

persecutions. It was not strange, therefore, that by virtue of laws of heredity the soul of the poet should from the earliest have been the home of the intense love of freedom, the strenuous abhorrence of oppression wearing any form. A poet with such an ancestry could hardly have sung in other strains than are heard in his poems on anti-slavery and labor reform.

Mr. Whittier's boyhood and early manhood were spent in the old home near Haverhill, Mass., described as a "lonely farm-house, situated at a distance of three miles northeast of the city." It is a picturesque region full of quiet, natural beauty, and did for Whittier just what the vale of Esthwaite did for Wordsworth, nurtured the love of nature which every true poet of freedom feels. Of course his early advantages in any way of education were scanty. What the New England school-house of those days could give, he shared in and improved; but in his "Snow-Bound" he has told us how limited was the range of reading supplied in his father's house. Of poetry, a single book, that book Ellwood's "Davideis," in which his

"meek, drab-skirted muse,
A stranger to the heathen Nine,
Sung, with a somewhat nasal whine,
The wars of David and the Jews."

Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" was also open to him, and, like Hawthorne, he drew a culture from its pages, but while, like Burns, he owed nothing to classical training, Whittier's range of reading in his boyhood's days was more limited than that of the Ayrshire ploughman.

The story of Whittier's first appearance in print and its subsequent influence on his career is interesting. He had sent by post to the office of the *Free Press*, in Newburyport, then edited by William Lloyd Garrison, a poem called the "Deity." It is a versification of the well-known biblical story of Elijah on Horeb. That was followed by other contributions. At length Mr. Garrison rode over to East Haverhill to make personal acquaintance with the young poet, his contributor. Thus began that intercourse which ripened into lifelong friendship, and which helped to secure Whittier's early espousal of the cause of the abolitionists. He became soon afterward, in the winter of 1828-29, editor of the Boston *Manufacturer*, subsequently editor of the *Essex Gazette*, at Haverhill, next at Hartford, Conn., editor of the *New England Weekly Review*, after eighteen months' service in which he returned to Haverhill, where he engaged in agriculture for the next five or six years.

But this was the period in which Whittier took his stand as an abolitionist alongside of Garrison and his fellows. Garrison had, on January 1st, 1831, issued the first number of the *Liberator*. Mr. Kennedy, in his sketch of Whittier's life,* implies that this event decided Whittier to sunder his editorial connection, then full of promise, with the *New England Review*. In the spring of 1833 he published, at his own expense, a pamphlet, "Jus-

* Page 78.