

love with which the common people look upon their historic monuments. The great cathedral of Siena, the exquisite bronzes of Florence, the memories of Tell among the Swiss mountains—from these breathe poetry and wonder for the child, and an atmosphere of charm which always lingers in his mind and eye.

In America our local history has not yet received its full development. We have been careless of our monuments and relics, which, to be sure, are of a different sort from those of Europe, though no less interesting and important to preserve. We have, as yet, slight growth of song and story, clinging with living grace to the broken fragments of the past. Worst of all, we do not know our local history. All this the teacher can do much to change.

First of all, let him ask himself, what are the connections of my city, town, or vicinity, with the general history of the country? Take, for instance, my own native place, Oswego—a dull little city on our northern frontier, lying asleep by the blue waters of Ontario. Commonplace enough it looks, and no great man, no great deed has signalized it; but let me tell its connections. First of all, its Indians were the fierce Iroquois, best of all the fighting tribes. Their songs and traditions still live among their descendants; their manners and customs, their village and forest life, are minutely described in the *Jesuit relations*. In the soil are still found their arrowheads, and on their reservations they still make their primitive wares and fabrics. In the Colonial period, we have connections with Champlain, the Jesuits, and the fur traders. There was still a trace of the old French settlement left when I was a child. There are old maps to be seen, showing Oswego as a wild wilderness with a fort, a river,

a few canoes and huts. In the French and Indian war, we were an important frontier post, for which the French and British fought back and forth. Of the old forts there still remain the well-authenticated sites. With the Revolution we had but little connection, but with its close the period of our growth began. We were in the swim of the great commercial and industrious boom that sprang up from the opening of the Welland and the Erie canals. The lake was white with sails, and every wind brought in the lumber of Michigan and the wheat of Ohio and Illinois. There stands our noble lighthouse, and the long stone pier, badly fallen to ruin, the green grass springing up between the stones, and old wharves, grass-grown too, where idle boys fish long afternoons in the sun, while the tall elevators have, one by one, been turned to other uses or have fallen to decay; for our greatness and wealth passed away with the opening of the railroad, whose great line of the Central passed to the south of us. Our fine canal with its locks suffered decay as well, and the old taverns with their wide piazzas were deserted and haunted places. Still, life went on in Oswego, and when the Civil War came we sprang to arms with the whites North; our fields were white with tents; in a long shed by the lake shore our soldiers ate their rations; along our streets they marched away amid tears and loud huzzas. To many a house came back the story of its hero, freezing, fighting, starving, dying for what he deemed the right. We children picked lint for the hospitals; one of our women marched away with her husband, and became a nurse, well remembered and much beloved; a stanch old preacher, white-haired and ruddy-faced, almost worshipped by his people, prayed to the God of battles