













NEW CONNECTICUT.

*"Still her gray rocks tower above the sea  
That crouches at their feet, a conquered wave:  
'Tis a rough land of earth and stone and tree,  
Where breathes no castled lord or cabined slave;  
Where thoughts and tongues and hands are bold and free,  
And friends will find a welcome, foes a grave;  
And where none kneel save when to heaven they pray,  
Nor even then, unless in their own way."*

HALLECK'S "CONNECTICUT."







# NEW CONNECTICUT.

An Autobiographical Poem.

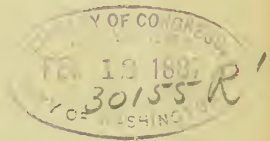
BY

A. BRONSON ALCOTT.

Edited

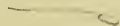
By F. B. SANBORN.

33



BOSTON:  
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1887.



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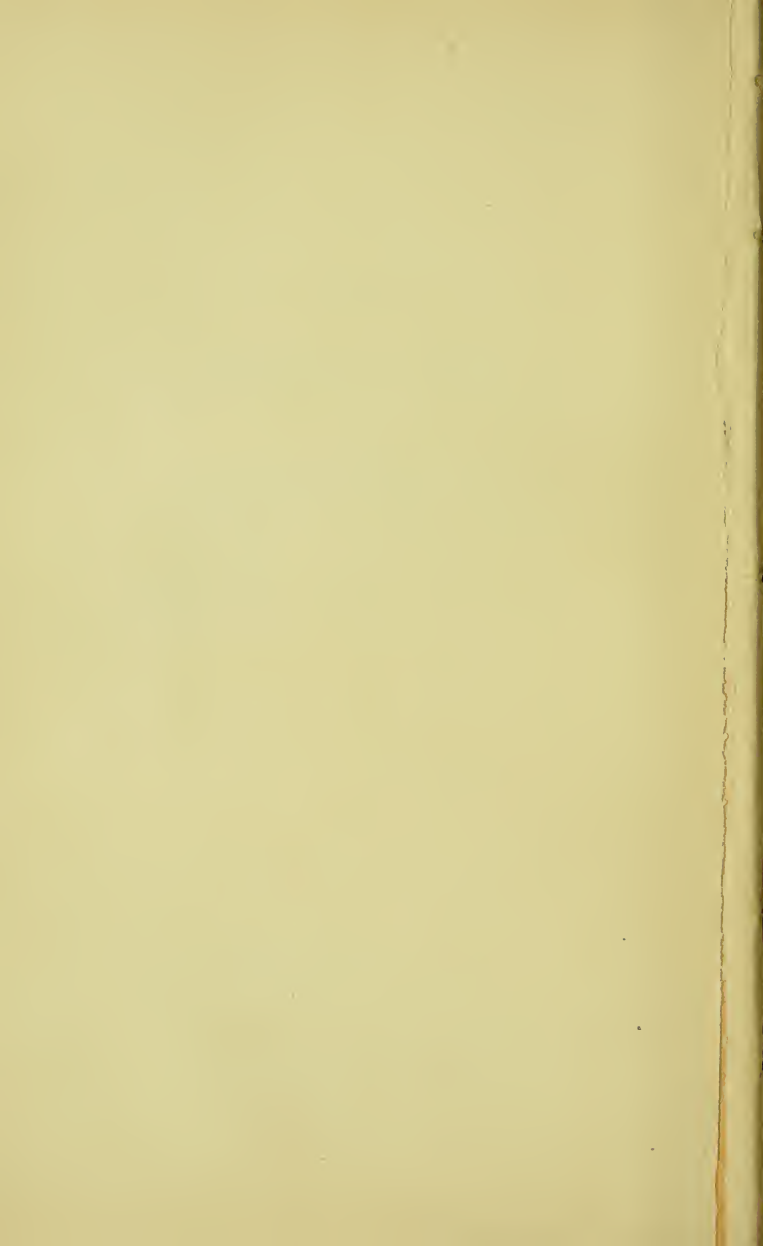
TO

F. B. SANBORN.



*Accept, dear friend, this rustic lay,  
Owing its polish to your learned sense,  
The while the lingering winter's day  
Held all my sadness in a rapt suspense.*

CONCORD, June, 1881.



## CONTENTS.



	PAGE
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	V
PART I. THE FARMER'S BOY . . . . .	7
II. THE PEDLER'S PROGRESS . . . . .	57
III. THE ADVENTURE RENEWED. . . . .	73
IV. FAILURE AND RETREAT . . . . .	93
<hr/>	
NOTES . . . . .	103





## INTRODUCTION.

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I HAVE undertaken to edit for my ancient friend, Mr. Alcott, this *näive* work of his, conceived and executed after his eightieth year, but not brought to completion when, at the age of eighty-three, he lost the power of writing by a stroke of apoplexy. Since that time (Oct. 24, 1882) he has reviewed, and to some extent re-arranged the material for an autobiography which he had long been collecting, and which his friends had for many years been urging him to edit. The first edition of this volume, privately printed in 1881, and the "Sonnets and Canzonets" of 1882, were the beginnings of a poetical autobiography, to which he intended to add notes, and to continue the work in prose during the years from eighty to ninety, in which, as he supposed,

the kind Providence that had wonderfully ordered his long life would still extend to him health and the vigor of his pen, that had never been more active than from seventy-five to eighty-three. But the death of his friend Emerson, in April, 1882, warned him of the hazards that wait on age, and he may then have regretted, as all his friends must, that he had so long deferred a work which he alone could adequately perform.

In explanation of these humble cantos, descriptive of the childhood and youth of a remarkable man (whose thread of life has connected one century with another, and who bridged the gulf between Puritanism and the Concord School of Philosophy, with all that those remote terms imply), I will here give from the history of his native town, Wolcott, the dates and outlines of Mr. Alcott's biography.

The first settler of Wolcott, John Alcock, of New Haven, left a son, Captain John Alcock, who lived on Spindle Hill, along with his brothers, each possessed of a good farm. At his house his grandson, Amos Bronson Alcott, was born November 29, 1799, being the eldest

of eight children of Joseph Chatfield Alcox and Anna Bronson, his wife. The homestead of Joseph Alcox was near his father's, and it was there that Mr. Alcott spent his boyhood. The present house, built in 1819, is that from which Mr. Alcott set forth for Boston in 1828, when he began his active career in the great world. It stood near the fork of the road, where in former times was the district school-house in which Mr. Alcott and his cousin, Dr. William A. Alcott, commenced their education. This school-house has now disappeared, and the house and farm of Joseph Alcox have suffered from neglect since his death in 1829. He was a skilful farmer and country mechanic, making farming tools and household utensils for his townsmen, and having the best tilled and best fenced farm (of nearly 100 acres) in the Spindle Hill district. Two of his brothers had built log cabins on their clearings and lived in them in the early part of this century, but he always occupied a frame house, and lived with comfort, though with frugality. He was a diffident, retiring man, and kept much at home, content with his simple lot, industrious, temperate, conscientious,

honorable in all his dealings, and fortunate in his domestic life.

His wife, the mother of Bronson Alcott, deserves special mention, since from her he inherited his name, his early religious training, and the general turn of his mind. Anna Bronson was the daughter of Captain Amos Bronson, of Plymouth, — a man of property, influence, and decided theological opinions, somewhat at variance with those of the majority of Connecticut farmers at that time. She was the sister of an eminent clergyman and scholar, Dr. Tillotson Bronson (mentioned on page 45, and in the note following), who educated many clergymen for the Episcopal Church, of which he was a leader in Connecticut. He would gladly have trained his young nephew for that profession, and, indeed, began so to do, but the auspices were not propitious. Mrs. Alcott assented with sweetness to the choice of her son, and maintained through her long life the tenderest relations with him. She taught him early to keep a diary, and he learned to write by practising with chalk on her smooth kitchen floor. He was a pupil of Dr. Bronson in 1813,

and studied with Rev. John Keyes, the pastor of Wolcott, in 1815. In 1825, after the unlucky ending of his adventures in Virginia and Carolina, he again lived in Dr. Bronson's family, and acted for a while as his secretary, assisting in the publication of the "Churchman's Magazine" of which Dr. Bronson was editor. At this time he wrote to his younger brother, Chatfield Alcott, then living at a distance from home : —

"We, dear Brother, have a kind and affectionate Mother — a Mother who has not had the return from us (on my part at least) that her virtues demanded. In the humble sphere in which she has moved she has been the means of doing a good deal. She has exemplified the maxim (which you and I and every one else should endeavor also) 'To do all the good which our means afforded, and as little hurt.'"

In a later record he says : —

"I assisted my parents in husbandry and housewifery during my childhood and early youth. From the age of six to ten years I attended the common school near my Father's house, during nine months of the year; and from ten till I was fourteen, during the winter months. Our 'copies' were set by the school-master in books made of a few sheets of

foolscap stitched together, and 'ruled' with a leaden plummet. We used ink made of maple and oak bark steeped in indigo and alum, which we manufactured ourselves. With this I began keeping a diary of my doings, with some entries of the weather and events, at twelve years of age; it contained some notice also of my reading, and a catalogue of the books read. This diary was continued without interruption, including my experiences while travelling in the Southern States, till the time of my school-keeping in 1825; and had extended to some twelve volumes. But in 1833 it was unfortunately burned in Philadelphia, with my early correspondence and business papers."

What this diary briefly mentioned, the present volume of verse and prose sets forth more fully and in another form.

Mr. Alcott says: "My Father was skilful in handicrafts, — making plows, yokes, rakes, scythe-snaths, boxes, brooms, baskets, and other implements of husbandry and articles of housekeeping. In these arts I inherited some portion of his skill, and early learned the use of his tools. In the spring of 1814, I went to work in the clock-factory of S. Hoadley, about two miles from my

father's, but in Plymouth; and continued there, putting together clocks, during the summer and autumn. Being discontented, I was permitted to return home and go to school about New Year's, 1815. Early in the spring, not being yet sixteen, I journeyed on foot with my cousin Thomas, as far as Western Massachusetts, peddling small articles from house to house, and extending my knowledge of geography and mankind. We made two trips, and visited the old Connecticut prison of Newgate, but made no money. In the autumn of 1815 I travelled into Eastern New York and obtained many subscribers to Flavel's treatise on 'Keeping the Heart.' This work was edited by a lady of Bristol, Conn., living near the merchant, George Mitchell, who had supplied us with goods for peddling in the spring." At seventeen he was confirmed, along with his father, as a member of the Episcopal church, the ceremony being performed in Waterbury, by Bishop Brownell; before and after which young Alcott, with his cousin, the late Dr. Alcott, used to read the church service on Sundays at the school-house in their neighborhood. The two cousins also carried on a boyish

correspondence, and founded a small library for their mutual improvement. A few years later, as we shall see, they visited Virginia and the Carolinas together, on one of those peddling pilgrimages which make such a romantic feature of Mr. Alcott's early life.

The beginning of these rambles was in the autumn and winter of 1818, when the youth was almost nineteen years old. At the age of sixteen he had been selling copies of Flavel's "Keeping the Heart," and his earnings were spent then in New Haven on a prayer book for his mother, another for himself, a dictionary, and a supply of paper for his diaries. These short journeys in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New York, had diminished his natural bashfulness, and increased his longing to see more of the great world. His father and mother would have retained him at home, but he resolved to go to Norfolk in a coasting vessel from New Haven, and had a dream that he could easily, in Virginia, find a place as teacher. Accordingly he sailed from New Haven, October 13, 1818, in the sloop "Three Sisters," Captain Sperry skipper, with fifteen other passengers, chiefly pedlers



from Connecticut and workmen going in the employ of the Tisdales, Connecticut tinmen, who had a shop at Norfolk. The voyage lasted about a week, and young Alcott landed in Virginia, October 20. His passage-money was ten dollars. For a few days after arriving at Norfolk he continued to board with Captain Sperry, but soon went to live with Tisdale, the tinman, and was urged by him to enter his service. At first he was bent on teaching, but having tried from the 24th of October to the 12th of November, without success, to get a school, and being then in debt, the youth accepted his offer, and began to peddle for him about the city. Just before the Christmas holidays we find Mr. Alcott buying for himself a small stock of Virginia almanacs, and selling them to the citizens of Norfolk at a profit of two hundred per cent. Each almanac cost threepence, and was sold for ninepence, and the young merchant easily earned a dollar or two a day so long as the holidays lasted. Then it occurred to him to enlarge his stock, and to sell trinkets and silks to the families in the surrounding country. He went, therefore, to a dealer in "fancy goods" at Norfolk,

and bought wares costing nearly three hundred dollars, which he bestowed in two small tin trunks, to be carried in the hand, as the pedler journeyed on foot from house to house. There were tortoise-shell combs, thimbles, scissors, various articles of ornament for ladies, puzzles and picture-books for children, spectacles, razors, and many other wares for the men, besides needles, buttons, sewing-silk, and much more that was not then a part of a pedler's stock in Eastern Virginia.

The first trip was made in January, 1819, and was a circuit from Norfolk, by way of Hampton, along the James River for a while, then across the country to Yorktown, and by the York County plantations back to Hampton and Norfolk again. Both goods and merchant found unexpected favor in the eyes of the Virginians. An American foot-pedler, a bashful Yankee, neither impertinent nor stingy, was an agreeable novelty in those regions. He was kindly received at the great houses of the planters, where he generally spent the night, accepting courteously their customary hospitality, though sometimes sleeping in the slave quarters. On Sundays and rainy

days, when his trade could not be pursued, this diffident and bookish Autolycus remained in the planters' houses, and had permission to read in their libraries, where he found many books he had never heard of before. In that part of Virginia lived some of the oldest and best descended families of the Old Dominion, with large and choice libraries, which they allowed the young man from Connecticut to explore for himself. Biography was his favorite reading, then poems and tales, and he had a keen appetite — not so common among lads of nineteen — for metaphysics and books of devotion. Cowper's "Life and Letters," Locke's "Conduct of the Understanding," and Lavater's "Physiognomy," were among the books thus read; nor was his childish favorite, "Pilgrim's Progress," forgotten, which he found in fine editions among the Virginians.

The region where he had lived was one of the most primitive parts of Connecticut, and, though it was so near to those centres of culture, Hartford and New Haven, was but scantily supplied with books. There were not a hundred volumes in the parish library, and it had fallen

into disuse when Mr. Alcott was a lad. He used to get permission from his father on Saturday afternoons to go round to the houses of the farmers in Wolcott for several miles to examine their libraries and read their books, which included the Bible, and perhaps half a dozen other books, among them Bunyan's "Pilgrim," Hervey's "Meditations," Young's "Night Thoughts," and Burgh's "Dignity of Human Nature," a book then in much vogue among the country people of New England. These volumes would be kept on a shelf in a corner of the family room, and young Alcott readily got leave to borrow them. It was his custom to borrow and read the "Pilgrim's Progress" once a year; and this book, more than any other, gave direction to his fancies and visions of life. Wolcott, indeed, might pass either for the Hill Difficulty or for the Delectable Mountains, according to the mood of the inhabitant of its uplands. The township lay high, and Spindle Hill, or "New Connecticut," was at the summit of the range of Wolcott hills, commanding a wide prospect on all sides. Seven parish steeples were in sight, and from an oak-top the young Chris-

tian could see the glittering waters of Long Island Sound.

Books were always his solace and delight, and he read constantly of evenings, and while resting from work at noon, during his father's nap or pull at the tobacco-pipe, in which he indulged himself moderately. Sometimes, too, the barefoot boy took his book afield with him, and read under the wall or by some tree, while the oxen rested in the furrow.

To a youth thus bred, the comparatively elegant and courtly life of the wealthy Virginians was a graceful and impressive revelation, — the first school of fine manners which he had entered. An English gentleman, hearing the story of Mr. Alcott's early years, — his farm life and his progress as a pedler, — could scarcely believe it true. "Why," said he, "your friend has the most distinguished manners — the manners of a very great peer." He would have been still more surprised to learn that it was during the years of peddling that this polish of manner began to be acquired, by contact with a class then esteemed the first gentlemen in America.

During the early months of 1819 he visited the Virginian towns of Portsmouth, Smithfield, Williamsburg, the old capital of the colony, Gloucester, and others in that region, and traversed the surrounding districts, without anxiety or misadventure, and with something to show at the beginning of April as the profits of the winter's trade. More than a hundred dollars was the net income, after all debts were paid ; and travelling homeward with this, Mr. Alcott put \$80 into the hands of his father, as the price of the six months' time he had taken from the work of farm and shop. The money went into the new house which the father was then building (in 1819), and which is still standing. In November, 1819, Mr. Alcott and his brother Chatfield went to Virginia again. On the 24th of January, 1820, they wrote home, saying: "We have been very successful in business, and have traded as much and sold at as good advantage as we ever anticipated. We hope to do better hereafter, for we have but just begun, and Chat is altogether unacquainted with peddling. He does well, and will make a very good hand at the business before we return. He sells nearly as much as

I do, and at about the same profit. Our articles afford (exclusive of expenses)  $33\frac{1}{3}$  per cent profit; consequently, in selling one hundred dollars we clear thirty-three dollars. The last trip we made we went out together and were gone just two weeks. I sold one hundred dollars' worth of property and Chatfield about fifty dollars'. I am calculating on keeping him in the country while I come to Norfolk to buy goods; he cannot be of any service to me here (Norfolk), and our board costs but very little in the country, though three dollars a week here. . . . Father and Mother, how do you think we look? Like two awkward, poor, unpolished, dissipated, homespun, begging, tugging Yankee pedlers, think you? No, this is not the case with your sons. By people of breeding and respectability they are treated with politeness; and if they are sometimes treated with contempt by the low, vulgar class of the community, it is then not worth minding. For my part, I can make peddling in Virginia as respectable as any other business, however humiliated and contemptible I may appear to the silken sons of pride and dissipation." In May, Chatfield

went home with sixty-five dollars profits, and on July 28, Bronson reached home with a hundred dollars. These sums also were paid over to their father toward the building of his new house.

October 8, 1820, Bronson and William Alcott sailed from New Haven for Charleston, S. C., intending to teach in South Carolina; but by December 5, they were in Norfolk, Va., after making the journey on foot from Charleston to Norfolk, and betook themselves to peddling again. During this winter Bronson Alcott suffered from a severe typhus fever, and William Alcott took care of him. The profits of the season were small, owing to this illness and other unfavorable circumstances. On his way home in June, Mr. Alcott visited for the first time Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York. His prosperity in Virginia had made him extravagant, and he bought on Broadway a costly suit of clothes, which, to the surprise of the Wolcott farmers and the chagrin of his father and his cousin William, he wore home in July, 1820, paying for them, but neglecting to pay the merchant, Allyn, of whom he had bought his goods in



Virginia. Consequently, in September, 1821, Joseph Alcox was compelled to endorse his son's notes for two hundred and seventy dollars, due to Allyn, and the burden of debt began to weigh down the family. In October, to retrieve his fortune, Bronson Alcott, with his brother Chatfield, set forth again for Virginia, "driving a wagon bought at Berlin, Conn., laden with goods bought at Meriden (on credit), and some clocks also," their father giving the horse. The enterprise cannot succeed; "the costly coat scorns peddling, and sinks money fast." Peddling will never do, after all; and at Norfolk, April 7, 1822, Allyn the merchant takes the horse, wagon, and goods to pay his account; the younger brother Chatfield goes on with his peddling, and the spendthrift takes refuge in North Carolina, where he will teach a writing-school. This adventure fails too, and he makes his way home on foot and in poverty, arriving at Wolcott in June. Not quite willing to abandon the hope of retrieving his fortune, he set forth again for the South with his cousin, Thomas Alcox, in October, 1822, and spent the winter in North Carolina, among the Quakers of Chowan and

Perquimans counties, returning in the spring of 1823. Here he saw much of the Friends and read their books, such as William Penn's "No Cross, no Crown," Barclay's "Apology," Fox's "Journal," and other works of like spirit. The moral sentiment, as Mr. Alcott has since said, now superseded peddling clearly and finally.

To this point in his life, the present volume brings the romantic youth. His career as a school-master, which he next entered, soon made him known to the public; as it had previously led to his acquaintance with Miss May, of Boston, whom he married in 1830. This union of hearts and minds Mr. Alcott has celebrated in his "Sonnets;" where also appear portraits of his friends Channing, Emerson, Garrison, Hawthorne, Parker, Phillips, Thoreau, and John Brown, — the last-named, like himself, a son of Connecticut and a religious enthusiast. Among these friends there were not wanting those who, in turn, have paid their tribute to Alcott himself. I cannot better close this chapter than by citing two of these, — in verse and in prose.

## TO ALCOTT.

NOR only in the camp,  
But near the scholar's lamp, —  
Not with the clash of arms,  
But in thy heart beat valor's charms ;  
I know the splendors of the great,  
The blazing halls, the ruby wine, —  
But in thy truth is an estate  
Not all their fancies could combine.

A dull, vexatious age  
Thy hand could not engage,  
King of a heavenly band  
More opulent in command ;  
As Fate is never known to fail  
I count thy gains full certain yet,  
Nor trust that winter, coldly pale,  
Shall, freezing, force thee to forget.

I can foresee thy worth  
Beyond the State, or Earth, —  
That in thy courtly band  
Both Kings and Consorts stand :

Thy peace is not a parchment scroll,  
But pure integrity of heart ;  
Though waters roar and thunders roll  
*That* beats as gentle in its part.

Give me the happy man,  
And wealth the weary clan, —  
And their manorial blessing  
To those who need possessing ;  
But come, thou tender, trusting Sage,  
My house, my heart, my hope is thine !  
Bright jewel of this bankrupt age,  
Rich cup for an immortal wine !

I bent at beauty's power,  
And, scorned, I hate the hour :  
Capricious was the child,  
Fickle of heart, and proud, and wild ;  
Thou standest firm, and saintly still,  
Though decades fleet, though youth outdies,  
The glory of a virtuous will,  
The candor of old Truth's replies.

Thus wrote Ellery Channing in the days commemorated  
by Hawthorne, when they rowed their boat together on

the Assabet. Henry Thoreau, encamped by Walden Pond, a few years later, drew this portrait of Alcott, which the years have not dimmed, and which posterity will recognize :

“During the winter of 1846-1847, there was another welcome visitor who came through the village, through snow and rain and darkness, till he saw my lamp through the trees, and shared with me some long winter evenings. One of the last of the philosophers, Connecticut gave him to the world ; he peddled first her wares, afterwards, as he declares, his brains. These he peddles still, bearing for fruit his brain only, like the nut its kernel. His words and attitude always suppose a better state of things than other men are acquainted with, and he will be the last man to be disappointed as the ages revolve. He has no venture in the Present. But though comparatively disregarded now, when his day comes, laws unsuspected by most will take effect, and rulers will come to him for advice.

‘ How blind that cannot see serenity ! ’

A true friend of man, — almost the only friend of human progress, — with his hospitable intellect he embraces

children, beggars, insane, and scholars, and entertains the thought of all, adding to it commonly some breadth and elegance. Whichever way we turned, it seemed that the heavens and the earth had met together, since he enhanced the beauty of the landscape. I do not see how he can ever die ; Nature cannot spare him.”

It must interest mankind to know how such a character was nurtured ; and in this little book, sometimes vague, iterative, provincial, and always artless, we have the story told in part.

F. B. SANBORN.

CONCORD, *October*, 1886.

# NEW CONNECTICUT.



## PART I.

### *THE FARMER'S BOY.*

BENEATH the mountain's brow, the o'erhanging wood,  
The farmer's boy had here his humble birth,  
From towns remote, in rural neighborhood ;<sup>1</sup>  
His education at the homely hearth.

A highland district and a rugged soil,  
By rough roads crossed, and dangerously steep ;  
Mad River's mill-stream tumbles with turmoil  
O'er its rash cataract with furious leap.

Far up the slope a winding pathway leads  
The forest's edge along, the summit gains ;  
Wide now around the opening prospect spreads,  
Ample reward for all the traveller's pains.

Within the circle of the blue sky's rim  
Peer forth in sight fair towns, tall steeples gleam ;  
The wavering lines of Hancock's Brook show dim ;  
Yonder wild Naugatuck, his mother's stream.



Mountain magnificent ! still unrenowned,  
Unsought for delicate air and lordly view ;  
Fields, orchards, murmuring woods, valleys profound,  
All aptly named "Connecticut the New."

Southward the charming landscape fills the eye, —  
New Haven's beauteous shades and classic ground  
Behind old Carmel's hills, hidden, yet nigh,  
Close harbored on Long Island's sandy sound.

Nearer, within short distance, there discern  
Potucko's woods, where once for snaring game  
The Indian fired his brushwood ring ; in turn  
Himself was caught, and perished in the flame.

Not three full lifetimes now had passed away  
Since this wild woodland planted was and claimed  
By his robust forefathers, old and gray, —  
Farms, orchards now, and “ Farmingbury ” named.

Here modest pride their pedigree might name,  
Trace back their lineage to Old Ely’s see,  
And Jesus College on Cam’s English stream,  
Whose Vigilant Bird still names the family.<sup>2</sup>

In Winthrop’s ships across the dismal sea  
Their fathers came, and honored names they bore  
In Boston and its neighboring colony, —  
From Roxbury journeying to New Haven’s shore.<sup>3</sup>

Thence inland marching, the first settler<sup>4</sup> here  
Surveyed his thousand acres, bound by bound ;  
His labors ended, left his titles clear,  
In fit proportion, to his children round.

His eldest heir, of military port,  
Won from his kinsman's hand a captain's sword ;  
Bold Trumbull's "minute men," in field and fort,  
Heard his commission and obeyed his word.<sup>5</sup>

Of Derby's ancient stock his lady came,  
The gentler virtues in her sweetly blent ;  
The Matron of the Hill, — a gracious name, —  
Grandchild of Yale's first-chosen president.

Borne as a bride through the deep, dark defile,  
Behind her lord on pillion seated high,  
Mistress of his new mansion, she, the while,  
Views gorge and river with admiring eye.

Bold scenery here, and wonderfully wild, —  
O'er the steep, jagged rocks the hemlocks lower,  
Darkening the wave below ; and high o'erpiled  
On either side the Alpine summits tower.

His upland district had received its name  
From many a spindle, busy wheel, and quill ;  
Such household arts bestowed a local fame, —  
It bore the homely title, " Spindle Hill." <sup>6</sup>

Eastward the meeting-house near two miles stood,  
Reached by steep roads, and past Mad River's mill;  
A few plain houses in near neighborhood,  
All, by preëminency, named "The Hill."

There, on the rock, the plain gray structure shows,  
Not with broad belfry or tall steeple crowned;<sup>7</sup>  
And down below the precipice repose  
The long-lived forefathers, yet unrenowned.

The boy's grave sire,<sup>8</sup> although a captain's child,  
His mother's virtues had, her quiet air,  
Her patient steadfastness and temper mild;  
Ingenious, bashful, scrupulously fair.

Resources had he when the inclement skies  
Held him from wonted labor in his fields ;  
Some handicraft in useful ways he plies,  
And this, meanwhile, an ampler income yields.

Skilful with tools, and in good husbandry,  
Well harvested his crops, and safely stored,  
By change of toil he earned a competency,  
Frugal and sober, spread a bounteous board.

Apartments few his low-roofed home possessed ;  
The simple household's competent estate  
For service, meal-times, shelter, and sweet rest,  
All on each other dutifully wait.

Convenient the wide-mouthed chimney's flues  
For wholesome warmth below, but overhead  
In chambers cold, thick coverlets of all hues,  
And quilted by his mother's hand, are spread.

Pipe, almanac, above the mantel-piece,  
Deep-seated arm-chairs standing carelessly,  
The floors uncarpeted, no spot nor crease,—  
Safe the latched door without or bolt or key.

Outside, the shop, where each rude implement  
For farm or household use was finished new ;  
There stood the loom, with treadles violent,  
While cunning fingers shot the shuttles through.

By the shop's side the aspiring well-sweep shows,  
And tilting downwards dipt the bucket's rim  
Sidelong below, dropt hand o'er hand ; uprose  
With sparkling waters dripping from its brim.

Across the meadow near, the orchard lies,  
Its goodly fruits all in their season ripe ;  
And by the winding fence, of biggest size  
The early apples hang, of ruddy stripe.

The choicer fruits are in the garden set,  
The cherry-trees along the broad wayside ;  
Across there steals a little rivulet,  
Or big with rain its narrow banks doth chide.



From forth the rock, near by, a cooling spring  
Drips into brimming trough for creatures' sake ;  
All round each waits, as a concerted thing,  
In turn, impatiently, their thirst to slake.

Close by the roadside, at the thicket's edge,  
Not long time since befell a tragedy ;  
For there among the chestnuts by the ledge  
The woodman died beneath the falling tree.

The mild-eyed mother, seasonably wed,  
A finer culture brought to these rude parts,  
Of sprightly race, considerately bred,  
And thus accomplished in all household arts.

Bold scenery her homestead's view confines ;  
Beside the meadows green the river glides,  
Mount Jericho uplifts his towering pines,  
And fruitful orchards crown the steep hillsides.

Pillioned behind her white-haired patriarch  
She often rode, while o'er the saddle swung  
The Sunday's luncheon ; he, the man of mark,  
Read service, sermon, set the tune, and sung.

Oft his well-mounted dame with homespun roll,  
Woven by herself, betwixt the river and hill,  
Paced the long distance to the city's goal,  
And therewith paid young "Tilly's" college bill.<sup>9</sup>

In household tasks his sisters did excel, —  
From roll and distaff spun an even thread ;  
Quick with their needles, yet they could right well  
The wholesome meal prepare and table spread.

Good sleight of hand his brothers' several art, —  
Their fingers apt, yet less with book and pen ;  
The lathe and chisel were their chosen part,  
Nor shallow knowledge theirs of times and men.

Not learning but hard labor theirs to give  
For homely comforts, neither beg nor steal ;  
Such idlers as on others' earnings live  
Their firesides share not, nor their frugal meal.

Here raise the curtain on the evening scenes, —  
The father baskets weaves, the sisters sew,  
Apples the brothers pare, the mother spins, —  
The boy in books finds his Elysium now.

A comely child, his aspect sage, benign,  
His carriage full of innocence and grace ;  
Complexion blond, blue eyes, locks brown and fine,  
And frank expression in his rosy face.

Of letters mindful, emulous of lore,  
Not willingly let he occasion slip  
To chalk upon his mother's cleanly floor  
His earliest essays at rude penmanship.

Her family's heirloom, a rude cabinet,  
Stood near, choice things there hid for privacy, —  
Old "Dilworth's Spelling-Book" <sup>10</sup> (its alphabet  
Black-lettered) and her maiden diary.

Rare moment when she blessed his childish sight  
With its quaint pictures, — cloud-throned Hercules,  
Responsive to the wagoner's sad plight,  
Will not to rescue come till, raised from knees,

The wheels he shoulder, and his horses scourge.  
His thought for once his mother's did outrun,  
Nor needed she his quick intention urge, —  
Next morn his little journal he 'd begun.

