

will be well enough to have such things; but it will be better to have some living incarnations of the office of religion as a teacher, a guide to men in dark places, a Voice of courage and of hope amid the sorrow and burden of life.

And so may the Exposition realize its noblest result—to help men to know, to think, to com-

pare, to remember, and to aspire. It may be that the dream which I have thus far sketched will seem to many impossible of realization; but if the same energy and ability and organized endeavor which have already shown themselves in other directions shall attempt to make it so, I am persuaded that it may become an ennobling reality.

Henry C. Potter.

REMINISCENCES OF BROOK FARM.¹

BY A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY.²



JOINED the Brook Farm, of which George Ripley may be held the founder, on the last day of May, 1841. Part of the company had already begun work there about the first of April. Some

engagements prevented my joining them until the last of May, although I had enrolled myself among them some time before. Among those I found there were Mr. and Mrs. Ripley; Miss Marianne Ripley, a sister of Mr. Ripley; Nathaniel Hawthorne; and Warren Burton, who had been a Unitarian clergyman, and was the author of several little books, among them "The District School as it was."

Mr. Ripley, who had been for some time the minister of a Unitarian congregation in Boston, was a scholar of much metaphysical and theological acuteness and learning, of a sanguine temperament, and with a remarkable power of rapid acquisition and perception—perhaps a little hasty in his conclusions, and with other characteristics of a sanguine temperament. His mind was filled and possessed with the idea of some form of communism or coöperation, and some mode of life that seemed to produce better conditions for humanity; and was informed to some extent of what had been said and written on these subjects. Whether he was at this time acquainted with the ideas and works of Fourier, I cannot say; my own impression is that he was, but others, who are perhaps better informed than myself, tell me that he did not become acquainted with them till later, after he had been some time at Brook Farm. I think he must, at least, have known

something of them through the writing of Albert Brisbane. When he became acquainted with them he was at first certainly not disposed to adopt them fully; but later he and other members tried to arrange the institution on principles of Fourier's theories. Finding many disposed to sympathize practically or theoretically with his views and plans, he went forward with an ardor and zeal that were inspiring to those who came in contact with him, with a genuine and warm interest in the idea of association, and faith in the benefits it promised to humanity. Full of enthusiasm for his hopes and schemes, he threw himself into them with disinterested zeal, and worked long and earnestly and with much self-denial for their accomplishment. Mrs. Ripley, too, who was of an energetic and enthusiastic temperament, entered into his views very heartily, and was always a prominent and important person in the conduct of the enterprise, and entered with zeal and efficiency into all the departments in which she could take part. There appeared a just and favorable notice of her in some pleasing papers on Brook Farm, in the "Atlantic Monthly," written by one of our zealous and very useful co-workers.³

With them came Miss Marianne Ripley, who had had a school for young children in Boston, several of whom she brought with her. She lived in a small house close by the farm,—which we called the Nest,—and had a warm interest in the enterprise.

Charles A. Dana, now editor of the "New York Sun," was an important member, and for a long time,—I think till the close of the institution. He came to us from Harvard College, which he had been obliged to leave, I think,

¹ The association continued in existence and operation until some time in 1847, after the loss by fire of a very extensive building (called phalanstery) before it was finished. The whole enterprise was abandoned mainly, I think, from financial troubles and embarrassments.

² The author of this paper died recently, at an ad-

vanced age. He was a man somewhat of the Emersonian type, of singular purity and loveliness of character. He was a teacher by nature as well as by profession, and one whose influence was as elevating as it has been abiding in many lives.—THE EDITOR.

³ Miss Amelia Russell, formerly of Milton, not now living.

from some trouble in his eyes. He was sanguine in temperament, with all the ardor of youth, and of great natural energy and rather arbitrary will, of fine personal appearance and attractive qualities in some other respects. Being, as I think, somewhat of a doctrinaire, he embraced the ideas and modes of operation with ardor and systematic energy; and, as he brought with him from Harvard the latest improvements in scholarly law, filled an important place as teacher, worker, and counselor. Dana did not come at the beginning, but later than myself, in the course of the first summer.

Minor Pratt, who with his family came in the course of the first summer, was a very valuable accession to our society. He had been a printer, but was drawn to the Brook Farm enterprise by sympathy with its object and the mode of life, as well as by his taste for agriculture, which last he retained during his life. He was a man of singular purity and uprightness of character and simplicity of taste, and was in many ways a very valuable member. In the later years of his life he was much devoted to the study of botany, and had a very peculiar, personal, and most extensive practical knowledge of the plants of Concord, where he passed the remaining years of his life after leaving Brook Farm.

