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These facts are well worth consideration before an attempt is made by any other government to build up, by wholesale subventioning, a mercantile marine to compete with the British. France has tried the experiment, at an enormous cost, with anything but satisfying results. The stimulus to the great expansion of German shipping has been from within, and not from heavy grants of taxpayers' money; and though two or

three of the larger companies do receive mail subsidies in excess of those paid for like service by the British government, their success is in much greater degree attributable to their independent efforts. The shipping industry is, in its very essence, an international one, and the application to it of principles which may have proved successful in the internal industries of a country may be found to end in very disastrous results.

*J. W. Root.*

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#### A GIRL OF SIXTEEN AT BROOK FARM.

OF all the memorable company whom I found seated at the tea table when I arrived at Brook Farm, a few weeks after its opening, not one is now alive. I myself, sole survivor of the men and women who occupied that first table in the parlor of the Hive, have already passed nearly a lustrum beyond the allotted term of life.

I realize, therefore, that if I am to comply with the repeated requests of many friends, and record my recollections of the earliest days of what, with Hawthorne, I may call "my old and affectionately remembered home," I must not longer defer the task. I esteem it both a duty and a privilege not only to correct some inaccuracies and supply some omissions in the accounts of those less familiar than myself with the inner life of those early days, but also to express my gratitude to my friends and teachers at Brook Farm for the noble, sweet simplicity of the life there, which has been to me one of the most precious influences of the past threescore years.

The idea of Brook Farm originated with Rev. George Ripley, settled over Purchase Street Church in Boston, and his wife, Sophia Dana Ripley, a niece of Richard H. Dana, the poet and scholar. Mr. and Mrs. Ripley had boarded

for several summers at the Ellis Farm in West Roxbury, and were convinced that it was the ideal spot for their enterprise. They invited all interested in the scheme to meet at their pleasant home in Boston one evening a week, through the winter of 1840-41, to discuss the matter and form definite plans. These meetings called together such "cultivated and philosophic minds" as Margaret Fuller, Theodore Parker, William Henry Channing, John S. Dwight, David Mack, and others of similar character and culture. The proposed association became the current topic of conversation in Boston and the neighboring towns. Some laughed at it, of course, but some were as much frightened as men and women have since been by the talk of the anarchists.

I was then a girl of nearly sixteen, living in a college town. My mother, a woman of rare discernment, wishing to send me away to a good school, and knowing that teaching as well as farming was included in the scheme, attended the meetings at the Ripleys' house, not without some opposition and ridicule from her Philistine friends.

Before her marriage, Mrs. Ripley, then Miss Dana, had been a most successful teacher in Cambridge. She was

a woman of elegant manners and perfect self-control, qualities which insured her a remarkable degree of influence over her pupils. My mother felt that she could intrust my intellectual and moral training to her with the greatest confidence; but my father was a clergyman, with a large family and the usual small income of his profession, and there was some hesitation. On learning, however, that I could work four hours a day for my board, leaving only my tuition to be paid for in money, my parents decided to send me.

One pleasant afternoon in June, 1841, my father drove over to West Roxbury with me in the family chaise, with my trunk securely strapped beneath, and left me at the Nest. This was a small house occupied by Miss Ripley, a sister of George Ripley, and a few young boys brought with her from her school in Boston, among them two sons of George Bancroft. In the care of these children and of the house I was to assist her. We all took our meals at the Hive, and in the autumn went there to live.

The Hive was the Ellis farmhouse, one of the lovely old New England houses with a broad hall running through the whole length, and having a door at each end. From the left side of this hall, as you entered, a staircase went straight up to the second floor. The walls of the hall were lined with open bookshelves filled with rare English, French, and German books, belonging to Mr. Ripley, who had, I imagine, one of the finest libraries in Boston at that time, especially in foreign works. After the Eyrie was built the Hive became merely the working headquarters, and this library was removed to the new building; but the books were always free to all, a fact which showed the real generosity of Mr. Ripley.

There was a comfortable sofa in the hall, under the stairs, on which Nathaniel Hawthorne, who then occupied the front room at the right, used to sit for

hours at a time, with a book in his hand, not turning a leaf, but listening with sharp ears to the young people's talk, which he seemed to enjoy immensely, perhaps with the satisfaction of Burns's "Chiel amang ye takin' notes." It is, however, but just to Mr. Hawthorne to say that, whatever use he made in *Blithedale Romance* of the scenery and "romantic atmosphere" of Brook Farm, he cannot be accused of violating the sanctities of the home and holding up to public observation exaggerated likenesses of his associates there. I spent some delightful hours with him the winter he died, when he assured me that Zenobia represented no one person there.