Lovingly his mother did her lore impart ;  
While with soft eyes he did her daily see,  
Flushed his young fancy, touched his tender heart,  
His conscience christened in his infancy.

Boy not without his faults, at home, at school,  
Brimful of fancies and his own quaint will,  
Sly thief of time for frolic, book, and tool, —  
Needs patience, counsel, good example still.

Evenings and mornings are permitted hours  
For studies which delight him and refine ;  
He writes his journal or his book devours :  
Book-shelf or corner is his chosen shrine.

Thus by his parents scrupulously bred,  
Religious both, industrious, plain, and poor,  
His infancy he passed, by fancy led,  
By fellowship unharmed, or learning's lore.

Full soon his infant gifts to task he brings,  
Impatient the fair world around to know ;  
Finds here his alphabet in nearest things,  
And writes his thought with finger-pen on snow.

[ At cross-roads near the district schoolhouse stood  
Disconsolate ;<sup>11</sup> its wide-mouthed chimney heats,  
Fuelled all winter long with soggy wood,  
Scarce reached the shivering pupils in their seats.

All round the room the hacked pine tables range,  
Long seats in front, in corner dungeon set ;  
Master will lessons hear, books interchange,  
Mend pens, set copies, point the alphabet.

On Saturdays forth came, yellow and dim,  
New England's Primer, and the scholars all  
Lord's Prayer recite, commandments, cradle-hymn,  
And fatal consequence of Adam's fall.

Rude was the dialect spoken here, and strong,  
It pained his ear ofttimes, and finer taste ;  
Old Entick's columns near, he dipt among,  
And for his thoughts found words more apt and chaste.<sup>12</sup>



Not much he gained at this rude nursery  
Of homely learning, — taught to spell and read,  
A glimpse he caught of ciphering's mystery,  
Was sometimes mischievous, often at "the head."

Yet for fair penmanship, both clean and neat,  
He often won the wished-for monthly prize,  
Which gave him preference for the better seat,  
Desirable in every schoolmate's eyes.

Most memorable that morning hour obscure,  
When with his playmates in tumultuous shout,  
He sallied forth, much dazzled, and yet sure  
Some one, up there, had snuffed their candle out.<sup>13</sup>

Under the cool shade where the brook did flow  
From forth the fissures, with contriving hand,  
Often he dabbled in the pool below,  
And turned his flume across the softened sand.

Here, too, his water-wheel was proudly set,  
That drove the pitman's movements underneath,  
And sent the forces of the rivulet  
Against the slicing saw with slashing teeth.

Soon, while soft suns with the sere frosts do vie,  
Drawing sweet juices upward in the spring,  
The woods he forages green sprouts to spy,  
And from his rod the piping whistle wring.

The treacherous fowling-piece and dangling hook  
Most scrupulously he from choice forbore ;  
Enticed but once, young angler, to the brook,  
Thy one inveigled minnow quick restore !

First Monday in September and glad May  
Brings round the train-bands drest in blue and red,  
The proud platoons their glittering guns display,  
And he his fourpence spends for gingerbread.<sup>14</sup>

At the Great Falls, Mad River with a bound  
Turns the prodigious wheel with motion slow,  
And sets the furious millstone whirling round, —  
Then from the dripping buckets drops below.

Hither he rides, his sack of grain astride,  
Waits while his grist 'neath the harsh millstone churns,  
The miller taking toll, — then mounts with pride  
Atop his load and leisurely returns.<sup>15</sup>

His week's work done, he to the mill-pond hies,  
His thirst for agile river sports to slake ;  
With the coy swimmers plunge, then proudly rise,  
And from his dripping locks the spangles shake.

Perched on the wheel-mill's axle, with birch thong  
Forward the unwilling beast he urges round  
The beaten track ; tedious the day and long,  
Yet comes no respite till the pile is ground.

But when compelling screws the pomace squeeze,  
And the luxurious liquor forth is prest,  
His privileged moment then the boy will seize,  
Ply well his straw, the cider sip with zest.<sup>16</sup>

Then comes his tall white-haired grandfather old,  
And takes his little namesake on his knee,  
While his deep pocket does red apple hold,  
That morning plucked from his June apple-tree.

Sometimes his kindly aunt the boy detains,  
Brings from her pantry shelf her new-baked bread,  
And while she pleasantly him entertains,  
Butters his slice, with toothsome honey spread.

From the log cabin near his uncle comes,  
Tells wondrous stories of old warlike times, —  
Of Farmingbury's red fifers, rolling drums, —  
And war-songs perpetrates with swaggering rhymes.<sup>17</sup>

Of his commissioned father loves to tell —  
His "minute men" — their secret countersign ;  
Of Jersey's battles, and what sore befell  
The Continental troops at Brandywine.

To cheer the genial neighbor, whom long eve  
And wood-fire welcomes with its friendly blaze,  
The cup he passes, hopes he will not leave, —  
Too short the time while he conversing stays.

Sweet pastime his whene'er the lowering skies  
Indoors his neighbors prison and detain ;  
Then chalk, or book, chisel or lathe, suffice  
To hold his hand, beguile his busy brain.

Once curiously he from the rifted bole  
Of a clear-veined maple-tree shaved thin  
A violin's hollowed sides, and the neck's scroll  
Carved quaintly, then drew music from within.<sup>18</sup>

Yet less skill had he with the fiddle-bow,  
And dexterous mastery of mellifluous sound,  
Than subtle insight of this splendrous show  
Unmasking nature's mysteries profound.

Oft on the height will he his morning pass,  
On his dim future musing dreamily, —  
Coin piles of glimmering wealth from isinglass,  
Apt type of his ideal pageantry.

Or, idly lingering by the near brookside,  
His frolic fancy quick enchanted sees  
Along the shallow margin spreading wide,  
Fair sand-sheets for his artless trceries.

Good pleasure has he in the harvest-field, —  
Their forenoon's luncheon left in the cool spring,  
While the blithe mowers scythe and cradle wield,  
Lay swath of grass or grain with widening swing.<sup>19</sup>



Again on wintry days with thumping flail  
The sheaves he threshes with a hearty will,  
Then fans and winnows, measures the full tale,  
And pours in sacks all ready for the mill.

Sometimes on sled he to the wood repairs,  
The runners creaking o'er the frozen ground ;  
Smites the tall tree, no dexterous blows he spares  
Till down it crashes with an echoing sound.

November loiters with the wished-for feast,  
The bright flames kindled in the "spare room" smile  
On cousins sleek and shining in their best, —  
Pudding and compliments, in turn, beguile.

Nor fail they when in rustic glee to call  
Black Tony's sweeping bow ; when the smooth floor  
Checkers with dancers in gay festival,  
The custards waiting till the reel is o'er.<sup>20</sup>

In graceful motions of the whirling dance  
And cheerful frolic joined he diffidently ;  
Preferred the rather kindly consonance  
Of heart with heart in silent courtesy.

Pleased when behind the jingling, merry bells,  
With tightened rein in mittened hand they ride  
Along the turnpike road, by glades and dells,  
His veiled Amanda sitting at his side.

Indoors the Needle's Eye they both must pass,  
Its thread that runs so nimbly and so true ;  
It has caught many a swain and blushing lass,  
Best prize of all, Amanda, it caught you.

“Then come, Philander, let 's be marching,  
Every one speaks from his heart-string ;  
Choose your true-love now or never,  
And forever choose no other.

Love, farewell ! darling, farewell !

We are all for marching, marching.”<sup>21</sup>

Thus must he forward fare, the farmer's boy,  
Beyond the limits of his neighborhood ;  
Eager of heart, companionable, if coy,  
Society he sought in solitude.

One youth he knew, in sight of chimney's smoke,  
Fired with the love of letters, — only one ;<sup>22</sup>  
Together they a fairer lot bespoke, —  
For fortune's frown let mother-wit atone.

Of kindred mind, as kindred by descent,  
Their evenings they in studies choose to spend ;  
Seek each the other's lore to complement,  
Their diaries keep and weekly letters send.

Like books they borrow, projects entertain,  
As life its opening pages round them spread ;  
What gifts are theirs seem not yet clearly plain,  
Their expectations vague and dimly read.

For news long two miles ride they, at week's end,  
The papers from New Haven posting slow,<sup>23</sup>  
Though hostile Indian cruelties impend,  
And Erie's Lake sees Perry sink the foe.

Parades are common in those boyish days ;  
Young citizens will drill in rank and file ;  
Captain, lieutenant, ensign, will display  
Their wooden guns in creditable style.

Through scenes grotesque and wild glides Hancock's  
    Brook,  
Precipitous its sides, with ivy crowned ;  
Neglected long, yet not at last forsook,  
It leaps the mill-dam o'er with plashing sound.

Down from the farms the rustic youngsters come,  
Drain the steep mountain of its bravest blood,  
Each hand and tool accord to factory's hum,  
And higher pay they gain beside the flood.

Here in the shop, above the flume and sand,  
While whirl the forces of mechanic fate,  
Busied aloft, where the red clock-shops stand,  
His fingers guide Time's o'er the dial-plate.<sup>24</sup>

Meantime he counts each hapless morn and night  
The while his six days' wages here he earns,  
Till up the ivied gorge, for home delight,  
By Saturday evening's moonlight he returns.

Past now his twelvemonth's long apprenticeship  
To arts mechanic, he seeks some amends  
For missed attainments, and for scholarship  
The parson's three months' winter term attends.<sup>25</sup>

Their morning walk the cousins here did take  
From Spindle Hill to the small schoolroom, where  
Far more they gained themselves for learning's sake  
Than all their learned pastor had to spare.

A few disciples near had Wesley found,  
Here in derision called the "Brand New Lights";  
The curious cousins seek the camping-ground,  
Their eyes to flatter with the novel sights.

Confusing scene! with its pale kerchiefed saints,  
And shrill, sweet songs, the trumpet's call for prayer,  
The rapturous shoutings, and the piteous plaints,  
The tearful glories, agonized despair;

Swoonings from fancy or from gloomy fear,  
Mingling despondent woe with cloudless bliss,  
Feigned sometimes seemed and sometimes all sincere,  
Mid forest's glimmer and deep night's abyss.



Longwhile these wood-notes, like high minstrelsy,  
Came floating downward on his raptured ear,  
Chanting the dear All-Loving Mystery,  
In ardent melodies, heartfelt and clear : —

“ Jesus saw me when a stranger  
Wandering from the fold of God ;  
He, to rescue me from danger,  
Interposed his precious blood.

“ Oh ! to grace how great a debtor  
Daily I 'm constrained to be !  
Let thy goodness, like a fetter,  
Bind my wandering heart to thee.”

Then sometimes went he by the ivied road,  
Wading the brooks with banks moss-lined and high,  
Through the deep gorge to his grandsire's abode,  
Where the wild Naugatuck swept rushing by<sup>26</sup>

Mount Jericho's ledge, and thence along its shores  
Dashed, heedless of the driftwood's eddying whirls,  
As by the cornfields green it onward pours,  
And 'gainst the jutting rocks its current chafes and curls ;

Now, swollen by numerous streams, the flooded bank  
Sees Waterbury's mills beside it rise,  
Whose varied industry, in growing rank,  
Sheffield and English Birmingham outvies.

There quivering o'er its reed-grown stagnant mire,  
Hid 'neath steep hills, the ambitious village slept,  
Hugged its white houses and its towering spire ;  
Round Abrigador's ledge Mad River swept.

Nurse of fair business and laborious art,  
Whose fostering carefulness, unsparing hand,  
Transformed the vale into a bustling mart,  
Broidering with enterprise the river's strand.<sup>27</sup>

Home of shrewd wit, its tributary brook,  
Whence Trumbull's genius scorched McFingal's crest,  
Chapfallen traitor, his suspicious look  
By tar-pot's feathering fleece rudely suppressed.<sup>28</sup>

Defiant still, it cleaves Rock Rimmon's pile,  
Mingling its wave with gallant Humphrey's name ;  
Friend of Mount Vernon's chieftain, he, the while,  
And warrior poet of provincial fame.<sup>29</sup>

Vale of unpictured grandeur, dost await  
The artist's graceful pencil, eye, and hand?  
Thy peaks, forth looking o'er "The Steady State,"  
Behold each stream by iron railways spanned.

Beyond the confines of his neighborhood  
A fairer country lay, he had not seen ;  
Yet ere within its space his footsteps stood,  
Thither his travelled thought post-haste had been.

Bound for New Haven's port, in rustic guise,  
At Cheshire pauses he, through spy-glass views  
The landscape round: rather his curious eyes  
The bookshelves capture and their leaves peruse.

Here dwelt his reverend uncle Tillotson,<sup>30</sup>  
With priestly gifts and wholesome learning graced;  
His noble namesake's faith he taught anon  
In this sequestered academic place.

At church or school he might not miss or pass  
Nor Hebrew Joseph's, nor old Homer's tale;  
The while he reads, recites before his class,  
His mild eye moistens and his accents fail.

Sound knowledge his and deep sagacity ;  
All seemings pondered he and duly weighed,  
Deemed all things had a subtle unity,  
And of " Religion, Science the handmaid."

With cane and buckled knee he oft did tread  
With stately step the pleasant village green ;  
His rosy cheek he bares and hoary head,  
And cons his verses for the magazine.

At sight of the Elm City's shadowed Green,<sup>31</sup>  
Its bustling streets, long wharf, and shifting shrouds  
On ocean's armlet in the offing seen,  
Amazed, the boy's quick fancy overclouds.

Breaks on his vision here the livelier scene, —  
A world of business, varied, unconfined ;  
Aside is drawn the dark withholding screen,  
Mount Carmel's curtain he now looks behind.

This mart of wonders new his eye detains,  
While by his father's guidance curiously  
He views the dazzling shops, the wharves and lanes,  
And plain gray homestead of his ancestry.

Nor does he pass unwonderingly the pile  
Of venerable name, where Pierson's hand  
Had shaped Yale's future happily, meanwhile,  
In liberal learning foremost in the land.

Amidst the scarcity of men and books  
He seeks what food his district can supply ;  
All round for miles most curiously he looks,  
His hunger to appease, by chance to satisfy.

There lived an aunt not far, of serious mind,  
Who loved her books and lent them with advice ;  
Coming and searching carefully, he did find  
Young's Night Thoughts and great Milton's Paradise,

With other pieces of pure piety, —  
What holy Hervey once did "meditate,"  
Burgh's book of Human Nature's Dignity,<sup>32</sup>  
Adventurous Crusoe and his savage mate.



Again it chanced, when on this quest for lore,  
Forth from smoked covert eagerly he drew  
(Like prize his eye had never seen before) —  
The Pilgrim's pictured Progress, strange and new.<sup>33</sup>

O charming story! dear, delightful book!  
Haply, I have thee now, my latest found;  
My haunts by meadow, forest, rock, and brook  
Made, as I read, by thee enchanted ground.

Fair Salem's turrets in the distance see,  
Delectable and clear, above the mist;  
Nearer, see burdened Christian frightened flee  
From flashing mountains' flame, warned by Evangelist.

See, see, the puddle there, — Slough of Despond, —  
Far in the valley low the city's fate ;  
Still farther on, and farther still beyond,  
Behold in sight "the little wicket gate."

Its homely pictures fill his startled mind ;  
A-field his oxen in the furrow wait  
The while he reads, beneath the shade reclined, —  
Too soon his candle fades at evening late.

His sacred classic now the book became,  
Its text oft copied, read anew each day, —  
New fledged his fancy, set his heart aflame,  
Led him to follow safe in Christian's way.

Plainly books have close kinship with his mind,  
And he that kinship will in kind repay ;  
Some compensating errand he will find,  
On tables will a goodly volume lay.

In homespun shawl fast knotted carefully,  
His pack he shoulders, and soon disappears  
The hill-top o'er ; down its declivity,  
Like burdened Christian, westward then he steers.

Far onward wandering he inquires his way,  
Solicits names for Flavel's " Saint Indeed," —  
Saints, sinners, without scruple, sign and pay ;  
He gains their names to the good Baptist's creed.<sup>34</sup>

His slender profits at New Haven spends  
For a choice copy of the Common Prayer,  
His part to take when weekly he attends  
The Sunday service at the schoolhouse near ;

Where in plain dress he stands, or bends the knee,  
Or in the anthems by the pitch-pipe set  
Responsive joins, or lowly litany,  
That in the pious soul finds echo yet.

The elders often choose him in their stead  
Lay reader in this dedicated fane ;  
By priestly instincts reverently led,  
The service he doth seriously sustain.

Plain farmers all, some Churchmen by descent,  
Some signers-off from Calvin's colder creed,  
Assembled here they decent Sundays spent,  
And sowed of All Souls' Church the wayside seed.<sup>35</sup>

The Sabbath day was holy, and all play  
Was sinful, business next, and visiting too ;  
All should their Bible read, and humbly pray,  
And, near or distant, to the meeting go.

The morning cavalcade, a proud display, —  
The elders mount, the children safe behind ;  
And swarming households chequer all the way,  
As to the Hill they numerously wind.

High o'er the pulpit hangs the sounding-board,  
And close beneath the deacons' sober seat ;  
Room for whole families the pews afford,  
The aisles ecclesiastically neat.

The singers' seats round the front gallery range ;  
The psalm is read (omitting the fifth clause),  
All round the fugue notes fly in concert strange,  
Yet all in time accord with rapt applause.<sup>36</sup>

Fervent and worshipful ascends the prayer ;  
In order next the serious sound discourse ;  
The application follows ; none can spare  
The benediction, nor free intercourse.

Meantime the tithing-man his vigilant eyes  
Straight on the Sabbath-breaker fastens so,  
That scarce he needs to startle and surprise  
Boys in the galleries or the pews below.

Nor fails the summer garden to fulfil  
Its Sabbath promise, — sprigs of caraway,  
All 'kerchiefed with sweet fennel and ripe dill,  
The services appetize and make glad the day.

Dress heightens virtue, Sundays specially,  
Worn then for worship and for conquest now ;  
And no less punctual evening's gallantry  
Than that the morning's service did allow.

The custom favored gentle forwardness,  
Those chosen evenings sealed the sweet surprise ;  
Could happier moment aid youth's bashfulness  
To lisp his sonnet to his lady's eyes? <sup>37</sup>



## PART II.

### *THE PEDLER'S PROGRESS.*

YOUTH casts its glance into the future far,  
Stirred from within by its deep-felt unrest,  
Led forward by some bright bewildering star,  
And holds a fair ideal in its breast.

Forth from his nest before the approaching cold,  
Fired by strange impulse and a dim foresight,  
Thirst for adventure, novelty, and gold,  
Our bird of passage takes his southward flight.

The Genius prompts and sends him out to find  
His proper calling, and his wits to try ;  
Leaving his home and friends and farm behind,  
He tempts the future with a prying eye.

Whilst at New Haven's long, extended quay  
The sloop Three Sisters hoists her ready sails,  
He steps on board ; past Hurlgate, and at sea,  
The little vessel rides with favoring gales.

On board a breezy company there was, —  
Boisterous and bold ; if winds did lull or fail,  
Straightway, it almost seemed, their blustering noise  
Held taut the canvas and e'en filled the sail.

Pedlers, by chance, they seek a kindlier clime,  
A larger license ; would fond hopes fulfil  
Of ampler wages, cozening there, meantime,  
Than their shrewd wits can earn on that cold Hill.<sup>38</sup>

Speeds the bold craft before the driving wind  
Past Henry's Cape, sea-kissing Rip-Raps round ;  
Her seven days' passage o'er, the vessel find  
Beside the Norfolk pier all safe and sound.

There ocean's surges wash the docks and streets,  
The tilted tumbrels line the market's side ;  
Across the ferry Portsmouth's numerous fleets,  
Where navies of all nations proudly ride. <sup>39</sup>

Knight-errant journeying here, anonymous,  
Dismal his prospects, as he sorrowing learns ;  
Schoolmaster none is this Autolycus, —  
Through Dismal Swamp to Norfolk he returns.<sup>40</sup>

No, not to teach, as he had fondly dreamed,  
This rash adventure proves no tilt at fame ;  
Peddle he will, but not his wits, it seemed,  
Nor widely wandering from an honored name.

Need pedler's calling propagate disgrace  
In offering almanacs at good people's doors ?  
He tries his fortune with his boldest face,  
And sells at largest profits by full scores.<sup>41</sup>

New Year's e'en here lasts not the twelvemonth round,  
And almanacs are passing out of date ;  
Somewhere a wider circuit must be found,  
Some choicer toys to lure and captivate.

He ventures next a bold experiment,  
His hand-trunk fills with goods of costly sort,<sup>42</sup>  
Then sallies forth on fresh adventures bent,  
Across the Roads to Hampton's little port.

In homespun dressed, his trinkets by his side,  
He trudges hopeful, bent on goodly gains,  
Thinks, as he plods, with heartfelt, homely pride,  
If friendly fortune come not, wit maintains.

By princely mansions and plantations rare,  
Along sequestered road and inland creek,  
Virginia's fallow fields, laid waste by war,  
By Yorktown's ruins, far-famed Chesapeake,

He takes his wandering way, afar, alone ;  
Rests sometimes by the roadside, undelayed,  
Her tumbling temples notes, her altars gone,  
Deserted now, or in piled fragments laid.

Now opening through the pines, far off, appear  
The spacious court, slave-quarters, mansion hoar ;  
Whose guarded gates he passes without fear,  
By kindly hounds escorted to its door.

Curious the maidens wait ; the queenly dame  
Our bashful chapman's errand will explore :  
“ No pedler he, no Northern tarnished name,  
Footman like him ne'er travelled here before.

“ Jewels, choice ornaments, and countless things,  
From Norfolk's mart he bears, a rich display, —  
All these for our convenience here he brings, —  
Never was stranger turned by us away.”<sup>43</sup>

Kind courtesies our guest from host receives,  
In conversation stays, or hastes away, —  
Amid the learned libraries' charmed leaves  
Left to himself, he reads the livelong day ;

Or courts the matron's choicer company,  
Mild sunshine mirrored in her friendly face,  
Or daughters' glances shy, yet fancy free,  
Refined by modesty and maiden grace.

New school of manners for the farmer's boy,  
Here midst Virginia's most illustrious names,  
Still diffident, observant, curious, coy,  
Charmed with her lovely daughters, queenly dames.

Now morn has come, and he will take his leave,  
Yet on his hostess will some gift bestow ;  
"No, no, ourselves the benefit receive,  
Again return our thanks the while we owe."



Gifts to the servants then : the motley ring  
Throng round the doorstep, and with sly device  
Cheapen with praise each preferable thing,  
Pleased to have won it at their own set price.

The creek across, or through the roadside gate  
Cheerful he passes, while the morning shines  
On his good fortune ; no disasters wait  
As on he trudges and the day declines.<sup>44</sup>

If by mischance of travel he fall short  
Of entertainment at some planter's hearth,  
The Cross-Roads Inn becomes his best resort,  
Filled with gay company and noisy mirth.

New England's customs find small favor here :  
A freer life, more opulent, less discreet,  
Far more restrained by courtesy than fear,  
E'en when the master and the menial meet.

Court days together draw the country round,  
Slave-dealers, slaves, senators of loud fame,  
Judge, jockey, gentleman, checker the ground,  
Dispute, talk politics, trade, drink, and game.

When Sundays come he joins his host in prayer,  
Or from his bookshelf steals a pure delight,  
Or entertains discourse, or sometimes there  
Within, will letters or adventures write.<sup>45</sup>

Sweet rural pictures on the shelves he finds, —  
Goldsmith's good Vicar, piping Traveller,  
The charming Seasons in their several kinds,  
Lavater's chart of face and character.<sup>46</sup>

Nor can the youth pass by forgetfully  
Old Yorktown's field, where erst the English lord,  
Whom allied foes besieged by land and sea,  
Resigned to Washington his conquered sword.

Nor William and Mary's University,  
Nurse of proud patriots in former time,  
Of princely manners and nobility,  
Still sighing for its old Colonial prime.<sup>47</sup>

His monthly circuits bring him round again,  
His goods renewed, with new attractions too ;  
Nor Yorktown nor proud Williamsburg abstain  
From traffic so convenient and so new.

Through bleak December's sleet and April's rains  
Onward he fares till genial spring appears  
And ends his journey. Profitable his gains,  
Measured by standard of those frugal years

When knowledge ampler weighed than lighter gold.  
We need not further follow, longer trace  
His circuits by plantations famed and old,  
Nor landlords name, their rank or social place.<sup>48</sup>

He forms new friendships and finds genial homes,  
In costly mansions spends delightful days,  
Is welcomed warmly when he monthly comes,  
And entertained the while, well pleased, he stays.

One blot he notes defacing the fair scene, —  
The knot of keys at lofty mistress' side,  
The cowhide's gashes, and the look obscene, —  
Courtesy ill mingling with imperious pride.<sup>49</sup>

Did there the Sphinx his gliding sense assail,  
With her beguiling arts and sorceries,  
And did his startled conscience then prevail,  
And hold inviolate the sweet mysteries?

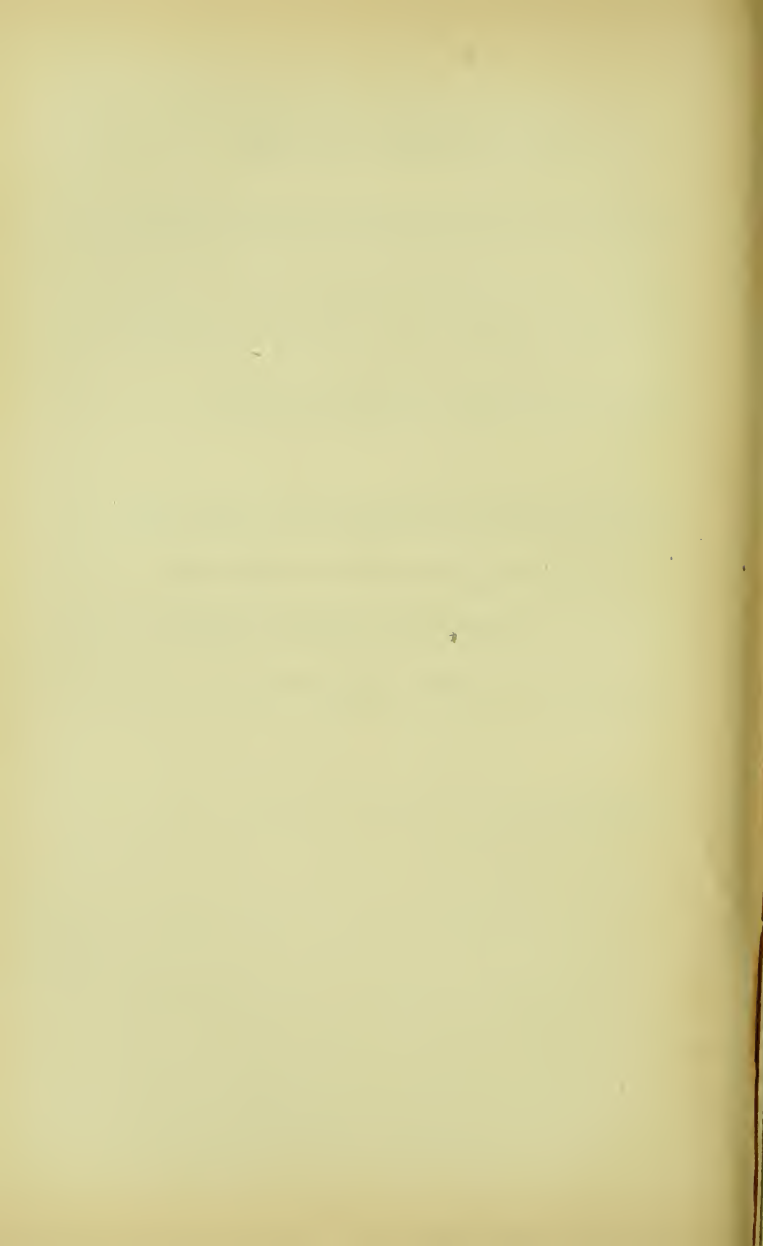
Happy if he preserve the blest estate,  
And crown life's close with equanimity ;  
Open wide at last the Heaven's cloud-capt gates  
To chaste-eyed Purity with crystal key.<sup>50</sup>

His business closed, he homeward casts his eyes,  
Pleased to have known such courtly company ;  
Gold gained by his successful enterprise,  
Knowledge far more, and kind civility.

From Norfolk's Borough and through Hampton Roads  
The freighted coaster sails the ocean o'er,  
Passes the Hook and at her dock unloads,  
In the great mart he sets his foot on shore.

Home near, his hopes and fears can he conceal,  
As from the chimney's top smoke curls and drifts?  
He thinks what six months' absence shall reveal,—  
Its threshold crosses and the latch uplifts.

Welcomed, approved, his gains and ventures told,  
Not strange if round the Hill the rumor ran,  
Gathered, in telling, gloss of glittering gold :  
“ No farmer now, but a fine gentleman.”





## PART III.

### *THE ADVENTURE RENEWED.*

PAST is the harvest now, the farming's done,  
The maple glowing with its crimson dye ;  
Soft shines the Indian Summer's yellow sun  
On voyagers of air, that southward fly.

These omens reading, and the prosperous gale,  
The adventurous cousins journey in due time  
To snug New Haven's wharf-side, and set sail  
Again for yonder mild, romantic clime.

Tempestuous passage has the laden craft,  
By blasts contrarious toward Bermudas borne,  
Till shifting winds and welcome pilot waft  
The crazy merchantman to port, unshorn.

Unskilful seamen, on a huckstering trip,  
For Charleston's market bound, their bark for sale,  
If, with her cargo and scant seamanship,  
She chance to outride the rough autumnal gale.

Behind the wains slow-trudging all the way  
Across a country marshy and champaign,  
While wagoners their luggage safe convey,  
Forth to the uplands fare the pilgrims twain ;

Through muddy stream and knee-deep puddles wade,  
On some dry hillock pause above the mire,  
Baiting on teamster's forage, undismayed,  
Sleep on pine needles by the brushwood fire.

By fields of rice, cotton, and indigo  
They travel wearily, with undaunted will,  
Rise to Columbia from the fens below,  
Thence to their wished-for station, Abbeville.

Persistent then their earlier dreams renew,  
Bright fancy dazzled with the alluring prize ;  
Here the schoolmaster's calling they'll pursue,  
Hope in their hearts, romance within their eyes.

By single terms adventuring for their board,  
Cabined in walls where snow and rain make way,  
Near some unwholesome spring, with drinking-gourd, —  
Shall such dull tasks young pedagogues essay?

Scant rudiments of learning (rude indeed)  
The gaping towheads gather here to gain;  
All of that little did the teacher need, —  
Such length of body, with such lack of brain!

