshly inflaming their fellows with the faith of the fathers.

Arching Elms

VIII

FAMILY TREES IN THE PARISH

The art of cultivating a Family Tree, while not attaining the distinction of a fine art, has become a thing of vast importance. A venerable county capital assumes special importance in these days of adventurous search for ancestors. The parson therefore finds at hand an absorbing diversion. As it is currently reported that he has little or nothing to do, only two sermons and Wednesday talk each week with a few delightful calls every seven days, what more natural than that the public scattered from Maine to California should write to him for the information essential to a fruitful cultivation of the Family Tree?

On the appearance of "An old New England Town" the author came into writing touch with innumerable descendants of the early sturdy pioneer stock. And there were many compensations. The fraternal spirit that binds a man into the fellowship of minds aflame with kindred purpose and enthusiasm is worth all foster care. The

interchange of thought, investigation, anecdote is truly tonic.

I have a characteristic note from John Fiske in which he traces his ancestry down from Simon Fiske of Suffolk, 1464, through William, Simon, Simon, Robert, Thomas, Phineas who came to Salem, 1644, John, Doctor John, Captain John of Middletown who died in 1761, John, Jr., Bezaleel, John, Mary who married John Bound, Mary Fiske Bound who married Edmund B. Green, father of the historian who changed his name to John Fiske. "Most of my Fiske ancestors seem to have been town-clerks," he writes. The inference is legitimate that this bias in the blood reached its happy consummation in the scholarship of this illustrious descendant of town clerks.

Donald G. Mitchell writes me concerning "a great stock of parson ancestors," father, great-great-grandfather—Solomon Stoddard, Governor Saltonstall, the Woodbridges, John Wood and Elder Brewster of the Mayflower. "I wish I were as worthy as the least of them." Good friend, now departed, vex not your soul with lingering regrets! Their blood did flow a pure stream through your veins. The sweetness and the richness, the nobility and lofty vision of

these brave, triumphant preachers unto life gave tone to your service while your service reflects fadeless honor upon such men.

And now the hand turns over a charming, little epistle—one of several—from the lovable poet and generous critic, who through laborious years in Wall Street filled in the precious interstices of time with enduring literary achievement.

"Yes, bless you, my family tree has a parson on every branch. Doubtless the most racy and historic of them all was my great-grandfather Rev. Aaron Cleaveland. His daughter Sarah married my staunch old Calvanistic grandfather, David Low Dodge, himself a ruling elder and writer of lay sermons, who taught me to read, and ruled a wild boy according to the old adage of 'Spare the rod and spoil the child.'" Magnificent progenitors of worthful and far-famed representatives! We marvel not that Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman thrilled with enviable family pride as his pen fashioned these words.

"I believe I have no colonial parson among my ancestors," writes Mr. George W. Cable. This is a rare case and the author of "Old Creole Days" has our sym-

pathies. What famous fathers and grandfathers and great-grandfathers these ancient preachers were! Their vitalizing and perfecting influences have spread through the nation, a very savor of life unto life. Are not Emerson and Lowell, Bancroft and Hildreth and Parkman and Motley and Higginson and Hale and Alcott—the noble company of Boston poets, historians and essayists the fortunate inheritors of the priceless legacy? They represent one kind of service done by these early ministers.

But here is Prof. Henry van Dyke,—pray, good friend accept our heartfelt condolences—who writes that "So far as I know I have not a drop of New England blood in my veins, being with the exception of a slight English strain through Pennsylvania a simon pure Dutchman." Alas! that our Princeton psalmist, true master of the literary art should be foreordained to such trammelling misfortune—"not a drop of New England blood in my veins"!

This familiarity with genealogical lore has its compensations, as was previously remarked. It is pleasant to bask in the sunshine of acquaintance and friendliness that possibly never advances beyond the limits of the rural free delivery. But in this cultiva-

tion of family trees the clerical nurseryman pocketed other pay. It was discovered that the bounds of the Prime Ancient Society contained a most interesting and varied assortment of domestic growths. A little study and watch care, the fertilization of dust from the Town House vaults, an application of midnight oil to the growing sprouts, the proper pruning and a sufficient stay in congenial atmosphere—behold there emerge fine and robust products, one seldom looks upon nobler specimens of the genealogist's craft and culture.

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What a stalwart, prolific plant is the Burr tree—the original Jehu Burr stock! And this is a tree so persistently and enthusiastically cultivated that it gives one little difficulty to start fresh shoots (on paper) and transplant such saplings to all parts of the land. The thing which struck the nurseryman with greatest force in his friendly care of this tree was its vast and vigorous ramifications—the life careering through such numerous offshoots and expressing itself with such characteristic vitality.

Forefather Jehu came over with Winthrop's fleet in 1630, tarrying a brief spell

in Roxbury, passing on with Pynchon to the valley lands of the Connecticut river, finally attracted to Ludlow's town in 1644 where he settled down for good and entered at once upon the discharge of numerous public tasks. His personal force and masterful leadership have been cropping out through a numerous posterity in America for two hundred and seventy years. The annals of the Prime Ancient Society are thickly embroidered with their works.

Chief Justice Peter Burr, who went up to Boston in early manhood and made his mark as schoolmaster, returned to his native colony at the call of duty and lived his very active life wholly devoted to public trusts, holding so many offices that fingers and thumbs are not enough to number them; during one year he served as Auditor, Assistant, Judge of the Probate Court, Judge of the County Court and Chief Judge of the Superior Court.

We read in the first volume of the Parish Records: "March 4th 1715–16. Aaron, son of Mr. Daniel Burr of Upper Meadow, baptised."

A lively, handsome, aspiring youth, Aaron Burr graduated from Yale in 1738, and entered immediately upon a note-

worthy career, leaving behind him most delightful memories of fruitful days. The eloquent young scholar stood to the fore in the founding of the College of New Jersey, accepting the presidency the second year of its life, shaping to a large extent the course of the institution for many prosperous years. As to his marriage writes a friend in the *New York Gazette*, July 20th, 1752, "I shall not descend to particulars, but only observe in general that for some centuries, I suppose there has not been one more in the patriarchal mode."

Another correspondent, a student in Princeton at the time, describes the mode: "During his (President Burr's) absence, he made a visit of but three days, to the Rev. Mr. Edwards' daughter at Stockbridge; in which short time, though he had no acquaintance, nor had ever seen the lady these six years, I suppose he accomplished his whole design, for it was not above a fortnight after his return here, before he sent a young fellow . . . into New England to conduct her and her mother down here. They came to town Saturday evening the 27th and on Monday evening following, the nuptial ceremonies were

celebrated between Mr. Burr and the young lady."

The town of his nativity was very dear to President Burr. His first sermon was preached in the upper part of the parish and he made frequent visits to the old, loved scenes.

It was quite natural that Colonel Aaron, the son, should haunt these same familiar scenes so intimately entwined with ancestral ties. During the period of young manhood his was a figure often seen upon the streets and in the homes of the village. Many a prank he played upon his cousins and their friends, an endless flow of merry talk and captivating adventure regaling the company. The Rev. Samuel Spring, chaplain in Arnold's expedition against Quebec, and a long-time guest in town, tells how in the attack there was a heavy fall of snow: "Montgomery had fallen, the British troops were advancing toward the dead body, and little Burr was hastening from the fire of the enemy, up to his knees in snow, with Montgomery's body on his shoulders." These were the days of honor, promise and achievement.

There is the record of a visit made surreptitiously to the home of his ancestors

on the return from Europe after years of exile. Colonel Burr had arrived in Boston almost penniless. The very books which he brought with him were sold to raise money for his passage from Boston to New York. The sloop on which he made the trip was curiously under the command of a Captain distantly related to the lonely passenger and several of the crew had Burr blood in them. Reaching Southport harbor the Captain asked him to go ashore but he declined. Then in the quiet hours, as the sloop tarried for freight, this intellectual giant and ex-Vice-President of the United States, slipped away to the dear, old trysting places of youth, hid himself for reverie and retrospection beneath the kindly protection of ancient trees, gazed tenderly across hills and plains where the men of his clan had built their homes through the generations and silently made his way back to the ship which bore him once more into the strife of publicity and the bitter assault of mighty enemies,—a long afternoon of heartache, solitariness, bereavement and bold, determined activity.

One portion of our ancient parish goes by the name of Barlow's plain—the pleasant reminder of another honored family

whose tree has made rich with many shoots the history of our land. Samuel Barlow, the father of Joel, moved a little further back into the hill country about 1740; but a few miles more or less mattered little to the youth who became chaplain in the Revolutionary army, the writer of patriotic songs and a man of large affairs. The county capital was headquarters for good fellowship and the town shook its sides over the wit of the young poet, making him merrily welcome to the fraternity of good-cheer and patriotism. In April, 1786, he was here admitted to the Bar.

* * * * *

These excursions into an historic past win their exceeding great reward, but truth and candor compel the parson to make an humble confession. He pays full price for all that he gets. Part of that price is paid in the current coin of precious hours devoted to an unbroken succession of callers who "stop in"—total strangers all of them—simply to make a few inquiries about their ancestors and verify some ancient traditions.

"If it is not asking too much of you, I

wish you would go with me to the Town House and the Old Burying Ground."

Alas, how many golden morning hours have been sacrificed upon the altar of strange and obscure genealogies! Agreeable and instructive as many of these guests prove to be, it is a fact that a vast number of minutes will slip through the fingers while talk runs endlessly upon the inexhaustible theme.

There are also the letters that array themselves upon the parson's desk and look him in the face with a heartless sort of stare until they have received proper notice. They come every day—they come with no enclosure of stamps—they make no apologies—they simply compliment the parson upon the breadth of his knowledge and the charm of his researches, concluding with an appalling string of queries:

"I judge that you must have studied the ancient histories of these old towns and families very deeply and probably have considerable data and records in your possession, so I take the liberty of addressing you."

There follow four finely written pages of "fool's cap" paper, propounding some

twenty obscure and complicated problems in genealogy:

"I would like so much to have each branch of the Blank family entirely complete and I thought you would be able to give it to me."

"I have traced also the families of the wives but there are quite a number of breaks in the links which I am sure you will be able to fill."

"David married Susan Jane in 1754. I cannot find out when either was born but I presume you have the dates."

"Jeremiah Blank the third, 1699, married Eunice Roe. Did he marry before he left Blankville and after he settled in your town?"

"An old gentleman told me from memory about three of the Blank brothers during the Revolution. I guess he was mistaken in some things. Did they move west or what became of them? I shall wait your reply hoping that you will send me all the information necessary to finish my family tree."

He leads a strenuous life who squares these accounts and clears his genealogical desk each day, which saying shall be illustrated by a parable:

A parson by the name of Gray lived in a county capital, the "rose of New England." Once upon a time he became very ill.

Said Mr. White, "They're having a council of doctors now."

And Mr. Black said, "What is the matter with him?"

"Some new disease," was the reply. "It's a great day for new diseases."

There were many anxious people in the parish. The first thing which aroused their attention was the fact that the minister preached repeatedly upon heredity. And then it was observed that in his calls he ran to talk upon family connections. Later he borrowed every genealogy in town and all the family letters and journals available. Another curious phase of his course was seen in a religious attendance upon all family re-unions held in the east. At the same time the postmaster noticed that the parson corresponded with many learned societies, both English and American, heraldry and genealogy evidently being the prime objects of these organizations. He also haunted the Town House, mousing among the old papers in the vaults and poring over the fine chirography of

town clerks with a concentration that was positively distracting.

It was remarked that Mr. Gray's clothes had also grown seedy, the dust rising from garments whenever the wind blew or a parishioner shook his hand in greeting. Not that Mrs. Purple with whom he boarded did not take good care of him and his clothes; but simply that he lived in the dust of ages and the dust clung perversely to him.

At last there were wrinkles upon his forehead and deep lines in his cheeks, accompanied by a startling loss of appetite, especially noticed when going out to tea, a thing occurring not oftener than five or six times a week. (Mr. Gray was a bachelor.)

Mrs. Purple reported that he spent sleepless nights at this period. She heard him walking the study floor and on several occasions he had knocked down big books at two o'clock in the morning, making a tremendous racket. He was so absent-minded that when Mrs. White met him one day and said "Good afternoon," he replied, "Yes, her great-grandmother was a Flint and married John Skinn. All the Skinn-Flints of Boston are descended from them."

Mrs. White burst into tears and hurried down to the sewing-society to tell the ladies.

Mr. Gray had lovely blue eyes when he was settled, but they had gradually turned red and to cap the climax he was now wearing green goggles, apparently thinking that green harmonized with red and blue. "A man with such taste must be unbalanced."

"He was a most methodical person," explained Mrs. Purple. "He gave his mornings to sermon work, interrupted frequently to be sure by strangers who talked with him about ancestors, collateral descent, heredity, first remove, second remove, broken links and such things; his afternoons were spent in pastoral visits as you all know and he wrote letters during his evenings. Why, I've seen as many as ten come to him in one day asking questions about people's ancestors. I should think that every woman in the United States who wanted to join the Colonial Dames or the Daughters of the American Revolution and every man who wanted to join the Sons of the Colonial Wars or any other patriotic society wrote and asked him to make out a pedigree for them with names, dates, incidents and authorities. He's such a conscientious man that he never

shirks you know. He says he likes it. It's perfectly fascinating."

While Mrs. Purple was talking to the assembled neighbors, they heard a feverish voice in an adjoining room shout, "I have it, I have it. His great-grandfather's second wife was a Herring. The Herrings are all Fishes on the mother's side. Gules a fesse ermine, between two doves argent. Spes Alit."

"That's the way he goes on day and night now."

"Did you say that he answered all those letters and talked with all these strange visitors?" inquired the consulting physician hastily summoned from the city.

"Every one of them," was the reply.

"I pity the pastor of an old New England church these days," said the doctor. The "disease is contagious. It spreads by correspondence."

"Why," continued Mrs. Purple pathetically, "the last time he sat down to the tea table with us he never asked the blessing but put down his head and murmured:

"'Williams and Hone, Solomon Stone,
The Hillses, the Millses and Anthony Cone,
Ten men.'

"The children were awfully frightened. What did you say the disease was?"

"Madam," it was Doctor Brown the eminent specialist speaking, "Mr. Gray has an alarming attack of genealogical prostration. We must get him into the woods among the birds and animals where no pains are taken to register pedigree. By roughing it a year and taking regular doses of common sense I believe he will survive this collapse. Arboriculture has its fascinations but grave perils appertain to that particular phase of it known as the culture of Family Trees. It is not that the trees exude a gum or impart a poisonous scale, but in some inexplicable way a treacherous microbe often communicates itself to the unfortunate victim and in some cases death at the top has been known to ensue."

IX

PASTOR AND COLLEGE PRESIDENT

When the Rev. Heman Humphrey came to Fairfield in 1807 the general conditions which prevailed throughout New England were dark and unhappy.

The people of the new republic fretted over their formative work. The constitution was only a few years old and it must be expounded, its principles embodied in laws and illustrated by specific cases. War had left scars, its legacy of poverty and suffering, its dire influence of rebellion and anarchy. England continued to harass the young nation while France had entered into such close fraternal relations with us that our students and youth aped her very sentiments, fashions and excesses.

When Doctor Dwight exchanged his Greenfield parish for the headship of Yale College, infidelity was riotous in academic circles. The admiring disciples of Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson called themselves by the names of the great French skeptics Voltaire, Rousseau and their com-

patriots. It was Doctor Dwight's first task—perhaps his chief task—to breast this wave of infidelity and marshal his students into phalanxes of average Christian faith. He was eminently successful and won a cordial and happy response.

The local parishes of New England had become infected with the new old doctrines. This was one condition which the new minister in Fairfield faced when he began his work here.

Another condition had to do with the tone of life. One result of war had been the dulling of the moral sensibilities. The lawlessness and havoc which inevitably accompany warfare leave their trail. It is not alone that a country is infested with adventurers and mischief-makers, but men themselves grow careless, they yield to cruel impulses, they give way to riotous excesses. Although the spirit of patriotism flamed high in the hearts of American citizens, there was an indifference to order, decorum, sobriety and righteousness which appalled thoughtful, observant men. This parish, like the neighboring parishes, was infected with this bad contagion. And conditions had become more serious on account of the age and infirmity of Mr.

Eliot. A man of abounding health, sterling worth, great moral strength and backbone, lofty spiritual ideals, was needed to quicken the people into fresh hope and pure life.

The man for the place appeared in Heman Humphrey. He was a Connecticut son, born the year following the Declaration of Independence; his childhood was spent amid the trying and tempestuous scenes of the Revolution.