The company on which my eyes fell, when I arrived at the farm, included Mr. and Mrs. Ripley; George P. Bradford, kinsman and friend of Emerson; John S. Dwight, musician and scholar, founder and editor of the *Journal of Music*; Nathaniel Hawthorne, then a young man, not yet married, but engaged; Rev. Mr. Burton, a Unitarian clergyman; Miss Sarah Stearns, niece of Mr. Ripley, a young woman of much culture and charm; the family from the Nest; and a pupil of about my own age, tall, fair-haired, and beautiful to look upon, Ellen Slade, mentioned by name in Hawthorne's *American Note-Books*, and the original Diana of that book and *The Blithedale Romance*, with whom I was proud to be associated.

There soon came others to our little company: Miss Georgiana Bruce, one of the most interesting persons at the farm, the writer of *Years of Experience*; Minot Pratt, who brought with him his wife and two little sons, one of whom afterwards married Annie Alcott, the Meg of *Little Women*. The Pratts were admirable people, and became very useful members of the association. Mr. Pratt, a printer, wanted, I imagine, more liberty to labor as he chose, and to find time for reading and study, and took an important part in the farmwork. Mrs.

Pratt I remember as a most kind and motherly woman.

Charles A. Dana, the late editor of the New York Sun, then a handsome collegian, came over from Cambridge and passed a day or two in the course of the summer, and later he took up his abode with us.

Theodore Parker's farmer, William Allen, had been deeply interested in the idea of the association, and soon came to take charge of the farm. This new farmer, William, was a sturdy young fellow from Westmoreland, Vermont. He married just before coming to us, and brought his pretty wife, Sylvia. William's brother also came, bringing his bride. These four were, I think, among our most efficient workers. The education of their hands had not been neglected, and these were well trained by good heads. It was such as they, perhaps, who kept the daily machinery running smoothly.

William, as I remember him, must have been a man of power in his way, as he was the head farmer, and the four or five men who fitted boys for college (I fancy this was the surest source of income to the association) must have been directed by him and his brother in all the work of the farm. I remember well that George P. Bradford and Mr. Hawthorne had the care and milking of the cows, but not to the exclusion of other less Arcadian labors, as is evident from the American Note-Books. Mr. Hawthorne seems to have had a rather tender feeling for his charges, expressing forcibly in *The Blithedale Romance*, chapter xxiv., his indignation at their "cold reception" of him on his return from an absence of several weeks. I recall distinctly the names of two cows, Daisy and Dolly, from the fact that Messrs. Hawthorne and Bradford were particular always to assign to these cows adjoining stalls in the barn at night, because they were always together in the pasture. I recollect also Mr. Bradford's

often begging me to stop at the gate through which the long line of cows came at evening, and watch the varying and interesting expressions on their faces.

The pigs too came in for their share of Mr. Hawthorne's care. When, in the following winter, the Brook Farmers, as a delicate attention, sent a sparerib to Mrs. George S. Hillard, with whom he was then staying in Boston, thinking to please him, he raised his hands in horror, and exclaimed, "I should as soon think of a sculptor's eating a piece of one of his own statues!"

Besides those whom I have mentioned others joined us, with well-trained hands, but not of such good New England blood. I recall among them two Irishwomen, one of whom, a fine cook, had lived with the Danas and others of the best families of Boston. This woman came to Brook Farm for the sake of her beautiful young daughter, an only child, who looked like a Madonna and possessed much native delicacy. Her mother was desirous that she should be well educated. These women were perfectly welcome to sit at the table with us all, but they preferred not to sit down until the two courses had been put upon the table, if at all.

As I remember our meals, they were most delightful times for talk, humor, wit, and the interchange of pleasant nonsense. When our one table had grown into three, Charles A. Dana, who must have been a very orderly young man, organized a corps of waiters from among our nicest young people, whose meals were kept hot for them, and they in their turn were waited on by those whom they had served. I have seen Mr. Dana reading a small Greek book between the courses, though he was a faithful waiter. The table talk was most delightful and profitable to me. Looking back over a long and varied life, I think that I have rarely sat down with so many men and women of culture, so thoroughly unself-

ish, polite, and kind to one another, as I found at those plain but attractive tables. All seemed at rest and at their best. There was no man, tired with the stock market and his efforts to make or to increase a big fortune, coming home harassed or depressed, too cross or disappointed to talk. There was no woman vying with others in French gowns, laces, and diamonds. The fact that all felt that they were honored for themselves alone brought out more individuality in each, so that I have often said that I have never elsewhere seen a set of people of whom each seemed to possess some peculiar charm.