A man who proved to be a valuable and generally liked member of our company was John Cheever. He was said to be son of an English baronet, and once held some position, I think, in the government of Canada. What the previous life of Cheever had been I cannot say. We found him intelligent, kindly, obliging, and very capable and useful in some directions. His case was a pathetic one: from his former experience in life and a natural insight into character he seemed especially drawn to persons of superior culture and refinement, who in their turn became much attached to him; yet he always seemed to feel a sort of gulf between them and himself.

Then a very important person to us in our inexperience in farming was Tom Allen, a young farmer from Vermont who had become "interested in the idea"—this was one of our pet phrases. He was valued and rather looked up to for his knowledge of farm work, and had pleasing traits of natural refinement. Besides those I have mentioned, there were others of marked and interesting character—among them several young women, who, if not much known to fame, made a strong and lasting impression on the friends who had the good fortune to know them and enjoy their friendship.

I joined the company, as I said, the last of

May. I arrived at evening, and the first impression was not very cheerful, the whole aspect of things being a little forlorn. Perhaps the company were tired out with the hard farm work, which I think the novices found more exacting than they had expected. Taken from books and comparative luxury and elegance of living, and obliged to work, day in and day out, in shoveling in the barn-yard, which Mr. Ripley called his gold-mine, they were quite wearied and naturally a little depressed. But the next day, June 1, made ample amends. It was to be a sort of holiday. Various groups of ladies who had been pupils and friends of Mrs. Ripley—many of them with their young children—came out from the city to pass a festive day. The excitement of the arrival of the successive parties; the exuberant spirits of the children on their holiday, on this loveliest of June days, and amid the very charming fields, woods, and knolls that made up or surrounded the farm, or skirted the lively brook that gave name to the place; the enthusiasm of the new devotees to a life that looked so beautiful and fascinating on such a day; the interest of those from the outside world who came to see old friends in so novel an environment, gave a sort of glamour to the whole scene, and to the enjoyment of the day. It seemed *Arcadia redux* at least, if we had not got *Astræa redux*. To the new inmates and cultivators it appeared the promise of a new, beautiful, and poetical life. We were floated away by the tide of young life around us. I dwell a little on this day, which may seem to my readers very like an ordinary picnic, because it was the type and precursor of many such golden days that at intervals came to throw a bright light over our life, mingled, as it was, with heavy and burdensome toil and care for some of us. There was always a large number of young people in our company, as scholars, boarders, etc., and this led to a considerable mingling of amusement in our life; and, moreover, some of our company had a special taste and skill in arranging and directing this element. So we had very varied amusements suited to the different seasons—tableaux, charades, dancing, masquerades, and rural fêtes out of doors, and in the winter, skating, coasting, etc. I have some vivid and pleasant recollections of exciting scenes by moonlight on the knolls, meadows, and river, with the weird aspects of its wooded banks under the wintry moon.

One great charm of the life at first, and indeed long after, was in the free and natural intercourse for which it gave opportunity, and in the working of the elective affinities which here had a fuller play; so that although there was a kindly feeling running through the family

generally, little groups of friends drawn together into closer relations by taste and sympathy soon declared themselves. For the first summer certainly, and indeed long after, the mode of life was felt to be very charming by most of those who were there. The relief from the fetters and burdensome forms of society,

The greetings where no kindness is,
And all the dreary intercourse of daily life,

was a constant delight to those who had suffered from them in the artificial arrangements of society; the inmates were brought together in more natural relations, and thus realized the charm of true and hearty intercourse; and at the same time the relief and pleasures of solitude were not wanting: one could withdraw to the solitude of the woods, or of his own room, without offense to any.