His father was a farmer whose energies did not bring any large return of prosperity. The son had a few months of schooling in the winter and spent the rest of the year in long days' labor on the ungracious soil. When this youth attained the age of seventeen he became the hired man on one or another neighbor's farm for a part of the year. His winter months were devoted to teaching the district school. The meager education which he had acquired by the help of the country pedagogue had been notably supplemented by books in a small parish library. These few precious volumes—mostly history—broadened his horizon and kindled a desire for college education. As he read by the light of pine knots and the flickering blaze eddying forth from the wide-

mouthed fireplace, the very dimness and mystery of his surroundings excited imagination and served to inspire the youth with high aims and hopes. When twenty years of age he passed through that experience known as conversion, a radical change being wrought in heart and mind; life assumed new phases of interest to him, his desires and purposes now converged in preparation for the ministry. In six months of hard study he mastered enough Latin, Greek and mathematics to enter the junior year of Yale College. At graduation in 1805 he had the satisfaction of facing life free from debt, his schooling all paid by his own faithful work, the only help received from home being the clothes with which his self-denying mother supplied him. What a fine, stimulating record, worthy our favor and emulation!

The important event in his young manhood was his association with President Dwight. The alert, sensitive youth proved to be the kind of soil in which the great teacher at New Haven sowed the seed which yielded an extraordinary harvest. Like many of the sympathetic, appreciative youth who came under the influence and inspiration of this remarkable leader

at Yale, young Humphrey responded to his touch with a loyalty and enthusiasm most beautiful. Theological instruction those days was not pursued according to the present fashion. The college was a school of the prophets. It was originally founded and supported for the chief purpose of educating preachers of the gospel. Divinity was a part of the curriculum.

But it was the fashion for students to settle in the family of some minister and there pursue their studies under the guiding hand of the pastor while these clerical apprentices were learning what we may call the technique of service. There were famous country preachers like Doctor Bellamy who had so many students in the home that it practically amounted to a divinity school. Following the custom young Humphrey went to Goshen, Connecticut, and became the student companion and helper of the Rev. Asahel Hooker. This part of his education was finished at the age of twenty-eight years. A unanimous call to preach in Fairfield was given Mr. Humphrey and on April 16, 1807, he was ordained and installed.

Given the field and the man, results speedily became apparent. The new min-

ister had lighted his torch in the fire kindled by Doctor Dwight and it shed a clear, strong light from the first day of settlement.

Religion was to the evangelical school of Dwight a larger thing than morality. It signified deep, fervent piety. So Mr. Humphrey induced the church to do away with the Half-Way Covenant and make a new record of membership in Zion. There must be the evidence of a changed life, the actual experience of religion, before a person could be received into the church. The force and faith of the new minister carried the people with him. And there must be a new confession of faith, a modern, up-to-date statement of belief, one which incorporated the new spirit, the evangelistic method. It shows the firm grasp of affairs and the large personal influence on the part of this young preacher that he carried the day in making these changes and that he did it without any marked degree of antagonism or opposition. His earnestness and sincerity, his extraordinary adaptability enabled him to do what the average minister would have found to be impossible. Then it is to be noted that he commanded the support of

certain eminent leaders in the parish, men like Judge Sherman and Deacon Judson. In truth the call to this pastorate had been unanimous and the people entertained great hopes of a vital service on the part of Mr. Humphrey. They knew that he came with aims and plans which might upset the ancient ways. If there were people who could not conscientiously rally to the support of his startling methods they had the grace and courtesy to give him a free hand and allow a new system to show its worth. The membership of the church was cut down half or two-thirds, but the roll showed a real membership, a living company of men and women who accepted the creed and tried to attain the standard set by the new order of church fidelity. There were evangelistic services, warm, exuberant, uplifting. The old, staid worshippers, the people of a former generation, were somewhat shocked by what they saw and heard. It was a re-appearance of the disquieting scenes witnessed during the career of Whitfield and his contemporaries in the colony. It was the adoption of means which became popular among the New Lights and the recently organized Methodist and Baptist

brethren. But President Dwight sanctioned this departure on the part of the orthodox churches or this recurrence to the ways of Edwards and the work proceeded along the lines indicated.

Social life in Fairfield at this time was characterized by considerable fashion and gaiety. Although people had not entirely recovered from the misfortunes of the American Revolution and the impoverishment of their estates or their business, yet they entered heartily into the conventional activities of society. A certain deplorable latitude and laxness marked these merry times. And the continued harassing of our ships on the part of England as well as our intimacy with French literature and French spirit fostered restlessness, passion and the conditions hostile to religion.

When we recall the fact that the drinking customs of the day were exceedingly free, that strong liquor in various forms was seen on nearly every sideboard and offered to guest and workman alike with genial frequency, we are not surprised to read that a high type of spiritual life did not flourish. When Lyman Beecher, a contemporary of Mr. Humphrey, attended the ordination of a nearby neighbor, the

minister's dining-room was redolent of rum and gin and lemons. The jollity of the company passed the bounds of decorum so that Mr. Beecher vowed a vow of reformation. Mr. Humphrey was startled when he observed the indifference of his parish upon this matter. Common indulgence led to all sorts of excesses so that the tone and standard of religion had seriously deteriorated. Along with the zealous and eloquent preaching of a simple gospel Mr. Humphrey insisted upon sobriety, temperance, self-denial, strict adherence to the principles of an exalted morality. The very largeness of demands which he made upon his people awakened in them the desire and purpose to attain the new ideal set before them. His work as a reformer was important and distinctive. When the state association heard the voices of Lyman Beecher and Heman Humphrey in behalf of this great forward movement there was a significant response. Parish after parish took up the work and joined heartily in the endeavor to purify social conditions.

The task assumed a special importance here in Fairfield for the reason that lawyers and litigants gathered regularly at

the sessions of the court while sailors and soldiers, tradesmen and gentlemen of leisure made their home in the shire town. The young minister had many a bout with his intellectual peers as they discussed the momentous questions which concerned their advantage and prosperity. It was a wide and far-reaching influence which he exerted over these men of intelligence and leadership. There were theological sermons covering the whole field of current thought and there were sermons, addresses, newspaper articles and pamphlets upon slavery, duelling, intemperance, Sabbath keeping, education, good morals, American history, Indian rights, missions, government and the various themes which the times suggested. He treated these matters with a clearness, practicality and force which left no hearer or reader in doubt as to his precise meaning. He wrought wisely, unselfishly with profound sympathy for men.

There were ten busy, earnest, fruitful years given to this work in Fairfield. And his service made him a conspicuous and influential man in New England. Other and larger churches sought him. Opportunities for advancement came to him.

When he deemed it best to accept one of these invitations and enter upon a larger work, the break was distressing, for he had become endeared to this people and his labors here had been richly blessed. But the parish had not recovered from the setback given it in 1779. Business had never revived—had in fact been diverted to Newfield (Bridgeport). The stipend of the minister was insufficient for his expenses. Mr. Humphrey frankly stated the case and asked to be released when he decided to accept a call to the church in Pittsfield. "Painful is the necessity which has led me to take the first step toward securing a dismission from my present ministerial charge," he wrote in addressing the church. I will not quote his letter in full but simply record the meeting of Consociation, the expressions of heartfelt sorrow, the high praise given him for the splendid service rendered to Fairfield and Connecticut and the affectionate words of appreciation which were spoken at the time.

Mr. Humphrey repeated his successful ministry in the Massachusetts parish; but his shining qualities as a leader so impressed the people of that region that they quite

naturally turned to him in the selection of a man to organize and conduct the new educational institution founded at Amherst.

When he assumed the headship of this callow school the difficulties which beset the task seemed insurmountable. Many people were opposed to the founding and endowment of a new college in the state. Was not Harvard sufficient? But others believed that this fresh venture in the country would meet a common need. Doctor Humphrey agreed with them. He entered upon his life's great work with superb confidence and enthusiasm. For twenty-two years he gave himself with unstinted loyalty to the upbuilding of Amherst. It seems to me, according to the narrative of events, that he was the real maker of the institution. Buildings, endowments, competent and consecrated instructors, a steadily increasing student body, the atmosphere and inspiration which constitute the true college—these all came at his bidding so that when the period of his service was concluded, he was able to rest from his labors with the sweet, happy consciousness that his arduous labors had been abundantly, magnificently rewarded. He had impressed him-

self upon a young, hopeful, promising institution destined to take large part in the history of New England, the Christian ministry and collegiate education. He had profoundly impressed himself upon a notable company of young men who went forth to teach, to preach and to serve in many honorable capacities throughout the land—throughout the world. "Read the sermon on the mount every month of your life," said he to the students who entered his classroom. Such advice gives the key to his view of life.

The quiet closing years were passed in Pittsfield—years freighted with precious memories and delightful associations—years devoted to a ministry at large extending to the length and breadth of our country.

But the catalogue of achievements is not ended when we point to his service in the pastorate or his service as president of Amherst College. He was the author of ten or twelve volumes—covering a wide range of subjects—education, theology, travel, history, literature and morals. The influence which he exerted by his contributions to the press and the varied literary activities of the day was far-reaching and vital. For men, young men had learned to

rely upon his judgment and advice. He represented all that was brave, true, fine, wholesome, manly, uplifting in private life and public service.

The great temperance reform movement which he shared as leader with Dr. Lyman Beecher, Dr. Nathaniel Hewit and their associates links his name enduringly with the history of that magnificent fight for clean manhood. But his spirit could not be restricted to one particular line of effort in behalf of the better manhood. Every reform of the day found in him a sympathetic co-worker. He gave himself with hearty encouragement to each distinct cause.

But he shone brightest as the man—the well-balanced, symmetrical man. "I have never known a man," says Doctor Todd, "who in my opinion came so near to being faultless." Practical and magnanimous, shrewd yet kindly, he was engaged in perpetual happy tasks for the benefit of his fellows. While pastor here he paid much attention to the schools which had always claimed the service of the minister. Observing one day that the children had no backs to their benches in the schoolhouse and that for many of the children the benches

were so high that their feet did not reach the floor, he immediately ordered that backs should be made and the benches lowered. Humanity, the desire and purpose to sweeten and exalt all life.

Integrity was stamped upon every action. He purchased a horse of a parishioner, agreeing to a certain price. "It is really worth ten dollars more than I am asking for it," remarked the owner. "But I must sell the animal. I need the money." "Well," observed Mr. Humphrey, "if I find that the horse is worth the extra ten dollars I will pay it." A few weeks' use convinced the minister that he had made a capital bargain so he paid the extra ten dollars with satisfaction.

His love of children was like the refreshing grace of a hillside spring. He knew the way to young hearts and he pursued it with charm and joy unabated to the close of life. There was a home experience in this happy fellowship which equipped him for such association. Were there not ten olive branches in the sacred enclosure of his own family garden? Two of these daughters married ministers, three of these sons became ministers, another son studied law, attained eminence and was a member

of Congress. Various spheres in life were honorably served by these sons and daughters. And all through the years this public spirited and tireless worker conducted himself with a humility and a simplicity which passed beyond criticism. He enjoyed his joke, a vein of humor pervaded his mental constitution. Christian service gave him many an opportunity to use it. You have heard of the recalcitrant farmer who refused to hear him preach. One day Doctor Humphrey called at his house while the farmer was cradling grain. As the pastor was seeking an interview with the man of the house he crossed the way into the field. But when the farmer saw him coming he dropped his cradle and disappeared in the woods beyond. Nothing daunted the minister took off his coat, assumed the cradle and bent to the hard task until the setting sun and the finished field reminded him that he had well performed his service. Amazed and amused the farmer watched the vigorous swing of the minister's arm. He likewise appreciated the humor of the occasion. "A man who can cut grain like that," said he admiringly, "is worth respect and friendship. I will hear him preach." On the

next Sunday this farmer appeared in the family pew. It was some months later that the shrewd, kindly minister observed a great change in the man and was finally privileged to number him among the saints. "I cradled him into the church," he facetiously remarked.

With infinite tact, with love unfeigned and practically manifest he served beneficently his day and generation. It was a common saying, current in this parish long years after he had given over his work into other hands—a current saying when the heat of passion embroiled neighbors and crusty individuals fell out with each other—"Well, this would never have happened if Mr. Humphrey had stayed with us." The angel of peace and good-will abode in his presence and fellowship.

The Lych Gate

X

THE MUSE OF HISTORY

THE author of "Venetian Life," a book filled with beautiful word pictures, is a man whose views command our friendly heed. When Mr. Howells writes to the parson "I never saw any place that took me more than your old town," there is good reason to feel assured that the parish must be invested with many charms. The fine, generous handiwork of nature is apparent on every side. Art comes in for a share of the praise, inasmuch as arching elms, velvet lawns, old-fashioned and new-fashioned gardens, restful Green, park-like hill-sides and similar man-trained devices enhance the native loveliness of the rural scenery. But history comes not short in its liberal contributions to the attractions of the parish. So it was foreordained that on a certain 17th of June—Bunker Hill Day—a few kindred spirits should meet in Sherman parsonage and organize an Historical Society.

The Muse of History had long ago

inspired children of the forefathers to rebuild the tombs of their ancestors and mark sites of local interest. The Daughters of the American Revolution, aflame with patriotic zeal, set a huge boulder on the Green declaring in words of brass that the place was the center of civic, military and religious life for eight or nine generations. And the Daughters erected a memorial fountain in a western portion of the old parish, dedicating it with appropriate ceremonies. Felicitous and persuasive are these services "rendered for love of country."

The Memorial Day on which the Daughters unveiled a tablet put upon the lich-gate of the ancient "Burial Hill" is a day long to be treasured. The thick curtain of gray cloud gave a somber aspect to the great assemblage strangely in keeping with the calm and solemnity of the hour. Ancient God's Acre became that day a trysting-place of four centuries: The Seventeenth Century, age of pioneer struggle and dawning of the larger hope; The Eighteenth Century, age of stern and bitter fight for liberty, our Star-spangled Banner unfurled to the breezes; The Nineteenth Century, age of irrepressible

conflict, civil war, moral and political readjustment, "with malice toward none and charity toward all"; The Twentieth Century, age of infinite opportunity and glorious promise, the young, buoyant, matchless Century, with "leadership in progress and righteousness," America's watchword. The four Centuries seemed to meet and stretch their hands in silent benediction above the hushed company. When the roster of citizen soldiers and patriot statesmen was read and we remembered that the sacred dust of their bodies here reposed, the past came back with all tenderness and inspiration. The place was peopled with shadowy forms—the forefathers walked mysteriously among us.

"Benefactors, you are welcome," said the multitude doing homage to the honored sires. "Amid the living green of spring and radiancy of flowers and melody of songful birds and sweet prophetic fragrance of nature, we greet you, spirits of the just made perfect. You live in the proud and grateful remembrance of your children's children. You live in the abiding, triumphant works achieved through your many sacrifices. You live in us and you live with us even while you live the

blessed life above, clothed upon with immortality, happy in the glorious citizenship of heaven." To such thought and speech were the people stirred. "All hail. We pledge you our word of honor—this Fatherland shall be preserved true and free. So help us God."

Did not our hearts thrill while we stood beneath the cloud and entered this noble fellowship? Such days give an impulse to love and a sanctity to patriotism measured only by the good great deeds of unselfish devotion to native-land.

This fine example of loyalty to the past set by the women of the town had already prepared the way for the later organization whose object was the enrichment of life through familiarity with local annals and achievements.

A vast amount of priceless material for writing history has been lost during the preceding generations through the carelessness of heirs and the indifference of people in general.

The experience that came to a friend of the parson's is not uncommon. This friend inherited a colonial estate handed down for many generations. The ancient house had a garret whose amplitude was

tested to full capacity by the multitude and variety of family heirlooms. In a thoughtless moment the owner of the property leased the place and gave the occupant permission to "clean house." Little did this inheritor of the farm suspect that the "house-cleaning" would extend to the garret, but what was his dismay and horror to learn on his next visit that the tenants in their fanatical desire to put everything in a state of naked cleanliness had started with the garret, dumping into the back-yard all the dust-begrimed letters, journals, torn books, newspapers, broken keepsakes, antique decayed pieces of furniture and similar stuff—the whole making a jolly bon-fire and illumination. Needless to say that good manners were scattered to the four winds on this occasion and the wronged, indignant proprietor gave his tenants a "piece of his mind," but it availed nothing—a case of locked barn after the horse was stolen.

One of the prime aims of the co-workers in town was to possess a treasure-house in which to collect the objects illustrative of local history. One and another enthusiast had made pilgrimages to Deerfield, Concord and Plymouth. Why not modestly

follow the course marked out by these historic places and appeal to the pride and affection of the people? It is true that there is only one Plymouth Rock (although we have a piece of it in this parish as does many another favored town), and there will never be a second Concord with its monument to the Minute Men, its Mosses from an Old Manse, and a hundred historic and literary associations. And we can find just one unique, quiet, charming Deerfield on the map—the Deerfield of Mary Wilkins and the Indian massacre and the wild rough days of frontier conflict. But let us not think that these are all the elect towns which have contributed to the working-out of our national destiny. They have done their large part. Honor them for it and rejoice that they have shown a proper spirit of appreciation in erecting the monuments and publishing the memorials which celebrate a distinguished rôle in the colonial drama.