I do not recollect Hawthorne's talking much at the table. Indeed, he was a very taciturn man. One day, tired of seeing him sitting immovable on the sofa in the hall, as I was learning some verses to recite at the evening class for recitation formed by Charles A. Dana, I daringly took my book, pushed it into his hands, and said, "Will you hear my poetry, Mr. Hawthorne?" He gave me a sidelong glance from his very shy eyes, took the book, and most kindly heard me. After that he was on the sofa every week to hear me recite.

One evening he was alone in the hall, sitting on a chair at the farther end, when my roommate, Ellen Slade, and myself were going upstairs. She whispered to me, "Let's throw the sofa pillows at Mr. Hawthorne." Reaching over the banisters, we each took a cushion and threw it. Quick as a flash he put out his hand, seized a broom that was hanging near him, warded off our cushions, and threw them back with sure aim. As fast as we could throw them at him he returned them with effect, hitting us every time, while we could hit only the broom. He must have been very quick in his movements. Through it all not a word was spoken. We laughed and laughed, and his eyes shone and twinkled like stars. Wonderful eyes they were, and when anything witty was said

I always looked quickly at Mr. Hawthorne; for his dark eyes lighted up as if flames were suddenly kindled behind them, and then the smile came down to his lips and over his grave face.

My memories of Mr. Hawthorne are among the pleasantest of my Brook Farm recollections. His manners to children were charming and kind. I saw him one day walking, as was his custom, with his hands behind his back, head bent forward, the two little Bancrofts and other children following him with pleased faces, and stooping every now and then with broad smiles, after which they would rise and run on again behind him. Puzzled at these manœuvres, I watched closely, and found that although he hardly moved a muscle except to walk, yet from time to time he dropped a penny, for which the children scrambled.

Among our regular visitors in that first year were: Emerson, who came occasionally to spend a day; Margaret Fuller, who passed weeks at a time with us; and Theodore Parker, who was a frequent caller. The last, a warm personal friend of Mr. Ripley, lived within walking distance, and we were often amused at the ceremonies of his leave-taking. When he took his departure, after spending two or three hours in close conversation with Mr. Ripley, the latter always started to accompany him part of the way; at the end of a mile or so, when Mr. Ripley turned back, Mr. Parker, in his turn, became escort, Mr. Ripley resuming the rôle when Brook Farm was reached. In this way, the two men, always absorbed in conversation, walked back and forth, until sometimes another couple of hours were added to the solid talk.

Wendell Phillips came once, but I was away and did not see him. On my return I was flattered to hear that he had especially asked for me; but my pride had a fall when I learned that he had supposed the "Ora" of whom he had heard so much to be a favorite cat.

All sorts and conditions of men were kindly received at Brook Farm, and of course many peculiar persons came to claim our hospitality. I remember well the man mentioned by Mr. Codman in his book on Brook Farm, who, when Mr. Ripley offered to show him to his room for the night, declined, averring that he never slept, and would sit up all night in the parlor, which he was allowed to do.

As our family soon grew too large for the Hive, two other houses were built while I was there. One, perched on a hill not far from the Hive, and built upon the rock, was named the Eyrie. In this was a good-sized room for our musical evenings and dancing; also a library, to which, on its completion, the books were removed from the hall in the Hive. At the Eyrie Mr. and Mrs. Ripley had their rooms; also my sister, who came a year after me, and myself, with several other young people; but we continued to go to the Hive for our meals and recitations. That the Eyrie was built on the Scriptural foundation I know, from having once seen the elegant Burrill Curtis, brother of George William Curtis, filling the oil lamps of the house on the cellar floor of solid rock.

Mr. and Mrs. Minot Pratt took charge of the Hive, and there all the cooking and washing were done. Mr. Bradford continued to keep his room there until he left, I believe.

One of the houses was a cottage built in the form of a cross, by a cousin of Mrs. Wendell Phillips, a wealthy lady, who lived in it herself. Charles A. Dana and other young people also had rooms there.

Later, Ichabod and Edwin Morton, of Plymouth, Mass., who came to Brook Farm after I left, built a large house after Fourier's plan, with a common kitchen, dining room, and laundry on the lower floor, and separate rooms above. This was called the Phalanstery. I think it was the outcome of a pet plan of Mr.

