

Very shortly we came by the grounds and buildings of Old Harvard,—which I have seldom passed without some suitable reflections upon her classic dignity and importance. Memorial Hall, now a completed edifice,—the repository of University treasures,—was then in building; and “Tom Brown,” of Oxford, was present at the laying of the foundation stone. Dr. John Harvard did a good thing for his memory, in making his bequest to this seat of learning. It were well if clergymen in affluent circumstances, would think fit to emulate his example. It is something of a reproach, in these days, that any man of talent should be without the advantages that Harvard, Yale and Cornell afford, when educational aids are so accessible. That *I* have never had the discipline of such institutions is matter of regret to me, and the want of systematic and scholarly training will be my life-long disadvantage. Yet I credit some of these young sophomores with an overweening conceit of their alma mater. I am acquainted with some of these future statesmen, philosophers, orators, and poets: I have noted their dawning genius for balls and bats, and I know how far they surpass the ancients in their acquaintance with the race-course and gymnasium. How little do they expect ever to know of me? With what majestic complacency do they pass me when I walk, and with what a barbarous stare do they answer me if I accost them? Of how great consequence it is that they have the big seal put on the corner of their parchment, that they may be useful to this generation, and admirable to the next! Will they then storm the world—while common myriads perish—who have only the college mint-mark upon their coin of dull dross? Nay, verily,—as subsisting on the returns of the “old man’s” speculations, exploding powder-kegs on the quadrangle, and consorting with billy-goats in academical chambers, are not the surest guarantees of success and eminence. The man of mind and mettle, rather than the devotee to mirth and mischief comes out at last with a shining diploma written upon every feature of his intelligent countenance. According to my opinion, it would be difficult to find, at the time of which I write, a more shameless and lawless set of rattle-heads than dwelt in these classic domains. They were frequently called, by their worthy governors, to abandon their boasted retreat,—for the highest good of the institution, I have no doubt.

My attention was attracted from those fair abodes of Art and