We also bear a certain burden of responsibility. There are worthy names incorporated in our town life, notable events dating back to words and deeds here spoken and achieved. They must be fit-

tingly enshrined in order to the full and truthful record of national progress.

The response to the patriotic impulse—the impulse to form a "Society"—came quickly and when the original company of incorporators first met, the plan of campaign was distinctly outlined.

A museum? Yes. And it shall be filled with the precious reminders of "a storied past."

"I will give the old manuscripts that I have been collecting through the years," said one enthusiast.

"I will commit to your keeping the genealogical works which I have used," said another friend.

"You shall have all our family heirlooms when we have done with them," promised a third helper. And the spirit proved contagious so that wealth of material came into the Society's possession before the Society had "where to lay its head," although a fire-proof brick building soon threw open its doors and extended its hospitality—thus verifying the truth of the brave speech that "all things are possible to him who wills."

But a place and a collection are simply spurs to research, preservation of old land-

marks, watchcare over public records and a disinterested service in behalf of the town's fame—"the sort of thing we want," wrote Prof. John Fiske.

Is not this one of the charms clinging to these old parishes—the vast resources which they afford in the way of fresh, original pursuit after historic facts, provincial characters and incidents, the infinite details of local tradition and experience contributary to the greater movements which assume prominence in the nation's life?

One day the parson was called to discharge the "last offices" over a stranger whose boyhood had been spent in the town—a descendant of the old stock.

"Now you shall have the papers, journals, correspondence and accumulated truck hidden away for ages under the eaves of the old house, the veriest rubbish in all the world," remarked the family. Such "finds" as this often prove a perfect treasure-trove to the quiet student of affairs.

Not long ago the garret of a capacious mansion in town was subject to a thorough examination on the part of a friend and behold there lay hidden an ancient chest,

plethoric with all sorts of interesting documents and books. There were letters proving that "Blank" had been "not altogether loyal," subscription lists to public improvements, the quaint rules of the village academy, deeds, accounts, bills, manuscript relating to the "Fire Sufferers" of 1779 and their interests in certain grants of land in Ohio south of Lake Erie, and other valuable material. But chief in the "find" was one of the ancient Town Record Books containing a great fund of information, supplementing the large collection already stored in the public vaults. The honored and long-time Town clerk had been accustomed to guard the book with special care, but it had been stowed away with such solicitude that it did not come to light for more than one generation.

Many of these ancient volumes are crumbling into pieces or the indistinct chirography of the cursive hand is fast passing away like the shadowy lines of the original Declaration of Independence. This state of things gives the Historical Society an opportunity to show its mettle by the prosaic yet patriotic work of copying these records and making them more accessible while they are preserved for all time.

It was this spirit of loyalty to the "good of ages" that incited the Society to commemorate the founding of the village academy. The school had reckoned among its teachers such eminent men as Doctor Humphrey, President of Amherst College, Doctor Baldwin, President of Marietta, Doctor Pearce, President of Western Reserve College, Doctor Moore, Moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly, Doctor March, preacher and author, Henry Dutton, Governor of Connecticut, Henry Day, member of the New York Bar and other leaders not less distinguished.

A large company of pupils had gone out into the world to strengthen the nation's life and make glad the hearts of brother workers. These venerable country academies were the mainstay of higher education and the chief feeders of college classes for generations. The rugged, energetic products of their training filled the high places of trust and enterprise in the nation. No single agency has done more to emphasize the importance of various country parishes than these small, modest institutions. Recall the work done on Greenfield Hill in its academy during the headship of Timothy Dwight. It was a fine

social, intellectual leaven for all the state. The fame achieved amid his rural surroundings elected the country preacher and teacher to the Presidency of Yale College. Call to mind the history of education in Litchfield and mark what controlling influences have streamed forth from its institutions. These village schools have been the honor of New England, priceless gems in the diadem of her good name.

On the day of this anniversary to which reference has been made, it was delightful yet pathetic to hear the greetings and witness the fellowship. There were old pupils present who had not seen each other for sixty years. When one of the speakers referred to a little boat which he and his comrades had built some threescore years ago and named for a certain attractive Miss who commanded his homage at the time, it touched the heart to the quick to observe as the name was repeated that the Miss of long-ago sat sweetly observant in the Hall, joyous and hopeful—the gleam of youth apparently bright and fadeless in her eyes. The bench full of stately, venerated matrons gracing the occasion—ladies whose recollections went back to the thirties—taught the younger

generations unforgetable lessons in the art of youth's perennial renewal.

It is the happy privilege of an Historical Society to put into good shape and permanent the annals which too often pass into oblivion. Some day the world awakens to an interest in a man who has achieved one of the great engineering feats of all time. Where was he born, who trained him, what school pointed out to him the way? He was a country lad, the great-grandson of a Revolutionary hero and inventor, an industrious self-supporting student in the village academy. What is the secret of his success? The free, independent, laborious life on a farm, the good schooling in the hill-town seminary, and the inspiration of a mother who believed in his destiny.

People must know these things. There are no aspersions to be cast upon city breeding. All honor to the youth, the man who profits by his metropolitan opportunity and forges to the front in the world's affairs. But the countrybred lad has the tremendous advantage of nature, simplicity, hard work, trained senses, robust physical inheritance, constant incentive to self-betterment and an early envi-

ronment favorable to thought and the life of systematic, painstaking endeavor.

A country parish is always a nursery for the city worker, the man of large gifts, the genius of great affairs. The name Marquand occurs in the old records of the Prime Ancient Society many times. There were two sons who, like many compeers, sought the city for the larger exercise of powers. Their names are inextricably linked with the progress of education in this land—the one bestowing munificent endowments upon institutions and erecting noble structures for many forms of Christian work, the other kindling a genuine enthusiasm for art in thousands of minds, making rich with services and treasures the Metropolitan Museum. The nation is put in debt to these men for their splendid, generous contributions to civic and national achievement. The Sheffield Scientific School, founded and endowed by a son of our town, is another efflorescence of this same munificent spirit.

An occasional visitor who summered for many years in a near-by parish, drawn thither by early attachments, is an interesting example of the service done by these country boys. The farm, the church,

the common school and a brief stay at the village academy prepared Francis A. Palmer for earning his own living and making a way in the world. He saved money from the first days of work. Although a "close" man and shrewd at a bargain he loved to share earnings and savings with deserving people and the institutions which won his approval.

There was one absorbing desire and object, however, which shaped his liberality through all the years of his long and arduous struggle. He took special interest in young people from the country seeking an education. This ambitious man "had the sense to feel the loss he had sustained by his lack of early education" remarked the *New York Independent* editorially commenting with favor upon his career. He wished that his large wealth should go to giving youth of small means in country districts the educational privileges which he had not enjoyed. So the little colleges and the village seminaries north, south, east and west advantaged by his kind, sane interest in their prosperity, hundreds of thousands of dollars going into their treasuries.

The happy consummation of his life's

supreme aim was most generously realized in the founding and endowment of a Trust bearing his own name—the income of which is to be devoted to the help of the young people and the institutions always so near to his heart. "The best investments which I have ever made in the shape of financial aid," observed an eminent philanthropist the life-long friend of this benefactor, "were those given for the education of some forty picked young men whom I have sent out into the world as my representatives."

"Yes, yes," assented this creator of the munificent Fund, "and these are my best investments and I mean that they shall increase and multiply through all coming ages, an honor to church and state, nation and humanity."

Is it not worth while to commemorate the services of such wise helpers? Will it not encourage many a hard pressed, ambitious youth to most strenuous effort? Let the Register of Honor, the Book of True Men and Golden Deeds be made and held in reverence by every parish.

XI

HAPPY SUMMER GUESTS

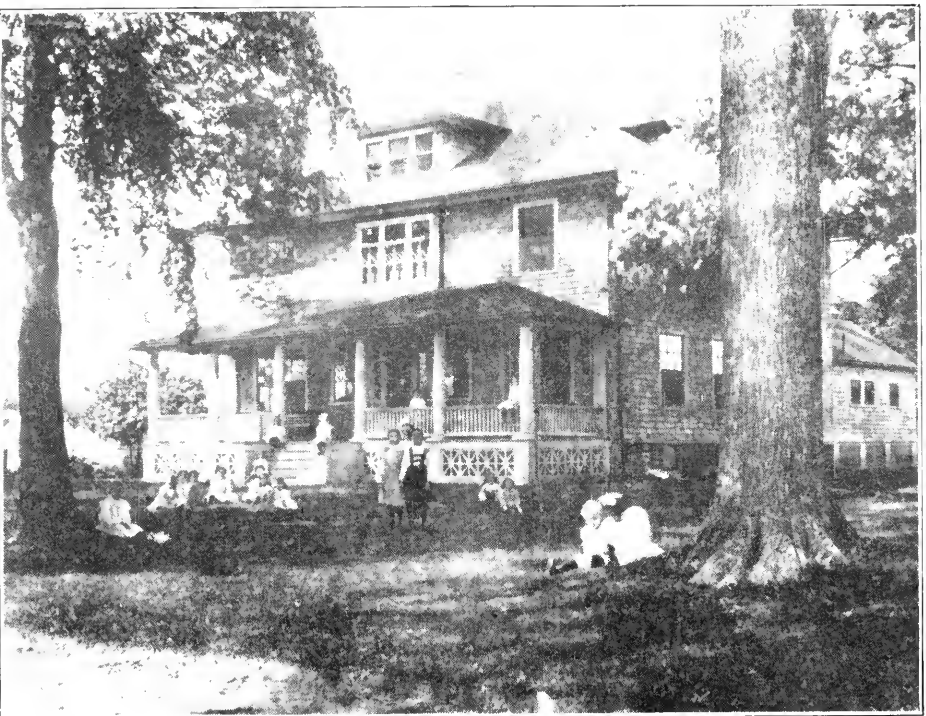
The large migration from city to country during the summer months is more than whim, caprice or native restlessness. It is one sign of a new awakening. The desire strengthens on the part of the average man to read at first hand "In Nature's infinite book of secrecy." It is a happy omen and mitigating circumstance coincident with the mad rush of the day's social and industrial competition.

Do not the birds have their northern and their southern homes? How they love to travel in vast flocks when the season warns them of approaching change!

> "The birds against the April wind
> Flew northward, singing as they flew."

Field, mountain, river, forest, seaside, garden bid all welcome to their sacred, glorious precincts.

> "Come out beneath the unmastered sky,
> With its emancipating spaces,
> And learn to sing as well as I,
> Without premeditated graces."



THE FRESH AIR HOME

And yet how large is the multitude of humble folk who never chance to smell the fragrant new-mown hay or recline on some woodland bed of mosses and yield to the charm of a babbling brook?

> "I chatter over stony ways
> In little sharps and trebles,
> I bubble into eddying bays,
> I babble on the pebbles."

But the day came sweet and clear when it seemed to the parson and the company of joyous helpers that some "prisoners of poverty" might be given the freedom of the country. Had we read pathetic stories about the "little mothers" to no purpose? When the newspapers made appalling revelations of cruelty and wickedness on the part of "sweaters," when burdened missionaries told the tale of the "submerged tenth" and said "Listen to the bitter cry of the outcast," did not the heart burn within us?

There was a loyal response to the suggestion that we make a summer home for such small people as our means would support.

"I will discover some quiet, sheltered resting-place," said one great-hearted friend. And "Elm Cottage," lying under the shade of massive, beautiful trees, near

enough to the sea so that the waves sang a lullaby if the mood was upon them, snug, modest "Elm Cottage" said, "I am what you seek."

"We will gather the simple furnishings that are needed," remarked the young folks, delighted to share in a service so tender and fruitful. Another royal friend said, "I will send you blankets, counterpanes, pillows and cots—cunning iron cots—like those upon which the children lie in the hospital."

And the ladies, always swift to lend a helping hand, promised linen, kitchen-fixings and the hundred details of plain housekeeping.

They were busy days—the days preceding the opening of the Home in June. Everything must be spick and span clean. Books and playthings with pictures for their pleasure came from many sources. A flag to adorn the flag-pole on the roof appeared one day. Swings and hammocks, carts and dolls, checked gingham aprons for week-days and white with delicate dots of red for Sunday, broad brimmed hats for the shore and bathing suits for the sea—what a generous preparation it was and

love beat strong in the heart while young and old took part in the jolly task!

A big 'bus met the little girls at the station. How they tumbled over each other in their eagerness and merriment, bundles flying hither and thither—(they always travel with bundles, these Fresh Air guests)—how they sang and giggled and shouted as they swung up the street through the town!

"Did you ever come into the country before?"

"No, sir," answered a dozen voices. "Where are the cows?" and their keen eyes roved over smooth-clipped lawns, along the noble arches made by the ancient elms, down into the wondrous gardens filled with endless variety of flowers, vegetables and precious fruit-trees.

"I want to see a robin." The wee girl had read her primer and now her dream was to come true.

> "Art thou the bird whom man loves best
> The pious bird with the scarlet breast?"

The rehabilitated, ancient cottage gave them a merry welcome.

"It's heavenly," piped up a thin, shrill voice as the speaker gazed upon green

fields and distant, shimmering sea. There was a rapturous expression stealing over her pinched, weazened face, the blue of her eyes deepened, a delicate flush crept into her cheeks and an air of dreams subtly diffused itself about her person.

The matron and her assistant had busy watchful days and nights. It is no easy task to keep peace and cheer among twenty or twenty-five strange little girls who tarry for two weeks in a country house—set back in the solitude and quietness of rural life. But had not the ladies agreed to take a kindly turn in the way of service and entertainment? So the days sped swiftly by filled with a delightful round of sports and pleasures.

One morning it was to the beach for the gathering of shells and a dip in the sea, the afternoon being given to a tramp through some flower-strewn lot where the children plucked daisies and buttercups. At eventide they rolled on the lawn, jumped rope, swung bravely in hammocks, put numerous doll babies to bed and sang their merry songs, the popular airs of the day caught on the streets of the great city.

Another day they were off for a ride—ten of them, twenty of them—horses and

wagonette or carryall loaned by the Lady Bountiful who thus served the children's pleasure year after year. They went back into the hills, or bowled along the macadam roads of the plain, shedding sunshine everywhere—gladness of heart overflowing like waters from the springs in our meadows.

There are picnics and parties, ice cream and cake, apples and blackberries, an endless succession of games and kindnesses. The Doctor "looked after" diet and health, the fatherly treasurer did a hundred beautiful deeds besides footing the bills, the ladies of the neighborhood made daily visits and looked after sundry needs and interests—everybody had a place in the heart for these annual guests.

And the dollars to run this beneficent institution? They came with a delightful spontaneity.

The midsummer event in town for years has been the Lawn Fete at the parsonage when everybody for miles around pays respects to the Fresh Air Association, bringing some contribution—cake, candy, fancy work, muslin aprons, bunches of sweet peas, great good cheer, friendly greetings—innumerable precious gifts. These home products and happy wishes,

passing from one guest to another with proper exchange of money, added to sums given by Earnest Workers netted annually the six or seven hundred dollars necessary to carry the work through the season. And best of all is the happy interchange of kindly feeling and hopeful sentiment—the bright hour spent socially beneath the shade of tulip, elm and maple on the ample lawn with perchance a merry song by the little guests from Elm Cottage, bringing the joy of a blessed charity straight home to the heart, an inspiration to nobler sacrifice and higher living. The company of friends embraces all ages, creeds and conditions, for the happiness of bestowing upon a humble child two weeks' wealth of gladsome country life draws the people into tender comradeship of service.

Every Sunday morning these summer guests are given a place of honor in the church—their bright, interesting faces a constant study to the preacher—so near to him that every shade of expression is noticeable, now and then a drooping eyelid or a smothered sigh intimating that one of the company has snatched a few minutes of sweet sleep.

But it is the vesper hour under the grateful shield of the whispering trees at the Cottage which will be longest remembered. On Sunday afternoons the parson with his choir of children helpers, sweet singers of Israel, meets the city strangers and they worship together in Nature's temple. The slanting rays of the lowering sun sift through the trembling foliage, the nearby fields hush their myriad life into respectful silence, the low murmur of old ocean falls gently upon the ear, a sweet accompaniment. A prayer or two, a psalm repeated in unison, some simple responsive sentences and a brief lesson from the Book—with song upon song, sung with the glad vigor of childhood, often sweet and heart-moving, pervaded with the infinite pathos and tender faith and love of the child—thus the warp and the woof are woven into an exquisite seamless garment of praise. May the recollection of these blessed hours spent with God under Nature's arching splendors adorn and enrich the sensitive heart of the summer guests!

No ministry to human need has brought a larger compensation of uplift and hopefulness to some of the workers than this

work among the children. And it has pointed the way to a direct and profitable fellowship between city and country, a service and partnership abounding in good promise. All honor to the Reverend Willard Parsons, father of this great thought and impulse!

