



Little Trips Among the Eminent.

Nathaniel Hawthorne.

(Continued.)

A year later, April, 1841, he went to take up his abode at Brook Farm, which has been mentioned in previous sketches, and of which more will be said in an article, yet to come, on Margaret Fuller. He remained here but for the summer, having found living among "reformers and progressive people" too strenuous for him. "What would a man do," he queries, "if he were compelled to live always in the sultry heat of society, and could never bathe himself in cool solitude?" The experience was, however, of use enough to him, since from it he got the idea which was afterwards elaborated in "Blithedale Romance." In this book, Miles Coverdale is supposed to be as close a portrait of himself as Hawthorne has ever given.

After his marriage, in 1842, he went at once with his bride to Concord, where the two took up house-keeping in the old Manse, of which we have so delightful a description in the introduction to "Mosses from an Old Manse." The Manse itself was, perhaps, suggestive enough to a fertile imagination with a somewhat Puritanically clerical cast. In it, generations of ministers, ancestors of Emerson, had had their abode. Emerson himself had lived there for a time, as had also the celebrated Dr. Ripley, to whom Hawthorne refers when he speaks of the renovation which the old place underwent before his occupancy of it. Referring especially to the little drawing-room, he says that probably "the shade of our departed host will never haunt it, for its aspect has been as completely changed as the scenery of a theatre. Probably the ghost gave one peep into it, uttered a groan, and vanished forever."

The Hawthornes remained in the Manse during three happy years, in which the only worry was that of poverty, which, however, was met bravely. "I might have written more," says Hawthorne, "if it had seemed worth while, but I was content to earn only so much gold as might suffice for our immediate wants, having prospect of official station and emolument which would do away with the necessity of writing for bread. . . . Meantime, the magazine people do not pay their debts, so that we taste some of the inconveniences of poverty. It is an annoyance, not a trouble."

In 1846 he again received an office in the Salem Custom House, this time as Surveyor of Customs. At once he stopped writing. The atmosphere, he felt, at the time, was not conducive to the flights of imagination which were his incentive to self-expression, though he was troubled by a feeling that he should be able to "diffuse thought and imagination through the opaque substance" of his daily life. "A better work than I shall ever write was there. . . . However, the time was not wasted. Impressions were gathering, which, three years later, resulted in the appearance of "The Scarlet Letter," by most critics considered its author's masterpiece.

Hawthorne's publisher, Mr. Fields, has written an interesting account of his discovery of this book. He tells of visiting Hawthorne in the winter of 1849 after his ejection, for political reasons, from the Custom House, and of finding him very de-

spendent, hovering over a stove in a little upstairs room. Mr. Fields urged him to publish something, and he replied by calling his attention to the small popularity his published productions had yet acquired. However, on Mr. Fields' leaving, he put a roll of manuscript—the germ of "Scarlet Letter"—into his hand, with the statement that it was either "very good or very bad," he did not know which.

On the train, on the way back to Boston, Mr. Fields began reading the manuscript, and has described himself as "All aglow with admiration of the marvellous story." A day or so later he went back to arrange for its publication, "in such an amazing state of excitement that Hawthorne would not believe I was really in earnest. He seemed to think I was beside myself, and laughed sadly at my enthusiasm."

"Scarlet Letter" appeared a year later, "One end being in the press at Boston," as Hawthorne wrote to Horatio Bridge, "while the other was in my head here at Salem, so that, as you see, my story is at least fourteen miles long."

Although he had hitherto been "the obscurest man of letters in America," according to his own verdict, Hawthorne now became almost immediately famous, with a fame that has ever increased. "Scarlet Letter" is a gloomy novel, and it has a few trifling weaknesses, but it is so powerful, so original, so exquisite as a pure piece of literature that it must stand among the great works of fiction for all time. As Henry James, a by no means overly-generous critic, has said, "It is beautiful, admirable, extraordinary" and perhaps not the least feature of its extraordinariness lies in the fact that, passing over a great passion—the phase on which most novelists would have concentrated their attention—Hawthorne occupies himself wholly with the story of a great retribution. Roger Chillingham, the torturer; Arthur Dimmesdale, the tortured; the weird woman wearing the scarlet letter on her breast; and the yet more weird child, the fantastic little Pearl, are among the most unique figures in literature.

"The House of the Seven Gables," was written at Lenox, a beautiful spot among the mountains of Massachusetts, in a little red house which is now carefully preserved, and pointed out to the inquiring stranger. Hawthorne remained at this place for two years, the most prolific period of his life, since it included, also, the production of two books for children, "The Wonder Book," and "Tanglewood Tales," whose fine bits of writing may be appreciated perhaps more by the grown-up than by the child.

Subsequently, he went to West Newton, near Boston, where he wrote "The Blithedale Romance," and finally again to Concord, where he lived for all of the remaining time that he spent in the United States.

The house which he here bought for his home was a small one, formerly occupied by Abbott, which Hawthorne named "The Wayside." It stood at the foot of a high, wooded hill, upon the top of which was a path much frequented henceforth by the novelist. Hawthorne was much pleased with his purchase, and wrote of it in detail to George William Curtis, telling how he had "added a porch in front, and a central peak, and a piazza at each end, and painted it a rusty olive hue and invested the whole with a modest picturesque-

ness." He adds that Thoreau had told him that it had been inhabited a generation or two before by a man who believed he should never die, a hint which Hawthorne afterwards worked up in the story of "Septimus Felton."