Ripley's. The inmates might either eat at the common table, or, by paying a certain sum, might have their meals sent to their apartments. This would clearly indicate that Brook Farm was not a *community*, as so often miscalled, but an *association*, where the members could more easily live out the aims for which it was founded. Possibly the whole settlement might in time have grown to be a sort of coöperative village, but unfortunately the Phalanstery was burned to the ground, in March, 1846, before it was quite finished. The financial loss was heavy, and I know that the destruction of the Phalanstery was a great blow to the association in many ways.

Perhaps my recollections of Brook Farm are tinted by the rose-colored optimism of sixteen, but as I have grown old, and, looking back to the general standard of half a century ago, have compared the lives led at Brook Farm with the most useful ones of these days, I am more and more convinced that my estimates are true, that there was very much "sweetness and light" there, — a light too bright for most people at that time to bear.

With the progress of time, as higher moral and scientific developments have improved the internal as well as the external vision, the world is coming to see that living for others is true living. Certainly, most of the persons whom I knew at Brook Farm lived on a higher plane than their contemporaries, recognizing, as they did, others' needs as of equal moment with their own. I can recall so many unselfish, loving, gentle-mannered people that I am sure that if others of a different stamp did come, they could not have lived contentedly there, but must soon have slid out. Thank God, there were always enough of the old stock left to keep the spirit of the place as it had been at first. Among the boarders, too, were some who entered into that spirit, and though not sharing the labors, yet added greatly to the pleasures of the

association. Among these I remember particularly Mr. Charles Newcomb, of Providence.

One may easily imagine the influence such a man as George P. Bradford had on the people assembled at Brook Farm. He knew the woods and fields well, — indeed, all outdoor things; the flora, especially, which, as my memory recalls it, was very rich; astronomy, too. Many, many nights he showed us the constellations, quietly talking of all this beauty in a way that inspired love and reverence in us.

He loved the beautiful pine wood which we called the Cathedral, using it as a magnificent hall, for our amusement. Hawthorne tells in one of his Note-Books of the masquerade we had there, where more beautiful people met, I think, than usually falls to one's lot to see in a lifetime.

The brook he loved, I fancy, as much as I did, as it ran in front of the Hive, through the large green meadow; talking sometimes in a serious undertone, sadly, as if finding fault with me, and sometimes so gay and frolicking that even now, after more than half a century, it comes to me as a voice either blaming or making me joyous.

The dearest friend I have ever had since I left Brook Farm often used to stop beside some singing brook, as we were driving through the country, and ask me: "How about this brook? Is n't its voice as sweet as the one at Brook Farm?" But only once did I ever hear one that even approached to the sweetness of Brook Farm's brook, and I believe firmly that the memory of its voice has helped many of those who were happy enough to have heard it to bear their successes and failures with gratitude, sweetness, and strength. I have often wondered if such a place, so pure, refined, and entirely democratic, could have been started nearly "sixty years since" in any other place than the United States, and in Boston or its vicinity.

One thing I early learned there was to discern the small importance of outward worldly distinctions as compared with true worth of character. This has helped me much in life in choosing friends, finding them sometimes even among servants. It has enabled me to treat them as if they were really equals, and to recognize sometimes their superiority to myself. This lesson has done much to make the practical part of my life run smoothly, I am sure. That such men as George P. Bradford and George William Curtis should muffle themselves up in the stormy and freezing weather, and work hard in the unaccustomed business of hanging out clothes, to save women, some of whom had toiled all their lives, seems to me more chivalrous than Raleigh's throwing his cloak in front of Elizabeth. I have never seen such true politeness as prevailed there. The selfish and consequently impolite people who occasionally came were either ashamed and left, or learned to follow the customs.

The boys studying there did not fight, as at other schools, for they were treated courteously, and had few rules. My tender conscience, however, has kept alive the memory of my connivance in one violation of a rule. One of my morning duties was to dust and adorn the parlor in the Hive, after it had been swept. Mrs. Ripley had made a strict rule that none of the boys who used that room for morning study should enter it before I had finished my task. Early one morning, on entering the room, dust-cloth in hand, I was surprised to see there three boys on three different sides of the room, each in a chair drawn forward from the wall, with heads bent over their books, apparently deeply absorbed in study. Not a head was raised nor a movement made, when I went in. "Boys," I said, "you know you must n't be here." "Oh, please let us stay, Ora, and we won't disturb you a bit. We've dusted our chairs, — see," and, suiting

the action to the word, they polished their chairs with their coat sleeves.