* * * * *

The parson has learned more than one helpful lesson in his contact with the little folks. There are startling revelations of life. The matron must go to the city to investigate these sad stories. A fresh purpose to do and give and suffer in behalf of human need is begotten. Opportunities to aid deserving poor open to the right and the left. Who can forget some of the incidents which are written in these curious phases of experience? Here is the story of a self-respecting American, as she called herself:

"I'd like to have mither and the children with me, you know," said one of the little mothers who came in August.

"How many are there, child?"

"Only six," was the quick reply, "and I'm the oldest. I'm nine and they call me 'Little Mither.' I take care of the young

'uns when mither goes out washing. Why, I can manage a baby as well as the nicest nurse you ever saw. And I can wash dishes and sweep and mend clothes and do lots of things just like a grown up." Honest pride glowed in her speech.

"Poor thing!" whispered the matron.

We had been getting acquainted with the last instalment of Fresh Air children—girls whose ages ranged from four to twelve.

No sooner had they jumped out of the 'bus than the noisy score flew into swings or hammocks, or tumbled over the soft turf, or raced through the pavilion and around the dormitory—shouting, teasing, crying, laughing—a small bedlam suddenly let loose amid the sultry quiet of a midsummer afternoon.

The thick slices of white bread and golden butter passed by the cook calmed their wild spirits for a few moments.

"Please, mum," piped a tiny five-year-old, "I's used to coffee. The milk has scum on it."

"Hush, you dago," hoarsely whispered an elder sister. "Mum's the word. Take what you can git."

"And where is your father?" said the

matron, continuing our talk with Mary, the Little Mither.

"Her real father's been dead ever so long," volunteered a frail hunchback. "She's got a stepfather and he drinks like a fish and her mother has to feed the whole kit of 'em."

"But he's kind, when he's sober," cried Mary driven to the defense of her family's good name.

"I don't care if he is," retorted the informer. "He's a deevil when drunk and makes it hot for all of yous, and the old woman, too. I'd fight him, I would—" and the speaker doubled her little fist, squaring off in fine pugilistic style.

Now Mary won our hearts the first day of her stay. Sweet-tempered and truthful, patient with the patience of some old battle-scarred saint, swift to lend a hand in the oversight of the smaller children or the tidying up of the home, we felt a genuine liking for her.

In a few days the "Little Mither" was rich with new shoes, half a dozen new dresses, proper underwear and all suitable gear. When the two weeks ended we voted to keep her with the next set, having received the mother's grateful assent; for

Mary grew fat and rosy, strength came back to her limbs, the careworn lines in her face were rubbed out and she was merry as a cricket, no longer the premature old woman, aged nine.

One day a well-to-do farmer drove down our way, hitched his buggy in front of the cottage and sauntered through the yard.

"I'm a lookin' for a gal," says he.

"We have twenty of them."

"But I want one to keep. I'm mighty well off. There ain't a better farmer'n our town if I do say it. And there hain't any mortgage on the farm either and it's all stocked. And between you and me"—this was spoken in low confidential tones—"I've got ten thousand dollars wuth of railroad stock that pays two per cent quarterly."

The old gentleman looked me straight in the face, as much as to say, "Beat that if you can!"

Then he continued: "But we lost our little gal nigh onto twenty-five years ago and mother'n me want to adopt one, see?" Another significant pause. "We'll give the child a good eddication, bring her up as one of the family and when we die

she'll have the farm'n stock. Good chance, ain't it?"

"Friend," said I, "there's a little girl here who would make your home bright and happy. We'll see what can be done about it."

A talk with Mary promised well, for the fair prospects of years cast a sort of spell over the child's imagination.

"Yes," she answered after two days' reflection, "I'll go if mither'll spare me."

So we sent the matron down to New York in order to consummate the arrangements.

It was a wretched tenement in which the mother, her drunken, shiftless husband and six children were housed; one room on the sixth story, a few pieces of broken furniture shifting up and down the floor; heat, rank odors, stuffy air, unadulterated misery.

"And air ye back agin," exclaimed not unkindly the mother as she caught sight of Mary in the doorway. "Child, there's not a crust o' bread to feed the six of yes, and no washin' for three days."

At this point the matron stepped forward.

"Yes, yes," said the mother with notes of appreciation running through her

speech—"She looks foine—fat as a pet pig in ould Ireland. It's her first sight o' the counthrey."

"And wouldn't you like to have Mary live in the country and grow up a lovely woman, rugged and happy?" observed the matron sympathetically.

Then without waiting upon the mother's answer, she told her errand, picturing graphically the fine opportunities which must open to the child as a farmer's daughter and the heiress of his farm and fortune.

The mother stood with arms akimbo in the group of scantily clad and ill-fed children, the place reeking with poverty and wretchedness. "What?" she exclaimed, raising a stentorian voice, wrath flaming in her deep set eyes, "Give away me child?" There was silence for a moment.

"I'm a self-respecting American." (She was born in Ireland.) "I'm a self-respecting American, mum," she repeated with a swelling pride which swallowed up the undertone of pain and anger.

And the incident was closed.

* * * * *

But there are other summer guests who spend happy vacations in the parish, vaca-

tions made joyous and beautiful through the beneficence of the three ladies—last of their line—who in gracious helpfulness for those who help themselves bequeathed their estate to found and sustain a Vacation Home for Self-Supporting Women.

The old mansion standing on a slight eminence overlooking field and meadow, ebb and flow of tide, sloping, shaded lawn and ancient Boston post road, is furnished just as the good people left it, the handsome, substantial family heirlooms giving dignity, elegance and comfort to this place of rest. Here the workers share a family life joyous and care-free, blessing the kind and generous givers, renewing strength and hope for the strife of the world, taking back with them into daily toil something of the gentle, womanly spirit which devised the Gould Home and lingers in the place with benediction.

XII

AN EPISODE OF WAR

A massive block of granite has been recently placed in the swamp on the southwestern edge of our township. The simple inscription reads as follows:

"The Great Swamp-Fight
Here Ended
The Pequot War
July 13, 1637"

The Sons of the Colonial Wars have done a characteristically patriotic service in marking the site of the Pequots' last stand. There were days when the future of this early New England hung by a very tenuous thread, the Pequots being the large factor in this uncertainty of life tenure. It was war to the death between white man and red man. John Mason became the scourge which wrought the final havoc among the masterful savages of his day. "Thus was God seen in the Mount," writes the pious, sturdy soldier, "crushing his proud enemies and the enemies of his people." John

Fiske sententiously observes, "Truly the work was done with Cromwellian thoroughness."

The fight with the fleeing remnant in the swamp may fittingly be reckoned as the first war episode pertaining to the history of the town, for it was this extermination of the Pequots which led Ludlow and his men down to these pleasant places and persuaded them to establish homes along these shores. The four narratives of the war, contemporary accounts by Mason, Underhill, Vincent and Gardener are curious and fascinating reading—the flavor of quaint diction and pioneer spirit pervading every page.

"About half an hour before day," writes Mason, "the Indians that were in the swamp attempted to break through Captain Patrick's quarters; but were beaten back several times; they making a great noise, as their manner is at such times, it sounded round about our leaguer; . . . But the tumult growing to a very great height, we raised our siege; and marching up to the place, at a turning of the swamp the Indians were forcing out upon us; but we sent them back by our small shot. We, waiting a little for a second attempt—

the Indians in the meantime facing about, pressed violently upon Captain Patrick, breaking through his quarters and so escaped. There were about sixty or seventy as we were informed. We afterwards searched the swamp and found but few slain. The captives we took were about one hundred and eighty; whom we divided intending to keep as servants, but they could not endure that yoke."

Poor, wretched barbarians! Driven from "pillar to post"—truly the free, roving creatures of the illimitable forest could "not endure that yoke." Rather than submit to it they tragically perish.

The second war episode in the history of the town has a serio-comic aspect—a delicious morsel of incident, spiced to a healthy taste with adventure, redolent of quixotic courage and purpose.

Dutchmen and Englishmen being "at daggers drawn" in 1653 the relations between the people of New Amsterdam and Connecticut were "strained." A freebooter from Rhode Island, with a commission from that colony, "under the commonwealth of England," brought a Dutch vessel into Black Rock harbor. The authorities of New Amsterdam sent two

men-of-war with one hundred men to attend to this matter so that consequent alarm and indignation were excited in town and along shore. The colonial governors of New England had been slow to respond when our citizens made earnest appeal for help against reported imminent Dutch aggression. In the emergency, therefore, Ludlow, who was then a colonial commissioner "invested," in conjunction with Captain Cullock, "with full power to agitate such occasions as concern the united colonies for Connecticut," decided that something must be done on the instant for the defense of the shore.

A town-meeting was held and a vote passed to raise troops and make war on the Dutch. The little army was speedily brought into being, Ludlow appointed Commander-in-chief, and the troops gathered for drill on the Green. The sentiment for war seemed widespread. The town yielded itself to the subtle intoxication of the passing excitement.

But Governor Eaton and the New Haven Court did not respond favorably to the movement, so impetuously organized. The Governor put before the Court Ludlow's announcement of his course, "all which

writings were read to the Court, after which the Court considered whether they were called at this time to send forth men against the Dutch, and after much debate and consultation . . . the Court by vote declared that . . . they see not themselves called to vote for a present war."

Alas, Mr. Roger Ludlow finds himself in difficulties! His war measures prove abortive. Enemies let fly at him their hostile speeches. Meanwhile a peace is concluded between Dutchland and England. The occasion of war sinks below the western horizon. A rankling memory of unwarranted speed of action lingers in the colonial breast and the town's second war episode goes down into history.

There was very little comedy in the third event of war. As headquarters for the leaders in shore defense through the years of the American Revolution—a very hot-bed of patriotic sentiment and endeavor, where meetings of the Sons of Liberty were held, and frequent councils of war—the center and basis for local action in the great struggle for Independence—the home of many leaders in civil and military affairs—Fairfield was a special object

of resentment and assault on the part of the British.

"All necessary preparations being made, on the 21st of November, 1780, at about 4 o'clock P.M. I embarked my detachment, composed of two companies of dismounted dragoons, and in all short of 100 selected men," writes Colonel Tallmadge in a private autobiographic paper, "and the same evening, at 9 o'clock, we landed at a place on Long Island, called the Old Man's." Then follows an account of the taking Fort St. George—the demolishing of the enemy's works, burning of immense quantities of stores and shipping, the firing of the magazine and the return to Connecticut. "By mid-night or about 1 o'clock the next morning, every boat arrived at Fairfield beach, although we had entirely lost sight of each other by reason of the darkness of the night." The story is told in the Journals of Congress, December 4th and 6th, 1780, Vol. VI.

Numerous expeditions of a similar nature started from the harbor. And frequent whale-boat fights occurred off the shores; Captain Brewster received a medal from Congress and a letter of congratulation

from Washington in acknowledgment of his eminent services.

When the British struck the blow that destroyed the village it was appalling in its force—shops, stores, offices, private residences and public buildings all being swallowed up in flames. Ten years later when Washington for the fourth time visited the historic place he notes in his journal the marks of ruin which remained at that period—the stark, black chimneys, the grass-mantled cellars and the torn, scarred trees.

The next episode in war woven into the life of the old town is less tragical and important. It is properly an intimation of war peril rather than any set act of conflict during the wild months of 1812 and '13. Admiral Cochrane's orders were to "destroy the coast towns and ravage the country." Repeatedly the enemy's fleet appeared off shore. The memory of crime, ravage and desolation dating back to 1779 was vivid. Did the old foe purpose to repeat the scourge of fire and again seek to obliterate the town?

Fort Union was rehabilitated and garrisoned with a little company of local militia, the men having been freshly supplied with

muskets, bayonets, cartridge boxes and belts, camp kettles, pans and pails, pick-axes, tin cups and other necessary accoutrement of war. The Green was again the scene of trainings and the accompanying excitement of strife.

Guards stood watchful as ships sailed up and down the Sound; people slept with one eye open and an ear alert to the anticipated alarm.

One day a British fleet drew nigh with apparent evil intent. An old twelve pound cannon was set up on the Green, the call to arms summoned a citizen soldiery to the number of nearly two thousand—and then the enemy sailed away.

The people suffered all the pains of threatened struggle and ruin through these anxious, miserable days until the Peace of Ghent blew away the war clouds and the sky assumed its wonted aspect of tranquillity.

* * * * *

The fifth episode of war occurred in the autumn of 1898. It was heralded by the President's declaration of war against Spain and consequent rumors flying thick and fast that Cervera's fleet was stealing along our coast, preparing like some huge

bird of prey, to swoop down upon us and play the mischief. The cry went up from timid hearts that like as not the Spanish gallants and hidalgos would take particular delight in sending their shot and shell into every town and city within reach. But while the excitement was highest, a sudden subsidence of dread anticipation linked itself with the announcement that Cervera's fleet lay bottled up in the harbor of Santiago.

The outbreak of war made a swift appeal to the sympathies of the American people, one response being noted in the multiplication of Red Cross Auxiliaries. The local organization evoked all the latent zeal of the ladies. The first general meeting was held on June 28th in the Church parlors. Residents from all parts of the town joined hands in the work, with never a thought of sect or sectional distinction. Private subscriptions, and public entertainments supplied the workers with abundant funds. Meeting followed meeting through the summer and autumn. A sub-auxiliary was organized among the children.

A printed report of the work and the many documents tracing the history of this community service are on the table

before the writer. What an interesting series of letters have been incorporated in the narrative, arranged with the orderliness and fidelity characteristic of the record keeper! Here are business correspondence, letters from Generals and other officers, privates and nurses—each letter giving some fresh view of the situation.

When our successors one and two hundred years later shall finger these papers preserved in the archives of the Historical Society, how close the age and event will appear to them and what tender emotions must arise in the heart!

But this is simply introductory to the gist of the matter. The government found itself inadequate to cope with the condition which it confronted late in the summer and early in the autumn. Its hospital resources were limited and insufficient. There was suffering from a congestion of numbers at Montauk Point and at other headquarters for the sick.

"We will lend a hand," said various hospitals in different parts of the land and our Fresh Air Association—an offer quickly accepted by the Government.

On Wednesday evening September 14th, a message was received that the Home

would be needed for the convalescent soldiers, and on Saturday the poor, sallow, emaciated, weak victims of fever, and other ills arrived, the intervening two days being filled with lively and enthusiastic tasks of preparation.

The organization and management of a little hospital for seventeen convalescent soldiers doubtless seems a simple thing, but only the initiated know what it means. The experience is one never to be forgotten, educative, disciplinary and enriching. Pope hit the nail on the head when he observed that

> "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread,"

the particular fool in this case being the parson who suggested this service. It may be true under some circumstances that

> "Where ignorance is bliss
> 'Tis folly to be wise,"

but under ordinary and extraordinary circumstances knowledge is a very necessary part of equipment and men run tremendous risks in rashly taking matters of life and death into their unaccustomed hands. The parson makes these severe strictures as it occurred that the headship of this

work naturally came to the President of the Fresh Air Association.

Beautiful was the spirit of love and patriotism which as a prevailing impulse moved the entire community to rally for this work. Men, women, and children could not do enough for our favored guests. And that was the difficulty—such unstinted generosity and glad tender of service—such multiplicity of helpers and insistence that the help be utilized, made a very embarrassment of riches. There was more than enough to go round and several times over—provisions, medicines, flowers, newspapers and books, attendance and company, goodwill and prayers—everything to help the lower, the higher nature of man. There were days when the mere selection or rejection of things and people proved a herculean task. Who would give pain to a little child bringing a bouquet by saying that one hundred and twenty bouquets already graced the rooms and the doctor's orders had gone forth that the flowers must be removed from the ward? And when the soldier boys were able to lounge in the recreation tent and smoke a social cigar it was hard to say to one and another visitor—visitors who had come laden with

good things—that the boys had seen so many people the doctor forbade further interview.

And yet the fellowship became delightful. For no sooner did the patients gain strength than they were given short or long rides through the country, back among the hills, down along the sea, charming little excursions were planned for them, they sauntered through the streets of the town and basked in the sunshine. On these bright days they disburdened themselves of a hundred tales and reminiscences—telling about army life, the Philippines, Cuba, revealing the tragic secrets of war, picturing camps and marches, weaving in a good deal of autobiographic material, bringing the kindly, sympathetic hearers the freshest impressions of the life which had unfolded to them.

The gratitude of these men amply paid their new-made friends. The strain of anxiety soon gave way to fair days of good fellowship. The first nights of worry and the incidental trials of adjustment having passed into oblivion, the happy season of mutual congratulation set in—halcyon days fragrant with blessed memories.

It paid every partner—this unique, unfor-

getable incident of war. The Eunice Dennie Burr Chapter of the D.A.R. provided the recreation tent, with all its furnishings and books, newspapers, stationery and games.

The Dorothy Ripley Chapter of the D.A.R. gave all the drugs and medicines. Daughters, the story of your happiness in this gracious ministry has become a matter of record!