There was for a long time a large element of romantic feeling and much enthusiasm, especially among the young and more inexperienced, and those who knew nothing of the embarrassment of providing ways and means. For there was much in the existing conditions of our life to excite and promote this enthusiasm: the picturesque situation, with something of wild beauty, with the rocks, woods, meadows, river, and the novelty of our position, where each step was often a new experiment, and with new aspects ever developing themselves. Nor was this enthusiasm confined to the young and more ignorant; there was something of the *l'été montée* pervading the family which led sometimes to those vagaries or hallucinations which afforded many a derisive laugh to the world without. But if in some instances there was a slight falsetto tone, there were a great deal of genuine faith and hope in the idea, and a conviction that this was, in many respects at least, a truer and better, as well as happier, life than that of the unfortunates who, according to our phraseology, were still in civilization (for this was a term of somewhat sinister import with us), and — perhaps among the sensitive and thoughtful carried to a foolish excess — a feeling of pity for the civilized, as we denoted those not yet emancipated and still struggling with the evils of civilized life. At the same time, let me say that it seems to me, as I recollect, that the feeling with which the more serious and thoughtful went into this enterprise was very simple, and with no special pretension or assumption of superiority.

Their motive and object was to work out for themselves a life better suited to their tastes and feelings than was possible in the common social arrangements, and which was thus deemed more consonant to the real demands of humanity.

The condition was somewhat like that of

travelers in a new and unknown country. New vistas were constantly opening, and new aspects developed. The effect was a sort of exhilarating surprise and excitement, such as comes in traveling among new scenes.

Much of the work the first summer was making and getting in the hay from our very extensive meadows and fields. This was pleasant work, and I have very agreeable recollections of raking and otherwise working over many an acre in close company with Hawthorne, with whom I first became acquainted here. He, as I understood him, was attracted to the enterprise by the hope of finding some more satisfactory and congenial opportunity of living according to his tastes and views than in the common arrangements of society, and also of uniting successfully manual with intellectual work. But he was, I think, disappointed in this, and found it not easy to combine writing with severe bodily toil; and as the former was so manifestly his vocation, he gave up farm work at the end of the first summer, and although he remained there some time longer, part of the following winter it was as a boarder, not as a worker. The younger people, as usual, had their admiration and their worships, and Hawthorne was eminently fitted to be one of these, partly from the prestige of his reputation, partly from a real appreciation of his genius as a writer, as well as from the impression made by his remarkable and fine personal appearance, in which manly vigor and beauty were combined. He was shy and silent, and, though he mingled with the rest of the company in the evening gatherings in the hall and parlor of the Hive, he was apparently self-absorbed, but doubtless carefully observing and finding material for his writing. The incident introduced into "The Blithedale Romance" which is commonly considered as giving the result of his life and observation at Brook Farm, — the drowning of one of his characters — with its ghastly features, did not really occur here, but in another place at some distance, and really had no connection. We had a good deal of enjoyment in becoming acquainted with and practising some of the industries of life unknown to us before, and in this, besides the excitement and novelty, was an accession of power in the exercise of some branches of this knowledge, humble as they may seem. Besides the agricultural knowledge and experience so interesting to many of us, there was a feeling of healthy reality in knowing and coming into close contact with some of the coarser forms of labor and drudgery which go to make up that "demd grind" of life so distasteful to Mr. Mantalini.

For instance, we spent some pleasant days working in a peat meadow. Interesting, indeed,

was the charming situation, surrounded as it was by woods, and lying along the pretty Charles River near Dedham, Massachusetts; the learning something of a very old, but to us new, kind of industry in the various operations of paring, cutting, and stacking the peat.

I think Hawthorne was with us on some of these occasions. Then there was the great work of the wash-room, into which a large number of our company were drawn or thrown out, according to experience of fitness or the needs of the household. I may perhaps be allowed to dwell rather fully on some personal experiences, and indulge in some egotistic narration, on the ground of the "magna pars fui"; for, besides serving a while in the wash-room, and pounding the clothes in a barrel or hogshead with a sort of heavy wooden pestle,—in which process I learned something of the mystery of that remarkable disappearance of buttons from garments in passing through the laundry, so inconvenient and vexatious to bachelors,—and wringing them out, not so simple a process as it might seem, I had for a considerable time the chief care of the clothes-line and of hanging out; for it was a part of our chivalry, in order to save labor and expense to the women, for the men to take on themselves, or have assigned to them, some of the harder and more exposing portions of the work. I have labored in the above-mentioned process of pounding the clothes by the side of some since well known and distinguished in the literary and political world. Mrs. Ripley, too, whose most important function, besides a sort of general superintendence, was teaching, but whose zeal and energy led her to take part in various industries, sometimes shared in the labors of the wash-room.