Finding them bent upon staying, I crossed the hall to the dining room and told Mrs. Ripley. She went immediately back to the parlor with me; but the room was empty, the boys having jumped out of the window. I continued my dusting. Soon one of the delinquents thrust his head in at the window and said: "Now, Ora, if you'll dust that sofa, you may take as much time for it as you please; and then I'll come in and put my feet up on it, so as to be out of your way, and I'll read hymns to you just the way some of the Unitarian ministers around Boston do." As some of the Unitarian pulpits in Boston and vicinity were filled, at that time, by men with very peculiar voices and styles of delivery, the temptation was too great to be resisted. The entertainment was certainly unique and mirth-provoking. My entertainer, George Wells, became one of the youngest judges ever on the bench in Massachusetts. Later, the dear fellow gave his life to his country in the civil war. Some years after leaving, he said that he felt all the good there was in him he owed to Brook Farm.

In keeping with this testimony of Judge Wells was a remark once made to me by George William Curtis, when staying at our house in the course of one of his lecturing tours: "In many places where I lecture I meet old Brook Farmers whom I have not seen for years, and they are always, I find, among the very best people of the place."

The teaching at Brook Farm was fine, and, to one who really wished to learn, of the very best kind. It was not confined to daytime study hours, for some, not only of the teachers, but of the scholars, used to work a portion of each day on the farm. In order to get our work done early enough for the evening pleasures, among which we reckoned Mr. Ripley's classes, Georgiana Bruce, Sarah Stearns, and myself, whose duty it was to wash

the tea dishes, used to hurry through the task with great rapidity, the young men helping by wiping them. I recollect particularly one evening in the moral philosophy class, — which must have been very interesting to rouse and keep the enthusiasm of a girl of sixteen, — when the question of free will came up. Mr. Ripley read aloud Jonathan Edwards's famous chapter on Golden, Silver, Wooden, and Pottery Vessels, and this was followed by a most exciting discussion between Mr. Ripley and Miss Bruce.

The arrival of George William Curtis, then a youth of eighteen, and his brother Burrill, two years his senior, was a noteworthy event in the annals of Brook Farm, at least in the estimation of the younger members. I shall never forget the flutter of excitement caused by Mr. Ripley's announcing their expected coming in these words: "Now we're going to have two young Greek gods among us." Nor have I forgotten their first appearance at the gate at the bottom of the hill leading to the Eyrie. This was the gate by which I had stood, at Mr. Bradford's request, to study the expressions on the faces of the cows as they came through. After we moved up to the Eyrie, this gate always seemed to me to separate the two different lives led at Brook Farm: on one side, the rest and recreation of the Eyrie; on the other, the busy, active, happy life of the Hive, where sweeping, dusting, lessons with Mrs. Ripley, and pleasant chitchat filled the morning hours. On a bright morning in May, 1842, soon after Mr. Ripley's announcement, as I was coming down from the Eyrie to the Hive, I saw Charles A. Dana with two strange young men approaching my "magic gate" from the direction of the Hive. Arriving at the gate before me, Mr. Dana threw it open with the flourish peculiar to his manner, and stood holding it back. His companions stood beside him, and all three waited for me to pass through. I saw at a glance that these must be the



"two young Greek gods." They stood disclosed, not, like Virgil's Venus, by their step, but by their beauty and bearing. Burrill Curtis was at that time the more beautiful. He had a Greek face, of great purity of expression, and curling hair. George too was very handsome, — not so remarkably as in later life, but already with a man's virile expression.

Burrill, whom I soon came to know very well, was quite unconscious of himself, and interested in all about him. He talked of the Greek philosophers as if he had sat at their feet. He carried this high philosophy into his daily life, helping the young people in their studies, and ready at any time to take his share of the meanest and commonest work. He had that thoroughgoing truthfulness that made him feel that every mood *must* be lived through. One result of this was that he gave himself up so completely to the person in whom he was for the moment interested as to create false impressions, and sometimes cause disappointment. But he was so much more attuned to another life than to anything here, so entirely fine in thought, manner, and deed, that one could not resolve to pain him by speaking of this. He was unworldly and wholly indifferent to what others thought of him, as also to their laughter when he changed his opinions, which he often did. Burrill's influence must have been of value to George in keeping him from caring too much for the admiration showered upon him later in life, the pleasures of this world being in many ways more enticing to him than to his brother. George had the greatest love and respect for Burrill, and, I always understood, was led by him to go to Brook Farm. Their intimacy was like that of two sisters. They worked, walked, talked, and sang together. Burrill's power is acknowledged most tenderly in the last chapter of Prue and I. George himself once told me that "our cousin the curate" was in part a portrait of his brother.