The American National Red Cross sent their supplies of jellies, liquors, soups, groceries, with underwear, blankets and "housewives."

Our townspeople and neighbors lavished all sorts of acceptable gifts and kind attentions upon the guests.

It was a partnership shared by three or four hundred loyal men, women, boys, girls. Rector, priest and parson stand witness to the fact that it paid the partners many times over.

It paid the nurses tireless and cheerful in their tender ministries. It paid the ward committee in their difficult and arduous task.

It paid the Fresh Air Association, emphasizing anew the worth and possibilities of such an institution. The work

reflected great credit upon individuals, churches, patriotic societies and the town. And it brought us real and lasting good—this fellowship of patriotism deepening in every heart the sense of common neighborhood fraternity, pointing to the larger life of a great, harmonious comradeship in all well-doing.

XIII

MONUMENTAL BRICKS AND BOOKS

JOHN COTTON once remarked that ordinarily "more benefit was obtained by conversing with the dead than with the living." The typical parson of New England is a book man through and through—the writer of books, the reader of books, their owner and distributor and master. Thomas Parker discussing theology in English, then fleeing successively to Latin, Greek, Hebrew and finally clinching his argument in Arabic is a good illustration of the scholarship which prevailed among the old divines:

> "The calm delights
> Of unambitious piety he chose,
> And learning's solid dignity."

One of the charms peculiar to a country parish is the precious leisure which may be honorably consecrated to books. This consecration presents several phases.

It is to be expected that a minister will live up to the traditions of the past and hold perpetual converse with the wise,

strong leaders whose words and works have been incorporated in literature. That phase of the subject asks for little enforcement or illustration. It is enough to repeat the truism that the student and reader in the country is able to command his hours and conscientiously make the most of them, although he faces the assurance that when he attains a certain degree of conspicuousness the city will claim him and possibly entice the scholar away from his fruitful retirement.

A friend of the parson's revelled in Hebrew points and vowels and similar oddities during the early years of his rural ministry; but people laid their hands upon him and dragged him into the Presidency of a college. One of the most genial and cultivated scholars of our state, honored with the degree of Doctor of Divinity by Yale, spent his quiet, happy days as a neighbor to the parson, content to let his light shine amid the modest surroundings of a small parish.

Many a man of large and pressing tasks is driven away from the city strain and urgency that he may think, read, write and attend upon the various calls sounding vehemently in his ears. A three months'

or a four months' vacation with a Sabbatic year will hardly suffice these workers; and this forced flight into retirement, which saves a man's health and reason, is a frank confession that country life is the real hope of the world, the free, natural life lived near to nature's heart perpetually imparting its sane and redemptive impulses to the rank and file of men congested in the shops, stores, offices, flats, tenements and hotels of the city.

The reading ministers are not the men who preach in the conspicuous pulpits. Not that the city preacher fails in the love of books or that he lacks well-filled shelves in the library; it is simply that time is at a discount and he must pay such high price for the long, quiet fruitful hours of study that it often becomes virtually prohibitory. He reads to be sure—but the reading will be fragmentary and interrupted, hours filched from public service or pastoral duty, so that the sweetness and inspiration are forfeited.

"You country preachers are the men of books and opportunities." Times without number these words have been repeated in the parson's hearing. Now and then some genius in the pulpit, a phenomenal

scholar, rich in physical resources, will glean the wide fields of literature, art and history, storing a capacious memory with vast treasures and assimilating their help; but these men are rare exceptions. The average city preacher must be servant to an ever increasing constituency, the demand for service expanding with the years until a day of break comes and his multiform tasks are hurriedly passed into younger and stronger hands.

The man who wisely adjusts himself to the country arranges the sacred times and seasons of arduous labor in his study and sticks faithfully to the schedule of book work through the years. It is his privilege to traverse the great literatures of ages—to take up one or another specialty and become authority upon his chosen subject. Here is a neighbor who has made Americana his pursuit and today ranks well among kindred spirits. Another neighbor makes the literature of economics and sociology the object of his earnest research. He attains such merit that a college elects him to a Chair in its Faculty. The preacher in another adjoining parish not only studies books but he loves the birds, the trees, the creatures of the wild

woods and wins their secrets, speedily attaining enviable position as a naturalist. Yes, it is the privilege of the country minister to read, ponder and inwardly digest while his city brother must either draw upon his capital gathered during early years or steal hours from night and insistent tasks or take long rests in the rural retreats when he strives to refill the exhausted cistern.

The rural preacher may turn his thought and scholarship to good account in the way of book making, a second phase of the consecration named. The old parsons were famous writers, almost the only literary men of their day. The later parsons have many competitors in this alluring field but they continue to hold their own. A fair proportion of such work is done by the man in the country parish, although the city will often take the credit for it. Many a preacher whose fame in scholarship and literature reflects honor upon his city charge, did all the work and achieved his success while serving his first church in the favoring atmosphere of rural life. There are other preachers who, aspiring to literary usefulness, wisely withdraw into the country and advantage by

the leisure which is happily given them. Their last days become their best days in the breadth and richness of their heart-touch with men through the medium of the book or the periodical. They give us the very essence and resultant wisdom of their experience.

The high character and attainments of our country ministers occasion frequent remark, for the income of these men is generally meager and insufficient. The college-bred student finds no pecuniary inducement to enter the ministry in these days, when a thousand lucrative pursuits invite a man of brains and ambition. It is a life of self-denial and strict limitation. Nevertheless the community finds in the preacher a man of culture.

The parson bears witness to the lofty standard which prevails in New England. It would be difficult to gather a stronger, more learned and more interesting company of professional men in any branch of service, or in any part of the land than often gathers for fellowship and inspiration in the neighborhood of the Prime Ancient Society. On one side is a brother who takes a prize among two or three hundred competitors from all over the English-

speaking world for a book upon the English Bible. Another one of the brethren writes the biography of a famous man—a delightful narrative of struggle and triumph. A third interprets the various moods of nature and writes with exceptional charm concerning woodfolk and kindred creatures; his volumes have gained the popular ear, and won for the author an honored name. There are other members of the clerical fraternity who write upon history or dream dreams for the young people or sound the praises of Browning and Stevenson in critical, appreciative language. These men are simply representative of the common intellectual life which abounds in these parishes. No marks of decadence here but the atmosphere and the associations of ripe culture and stimulating activity.

There is a third phase of this consecration to books which presents itself with singular force in the country parish these days. The minister who is always supposed to be a book-lover, and who in many instances becomes a book-maker, will inevitably show his loyalty to the good of a town by taking his part in building and sustaining the library.

A near-by parish, formerly included in the Prime Ancient Society, was the former home of a munificent giver who has founded and upbuilt a library of unique worth and importance. It will stand for all time as a tender and beautiful expression of local patriotism, great purpose and the love of knowledge. A member of the clerical fraternity has put his life into the careful selection of the books that deserve a place in this rare fellowship of history and literature. As our Judge remarked on a public occasion, "I am utterly unable to pay adequate tribute to his tireless zeal."

It is not possible for every country minister to do what this worker has done—opportunities and the money to buy books like the first edition of Eliot's Bible, First Letter of Columbus or the first edition of the Saybrook Platform or Vincent's Pequot War, do not come to the average book-buyer connected with a country library. It affords a scholar peculiar satisfaction to "pick up" such ancient books as Winslow's Good News, Mourt's Relation, and Purchas' History of the Pilgrims (the first, second and third editions) a satisfaction enjoyed by the enthusiast who visits the Pequot Library.

A great advance movement in education has been made during recent years through the multiplication of public libraries. The towns of Massachusetts set the world a noble example and Connecticut follows a close second with a library for well-nigh every town. And these institutions are the attractive, inspiring centers of intellectual and artistic life for the people. The edifices which house the books are generally built of stone or brick, ornamental and instructive. Many of them are rare and beautiful specimens of architecture, like the classic monumental structure in Branford.

* * * * *

The parson counted it all joy when he was asked to lend a hand to several public-spirited citizens in their steadfast endeavor to rear and conduct a free public library in the eastern part of the parish, the feeling being that while the magnificent institution in another part of the town was doing splendid service, a second library would make our people so much the richer and healthily stimulate the community life.

It was not a difficult task to raise the money for the enterprise when it became apparent that a genuine interest in the

work existed. The keynote of the work sounded in the word "Memorial." The institution was to commemorate certain important historic events both national and local in character; and it was to commemorate the honorable and important services of certain eminent men whose names shone with steady luster in the firmament of Colonial and State history.

The placing of the cornerstone one midsummer afternoon at five o'clock—the very hour for reminiscence, inspiration and prophecy—gave opportunity to set forth in fitting speech this controlling purpose; the gifted orator, Hon. James R. Sheffield, persuaded his hearers to be true to the lofty ideals of those who laid broad the foundations of the Republic and laid down their lives to perpetuate its institutions. A tribute in verse by the popular author, Mabel Osgood Wright, graced the service and fittingly consummated the formal act of placing the stone:

"To Truth

"With tongue and pen our fathers wrought
To keep alive the flame of thought
In sterner days.
We by their sacred memories led
To serve the living, praise the dead,
This book-house raise.

Let every stone the masons lay
Upon this corner sealed today
Its witness bring
Of strengthened brotherhood Divine,
Of Truth to which this student's shrine
Gives offering."

A year later the books, arrayed in bright colors, stood alertly in their places like trained sentinels on duty, while the formal act of dedication was performed before the hearthstone in the reading-room. Then the procession of directors, orators, and distinguished guests marched out upon the lawn and gathered under the grateful shade of old trees, facing a great throng of expectant people. Happy the parson who is privileged to preside on such an occasion!

A son of the town was the first speaker—Prof. Henry Fairfield Osborn, a scientist whose devotion to his chosen field of labor has made him widely known, lover of nature, well versed in her lore, a workman filling various places of importance: Professor in Columbia University, Curator of the Museum of Natural History in New York and later its President, Archæologist of the Smithsonian Institute. He addressed the company upon nature study. The library is to teach boys and girls, men

Library and Fountain for Perennial Refreshment

and women how to love flowers and care for them, how to preserve our beautiful scenery, how to enjoy and save the birds and our native animals, how to come into friendliest relations with this glorious world.

The second speaker was a man of letters from Yale University, a critic of books, a book-maker, a book-lover, a scholar in English. Quite properly Prof. William Lyman Phelps' theme was books, and he reminded his hearers that we are all of us governed, not by the living but by the dead. The laws that we live under were made by men who have passed away. Our habits of thought are determined not by our associates but by people who have been dead many years. "Literature is fortunately the immortal part of history." "It is through books that we leave geographical boundaries and become really in spirit citizens of the world."

The third contributor to this "feast of reason" was the President of the Connecticut Historical Society, Doctor Hart, described by the friend who sat near him as "the incarnation of history." He led the thought of the assembly back to primitive days and the settlement of the town,

adverting to one and another incident which had been embroidered upon local history, dwelling on the importance of making the library a very mine of resources for study and research respecting the life of town, state and nation. "Everything that is needed for writing, everything that is needed for instruction, in regard to the history of this community should be found on your shelves and within your walls."

It was reserved for Judge John H. Perry to remind the appreciative company that the first public library of the town, a stock enterprise, was founded about 1790, the second about 1813, the third and fourth in 1830, the fifth in 1858, the sixth and seventh in 1871, the eighth in 1875, the ninth in 1876 and the tenth in 1893—these libraries extending their concatenated services through a century, and culminating in two attractive and convenient edifices with their sustaining endowments and the generous loyalty of their faithful friends.

This leaf torn from the history of libraries in the old town is fairly typical of kindred movements in various New England districts and villages.

The love of books is a ruling passion with the genuine son of the soil. The

church, the school and the library constitute a noble triumvirate determinative of destiny, both individual and national. "A book-lover is ordinarily a home lover," said the judge, "and a home lover is a community lover, and community love expressed in terms of action, but not otherwise, is good citizenship. Enlightened minds, willing hands, public spirit and the Puritan conscience are together omnipotent for good; and no one of them is greatest."

The last speaker of the afternoon was the Ex-President of Yale University, Dr. Timothy Dwight, a gentleman who walked the streets and reposed under the shade of historic trees during the halcyon days of young manhood when love-light glows with its early radiancy in the eyes and "all the world loves a lover."

It was most fitting that this scholar, author and leader in the wide realm of learning should bring greetings and felicitations. "I beg you will allow me to say that the best way in my judgment, of reading history and of cultivating the mind by such reading, is to give oneself to the study for a considerable time of the records of some special period. What better

period can be selected than that of the establishment of our government, or that of the growth and progress of the country in the earlier half of the last century? Familiarize yourselves with all the history and literature and thought of those times, and make yourselves thereby as fully acquainted with the period as it is possible for us to be at such a removal of years. . . and then you will live with the people of the older age and know them as they knew one another."

Wise words spoken on such occasions sink deep into the heart and kindle fresh fires of laudable aim and high service. These village libraries give the aspiring youth an opportunity to gaze "on the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies." Like Emerson, he finds "certain books vital and spermatic, not leaving the reader what he was; he shuts the book a richer man."

Well may good friends extend congratulations on such a red letter day. But the library does more than supply the community with literature. The people naturally gravitate to it as a center of hightoned life. The classes meeting for a discussion of current topics, the little

coterie of students pursuing English history or asking for knowledge of native birds, the young men reading on civics or Parliamentary law, the Audubon Society circulating illustrated lectures, the school board arranging for free talks upon education—these and a score of important interests discover in the library a large-hearted and stimulating helper.

The opportunity for fine, true service is most alluring and full of promise. A student may reach through these channels a multitude of people quite beyond the scope of his ordinary ministry. His influences will be felt in behalf of the best books, the purest thought, the loftiest endeavor, the broadest culture. It is given him by common consent to exercise a solicitous and helpful oversight respecting the things which represent the deepest and richest life of the town. The ministry at large in the average country parish is an important privilege. Education, morals, charity, civics, the lyceum, and the like turn to the worker as an ally. He multiplies himself and preaches unconsciously, as well as uninterruptedly the gospel of light by means of these beautiful, beneficent messengers.

XIV

THE PARSON'S INHERITANCE

THE promised visit of Senator Hoar was one of the pleasant incidents in the last year of his life. He had corresponded intermittently with the parson for a decade, searching for information upon some historical matters, and it had long been his wish and purpose to make a little pilgrimage to the town so intimately connected with the name and fame of his cousin, Judge Roger M. Sherman. The visit, all too brief, is a charming and delightful reminiscence. There was nothing to do by way of entertainment other than to lead the honorable senator from room to room and give him free opportunity to talk. His richly stored mind yielded a very wealth of anecdote, repartee and quotation, bringing to us the priceless gleanings of a notable career.

"He was one of the greatest men of New England, the peer of Mason and Webster," he said, referring to Judge Sherman. "How this old mansion brings me face to

face with him!" The Sherman family clock ticking the minutes and striking the hours as it stood in the corner of the west drawing-room set the visitor's flow of monologue in a new direction. Lingering with reverent gaze before the portraits of the Judge and his wife hanging in the east drawing-room, the visitor sketched with master hand the character of this wise, staunch Puritan. "Modesty and reserve clothed him like a garment but his greatness refused to stay in hiding." Holding the small boy of the parsonage, Roger Sherman, upon his knee and placing his hands upon the child's head, "May his spirit rest upon you," was his benediction; and the Nestor of New England's public servants said adieu to the house, rich and suggestive with historic memories.

It was a magnificent tribute which the Senator paid to Judge Sherman on the evening of that same day, when he addressed an audience of cultivated, patriotic New Englanders in our neighboring city.

The early struggles of Roger Minott Sherman tested his mettle. Josiah Sherman was a preacher, planning like the brethren to give a good education to his children; but he was cut down in the flower

of usefulness so that the boy in college found himself suddenly thrown upon his own resources. The kindness of Roger Sherman, the signer of the Declaration of Independence—his uncle—became a mainstay through the succeeding terms of college life, although the young man worked in self-support, while applying himself with zeal to his studies. He taught during his college course and the time that he studied law under the instructions of Judge Oliver Ellsworth and Judge Reeve. Later he served as tutor in Yale, and began the practice of law at Norwalk, whence he moved into our Prime Ancient Society in 1807.

His strong personality and eminent worth soon impressed the men of this state. Repeatedly the people called him to act in various official capacities—as representative in the lower house, as state senator, as associate judge of the Supreme Court of the state. Private circumstances compelled him to decline a nomination to Congress tendered him by friends. He was earnestly supported as a candidate for United States senator, to which position he would probably have been elected had he been willing to yield certain points.

He was a member of the Hartford Convention in 1814 and one of the committee appointed to draw up a report to be presented to the respective state legislatures.