Strangely your alphabet ye travesty,  
Ye dull wiseacres of the rusty land,  
Pronounce your final letters learnedly, —  
“Izzard” is *z*, and next comes “ampersand.”

“Why further stay on Carolina’s ground?  
No prospects open here for hopeful gains;  
Better remain at home the twelvemonth round,  
Where ampler wages come for lesser pains.

“Let us forthwith to Norfolk’s port repair;  
This search for schools, awhile, we’ll set aside;  
Some other calling, cousin, be our care;  
Thy disappointment soften, soothe thy pride.”

Along the narrow, fenced road they passed,  
Rivers they forded, oft inquired the way,  
Their little bundles in their hands held fast;  
At public houses seldom could they stay.

Next a long stretch of sand and sterile ridge,  
Persimmon-patches, hovels' smoke and soot,  
Tar forests, Tarborough (with its lengthened bridge);  
No other cities on their weary route,

Till Gosport's pennons, Portsmouth's town appear.  
The pilgrims, pausing there, fresh toilets make,  
Cross the broad ferry with refreshing cheer,  
To lodge in Norfolk by the waters' wake.

'T was Christmas, when the fortnight's holidays  
Are given to sport and endless jollity,  
By swarthy mimics in fantastic ways,  
By gentlefolk in decent gayety.

The motley pageant in each street is seen,  
Tricked out in equipage of every hue,  
Tripping to jingling thump of tamborine,  
While banjos tinkled, and loud trumpets blew.

Again, on ground familiar and well proved  
The Yankee cousins here their calling ply ;  
Though such employment be but ill-beloved,  
Needs must they seek it, nor their craft deny.

Such eager hawkers into business slide,  
Canvassed the Borough, they to Portsmouth cross ;  
Offering the " New Year's Register " with pride,  
They sell their stock, and that without a loss.

Next sallying forth, on brighter prospects bent,  
From costly trinkets or plain merchandise,  
Their spirits buoyant, and their minds intent,  
They journey onward with observant eyes ;

Plantations see, tilled by the laboring slave,  
Rich vessels lading at the neighboring creek,  
Or sailing on some noble river's wave,  
Drank soon by many-throated Chesapeake.

Memory recalls their brave resounding names, —  
Colonial some, and some of Indian trace, —  
Potomac, Rappahannock, York, and James,  
Of royal sound, or Pocahontas's race.



Again our pedlers trudge the frozen road,  
Through piny forests fare, round creeks they skirt ;  
The gates unbolting to each grand abode,  
They pass the growling mastiffs all unhurt.

Resistless is their sparkling pedlery,  
All useful things, or comely ornament ;  
Here 's no cajoling nor chicancery,  
Nor profits greater than the fair per cent.

Good bargains drive they through the inclement weeks,  
Till vexed Aquarius pours chill rain and snow,  
Nipping their fairest hopes : the ruddy cheeks  
Of one young pedler lose their wonted glow ;

And soon on bed of sickness low he lies,  
While gloomy spectres haunt his fevered brain.  
Shall Reason's sunlight animate his eyes,  
And give him back to the sane world again?

Sad news from Wolcott Hill his friend received ;  
'Gainst these disastrous storms nought could avail.  
From months of weary watch at last relieved,  
He for his mountain home sets instant sail.

Bereft of thy kind counsel and good sense,  
Ah ! faithful friend ! thou leavest me now alone,  
To joust with fashion and improvidence, —  
The dupe of others' follies, and my own !

Another playmate of life's early years  
Here plied, as oft before, his gainful arts ;  
Unsympathetic ran our several ways,  
Yet cousins kindred seem in foreign parts.

Together first through districts near we rid,  
Environed still by dismal fen and pond ;  
For health and pleasure sought the invalid ;  
His cousin bargains : so through Nansemond,

And farther southward still their route extends,  
And Carolina's fields their trade invite ;  
On Chowan's banks they found the kindly Friends,  
Drab-coated followers of the Inner Light.

There, midst green pastures, with their swarming bees,  
Dwelt these remote, and pastoral lives they led ;  
Not more could Virgil's swains the fancy please,  
On yellower creams, or sweeter honey fed.

Less versed in books, they trusted Nature's lore,  
Schooled by habitual temperance and sense ;  
Of worldly goods they had abundant store ;  
Genial and generous, and without pretence.

Oft came all pedlers from their circuits round  
To spend "First Day" inside these welcome doors ;  
With goodly cheer their buttery did abound ;  
Bright were their buffets, neat their sanded floors.

Few books, — but “ Fox’s Journal ” they revere,  
And Penn’s calm rhapsody, “ No Cross no Crown ; ”  
Esteeming silent worship more sincere  
Than loud lip-service and the Churchman’s gown.

Soon came pedestrian tours ’mong gentle folk,  
Who spend their money fast and lavishly,  
Enjoy luxurious banquets, mirth, and joke,  
And take their business late and leisurely.

So sauntering pedlers wend their devious way  
By fallen church and lowly hermitage,  
By mansions lordly once, now in decay,  
Of Wilson, Taliaferro, Taylor, Braxton, Page.

Ancestral places of provincial name  
Lure them still farther northward each day's beat, —  
Mount Vernon's homestead of immortal fame,  
Potomac's windings, Alexandria's street ;

Thence forward to the pillared Capitol,  
Blackened and blemished by a foreign foe,  
Whose English prowess men must needs extol,  
Though vengeance more than valor there did show.

Through Maryland roam they, nearing the free States,  
Past Carrollton and stately Baltimore,  
Swayed once or now by lordly potentates,  
Calverts and Carrolls from the Irish shore.

Slow journeying, at the plainer inns they call,  
Hastening, where Clinton his proud flag unfurled,  
To Penn's mild city with its spacious hall,  
Where once a people's challenge roused the world.

Crossing the Delaware to the Jersey shore,  
They saw the Exile's villa, once of note,  
That sheltered Bonaparte in days of yore ;  
Thence to New York, in Amboy's ferry-boat.

Whirling with business, pleasure, noise, and pride,  
Here they the city's marvels wistful view ;  
Here will they rest a day from their long stride,  
Refresh their spirits and their garb renew.

For homespun suits are threadbare worn, and shine,  
While garish windows all their fancy fill ;  
“ Clad in this broadcloth, with these ruffles fine,  
We 'll dazzle the plain folks on Spindle Hill.”

The obsequious salesman draws a sumptuous store  
Forth from his wardrobes, smiles complacently,  
And clothes in garments gay, as ne'er before,  
Our spendthrift pedlers, drest full fashionably.

Debarking at New Haven's lengthening quay,  
In sleekest beaver and resplendent boot,  
Our gallant knights of wayworn pedlery  
(No stages running) take the road on foot.



Thence up East Mountain's rocky steep they climb,  
Passing the Green, the Church, the stores, the mill,—  
Familiar places all, from earliest time,—  
Each bound for home on yonder sightly hill.

In these plain households, startling the surprise  
At such unheard magnificence of dress,—  
“Are these our pedlers here before our eyes,  
These handsome fellows, with such soft address?

“Black coat? and white cravat of daintiest tie?  
Crimped ruffles, gleaming amethystine pin?  
Vest of Marseilles o'er trowsers of drab dye,  
Gold seals at watch-fob, jewelled watch within?”

Next Lord's day morning, promptly sallying forth,  
They flaunt in eyes devout their raiment soft,  
Eclipsing thus poor homespun modest worth, —  
These brilliant youth in gallery aloft.

Not undevout were they, but indiscreet ;  
And whilst the parson broached divinity,  
Not less devotedly, from seat to seat,  
Soft eyes diffused their pleasant sorcery.

Come sunset, in the shady path they strayed,  
Courageous slipping by the graveyard lone,  
While on their way to court some handsome maid,  
No dismal spectre seeing, fearing none.

Shall this gay youth his soberer cousin see,  
Or journal write? His mirror sees him more.  
Not an accomplished coxcomb yet is he,  
But far less bashful than he was before.

All through the busy, toiling summer hours  
Will he for pleasure the farm-labor leave?  
If o'ercast sky or threatening cloudlet lowers,  
He copies verses for the Sabbath eve.

“The lovely young Lavinia once had friends,  
And fortune smiled propitious on her birth.”  
E'en so with him, — the sunny chapter ends,  
And sudden darkness settles o'er the earth.

Midst these brief raptures and this gay success,  
The sharp attorney, positive and bland,  
Shows his instructions, strict and pitiless,  
Demanding surety and a note of hand.

Ah! now the crisis comes! With agony  
The frugal father, pledged for wasteful son,  
His lifelong earnings puts in jeopardy,  
And household troubles early have begun.

## PART IV.

### *FAILURE AND RETREAT.*

**M**R. ALCOTT began in 1882 a fourth part of his Autobiography, but had not completed it when his illness in October of that year made further writing impossible. A few stanzas will be given from this fragment, in order to continue the story until the summer of 1823, when, toward the end of his twenty-fourth year, he withdrew from this rambling life at the South, and took up his manhood's task of education, to which his genius called him. He journeyed in the autumn of 1821 through Pennsylvania and Maryland to Virginia, in company with his kinsmen and acquaintance from Wolcott,

but without his cousin William, who had been his counsellor and nurse the year before. His companions now were less worthy, and led him into some habits of expense and indolence ; which caused the Connecticut dealer of whom he had bought his wares upon credit, to refuse him further time for payment : —

Soon this smooth-faced, exacting creditor  
Demands of his delinquent instant pay ;  
Tells him without reserve or metaphor,  
“ Why, you ’re above your business, — far too gay.”

Forthwith all properties and cash in hand  
To pay his debt are honestly made o’er ;  
Shall he now follow traffic contraband,  
Begging for custom at the planter’s door ?

No, the young bankrupt decides that he cannot demean himself so much, and therefore will push down into North Carolina, and teach a writing-school, being

gifted in penmanship. Warrenton is the place chosen ; and thus Mr. Alcott, in a letter to his brother Chatfield, dated April 13, 1822, relates in prose how he came to be there :—

DEAR BROTHER,—I can imagine your surprise when you read this letter at finding me here, engaged in teaching penmanship,—a very fair writing-school of a dozen scholars, with the prospect of more : but such is the fact. At Surrey Court House I met Mr. Allyn's brother ; and from there we went to Norfolk, leaving our effects at Smithfield. On reaching Norfolk and calling upon Mr. Allyn, he gravely intimated that I was "above my business" (and I agreed with him), and must give him a bill of sale of my effects then at Smithfield, in part-payment of my indebtedness for goods taken last season, and for which he has my note, with our father's indorsement. Those were the best terms I could make with him. Remaining in Norfolk a few days, I returned to Smithfield for my books and clothing ; then took the stage for Petersburg, reaching there after my

day's ride. Next morning I took the Southern stage and reached this place, 185 miles from Richmond. I am at the public hotel. This is a pleasant town on the great Southern road through the State of North Carolina.

In verse this adventure runs thus : —

On to the highlands then ! and far remote,  
Where rumor breathes not, let him come who will !  
The quondam pedler there, in costly coat,  
Shall show his art, wielding the feathered quill.

The stage is ready ; quick he steps inside,  
Knight of the goose-quill, not of tape and tin ;  
Southward he rides all day, with proper pride,  
And 'lights, genteel, at Warrenton's best inn, —

Resort of gentle folk from far and near.  
The jockeys' chariot by the door-step whirls,  
While on the Seminary lawn appear,  
Dancing around the May-pole, merry girls.



Costume now serves : the brightly polished boot,  
The sleek white hat, the wearer's vernal bloom,  
Watch-seal and ribbon, and becoming suit  
Give the distinguished stranger the best room.

Proposals soon come forth, in fairest script, —  
The new Professor will on pupils wait ;  
Strokes of his careful pen, in standish dipt,  
The clerk declares " beat even copperplate."

The judge, the parson, would be dashing scribes,  
And pledge their names ; the flattering clerk himself  
Thinks praises easy and convenient bribes  
To gain his lesson, without loss of pelf.

The landlord and fair lady ride away  
To the spring races in their chariot fine,  
Drawn by white steeds, caparisoned so gay,  
And tavern business to the clerk resign.

But the writing-school does not draw pupils enough to  
pay the master's board at the costly inn, where he has

leisure to read Moore's "Melodies" and Goldsmith's comedies and tales. He therefore determines to depart at night, leaving his watch and cloak behind to pay his tavern bill.

The sunset's blaze forsakes the window-panes ;  
Then from his low apartment, with his pack,  
Steals he along the streets and winding lanes,  
Wandering all night, far from the beaten track,

Like fleeing slave pursued by dismal fears,  
Who hopes and dreads the light of coming day,  
As by the friendly star he northward steers,  
Nor stops till, safe, he walks the public way ;

E'en so our fugitive travels in his flight  
Each unfrequented, each remotest road,  
Till the great thoroughfare comes full in sight ;  
And pausing there, he lays aside his load.

By cornfields green, acres of waving wheat,  
Ripe for the sickle and the threshing-floor,  
Midst forests sheltering many a planter's seat,  
His hasty steps avoid each open door.

For sleep and meals he can but moments spare,  
Until he reach Virginia's Northern Necks,  
And join again his brother trading there, —  
Near Rosewell House, in sandy Middlesex.

Rosewell! fair pride of the colonial age,  
Then in its grandeur, when its lord had sway,  
The friend of Jefferson, baronial Page;  
Thou'rt now the mouldering monument of that day.

The ruins of former magnificence suited well the mood of the forlorn traveller, who had lost his chance and fallen into debt. These are his reflections as he hurries onward through Maryland and Pennsylvania with diminishing stock of money: —

“ Gay knight of goose-quill, flourishing of late,  
From sudden pounce of Pinchfist newly flown,  
Absconding now, needy and profligate, —  
Poor footsore pilgrim, penniless and lone,

“ Wouldst thou ride Fancy o’er her giddy ground ?  
Fancy — cool-headed judgment’s constant foe —  
A skittish hippogriff is always found,  
And her rash rider she will surely throw.”

On foot he seeks Penn’s city ; o’er him dark  
The threatening clouds impend, and thunders roll,  
As when bold Franklin caught the crinkling spark ;  
Hies on, and at the ferry pays his toll.

He embarks at Perth Amboy for New York, and spends almost his last dollar for his fare, which the captain hands back to him upon seeing his tattered condition and graceful bearing. He throws away his worn-out boots, and at New York supplies himself with shoes, sails for Nor-

walk with a Yankee skipper, and plods homeward to Wolcott on foot.

There on the summit of his native hill,  
Dreaming no more of fortunes won by chance,  
Adventurous Fancy cannot dupe him still  
With glittering vagaries of romance.

In the same year, 1822, he is persuaded to try his fortune once more at the South, and spends December, January, February, and the spring months of 1823 among his old friends the Quakers of North Carolina. But worldly success fails to attend him, though he gains in spiritual life; he falls sick again with fever and ague, and reaches Wolcott early in July, 1823, "sallow and spiritless," and weighed down with debt. His disease is not fairly mastered until 1825, when he enters upon a new and congenial life at Cheshire, with his uncle, Dr. Bronson. The period of the Sonnets begins in 1827.



## NOTES.



### NOTE I, page 7.

THE town of Wolcott was formed from territory taken from the ancient towns of Farmington and Waterbury, Conn. The part taken from Waterbury, in which are Spindle Hill and New Connecticut, was called Farmingbury Parish previous to the incorporation of the township in 1796. It was named Wolcott from the second Governor of Connecticut, of that name. As a summer retreat it has attractions and facilities for health and recreation hardly surpassed by any spot in Western Connecticut. The highest of the high lands in that section, its commanding views of a wide range of country, salubrious air, pure water, wild woodland drives, simple, well-disposed people, — these entitle it to a far wider knowledge on the part of the community than it has obtained.

I know of no more primitive people in the State than the present occupants of these old Wolcott homesteads, — few finer studies for the novelist, the artist's pencil. The scenery is bold and picturesque. Seen from the summit of New Connecticut, the view commands many townships sleeping in the distance, — Torrington on

the north, Plymouth and Northfield on the northwest, on the west Litchfield and Morris and Watertown; Middlebury on the southwest; overlooking Waterbury on the south lies Prospect, Mount Carmel, and Hamden on the southeast; Meriden Hills east of Wolcott Hill, overlooking Southington. The line of Hancock's Brook is seen along the valley west, its sides clothed with ivies, hemlocks, and birches; woodlands in all directions interspersed, fringing the cultivated fields and pastures, giving charming touches to the picture. The manners and dialect of the early settlers still linger on those highlands; the pursuits are the same. It is the pride and boast of the farmers that their oxen and steers excel in stature and strength, and their military company is the tallest and the best equipped and disciplined in the regiment, at the annual Field Days; their Drum Band is still famous, and sought on all public occasions far and near.

NOTE 2, page 10.

The name is spelled Alcocke in English history. By authority of the king, about 1616, a coat of arms was granted to Thomas Alcocke of Silbertosf in the county of Leicester. The device is three cocks, emblematic of watchfulness. The motto is "Vigilate." The first of the name appearing in English history is John Alcocke, born in Beverly in the county of Yorkshire. Thomas Fuller gives the following account of him in his *Worthies of England*:—

"He was bred a Doctor of Divinity at Cambridge, and at last became Bishop of Ely. His prudence appeared in that he was pre-



ferred Lord Chancellor of England by King Henry VII., a prince of an excellent palate to taste men's abilities, and a dunce was no dish for his diet. His piety is praised by the pen of Bishop Bale, which (though occasionally bitter) drops nothing but honey on Alcocke's memory, commending him for a mortified man, 'given to learning and piety from childhood, growing from grace to grace, so that, in his age, were none in England higher for holiness.' He turned the old Nunnery of St. Radigund into a new college called Jesus, in Cambridge. Surely had Malcolm, King of Scots, first founder of this Nunnery, lived to see this alteration, it would have rejoiced him in heart to behold lewdness and laziness turned out, for industry and piety to be put in their place. Alcocke died October 1, 1500, and had saintship gone as much by merit as favor, he deserved one as well as his namesake, St. John, his predecessor in that See." — *Fuller's Worthies*, Vol. II. p. 521.

Warton, in his *History of English Poetry*, says that Barclay's Eclogues were the first that appeared in our language, being written about 1514. And he quotes from them Barclay's praise of Bishop Alcocke. He was an author and translator of some celebrity in his time, as well as architect and statesman.

"Nothing cheers the heart of kindred more  
Than the ancestor's fair glory gone before."

NOTE 3, page 10.

Thomas and George Alcocke were the first of the name among the settlers in New England. Thomas first settled in Boston, afterwards

at Dedham ; John in Roxbury. Of the latter, Rev. John Eliot (the apostle) says in his Church Records : —

“Mr. George Alcocke came out in the first company in 1630. He left his only son in England, his wife dying soon after he came to this land. When the people of Rocksborough joined to the church at Dorchester until such time as God should give them to be a church among themselves, he was by the church chosen express to be a deakon ; after, to regard the brethren at Rocksborough. And after he adjoined himself to this church at Rocksborough he was advanced to deakon of this church. He made two voyages to England upon just calling thereto, wherein he had much experience of God’s providence and blessing. He brought over his son John Alcocke. He also brought over a wife, by whom he had his second son, Samuel, born in the year ——. He lived in a good and godly sort, and dyed in the end of the tenth month, Anno 1640, the poor of his church much lamenting his loss.”

Governor Dudley, in his letter to the Countess of Lincoln, speaks of the death of his first wife, “Mrs. Alcocke, a sister of Mr. Hooker,” dying at Charlestown. He was a deputy to the General Court from Roxbury for the years 1634, ’35, ’36, and ’37.

His son John graduated at Harvard College in 1646. Governor Winthrop, writing from “Boston 16 : 6 : ’46, to his son, Mr. John Winthrop, Jr., at Pequot” (New London, Conn.), says :—

“There were three hopeful young men commenced Masters of Arts the last commencement. One is a schoolmaster at Hartford, the other at Concord.” The schoolmaster at Hartford is presumed to

have been John Alcocke, drawn thither by his uncle, Rev. Thomas Hooker. The other, at Concord, may have been Mr. Nathaniel White.

Mr. John Alcocke was afterwards a physician, and resident at Roxbury. He appears to have been an active person in the affairs of the colony. Hudson, in his Memorials of the Mosses, says :—

“Dr. Alcocke belonged to the nobility of the colony. As was then their custom, he improved a farm at Marlborough as a kind of manor. He is presumed to have built the splendid house, for those days, which stood for one hundred and fifty years on the spot now occupied by Stephen Moss, Esq., and which, defended by a neighboring garrison, escaped the torch of the enemy often seen skulking about during the second and third Indian wars. Hither himself and family resorted occasionally, as is believed, until his wife and daughters had contracted such an attachment that the Doctor, in 1666, left the farm of 1,000 acres at his death, with the stock and utensils, to Anna, Sarah, and Mary, who, in 1670, were the wives of John Williams of Boston, Zachariah Whitman of Hull, and Joshua Lamb of Boston.”

This farm, it appears, was granted to Dr. Alcocke by the Honorable General Court of Massachusetts “in consideration of many long services discharged for the country, as also of other services.”

A granddaughter of his, Sarah, the daughter of Rev. Samuel Whitman, of Farmington, Conn. (son of Zachariah), married Rev. John Trumbull, of Watertown, Conn., and was the mother of John Trumbull, the author of the Revolutionary satire entitled

“McFingal,” — “a burlesque poem directed against the enemies of American liberty, and holding up to scorn and contempt the Tories and British officers, naval, military, and civil, in America.” It was very popular at the time of its publication, — 1775-1782.

Mr. Thomas Alcocke came in Winthrop’s fleet with his brother George. He was one of the original signers of the Covenant of the First Church at Boston, dated at Charlestown, August 27, 1630, his name standing the forty-fifth in the list of members. In the Church Records, dated “8 : 7 : 1639, our brother Thomas Alcocke and Sister Margery are recommended to the church at Dedham.” He was one of the original planters of that town.

His widow, Margery, married, November 16, 1659, John Benham, of New Haven. Letters from Rev. John Davenport, of New Haven, to John Winthrop, Jr., give some account of Mr. Benham’s journey homeward with his wife, and of her decease : —

“NEW HAVEN, 13 : 2 : 1659.

HONORED SIR, — I received yours by brother Benham, whom God preserved from being drowned on his journey homeward. The river by Mr. Yale’s farm was swollen high ; his wife was fearful of riding through it. God provided an helpe for her at the instant, by a passenger who travelled from Windsor to Branford to Mr. Crane’s, whose daughter he had married. He helped sister Benham over a tree. But her husband adventuring to ride through, a foote of his horse slipped, so he fell into the water, and his horse, as he thinketh, fell upon him, for he had a blow on his head. But, in the

mercy of God, is now well. . . . Capt. Hawthorne is now in New Haven from the Baye.”

“NEW HAVEN, ye 20<sup>th</sup> of ye 5<sup>th</sup>, 1660.

“. . . . Brother Benham, indeed (whose good and sweete spirited wife the Lord hath taken from him since his return, and a young childe of one of his sons, is since died in his house, where also one of his wife lyeth very sick), he went to Hartford, but gave me no notice of it before that I might prepare a letter from home. Brother Myles, at his return from the Baye, comforted us with hope of your recovering strength, &c.” — *Davenport to Winthrop*, in *Mass. Hist. Coll.*

Mary, daughter of Thomas and Margery, married, September 27, 1664, James Robinson of Dorchester. Their son, Rev. John Robinson of Duxbury, was the father of Faith, who married Jonathan Trumbull, first governor of Connecticut, and was the mother of a distinguished family.

Philip, brother of Mary, married, December 5, 1672, Elizabeth, the daughter of the wife of Thomas Mitchell, one of the original planters of New Haven, and signer of the plantation covenant. He inherited Mitchell's homestead, situated on George Street. Atwater, in his *History of New Haven Colony*, says: “Quinnipiac had a larger number of wealthy men than any other of the New England colonies.” And Mann, in his *Annals of Dedham*, says: “The founders of Dedham were a choice few among the number of those who fled from a religious persecution in their own land, and sought in this western clime a place of refuge, where they could worship their

God in a manner most congenial to their feelings. A large portion of them who came here were those who had been well educated in the old country, and some of them were noted in the annals of literature in the European world."

NOTE 4, page 11.

"John Alcock, son of John and grandson of Philip, was born in New Haven, where his father resided at that time, January 14, 1705. He married Deborah, daughter of Isaac Blakeslee, of North Haven, on the twenty-fourth anniversary of his birth, and settled on Spindle Hill in the spring of 1731, on a farm of one hundred and seventeen and a half acres of land, which he had purchased of Deacon Josiah Rogers of Branford. He continued to add to his landed estate until he was the possessor of about one thousand acres. He purchased more than twelve hundred acres, but had given some to his children previous to the later purchases. He gave to each of five or six children a farm of about one hundred acres in the immediate vicinity of his home, retaining his homestead for himself as long as he lived. He was a man of much energy and endurance, for without those qualities no man would or could have accomplished what he did in a wilderness country in the short space of forty-seven years. When he made his residence on this farm, coming up from Waterbury, he passed a little beyond the bounds of civilization into the territory of panthers, bears, wildcats, and immense forests. Here he built his log house, and introduced his bride of fifteen months, as queen of the realm, to the privation and severe toil which the circumstances must have imposed

in following years. Before his strong arm the wilderness gave way, and in a few years neighbors were on every side. Prosperity was his lot until his acres numbered a thousand, and his sons and daughters a dozen, and his log house, being too frail, gave place to the more comfortable frame one. He was a man of public spirit, serving the town of Waterbury in different capacities, but especially as surveyor of lands and highways, the old records now showing his name connected with much work of this kind. His name is not prominent in the doings of the Ecclesiastical Society, for he was sixty-six years of age, and had performed a large amount of hard labor, and was very properly allowed to rest on the retired list of prominent men of the community. He lived to see his children comfortably settled near him, and some of them highly honored as public citizens." (Both himself and wife were among the first members of the church.) — *Orcutt's History of Wolcott.*

## NOTE 5, page 11.

Captain John Alcock, oldest son of John, of Spindle Hill, married, August 28, 1755, Mary Chatfield, daughter of Solomon Chatfield, of Derby, Conn. She was the grandchild of Rev. Abraham Pierson, first President of Yale College from 1701 to 1707.

Captain Alcock held his commission from his kinsman, Governor Trumbull, dated May 14, 1774, for the Winter Parish of Farmingbury trainband. Three of his sons served in the army of the Revolution, John, Jr., receiving a pension. He and his wife were members of the First Church in Farmingbury Winter Parish, their

names being subscribed to the church covenant December 18, 1773.

At the time of his marriage the country was a wilderness along the Naugatuck to Derby Landing (fifteen miles distant from Spindle Hill), which was then a flourishing trading-place and fishery, situated at the junction of the Naugatuck with the Housatonic. The road along the side of the former was a narrow pathway cut into the banks through a deep gorge, with steep precipices on both sides, clothed with hemlocks, and tall chestnuts crowning the summits. The road, built thus on the bank of the river, was called the Dug Road, and in places was overshadowed by hemlocks and ivy, darkening the scene and giving it a romantic interest. It was along this road, the only one at the time, that the pair, mounted in the saddle, rode through the defile across Buck's Hill, lying south of Spindle Hill, to the new mansion, just built near his father's, situated at the base of New Connecticut. There his grandson, Amos Bronson Alcott, was born, November 29, 1799.

The name Alcocke has undergone the successive changes from the original, of Allcock, Alcock, Alcox, Allcott, Alcott, — the present name.

NOTE 6, page 12.

Flax was cultivated by the farmers as generally as were oats and rye. Pulling flax was an employment in which the women often took part with the men. The linen manufacture was an important thing in every household, the families being clothed throughout in



homespun, either of flax or wool. I may say that I wore no other than homespun till nearly grown, and used to hand the warping threads for the reed to my mother, weaving the web in her loom. My sisters were spinners, both of wool and flax, which were sometimes carded by hand and prepared for spinning and weaving. The "rolls" were spun into threads, then run upon spools by the "quill wheel and blades," and thus made ready for the shuttle. When woven, the linens were spread on the grass for whitening, and were sprinkled at intervals on sunny days from the spouts of watering-pots. Dressing the flax, like threshing, was the winter's task, along with chopping and storing the year's supply of wood for fuel.

After the carding-machine near the Great Falls was in operation, bolsters of wool were strapped to the saddles, and thus taken there to be carded into rolls.

Atwater says: "New Haven had in its Yorkshire families special skill in the manufacture of cloth. This industry, so far at least as spinning is concerned, spread throughout the whole community. Every farmer raised flax, which his wife caused to be wrought into linen; and wherever sheep were kept, wool was spun into yarn for the knitting-needles and the loom. A young woman who could spin between sunrise and sunset more than thirty knots of warp or forty of filling was in high estimation among sagacious neighbors having marriageable sons. The music of the spinning-wheel was frequently accompanied with singing."

It is useless to sigh over the poetry of those lost times, now made prose in the whirl of factory spindles.

“Verse sweetens toil, however rude the sound ;  
 All at her work the village maiden sings,  
 Nor, while she turns her giddy wheel around,  
 Revolves the sad vicissitude of things.”

NOTE 7, page 13.

The first minister was the Rev. Alexander Gillet, who was succeeded by the Rev. Israel Beard Woodward, a native of Watertown, Conn. He was much beloved by his people, and his sudden death in 1810 was much lamented. As was customary, the ministers in those days received pupils into their families to be prepared for college. Mr. Woodward was a graduate of Yale, and a good scholar, who drew to his home pupils from different parts of the country. Percival the poet, and a youth from Norfolk, Virginia, who became distinguished in his State (William Maxwell), were students of his. The latter, in a poem entitled “Wolcott,” laments the death of his preceptor, and draws a pleasing picture of his character, and the scenery and manners of his people. I quote some of its lines.

“High on a mountain all unknown to fame,  
 Though graced with Wolcott’s venerable name,  
 The village bloomed in her serene retreat,  
 And smiled to see the clouds beneath her feet.  
 Such scenes of old the saintly hermit sought,  
 Retreat for penitence and pious thought,  
 Where truth might love to breathe a parting sigh,  
 And hope a shorter passage to the sky.”

Mild were the virtues of the village train,  
The rural virgin and the faithful swain,  
Hid from the world, unconscious of its arts,  
While peace and innocence possessed their hearts.  
Virtue beheld them with approving eye,  
And Vice confessed her homage with a sigh.

“There Woodward reigned the genius of the place,  
The friend and guardian of the simple race.  
And well the pastor led his little flock  
Through peaceful meadows to the gushing Rock ;  
Himself before, lest they should go astray,  
His only care to help them on their way,  
Fulfil his office, and approve his love  
To the great Shepherd of the fold above.