Then there was the experience of milking the cows, which could not be omitted by those bent on agricultural education; so some of us learned and practised the mystery of this accomplishment, somewhat to our own satisfaction, but apparently not so much so to that of the animals. But in time matters arranged themselves, and we came to the conclusion, reluctantly perhaps, that the old Philistine way might, after all, be the better, more sensible, and more economical; viz., that work requiring skill and experience should be executed by those who had had the proper training, rather than by amateurs, however our culture might suffer by the loss. But let it not be supposed that we had none but unskilled workers. There were some men of skill and experience in various departments, and incapable amateurs could be easily reformed out of office, as our system was flexible and readily yielded to the demands of our household work.

I may mention, as an instance of the way in which we accommodated ourselves to our needs, our arrangements of the waiting department. When our table had grown so large that it was found inconvenient to pass the dishes backward and forward, and as the getting up from the table to help ourselves as we might want anything seemed not quite orderly, a special corps of waiters was detailed for this work, and to this were assigned some of the younger and more ornamental members of the company.

A difficulty we found in the attempt to unite work of the head and the hands was the loss of time in passing from one to the other, especially for those engaged both in out-door work or other manual labor and in teaching. Thus, something of this kind might be likely to occur: we might leave our hoeing, weeding, haying, etc., and go from the fields to the house for a lesson with some pupil who, himself zealously engaged in hunting or trapping woodchucks, muskrats, or squirrels, or like absorbing occupation, might not be mindful of the less important lesson.

The question is naturally asked, What were the financial resources, and whence the funds for the daily support of the family? The purchase of the estate, and the carrying on of the farm and household were, at first, and for a few months (through the first summer perhaps), the private enterprise of Mr. Ripley; and those of us who went there did so by some arrangement with him, most of us working for and with him, and receiving in return our daily support without any very definite or exact bargain. There were also boarders and scholars from whom, as well as from the sale and use of some of the various products of the farm—milk, hay, vegetables, etc.—the necessary funds and means of support were derived.

After a while the company resolved themselves into a community, with a systematic organization and with certain conditions, and soon, I think, were regularly incorporated as a sort of joint-stock company. In course of time several trades were introduced, and with the farm products contributed something to the necessary fund; but the income at first, and for some time, was mainly derived from boarders and scholars, some of the latter paying a part or the whole of their board by their work in various ways. This brief sketch of the ways and means is very imperfect, as it is aside from my general design, which is to give mainly my personal reminiscences and impressions.

The situation of our farm was very pleasant. It lay between the towns of Dedham, Newton, and West Roxbury, of which it formed a corner. About the house were wooded knolls, fields, and hills sinking down into a wide

meadow that extended to Charles River and bordered on it. The place was well adapted to some of our winter pastimes,—sledding, coasting, skating,—of some of which scenes on moonlight nights many of us have a vivid and agreeable recollection.

Through the meadows ran the lively brook from which we had our name; at a little distance from the houses was a fine upland pasture which also sloped down to the river, and was a favorite resort for sunset views and twilight walks.

But the farm, though having many picturesque charms, was not adapted to be a very profitable one, as much of the land was not well suited for culture, consisting largely of a meadow that bore little but coarse grass, and pastures with rocky ledges—picturesque, indeed, but clothed with a thin, hard soil. There were beautiful and interesting localities in our neighborhood, where we found pleasant walks, or which we utilized for our rural fêtes.

The Hive, the original farm-house and first residence of our company, was soon found insufficient for our growing numbers, and considerable additions were made from time to time; but our numbers still increasing, the Hive could not well hold us all, and we were obliged to swarm. So the Eyrie, after much planning and discussion, was decided on and begun. It was planned with much care and deliberation, but one might perhaps think that more regard was had to esthetic considerations than to those of ordinary comfort and convenience. It was pitched high on a rock, whence its name, and with fine picturesque rocks all around; but to climb the shelf on which it stood in wet, snowy, or scorching weather was not easy or comfortable; neither was the journey in the deep snow and mud through which our path lay to and from the Hive, where the operations of cooking and eating were carried on. Besides, there was no well, only a rain-water cistern, which want involved the trouble of fetching water for some purposes.

But the situation was charming, and very near was a beautiful grove of pines—so well known to the inmates, habitués, and loving visitors of Brook Farm—where so many delightful days were passed, and so many charming fêtes and entertainments of various kinds enjoyed by those who had the luxury of being idle. Many of our company had a fancy for climbing these trees, and some a still more odd one of perching or roosting like birds or squirrels on the highest branches. Besides the Eyrie, there were added to our building, in course of time, the Cottage, a pleasant and pretty building where were held many of the gatherings for amusements, and later the Pil-

grim House; still later, shops and buildings for the various kinds of industry were introduced.