Mr. Sherman was frank and clear in stating the principal object of that famous meeting, his own words being as follows: "Its principal object was a more effectual coöperation in the war as to the defense of the New England states." Said he, "There is not the slightest foundation for impugning the motives of these men, or stamping the proceedings of the convention as treasonable. The delegates never contemplated an act inconsistent with their obligations to the United States." But his service on that occasion doubtless wrought disaster in respect to political advancement. He could not trim to the wind. True to conviction, he not seldom found himself at odds with the party in whose company he generally trained.

A congenial atmosphere and the Court life drew Mr. Sherman to the County Seat. His extraordinary success won for him in a few years independent means—then came dreams of a home, the place of his choosing, walls of his rearing,

> " the resort
> Of love, of joy, of peace and plenty; where
> Supporting and supported, polished friends
> And dear relations mingle into bliss."

There was a small domain in the most attractive and central portion of the village which the prosperous young jurist coveted and acquired. Situated near the church and the court-house, on a slight elevation with gentle slope at the rear, commanding patches of sea view through intervening foliage, it was an ideal homestead lot, amplitude and fertility enhancing its other delightful features.

The first mention of this property occurs in 1653 when the name of Robert Hawkins is connected with it in describing the boundaries of an adjoining piece, although no transfer to him or from him is recorded. Henry Lyon became its owner and he passed it by bill of sale, April 26, 1670, over to Thomas Wilson. This particular square or block was evidently alluring to men of substance, for we observe that the famous pioneer, Andrew Ward, lived next door on the left, while Law-maker and Lieutenant-Governor Roger Ludlow built his house on the corner still further to the left—a homestead lot—purchased and

occupied after his departure by the wealthy and worshipful Major Nathan Gold.

Thomas Staples lived on the northwest corner of the block, furthest removed from Mr. Ludlow, but the two families came into irritating and tempestuous relations.

In the inventory of Thomas Wilson's estate, in 1691, the house, barn and lot are appraised at one hundred pounds. The only child, Sarah, having reached a proper age, married Elnathan Hanford, son of the revered Norwalk minister, and spent her years which were few, on the homestead lot.

Mr. Hanford, the disconsolate widower, heedful of prevailing sentiment and custom, welcomed to the enjoyment of his deceased wife's little estate, a second helpmeet in the person of Abigail Burr, widow of Daniel Lockwood. There was much good blood in her, for she had as grandfather and grandmother Nathaniel and Sarah Ludlow Brewster, and for great-grandfather the founder of the town. Although the great statesman had moved back to mother country and served the Commonwealth under Cromwell, a descendant lived in the square, not a stone's

throw from her ancestors' original possessions.

Thomas Hanford, the son, inherited the property appraised when his father died at five hundred pounds. Ann, the daughter of Gideon Allen and grand-daughter of former neighbor Andrew Ward, became his wife—a fresh intermingling of blue blood. When Mr. Hanford passed away his widow continued the use of his homestead and later shared its joys with her second husband, Gershom Burr.

There was only one child born to the second Thomas Hanford and his wife. This Sarah in due process of time entered upon her inheritance of the ancestral acres and first married Ebenezer Wakeman, the tale of whose life was soon told. Her second companion was Dr. Seth Warner.

Mrs. Warner's only child, Thomas Hanford Wakeman, born in the year 1755, next entered upon the inheritance, marrying Sarah Bradley June 4, 1776, on the eve of the supreme struggle for Independence. Left a widow, Mrs. Wakeman became the consort of David Baldwin.

Thomas Hanford Wakeman bequeathed all his property to Ebenezer Wakeman, Jr., a brother, but the homestead lot he

transferred while living to Sturges Lewis, who in turn passed it back to Mrs. Wakeman. As in the case of her mother-in-law, Wakeman-Warner, her grandmother-in-law, Hanford-Burr, and her great-grandfather-in-law, Elnathan Hanford, she joined destinies with a second life-companion. There was born to Dudley Baldwin and his wife Sarah Bradley Wakeman a son, Abraham D. Baldwin, afterward High Sheriff. The guardian of this child sold to Roger M. Sherman, by order of the General Assembly in their session of May, 1808, this land in "the old society." The young lawyer also bought from Aaron Adams, Ebenezer Dimon, Jr., and James Knapp, small parcels of land which, added to the original purchase, made a precious domain of nine acres, more or less.

It is interesting to trace the history of such a piece of real estate situated in a town possessing a wealth of old-time, suggestive associations. Here are names representative of station, culture, politics, ecclesiasticism, the various phases and forces of social, intellectual and patriotic activity. Hawkins, Wilson, Hanford, Lockwood, Burr, Brewster, Ludlow, Allen, Wakeman, Ward, Warner, Bradley,

Knapp, Lewis, Baldwin, Sherman—the lives of these people have taken root in this soil, they have become identified to a degree with the fair acres spread before us; here is the stage across which comedy and tragedy have stalked once and again and many times, the very air and stones, ancient trees and modern flowers whispering to each other and passing down their line strange stories of joy and sorrow, domestic transition and community incident.

One early day soon after the land came into possession of the white man through a trade with the Indians, a portion of it was said to be witch-haunted. Down in the fields wild and uncanny voices might be heard in the dead of night. There were other days when shadowy forms stained with war paint crept stealthily along the ground. And other days resounded with the tread of martial feet, booming cannon, clash of fire-arms, din of war, the hateful, vindictive, tumultuous roar of flames. And through all these changeful scenes there rings the merry call of children, their free laughter, and sprightly play-echoes of sweet, innocent, jolly pastimes ranging over garden, pasture, meadow and

orchard: the little Puritan lad in close fitting nankeen suit, broad white collar and cocked hat learning to shoot his first musket; the demure Abigail clad in bright flowered chintz with black bib and apron, a calico sunbonnet upon her head, taking her rag doll for a walk; the later throng of merry-making youngsters playing hide and seek or cops and robbers up and down the acres, scurrying amid the cows, the chickens, the swaying bushes, the watchful trees and nature's myriad life,—the very welkin resounding with their mad, mirthful humor.

* * * * *

The mansion which Mr. Sherman built on this site was substantially constructed, its solid oak timbers made to withstand the ravage of ages, the material used from cellar to garret the very best. But that which stamped the house with distinction was the unique individuality expressed by its interior arrangements, its informing and transforming spirit being most properly the lady mistress.

The family set up their household gods in the imposing structure during the summer of '16. The receipted bills for various

furnishments may be seen today lying orderly disposed in a cabinet of the Judge's old library.

"R. Deming for sofa" $125
W. W. & T. L. Chester for floor cloth . . $54.75

"Mr. Elmendorf will please to pay these bills whenever the articles are sent on board."

The shopping was done largely in New York and the stuff sent by boat to Southport.

"April 30th 1816. New York
Bought of W. W. & T. L. Chester–Carpet Warehouse, 191 Broadway

43¼ yds brussels carpet	$113
Rug	$ 23
making	$ 11.91

Here is a bill of $53 for a claw tea-table and $22 for ladies' work-stand. In 1817 the Judge paid $125 for a Grecian sofa and cushion.

Augustus Johnston of New York supplied the china:

6 Tureens
4 doz. dining plates
2 doz. large desert plates
2 doz. small desert plates
15 flat dishes
2 covered dishes
2 pudding dishes
1-2 doz. custard cups

3 scollup dishes
1 pair fruit baskets
A tea set of china
A doz. china coffee cups
2 dozen tea cups
2 plates
1 dozen cups and saucers and one basket

$163.25

When the Venetian blinds were hung, we discover as Judge Sherman writes, "that they were not quite adapted to the windows. The cornices want to be four feet and eight inches long. These are therefore too short. I send them back by Captain Keeler who will take another set and pay you the difference. . . I do not send the tassels. I make the exchange as you obligingly agreed when I took the blinds. Your Most Obedient Servant etc." Ever the gentleman, straightforward in dealings, polite and particular in his phrases! This exchange of blinds, by the way, cost the Judge four dollars and thirty-eight cents.

Peter D. Turcot of Maiden Lane supplied the curtains, the making of which cost twelve dollars, and the fringe thirty-eight dollars and twenty-five cents. Captain Goodsell of the sloop Lapwing transported these latter goods.

But when the house was done and all furnished it soon appeared that a beginning had simply been made. In the pleasant task of adjusting themselves to new conditions these good people discovered that certain changes were essential to comfort. Wings must be added to the two front rooms, an extension to the right at the rear. A little later an inundation of books embarrassed the Judge so that another and larger wing on the left spread its generous protection over six or seven rooms, a private staircase and ten closets. The lower regions likewise expanded, deepening into a sub-cellar, widening into a light and spacious room for fruit and other purposes. There were later increments at the rear, suggestive in their easy irregularity of convenience and hospitality. And stretching through the years there succeeded the innumerable changes among the closets, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, but principally multiplication, until their number actually reached the respectable sum of sixty. A house with sixty closets; its individuality now become historic.

When Peter Parley tarried here with

his friend, he discovered an ample closet in his chamber where the full-skirted fashionable coat of the day might hang in ample freedom. A visit from the President of Yale College and Professor Greenleaf of Harvard gave opportunity to explain the intricacies of the Judge's closets for legal documents. The closets for hats, bonnets, preserves, linen, flannel and similar commodities were always plethoric, although the goodwife was a true Lady Bountiful and drew liberally upon these supplies for the needs of impecunious friends or sufferers.

The hospitality of the Sherman mansion became proverbial. For many years master and mistress kept open house, entertaining judges, ministers, authors, statesmen, artists, the notable of the land—with charming grace and courtesy. It was a wide circle of associations formed by the Judge and his wife. Glancing casually through the books belonging to his private library—carefully preserved behind glass through the devout interest of one given to such patriotic services—the reader is impressed with the breadth and scope of the Judge's intellectual fellowship. Not a few of the books are presentation copies,

bearing the good wishes of the author. Public men often travelled this way in order that they might tarry the night with the Judge and discuss some important question of the day.

His correspondence with contemporaries has the flavor of vast learning and high-toned gentlemanliness. Governor Seward, Charles O'Conor, President Dwight, Aaron Burr, Professor Silliman, Senator Ferry, Judge Ellsworth, Secretary of the Treasury Woodbury, Attorney-General B. F. Butler, Governor Tomlinson, Sir Robert Peel and a host of other public men are numbered with those eager to profit by his wisdom and counsel.

Learned and patriotic societies invited him to speak before them—invitations which he modestly declined. The churches of the state sought his advice and inspiration—a call which he felt constrained to heed. The reform movements of his day made their appeal to him and he stood forth the staunch friend of social progress. These unobtrusive testimonies to Judge Sherman's wide-reaching influence are suggested by a fingering of his letters, journals and memoranda, or by the marks and inscriptions traced on fly leaf and title-

page in the books which now adorn the spacious Study of the parsonage.

But there was ever present in the heart of master and mistress a pathetic sorrow, which shadowed them to the sun-setting. Their two sons, stricken with incurable malady, slipped away from them into the Great Beyond, leaving the lonely father and mother to pursue a long and quiet journey. Was it not fitting and characteristic that these devout, beneficent people should give and bequeath the homestead to the Ecclesiastical Society in trust for "the use, habitation and occupation of the minister of said Society . . . who shall have right freely to inhabit, occupy and enjoy the said homestead and property without making any allowance or compensation therefor, directly or indirectly, and shall have full right, while ministering in said Society, to enter upon and use the premises without license or molestation"?

* * * * *

Doctor Atwater, congenial comrade of Judge Sherman, was first in the ministerial line to enjoy his friend's noble gift. He had made his home in the quaint "Rising Sun Tavern," the hostelry where Presi-

dent Washington and his suite tarried on the night of October 16, 1789, when touring through New England. No worthier man could have entered upon the inheritance than Doctor Atwater the profound scholar and courtly gentleman. One of the leading metaphysicians of the country, elected some years later to the chair of philosophy in Princeton College and the position of Acting President for a period, an author of various learned works, editor of The Princeton Review, he was a man who would give distinction to any place or work appointed him. In scholarly attainments the jurist and the parson were well matched. The same atmosphere of broad culture and lofty contemplation therefore continued to prevail in the mansion.

Doctor Atwater was a large, dignified man, his very presence significant and impressive. Quiet yet forceful in speech, he was particular never to transgress strict ideas of propriety in the pulpit. Doctor Cuyler tells how while visiting in town he preached for him one Sabbath, securing one definite result. "Tall, rotund, ponderous in his build," remarked Doctor Cuyler, "he would weigh as much as two of me. In my lively movements during the sermon I

stamped my heel vigorously upon a knot driving it through to the cellar beneath us. 'There' said I, 'Doctor, while you have preached here all these years apparently making little impression, I have rattled around in your pulpit this once and made a hole in the floor.' "

Doctor Atwater was an instructor at Yale when called to this old parish. He served the Prime Ancient Society for nineteen faithful, happy years, yielding at last, however, to the academic spirit, when he gave the remaining years in service to the college of his second choice and love. The little group of healthy, mirthful children felt great tugs at the heart-strings when they exchanged broad fields, sea breezes and the tender associations of their native Connecticut for the strange scenes of Jersey sand plains and pine forests.

Dr. Willis Lord was the next favored dweller in the Judge's mansion. An eloquent speaker, a ripe and eminent scholar, his mind turned to books, young men and college halls. He continued the traditional fellowship of lofty thought and intellectual achievement peculiar to the place, but the call of the academic life sounded in his ears, urgent and convincing. For years

he filled the chair of Biblical History and Polemic Theology in the Seminary of the Northwest at Chicago, later becoming President of Wooster University, Ohio.

Mr. McLean was a bachelor—fresh, ardent, abounding in fun, an impulsive and irrepressible young man, when he unpacked his books and belongings in the old Study. The big house appalled him. A strange hush settled down upon its many rooms, broken occasionally by reverberating voices from the seclusion of the inhabited quarters. What did he hear at eventide when the first gloom of threatening shadows had stolen into the corners of the great rooms? It sounded like the whisperings of children. And there certainly passed through the halls and back into the intricacies of the rear rooms the slow tread of a stately gentleman.

At midnight when the wind was high and the waves dashed boisterously over the beach, a pathetic cry might on occasion have been heard as it was carried from chamber to chamber by subtle messengers. And the disturbing noises in the sixty closets—well, they prevailed to such an extent that it became quite clear the house was numerously inhabited. It might be

expected that a lonely bachelor would "drive dull care away" by the exorcism of wreathed smoke. And it followed inevitably that a mistress must be installed in the great mansion before it was given into the ghostly keeping of a storied past. So there was a wedding.

And we are told that the happy bridegroom, who for long time had practised the objectionable habit of running his pocket handkerchief through his fingers while preaching, on the first Sunday after returning from the bridal tour, in his nervousness recurred to the startling habit and to the horror and confusion of the bride, fluttered and flaunted before the congregation a handkerchief literally filled with holes—a striking relic of bachelorhood's infelicity.

The amplitude and variety of rooms in the mansion had its embarrassments—chairs, tables and lounges scattered through the large spaces appeared lonely and homesick, but Love tarried as a constant guest so all was well. During Doctor McLean's later years when as Secretary of the American Bible Society he served a large constituency, few hours gave him

keener delight than those spent in happy reminiscences of life in Sherman parsonage.

On the coming of Doctor Rankin, there was a fresh infusion of child life—a long, jolly revel of gay, mischievous boys and girls, his own and the neighbors, the fun and frolic of school-days, the adventures of robust, inventive young America. The courtly master of the house belonged by "good rights" to the honorable succession of worthies, his predecessors in true home-making. One of the sons, now an editor of "The Congregationalist" and a writer of sweet songs, recently visited the house of childhood associations and as he trod the loved, familiar places, a flood of tender recollections crowded in upon him, joyous and sacred.

When Doctor Burroughs was inducted into the mastership, he stood in the first flush of his laborious and fruitful career—a young man of lofty ambition, large work power, and fine scholarship. The little domain bewitched him so that preaching, Sanscrit, parish calls and institutional experiments had a large offset in raising strawberries, chickens and the varied harvest of garden, orchard and field. The discipline made him a wiser albeit not a

richer man—so that he steered clear of certain breakers while pastor in Amherst College, President of Wabash and professor in the Divinity School at Oberlin. But his days in Sherman parsonage were counted the brightest, happiest days; the generous life, its freedom, and hopefulness, the charm of Nature, the hallowing influences of the place, its genial fellowship and precious traditions strengthened with years and held him true to first love.

When the second bachelor minister fresh from the school of the prophets moved into the great house it proved a form of strenuous living from which he gladly escaped in due time. With the advent of a bride, certain slight alterations marked the interior of the parsonage, but the house had retained through all the years its essential early features. True the old porch had given way to the long veranda more than a generation ago, and a rear piazza afforded a delightful retreat from the morning shine of a summer's sun. The main hall had also been lengthened by absorbing a portion of Mrs. Sherman's first floor bed-room. When we mention the fact that the kitchen was removed to a rear wing and that a dining-

room took its place, the important changes have been recorded. The house then stood as the present inhabitants certify to it.