“’T was on a hill just rescued from the wood,  
The preacher’s hospitable mansion stood,  
Where oft the taper with inviting ray  
Allured the stranger from his weary way,  
And oft the cheerful table spread its best  
To win the smile of some unbidden guest.  
Beside the fence bloomed many a graceful vine,  
The blushing rose and sweeter eglantine.  
Before the door the greensward, trim and gay,  
Enticed the lamb and little child to play.

Spring set her flowers too beautiful to last,  
And winter nipped them with unwilling blast.

“Here let me pause upon the mountain’s brow,  
(Where oft the Muses listen to my vow,)  
And view with eyes that fondly overflow  
The various beauties of the scene below :  
Towns, mountains, villages, in fair display,  
All softened by the sun’s descending ray ;  
Thy steeple, Southington, that high in air  
Invites the rustic to the house of prayer ;  
And spread around it many a smiling plain,  
Waving with harvests of the golden grain ;  
The farmer’s mansion, fair in modest pride,  
With barns of plenty rising at its side ;  
Bright running streams that shine between the hills,  
While fancy hears the music of their rills ;  
And, far retreating into fading blue,  
Old Carmel’s mountain closing in the view.

“Fair was the scene when Sunday’s smiling day  
Called the good villagers to praise and pray ;  
When up the hill in order they repair,  
To join their pastor in the house of prayer.  
The proper matron in her russet best,  
Her little infant smiling at her breast,

The blooming maid (her eyes are raised above,  
Her bosom sighs, but not with earthly love),  
The swain, unconscious of his resting plough,  
And free to seek a nobler service now,  
Forget alike their labors and their sports ;  
They meet their Maker in his earthly courts.  
Away with earth ! I see the preacher rise ;  
And hark, he speaks ! — a message from the skies. .  
No poor ambition, void of grace or sense,  
Betrays his tongue to gaudy eloquence ;  
He scorns the tricks of vain theatric art,  
That catch the eye but cannot reach the heart.  
Warm, but yet prudent in his tempered zeal,  
He feels himself, and makes his hearers feel.  
How sweet the accents of that silver tongue,  
That wins the old and fascinates the young !  
The scoffer hears at last, and, undeceived,  
Wonders to find how much he had believed.  
E'en children listen to the simple style,  
And half divine the doctrine by his smile."

The meeting-house stood on the north side of the Green, facing the Green and the south. It stood on the line that divided the towns from which the parish was formed, — half in Waterbury and half in Farmington. It was a plain building without a steeple. The pews below were old-fashioned box or square pews, numbered on

the doors, and the seating of the members was according to their age, the elderly nearest the pulpit. The pulpit stood on the north side, opposite the front door, with a double window in the rear above it, and there was a door in each end of the church, east and west. The aisles leading from these were swept and sanded. The pulpit was very high, as was the custom in those days, and beneath it, extending in front, were the seats for the deacons. The front galleries extended around three sides, with raised seats behind, and at the south end, between the stairways, were high seats for the young people who preferred them. When the house was raised, it is said that all the inhabitants of the parish could sit on the sills. The body of the house was painted white and the roof red. This ancient building was some years since destroyed by fire. A smaller one now stands on the spot. All Saints, the Episcopal Church, built in 1832, stands on the south side of the Green.

NOTE 8, page 13.

Mr. Joseph Chatfield, the son of Captain John Alcock, married, October 13, 1796, Anna, daughter of Captain Amos Bronson, of Plymouth (formerly Northbury Parish in Waterbury). His home was near his father's on Spindle Hill. His farm, of near a hundred acres, included the summit of New Connecticut, the highest land in that part of the State. It contained suitable portions of ploughland, pasture, and woodland, and was watered by brooks having their sources within its borders, one flowing southward into Lily Brook, a tributary of Mad River, the other westward into Hancock's Brook.

The woodlands were choice possessions, and carefully preserved, the decaying trees being culled out for firewood. The northern summit of the hill was crowned with a stately growth of chestnuts, with oaks interspersed. This was left standing, improving the symmetry of the grove. This wood still crowns the summit and shows to advantage from all points of view. It was in the edge, near the roadside running along the eastern slope, that a falling tree crushed the body of the woodman.

The recent market for fuel in the factories on the Naugatuck has tempted the owners of wood-lots to supply the demand ; and Spindle Hill, instead of the busy hive of industry it was at the opening of this century, fruitful in fields of grain and dotted with orchards, has now become almost one spacious forest, the wood being the most productive crop the owners can grow for the market.

From the dwelling-house standing at the foot of the hill might be seen, southwards, Potucko's Ring, so called from an Indian chief who, having laid a ring of brushwood for catching game, and set it on fire, was himself caught within the enclosure and burnt. This tract of woodland was included within the territory purchased by John Alcock, the first settler on Spindle Hill, as were the mill-seats at the Great Falls on Mad River.

NOTE 9, page 18.

Captain Amos Bronson married Anna Blakeslee, of Plymouth, Conn. His home was at Mount Jericho, on the Naugatuck, about four miles west of Spindle Hill. A venerable man, of strong

features and frank manners, as I remember him. He was a staunch Churchman, having embraced Episcopacy after his marriage, educated his family in that faith, and was a leading man in establishing the Episcopal Church at Plymouth. He named his eldest son Tillotson, after the distinguished English divine of that name. His second son, Noah Miles, was a man of strong mind, enterprising, and of a public spirit. He built the turnpike road along the banks of the Naugatuck to Salem Bridge in Waterbury, connecting there with the turnpike road to New Haven, and with the road to Derby Landing. The building of this road through its length was thought an undertaking of no ordinary kind in those days. It was not completed till 1802. Before this time, in passing from Jericho to Waterbury, after the Revolution, one was obliged to ford the stream five or six times, and remove from twenty-five to thirty sets of bars. It was through these fords and bars that the adventurous mother rode on her way to New Haven, twenty-five miles distant, and paid her son Tillotson's tuition bills. He fitted for college with Rev. Dr. Trumbull, of Watertown. He graduated at Yale in 1786.

In an address delivered at Thomastown by Dr. Woodruff, at the celebration of the 4th of July, 1876, he gave a minute description of the manners, customs, and pursuits of the early settlers in that region. Thomastown, named Church Hollow at the time of its settlement, lies about two miles north of Mount Jericho, and about five miles north of Spindle Hill. It was to this church at the Hollow that Captain Bronson, with his family, used to ride and conduct



the services on Sundays in the manner described. He was a leading churchman and a prominent man in the affairs of the town. The sketch by Dr. Woodruff follows:—

“The first settlers of Northbury were self-reliant, a robust and hardy race, who worked and won a living from the rocky, rugged soil. Their first labor was to build log-cabins, which were hospitable, if rude, and capable of accommodating all friends who might visit them. These cabins were built near springs or running water, the low lands being also valued for the forage they furnished the cattle. The agricultural was the central interest, and even the minister tilled the land allotted him to eke out his small salary with the rude and simple implements of labor. Exchanges of labor were in the products of the land, so many bushels of wheat, rye, or corn being equivalent to so many days' labor. The shoemaker and tailor made their annual tour through the families of the neighborhood, clothing and shoeing them while they received their support. Woolen and linen were the staples for clothing, cotton and calico being too costly to be worn except on great occasions. These were procured from their own flocks and hillsides, and were made into homespun on the loom, which occupied one room of the house, with its rough-hewn, solid timbers, mingling its constant thwack with the milder notes of the spinning-wheel day after day, — the organ and piano of homespun. The cloth made was so thoroughly beaten up that it resisted the rigors of the Arctic winter, and almost defied the Indian arrow and musket shot. The linen was spread in long pieces on the grass, and whitened by the constant application of water from

a watering-pot in the hands of a buxom daughter of the household, who thus provided the Sunday linen and her own wedding outfit. The living was simple and nutritious. The year's supply of meat was laid up in the cellar at the annual slaughter. Bread was made from buckwheat, rye, or corn, which the land supplied; and as wheat soon became an unprofitable crop, it was rarely used, and in limited quantities. From four to six barrels of wheat flour was the annual demand from a merchant in fair trade, those who purchased it being looked upon as living extravagantly and luxuriously. Cider was the beginning, the middle, and the ending of hospitality, most of the autumn being consumed in making it, and a large share of the winter in drinking it. Strong liquor was used on all occasions, and under the most shadowy excuses, — at weddings, funerals, ordinations, and raisings; the largest items in the bills for such occasions being for what were called 'wet goods.'

“Life was isolated outside of the principal towns a hundred years ago, the house and home of the average family being measurably shut in to itself, which required more completeness and independence about the home than now, and centred life about it and not in society, which made the simple home very picturesque. The frame houses which succeeded the log-cabin were built for use, and so substantially that some of their large timbers were sound when a century old. The house was generally square, with a massive chimney in its centre. The interior of the house was panelled, not plastered, and the great oak beams crossed the ceiling in plain sight. A great open wood-fire blazed up the throat of the spacious chimney, for

stoves were unknown. The cooking was done in tin kitchens, or on turnspits, or in a long-handled frying-pan, or on hooks suspended from the swinging crane, or in the great oven. The floor was bare, save for a home-made rug or two of woollen rags. The tallow-dipped candle shed a dim light at evening. The kitchen was a tidy, cheery room, with a tall dresser and rows of plates and platters, and a rack of spoons. A skillet and warming-pan hung near the fire, and the one flatiron, teapot, and various other articles hung on pins or spikes driven into the chimney; articles of clothing decorated the poles overhead; the trusty queen's arm hanging from the side of a beam. Over all presided the mistress of the house, clad in short-gown and petticoat, with a cap-border half concealing her kindly face, the brightest memory of the family group. In the evening all gather around the big fireplace, the father and hired man talking of farm matters, while the mother mends the rents, and the children con the next day's lessons by the firelight. Neighbors drop in as the evening advances, and then nuts, apples, and the mug of cider are brought out, and the struggle of the colonies with the mother country is discussed in its different phases. Still later, the merry young folks drop in from their ride, and, as the tall clock in the corner ticks towards nine, the last Sabbath's sermon is discussed, and at nine the evening is closed with a prayer for divine guidance.<sup>1</sup>

“The American people were a religious people, and, while all sects had a foothold in the country, the Congregationalists predomi-

<sup>1</sup> “Half or two thirds of the inhabitants in New England sleep in the present time without locking or barring the doors.” — *Dr. Dwight's Travels*, 1821.

nated in New England. Its patriot pulpit wielded a powerful influence in moulding the character which wrought out the successful result of the Revolution. It was the centre of intellectual influence, moulding the soldier and statesman with its instruction. Living among farmers, remote from towns, where literature would naturally be neglected and corrupted, in advance of the schoolmaster and school, the minister was the college in embryo. He combated vice, and was the companion and guide to genius and virtue, and his presence and talents inspired the great men of the State.

“The meeting-house was usually situated on a high hill, between two or three valleys; plain and cubical in shape, with galleries inside, and surmounted by a tower or steeple. The pulpit was lofty, reserved, and imposing, over which hung an august wooden canopy, the sounding-board. Just in front of and beneath the pulpit was the deacons’ seat, where those worthies reposed and received the more perpendicular droppings of the Word. The pews were square boxes, close-doored, high-walled, and railed around the top, where the people were impounded, half of them with their backs to the preacher. The seating of the meeting-house was a matter of much delicacy, and was done by a committee, who ‘dignified’ the seats. The only heat came from foot-stoves, filled at adjoining houses; and, while the cold blasts of open ventilation chilled the people, they patiently listened to the minister as he preached in great-coat and mittens or gloves. The choir was ranged around the front seats of the gallery, with the pitch-pipe in the centre. The bass-viol was not then introduced, and the organ was looked upon as a device of

the great adversary. The hymn was lined out by the deacon, and the hymn-book was only introduced after great opposition.

“ Besides the homespun clothing, a leather apron was a common article of apparel, and was sometimes seen in the meeting-house when new and clean. The young folks went to meeting barefoot, or carried their shoes and stockings in their hands, and slipped them on in some sly corner when almost there. The Sabba’ day house supplied the comfort lacking in the meeting-house. It was a family affair, usually comprising but a single room, perhaps fifteen feet square, with windows and a fireplace. It was plainly furnished with chairs for the old folks and benches for the children, with a table in the centre on which lay a Bible and a few religious books, while shelves at the side contained dishes for cooking and eating. Sometimes the house was mounted over a shed in which the horse was sheltered. A group of such cabins standing about the meeting-house added much to the picturesqueness of the spot, and added to the comfort of Sabbath worship in winter. The family able to keep a Sabba’ day house rode directly there Sabbath morning, and warmed themselves within and without, dispelling the frost of the church with another thaw at intermission, when they paid a wholesome regard to the wants of the inner man.

“ The schoolhouse was usually perched at the bleak angle of the cross-roads, with its outside littered with remnants of last year’s wood, and policed by the neighbors’ cattle and swine. Inside a row of desks surrounded the room, blotted with ink and marked with the jack-knife. The inner row of seats for the younger pupils was

made from the smooth side of a slab erected on four stout legs set in auger-holes, and was so high that little folks could hardly touch their toes to the floor. Almost all one side of the room was taken up with the yawning fireplace, holding the best part of a cord of wood, but whose roaring flames made little impression on the more remote side of the apartment, which was well ventilated by innumerable cracks and crannies. The teacher was a man of authority and admitted receptacle of all valuable knowledge; he was revered accordingly, and his patient labors had no small share in the progress of the people. His simple and primitive university graduated men who have filled the country with glory and renown.

“The fathers rode on horseback, with their wives and children on a pillion behind, the aged and feeble having the privilege of riding in the cart. The first wagon was as much a curiosity as the first locomotive at a later day; it was made with wheels of equal diameter, and framed like a cart, and had no springs. Domestic industries supplied amusements. The husking bee, the quilting bee, and the apple-paring brought the young people together, and a raising gave all the men in the neighborhood a half holiday. There were foot and horseback excursions after the haying, and the evening singing-school for the practice of sacred music. Marriages were commonly contracted at a much earlier period than now, the theory being that wives were not to help their husbands spend a living, but earn one. Children had a somewhat different place in the old social economy; they did their share of domestic work; found their recreation in sports of a very rude description; looked up to instead

of down upon their parents, and stood in wholesome awe of domestic law and authority. A visit from the minister meant a dreaded catechetical exercise, and on the Sabbath their natural activities were sternly repressed. The exercise in the catechism on Saturday was the most dreaded and shirked by the children of any in the week. The Sabbath began at sundown Saturday, and was rigidly observed. All who could were expected to attend public worship; and there was no strolling in the fields, and no riding or travelling, except of necessity. Their reading was the Bible, as books were few and religious newspapers had not been discovered. It is customary in some quarters to speak lightly of the fathers, but there is something magnificent in their stern, practical fidelity to their principles. What we are they have made us; and when we have done better for the ages that come after us, we shall have a more certain right to blame their austerities."

## NOTE 10, page 21.

Before Webster's school-books appeared, Dilworth's "New Guide to the English Tongue," Fisher's "Instructor, or Young Man's Best Companion," with the New Testament, were the chief books used in the colonies. The first edition of Webster's spelling-book appeared in 1783. It was published at Hartford by Hudson and Goodwin. Many millions of copies of this book have been sold and used in schools, and it is still used in some portions of the United States as a school-book.

"Noah Webster," says Duyckinck in his *Cyclopædia of American*

Literature, "had tact in discerning the wants of the country in his day, and providing for them in his spelling-book. He simplified knowledge and made it easy of acquisition, arranging the words of his spelling-book in ready forms to catch the eye and linger in the memory, while he added brief lessons in definitions and geographical and other terms, intermingling those homely and ready lessons of fables and proverbs, which were not at all blunted in their way to the conscience by woodcuts such as the art in the country then afforded. There have been few moral lessons productive of the same effect in the country as the famous old fable of the 'Boy that stole Apples,' and who sits, in the old woodcut, alarmingly exposed astride of a branch of a tree, almost naked of foliage, while the farmer, in small-clothes, one arm akimbo, the other in a most striking attitude, takes aim at the 'young sauce-box.' Many an honest fellow through the world has had his sense of duty painfully strengthened by the moral of that fable. Then there is that forsaken 'Country Maid and her Milkpail,' teaching the double lesson of the vanity of human expectations and the folly of unnecessary grief: that chickens are not to be counted before they are hatched, or milk to be wept over after it is spilt. The story, too, of the 'Boy that went to the Wood to look for Bird's-nests when he should have gone to School,' and the descriptions of a good boy and of a bad boy, not forgetting the wonderful table of 'Proverbs, Counsels, and Maxims,' all in words of one syllable, taxing the wisdom of nations and the strong old Saxon power of the English language; all sound lessons, calculated to make honest men and ingenious Benjamin Franklins."



## NOTE II, page 23.

Dr. William A. Alcott gave the following account of this school on Spindle Hill, in "The Annals of Education" for October and November, 1831:—

"The schoolhouse stood near the centre of the district, at the junction of four roads. The spot was peculiarly exposed to the bleak winds of winter; nor were there any shade trees near, to shelter the children from the scorching rays of the summer's sun during their recreations.

"The size of the building was twenty-two feet long by twenty broad. From the floor to the ceiling it was seven feet. The chimney and entry took up about four feet at one end, leaving the school-room itself twenty feet by eighteen. Around three sides of the room were connected desks, arranged so that when the pupils were sitting at them their faces were towards the instructor and their backs towards the wall. Attached to the sides of the desks nearest to the instructor were benches for small pupils. The instructor's desk and chair occupied the centre. On this desk was stationed a rod or ferule; sometimes both. These, with books, writings, inkstands, rules, and plummets, with a fire-shovel and a pair of tongs, were the principal furniture.

"The windows were five in number, of twelve panes each. The entry was four feet square. A depression in the chimney on one side of the entry furnished a place of deposit for the hats and spare

clothes of the boys. The girls generally carried their bonnets, etc., into the schoolroom. The ceiling and walls were plastered. The room was warmed by a large and deep fireplace. In severe weather it was estimated that the amount usually consumed was not far from a cord of wood a week. The wood was left in the road near the house, so that it was often buried in the snow or wet with the rain. At the best it was always burnt green. The ventilation of the schoolroom was as much neglected as its temperature; and its cleanliness more than either. In summer the floor was washed once in two or three weeks.

“The winter school usually opened about the first of December, and continued from twelve to sixteen weeks. The summer school commenced about the first of May. Men were uniformly employed in winter and women in summer. A strong prejudice existed against employing the same instructor more than once or twice in the same district.

“Good moral character and a thorough knowledge of the common branches were considered as indispensable qualifications in an instructor. They were chiefly selected from the most respectable families in town. In general, the candidate was some favorite or relative of the district committee, and the moral character of almost every instructor was unexceptionable.

“Instructors usually boarded in the families of the pupils. Their compensation varied from seven to eleven dollars a month for men, and from sixty-two and a half cents to one dollar a week for women.

“Two of the board of visitors usually visited the winter schools twice during the term. In the summer their visits were often omitted. These visits usually occupied from one hour to an hour and a half. They were spent in hearing a few hurried lessons, and in making some remarks, general in their character. Writing and spelling were leading studies every day, and on Saturday the Old Assembly Catechism, in the Congregational order and the Episcopal order, were regularly repeated. Webster’s Spelling-Book, the American Preceptor, and the New Testament were the principal books used. Arithmetic was taught by a few instructors one or two evenings in a week.

“In teaching the alphabet it was customary for the instructor to take his seat, and point to the letters precisely in the order in which they are placed in the book, A, B, C, &c. If the pupil could name the letter immediately, it was well ; if not, he was told it. After going through from A to Z, the double letters were also taught. Sometimes the process was inverted ; beginning at the bottom, and ending at A.

“To teach spelling, a lesson was assigned, consisting of a certain number of columns of words arranged in alphabetical order, as the words of our spelling-books usually are, which the pupil was requested to study over and over, until he could recollect and spell them from memory. In this manner one word suggested, by association, the next ; the second, the third ; and so on. No faculty was called into exercise but the memory. If a word was misspelled, the next pupil who could spell it was allowed to take his

place, or 'go above him,' as it was called. He who was at the head of the class at evening had a credit mark, and sometimes a written certificate of good scholarship.

"In teaching reading, the process was equally mechanical. The instructor generally read the first verse or paragraph, and sometimes read with them in his turn. The instructor, or the pupil at the head, made the corrections. These extended no farther than the right pronunciation of the words, and a measured attention to the pauses. 'Read as you talk,' was a rule seldom given, and still less frequently reduced to practice. It was customary to read the Testament and Preceptor (the principal reading-books), generally in course. There were, however, certain days of the week on which selected pieces were read. These consisted of an oration, and perhaps a dialogue, with some of the more difficult poetry. When visitors called, they were commonly required to read these selections, which they had learned almost by heart.

"New beginners in writing usually had a copy of straight marks. Over the top of the next page the master wrote *Avoid alluring company*, in large hand, which the pupil was required to imitate. A page a day, that is, one eighth of a common sheet of foolscap paper, was their task in writing. The pupils' copies were usually in alphabetical order, and, during the first year, almost wholly of coarse hand, ruled (for all were required to rule) from one fourth to half an inch wide. Engraved copy-slips, instead of written ones, were sometimes used.

"When Arithmetic was taught in the evenings, the instructor

usually wrote sums for the pupil on a slate, which he was required to work. Daboll's Arithmetics were used as guides.

“The order of exercises for a day was usually as follows : From nine o'clock A. M. to fifteen minutes past nine, the instructor came to the door with a large ferule, and struck several times on the doorpost as a signal for opening the school. Such pupils as were present came in, and either took their seats or crowded around the fire. Those of the first class who were present read in the Testament. The lesson consisted of from two to four chapters, according to their length. The time usually allotted to this exercise was from twenty to thirty minutes, or until most of the pupils had arrived.

“When this exercise closed, writing was attended to. In the winter copies and pens were to be prepared, ink to be thawed and watered, and numbers wished to go to the fire at once. In the midst of all this the second class usually took their Testament for reading. While the second and third classes were reading, the instructor usually finished copies and pens, and assigned the spelling lessons for the forenoon. Then the smaller classes were to be taught. Those who were able read a few sentences of some of the easy lessons in the spelling-book, while others merely read over the words of the spelling lesson.

“At about half past ten the welcome sound ‘You may go out,’ was heard. Every one made his long ‘obeisance,’ and was immediately in the street ; but in from five to ten minutes the loud rap brought them to the place of obeisance, and ultimately to their seats again. The two sexes went out separately.

“The rest of the forenoon was spent chiefly in spelling. The school closed at twelve o'clock. At the usual signal, 'School's dismissed,' a scene of confusion commenced. But at all other times they usually went out in good order.

“There was a large pond about a quarter of a mile from the school-house. In the winter this was the favorite resort of the boys. Time passed so swiftly that they were often too late at the school, and were reprimanded, sometimes feruled or flogged. The rap on the door summoned them at one. The American Preceptor was then read for nearly half an hour by the first class, and about a quarter of an hour by the second. Writing went on again, simultaneously with the reading of the second and smaller classes.

“When the course of lessons was finished, a short recess was allowed, as in the forenoon. On coming in from recess or intermission, it was customary to have a pail of water and cup stand by the door. It was rarely 'handed around,' but every one helped himself. On coming in from the afternoon recess, the classes were all exercised in their spelling lessons again, beginning with the youngest. After spelling, the pauses, abbreviations, numeral letters, &c., were recited. In addition to these, the instructor usually had a set of written questions, embracing the time when many remarkable events happened, the various currencies, tables of distance, weight, measure, &c. The first class, and sometimes the second, were required to answer these daily until they were perfectly familiar. The older classes were required to commit the Introduction to the Spelling-Book to memory.

“A table of words spelled differently, but pronounced alike, was usually a favorite table with most instructors. It consisted of four pages of the Spelling-Book. It was usually studied until many of the pupils could repeat it from beginning to end. But I never knew any teacher require his pupils to apply it.

“The exercises of the day were usually closed by calling the roll or catalogue of pupils, by announcing the name of the scholar whose turn it was to make the fire next morning; and by giving positive orders for every pupil to “go straight home, and be civil to everybody he might meet with.” Once a week the writers were required to write each a line for examination. They were then numbered according to their excellence. He whose line was No. 1 was allowed to have the first choice among the seats; No. 2 the second, and so on. About once a week they were also allowed to choose sides for spelling, which usually took up about half of the afternoon. The side or party who misspelled the smallest number of words was declared to have *beat*; and they usually manifested much triumph.

“Dialogues, too, were sometimes committed to memory, and repeated.

“This school was equal, if not superior, to the average of the schools in that part of the country.

“In 1801, the people paid at least one half of the compensation of the instructor, by a tax upon themselves proportioned to the number of pupils furnished by each. But for the last ten years the public fund has paid about nine tenths of the expense.”

## NOTE 12, page 24.

## THE WOLCOTT DIALECT.

Afore.	Clever, <i>for</i> kindly.
All-fired.	Clost, <i>for</i> close.
Amost, e'en-a-most.	Clout.
Aant.	Codger.
Ary, nary.	Courtin.
Astware, <i>for</i> as it were.	Cowlick.
Ax, <i>for</i> ask.	Cross-patch.
Baint, <i>for</i> be not.	Cud, <i>for</i> quid.
Bile, <i>for</i> boil.	Cuss.
Bime-by.	Cute.
Blazes, like blazes.	Cut out.
Bobbery, kick up a bobbery.	Daater, <i>for</i> daughter.
Bran new.	Daddy.
Bunk.	Darnd, darn it.
Bunt.	Desput, <i>for</i> desperate.
Buss.	Dreffle, <i>for</i> dreadful.
Calkerlate.	Drought.
Chap.	Drowneded.
Chaw.	Expect, <i>for</i> suspect.
Chirk.	Fire, to fire a stone.
Chock-full.	Fix it.
Chore.	Flop.



Folks.	Jerk.
Foxed boots.	Keel over, turn a somersault.
Froe, a tool for rending timber.	Keep company with.
Full chisel, go fast or swift.	Kind'er, <i>for</i> likeness.
Furder, <i>for</i> further.	Kiver, <i>for</i> cover.
Fust-rate.	Laze about.
Gab.	Leanter, lanky.
Gal, gal-boy.	Likely, a likely fellow.
Gallowses, <i>for</i> suspenders.	Links, sausages.
Gambrel.	Lit.
Give the mitten.	Logy.
Gownd, <i>for</i> gown.	Lope, laze about.
Guess.	Mammy, <i>for</i> mamma.
Gump, a silly fellow.	Medder, <i>for</i> meadow.
Haint.	Meechen, downcast.
Heft.	Mile, <i>for</i> miles.
Hern, hisen.	Miss, <i>for</i> Mrs.
Het, <i>for</i> heated.	Nimshi, a foolish fellow.
Hoity-toity.	No odds.
Hook, on one's own account.	Not by a jug full.
Housen.	Notions, chores.
Hove.	Nohow.
Hum, <i>for</i> home.	Nowheres.
Humly, a humly fellow.	Nubbins.
Hunk.	Nurly.
Jaw, hold your jaw.	Ollers, <i>for</i> always.

On'y, <i>for</i> only.	Sartin.
Ought ter.	Sass, <i>for</i> garden vegetables.
Ourn, <i>for</i> ours.	Saaser, <i>for</i> saucer.
Pappa, <i>for</i> papa.	Scaunch.
Partly opposite.	Scrimp.
Perk up.	Set by, prized.
Pimping.	Shack, a ragged beggar.
Plaguy.	Shet, <i>for</i> shut.
Pokerish.	* Slick, <i>for</i> sleek.
Polt, a blow on the head.	Slobber.
Proxing.	Slosh.
Pung.	Slump.
Puttering about.	Snicker.
Puzzle.	Snore, I snore, I swow, I vum.
Quilting match.	Sozzle.
Rave, if angered.	Spry.
Raound, <i>for</i> round.	Sqush.
Reckon.	Stun, <i>for</i> stone.
Right away, soon.	Tag.
Rile, <i>for</i> roil.	Taint, <i>for</i> it is not.
Rowen.	Taters.
Rugged, hardy, robust.	Teeter, see-saw.
Sabba' day.	Telled, <i>for</i> told.
Sag.	Tend, <i>for</i> attend.
Samp.	That are, <i>for</i> a particular thing.
Saphead.	To get round one.

Tolable, <i>for</i> tolerable.	Whaling, <i>for</i> a beating.
To rights, immediately.	Whop, whop over.
Towzle.	Yander, <i>for</i> yonder.
Truck, trade.	Yank.
Tussle.	Yerk.
Wabble.	Yourn, <i>for</i> yours.

## NOTE 13, page 25.

At this total eclipse of 1806, the line of total darkness passed through Massachusetts and Connecticut, and the centre of darkness passed across Litchfield, lying in sight over the hills west of the Naugatuck. The day was clear and bright till the darkness came on. Smoked glass was used by thousands of eyes as the dark shadow of the moon began to cross over the sun's disk. When only a crescent form was to be seen, the reflection of this was cast upon the leaves of the trees. As the sun became more and more obscured, the crescent became thinner and thinner, until it was a mere thread of light in the shadow of the leaves. Suddenly it faded entirely away, and the sun was extinguished in its meridian path. There it hung in the sky, a round funereal patch, rayless and cold. The dews descended as if it were evening twilight; the fowls sought their roosts; the cattle turned their eyes wonderingly to the expiring luminary; the air was dense and compressed; the smoke rushed down the chimney flues; the darkness was like that of evening twilight. In the afternoon the wind had risen boisterously, and the weather was cold. It was followed by violent hail-storms in all

parts of New England. This was the greatest eclipse that had happened in New England for a hundred years. It began at 10.5 A. M. ; middle at 11.23 A. M. ; whole duration, two hours and forty-six minutes.

NOTE 14, page 27.

Training-day was a great occasion. Every boy looked forward to its coming with longing eyes. He then appeared in his best attire, with spending-money in his pocket, wending his way at an early hour to the Hill. There the military companies were already on parade, dressed in regimentals (in blue coats with red facings, the skirts doubled to a point, with their muskets scoured to a glittering brightness), their cartridge-box strapped over their shoulders with the bayonet ; the hat with a feather red-tipped, and a plate in front lettered with the name of the company, its number, and that of the regiment to which it belonged. The officers were dressed in blue and red, with cocked hats and lofty plumes of yellow and red ; the fifers and drummers in red coats and plumes, the colors flying above them. The drill, with marchings and filings to and fro around the Green, was followed by a dinner at the tavern. The pedlers' carts were irresistible temptations ; for a penny a roll of gingerbread was to be had ; a card of ten rolls for fourpence-halfpenny. Sweet cider was plenty in September ; raisins, always. In the evening a dance came off at the ball-room, with plenty of sling to stimulate the merriment. The girls were not less curious than the boys, and sure to be at hand for the evening's frolic. Young men were enrolled at

the age of eighteen. They were fined for non-appearance, and if not equipped according to law.

Disinclined as I was to handle fire-arms, my drill was not of the bravest bearing. The highest honor intended from my companions in arms was to be chosen a corporal, when I addressed them from the front, "Gentlemen Officers and Fellow-Soldiers," on declining the honor.