The Eyrie itself was a sort of romance of houses: it had no kitchen or fireplace, and so was dishonored or degraded by no culinary uses. One striking thing about it was its acoustic character: it seemed constructed on some, I know not what, acoustic principles by which the sounds of each and all the rooms were, as it seemed, audible in every other; as it was the place for musical instruction, and the scene of the musical exertions of troops of young beginners, one can, or perhaps cannot, imagine the discomfort of this remarkable property in this singularly constructed building; and though I had at one time a charming room there, I have not very charming recollections of the dreary monotony of scales and exercises through the long, sleepy summer days.

I have some pleasant recollections of the large parlor in the Eyrie, which was designed with special reference to our evening gatherings of various kinds for amusement or improvement. We had many visitors from the outside world of *civilization*, among them some persons of interest and distinction.

Miss Margaret Fuller (afterward Countess Ossoli) was one of these, and was often there as a friend of the Ripleys and of others of the company, as well as from interest in the enterprise and sympathy with its objects. She was to us an interesting and instructive visitor, and would sometimes hold conversations, a favorite mode of teaching with her. Then, too, among our visitors was Orestes A. Brownson, whose active brain led him to the various new movements of which the air was full at that time, and finally to a very old institution. He was also a friend of George Ripley—whether then a Romanist I cannot say. One of the visitors best known to the world was Robert Owen of Scotland. He was naturally interested in our experiment, as he had been engaged in something of a coöperative or communistic character at New Lanark, Scotland. I recollect that I received an agreeable impression of his great simplicity and transparency of character, as well as his earnestness and warm humanity. Then Miss Frances Ostinelli, afterward well known in opera as Madame Biscacciarti, spent some time with us. Her fine voice in its youthful purity and freshness was a great delight to us, as her youthful beauty and charm were very fascinating to some of the younger members of our company. Then there were the Hutchinsons, a family well known at that time, and a marvel for their sweet singing, and this especially in the interests of antislavery and temperance. The accord of their voices was very pleasing. A great charm of their singing was a sort of

wild freshness, as if brought from their native woods and mountains, and their earnest interest in the objects that formed so much the theme of their songs.

We had in our vicinity some agreeable neighbors: among these Theodore Parker, who was a personal friend of Mr. Ripley and others of us, whose church some of us attended, and who often came to see us; for though he did not enter fully into the idea and plans of the "Association," he of course looked with generous interest on all that promised benefit to humanity. There were also near us other families to whose broad and liberal sympathy, generous assistance, and genial society we were much indebted.

Besides, there came from time to time to see us reformers of a humbler or milder stamp, with various schemes and dogmas for reforming society: vegetarians, come-outers from Church and State, to some of whom no doubt the former was, in the rather strong language current at the time, the "Mother of Abominations." Then there were long-bearded reformers dressed all in white, which was in itself a protest against something, I hardly know what; for a very liberal hospitality was exercised from the beginning, for which I think great credit is due to Mr. Ripley.

There were also those who came to observe and make trial of our mode of life, or as candidates for admission on a sort of probation; for, in the narrowness of our means and accommodations, we could not take all that offered themselves. Mr. Ripley, who, as I have said, was somewhat sanguine in his way of looking at persons and things, would bring us from time to time accounts of applicants that looked to him very desirable, but who on further consideration were not accepted; for a very important question in regard to those who wished to join us was the Shylock one, "Is he a good man?"—and this in the Shylock, and not in the ethical sense,—and "Is he sufficient?" and perhaps our applicants were not so apt to have the former sort of goodness as the other, that of a more transcendent kind.

Our enterprise attracted a good deal of attention and interest, and we certainly had the satisfaction of being much talked about, for good or for evil—chiefly the latter. Indeed, it seems strange that it should have been looked upon so unfavorably, and have excited, I may almost say, such bitter hostility.