What first impressed the last comers on the day of advent was the sense of liberal proportion in the large, airy rooms; an impression quickly obscured, however, by prevailing wonder at the labyrinths of very little rooms—shouts of joy, scurrying of feet, and other distant noises indicating juvenile enthusiasm and appreciation. Like the roar and lull of a distant storm, sounds rose and fell upon the ear. The sun had set upon the old, long day of quiet. The night of haunting shades and ghostly echoes had likewise passed away. The merry round of childish glee made glad the home of books and saints. One of the early demands on the part of these same small people was a story,—the story—of "The House with Sixty Closets."

* * * * *

Now the Judge and his wife in their goodness of heart had given a fund for the preservation of the mansion, but alas, there came a day when the income was eaten fast and full and the house like Oliver

Twist craved more. Age, with its "tooth of time," the wear and tear of vigorous, irrepressible life overflowing into every nook and cranny of the place, wrought decay and ruin. Was there a hand to stay this ravage of time and use?

"Let the mansion be restored," said the ladies with notes of authority in their speech. A controlling spirit had kindled a flame of purpose. "Sherman parsonage is an historic memorial of one of New England's noblest Christian statesman and orators," such was the language of their appeal. "What better way is there for us to cherish and honor the memory of this great man than by making the mansion—so intimately associated with him and other eminent men of the past century—a well preserved and attractive monument, appealing to the sentiment of our people and serving as an inspiration to what is best and highest within us?"

The ladies formed their committee, raised the necessary funds, engaged an architect, sent out specifications for bids, gave out the contract and interested themselves in all the details of the business.

It was a large and expensive task. "Better build a new house. It will cost

less in the end" was the advice given by good counsellors. "Let the mansion be restored," repeated the ladies.

Months hurried their way, the sound of saw and hammer was heard in the land, clouds of dust escaped from open windows, carpenters, masons, plumbers, decorators, cabinet-makers, painters and the whole fraternity of builders held high carnival in the place.

Lo, one morning the mansion shone resplendent in its fresh coats of white paint; balustrades adorned the various roofs, the big chimneys looked bigger than ever in their renewed squareness and fresh redness, the massive pillar at the corner on the porch before the Study stood forth a stately sentinel unremitting in watchfulness; the broken lines of the numerous wings and piazzas at the rear were straightened into an unbroken roof—a line eighty or ninety feet long—the front veranda had grown wide and graceful Doric columns supported the ample shelter; the beautiful colonial entrance assumed more than its usual dignity and the street itself had become richer by this added attraction.

The changes within the walls were chiefly those necessarily made by "modern

A Garden View of Sherman Parsonage

conveniences" and the decorator's art. More than a score of closets had disappeared, being swallowed up in more chamber or book room.

The Judge's library was the one apartment that had lost identity. Its gloom, the mystery of its many closets, its rear overflow addition and the private entrance passage at the front were merged into one cheerful, expansive, beautiful room, with a broad alcove and three windows to streetward, a second fine alcove with its window overlooking the garden at the rear and two windows with a pleasant eastern exposure in the main part. There still remained seven closets connected with the room to serve a man's need and the room on the left of the rear alcove was converted into a supplemental book-room so that the demands of the day were met.

The position of honor in this readjusted apartment was assigned to the collection of books made by the Judge—"The Private Library of Judge Roger Minott Sherman"—so runs the inscription on the brass tablet sunk into the case "A Gift to the First Ecclesiastical Society for the use of the minister's library and to be always

kept in said library and never to be sold or exchanged."

A second case holds in ward under glass, manuscripts, account books, journals, bills, letters written in the firm, clear hand of Mr. Sherman, and other heirlooms associated with the history of the mansion, all interesting memorials of a great and noble man. The restoration of the mansion and the preservation of relics in attractive way speaks distinctively concerning the patriotism and generosity of those who achieved this notable task.

The parson, wrapped in reminiscent mood, lingers before the sportive, tuneful wood fire on the hearth in the Study. It is New Year's eve, and the great clock in the distant west drawing-room is bestirring itself gently, rhythmically intimating that it is now minded to strike the twelve strokes which usher in the first day of another year-span. A dim light pervades the mansion. Suddenly the flames leap jubilantly, fantastically upon the glowing logs—strains of sweet music fall upon the listening ear—there is the rustle of gowns, the sound of many foot-falls, the merry ring of childish voices, gladsome words of heart-felt greetings.

"I wish you a Happy New Year!"

"Many returns of this glad day!"

The mansion is peopled with shadowy forms, clad in the costumes of a hundred years. The young and the old move side by side.

Yes, there stand the Judge and his wife—they are "receiving"—just beneath their portraits. How their faces flush with pleasure! What warm words of welcome fall from their lips! Their boys—not the grown up sons—but the bright, hopeful little boys—are close beside them intent upon the curious spectacle.

The light is dim, yet all see—the sounds are ghostly and elusive yet the air carries a great freightage of melody and kindly greeting. And then the children, big and little, clasp hands, they whirl through room after room, the very babes talk merrily, old closets are explored, mad frolics are called to mind, finger marks are traced on the staring white paint, books in the Study are scattered mischievously over tables, desks, and rugs, toys and garments are jumbled together in the college room, the china is displaced in the dining-room, some one has played with the clock for the congratulations upon the

rejuvenated mansion have hardly been given when the venerable time-piece stops short in its ringing in of the year—fire on the hearth expires and the parson shivers as he rubs his eyes and springs to his feet that he may catch at least the aftermath of strange sights and sounds which perchance still tarry with the mystery of midnight in the charmed precincts of the dear old house.

XV

A PARISH GARDEN AND ITS STORY

The beach is serpentine, although the curves have long and graceful sweeps, bounding the garden on two, almost three sides, as it extends miles toward the southwest.

There are several approaches to the sea—man-made roads, which bisect the marshes and divide Nature's horticultural exuberance into sections. The sinuous expanse of garden is bordered on the rear by the bold works of aggressive conventionality, namely, a farm house or two, several corn fields and meadows, an old historic Burial Hill (only six or eight feet above tide water), half a dozen orchards and groves, and an enticing margin of trees, young and old, evergreen and deciduous, through which peep the gables of faraway houses in the village.

One fortunate advantage which a marsh garden possesses is the fact that Nature does all the gardening, man never spending

a penny upon it or giving a thought to spading, planting or other care-taking.

> "Self sown my stately garden grows."

A man revels in the free, marvellous products of this vast, untamed, untamable wilderness of beauty.

> "'Tis here, 'tis here, thou canst unhand thy heart
> And breathe it free, and breathe it free,
> By rangy marsh, in lone sea-liberty."

The hours are checkered with innumerable surprises. Now it is the sky that has assumed unwonted beauty and splendor, the clouds touched here and there with the delicate shadings of many colors—blue, saffron, pink, violet, a crimson or a golden glow. Later it is the sea flecked with shadows, which are tossed merrily by the waves, until they disappear in the deeps beneath. There are shining pathways thrown athwart the fickle surface—pathways that invite the dreamer to saunter through their evanescent mysteries. On some gray winter's day, when the winds are rough and boisterous, the waves climb to the crest of the beach and stretch forth their white hands clutching for the solitary pilgrim as he lingers in captivity to the grandeur of the scene. The spray is

thrown in great handfuls square in his face. Now and again some ambitious billow spends its strength in a stealthy effort to grip his feet and undermine his sandy path. And how madly the winds shriek, how gruffly the waters strike the shore, imperiously calling upon all nature to swell the flowing tide of riotous song!

And what voices sound in the ear, sweet and low, loud and fantastic, gruff and mandatory, seductive and winsome—angel voices and demon voices—voices of the land and of the sea—voices stealing into the heart like the strains of an æolian harp—voices brazen, vibrant, appalling, filled with terror and the threat of woe!

* * * * *

One summer's morning the call of the marshes came early and insistent. It was sunrise and the day-king stretched a highway of glory straight from the eastern horizon across the placid Sound to the sentinel grasses on the summit of the glistening beach. The sweet breath of June pervaded the air. Ten thousand blossoms scattered through the fretwork of congenial soil nodded a welcome and gave the inspiration of beautiful form and exquisite color to the

Garden. The birds, myriad company, flitted joyously from tree to tree, from perch to perch, sometimes swinging like playful children as they cling to swaying saplings. And their matins made heaven resound with varied notes of jubilation.

As the early zephyrs gently sported with leaf and branch and bird-note and distant low of cattle on the hill-side, the old marsh Garden drew the pilgrim into his retreat, while the song of the poet vibrated upon his lips:

"I will fly in the greatness of God as the marsh-hen flies.
In the freedom that fills all the space 'twixt the marsh and the skies;
By so many roots as the marsh-grass sends in the sod
I will heartily lay me a-hold of the greatness of God.
Oh, like to the greatness of God is the greatness within
The range of the marshes."

As the parson yielded to the spell of the place, the Spirit of the Garden stole into his presence and quietly talked with him heart to heart.

"Why have you lived a vexed and narrow life all these years, mind closed to the precious, open secrets of the marshes? Bethink you how I have longed to share freedom and mystery—the loveliness of shapely plant and painted blossom—the music of feathered songsters and whis-

pering trees—all the charm and glory, the abundant vigor and large vitality—bethink you how I have longed to share these things with you and your deaf, blind, busy kinsfolk! You would not hear me when I called to you with my many voices. You would not see me when I filled your eyes with a thousand visions splendid. How could I share with you my overflowing treasury of life when every channel of fellowship was closed?"

The parson stood mute and sad at the remembrance of lost years with their neglected opportunities.

"But, dear son, let bygones be bygones. You have entered the charmed circle; the eyes and the ears of your soul are wide open. I will give you treasures both old and new. Be cheered—take your heritage of happiness."

The pilgrim's face was radiant with hope.

"Do you know this is a wonderful Garden," continued the Spirit. "I have presided over it since the time when it first emerged from the dark waters at the dawn of creation."

A rollicking chorus from the bobolink choir burst upon the parson's ears at this moment.

"The bobolinks from silence rouse
And flash along melodious ways."

The sweet interruption is for a moment—then the Spirit continues: "I have trained half a dozen varieties of marsh grasses. Are they not lovely—the bright and the dark—the short and the long. And the small witching crystals sparkling upon them are done by the breath of the dew or the hand of the sea." The shimmer of early morn decked a million swaying spears of rank verdure.

"Do you see the bayberry, the dwarf cedars, the wild plums and the scrub oaks to the southwest—that mile-long narrow stretch skirting the marsh, holding in check the sea? I call it my birdery. It is filled with nests and songs."

"Yes," whispered the parson, "I have lingered in its shady seclusion, lying prone on the sands 'neath the sheltering arches. The bird-notes have slipped into my soul with their delicate wafting of bliss."

"Ah, man," cried the Spirit with lingering tenderness, "you are fast becoming a child after my own heart. There are days and days of abundant friendship in store for you."

While the sun slowly climbed out of the

eastern waters and scattered over the landscape the indescribable glory of the ever fresh dawn, the Spirit of the Garden told the story of seed-time and harvest, the tranquil rest of winter months and the genial awakening of welcome spring. It was a lovely parable of life. "Speak to the earth and it shall teach you," said wise man Job.

"Man himself is fruit of the soil, the child of Nature. What folly to immure himself within narrow walls, breathe stale air impregnated with poisonous microbes, ruin his eyes with the fine print of many books and grow feeble, twisted and dyspeptic?"

The parson gave a sad assent to the remark. He felt its truth and justice. "A man is only half a man who refuses to claim all his Nature rights and privileges. You see, we Spirits of Air and Sunshine and Gardens and Forests, we hold the key to health and happiness, we know the secret of the strong arm, the clear brain, the merry heart, the imperious will. Take every breath of fresh air that comes your way—revel in the radiancy of light—absorb the beauty of landscape, the melody of songful creation, the loveliness of the rich,

varied life about you! Drink deeply of the springs which will reveal themselves to your faithful search as you push eagerly through fen and fell, dark forest and shaggy hillside. The rush and splendor of life comes to the man who tarries beneath the roof of the trees and the boundless canopy of the high heavens."

Now while the Spirit discoursed sweetly, joyously with this newborn comrade in the marshes, the day was making glad every grass spear and quivering leaf, the meadow larks, the song sparrows, the wonderful array of pink, blue, yellow, white, crimson, and lavender blossoms, the trees, the insects, the wild creatures that had slipped from their secure hiding places—all the vast, marvellous things, animate and inanimate. The glory of it passes human speech. It is one of man's supreme experiences—the revelation that for an hour or a day he is in tune with Nature—the vigor and richness of the seen world flows in upon the soul like a rushing mighty wind or snatches the soul away from the strain and trammelment of the ordinary and the prosaic into the boundless realm of ecstasy and vision.

But hours of ravishment are brief

and fleeting. The very intensity of feeling militates against their continuity. This high tension is perilous, so the Spirit of the Garden vanished and the pilgrim flung himself upon the cool sands in sheer exhaustion. The tide pushed its tranquil way higher and higher up the beach, the birds mellowed their songs to a low accompaniment of the advancing day. The man who toils appeared in the distance and there was disillusionment.

* * * * *

But the Spirit made good the promise of friendship. The parson had simply to discover the charmed times. Sunset favored the gracious intimacy—and the talk often stretched into the borderland of evening when the moon spanned the sea with a bridge of silver splendor and shadowy forms came trooping through the gentle light, bringing fresh treasures from the east, tales of oriental magic, fancy-free pictures of the long ago.

"My Garden," said the Spirit one delicious evening when the parson rested in the lap of mother earth amid the tall whispering grasses near the sea, "my Garden is instinct with history and romance.

The glare of this modern civilization cannot obliterate its treasured associations. To be sure the covetous farmer encroaches upon my domain and tries to curtail my boundaries by planting onions and potatoes or other market stuff along the edges of the marsh, but I get even with him, for when the winds swell and the tide rises beyond all reason in its vexation, I lure both wind and tide my way and make them do my bidding. With wild merriment they sweep over the man-made fields, the fields stolen from the marshes, and every vestige of labor is lost. So I come into my own again."

Now that seemed heartless to the parson and the Spirit read his inmost thought.

"Let me tell you a secret. The things of greatest profit in the world are not always gold mines or patches of potatoes." The Spirit had a wise and compelling manner of speech. "A tiny flower will sometimes do more for the human heart than the wealth of Indias. You human folk must feed on love and beauty and truth some good part of the time. An acre of Garden, set like an emerald in cincture of silver sheen, is worth bushels of common produce. It speaks to the higher nature of man.

The mystery of color and form, waves of glistering heat and child play of shadows as they chase each other across the changeful expanse, make an exquisite poem written in the beautiful sign language of affluent Nature."

True; and how many times had the parson wandered through tuneful marsh land and rock strewn pastures utterly oblivious to the finer shades of meaning in these things, taking note upon such acres as so many pieces of waste land.

"There is no waste land in all creation," explained the Spirit. "Every inch of soil, rock, stream or ocean bed has its uses. You human kind are to cultivate the very sky. It will yield poet and romancer, lone sailor and midnight watcher of the stars its generous inspiration and kindly helpfulness." And as these words were spoken the heavens overarched the dreamer with their glittering splendors and masses of silvery clouds floated airily through the deep spaces, quenching for a moment the glory of many a nameless sun only to lift the curtain again and usher in fresh scenes of stellar radiancy.

On this particular matchless summer

evening the Spirit appeared in reminiscent mood.

"What strange things have happened within the Garden and its neighborhood? You see these little knolls and ribs of sand which I threw up as breastworks against the too familiar approach of old Ocean are vantage points. As I linger on them my eyes sweep both land and sea. Off there to the southwest I saw, two generations ago, the Lexington burn. More then seven score human beings lost their lives. It was infinitely sad. The biting cold of a winter night, the fury of passionate flames and the ruthless clutch of the encompassing waters made a league and did the work." The parson shivered at the recital although the heat of summer clung like a garment to mother earth and her children.

"Once upon a time—it is more than a century in the past—I fondled and cherished a dear boy who haunted the captivating precincts of the Garden. I called him my little Benjamin. His home stood over on the hill back of the eastern inlet. He was one of the Nature-lovers from old Puritan stock. Time out of mind would he slip down into the Garden, fling himself into my embrace, and question me with

all the grace and passion of a true son. Would I tell him why there was such a diversity of colors, how did one seed or root grow into the fleur-de-lis and another into the orange-red milkweed, what made the sky blue and the sea green or gray, who ploughed the marshes, when did the birds learn to sing, had the snakes a father, how did the rocks become hard and the clouds wet, where did the sea get its salt and in what place did the man stay who had charge of the winds? Why a thousand questions my little Benjamin asked! Did I answer? Watch, my child, said I. And I showed him how to worm secrets out of Nature. I trained him to keen and constant observation. I filled his mind with the riches of antique lore. He never fished or dug clams or set traps for weasel, fox or muskrat that I did not whisper to him curious things. He was at home in forest and on shore—a self-trained enthusiastic observer. And this little Benjamin—my foster-child and bosom friend—became a world famous scholar and scientist reflecting his glory upon this Garden, Yale College and the nation, and the world called the dear boy Professor Silliman."