At the Centenary of the Congregational Church and Society of Wolcott, held in September, 1873, Editor Cooke, of the "Waterbury American," gave an account of a general training or field day at Wolcott, which he attended when a youngster :—

"The first time we ever saw Wolcott was at a general training held there about 1803. The regiment at that time was commanded by Colonel Streat Richards, who, by virtue of his office, ordered the regiment to parade at Wolcott, — the only time that Wolcott was honored by this distinction. The Colonel was then in his prime and glory. He was a man of wit, of strong impulses, of a gay disposition, having that pride and ambition which constitute the essentials of a military officer, but not averse to 'fuss and feathers' when an opportunity offered for display. When well mounted upon his charger, clad in the old colonial costume, or Revolutionary uniform, with well-powdered wig, ruffles at his wrists, high-topped boots, three-cornered plumed hat, *à la mode* the old régime of the Baron Steuben school, he formed an imposing feature of the olden time. The Colonel felt his station, and casually observed to a brother officer that 'on Sunday the Lord commanded ; but to-day, being Monday, was his

day, — *He* was in command ;' and the troops found it out during the day. Waterbury being so near, the boys from eight to fifteen were bound to attend ; and, as conveyances were scarce at that time, they organized a company and resolved to foot it over the hills to the town centre. Starting from home an hour or two before day, they arrived there just as the sun gilded the eastern horizon, in time to see the out-of-town companies enter the village, headed by martial music, their colors flying. They were conducted by the adjutant to the station for inspection. This occupied the forenoon till dinner-time, which was taken under the shade trees on the Green, — the boys participating in a shilling cut ; after which the regiment took up the line of march to an open field about a mile east of the Centre, where the parade and review took place with all the pomp and circumstance of the old-time general training. Wolcott bore off the palm, as she always did, by her soldier-like bearing, neat and tidy uniforms, and her splendid military band, — the nucleus of the celebrated brass band still existing in spirit to the present time. The day was unusually fine, the display grand and without accident, an honor to the town and its intelligent people, — the only drawback being for those spectators condemned to foot their return after the fatigues of the day."

NOTE 15, page 28.

The mills at the Great Falls were the resort of the inhabitants generally. Here were the grist and saw mills, the clothiers' works, and, at the pond just below, the carding-machine. The spot was

picturesque. Above, in the rocks, at some distant time, the water had worn a circular cup, named Benson's Pot. The whole stream poured down the precipice, turning the prodigious overshot wheel which drove the gearings of the millstones within and the clothing works below. The grist-mill, built against the ledge, was entered by descending stairs into the upper story, thence by another flight into the dusty apartment where the millstone whirled. The slowly revolving cylinder bolted the grist by means of an ascending and descending belt, with pockets revolving and emptying themselves into the long trough underneath, to be shovelled thence into sacks suspended by hooks at the apertures on the outside, — the flour and bran at different outlets. Descending still lower by a flight of steep, narrow stairs, with slender rails for support, we came in sight of the wheel and foaming current as it rushed through the sluice at the base of the ledge. Here, on the opposite side of the stream, stood the fulling-mill champing the cloth, the dye-pits, and along the banks the long stretch of frame for extending the cloths to dry.

Then, at sunset on Saturday nights, might be seen, during the spring and summer season, the boys from a long way off tramping along the roads, with their linen coats on their arms, to the Pond for their swimming frolic. A long frame, covered with plank and extending over the depth, formed an admirable platform for the divers. From this, following one another, sometimes by scores, they plunged, emerging above the surface at long distances, till the Pond was populous with heads. Many were the antics of the gay swimmers ; all possible evolutions being performed, and a race some-

times followed to the mills above. It was a salutary and charming sport, and a becoming preparation for the morrow's services.

NOTE 16, page 29.

The fruitful orchards furnished a common drink. Every householder in autumn laid in a supply for the season. Rows of barrels, extended along his cellar, were filled with the liquor. Much of this was drunk during the winter months; the tankard was offered to the neighbor when he called; and the bottle of cider was a constant companion of the mower and reaper going into the fields in summer. Agreeing with the poet, the farmer questioned:—

— “ Why reject

Our native liquor, while for us the mill

Still grinds choice apples, and the pomace vats

O'erflow with generous cider; cider smooth

Shall please all tastes and triumph o'er the vine.”

It was not until near the beginning of this century that distilleries were known in these parts, and cider-brandy became a common drink with any considerable number of the farmers. It was used chiefly during the haying and harvesting. The excesses of some soon led to measures for regulating its sale. The temperance movement, begun by Dr. Beecher, then living at Litchfield, has since led to a general discussion of the subject, and legislation is still active in devising means for suppressing or regulating the sale.



Amidst the distracting views and measures now current, it may be instructive to listen to a word from Bishop Berkeley. Writing of the state of England in 1740, he says : —

“The public virtue and spirit of the British legislature never showed itself more conspicuous in any act than in that of suppressing the immediate use of spirituous liquors among the people, whose strength and numbers constitute the true wealth of a nation ; though evasive acts will, it is feared, prevail, so long as distilled spirits of any kind are allowed, — the character of Englishmen in general being like that of Brutus, *Quicquid vult, valde vult*. But why should such a canker be tolerated in the vitals of a state under any pretence or in any shape whatever? Better by far the whole present set of distillers were pensioners of the public and their trade abolished by law, since the benefit thereof put together would not balance the hundredth part of the mischief. To prove the destructive effects of such spirits, with regard both to the human species and individuals, we need not go so far as our colonies, or the savage nations of America. Plain proof may be had nearer home. For, albeit there is in every town or district throughout England some tough dram-drinker set up as a devil’s decoy to draw proselytes, yet the ruined health and morals, and the beggary of such numbers, evidently show that we need no other enemy to complete our destruction than the cheap luxury at the lower end of the state, and that a nation lighted up at both ends must soon be consumed.” — *Siris*, pp. 50, 51.

## NOTE 17, page 30.

Doubtless Captain John Alcock's company contributed its privates to serve under General Putnam, whose order he had received, September 5, 1774, to march immediately to Boston with his forces. And ten days later he received from the colonel of his regiment (Colonel Strong, of Farmington) an order to have them ready "for marching at an hour's warning if need be." Three of his sons were privates in the Revolutionary army, John drawing his pension from the Government during his latter days. A venerable man, as I remember him, fond of relating his war adventures in the "*Farseys*," proud of having seen General Washington, and of reciting the war ballads of that time. I find among my papers one of these copied by his own hand. Some of the first verses are wanting, and several of the following are obscure, the paper being doubled and much worn. I have not seen these elsewhere: —

. . . . .

“ But Gage and Howe and Clinton too,  
 And many thousand more,  
 May cross the main, but all in vain :  
 Our rights we 'll ne'er give o'er.

“ Our fathers gave them to their sons,  
 And these again to theirs,  
 And we 'll convey them safely down  
 To our succeeding heirs.

“ Our properties we ’ll sure maintain,  
Our rights we ’ll not resign,  
Nor these be sold for glittering gold  
Nor heaps of Spanish coin.

. . . . .

“ Tories may dream of future joys,  
But I am bound to say  
They ’ll find themselves bound fast in chains  
If Britain wins the day.

“ The cause for which we do contend  
We know is just and right,  
Therefore we trust the Lord of Hosts  
Will put our foes to flight.

“ Then, in our Great Jehovah’s name,  
And under his command,  
Let us go forth with one accord  
The fate of war to stand.

“ Husbands must leave their loving wives,  
And sprightly youth attend, —  
Leave their sweethearts and better selves,  
Their country to defend.

“ May Heaven now guide us in the field  
And keep us safely there ;  
We pray the Lord will be our shield  
When thundering cannons roar.”

Whether written by some member of his regiment or other, they plainly speak the spirit of the time, poor as the doggerel verses are.

Captain Alcock's commission is dated at Hartford, May 18, 1774, fourteenth year of the reign of George III.

NOTE 18, page 31.

This instrument was made from the bole of a maple-tree grown in a bilberry-tangle on the confines of the farm (a wizard spot then to the young fancy). From this its sides, rim, and neck were fashioned by the knife ; the varnish, strings, and rosin were purchased at New Haven. The bow was strung from the tail of the family horse. My eyes were delighted with its beauty. It was an amusement and recreation for noon-spells and rainy days. I must confess the scranrel notes drawn forth were unreportable to cultivated ears. It disappeared in the hands of a dapper Hessian tailor, in payment for his work on the homespun suit, which sailed south on its adventures among the “ First Families ” of the Old Dominion.

## NOTE 19, page 32.

The custom of gleaning after the reapers came, it appears, with the introduction of wheat into Britain from the East, and was brought by the Puritans into New England, where it was continued in the rural districts until the beginning of the present century. Wheat was grown on the virgin lands until these were less productive; then gave place to the cultivation of rye. Gleaning was seldom seen in my boyhood. I seldom used the sickle, but oftener the cradle and the scythe. The haying season was one of continued labor and merriment. There was something picturesque and poetic in looking at the platoon of mowers delivering their swaths from the scythe across the meadow, and then following them with tedding-fork, spreading the new-mown grass. The cradling and binding the sheaves of rye gave a certain dignity to the laborer. But whatever of picturesque grace once attached to these rural occupations is now superseded by prose machinery, and the golden age of poetic labor is departed from us. Still machinery has not destroyed the poetry of toil, while apple and berry picking remain to us. For what but the human hand can gracefully pluck an apple or a berry?

## NOTE 20, page 34.

“No picture of domestic life,” says Atwater in his History of New Haven Colony, “in New England could be complete which did not exhibit the family observing the annual Thanksgiving. Reject-

ing Christmas, because of the superstitions which had attached themselves to it, the Puritans established in its place another festival, which became equally domestic in the manner of its observance. Children who had left their parents to prepare for the duties of adult life, or to occupy homes which they had established, were gathered again in the home of their nativity, or under the roof of those whom they had learned, since they were married, to call father and mother. Here they recounted the blessings of the year, and united in giving thanks to God. If there were children's children they came with their parents, and spent the hours which remained after worship in feasting and frolic. Whenever the family came to the table for breakfast, dinner, or supper, there was a grace before meat, and when they left it a grace after meat, — every person standing by his chair while the blessing was asked and the thanks were given. Family worship was an important feature of domestic life in Puritan households."

Dr. Dwight adds his testimony to the character of the Connecticut people : —

"The State of Connecticut is distinguished, perhaps, from all other countries by a commanding regard to personal character.

— " Here, in truth,

Not in pretence, man is esteemed as man,  
Not here how rich, of what peculiar blood,  
Or office high ; but of what genuine worth,  
What talents bright and useful, what good deeds,

What piety to God, what love to man,  
 The question is. To this an answer fair  
 The general heart secures."

*Dr. Dwight's Travels.*

NOTE 21, page 35.

"Threading the needle" was a favorite play with the young people. Blindman's buff, Throwing the handkerchief, huskings, and apple bees, sleigh rides, and a dance after quiltings were also favorite amusements. A "raising" was an occasion of interest and merriment to both old and young. The game called "Threading the Needle" was played by children or young persons, one of each sex standing together with their hands joined and arms raised, under which the other players passed, until the two chose to drop their arms, and catch a girl or boy, who must then pay a kiss to be set free. The players sung, meantime, this verse:—

"The needle's eye no one can pass,  
 The thread that runs so true ;  
 It has caught many a pretty fair lass,  
 And now it has caught you."

NOTE 22, page 36.

William Andrews Alcott. He was my cousin and a little older than myself. Living in sight, we sought each other's society whenever we could steal away from our home duties, hoping to find in

conversation and reading food for our minds not accessible to us at school, nor within the limits of our immediate neighborhood. We read the same books, borrowed any within our reach that promised to be interesting or instructive ; formed a Juvenile Library, as we called it ; corresponded by letters, delivering these at each other's doors ; cherished like dreams of the future. Teaching was a desirable occupation and possible for us ; we even aspired to authorship. A new spelling-book was thought to be needed, and, should we attain to a position of eminence in medicine or the ministry, might be written. Dr. Alcott's writings on hygiene and primary education were numerous ; they had a wide popularity for a time, and might be read still with profit. He was a pioneer in reforms, in methods of teaching and discipline. As a teacher in his district his reputation was second to none. His papers contributed to the "American Journal of Education" contain suggestions to which many of the modern improvements owe their origin. He was for some time associated with Mr. William C. Woodbridge in conducting the "Annals of Education," and succeeded him as its editor. Few men have lived lives of more untiring industry. His modesty was the only impediment to a wide and just appreciation by his contemporaries.

NOTE 23, page 37.

The "Hartford Courant" and "New Haven Register" were the only newspapers that came into our neighborhood. The former was brought by a post-rider across the Hill ; we rode to "Woodtick,"



two miles away, for the latter. With what avidity we devoured the accounts of battles by sea and land and skirmishes with the Indians ! — purchasing greedily of the pedlers pictures and maps of the struggle. Nor were the politics lost on us. Jefferson, Madison, and Jackson were names familiar. We schoolboys caught some notion of what they represented, to the extent even of becoming partisans, — “democratic” or “federal,” the latter largely. Then we had our military company, meeting weekly for exercise with our wooden swords and guns, with plumes in our hats plucked from the feathered fowl, cockades of “sheepskin morocco.” I had the honor of rising from ensign to lieutenant, from that to the highest rank known, — that of captain ; and, after serving at the head of my company, of resigning my office, making a flaming speech, — eloquent, of course, and winning plaudits from the brave.

## NOTE 24, page 38.

The business of clock-making was begun in this neighborhood by Ely Terry. In 1806 Mr. Terry established himself at the Falls on Hancock’s Brook in Plymouth, employing Messrs. Silas Hoadly and Seth Thomas in manufacturing wooden clocks. He had previously done a small business of the kind in another part of the town. This clock-shop was situated above a mile from Spindle Hill. It was reached by a blind, precipitous pathway, leading down the declivity through a narrow defile, following and crossing repeatedly a little rushing stream, as it wound its way towards the factory. This

neighborhood was then named Ireland. Hancock's Brook, on the north, flowed through pleasant meadows of the same name. South of the Falls, the stream ran noisily over a rocky bed, at the base of overhanging cliffs, emptying into the Naugatuck at Waterville. The Hartford and Fishkill Railroad has cleaved its way along the margin for some distance, and by a circuitous passage across the highlands, descending by a deep cut to Bristol, and thence to Hartford. Here, at the Falls, Messrs. Thomas and Hoadly prosecuted a successful business till some time in the year 1813, when Mr. Thomas transferred his business to Church Hollow (Plymouth), and gave his name to the thriving village, which owes its prosperity, if not its existence, chiefly to his skill and enterprise, ranking now as one of the great manufacturing towns in the valley of the Naugatuck.

The western and northern sides of New Connecticut were covered with a luxuriant growth of ivy, esteemed of little worth, till Messrs. Terry, Thomas, and Hoadly brought the wood into use for clock pinions. The owners of these woodlands furnished this "clock-stuff," as it was called, ready for the turner, by a cutting machine invented for this purpose. The new industry also created a demand for clock-cords, which were manufactured from flax raised by the farmers, and spun ready for use; while the young men and women were tempted by the offer of fair wages into the factory as turners, or in putting the clocks together, ornamenting the faces, and other forms of work. The farms, in consequence, were neglected; the spinning and weaving were becoming superseded by the cheapness of cotton fabrics. The young men, emulous of adventure, or of

more lucrative employment during the winter months, went South as pedlers of the clocks. Presently tin-ware and dry goods were added to their stock in trade. As the years passed and a new generation came forward, the farms had grown up with timber, and the days of industry and thrift in New Connecticut had departed.

My work at the factory consisted of "fitting parts and putting together." In itself it was neither hard nor disagreeable. But it left me less of the freedom for reading and study with which I had been favored hitherto ; and, after urgent persuasion on my part, I was permitted to return and attend school.

NOTE 25, page 39.

Rev. John Keyes. He was a faithful servant of the town during his ministry, and while a generation of young men and women were coming forward to take part in its affairs. Up to his time the pursuit had been mainly agriculture, but now new industries had sprung into existence in the neighboring towns, and drawn the young people away by the offer of better wages or more agreeable pursuits. Many had chosen to pass the winter months at the South, and, on their return, brought from there freer manners than the sober citizens deemed respectable, and particularly unbecoming to the gravity of public worship on Sunday. The high pews in the galleries were then wont to be crowded with the gay idolaters, anticipating the evening's devotions rather than those proper to the sanctuary. If the preacher was in earnest in his worship, not less earnest and devout

were they in theirs, — even while the gayest appeared to be taking notes of his discourse. Mr. Keyes was the first minister of his denomination of whom I have any distinct remembrance. Mr. Woodward had passed away some years before his settlement. The day of Mr. Keyes's installation was a memorable occasion. Rev. Dr. Lyman Beecher, then residing in Litchfield, preached the sermon, and left a lively impression on my memory. His bearing in the pulpit was superbly serious and impressive. His arguments, pointed with emphasis by the spectacles dropped or raised, as he dealt forth his doctrine, thunderous at times, and illuminated by the lighting of his countenance, were in a style of eloquence as unique as it was effective. Beside his part, I remember nothing of the day's exercises.

The church has undergone many reverses since that time. A bright and memorable occasion was the celebration of the centenary of the church in September, 1873, which brought together from distant parts many who had their birth and had passed their early days within its territory. A poem read at that time draws a characteristic sketch of the place and of its history. The author is the well-known poet of Concord, nephew and namesake of Dr. Channing, the divine.

“ The ages pass, their heroes live and fade,  
And mythic pens prose to a future shade ;  
Again the Trojan plains refresh our sight,  
The flashing plumes Astyanax delight,

Again to us, — again his Sabine farm  
The Roman Horace sends us with a charm,  
And silver Virgil slowly tunes his lay, —  
Time was and is, — let us implore to-day.

“ In these plain fields, upon old Spindle Hill,  
Not vainly Wolcott looks, nor turns its mill  
Mad River, — child of the deep and moss-clad swamp,  
Around whose spruce our wandering thoughts encamp.  
For sweet renew the fading dreams of old,  
When the fleet Indian here was hunting bold,  
Not merely savage, but possessed with sense,  
Social and kind, shrewd in his eloquence,  
No more destructive, formed to mash and slay ;  
He loved to see the softening light delay  
On Wolcott’s height and touch her shadowy vales,  
Child of mysterious thought and Nature’s ails.  
His altar was the sunshine on the hills,  
The bird’s quick song, the woodland or the rills.  
And where to-day we greet the Hundred Years,  
Since first this church allayed uncivil fears,  
Toiled on dark centuries a mouldering knell,  
Trees were their pillars, winds were all the bell.

“ To us, this hundred years more than a line  
Of tawny sachems comes, a thought divine ;

It in our human nature has its dates,  
And more to *us* than outward things relates.  
The Fathers' home, Wolcott the dear, the good,  
The hills, the vales, a crowning multitude,  
Eying afar the steeples where they shine,  
From Spindle Hill we touch the blue sea brine,  
And Farmingbury names the simple truth.  
As now, so in the pastime of her youth,  
They ploughed the shining glebe, they stocked the mill,  
Rising from homelier attributes to skill,  
Our virtuous Fathers, strong and steady folk,  
Slow in their motion, not divest of joke ;  
On ' proxing day ' they voted for the best,  
To guide the impulse of the busy nest.  
They brewed the vintage oft from mellow grain,  
Saw rich Pomona load the joyous wain,  
Bearing great tributes from the orchards here,  
In sparkling cups desirable cheer.  
Pleased with sobriety, our yeomen held  
Feasts of the farming genius, not impelled  
By thoughtless Fashion's cold, unfeeling sway,  
A spendthrift worm that eats its web away.  
The husking frolic made the barn aloud,  
The ruddy corn sent laughter through the crowd,  
While the coy virgin held the blackened ear,  
Half mischief-bent, she still reserved its fear ;

And gay *Philander marching* chose his love, —  
His *choice forever*, let us hope to prove.

“ No word profane then sullied house or street ;  
The time was innocent, its moral sweet.  
So lived the fathers ; natural men were they :  
Whate'er they held, the youth should swift obey.  
They did not spare the law the child to spoil ;  
They cherished industry, nor thought it toil.  
Duly each Sabbath to this church they came,  
Devoutly pious in salvation's flame,  
Good counsels got that brought the week in view ;  
Here might one think, and here his thought renew.

“ An English race an English tint may prize,  
The Saxon blonde that shines from friendly eyes ;  
Light waves the tress across yon Parian brow ;  
Blue are those tender orbs as violets grow, —  
Those pleasant glances of the English maid,  
Stealing along the burnside by the glade.  
Such blood shows temperate, such in virtue grows,  
Loves the old homestead where the sires repose ;  
The modest field along the gentle height, —  
Where rest from all their labors, from the fight,  
The silent hermits of the peaceful cell :  
'After life's fitful fever they sleep well,' —

So sang a poet once ; and yet *this* race,  
After life's earnest action, seek for grace, —  
Softly that watchful sky bends patient down,  
And winds and waters smooth their burial-town.

“ And must we ask for monuments more high  
Than these plain stones ? and should this church defy,  
With pillared arches or o'er fretting spire,  
Time's deepest dents or the last judgment-fire ?  
A glittering abbey's but a sty of monks,  
Dull contributions piled o'er filthy trunks.  
Our *people* are the church, its virtues shine  
As theirs in eminence, — the work divine ; —  
If they control their thoughts, their passion stay,  
Seek generous acts, and truth and love obey, —  
Strive for unhappy souls who, strewn about,  
Need home and friends, wrecked on the rabble rout, —  
The pallid widow, left her mate to mourn,  
Or narrow orphan by remonstrance shorn.

“ We build this church of justice, carve the right  
Along her battlements, whose heaven-born flight  
Defies the patience of the loftiest tower,  
Spurns history, and dates from Virtue's hour ;  
Something that never feels the chill of death,  
No moth, no rust ; that draws its lovely breath



From groves of Palm, by Rivers of the Cross,  
Deliverance from alarm, beyond all loss.  
Such are our altars, — these our flamens wear  
Across their hearts, Be good and true, be fair ! —  
Like some cold fountain to a traveller's taste,  
In his hot summer toil across the waste,  
Nor all unknown, for from this Mount may flow  
Pure streams of thought such as the gods allow.  
This youthful pilgrim with his pack unslung,  
From far Virginia's vales, — unbind his tongue,  
And prove how love and beauty yet are clear  
In Wolcott's skies as in the Athenian year.  
And many a mirthful child shall eager hold,  
The cheerful sermons from this pulpit rolled,  
Tales that in all the households of the land  
Call up their ' Little Women ' to be grand.

“ Let us *believe*, yea, may we oft declare,  
That round us lies a scene as rich, as fair,  
As that Boccaccio dreamt and Milton caught,  
When on its wings upsprung the verdurous thought  
Of Paradise ; rare because innocent,  
Fair because true, — pledge of a people bent  
To make their problem clear, — self-government ;  
No gilded king betrays his hollow fate,  
The tattered symbol of a treacherous date ;

No tax-built church compels us here to sign  
Thirty-nine articles, or life resign.  
Here every man is to himself a state,  
His own prerogative, his own debate.  
The land *is ours*, those heavens are our own,  
The race here blossoms, more maturely grown ;  
We may not seek to live a down-trod life,  
Bring back mad Rome, or whet Napoleon's knife.  
Enough the grassy fields that round us lie,  
Enough the cheerful hill, dear Wolcott's eye,  
That by its lifting purifies the air,  
And shows us blither to both sun and star.

“ Child of the ancient Race, who sailed with fate,  
Across cold ocean's vault not desolate ;  
Child of the blue-eyed Saxon, here thy sire  
Built his warm hearth-stone, here lit up its fire ;  
Never let us forget from whence we came,  
From Shakespeare's fields, fanned by an English flame,  
United by the past, yet one to-day,  
Fused by humanity's o'ermastering ray. —  
Then may the people lift the song of praise,  
And ask the Lord to grant them length of days,  
To screen our church from madness and deceit,  
In virtue's strength each virtuous soul entreat.

And in those future hours when future years,  
Build up by hundreds o'er our smiles and tears,  
Must never sin nor stain pollute this soil,  
Of peace the faithfullest, of love the oil !”

## NOTE 26, page 42.

“The Naugatuck River rises in the Green Mountains, in the township of Norfolk, near the north line of the State. Thence, in a course generally south, it passes through Winchester, Torrington, Harwinton, Plymouth, Waterbury, and Oxford to Derby. Its length is about forty miles, its current rapid, and, when swollen by freshets, as it often is very suddenly, violent and destructive. It furnishes a great number of mill-seats, and is in many places lined with beautiful intervals. Notwithstanding the roughness of the country through which it passes, its bed is worn so deep, and to so uniform a surface, that from Waterbury, northward, one of the smoothest and most level turnpike roads in the State has been formed on its banks.” — *Dwight's Travels*.

## NOTE 27, page 43.

The valley of the Naugatuck is now known chiefly as the seat of extensive manufactures, due to the enterprise and thrift of its inhabitants; its banks being dotted with factories almost the whole line of its passage from Winsted to Derby Landing. Hardly any section of New England presents a busier aspect to the traveller.

Waterbury, its chief town and city, is famed for its numerous rolling-mills and brass manufactures of various kinds ; Thomaston for its clocks ; Birmingham for its pin manufacture. Throughout its whole distance this valley is a workshop for a busy population. All this has sprung up within the present century. Derby and Humphreysville (Seymour) were considerable places before this date : for fisheries, ship-building, and coasting trade at Derby ; and for woollen manufactures at Humphreysville. Then Waterbury was a mere village, containing less than 3,000 people in the township. At an earlier date, Wadsworth, then making a tour of observation, records in his journal : "*August. 1694.* — We came this day to Mattatuck, *alias* Waterbury, being about eight or ten miles from Woodbury. 'T is a very bad road between the towns. A small river, whereon there is some valuable land, runs through Waterbury, which is a small town, though very compact, of twenty-five families. Rev. Mr. Peck is their minister. They have a new meeting-house, though not completed."

My earliest recollections are associated with the Green and steeples of this ancient village. I sometimes rode behind my mother on horseback four miles to attend church at St. John's, and lunched at noon with a relative of hers. Her brother Tillotson had been rector of St. John's a few years before. The steeples were the first I had seen so near, and excited my curiosity. I had only seen such from the summit of New Connecticut, Wolcott meeting-house having none. My mother, bred an Episcopalian, preferred attending church here before services were held in the schoolhouse on Spindle

Hill. A portion of the Green was then a frog-pond and reedy fen. The young folks used at noontime to pull sweet-flag there, chewing the root in service-time. Here, to the mills on Mad River, when the water was low at the Great Falls, I sometimes came, riding atop of sacks of rye ; waiting for my grist to be ground, and returning in like manner. The clock factories, then a novelty, stood near the mill, and, being curious about machinery and woodcraft, I often lingered there.

## NOTE 28, page 43.

“Forthwith the crowd proceed to deck,  
 With haltered noose, McFingal’s neck.  
 While he, on peril of his soul,  
 Stood tied, half hanging from the pole.  
 Then, lifting high the ponderous jar,  
 Poured on his head the smoking tar.  
 His flowing wig, as next the brim,  
 First met and drank the sable stream ;  
 A down his visage, stern and brave,  
 Rolled and adhered the viscid wave ;  
 With arms depending as he stood,  
 Each cuff capacious holds the flood ;  
 From nose and chin’s remotest end  
 The tarry icicles descend ;  
 Till all o’erspread with colors gay  
 He glittered in the western ray,

Like sleet-bound trees in wintry skies,  
 Or Lapland idol carved in ice.  
 And now the feathered bag displayed  
 Is waved in triumph o'er his head,  
 And clouds him o'er with feathers missive,  
 And down upon the tar adhesive.  
 Not Maia's son, with wings for ears,  
 Such plumage round his visage wears ;  
 Nor Milton's six-winged angel gathers  
 Such superfluity of feathers.  
 Now all complete appears our squire,  
 Like gorgon or chimera dire ;  
 Nor more could boast on Plato's plan  
 To rank among the race of man,  
 Or prove his claim to human nature  
 As a two-legged, unfeathered creature."

*McFingal*, Canto III.

NOTE 29, page 44.

In an ode of his, entitled "Mount Vernon," General Humphreys thus alludes to his acquaintance with Washington : —

"By broad Potomac's azure tide,  
 Where Vernon's mount in sylvan pride  
 Displays its beauties far,

Great Washington to peaceful shades,  
 Where no unhallowed wish invades,  
 Retired from fields of war.

“ Let others sing his deeds in arms :  
 A nation saved and conquests’ charms  
 Posterity shall hear.  
 ’Twas mine, retired from Europe’s courts,  
 To share his thoughts, partake his sports,  
 And soothe his partial ear.”

1786.

NOTE 30, page 45.

This institution is probably the oldest of the kind in the country. The first steps towards its organization were taken by the Convention of the Diocese in 1794, very soon after the consecration of Bishop Seabury. For many years it was the most celebrated seat of learning in the State under the control of Churchmen ; it was both college and theological seminary for this and other dioceses. Dr. Bronson was for many years the principal of the school. He was distinguished for his classical and mathematical attainments. He was a theologian of eminence, and the choice of a large portion of the diocese of Connecticut for the Bishopric. For many years he was editor of the *Churchman’s Magazine*, to which he contributed portions of his lectures delivered to his students, entitled “*Science the Handmaid of*

Religion," a poem entitled "Retrospect," describing his birthplace on the Naugatuck, and sonnets to the several months.

Portions of his verses entitled "Retrospect" follow :—

" Sweet vale, secluded from the world's vain strife,  
Where Science never trod, where Genius slept  
In unambitious, humble life,  
And calm Religion sought retreat, —  
Thy flowery lawns, thy green enamelled meads  
Untuned to numbers, thee I joyous greet.

" Full on the right a mountain peers sublime ;  
There leafy forests crown its rounded brow ;  
There up the rocky steep securely climb  
Few straggling, stunted oaks ; and there  
A naked moss-grown cliff of sable hue  
Bedims with gloom the sun's declining glare.

" A dark-green, twofold pine, ascending tall,  
Just on the precipice's dizzy height,  
Nods to the winds and threats a fall.  
The seated hill and subject plain  
In seeming haze the swimming eye confuse,  
And all the kindled dazzling senses pain.

" See there, from forth its base, meandering creep  
And silent glide along the broadening stream,



On whose smooth surface calmly sleep  
The banks and stooping forest nigh  
Inverted, with the climbing rocky mound,  
And underneath the blue ethereal sky.

“ Tall sycamores with branching elms combine,  
Casting a solemn shade along the green  
Where ruminating herds recline,  
Or plunging down they stand and lave  
Their panting sides, by swarming insects stung,  
Or snuff the cooling breeze and sip the wave.