In 1853, however, The Wayside was temporarily abandoned because of Hawthorne's appointment as American Consul at Liverpool, as a result of which, "Our Old Home" appeared in 1863. In 1857 he resigned the Consulate, and went to Italy, living first at Rome, then at Florence, where he rented an immense old villa, "big enough to quarter a regiment of horse." "At one end of the house," he wrote, "there is a moss-grown tower, haunted by owls, and by the ghost of a monk who was confined there in the 13th century. . . . I hire this villa, tower and all, at \$28 a month; but I mean to take it away bodily and clap it into a romance"—a prediction which he fulfilled in "Transformation," or "The Marble Faun," the idea of whose character "Donatello," it will be remembered, has been supposed to have been taken from Thoreau.

On his return to America, in 1860, Hawthorne again took up his abode at "The Wayside." Henceforth, he wrote less, contenting himself chiefly with contributing to the magazines, and beginning two books, "Septimus Felton" and "The Dolliver Romance," which, although never finished, were published as fragments after his death.

For some time his health had been poor, and in the spring of 1864 he started with General Pierce on a little trip, hoping to be benefited. At Plymouth, N. H., however, he was stricken down, and died there, in a hotel, on May 18th. He was buried at Concord, where his grave may today be seen, not far from those of Emerson and Thoreau.

Hawthorne is, when considered from a purely literary standpoint, probably the greatest writer of fiction that America has yet produced. There have been more profound writers, but none who have possessed to an equal extent his exquisite genius of pure art. Those who are interested, and may wish to read his books, will find it advisable to read at least "Scarlet Letter," "The House of the Seven Gables," "The Blithedale Romance," "The Marble Faun," and the introduction to "The Mosses from an Old Manse." It is never wise to pass over Hawthorne's introductions. In them may be found some of the choicest bits of writing in the English language.

A Word to Parents.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate"

Now that school has begun again, it is an opportune time for us parents to consider ways and means of assisting our children and teacher in their school work.

Teachers in training are being advised these days to teach "Observational Geography," i. e., instead of teaching the child that a river is a stream of water, etc., take him, if possible, to see a river, and then he will understand, and be able to make his own definition of a river, whereas the child who has to depend on his imagination to picture a river, is much more likely to forget the definition than the child who has seen the river.

Some years ago, before I became chief cook, dish washer, gardener, seamstress, baker, etc., for a certain disciple of "The Farmer's Advocate,"

I was teaching a rural school within a few miles of Lake Erie. One Saturday we had a school picnic, which was held in a grove on the lake shore. As our wagonload of happy children reached the top of the hill, the broad expanse of blue water suddenly came in sight. The wee tots were delighted, but I shall never forget the rapture with which one fifteen-year-old girl viewed the lake. "Oh! It must be the ocean!" was her exclamation, after gazing silently for some seconds.

Now, the point in recording this incident is to show how little interest some parents (and I fear I could truthfully say, many) take in showing their children the wonderful works of Nature in their own neighborhood.

This young girl, who was almost through with school life, and who lived within an hour's drive of the lake, had never been taken to see it. This is only one case. How can you expect a teacher to do her best when you don't do your part? The teacher talks of cities, while many a child before her has never seen a large town, so how is he to form any idea of London, New York, etc.?

Far be it from me to expect parents to take along the whole family every time they leave home. Nothing is pleasanter for father and mother than to take a little excursion off by themselves once in a while; but many other times, when a child is old enough to understand what he sees, he should be taken to see something outside of the home acres and the schoolhouse. Then Mrs. Hopkins will not accuse our young men and women of being awkward and green, and staring ~~staring~~ when they do see a little of the world. Many a time, something which appears common and uninteresting to the adult will reveal a new world to the child-mind.

When youths have seen what they can in their immediate neighborhood, encourage them to read about other places, and thus they will develop a taste for good reading. When the boys and girls of the country become interested in studying Nature and in reading good books and magazines, we shall hear less of the cry that the country is dull and lonely, and, as a result, more of our boys and girls will be ready to "stick to the farm." BLUEBELL.

The Windrow.

Lieut. Seddon, a British navy officer, has constructed the largest aeroplane in the world.

Commander Peary's book, describing his discovery of the North Pole (Stokes Co., N. Y.) will be one of the important books of the year.

A German inventor has invented a gyroscopic balance which will prevent a man from falling when he is working in high places of danger.

Among recent arrivals in New York is the Rt. Rev. John Wordsworth, Lord Bishop of Salisbury, Eng., and a grand nephew of the poet Wordsworth.

J. F. Swift, Edward Morris, J. Oedon Armour and Arthur Meeker have been personally indicted in Chicago on charges of conspiracy, monopoly and restraint of trade.

Mr. Booker Washington, the American negro leader, is now in Europe inspecting the social and industrial conditions of the working classes. He has been entertained by Sir Thomas