The parson listened, hardly daring to

move hand or feet, for fear that the Spirit's mood might change.

"I saw at midnight, May first, 1779, the whale boat with its crew of nine Tories creep into the sedge over there to the east of the Garden. The British came to take General Silliman prisoner and they dragged him down through my marshes trampling carelessly in their haste, pushing quickly to sea, soon lost in the darkness." The story is told by the son in his autobiographic sketch.

"It was a frightful scene which I witnessed on the nights of July 8th and 9th in this same year," said the Spirit. "These salt meadows were scourged with fire. Soldiers from British ships stalked back and forth along the lane, across my Garden and up and down the beach, carrying ravage and desolation with them. When abused and frightened women fled from the burning village to hide themselves within the shelter of grasses and fragrant shrubs, the heartless foe tossed fire-brands into this retreat; the flowers withered and burned, luxuriant vines shrivelled away and died, the birds and tiny creatures which habited the place were driven forth in terror. My Garden suffered the same stroke that laid in ashes the historic town."

These sad memories seemed not in harmony with the sweetness and majesty of the evening, so the parson gently insinuated that there must have been long generations when Nature revelled in her luxuriance unchallenged by the touch of the white man.

"Yes, yes." There was fresh animation in the voice of the Spirit. "The red man, noble son of the earth, thrived here many ages. He lived in comradeship with Nature. The eagle eye, brawny arm, swift foot, keen ear, erect carriage, stoic endurance were given him in reward for loyalty. Why do not men of today learn the great lesson? Stay in the open, talk with the trees, lie on moss-beds, rise with the sun, read the signs of the heavens, feed on plain fare, revel in sunshine and rejoice in the free service of Nature!

"You will rid yourself of dull care and abound in all the wealth of noblest, gladdest life."

The parson heaved a sigh for a vision of "what might have been" stood clear before the eyes of his mind. Had he like the Spirit's little Benjamin haunted Nature's retreats what joy of robust manhood charm might have been his possession, to say

nothing of the happiness which comes with the sense of this higher knowledge and power. "There were long days when these swarthy denizens of the woods reared their wigwams along the edges of my Garden. They shot their arrows into the breasts of the wild fowl, they dragged the succulent oysters from their beds and roasted them upon hot stones, they beguiled the fish from the sea and feasted like royal guests,—indolent, virile children of Nature. I loved and fondled them," whispered the Spirit. "I grieved when they were hunted from the land. They had learned to trust me and I talked often with them. Many a secret did they gain through this sweet intimacy—secrets which I have kept hidden away in my bosom since the Redman's going—secrets which I will share with the true-heart who wisely, tenderly courts me and invites my confidences."

This was a noble pledge breathed into the ears of the new found comrade. And there followed such a telling of strange things—such frank, happy narrative of times, seasons, changes, salt meadows, the growth of the reef which ran into the sea, the building of the Garden by the hands of

a million toilers, the rise of the lands after strange convulsions up and down the coast—such a story of wonders that the dreamer was lost in the labyrinth of mysteries.

It was a new life from this hour forth which the parson lived, for the Spirit of the Garden had taught him how to see and hear as he moved through the vast, palpitant realm of Nature. He learned that fairyland lies all about us—that wood nymphs, mermaids, sprites and ethereal creatures crowd land and sea with their friendly company. Did not maids of the mist speak to him when the dense fog settled down upon the shores and fleeting shadowy forms danced merrily upon the shifting sea? Truly it was some beautiful, evanescent creature which emerged from the heated marshes as the sun beat down upon the shining motes floating resplendently upon the restless air.

But the great, deep lessons taught by the fresh insight into things had higher meaning and a bearing upon life infinitely broader. A friendly seagull which has tramped over an acre of low-lying, tide-washed sands now takes wing and travels northward:

"He who from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright."

These are the thoughts which flit through the mind as the parson lingers.

"There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes,
By the deep sea—"

Days there are when God reveals His presence in such measure that the soul would fain cry with Hawthorne—

"O good God! O beautiful world!"

Byron on his return from the pilgrimage sings of the sea:

"Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convulsed, in breeze or gale or storm
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark—heaving—boundless, endless and sublime—
The image of Eternity, the throne
Of the Invisible."

One day the sea, another day some gentle songster, now the glory of sunset and again the tumult of wind and water—chorus of humble bees, wafting of flower odors, glint of dew-drop, visions of the cloud country—what ravishment and inspiration to the elect soul.

To the prayer of Thompson straightly and with devoutness say "Amen:"

> "O Nature,
> Enrich me with the knowledge of thy works;
> Snatch me to heaven."

It is not alone or chiefly that buoyant health and great good cheer may be had for the persistent asking. Chaucer hath the glory of truth when he pays homage unto Nature as "The vicar of the Almightie Lord."

XVI

THE CHARMS OF A RURAL PASTORATE

ONE day in strawberry time the parson played cicerone to a guest who is pastor of The Broadway Tabernacle. First there was a long, sinuous drive through lovely patches of woodland, over gently sloping hills, down by murmuring streams and along the bluff, bulking against the sea. Then the forlorn, city-weary man was taken by the hand and led down into an abundant, fragrant garden. The roses bloomed for him in all happy luxuriance, the birds sang brief mid-day refrains of June chorals—the gorgeous butterflies flashed a hundred hues of radiancy into his eyes—and the strawberries—well, they blushed with joy to their very tips and nodded enticingly as much as to say, "Touch me, taste me." To this witchery the guest swiftly responded, assuming an attitude of prayer on the mellow soil and bending low over the luscious fruit like a devotee intent upon most respectful posture in the presence of his favorite idol.

The lunch hour was followed by a saunter seaward and a long stretch of free and easy walk with interludes of talk and dream and fancy evoked by the vast expanse of waters.

The hour that ushered in or out the sunset summoned the parson and guest with some fifty young men to the clam bake. Chicken, fish and clams—sandwiches, crackers and other proper accompaniments with coffee, fruit and cakes—this was the first course and the second course was like unto it, followed by a jolly dessert of college songs, while the surge of waters beat time against the resisting sands. And when the sun had hidden far away beneath the western horizon Nature drew a thick curtain of gray-black clouds across the face of hastening moon—and a quiet lullaby of whispering sea, rising winds, restless grasses and shrubbery turned thought to home and rest and sleep.

On the morrow the parson guided the guest down through the marsh garden into the merry, busy life of these seductive regions, imparting to him the secrets of birds' nests, rabbit covers and wondrous beds of beach peas or other favorite flowers, bringing him at last to an enticing sand-bed

close upon the sheltering shade of tall grasses. Here the guest flung himself upon dear old mother earth and lingered in sweet, blessed isolation, getting in tune with the Infinite. As the hours sped their way, a new light came into his eyes, the relaxed form absorbed new life, the wrinkles fled from his brow, a delicate color mounted his cheeks, he became another man, wiser, stronger, richer, better.

"Ah," said he, "give me the country parish with its precious friendships, and all the hours of day to cherish them." It was not so much the weight of years as the weight of labor, responsibility and demands that sorely burdened the quiet guest. "A city minister has no time to cherish friendships. The hours of days are not long enough to answer the thousand calls that insist upon our heed."

Many thoughts came trooping to the music of that compelling phrase "the charms of a rural pastorate."

* * * * *

It is not to be gainsaid that a great, thriving city has strange fascination for the average man. Its appeal is direct and practical—a tangible array of advantages

present themselves on the instant. And men will mass themselves in cities,—the trend of life moves that way. Imperative is the need of teachers and leaders in these large centers. We bid them all Godspeed in their exacting and multitudinous labors. But the spell of the country is upon us and we must confess our faith. Here is task and opportunity that will not only match urban conditions or demands, but will afford as compensation for unstinted service life's noblest enrichments.

A country parish yields the same diversity of taste, station, temperament, culture and achievement found in the city, although the general opinion is to the contrary. Human nature is human nature in whatever environment it is placed and sooner or later its essential traits and peculiarities express themselves. It is a matter of adaptation whether in city or country. "All things to all men," Paul's comprehensive phrase on the subject, indicates the key to the situation—a generous and happy adjustment of the individual to the people whom he must love and help.

The country parish will not vie with the city for numbers and its members may be scattered from Dan to Beersheba, but these

conditions are to be reckoned among its distinct advantages. The pastor has become a tradition in our great churches. He finds it impossible to meet his people in their homes. They hear him preach on the Sabbath and gain sight of him in some public function during the week, but any nearer relationship is a dream for the majority.

The old-time visit of a country minister, the long stay of a colonial parson when he made his regular parish round, is a thing of the past; but he still goes among the people, visiting them in joy and sorrow, entering heartily into their concerns, the trusted confidant and precious counsellor. The family is not summoned for prayer and catechetical examination according to the example of the primitive days, but there is a close and tender relation of real friendship—the mutual interest and affection of people who have lived through common trials and victories, learning each other's worth and the joy of giving and doing in the name of our Master.

What charming homes many of the country parishes provide for their ministers! Some good friend builds a pleasant, modern house so that it is flooded with

sunshine and says to the people, "This is our manse." The place is sacred; its brightness and good cheer enter into the life of the whole town.

It is true that a city church may build something of the kind, but real estate rises in value and one day it is sold. Why not rent a place? So the preacher passes from one street to another, getting into touch with a larger number of his flock perhaps, but forfeiting all sense and comfort of a minister's house. In the country it is becoming quite the fashion for old historic homesteads to pass by last will and testament into the charge of the parish for the use of the shepherd. This is a beautiful tribute to the past, present and future: the past, as such a manse becomes the treasure-house of sweet, precious memories; the present, as it fosters the spirit of peace and happiness in the preacher's heart; the future, as it binds all the generations into a blessed social fellowship and continually reminds the home-makers concerning love's gracious privileges. Blessed is the parish whose loyalty adorns and enriches the parsonage with precious associations.

* * * * *

Books have a special charm in the country. The atmosphere of respectful quiet favors deep thought. The roar of trade will break in upon a man who seeks never so retired a place in city limits. Great clouds of black dust may curtain away his light and darken his very soul with gloom. But life among the hills or by the sea or in the valley is a life gloriously free. A man retires to his study, the song of birds floats in through the open window, the hum of busy insects, the gentle undertone of winds—it all harmonizes with mood of meditation. When winter invites nature to take her annual sleep and the driven snow lies snug against the house, what long delicious evenings of priceless, uninterrupted isolation the bookman enjoys! He sits among kings and queens, the wise and noble spirits of all time. They are looking down upon him with infinite gladness and hope. He has simply to invite Shakepeare, Ruskin, Dante, Milton to speak and they give him their vast, splendid wealth.

There are times when it becomes a revelry of delight—this fellowship with books in the delectable secrecy of a library on some riotous winter's night. The good and the true—favorite singers and teachers—

spirits freighted with love, cheer, wisdom, come down from the retirement of shelves and cases, throng the room with their subtle presences and instill something of their life into the heart of the startled reader—transforming the hour and the place into a heaven on earth.

The parson has learned a secret which he will impart to any true heart who will promise to keep it. There are many books which must be read out under the blue sky, away from frowning walls and imprisoning conditions of stone and wood. They must be read within the hearing of Dame Nature, accompanied by her wordless comments, her beautifully suggestive annotations and illustrations. The publishers are shrewdly putting into our hands pocket editions of the world's classics. The parson looks with pride and affection upon these wise, strong comrades who travel with him up and down the parish, through all kinds of weather, under the most varied circumstances.

There are calls to be made back in the country two or three miles. It is the day for a ride on the bicycle and there will be half a dozen lovely resting-places where the views are broad and varied, the woods and

the waters being vocal with happiness. Here the parson will tarry, drawing from his voluminous pocket a handy selection from Tennyson or a favorite play from Shakespeare. Beneath an old oak—old—three hundred years ago when the Indians are said to have used it as a signal tower and rendezvous—old beyond all neighbor trees and called by Professor Dana one of the Tree Monarchs of New England—beneath this rugged, venerable land-mark, the parson lingers while he reads "The Talking Oak"—

> "The fat earth feed thy branchy root,
> That under deeply strikes;
> The northern mornings o'er thee shoot,
> High up in silver spikes."

Never does the music of sweet singer sound sweeter than when chanted to the mellifluous accompaniment of Nature's harmonies.

> "There's music in the sighing of a reed;
> There's music in the gushing of a rill;
> There's music in all things, if men had ears:
> Their earth is but an echo of the spheres."

When duty takes a man back into the country or down through the woods he fails to improve his opportunity in neglecting to bring for companionship the gracious

spirit of Emerson or Thoreau or Browning or the like tried friend. And if perchance there are necessary delays when the parson has reached his calling place, delays incident to a preparing for the welcome visit, it is a most satisfactory way of waiting, this resort to the company of the good book carried with you. Many an hour is saved in this way, invested in the cultivation of high thinking and commendable patience. A few years' pastoral service, illuminated and transformed by this happy practice will induct a man into the chief treasures of English literature—a practice that must restrict itself to country life. For the man moving up and down the streets of a city would find it perilous to walk with bowed head intent upon his book. There would be inevitable collisions. And the reader standing stock still on a corner under the shade of some grateful tree might be an obstruction in the stream of trade or stigmatized as a crank and lunatic.

Ah, this bewitching and soul-satisfying liberty which pertains to life in the "open" —which gives zest and inspiration to a sensitive pilgrim!

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There is abundant work for the country minister—there are no sinecure parishes for an honest, faithful man. But the sense of leisure—as compared with workers in the larger fields—is a very precious boon. The years may be devoted to the mastery of large tasks in scholarship. Not a few men of mark have spent the early days in quiet parishes, true to every present duty, but so orderly and economic in the use of time that they achieved important labors in the broader realm of study and research.

The public library has become such a common institution in our towns and villages that books are accessible to every reader. The man who is earnest in the matter will have little difficulty in getting for his use the great, essential works of literature, history and religion.

What a wise move it would be on the part of every young preacher if he would spend his first years of service in the country parish—the place with largest opportunity for self-culture, the place where multitudinous demands of a general nature did not absorb and restrict him to his actual impoverishment of intellect and spirit?

* * * * *

The "call" of the country is urgent and tireless.

"Come, drink at these quiet fountains of knowledge and wisdom." It is the call of old, dear books—the great books of all time, read in the seclusion of a modest manse. "Come, look upon me and live." Nature speaks and flowers, trees, birds, finny tribes, curious creatures of field and forest, mute soulful landscapes, scurrying clouds, unseen frolicsome winds and the myriad animate and inanimate things, all join the chorus until the call compels the heedful listener to respond.

"Come." The voice is a "still, small voice." It sounds at midnight through the echoless watches of dreams. It sounds at dawn of day when renewed freshness gives a man his first free thought of life. It sounds in the din of approaching battle when one trembles because of immaturity. "Come! I need you—cheerful, generous, laborer."

"I come." Days speed their way—the country weaves its magic spell and holds the prisoner in happy, unconscious thrall, giving leisure and opportunity for work potential, far-reaching and immeasurable in worth.

For the country lads and lassies—yielding to the inspiration of ideals held aloft by faithful preachers,—well-equipped in body, mind and spirit, and abounding in robust life,—instinctively climb to leadership and victory. The names are legion.

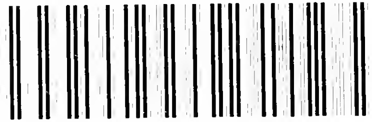
Favored above his fellows is the man fore-ordained to be a shaping force in the shining career of these country boys and girls who bear the chief burdens of a great Republic and perpetually infuse their vigor into the world's work.

* * * * *

What sacred hours of fellowship with the Informing and Controlling Spirit is granted to the reverent man as he withdraws into the privacy of Nature and meets God face to face! Verily, "The groves were God's first temples"; the mountain tops stand second, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help"; and the sea, "Darkly, deeply, beautifully blue" in its noblest moods invoke the spirit of worship—its vasty realm, o'er arched by the heavens, most spacious and magnificent cathedral of all.

There was a week of clear, crisp weather one winter—superb days following the

wake of a wild storm and the sunsets were matchless. Walking through the marshes, during the supreme hour of glorious pageantry, the parson seemed to be transported into celestial realms—a score, a hundred shadings of vivid color were woven into infinite tapestries and endless mosaics for walls and ceilings—gold, blue, crimson, sapphire, orange, ochres, pinks running into purples and yellows lost in delicate greens, blue-black and soft gray, passionate scarlet and ashes of roses. The floor of the illimitable temple was the white driven snow and the tranquil sea worked into irregular tessellated pavement all aglow with the light of departing day. The silence of the place and the hour was most worshipful. Did not God make his presence felt? The heart stood still for a moment in ecstasy of jubilation. The subtle calm was vocal with praises. There came into the life a fresh sense of the Divine.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