“ Beyond the flood luxuriant pastures smile,  
Or ripened corn that waves before the wind,  
To glad the swain and toil beguile  
Of gleeful boys who shock the grain :  
Enlivening scene ! Rich source of earthly joy !  
Where health, and peace, and calm contentment reign.

“ Blithe from the couch, long ere the blazing sun  
Has peeped above the eastern hoary cliffs,  
They rise ; and, morning service done,  
Nerved for the field they hie away,  
Snuffing the cool, the pure, the fragrant breeze.  
Successive thus rolls on each passing day.

- “ Here first I drank the stream of vital air,  
First saw the glorious sun with shining orb,  
And all this mundane scene so fair ;  
Here still my soul would wander pleased,  
And greet the verdant landscape o’er and o’er,  
From burdening thoughts and labored study eased.
- “ Here first Religion warmed my laboring breast ;  
First here I felt her pure, enlivening glow ;  
My secret soul her guilt confessed  
To Him who sees through night’s dark reign  
As full, as clear, as at the mid-day blaze,  
And pardon metes when contrite hearts complain.
- “ Ye smiling glens, embosomed deep in hills  
Where never swept the rude tornado’s rage,  
Ne’er may you know the ruder ills  
Of warring man, intent on spoil ;  
Here may the frugal swain securely dwell,  
And load his healthy board from sweatening toil.
- “ Hence, luxury, begone ; nor with thy breath  
From splendid halls and midnight feasts untold  
Spread pestilence and venom’d death :  
Thy poisonous steaming drugs be far ;  
Taint not those streams from gushing founts that flow,  
And nature’s purest, healthiest beverage mar.

“ While the firm earth endures, while rivers glide,  
O Thou, who guid’st the universal whole,  
May health and plenty here reside,  
By labor and by temperance bought ;  
And thou, romantic dale, to memory dear,  
My home ! be thou my latest earthly thought.

“ The sun now sinks behind the western hill,  
And casts a cooling shade along the fields ;  
Anon comes grateful twilight, still  
Unbroke, save by the tinkling bell,  
And lowing herds, re-greeting glad their young,  
Or scanted stream faint murmuring down the dell.

“ The hour of darksome night, assigned to rest  
For weary toil, ensues ; the mansion closed,  
The kneeling sire, with contrite breast,  
Invokes the Power that reigns above,  
His household gathered round in solemn pause,  
And asks his daily bread from Boundless Love.

“ Sweet slumber, falling, closes every eye ;  
Unheard, the ticking clock tolls out his knell,  
Till Hesper speaks gray morning nigh,  
Or from his perch the cock’s shrill voice  
Calls tuneful nature all to wake and sing,  
And in the great Creator’s praise rejoice.”

## NOTE 31, page 46.

The spacious Green, the colleges, and bookstores were objects of admiration. Among other fancies at this time I remember the one of applying for a place in a bookstore, thinking I might thus have a chance to read the books. My first glance at a library had been at Cheshire on my way. The sight of so many books saddened me with the thought that I might never be able to read them all. I recall the title of a single volume; it was Ray's "Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of the Creation." The author was a person of celebrity in his time.

## NOTE 32, page 48.

A letter written at this period remains, and may find place as a note with the full title-page of the book named therein:—

"WOLCOTT, May 29, 1817.

"DEAR FRIEND,—I have been so busied about many things since your letter came to hand, that I have hardly had any time to reply as I wished.

"About my summer: I have concluded to remain at home and work on the farm, giving my leisure time to studying Burgh's 'Dignity.' I can borrow the book of my aunt. Having read it yourself, you know its value. Does it not illustrate Pope's line in making the reader

'To see all others' faults and feel his own'?

“Wishing you much pleasure and profit in reading Rollin’s ‘Ancient History,’ I am yours truly,

AMOS B. ALCOX.

“WILLIAM A. ALCOX.”

The title of this book is, “The Dignity of Human Nature; or, A Brief Account of the Certain and Established Means for Attaining the True End of our Existence. In Four Books. I. Of Prudence. II. Of Knowledge. III. Of Virtue. IV. Of Revealed Religion. By JAMES BURGH.

“‘Qui se ipse novit, intelliget se habere aliquid Divinum, semperque et sentiet et faciet aliquid tanto munere dignum.’ — *Cicero*.”

A thoughtful and instructive volume, to which I am indebted for many wise counsels and useful suggestions. It was a Boston edition, printed in 1794. This and “Pilgrim’s Progress” were favorite reading.

NOTE 33, page 49.

I should be disloyal to myself and my author did I not record my early interest in this delightful allegory, the charm it had for me when a boy, the ideal life which its perusal awoke and fostered in my rural retreat, afar from books and the haunts of cultivated people. More than any work of genius, more than all other books, the Dreamer’s Dream brought me into living acquaintance with myself, my duties; and if the value of a work is to be determined by its power to interest and educate its readers, then I must acknowledge

my debt to be greatest to the author of "Pilgrim's Progress." The copy which I borrowed so often of a cousin is now in my possession. It is an illustrated edition, published in Edinburgh in 1802.

NOTE 34, page 51.

Rev. John Flavel was an English Nonconformist clergyman, whose books were much prized by pious people of the Puritan stamp. Besides this treatise on "Keeping the Heart," he wrote "Husbandry Spiritualized," "The Touchstone of Sincerity," "The Soul of Man," "Divine Conduct," "An Exposition of the Assembly's Catechism," and other books.

NOTE 35, page 53.

I have reason to be grateful to my parents for leaving me free to choose and fashion a religious faith in accordance with my native temperament and gifts. I was taught to reverence and speak the truth and practise personal purity. Beside these, I was taught at school to recite the Westminster and Episcopal Catechisms. At sixteen years of age I was confirmed in the church at Waterbury, having been christened when an infant by my uncle Tillotson. After confirmation I became a lay reader in the schoolhouse on Spindle Hill. In the formation of my religious views, I am not aware of being permanently influenced by any contemporary. There is a spiritual as there is a human heredity, a family creed and likeness. Very naturally the Episcopal tendencies of one's namesake and godfather may crop out in his grandson; the Broad Church

into which he was born, baptized, and confirmed better express his considered faith than other of the dissenting denominations, however liberal and devout. The *man* is implied in all faiths, and he alone gives soundness and significance to any. An anonymous writer best expresses this :—

“The union of a sect within itself is a pitiful charity. It is no concord of Christians, but a conspiracy against Christ ; and they that love one another for special rites and rules love for their own sakes, not their Lord’s ; not because they love his image, but because they bear one another’s.”

NOTE 36, page 54.

A lady who was present at the installation of Mr. Keys relates that when the hour came for service at the church, “the members of the Council formed a procession, two by two, then the choir, and following them, in the same manner, the members of the church. The meeting-house was full, the singers in the gallery nearly filling the front seats on three sides. The bass singers sat on the west side of the gallery, David Harrison with bass-viol in the centre ; the tenor and counter on the south side, and Stephen Harrison with tenor-viol in the centre ; first treble on the east side, and Dr. Harvey Norton with violin in the centre.”

NOTE 37, page 56.

“The Puritan Sabbath began on Saturday at sunset. House-keepers prepared for the morrow’s day of rest by putting everything

in readiness, that all unnecessary labor might be avoided. The floors were scrubbed in the cleanest manner, the Sunday's attire made ready. The Sunday was at once a holy day and a holiday, the Puritan restraint with which it was kept till sunset giving place in the evening to recreation and social converse. Though young men were forbidden to 'inveigle or draw the affections of any maid without the consent of father, master, guardian, governor, or such other who hath the interest in charge (or, in the absence of such, of the nearest magistrate), whether by speech, writing, messages, company-keeping, sinful dalliance, gifts, or any other way,' yet every respectable young man knew of some house where he met on Sunday evening one of the maidens whom he had seen in the opposite gallery of the meeting-house, without fear that father, master, guardian, or governor would be displeased." — *Atwater's History of New Haven Colony.*

NOTE 38, page 59.

"They love their land because it is their own,  
 And scorn to give aught other reason why;  
 Would shake hands with a king upon his throne,  
 And think it kindness to his majesty.  
 A stubborn race, fearing and flattering none,  
 Such are they nurtured, such they live and die, —  
 All but a few apostates, who are meddling  
 With merchandise, pounds, shillings, pence, and peddling."

*Halleck's Connecticut.*



The business of peddling was a profitable one at this time, and at its height of prosperity. Dr. Dwight has given a good account of it in his Travels.

“The pedler’s load is composed of tinware, pins, needles, scissors, combs, buttons, children’s books, cotton stuffs, a smaller or larger assortment to offer to his customers. A number set out with large wagons loaded with dry-goods, hats, and shoes, together with tinware and the small articles already mentioned. These loads will frequently cost the proprietor from one to two thousand dollars, and are intended exclusively for the Southern and Western States. It is frequently the fact that from twenty to thirty persons are employed by a single house in the manufacturing and selling of tinware and other articles. The workmen, furnished with a sufficient quantity of the raw material to employ them for six months, are sent by water in the autumn to Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia. They station themselves at some town in the interior, where the employer or agent has a store well furnished with such articles as the pedlers require. As the stock of each pedler is exhausted he repairs to the store for a supply. In this way a large amount of goods are vended during the six or eight months they are absent.”

Not less than ten from Wolcott often went South during several seasons. These were mostly employed by a house in Southington.

## NOTE 39, page 59.

Norfolk was a winter-stand for pedlers at this time. Tinware was manufactured there on Church Street, the pedlers being refurnished with their supplies as these were disposed of in the surrounding counties. A county license was required from the authorities. Other articles were added to their load if desired. Once a place of some importance, Norfolk then owed its standing chiefly to the naval station at Gosport. Foreign vessels were often seen sailing into the spacious harbor, or anchored in the stream, their national colors at masthead. In the streets, at evening particularly, were seamen from all parts of the world, dressed in their national costumes. Water Street was a famous resort for them. Market Street and Square were the centres of business. Hither came the countrymen in their tumbrels, laden with their small ventures, from the sale of which they supplied themselves with needful comforts for their families, or small trades. Gentlemen might often be seen in the saddles protected from the slush underfoot by "spatterdashes" strapped about their legs. Gigs were common vehicles. At the foot of the market were the ferry stairs, from which row-boats at regular intervals conducted passengers to and fro between the Borough and Portsmouth Landing opposite.

## NOTE 40, page 60.

When I went into Princess Ann County in quest of employment as a schoolmaster, the strangeness of the country and of the people in that neighborhood soon led me to question whether I was not bent on a fool's errand, and must not reclaim my good sense by seeking another calling at once. And a venerable gentleman, whose guest I was for the night, had the kindness to assure me of the hopelessness of my pursuit, though I drew from my pocket my credentials, signed by the learned principal of Cheshire Academy. Why, then, longer persist in chasing an absurdity? It was plain that these people, dwelling here around the fens bordering on Dismal Swamp, ignorant as they were, had sense enough not to engage a strolling schoolmaster, come all the way from Yankeeland, to instruct their children. Convinced of the folly of the chase, I turned my face towards Norfolk. The Dismal swamp was before me. I entered it some time in the afternoon. The path led alongside the canal, —

“ By tangled junipers, beds of reeds,  
By many a fen, where the serpent breeds.”

Evening approached, and the long stretch of the canal was still before me. A tempest arose, adding to the loneliness and terror. The cypresses, bent and swayed by the blast, fell now and then across the path, threatening the head of the traveller. It was late in the evening when I found my companions in the Borough. Dismal

as was the adventure, and discouraging, it saved me from a disastrous failure in pedagogy, and set me upon quite another errand.

NOTE 41, page 60.

My range was round the Square in Norfolk, through the Market early in the morning, and from thence to the citizens' doors on the principal streets ; sometimes across the ferry to Portsmouth. My almanacs were bought by the dozen at the bookstore, and offered single to purchasers. It was a good day's work when my profits reached a dollar, though some days they were double that sum. It required more confidence, at first, than I could readily summon, to accost a person and offer my trifle. Habit, however, soon gave facility, even something of dignity, to my attitude, and won respect. A foot-peddler, even now, when I meet one, awakens the former sensations, and puts me in his place for the time. This feeling humanizes ; and I esteem it a fortunate incident in my career to have been engaged in several different occupations, and thus brought into sympathy with persons in the humbler walks of life.

NOTE 42, page 61.

The sale of almanacs was limited to the holidays. Norfolk and Portsmouth had been canvassed and supplied for the current year. Now for other fields of adventure. A shrewd dealer in fancy goods offers credit for any amount of trinkets one may select from his store on Market Street. The offer is auspicious and timely. So two

hand-trunks are purchased and filled with a brilliant assortment of articles, both ornamental and useful, — purchased at fabulous prices, the dealer knowing his man.

Gudgeon confessed, he buys, nor once demurs,  
 His dazzled eyes the cheated customers;  
 Why should he hesitate, why need repent,  
 To sell in turn at thirty-three per cent ?

NOTE 43, page 63.

Hospitality is an historic trait of the Virginian, one in which he takes a loyal pride. I find my journals and letters bear testimony to this virtue as regards myself, — pedestrian as I was, and pedler there. I remember but a single instance to the contrary, which it seems was bruited about the neighborhood many years after its occurrence, to be caught up by a travelling correspondent of the New York Tribune, and given a yet wider currency. The writer indulges in humor to suit his mood at the time of writing.

“ At Stafford Court-House, strange to say, we learned something concerning another New England Transcendentalist, though of quite a different character from that which related to Mr. Emerson. The subject was even the philosopher of the *Conversazione*, A. Bronson Alcott. To our astonishment, we learned this modern Plato had been a pedler of Boston notions — of veritable lace, thimbles, etc. — before he had entered on the peddling of Transcendental truth. It was about forty years before, according to our informant, that Plato

came with his box of 'notions' to Stafford Court-House and put up at the tavern. On the following day, which was Sunday, wishing to see the neighborhood, he obtained a horse from some one, and, instead of going to meeting, which was conducted by a favorite young divine newly sent thither from the Baltimore Conference, Alcott went 'gadding about the country,' profanely enough. Indiscreet man! Little did he know the storm that was preparing a thunderbolt for his sacrilegious head. On his return to the tavern, the pious innkeeper informed him that for no price could he retain in his house a man who would violate the Lord's Day by riding about the country. He would not be persuaded; and Alcott was cast forth tavernless upon the shores of Virginia. However, an old, friendly, and rather liberal gentleman (who took a Boston Universalist newspaper) took him in, where Alcott found his 'ungodliness with contentment to be great gain.' Little did we expect to hear two such good stories about Alcott and Emerson in such a region. Our tea at the tavern had been execrable before; but, sweetened by this bit of romance, it became almost æsthetic."

The anecdote of Emerson related to a student who, being sent to the South to teach, died there of consumption, but told of Emerson's kindness to him when penniless, and assisting him about his education at Harvard College.

As to the tavern-keeper, it was he who took in the vagabond after the Methodist preacher had ejected him from his house, where hospitality had been offered for the Sunday.

## NOTE 44, page 65.

“Jog on, jog on, the footpath way,  
And merrily hent the stile-a :  
A merry heart goes all the day,  
Your sad tires in a mile-a.”

## NOTE 45, page 66.

“I am sure it would please you to travel here in Virginia. Hospitality is a distinguishing trait of the people, rich or poor. And the polished manners and agreeable conversation ingratiate the traveller at once in their favor. The planters in this section are largely an educated class, — gentlemen in the best sense of the word. I pass many an evening at their hospitable homes. It is a school of manners next to travelling abroad.

“The country is picturesque and inviting, alike for its past and present history. Yorktown, Williamsburg, and the shores of the Chesapeake are full of incidents for study. Pleasant to move from plantation to plantation, observing the various objects of interest that meet his eye, ruins and monuments of past times. If ‘the thinking man lives two lives,’ here there is food for thought with every mile he travels.

“It may interest you to learn that I passed a day with Dr. H., of Wolcott formerly, now living in Matthews County, where he married and practises his profession. Like some others bred at the

North, who marry here, he retains his slaves and justifies the institution. Nor dare I affirm that even yourself would resist the temptation to take the charming Virginian maiden with her dark possessions.

“I wish you every success in your school, and a future of usefulness.” — *Letter to Wm. A. Alcott, Norfolk, March 19, 1820.*

NOTE 46, page 67.

A rainy day, too forbidding for travel, offered agreeable entertainment as it gave access to the planters' libraries, which were often voluminous and attractive. Of the books now remembered are those mentioned in the verses: Lavater's *Physiognomy*, illustrated (the heads from which I copied into my journal); and “*The Pilgrim's Progress*” (in costlier editions than I had seen before) beguiled the rainy days. Locke's “*Treatise on the Human Understanding*” proved also interesting; and now and then a novel or a biography.

NOTE 47, page 67.

“William and Mary College was chartered in 1693, but the idea of such a college was talked of among the Virginia colonists almost as soon as they came. The college is next to the oldest American school of learning, and, if thoughts were deeds, it might be called the first. With no lack of money, with a favorable location, and with plenty of powerful friends at home and abroad, it flourished



finely until the guns of the Revolution sounded at its doors, and swept away its money and many of its friends. William and Mary was the school where were taught Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe, Chief-Justice Marshall, and many another noted man ; and it gave his surveyor's commission to young George Washington, whose figure was familiar in Williamsburg during a large part of his life, and who, in his last years, served the college as its Chancellor, or honorary head. Here, in 1776, was formed the Phi Beta Society of America."

"Nine miles east of Williamsburg lies Yorktown, around which, in 1781, the combined French and American forces on land and sea so planned and fought as to dislodge Lord Cornwallis from the position he had chosen. It is now a small village containing about two hundred and fifty inhabitants, mostly fishermen and oystermen. It lies on a bluff at a bend in the York River, whose mouth is ten miles distant. The river spreads out below the town into a broad and beautiful harbor. The historic buildings still standing are the Nelson House and the Court-House ; the former served as Lord Cornwallis's quarters during the siege. The Cornwallis Cave, cut out of the rock, is at the foot of the bluff." — *Newspaper*.

The desolation of this ancient town, as I approached it by the Warwick road, passing by the field of the surrender, printed the scenery indelibly on my memory. And to revisit the spot after the many years intervening would be deeply interesting and impressive.

## NOTE 48, page 68.

Among the wealthy and distinguished planters, at whose mansions I remember to have called, were the Tabbs and Taliaferros, Nelsons and Dabreys, living on the shores of York and North rivers. It was a continual surprise and wonder to the household by what stratagem I passed safely through the gates (guarded as these were by fierce mastiffs howling about my heels) and came to their doors. As I had no fear of the creatures, they seemed to take me as an accepted visitor, and affectionately escorted me thither. The only damage which I received was a slight rent made in my surtout skirts by the teeth of one of them. And I may add, that though I carried costly trinkets, my trunk was never robbed of its treasures. I usually set it by my bedside on retiring at night; and before I slept the profits of the day's traffic were ascertained and recorded in my journal, with the amount of cash in my pocket-book. A scrap of this, with an entry or two, survives, and may be cited here:—

## JANUARY, 1820.

			Cash.
<i>Saturday</i> , 1. At Yorktown,	traded	\$5.48	\$48.50
<i>Sunday</i> , 2. With my brother,	"	7.50	54.50
<i>Monday</i> , 3. I cross into Gloucester,	"	7.50	
<i>Tuesday</i> , 4. My brother leaves me,	"	8.00	62.00
<i>Wednesday</i> , 5. In Gloucester County,	"	8.00	70.00
<i>Thursday</i> , 6. Passed Gloucester C. House,	"	12.50	82.50

<i>Friday</i> , 7.	Met my brother on North River at Mr. Booth's,	traded	8.00	90.00
<i>Saturday</i> , 8.	We cross the North River into Matthews County,	traded	3.00	93.00
<i>Sunday</i> , 9.	At private entertainment.			
<i>Monday</i> , 10.	At Thomas Ransom's on Back Creek.			
<i>Tuesday</i> , 11.	We return to Norfolk,	traded	2.00	94.00
<i>Wednesday</i> , 12.	Pay J. T. Allyn for goods,		\$75.00	
<i>Thursday</i> , 13.	Property received of Allyn,		168.05½	
<i>Friday</i> , 14.	Goods on hand,		\$375.00	
<i>Saturday</i> , 15.	Engage passage to Northern Neck of Virginia.			

## NOTE 49, page 69.

The abolition of slavery had not, while I was travelling in these parts, become the absorbing question with the people from whom I received such graceful hospitalities. My host and hostess sometimes alluded with impatience to the annoyance of caring for and being served by those whom they held beneath them in every sense. I saw few open instances of cruelty, and was surprised at perceiving the kindest relations occasionally existing between mistress and maid. The elegant refinement and gracious courtesy, of which I was enamored at the time, doubtless covered from my eyes the iniquities of the system. I recall no instance of its defence by any one during my sojourn here among the first families dwelling in the most fertile lands bordering on the James and York rivers.

## NOTE 50, page 70.

“Many of the young men employed in this business part at an early period with both modesty and principle : their sobriety is exchanged for cunning, their honesty for imposition, and their good, decent behavior for coarse impudence. Mere wanderers, accustomed to no order, control, or worship, and directed solely to the acquisition of petty gains, they soon fasten upon this object, and forget every other of a superior nature. The only source of their pleasure or their reputation is gain, and that, however small, or however acquired, secures both. No course of life tends more rapidly or more effectually to eradicate every moral feeling.”— *Dwight's Travels*.

[With the preceding Note (50) the printed Notes of Mr. Alcott end, and those which follow are made up by Mr. Sanborn from the Alcott Papers.]

## NOTE 51, page 73.

The beginning of Part Third describes a voyage and land journey taken by the two cousins, Bronson and William Alcott, in the autumn and winter of 1820-21. Beginning at New Haven, they sailed to Charleston, S. C., and thence travelled slowly up the country with the wagoners who carried their luggage. A full account of this adventure was printed many years afterwards by

Dr. Alcott, and is quoted below. A passage may here be quoted from Bronson Alcott's letter to his family in Wolcott, concerning the route from Charleston to Abbeville. He wrote thus:—

“The teamsters carried our trunks in their large wagons, while we walked behind them. The streams were high; there being no bridges, we forded them, and camped at night by fires on some dry spots by the roadside. The nights were frosty, and we found our bed of pine needles rather uncomfortable. Our Dutchmen were jocose in their way, and entertained us by their jokes and strange manners. Near Columbia we passed large fields of rice and indigo and cotton; there were fires lighted in these, and the slaves were busy gathering the cotton, seen partly out of the pod. Newberry Court House is about 160 miles from Charleston, on the uplands. Here is the stand for peddlers in these parts. We purpose leaving to-morrow in pursuit of schools. On our way from Charleston we saw at the Rapids, on the Santee, some of our Wolcott friends, who had preceded us, and were at work on the Canal. In my next I hope to have some definite information to give you about our success or failure in finding schools for the season.”

The more detailed description given by Dr. Alcott is as follows:—

“No New-England boy ever deserved a happier home or kinder parents than I had. With them I lived and labored, cheerfully and happily, till I was almost as large as I am now. At last I began to grow uneasy. True, I was not tired of work, but I

wanted change. Besides, I had always, from my very childhood, been anxious to *ramble*. But my father, who wanted me on the farm, was unwilling to let me go. I became more and more determined to travel, and my father and all my friends more and more opposed to it. They said much to discourage me, but all to no purpose; go I would, and go I did. My father at last consented, though with great reluctance; and with his eyes suffused with tears, watched me, as, with another discontented young man of about the same age,<sup>1</sup> I went over the hill out of his sight, to throw myself upon a world of strangers.

“South Carolina was the place I had in view. A vessel was about to sail from one of the seaports of Connecticut to Charleston; and with ten dollars I procured a passage in the steerage, and was immediately floating over the smooth waters of Long Island Sound. But how was it about money for the payment of travelling expenses in general? I have told you already that I procured a passage at the cheap rate of ten dollars. I had also twenty silver dollars more in my pocket, which my father had suffered me to earn for myself,—for he did not believe in actually giving boys money; but what were twenty dollars to set out with on a journey of one thousand miles?

“Our passage, though slow, was prosperous enough, at first. We had, indeed, a squally time in passing through Hurlgate. The waters foamed and roared and whirled among the rocks; enough almost to frighten old sailors; but we passed safely on,

<sup>1</sup> His cousin, A. Bronson Alcott.

and were soon at the wharves in New York. There we were allowed to land, but charged not to stay long, as the vessel would sail again shortly. We returned several times, but the vessel continued at anchor; and at last we grew careless, and being delighted in viewing the city, we stayed so long that we narrowly escaped being left on shore. Just at dark our captain set sail. But the wind was unfavorable, and we could not get out of the Bay. We tried a long time, — till near midnight, — when we gave it up, and anchored in a safe place till morning.

“In the morning the wind was fair, and we set sail again. We soon lost sight of New York, Staten Island, Long Island, Sandy Hook, and New Jersey shore, and were in the main ocean. Not, however, till the vessel had struck on a sand-bar in passing out of New York Bay, and received some injury.

“Trouble now arose. The passengers began to be sea-sick, and myself among the rest. By sunset nearly every one was confined to the steerage, where the paleness and heaving and vomiting of forty persons made the place seem more like a hospital than a sleeping-room. I slept little that night, as you may guess. But the wind blew strong, and wafted us on at the rate of ten miles an hour, at the least. This continued all the next day, so that by the second evening we were in the latitude of Cape Charles and Cape Henry, in Virginia. But we were not near them. We were a great way off, at sea; our captain having stood off from the land on purpose.

“But I must tell you a little about our floating house, and the

family with whom we boarded. The vessel was a schooner, — the 'Enterprise.' Our captain owned her, but was going to the South to sell her; and so took passengers for Charleston to defray, in part, his expenses. The passengers were forty or fifty young men, most of whom were going to work on a canal near Columbia, S. C. The 'Enterprise' was a dull sailer, and when the wind was not fair, would hardly move. The officers were all very ignorant men, except one, and the captain would not hearken to him. Our provision was bad; some of the meat was almost spoiled; but if we complained to the captain, it only made him angry. Most of us put up with it and said nothing, especially as we were so dreadfully sea-sick that we did not wish to eat anything. Some, however, continued to complain, and this kept the captain in a fretful mood toward the whole of us. But what grieved me most was, that he would vent his displeasure toward us on the poor cabin-boy. Once I saw him seize him by the collar of his jacket, and then kick him down from the quarter deck with such violence as to leave the jacket in his hand.

“At evening, the second day of our voyage, the sea became very rough, and the wind blew from a less favorable quarter. But our vessel, though *dull*, was dry. As we had to make our way against the strong current, and the wind was unfavorable, we made little progress. Though I slept quietly enough this night, yet I rose once or twice and crept upon deck to view the ocean. What a scene! The vessel seemed to be actually ploughing her way through huge piles of red-hot coals and embers. To see water



thus sparkling like fire was, to me, a most novel affair. Some naturalists say that the appearance is owing to small animals which, like the glowworm and fire-fly, are phosphorescent.

“ Sometimes the sea was calm, and then we used to amuse ourselves by looking at the dolphins, which came round the vessel as thick, almost, as a swarm of bees. These, you know, are among the most beautiful fish in the world. Several times, during our voyage, large schools of porpoises gambolled round the vessel, sometimes leaping so far out of the waves that we could see them in their entire length. They are a large fish, but rather clumsy-looking.

“ Birds, apparently much fatigued, sometimes alighted on our vessel. One was a hawk. He seated himself at mast-head, and a sly sailor went softly up the ropes and caught him in his hand. While sitting on deck one day, a small bird came and perched upon my knee. When I put out my hand to take it, away it flew, and alighted among the rigging.

“ The wind continued unfavorable, and we went on heavily. Many of the company spent their time in playing cards; but for this I never had any relish. I never knew the names of a pack of cards in my life. As to reading, I found it difficult to read among such a crowd of passengers. To go upon deck and see the sun rise and set in the water afforded me but little pleasure. We had *one* amusement, however. There were musicians on board, and sometimes, in the evening, when the wind was not too violent, they used to go upon deck and play us a kind of serenade.

“ At length we found ourselves in the latitude of Cape Hatteras, in North Carolina. This is a stormy place. Many sailors say they never passed it except in a thunder-storm ; and though it was the middle of October, it thundered and lightened when we passed it, but the storm was not severe.

“ After being out of sight of land ten days and eleven nights the captain told us we were not far from Charleston, and presently we saw a point of land. But so ignorant was our captain of the coast, that he did not know exactly where to steer for the harbor, and we were ‘ off and on ’ till it was near night ; and though the colors were set for a pilot, it was so late that none arrived, and we were soon enveloped in darkness. Nor was this the worst. A gale came on, and we were driven off the coast, a long way, toward Bermuda. But the wind abated, and after a day or two we found ourselves again approaching Charleston. Having procured a pilot, we were conducted safely into the harbor.

“ While we were in Charleston, gazing about alone, we were beset with many of those temptations to evil to which young men glowing with curiosity, who have never before visited a city, are peculiarly exposed. But we remembered a word of advice which we used to read in a celebrated school-book, ‘ every one should mind his own business,’ and gave heed to it ; and it was well we did. For thus, after being preserved by our kind Father in heaven from shipwreck at sea, we escaped a worse than shipwreck on the land !

“ But now we wished to go to Columbia, — about one hundred

and twenty miles to the northwestward. There were no stages ; and the steamboat which ran between the two places had to perform a very circuitous journey ; and besides, the fare was very high. There were many different roads ; but they all went through a flat, marshy country, much of which at this season was covered with water, sometimes to the depth of several feet. Those who attempted to walk found it difficult, and were, in some instances, obliged to swim. Besides, each of us had a travelling trunk, as well as other baggage. We finally adopted the following plan.

“There were many countrymen in Charleston who had come down from the upper country to market with large wagons loaded with cotton, who made it their business to carry back such loading as they could obtain. But they seldom carried travellers themselves. Indeed, there were usually no room nor accommodations. We could do no better than to put our baggage into their wagons and travel along with them, and fare as they did. Toward sunset of the third day after our arrival in Charleston we set out on our journey. I was so feeble, after my long sea-sickness, that I could but just drag myself along ; but my friend<sup>1</sup> was in better health, and did much to encourage me.

“Our caravan made a very sorry appearance. It consisted of several wagons, — some drawn by mules, and others by horses. The wagons were very large and heavy, and covered with a coarse cloth. Each was under the care of two persons, a man and a boy. They were of Dutch descent, and lived near the Santee

<sup>1</sup> Bronson Alcott.

River, beyond Columbia. Several pairs of horses or mules were harnessed to each wagon, and one beast to each wagon wore bells. One of the drivers — sometimes the boy, and sometimes the man — rode one of the horses, while the other trudged along on foot, at his side. My companion and myself followed behind, — now musing on our condition, now, perhaps for the first time after we left home, casting a thought back to the land of our fathers.