If the world chose to think us very silly and childish and ridiculous in our mistakes, hallucinations, and vagaries, and that we had a foolish pretension and self-complacency, it was fair and reasonable enough in them to have their laugh at us; but these follies of ours, if they were so, were very harmless, good-

natured, and well-intentioned, and with these there were a real earnestness of philanthropy and worthiness of purpose, which certainly deserved some respect, and were not properly marks for ridicule and malice. This prejudice was no doubt due in some measure to false or exaggerated accounts of our doings which were circulated and, naturally enough, in many cases innocently believed. There were criticisms on our fare, which was sometimes not very sumptuous, and on our style of living, which was not very elegant. But we did not go there for luxury, and if there was no elegance, there was certainly a good degree of refinement—as far as consistent with our conditions. As an instance of this I may mention that the attempt was made to give, as far as possible, separate rooms to those who desired it. One very current and common misapprehension was that the members of our company were agreed, for the most part in views of extreme radicalism and hostility to the common beliefs and institutions of society. But in fact no such uniformity existed; on the contrary, there was a great variety of shades of opinion and feeling.

Indeed, there were some who might be considered quite conservative, and often children from families of conservative parents, who were well enough acquainted with the leading persons to have confidence that they would get no harm. Some of the stories to which I have alluded related to the way in which Sunday was regarded and treated—stories of disrespect and desecration of the day, as it was considered, which shocked some persons, but I think without much ground. Quite a number inclined to go to church, some to Boston, some to Theodore Parker's church, which was at that time in West Roxbury. Others chose to spend the day walking in the woods or other beautiful localities about us. But if not observed with much rigor, it was generally, as far as I recollect, a quiet and peaceful day, and this was in accordance with the wishes and tastes of the principals of the company. At one time, I recollect, Mr. Ripley gave on Sunday afternoons some account or explanation of Kant's philosophy to those who wished to hear him. It should be considered that great freedom existed and pervaded our mode of living, and the company in general did not feel responsible for the eccentricities of some individuals, or authorized to interfere with them, except perhaps in extreme cases.

One of the interesting features of our life was the pleasant and favorable influence with which the young were surrounded. With great freedom in the modes of instruction and discipline, there was no lack of thoroughness, for the most part; and, what was important, there was an inspiring influence either in the circum-

stances surrounding, or in the modes of imparting knowledge of a very varied character in an informal and genial way, by a variety of teachers with whom the pupils were thrown into near and friendly relations. In our easy way the teachers and pupils interchanged functions, the pupils becoming teachers and *vice versa*. Some of the pupils have become well known in various ways. General Frank Barlow, so honorably distinguished in our civil war, and politically since, was then but a young boy. George Weeks, who went from us to the Williamstown college, where he graduated with honor, became a lawyer, and also had some judicial position. At the first sound of the call to arms to suppress the Rebellion, he joined the volunteers, I think as captain in the First Massachusetts Regiment, distinguished himself as an officer, and after a gallant career died or was mortally wounded on the field, in some battle of western Virginia, having risen to the rank of general.

Then there was George William Curtis, of late so prominent in the literary and political world, and a number of others since esteemed and honored in the community.

Isaac Hecker was there for some time, attracted by the object and character of the enterprise. He afterward went over to the Romish Church, where he has been a good deal distinguished, and active in the formation of a new order called the Paulist Fathers.

John L. Dwight, so well known to the musical world for his zeal and services in the cause of the higher music in our neighborhood, came early with the others of his family, and remained a long time, till the final abandonment of the enterprise. Of course his taste and zeal in the interest of the best music could not fail to be of very great value in our community, among whose objects artistic cultivation held a high place. There were many others whose memory and friendship are sacredly and lovingly cherished by many of us, but this seems hardly a place to give publicity to their names.

I have spoken of the gatherings at the Eyrie, where were passed many pleasant and profitable evenings; when some lion of special note came along, it often was an occasion for discourse or conversation on his specialty. The young people had a fancy for sitting on the floor or on the stairs. The scene was pretty and interesting.

In the evenings of our washing-day the folding of the clothes gave occasion for pleasant and social meetings.

An amusing and rather odd practice was the frequent writing of notes among those who were constantly meeting each other for work, etc. Perhaps it was that the various