“It was growing dark. ‘Where are we to put up?’ asked my companion and I, as modestly as we could. — ‘We shall soon come to the camping-ground,’ said our Dutchman. To the ‘camping-ground’ we accordingly soon came, — about five miles from Charleston. Our teams were driven into a large, thick pine grove, a little way from the roadside, where the ground was tolerably dry, and arranged in a sort of circle around a spot that looked like a place where they had been accustomed to burn charcoal. We soon learned that it was a spot where travellers were accustomed to lodge or encamp, and, when the weather was cold, to build fires. While part of the company unharnessed and fed the horses, the rest went in pursuit of fallen wood for fuel. They soon collected a quantity of dry pine, — lightwood, or *light’ud*, as they called it, — and built a huge fire. Then they took from their wagons a kettle, and made some coffee, — for the Southern people, many of them, can hardly make a meal, as they imagine, without coffee. Having regaled themselves with corn-bread (hoe-cake) and bacon, and drank their coffee, the next thing was to prepare their beds. Each wagon carried a feather-

bed and a blanket. They spread the blanket on the ground and lay down upon it, and then *covered themselves with the bed*. This, thought I, is an odd way of doing business; but I soon found it was the custom of the Dutch people in that part of the country, generally, to sleep under the feather-bed instead of upon it.

“You will wonder why these people slept out in the woods. It was for three reasons: First, there were no public-houses, or next to none, on the road. Second, it was so very sickly in this low country that autumn that it was almost impossible to get accommodations in a private dwelling. Third, the honest Dutchmen wanted to be economical and save their money.

“While my companion and I were half disposed to smile at the oddity of their arrangements, the question came across our minds, Where are *we* to sleep? We ventured to ask counsel of our Dutch friends. They would gladly have allowed us to sleep with them, but a single feather-bed would not serve as a covering for more than two persons. So they advised us to collect pine-needles—the dried leaves of the pine—and make ourselves a bed of them. Necessity compelled us to follow their advice, and we soon collected a large pile, and laid ourselves down for repose.

“We rose early in the morning, not because we were sufficiently rested, but because it was time to prepare for our journey. After eating a few mouthfuls of breakfast, we went to the ‘spring’ and drank some water. Almost all the water in this part of the United States is very bad, being muddy or half stagnant; and what the people call ‘springs’ are nothing but places in some

brook or creek where the water has motion enough to render it clear. We had taken a quantity of ginger with us to mix with our water to prevent its injuring our stomachs.

“When our company and their horses and mules had breakfasted, and everything was in readiness, we resumed our journey. When we first began to move, I was so weak that I thought I could not possibly walk a mile. But having dragged myself along one mile, I found myself no worse for it; so I persevered through the day, and we travelled about twenty miles. Our course was through a flat country, half-wilderness and half-cultivated, with here and there a small cotton or rice field, and occasionally, at long intervals, a house. We slept in the fields or woods five nights before we reached Columbia, and always by a fire composed of pine knots, logs, or limbs.

“The greatest curiosities in all Carolina are the immense fields of cotton. A large field just ripe enough for picking—that is, when the pods are burst open—is a beautiful sight. Before we reached Columbia we saw fields containing several hundred acres, and the slaves were collecting it. The weather was chilly, and they had fires in the old stumps, which were smoking like so many chimneys, and the slaves were shivering round them. The colored people cannot bear the cold so well as the whites.

“The country through which we passed was almost level till we were within a mile or two of Columbia. In some places it was so overflowed with water that we were obliged to wade a quarter of a mile at a time, at a depth of from two to twelve inches. Some-

times, however, we could avoid the water by walking on logs or fences, or by clinging to the wagons. But we nowhere found the water in the road deep enough for swimming.

“ We reached Columbia about noon. This is a pleasant place, being much more elevated than the rest of the country around it, and pleasantly laid out in squares. It is a plain of two or three miles in extent, sloping off gently on every side. The town was not large. I did not stay long in it. They were just at this time building a canal around the falls of the Saluda River, just above the town, and some of my Northern friends were at work there. So, in company with my travelling companion, I paid them a visit, and spent the night there.

“ We left our friends early in the morning, and proceeded westward, toward Newberry. Instead of a swampy, marshy country, or a mere succession of sand-hills, as it had been before, we now came into a pleasant hilly country, not unlike the Northern States.

“ We stopped during the night at a place called Spring Hill, — not at a public-house, for there was none there, — but with an aged Dutch physician, whose name was Adam Schmitz. He received us kindly ; gave us plenty of soup for supper, and a good feather-bed for a covering. We slept well, had soup again for breakfast, with a little sour milk and some cold Indian bread ; and after breakfast we proceeded on our journey.

“ This day we passed through Newberry. This is a decent little village, forty-three miles from Columbia, and nearly one

hundred and sixty from Charleston. Here are a court-house and several shops and stores. Newberry was the only place, except Columbia and Granby, that could be called a village, which we had seen in South Carolina.

“ One thing used to amuse us, which was the school-houses and schools. In the midst of the woods, and often distant from any road, you would find a log school-house. In it you would see through the door or through the crevices between the logs a number of boys stalking around, a few sitting out of doors, with their slates, and perhaps one or two others at the spring procuring water.

“ I said they were stalking about in the house, but some of them were sitting. Occasionally a class would be called out to spell. They did not spell very well, but we were most amused with their pronunciation. Q, they called *cufe*, as some people do at the North even now. Z, they called *izzard*, or *eezzard*. Thus in spelling ‘gizzard,’ they would say *g-i-izzard-GIZ*; *izzard-a-r-d-ZARD*, GIZZARD. Some schools, it is true, were much better than others; and we sometimes found — perhaps once a week — a pretty good school-house.

“ The churches were little better than the school-houses. Like them they were often in the woods, made of logs, and had no floors. The seats were benches made of planks. They were usually small, — seldom accommodating more than two or three hundred people. It will of course be understood that I am speaking all this while of country places. In the cities and villages of the



Southern States they often have tolerably good buildings of every kind, especially churches.

“There is one difficulty which travellers on foot in the Southern States are obliged to encounter, and it is a very serious one. There are seldom any bridges over the rivers and creeks, and footmen are often obliged to wade through these streams. At some places there are, indeed, ferries; but at others there is nothing.

“Though it was now about the middle of November, and consequently rather cold, we waded through several considerable streams. The water, however, was usually shallow. Even the Neuse, in North Carolina, a considerable river,—though we crossed that in a boat,—was almost fordable. We waded through Lynch’s Creek, Little Lynch’s Creek, Black River, and several smaller streams.

“One night, sometime after dark, we came to a stream where there was neither ferry nor bridge, and we were uncertain about the depth of the water. Had it been daylight we might have judged pretty correctly in regard to it. We hesitated. We were anxious to go farther, as it was not very dark, and we were not yet very much fatigued; and yet we dared not quite venture. So at last we went back a considerable distance to the next house.

“Here we endeavored to gain admittance, but were attacked furiously by the dogs. At last, with the help of the slaves, we succeeded in getting into the house; and after some hesitation, we were permitted to stay till morning.

“The family was large, and the house small. It had but one room, and, like many houses in that part of the Union, was without a floor. There were but three beds. One of them was occupied by the gentleman’s son and ourselves, another by some of the children, and the third by the parents. The rest, with several young slaves, slept around the fire, which was at a remote corner of the room.

“In the morning, after breakfast, the gentleman went with us to the creek, and taking us, one at a time, behind him on his horse, carried us safely across it. For all his trouble I do not remember that he charged us anything; if he did, it was a mere trifle. The Southern people are very kind and hospitable to travellers. One reason may be that they see but few of them; for they do not usually live near the roads, but at a distance in the fields, and strangers seldom call on them.

“We were soon within the limits of North Carolina. We stopped, the first night after we arrived in that State, at Peter May’s. ‘You can throw a rock from my porch into South Carolina,’ said our good-natured landlord; and so we could, for it was only a few rods. However, by a *rock* he only meant a small piece of rock, or a *stone*. He only expressed himself according to the custom of the country.

“From Peter May’s we came on toward Fayetteville. There was little to be seen which interested us much, and I have, of course, little to describe. For many miles before we reached Fayetteville we went through a sandy and thinly-inhabited coun-

try. Sometimes we travelled eight or ten miles without finding a single house. When we came to one, it was usually a miserable log hut, consisting of only one room, and without a floor.

“Many of the people of this region are Scotch. They appear to be very poor. The best food we could usually get was Indian-corn bread, or as they call it, ‘hoe-cake,’ venison, a little honey, and a tumbler of sour milk. The latter, however, was intended, not for food, but for drink.

“At length we reached Fayetteville. It was pleasing to see a ‘town’ once more. Fayetteville, at that time, contained three thousand five hundred inhabitants and many very good buildings. Among these were a court-house, a town house, an academy, a masonic hall, three banks, and three houses for public worship. But most of these buildings, together with most of the dwellings, have been destroyed since that time by a great fire, though the place has been in part rebuilt. The town is regularly and handsomely laid out, and the principal streets are one hundred feet wide, — that is, as wide as the south part of Washington Street, in this city (Boston), which everybody who has seen it knows to be one of the finest streets in the country.

“We did not stay long in Fayetteville. We crossed the Cape Fear River on a fine bridge about a mile from Fayetteville. The river here is very dark-colored, and apparently very deep; but it is rather narrow. It is, however, a noble river. Steamboats come up here from Wilmington, which is eighty or a hundred miles below.

“The next place of any note which we saw was Tarborough. It stands on the Tar River, and contains perhaps one hundred houses; but it does not appear to be flourishing. It is about sixty miles eastward of Raleigh.

“We arrived in Norfolk, which, as you know, stands on Elizabeth River, about eight miles from its entrance into Hampton Roads, and contains about ten thousand inhabitants. At the time of our arrival, however, it contained only eight thousand five hundred. It is not a city, but is a borough. It contains several churches, two or three banks, a theatre, a marine hospital, an academy, an orphan asylum, and an Athenæum. It also contains many good dwelling-houses, especially in the northern part of the borough; but the houses generally are not elegant, and some of the streets are low and dirty.

“Well, we were in Norfolk; but where should we go? I was not quite destitute of money; I had about thirty dollars. If we went to an expensive public-house to stay, however, this would not last long, and as yet we knew of no employment by means of which we could earn anything more. We asked ourselves and each other again and again where we should go. At last we decided.

“There lived in the borough, in one of the lower and more dirty streets, an elderly gentleman from the North, who kept a grocery store and a few boarders. He was a kind old gentleman, but not very respectable, — though I did not know the last circumstance till some time afterward. My friend knew it, but,

destitute of money as he was, he seemed to overlook it. After some deliberation we concluded to board with the old gentleman, whom, for the present, I shall call Mr. Brown."

This description by Dr. Alcott seems to have been written before 1850; and, of course, long before the Civil War, which raged about several of the towns traversed by the two cousins in 1820.

NOTE 52, p. 77.

The following letter from Bronson Alcott describes the journey from South Carolina to Virginia:—

"NORFOLK, Dec. 5, 1820.

"DEAR PARENTS,— You will be surprised on reading this letter to learn we are here in Norfolk (instead of Carolina), and thinking of taking to peddling, rather than teaching, as hoped when we left home. But on finding that employment likely to prove unprofitable, we made the best of our way across North Carolina to this old stand in Norfolk. We were fourteen days on the road, walking all the way, and sending our trunks round hither by water. I had hoped never to undertake peddling again, but it seemed our best resource under the present circumstances, and now that we are here. The business is new to my companion (William A. Alcott); but he acquiesces, and will try his hand at it instead of teaching, in which he has been so successful at the North. We purpose leaving here in a day or two, taking my

familiar route by Hampton, Yorktown, Gloucester, and the Northern counties. My cousin, Thomas, is now here in Norfolk. I wrote from Newberry Court House, which I trust you have received."

In a note written many years later, Mr. Alcott says:—

"I find Norfolk was first incorporated as a town in October, 1705, in the fourth year of Queen Anne. It then had a considerable population, its position being favorable for trade. St. Paul's Church, giving name to the street on which it stands (Church Street), is an antique structure, with its graveyard facing the street. Near this church was the pedler's stand of the Tisdales, from Southington, Conn."

This makes Norfolk a modern town in comparison with some of the Virginia settlements. Among those visited by young Alcott was Smithfield, of which he says:—

"One of the oldest churches now existing in the United States is that near Smithfield, Isle of Wight County, Va. It was built in the reign of Charles I., between the years 1630 and 1635. The brick, lime, and timber were imported from England. The timber is English oak, and was framed in England; the structure is of brick, erected in the most substantial manner; the mortar has become so hardened that it will strike fire in collision with steel. This church is now (1882) deserted, in the depth of the forest; but its mason-work, where not exposed to rain, is perfectly sound. There is a lofty tower, and the walls are overgrown with a delicate network of vines."

## GENERAL NOTE TO PART THIRD.

At this point, in order to fix the succession of dates, and recapitulate what has gone before, as well as what is to follow, the Autobiographical Index made by Mr. Alcott about 1850 may well be cited, for the first six-and-twenty years of his life :—

## DATES AND EVENTS.

“ 1799. *November 29.* Born at my grandfather’s, Captain John Alcock’s, in what was once Farmingbury Society, now Wolcott township, New Haven County, Conn.

“ 1801–1804. Live at Potucko’s Ring, near my grandfather’s. In 1801 my brother, Chatfield, born.

“ 1805. Live at Colonel Richards’, near Potucko’s Ring. My sisters Pamela and Pamila (twins) born. I go to school in Babylon district, a mile distant.

“ 1806–13. Live at Spindle Hill, or New Connecticut, my father purchasing a place near my grandfather’s. Engage in farming and in my father’s shop ; also in studies at home and in the district school, which I leave at the age of thirteen. Learn to write with chalk on the kitchen-floor. Read ‘Pilgrim’s Progress’ and ‘Robinson Crusoe.’ In 1812 began keeping a diary. My companion and school-mate is William A. Alcox, and we organize a juvenile library. Meanwhile are born my sisters Betsy and Phebe.

“ 1813 (*autumn*). Live a month at Cheshire with my uncle, Tiltonson Bronson, D. D. First see New Haven City and the Sound.

"1814. Live at Ireland, in Plymouth, near Spindle Hill, and work at clock-making. Continue my diary, and begin an epistolary correspondence with William Alcox. Read Young's 'Night Thoughts' and Milton's 'Paradise Lost'; also read and transcribe portions of Burgh's 'Dignity of Human Nature.'

"1815. *January.* Work at clocks in Bristol.

"*February and March.* Go to school to Rev. John Keyes, on Wolcott Hill. Begin to read prayers and sermons to the Episcopalian congregation at Spindle Hill school-house on Sundays.

"*May and June.* Hand-peddling with my cousin, Thomas Alcox, into Western Massachusetts. Saw Newgate and the States' prison.

"*September and October.* Get subscribers for John Flavel's 'Keeping the Heart' in Western Connecticut and Dutchess County, New York.

"1816. In the spring distribute Flavel to the subscribers; in the autumn (seventeen years old) examined and approved as a school-teacher.

"1817. Engage, as heretofore, in farming and studies at Spindle Hill. Have now borrowed and read all the books (down to the almanacs and flying stationers' leaves) that are to be had in the neighborhood for many miles round. Continue my diary and my correspondence with my cousin William, and of evenings we meet sometimes and 'cipher.' Reading the service continues at the school-house on Spindle Hill and at Babylon on Sundays.



“1817. *October*. Live this month with my grandfather, Captain Amos Bronson, at Riverside, in Plymouth, who was my godfather, and gave me his name.

“1818. At home I assist in the farming and in plow and basket making, with private studies. In October I sail from New Haven for Norfolk, Va. Fail of teaching, and begin travelling into the districts about Norfolk peddling, reading at the plantations, sometimes repairing a clock, and note my experience in my diary. Return to Spindle Hill in May, 1819, bringing \$80 to my father. My brother James born during my absence.

“1819. *June 12*. My father raises a new house on the site of the old one, in which we had lived since 1806. The family live this summer in the shop. The old house was one and a half stories, unpainted, with three rooms on the ground-floor, besides a pantry and the ‘lean-to.’ The chamber was one unpartitioned store-room; the cellar entrance was through a trap-door in the kitchen-floor. The kitchen was the largest and ‘living’ room, the place of all work, — cooking, eating, spinning, dyeing, etc.; also for sitting and for my studies, — such as they were.

“*November 18*. Sail from New Haven with my brother Chatfield for Virginia, and engage in travelling and hand-peddling, as before, in the districts surrounding Norfolk. (My brother returns to Spindle Hill in May with \$65.) I read Lavater’s ‘Physiognomy,’ and Locke’s ‘Conduct of the Understanding.’ Come near being drowned in the James River near Williamsburg while bathing; my companion, J. Cook, a pedler, being

drowned. July 28, 1820, I return home with \$100 for my father, and engage in farming.

"1820. My brother Ambrose born. I study geography and arithmetic with William A. Alcox. October 8, I sail with him for Charleston; passage seventeen days.

"*November 2.* At Newberry Court House, S. C., seeking school-teaching.

"*December 5.* At Norfolk, Va., and about, peddling again,—my companion with me. We have walked the distance from Charleston to Newberry, and thence to Norfolk, since October 25.

"1821. *February and March.* Sick in Norfolk with typhus fever.

"*April.* William leaves Norfolk for Connecticut.

"*June.* I leave Norfolk with Thomas Alcox, travelling by way of the Northern Necks, Alexandria, Washington, Baltimore, and Philadelphia, to New York City; there purchase a costly suit of clothes,—the best in Broadway,<sup>1</sup>—and wear the same, to the surprise of my towns-people and the chagrin of my father and my cousin William, to Spindle Hill, where I arrive in July. Read Thomson's 'Seasons,' and journalize in the spirit of this period of gayety and extravagance. Now begin to write my name 'Alcott,' instead of 'Alcox,' as my father wrote his; the old spelling being 'Alcock,' and so my grandfather wrote, and some of my uncles still.

<sup>1</sup> See pages 88-90.

" 1821. *September*. My father indorses my notes to J. T. Allyn, of Norfolk, for \$270, due him for goods.<sup>1</sup>

" *October*. Leave home with Thomas Alcox and my brother Chatfield, for Virginia, driving wagons bought at Berlin, Ct., with goods purchased at Meriden (on credit), and some clocks also, — my father giving the horse. We journey South by land.<sup>2</sup> Am at Alexandria in November, at Norfolk, Jan. 7, 1822, and ride on horseback thence on a silver speculation. The costly coat scorns peddling, and sinks money fast. Am at Richmond, March 21. Peddling will never do, — neither pleasure nor profit therein.

" 1822. *April 7*. At Norfolk, J. T. Allyn takes a bill of sale of my horse, wagon, and goods on account; and on the 12th of April I am at Warrenton, N. C., teaching penmanship, with fifteen pupils; terms, \$3. I read here Goldsmith's 'Vicar of Wakefield,' and Johnson's 'Rasselas.'

" *June*. Walk from Warrenton through the States to Spindle Hill. I sleep one night in a tobacco house in Maryland, and come, unshod, from Amboy to New York City on board the steamer. Reach home with a sixpence only in my pockets, and many penitences at heart.

" *July, August, September*. Labor on the farm, and study; also read the service on Sundays. In October my cousin William writes me a letter of expostulation which touches me tenderly, and

<sup>1</sup> Up to this time his sons had paid him \$245 for their Virginia profits.

<sup>2</sup> See the Journal of Chatfield Alcott, on pages 229-234.

I resolve to do penance for my follies by trying peddling once more, with hopes of retrieving my fallen fortunes.

"*October 29.* Leave home with Thomas Alcox, and journey by land to North Carolina; Thomas furnishing horse, wagon, and goods. I take a license for trading in Chowan County, N. C.<sup>1</sup>

"1823. *January 1.* In Norfolk after goods. In February, while I am in North Carolina, J. T. Allyn's store was burnt, with his partner, Talbot, whose ashes were found and deposited in an urn with funeral honors.

"*March and April.* Have a good deal of intercourse with Friends in Chowan and Perquimans Counties. Read Penn's 'No Cross, No Crown,' Barclay's 'Apology,' Fox's 'Journal,' Clarkson's 'Portraiture of Quakerism,' William Law's 'Devout Call,' and other serious books of like spirit. Copy passages into my diary. The moral sentiment now supersedes peddling, clearly and finally.

"*May.* Ill with ague and fever at my friend Jeremiah Mixon's, near Edenton, N. C. In June I sail from Norfolk for New York, and reach home early in July, sallow and spiritless. Debts, \$600.<sup>2</sup>

"1823. *August, September, October.* At home, reading Cowper's Poems, Hervey's 'Meditations,' and the New Testament. In November am examined and approved as teacher for three months

<sup>1</sup> He had evidently been among the Quakers here in 1821-22.

<sup>2</sup> It seems, then, that the five years' experiences in Virginia and the Carolinas cost the young scholar the net sum of \$420, — something less than a college course at New Haven would then have cost; but they were to him a liberal education.

in the Fall Mountain district, in Bristol, three miles from Spindle Hill, — wages, \$10 per month and board.

“1824. *March*. Review my studies at home. In April, walk to Paris, near Utica, N. Y. (where my brother Chatfield was living), in hopes to engage in teaching in that neighborhood, but am driven home again by an attack of ague and fever, to pass a shiftless summer at my father's. In the autumn, teach a private class in penmanship on Wolcott Hill (terms, \$1 per course); and in November begin a five months' term as teacher at the West-Street school, in Bristol; wages, \$15 a month and board about the district.

“1825. *April, May, and June*. At Dr. Bronson's, in Cheshire. I act as secretary to him in editing the ‘Churchman's Magazine;’ and in September canvass for subscribers in Western Connecticut. Here, at my uncle's, I read Butler's ‘Analogy,’ Reid and Stewart's Metaphysics, Watts's ‘Logic,’ and Dwight's ‘Theology.’

“In *July and August* I am at home to assist in the haying and harvesting. In November I begin teaching the Cheshire Centre district school, — boarding at my uncle's, Dr. Bronson's, — my wages \$18 a month. I read Vattel's ‘Law of Nations;’ and in December visit my friend, William A. Alcott, — now a student in the medical school at Yale College, — and purchase books for a school library.”

This brings Mr. Alcott to the age of twenty-six, and the successful beginning of his ten years' course as a schoolmaster.

NOTE 53, pp. 81, 82.

Letters of Bronson Alcott's in several years may illustrate this passage, and the details of his life as a pedler: —

“NORFOLK, VIRGINIA, November 30, 1818.

“HONORED AND DEAR PARENTS, — Separated from you by a distance of near five hundred miles, imagination still pictures to itself the festive board and cheerful fireside around which, animated by your presence and that of my brothers and sisters, I have passed many happy moments; and though now deprived of this pleasure, I am quite well and contented. Something of chilliness, I must confess, affected me on taking leave of you, along with the feeling that I was not encouraged by either of you in my adventure. But my resolution being formed, I persisted even against your wishes, and thus far have no reason to regret it. I trust you will not attribute this to youthful curiosity, or a roving disposition.

“We set sail from New Haven on Tuesday, the 13th of October, at 11 o'clock, A. M., in the sloop ‘Three Sisters,’ Captain Sperry, and reached New York on Wednesday noon. The wind being ahead, we lay off New York till Friday, the 16th, when we set sail at sunset, and on Tuesday, October 20th, reached Norfolk, making a passage of about seven days. I was sea-sick during most of the passage, and took but little food. The captain was kind, and made me as comfortable as possible. There were fifteen passengers, mostly pedlers and workmen for Tisdale. The sloop was heavy

laden with produce destined for the Norfolk market. My first care on arriving at Norfolk was to find board and lodging, and as the 'Three Sisters' would lie at the wharf some days, for discharging her cargo, the captain allowed me to take my meals and sleep on board for a few days, till I should find better accommodations. Mr. Tisdale offered me employment and board and lodgings at his place of business, by which I was enabled to discharge my obligations to Captain Sperry, and leave the sloop. My passage money was eight dollars. While engaged as an accountant with Tisdale, a gentleman from the country informed me that I might obtain a school in his neighborhood, where young men from the North were frequently employed as teachers. As teaching was my object in coming South, I set out accordingly on foot for Kempsville, distant about twenty miles from Norfolk, and applied for a school. The parents were friendly, and about twenty scholars were promised; I was to teach for three months, at five dollars a quarter for each scholar, and, if my services were approved, to continue for the year or more. But on application for board and lodging I found no one could accommodate me, and I returned, after making further inquiries for school-keeping in the surrounding country. As the plan of teaching seemed to be impracticable, I began on the 12th of November peddling about the city, purchasing my tin-wares of Tisdale at his shop on Church Street. The business is profitable, and I am still pursuing it till something more desirable offers. Peddling is not what I came for and desired, but I am unwilling to be idle meanwhile.

“I wish you would write how your crops come in, whether you purpose building a new house in the spring, and how my friend William Alcox succeeds in his school-keeping. I wish my brother would also write, and if he can be spared, attend Mr. Keyes’ school for a quarter at least.

“I have the privilege of attending church on Sundays, and on several evenings during the week. I generally attend some of these. There is but one other person at Tisdale’s who accompanies me. I think religion is less cared for here than with us. The Sabbath is kept less strictly, and, I am sorry to find, no better by Northern people than by Southern people.

“It is now late and my paper is full. Forgive, dear parents, my faults, and accept the love of your unworthy son,

“AMOS B. ALCOX.”

“NORFOLK, February 14, 1819.

“HONORED PARENTS,—I have this day received your affectionate letter of the 22nd of January, and read it with emotions of pleasure and satisfaction; particularly the account you give of your health and family affairs, and that you are so well disposed concerning my absence. I trust I shall be able to contribute my mite towards the expenses of the new house, though I may be disappointed in my winter earnings. I am well, and have enjoyed myself as well as I could have done in farm labors at home; never have four months been more happily passed. Money is more



readily acquired here than at home, — a dollar as easily as a quarter there, and may be as easily spent. But I have kept in mind the lessons which I have received, respecting frugality and economy, from my father.

“You will wish to learn further of my present employment and prospects. I left Tisdale January 27, and began peddling fancy articles, which I find more profitable and pleasant. I returned last night from my first trip into Princess Anne County. I was gone sixteen days, during which time my sales amounted to \$111, and at a good profit. I think I may continue in this business till June, but will return sooner if you wish my assistance about the spring farming. When I left Tisdale and settled my affairs with him, I found my profits for the two and half months were \$65. Selling fancy articles is more agreeable than tin-wares about the city. I hope to return to assist you about building of the new house. I trust my winter’s employment will prove a school of instruction to me, as you, dear father, suggest in your last. I am confident, indeed, of its having been such, and in matters which you have so frequently urged upon me, — namely, ambition and perseverance, — without which (and industry), men seldom acquire wealth. I think of you all daily, and particularly of my little brother, with whom I parted so tenderly. My thanks to dear mother and my brothers and sisters for their writing so particularly.

“The winter thus far has been very mild and pleasant, only one or two snows and a few days of severe cold. But there have been

frequent rains, and variable weather, rendering the walking muddy and unpleasant for the time.

“ You all have a grateful place in my remembrance.

“ Your affectionate son,

“ AMOS B. ALCOX.”

“ NORFOLK, January, 1820.

“ DEAR PARENTS, — We have received your letter dated December 28. To hear that you were all well, prosperous in your affairs, enjoying the fruits of your industry, I need not assure you, gave us much pleasure. Our thanks are due to the Author of all good gifts for such blessings. We have had fair success in our business thus far, although the times are called ‘hard’ here in the Old Dominion. I trust we shall make a profitable winter’s work for you. Our profits from sales average about one third per cent ( $33\frac{1}{3}$ ), exclusive of our travelling expenses, which are slight, — indeed, very little, save when we stay at the public-houses. At my last trip along the James and York rivers I sold goods to the amount of \$150, and we are now here to renew our stock. Wherever we travel we are treated with respect and most hospitably entertained by the planters. Would you have a picture? With our trunks at hand or ‘toting’ them at our side, we find our way into the planters’ houses, and find the inmates pleased to look inside of our box of trinkets; and they seldom allow us to leave without putting gold and silver into our hands. I take much satisfaction in conversing with the courtly planters

and their families. It offers a fine school for the study of manners, and I gain information, as I pass along my tour, that books could not have given. I wish to make my part respectable, and though peddling is not the calling I would have chosen, I am partly reconciled to it, for the benefits I gain in other particulars. Honor, integrity, and perseverance are respectable in the humblest of circumstances. We left home to assist our parents, and have not repented of the choice.

“Your obedient son,

“AMOS B. ALCOX.”

“NORFOLK, March 17, 1820.

“HONORED PARENTS, — Your letters dated January 15 and 24 February are received. They came to us on our return here after a five weeks' trip into the country. You need have no concern for us, for we meet with many (almost) fathers and mothers in our travelling. The planters are hospitable, kind, and sociable. I love to travel here in Virginia; it is a school of infinite value, and my brother is already much improved in his manners by his intercourse with better society than he has been accustomed to meet hitherto.

“Our business is becoming more profitable and extensive. I replenished our trunks yesterday with \$500 worth of goods, and we purpose going in a few days to the Eastern Shore of Virginia, expecting to be gone from Norfolk six or seven weeks. On our

return we shall hope to find letters from you, and then you shall hear further from us.

“Your dutiful sons,

“AMOS B. ALCOX.

“CHATFIELD ALCOX.”

*To W. A. Alcott.*

“NORFOLK, March 19, 1820.

“DEAR FRIEND, — Agreeably to promise I now write, and am happy in informing you of my present good health and spirits, and to express my cordial good wishes for your welfare. . . . The times are called ‘hard’ here in the Old Dominion, but, from what I learn, are better than in the ‘land of steady habits.’<sup>1</sup> Yet if the pedlers from that section of the country are calculating on large profits this season, they must manage their affairs with prudence and economy, or they will fall far short of any anticipation of that kind. Considering the times, we are as successful as we expected to be. Wind and weather favoring, we take passage to-morrow for the Eastern Shore of Virginia, expecting to be absent from Norfolk six or seven weeks. We take goods worth about \$500, which we purchase of the firm of Allyn and Anderson with the privilege of returning what we do not sell. Pedlers have become so numerous here that the late Virginia legislature passed an act imposing a tax of \$80 on pedlers of dry goods, and of \$40

<sup>1</sup> Connecticut was so called.

on tin-peddlers,—the act to be enforced on the 1st of next May. Whether hand-peddlers like myself and brother will be called upon for a license, I wait to learn.

“. . . I am not sure of my time of returning to the North; probably not till some time in the summer. I certainly am enjoying my life here. Remember me to the young people of my acquaintance, and may we soon meet again!

“Sincerely yours,

“A. B. ALCOX.”

“NORFOLK, July 3, 1820.