sentiments could not be so well expressed *viva voce*, and pen and paper gave better opportunity for more full and considered explanatory statements and epilogues, as needed, than the winged words of speech. One of our number, quite a singular character, had the habit of administering advice and reproof, of which he was rather lavish, on little scraps of paper, which he left on the floor or ground where the objects of his censure might find them. The notes I mentioned above were generally put on the table at the plate of the persons for whom they were designed. These may seem poor and trifling details, but some of those who were at Brook Farm may be pleased to recall the amusing, the trifling details and incidents of our life. But I must not omit among our social pleasures the gatherings in the barn in summer for preparing vegetables for the market, and other social work. Those who have not had the experience cannot know what a stately room for company a large barn is, with its lofty roof, the sweet scent of hay for perfume, the twittering of the swallows overhead for music, and the cool breezes passing so freely through. Our meetings here were at times enlivened by what we pleased ourselves with thinking was wit. Various classes were from time to time formed for reading and studying together. One I recollect was a very agreeable opportunity of reading Dante in the original (we read in turn, the whole or nearly the whole) with a number of cultivated, intelligent, and appreciative persons, those of better knowledge of the language helping the others. Mrs. Ripley was one of this class. In the summer we often had our readings out of doors, sometimes on one of those pleasant wooded knolls I have mentioned.

But I find that the limits to which I must confine myself will not allow me to speak of many of the varied aspects and features of the life at Brook Farm, or to give any detailed account of its course, progress, or final abandonment, which, besides, would be beyond the scope of this paper, professing as it does to give my personal reminiscences—in a somewhat discursive manner.

And now I wish to express for myself the very agreeable and, more than this, very affectionate remembrance of this rich and interesting episode of our lives, which feeling, I believe, is shared by many others. There were, no doubt, some dissatisfied or discontented on one ground or another, and, of course many shortcomings and imperfections in carrying out the idea and professed object of the institution. But I fully believe that many, very many, who were there look back upon it as one of the most profitable as well as delightful parts of their lives, and with warm feelings

of affection and respect for its objects, and on the whole for the way in which the attempt was made to realize them. To many young people especially it was an opportunity of great and lasting benefit as well as of enjoyment. To such persons of high aims and aspirations, but whose life had been straitened and hampered by unfavorable conditions, this opportunity of a life freed from many of the embarrassing conventions of society, and where feelings of humanity, sympathy, and respect for all conditions of life and society were cherished and professed as the basis of the association,—in habitual intercourse, too, with persons of cultivation and refinement, of varied acquaintance with society and the world, surrounded by those of friendly and kindly character and of aims at least theoretically humane and unselfish, to many of whom, too, they were drawn by the elective affinities into close and confidential intimacy,—was a very valuable and precious one, and was felt and appreciated as such by them at the time, and remembered with a tender and grateful interest. And some there are who still revere all the dreams of their youth, not only those that led them there, but those also that hovered around them while there and gave a color of romance to their life, and some of whom perhaps still cherish the hope that in some form or mode of association, or of coöperative industry, may be found a more equal distribution of the advantages, privileges, and culture of society—some mitigation of its great and painful inequalities, a remedy, or at least an abatement, of its evils and sufferings. But it may be thought that I have dwelt too much on the pleasantness of the life at Brook Farm, and

the advantages in the way of education, etc., to the young people, which is all very well, but not quite peculiar to this institution, and some may ask what it really accomplished of permanent value in the direction of the ideas with which it was started. This I do not feel that I can estimate or speak of adequately; neither is it within the scope of this paper. But I would indicate in a few words some of the influences and results that I conceive to belong to it. The opportunity of very varied culture, intellectual, moral, and practical; the broad and humane feelings professed and cherished toward all classes of men; the mutual respect for the character, mind, and feelings of persons brought up in the most dissimilar conditions of living and culture, which grew up from the free commingling of the very various elements of our company; the understanding and appreciation of the toils, self-denial, privations which are the lot to which so many are doomed, and a sympathy with them, left on many a deep and abiding effect. This intercourse or commingling of which I have spoken was very simple and easy; when the artificial and conventional barriers were thrown down it was felt how petty and poor they are; they were easily forgotten, and the natural attractions asserted themselves. So I cannot but think that this brief and imperfect experiment, with the thought and discussion that grew out of it, had no small influence in teaching more impressively the relation of universal brotherhood, and the ties that bind all to all, a deeper feeling of the rights and claims of others, and so in diffusing, enlarging—deepening and giving emphasis to—the growing spirit of true democracy.

George P. Bradford.

G. P. BRADFORD.

GENTLEST of souls, of genius bright,
Wavering, but steadfast for the right;
Doubtful on many a trifling theme,
Faithful to every noble dream,
Spotless in life, and pure in heart,
Loving the best in books and art.

All secret nooks of wood and field
To him their hidden treasures yield.
Anxious about each devious way
As o'er the earth his footsteps stray,
He started on the heavenly route
Without a question or a doubt.

George Bradford Bartlett.