“DEAR PARENTS,—Returning to Norfolk yesterday, I had the satisfaction to find a letter from you, bearing date June 15, and I answer it at once. I am in excellent health, and ‘heartier’ than is usual with me at this season of the year. I wish this may find you so, with all other comforts suitable to your age and condition in life. It is now July, and the heat has not been oppressive as yet. The season is more forward here than in Connecticut. I find by a memorandum of mine, we had,

May 12, ripe Strawberries.

“ 20, green Peas.

June 4, new Potatoes.

“ 13, Cucumbers.

“ 20, ripe Apples.

“ 25, Blackberries.

“ 28, Whortleberries.

And the farmers are now weeding their corn the second time, and reaping their wheat and oats. Once in a while, on passing a corn-field, I am tempted to take the hoe (the huge Guinea hoe), and show the slaves how the Yankees use it; and how to use the axe also in chopping wood. They civilly own themselves beaten.

"I am now selling goods at wholesale, having left my trunk peddling, going by water from place to place, and trading with the merchants. I have been at Hampton, York, Smithfield, and purpose leaving for Williamsburg in a day or two. To-morrow I attend the Celebration of American Independence in this borough.

"I hope to sail for New York by the 28th of this month.

"Your affectionate son,

"AMOS B. ALCOX."

It was not until 1821 that Bronson Alcott and his cousin wrote their names in its present form, as mentioned on a preceding page.

NOTE 54, p. 83.

The journeys of the Alcotts often took them through or near the so-called "Dismal Swamp," which Moore had seen and sung twenty years before. They found it not as he pictured it, but a pleasant, though solitary, region. Instead of being a receptacle into which streams flow, it is in reality an immense reservoir that, in its vast, sponge-like bulk, gathers the waters that fall and pours

them into five different rivers. The swamp is entirely of green timber. The two principal woods are the juniper and cypress, which fall prone on the ground like other trees, but instead of the wood decomposing it turns into peat, and lies for ages perfectly sound. There is nothing in the swamp to create miasma; no rising of the tides and decomposition of rank vegetation; no marshes exposed to the burning rays of the sun. All is fresh and sweet; and the air is laden with as sweet odors as the fragrant woods in May, when the fragrance of the flowers mingles with the pungent scent of the pine and dogwood. The air is pure, and the water — tinged to a faint wine hue by the juniper — is as potent a medicinal drink as is to be found at the famous watering-places of Virginia. It was often used by vessels going on a foreign cruise on account of its healthful properties, and also because it keeps fresh and clear for years.

## NOTE 55, p. 84.

The diary of William Alcott gives the following account of this illness, and the letter of April 3, 1821, continues the story.

*Extract from William A. Alcott's Diary.*

“*February* 16, 1821. I arrived in Norfolk from Hampton, immediately went to D. Barnes's, our lodgings in Water Street, and to my great mortification found my friend Amos very ill in his bed. I attended to him a little and then retired to rest.

"*Sunday, 18th.* Amos no better, with severe pains in the head. I attended his bed, as did also R. Burnham. Watched with him this night.

"*Monday, February 19.* I remitted to J. T. Allyn \$54 cash; also attended friend Amos, who was no better. We gave him some medicine, and on the morning of the 20th sent for Dr. Selden, who came and gave him a dose of camomile and jalap. He came a second time and concluded to send a young man to bleed him, which was accordingly done. Toward evening the Doctor came again, and afterwards sent a few papers of cooling powders.

"*Sunday, February 25.* My friend continues insane; he has, however, rested rather better than usual the last night, and I yet entertain strong hopes of his recovery. Ten days of fever have been worn away already.

"*February 26.* Amos appears more composed in mind and body; but he is still very sick; his fever, which the Doctor calls *typhus*, is violent, but less so than yesterday. I still hold out in health and spirits.

"*February 28.* Amos is so much better that I begin to think of peddling again.

"*March 1.* I wrote a letter to his father to-day.

"*Sunday, March 4.* I heard Bishop Moore at Christ Church.

"*March 12.* I continued attending Amos not only this day, but also the 14th, 15th, and 16th."



Mr. Alcott's own letter to his mother was as follows :—

NORFOLK, April 3, 1821.

“DEAR PARENTS, — Your letters of the 18th February and March 18 came duly to hand. The former I did not know much of till since my recovery. William read it to me during my illness, but it made little impression, in my feeble and wandering condition, and now seems fresh and new to me as I read it. My disease was typhus; and my fever ran its usual course, confining me to my room for twenty-five days, and leaving me feeble and much emaciated. But I am gaining fast, and am now able to walk without support, and have a strong appetite withal. Dr. Selden, a kind and skilful physician, attended me; he is most reasonable in his charges. And most fortunately too, my good friend William took the best care of me during the whole time; watching night after night, with only occasional relief, and this too while suffering from most distressing intelligence from home,—the death of a dear sister, and of his grandfather. I can never repay him for his kindness, nor be sufficiently thankful in being blessed with so good and generous a friend. And I am spared to bless Him ‘in whose hand our breath is,’ for His gracious favor in raising me from this bed of helplessness to comparative strength, and desire to serve Him in the future. I am not sure that William informed you of the danger till my fever abated and I began to recover. I remember requesting him to write to you.

“I am happy, dear mother, to learn of your returning health.

I now know what sickness is, myself, and can prize health as never before.

“My hand is yet unsteady, as you will perceive by my handwriting.

“Your affectionate son,  
“AMOS B. ALCOX.”

Bronson Alcott wrote thus to his cousin William in March, 1823:—

“MY DEAR FRIEND AND COUSIN,—I am fortunately fallen upon a good class of people dwelling here in the counties of Chowan and Perquimans, N. C. Their plain manners and kind dispositions are interesting to me, affording, as they do, a lively contrast to the courtly manners and culture of the Virginians at whose houses we were entertained. I find in their scanty libraries books which I have read with much profit and pleasure,—William Penn’s ‘No Cross, no Crown,’ William Law’s ‘Serious Call,’ Barclay’s ‘History of Friends,’ Fox’s ‘Journal,’ Tuke’s volume, Cowper’s ‘Poems,’ and other books of a serious character. If I were bent on saving my soul, these volumes would be a most wholesome incentive to that result. I do not mean by this remark that I am disposed to accept in this respect the saying, sometimes quoted by pedlers, that ‘peddling is a hard place to serve God, but a capital one to serve Mammon.’ I find I have not served either to the best advantage, and wish I may find the grace to amend my ways. I have enjoyed some of the pleasures and profits of travelling, along these sandy roads, and in the

society of this simple people, living here beside their juniper forests, in the midst of their pastures and fields, their flocks and herds, and their old orchards.

“I have little to add concerning myself, unless it be restoration to a degree of health and spirits for which I trust I am grateful. Your acquaintances in Norfolk were well, and merry as ever when I last saw them there.”

## NOTE 56, p. 85.

Mr. Alcott's travels sometimes led him in sight of the then new Fortress Monroe, since so famous, and of which the history is thus given in his notes:—

“‘Poynt Comfort’ was so named by the first settlers because its friendly shelter ‘put them in good comfort’ when driven there for safety during a severe gale. Newport News was first known as ‘Pernt Hope,’ *pernt* being assumed to be a corruption of the Celtic *pen* (promontory). The ‘Poynt’ was originally an island, and is now, when the heavy easterly storms drive the sea over the strip of beach that unites it with the main-land. As early as 1608 a fort was there, which appears to have been a temporary affair, as in 1692 it was decided by the Colonial Assembly of Virginia that Captain Samuel Mathews should undertake the “raising of a ffort at Poynt Comfort.” The Soldiers’ Home now stands on a plantation known as ‘Fortfield,’ from the work there located more than two centuries and a half ago. Twelve to

sixteen pieces of ordnance were mounted there in 1629, and in 1639 a tax was ordered to again rebuild the fort. When the foundations of the present fortress were laid, — in March, 1819, — the profile of the old 'ffort' was discovered, and a signet ring was found bearing the crest of the Barrons. During the Revolution a battery was erected there by the allied forces of De Grasse and the Continentals. The work went to decay after the Revolution, and Point Comfort and Bush Roe beach became a romantic solitude. The land on which the light-house now stands was granted to the government Jan. 2, 1791, and the area of the fort — two hundred and fifty-two acres — was added by Virginia, March 1, 1791. Fort Monroe is supposed to have been planned by General Simon Bernard, of the corps of engineers, formerly an officer of Napoleon. The construction was commenced March, 1819, under Major Charles Gratiot, and the post named after the then President of the United States."

## NOTE 57, p. 86.

The wanderings of the young pedler are not here very methodically described, but they took him through regions to which the following notes refer, collected by Mr. Alcott in 1881-82:—

"Westmoreland County has been called the 'Athens of Virginia.' Some of the most renowned men in America have been born within its borders. Among these may be mentioned Washington, Richard Henry Lee, and the late Judge Bushrod Washing-

ton. President Monroe was born at the head of Monroe's Creek; Chantilly, situated upon the Potomac, now in ruins, was once the residence of Richard Henry Lee. Upon the same stream, a little further up, is Stratford, the family seat of the Lees for many generations. The birthplace of Washington was destroyed previous to the Revolution; it stood about half a mile from the junction of Pope's Creek with the Potomac. The house was a low, single-storied farm-building, with four rooms on the first floor, and an enormous chimney at each end on the outside. This was the style of the better sort of houses in those days, and they are still occasionally seen in the old settlements of Virginia."

"Mount Vernon is situated on the western bank of the Potomac, sixteen miles south of Washington. It is elevated two hundred feet or more above the river, which widens into a sort of basin by a beautiful curve in its west bank opposite Mount Vernon. The river at this place is about two miles wide; the mansion is two stories high, of ancient style, strong and durable in its construction and material; a porch fifteen feet wide, extending to the eaves, paved with stone on the ground floor, runs the entire length of the eastern or river front. On the west front of the house is an extensive lawn, surrounded by a winding walk, and shaded by a variety of forest-trees, flowers, shrubs, and evergreens, which are said to have been selected and planted by Washington's own hand. The levee below and the bank are covered with a heavy growth of forest trees, which give it a romantic aspect."

“King and Queen County contains residences of greater magnificence than any in the State. On the Mattapony, a beautiful stream, are the vestiges of many ancient and once highly improved seats, among which are Laneville, Pleasant Hill, Newington, Mountassise, Mantua, Rickatoo, White Hall, known as the residences of the Braxtons, Corbins, Robinsons, etc.”

NOTE 58, p. 93.

*Extract from Chatfield Alcott's Journal of a Trip from Connecticut to Virginia in 1821.*

“Wolcott, Nov. 7, 1821. Left home at nine o'clock this morning; went by way of Plymouth as far as Watertown, where we stayed overnight. Our company consisted of myself and brother (A. B. Alcott), cousins Thomas and Ephraim; a Mr. Judd, from Southington, joined at Watertown, — making five of us.

“*Thursday, 8th.* We left Woodruff's tavern, where we stayed overnight, and passed through Woodbury to Southbury, Newtown, and Danbury, and stayed at a private house overnight. We passed the Housatonic River.

“*Friday, 9th.* This morning we entered York State at Southeast; thence we passed Patterson, and stayed in Fishkill. The people seemed to be mostly Dutch. (In Putnam County.)

“*Saturday, 10th.* We crossed into Newburgh and went on to Salisbury and Washingtonville, where we stayed.

"*Sunday, 11th.* Went on to Bloomington to breakfast, and from thence through Chester and Warwick to Vernon, in New Jersey.

"*Monday, 12th.* Passed through Fame, Sussex Co., and put up at a place called Logkill. Here we found Mr. Camp and Mr. Curtis, from Plymouth, peddling Terry's patent clocks.

"*Tuesday, 13th.* This day we passed Hope (Warren Co. N. J.), and stayed at Easton, in Pennsylvania, at as fine a tavern as I ever saw.

"*Wednesday, 14th.* We crossed the Delaware on a covered bridge, and went on through Bethlehem to Allenstown, where we stayed.

"*Thursday, 15th.* We passed on to Fitztown and Reading, — a very nice place.

"*Friday, 16th.* Crossed the Schuylkill and passed Readsburg to Adamstown, within nine miles of Lancaster, where we put up at a tavern.

"*Saturday, 17th.* Passed Lancaster. This is the largest inland town in the United States; it has twelve hundred inhabitants.

"*Sunday, 18th.* Passed York and put up at a small house.

"*Monday, 19th.* We passed Littlestown, and then came into the State of Maryland, and stayed at Taneytown.

"*Tuesday, 20th.* We passed through Woodstown and came into Frederickstown, a village of seven hundred houses, and put up about four miles beyond that place.

"*Wednesday, 21st.* This morning Thomas and Ephraim left us and went up the river; Minor and Judd went across the river,

and I and my brother came down the river about ten miles, and put up.

" *Thursday, 22d.* We proceeded down toward Washington, passed by the county Court House, and stayed overnight.

" *Friday, 23d.* We proceeded on to Washington City. The Capitol is built of marble, and the President's house is one mile from the Capitol. Half a mile from the city is Georgetown. There we cross the Potomac, and come on to Alexandria, where we stay overnight.

" *Saturday, 24th.* Very rainy, and we stay in the tavern all day.

" *Sunday, 25th.* We leave Alexandria and come on to Mount Vernon, and put up at a very good place.

" *Monday, 26th.* Passed on to Occoquan, and thence to Duffries, and put up; a very pretty place for Virginia.

" *Tuesday, 27th.* Passed on through to Stafford Court House, and put up.

" *Wednesday, 28th.* We came through a poor country to-day, and put up at a poor house.

" *Thursday, 29th.* We travelled four or five miles and put up at a good house on the banks of the Potomac.

" *Friday, 30th.* We went on four or five miles and put up at an academy with one of the boarders.

" *Saturday, December 1.* Went on ten miles, and put up over Sunday at a good place.

" *Sunday, 2d.* We stayed at Mr. Parton's.

" *Monday, 3d.* We parted this morning; Amos went down



the Neck and I went by the Court House, and down to the Rapahannock. I expect to go to Norfolk in about three weeks to get a better assortment.

“Norfolk, Va., *Saturday, Jan. 5, 1822.* My brother (Bronson Alcott) came on from Hampton, having purchased a horse and wagon for me, and left it in Westmoreland County. I have been in Norfolk a fortnight.

“*Tuesday, 15th.* I am at J. T. Allyn's, assorting goods with my brother.

“*Thursday, 17th.* My brother went to Hampton with a horse and wagon. I took property to the amount of \$93.67. I am going to Richmond, and expect to return here by the first of March. Amos expects to be here again in a fortnight.

“*Friday noon, 18th.* On board the packet for Hampton; once more have I left my country and friends and come to Virginia to travel in these lonesome woods. But I am glad; it was my own choice, and glad am I, so far.

“*Saturday, 19th.* Left Amos at Hampton, and went to Mr. Mallory's and put up. I am getting accustomed to the ways and manners of the people, and like them better and better as I know them better. But I shall never settle here; the people have no economy, nor industry, nor perseverance, nor care for much save dissipation.

“*Friday, 1st February.* Left Mr. Duval's, and proceeded on to the Battery, where I heard of my brother, and that he was going to Richmond in a fortnight, where I intend to be about that time.

" *Tuesday, 5th.* This morning my brother came to me, having heard of me at Gloucester Court House, and thought it best for me to go to Norfolk and come up again on Friday, and then go to Richmond and make arrangements to go to the Northern Necks of Virginia. I let my brother have \$43, and he sends \$100 worth of musk-rat skins by me. I found him well, and no accident had happened to him.

" *Wednesday, 6th.* Left East River, and came in sight of the light-house, when the wind fell away and we were becalmed some time near the light-house. I am sometimes on the water in a gale, and at other times in calm; sometimes on land with plenty to eat and drink, and at other times in poverty, with nothing to eat; then sometimes with plenty of money, and sometimes not a cent, — and so it is.

" *Monday, 11th.* Left Norfolk at nine this morning by the East River boat, and reached Matthews at eleven o'clock, and stayed on board overnight.

" *Tuesday, 12th.* Left the packet and came on to the Court House; and there met my brother (Bronson Alcott).

. . . . .

" *Friday, May 22.* I came to York, and passed over to Gloucester, and went into the tavern, where I heard of my brother, who was in pursuit of me, having just come from North Carolina, and wishing to go home.

" *Saturday, 23d.* My brother came to me this morning with

James Allyn, and we went on to the Court House and from there to Mr. Duval's, on the Pianketank, and put up.

“*Sunday, 24th.* Rainy in the morning; in the afternoon we came on to Dragonville, and put up there for the night.

“*Monday, 25th.* Amos and I went on to a barbecue; it being court-day I got my wagon mended. Amos concluded to go home on foot, and started about ten o'clock. I let him have \$8.50 to go with.”

NOTE 59, p. 98.

Between April 12, 1822, and May 15, or thereabout, Bronson Alcott was in Warrenton, N. C., under the circumstances described on pages 95-97. His brother Chatfield, on May 22, heard of him as on his way from Warrenton to Wolcott; met him the next day in Gloucester County, Va., and parted from him May 25 in King and Queen County, as above mentioned. In later years Bronson Alcott wrote these notes of this

*Walk from Warrenton to Wolcott.*

“Wishing to pass unmolested on my way, and as speedily as possible, I took the shortest route from Warrenton to the Northern Necks of Virginia, where I hoped to find my brother. My slender avails from my writing-classes were not sufficient to take me by stage. As my brother was not then about returning home when I met him, I set forth from Westmoreland on my journey north. It was a long way,—the season sultry, the roads dusty; but a steady

persistence and the safe goal in my eye kept me stepping along day after day. I came late at the inns and was off early in the morning, resting at times, and napping under the shade-trees, with my budget for a pillow. At Baltimore I fell into the great road which I had travelled once before with my cousin. On reaching Amboy, New Jersey, to take the steamer, I found my boots were unmanageable, and cast them into the dock. When the bell rang for the fare I paid mine with the rest, but the steward presently returned it with the captain's compliments. It was dusk when the steamer touched the pier at New York, where the hackmen were. 'Ride, sir?' 'Carriage, sir?' No; the gentleman in stocking-feet passed on, and to the shoe-dealer's, and went thence shod as others are; the tailor, too, in Maiden Lane, mending his coat while he slept. The next morning saw him on the packet-boat for Norwalk, whence he walked through Bridgeport, Derby, and Waterbury on his way. On reaching Spindle Hill there remained sixpence of the Warrenton moneys, and the invaluable experience it shall take years to count for him."

In the Autobiographical Index printed on pages 206-212, the time of this walk is given as June, but it began May 18, perhaps, in an early evening escape from Warrenton, and ended about June 10 at Wolcott.

The following letters relate to the year 1822; beginning with two from Mr. Alcott's parents.

*From Mrs. Anna Bronson Alcox.*

“WOLCOTT, January 20, 1822.

“AFFECTIONATE SON,—I received your letter unexpectedly, and have abundant reason to be thankful that I have a son who has so tender a regard for his father and mother, brothers and sisters, and is always so willing to assist them, in everything that he is able to do, with pleasure and satisfaction. And may that disposition always live and grow in you! I have great reason to be very thankful that my health is still preserved, and that yours and Chatfield’s is also. I do not forget to praise the Lord for his goodness in preserving you both on your journey, and *your* prosperity depends upon your putting your trust in that Being who rules and governs all things. May He give you a disposition to pray for each other, as you have had but very weak petitions put up from a mother last winter, owing to my weak state of mind.

“We are very lonesome this winter. Pamela is gone most of the time from home, and Betsy and Phebe go to school. But we are in peace, and have provisions of all kinds necessary for our comfort, and if you will come home, I will have my table spread with the choicest we have, and what you best like.

“I leave you in the hands of Him who preserves us all.

“ANNA ALCOX.”

*From Mr. Joseph Chatfield Alcox.*

“WOLCOTT, January 27, 1822.

“MY DEAR SONS,—I received your letter of the 19th very unexpectedly, which brought the good news that you were both well and contented. We are all well and live contentedly. After you left home, I repaired my porch and made ready for winter. I have been busily engaged in taking care of my cattle. I have a good pile of wood; my threshing is all done. We have had very little snow, but good sleighing most of the time. I do not go out in the cold but very little, but take care of my cattle and make boxes. I think of you both every day, and offer my prayers for your success in business, for preservation of your health, and that you may be guarded from the evils that so easily beset us all, and run the Christian race with patience and fortitude. Be prudent and industrious, persevere in well-doing, so that you may look to God for his blessing.

“Your father,

“JOSEPH C. ALCOX.”

*To Chatfield Alcott.*

“PETERSBURG, November 24, 1822.

“DEAR BROTHER,—I avail myself of this means to inform you of my present adventure and prospects. Cousin Thomas is with me. We left home on the 27th of October, and reached here last evening. Our purpose is to leave in a few days for North Caro-

lina, and take out licenses for trading in the counties of Perquimans and Chowan, near Edenton. I shall hope to meet you in Norfolk, or at least hear from you at New Year's.

“Dear brother, I have plans to retrieve my fortunes, and make some money to pay my debts. I have seen the folly of my past extravagance, and hope you will take timely warning by my example. A young man at twenty-three should have learned his lesson at less cost than I have. Our father's counsels were wise, and I, at least, should have taken the consequences of my folly, and spared his anxieties and embarrassments. Do you say this advice, these cautions sound singular from me? Well, prudence is a duty; we must not squander other people's money for such costly outfits as I have done. You have been less extravagant than myself, but the best of us may be led astray, as I have been by others, weak and half-willing as I was. Pray think of these things in time, and spare our parents and friends at home further troubles. I wish you would send my books, as soon as you can reach them at Loudon, to the care of B. Tisdale, Norfolk, where I hope to meet you at New Year's.

“Your brother,  
“AMOS B. ALCOX.”

NOTE 60, p. 99.

We have this account, perhaps a little overdrawn, of the seat of the Pages, at which the young pedlers called:—

“One of the noblest ancient homes of the Old Dominion is

Rosewell House, in Gloucester County. Looking at the massive grandeur of the high cube-like structure, you are compelled to wonder how, even in monarchical and aristocratic times, the expenses of such an establishment could be supported. It stands like an old English castle in solitary grandeur, a striking memento of the days when the Virginian aristocracy was the noblest in the land. It is built of bricks, every one of which was imported from England. The roof is flat, and was originally covered with heavy lead over the shingles. Richly carved mahogany wainscotings and capitals and stairways adorn the interior, and its situation is beautifully romantic. A few old trees, remnants of a noble grove, are standing in the rear, and in front spreads a fair, wide lawn stretching down to the banks of the York, of which a glorious view is obtainable from the roof of the mansion. Rosewell House was formerly the seat of the Pages,—a distinguished family, some of whose members have at various times filled the highest civil and military offices of the Old Dominion. The mansion was built by Mann Page, grandson of Sir John Page, the original founder of the family in the New World. He was probably the wealthiest landholder of his time in Virginia, with the single exception of the Fairfaxes. He united in his person the rich inheritances of the Manns and the Pages. His landed estates were scattered over every portion of the State. He had eleven thousand acres, called Pageland, in Prince William County, eight thousand acres in Frederick, forty-five thousand in Spottsylvania, an estate called Pampike of one thousand acres in King William, two thousand in



Hanover, fifteen hundred in James City, besides others elsewhere, and the magnificent plantation on the York River to which Rosewell gave its name. His heirs sold some of this land at various times to liquidate certain debts; but the Pages of Rosewell were always among the foremost citizens of the colony. John Page, the grandson of Rosewell's founder, was governor of Virginia in 1802. Representative to Congress, judge, and a friend of Jefferson, he was distinguished for talents and patriotism, and fulfilled his numerous trusts with fidelity and honor. He died in 1808, and his son was the last of the name who ever inhabited Rosewell."

## NOTE 61, p. 101.

Reaching Wolcott in the manner here described, Bronson Alcott again meets his wiser cousin, William, and benefits by his counsels. The following verses seem to describe his life in the summer of 1822:—

" Adventurous Instinct, Life's auspicious bird,  
Lured us far forward; with unsated zest;  
Anon her swift wings, by Fate undeterred,  
Convey us homeward to the native nest.

" Now in this graver cousin's company  
Past fortunes and misfortunes we 'll renew;  
Recall those follies penitentially,  
And earliest studies further will pursue.

“ So book and journal occupy his hours,  
 While in farm-labors he short respite gains,  
 Save when the drooping cloud sheds tearful showers,  
 Or when from lathe and chisel he refrains.

“ Enticed from home and often led astray  
 By old illusions, till the insidious slip, —  
 Henceforth our pilgrim would his wit display  
 In village schoolmaster’s apprenticeship.

“ His town shall see the writing-master’s hand,  
 Since he must children teach to wield the quill,  
 Not now far off, in luckless Southern land,  
 But yonder, at the Store, on Wolcott Hill.”

The first essay at regular school-keeping has been made in the neighboring town of Bristol, where also his cousin William was teaching near by. Of this and of his school in Cheshire, Mr. Alcott writes : —

“ There in the vale clasped by o’erhanging hills,  
 On thrifty Bristol’s narrow, populous street,  
 Where the bridged streamlet turns its busy mills,  
 The young schoolmaster shall his pupils greet.

“ Across the brook, in sight, that early friend<sup>1</sup>  
 Gathers *his* pupils ’neath the village spire ;  
 Enthusiasts both, we punctually attend  
 Bright wits to kindle, build our morning fire.

<sup>1</sup> William Alcott, whom Sonnet I., in Part II. of the “ Sonnets and Canzonets,” describes.

“ Not to this narrow neighborhood confined,  
Their lighted torches shine a longer way, —  
Taught less from books than from the living mind,  
Their cordial methods now find ample sway.

“ Short time shall pass ere rumor’s windy tongue  
May blow applauding accents far and near,  
Loud shall the teacher’s native art be sung,  
And his new notions, lively, fresh, and dear.

“ While o’er prim Cheshire’s academic Green,  
With well-filled satchels dangling at their side,  
The glad ambitious boys and girls are seen,  
The school their pleasure and their parents’ pride ;

“ Not to mute pages at the desk confined,  
Vague repetitions of some ancient text,  
But frolic and fair learning are combined, —  
Much is the pupil taught, the pedant vexed.

. . . . .  
“ A gracious maiden <sup>1</sup> casts a favoring glance  
And earnest furtherance gives his goodly scheme,  
Gilds the dim future with its glad romance,  
Then gives herself to consummate the dream.”

Speaking of these last fragments, Mr. Alcott, in the autumn of 1882, thus wrote : —

<sup>1</sup> Miss May, afterward Mrs Alcott, to whom Sonnets I.-XIII., and Sonnet XXI. relate. Mrs. Alcott was born in 1800, and died in October, 1877.

“The incidents described in these verses do not warrant poetic treatment; and if detailed at all, should be written out in prose, as should the lines entitled ‘The Schoolmaster,’ given in these notes. The life, from this time, takes a poetic form,—as given in the ‘Sonnets and Canzonets.’ Then may follow prose, till the Fruitlands’ Idyl, of 1843.

“From Bristol I went to Cheshire to be an amanuensis to Dr. Bronson, then editor of the ‘Churchman’s Magazine.’ During the summer I was engaged in copying matter for the ‘Magazine,’ and in studies as preparative for teaching. I read Edgeworth’s ‘Practical Education,’ Kett’s ‘Elements,’ Watts’s ‘Logic,’ Millar’s ‘Retrospect,’ Dwight’s ‘Theology,’ Reid’s Philosophy of Common Sense, Locke’s ‘Essay on the Human Understanding,’ Stewart’s Philosophy, etc.”

#### LETTERS FROM BRONSON ALCOTT.

##### 1. *To Chatfield Alcott, at Paris, N. Y.*

“CHESHIRE, CONN., June 15, 1825.

“DEAR BROTHER,—By this letter you will learn where I am, and how employed. I came hither soon after closing my school at Bristol, and have been here since, saving a short jaunt of a few weeks canvassing for the ‘Churchman’s Magazine.’ My prospects are now most hopeful. That dismal ague caught in Carolina has been dismissed, and I enjoy copying my uncle’s articles for his ‘Magazine’ and pursuing my studies. I was at Spindle Hill

lately, and sat by the old hearthside with our honored parents; they feel rather lonely in these days, — most of us having left them for an independent pursuit. It is for us to remember them when afar or near. I only regret that I have given them pain by my past extravagances.”

2. *To his Father and Mother.*

“CHESHIRE, NOV. 1, 1825.

“DEAR PARENTS, — I began my school here yesterday with the prospect of continuing during the coming six months. I am to be paid \$18 a month, and board with my uncle, who has spoken good words for me to parents and school-committee. It is the Cheshire Central district school. This school has been thought a difficult one to manage, but I doubt not my ability to secure good order and successful results. The chief defect is less in children generally than in the want of good government at home. I am flattered by the estimate in which my services are held by the parents who placed their children under my charge in the school at Bristol. Mr. Roberts, the school-committee man there, came down here the other day, wishing to engage me for another season, offering high wages. But, for various reasons, chiefest of which is my uncle’s company, I concluded to remain here. You may look for me to partake with you the Thanksgiving meals. I am pleased to learn that my little brothers are good boys, and attend school.”

3. *To William A. Alcott, at New Haven.*

"CHESHIRE, Jan. 13, 1826.

"MY DEAR FRIEND, — I reached here on the morning I left you in time to open my school at the usual hour, much pleased with my bath and visit. My young charge is gaining daily my affections, and my efforts have thus far been attended with the most encouraging success. The parents have given me their confidence and encouragement; my prospects are most flattering. My numbers are not far from seventy; they range from three to eighteen years of age. Nearly half of these write with the quill, and all with the pencil; the least and youngest turn pretty and delicate curves, surprising to teachers of the old practice. My classes are many in the common branches taught in our district schools. The novelty of my methods is attractive to the scholars, and their progress most gratifying to themselves and their parents. The school has drawn many visitors from far and near. But I would not imply by this that some few of the parents do not prefer the older routine of teaching and discipline, or are silent concerning their preferences. I find myself in a sphere of usefulness unexpected and gratifying. I seem to have found the calling for which I am best fitted; perhaps born to it. No one better knows than yourself the schooling which has brought me to this conviction. It seems as if by birth and early association we had been providentially training for this employment, — our wanderings and experiences at the South giving us important lessons in life.

Our friendship dates almost from the dawning consciousness in our cradles; and childhood and youth have shared our affections and adventures. Let me add, my dear friend, my obligations to yourself for kindly counsel, care, and even admonition, when I strayed from the plain path of duty. Our future opens with promises of usefulness. I wish you every advantage for studies at the School from which you hope to derive the knowledge fitting you for your chosen profession. Your letters are always acceptable. I wish mine were more deserving of your kindness and affection."

In copying his early correspondence for printing, Mr. Alcott has occasionally omitted and inserted matter, in order to give the story of the time more clearly. Any repetitions in these letters may thus be explained. In some cases the originals have been used by the editor.





# LOUISA M. ALCOTT'S WRITINGS.

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