About George William Curtis there was a peculiar personal elegance, and an air of great deference in listening to one whom he admired or looked up to. There was a certain remoteness (at times almost amounting to indifference) about him, but he was always courteous. His friends were all older than himself, and he appeared much older in manners and conversation than he was in years; more like a man of twenty-five than a youth of eighteen. I, being a year younger and quite immature, did not then know him so well as a few years later, from which time the privilege of calling him my friend became one of the greatest pleasures of my life. As time passed he grew more genial, but he was always more sociable with some of the older men and women — George P. Bradford, Caroline Sturgis, and Mrs. Shaw, the last two being our near neighbors — than with any of the younger people at that time, excepting Charles A. Dana, with whom he and his brother used to take long walks. I remember Mr. Bradford's telling me that he and the other older men saw more promise in George than in Burrill, perceiving as they did, I suppose, the steady practical side of his nature; but I must always think that the influence of "our cousin the curate" was an important factor in the development of his character.

I passed a happy year and a half as a scholar at Brook Farm; but for the following three years, until I left New England, I was in the habit of making frequent visits there, and was always received as one of their own, — "a child of the farm," as it were. In the course of these visits I made the acquaintance, and in some cases the friendship, of later comers. Among these I must not omit to mention Abby Morton (Mrs. Diaz), who became very dear to me, and whose peculiar combination of liveliness and dignity, together with her beautiful singing, made her a favorite with all the members, old and new.

Another whom I first met at the farm, and whose friendship I prized, was Isaac Hecker. It was on one of my earliest visits after leaving the school that I went out to the kitchen to see some of my friends, and there beheld, on one side of the chimney, a strange young man with the regulation baker's cap on his head. His face attracted me. It was pockmarked and not handsome, but it was earnest, high-minded, and truthful. Circumstances — among other things the friendship then existing between him and Georgiana Bruce — led to a somewhat intimate acquaintance and frequent correspondence between him and myself, the latter continuing after Mr. Hecker went to the Catholic college at Worcester. Young as we both were, our correspondence was yet on high, spiritual themes, and his persuasive powers almost made me too a Roman Catholic. Undoubtedly, Isaac Hecker's influence had much to do with Mrs. Ripley's conversion to the church in which his restless mind finally found "surcease of doubt." My dear young friend Sarah Stearns became not only a Catholic, but a nun.

Among the unwarranted calumnies formerly circulated about Brook Farm was the assertion that a good deal of flirting was carried on there. I have been much with young people in my life, — a teacher for some years, a mother with several children, and now a grandmother with hosts of grandchildren, — and I have never seen more truly gentlemanly and gentlewomanly relations between youths and maidens than at Brook Farm. I am sure not only that no harm was done, either to young men or maidens, by the healthful and simple intercourse that was invariable between them, but that very much good came, especially to the young men. There seemed a desire in each person to make Brook Farm a happy home. There were few of us who had not enough work each day, either manual or intellectual, generally both, to give a

keen zest to the pleasures of the evening. It seems to me, as I look back upon the happy hours of recreation, that we were more amiable and content with ourselves and one another than any circle of people I have ever known since.

Among our daytime amusements were some charming picnics in the pine-tree grove, one of which is almost exactly described in *The Blithedale Romance*. Hawthorne's one variation from the facts was in making me, both there and in the *American Note-Books*, the gypsy fortune teller, whereas that part was really taken by Mrs. Ripley, and I was merely the messenger to bring persons to her; but it would seem that I must have done some talking on my own account.

In the happy Brook Farm evenings there were games for the young people at the Hive, while once or twice a week, at the same place, the older classes listened to Mr. Bradford's readings of Racine's and Molière's plays, — delightful readings they were, — or to discussions in Mr. Ripley's moral philosophy class. At the Eyrie we had charming singing by the two Curtis brothers, occasional concerts given by people from "the world," talks by Margaret Fuller, William H. Channing, and others, sometimes dancing in moderation, and once in a while a fancy-dress party.

Everybody on the farm knew that he or she was cordially invited to all these various amusements, and would be kindly received. The result was that all sorts and conditions of men mingled freely and without sense of constraint. There were often side by side three of the most beautiful women I have ever seen from the Shaw and Russell families, a girl who had been nursemaid in my uncle's family, and others of even lowlier station in the world. When the chairs gave out, as they not infrequently did in our more crowded assemblies, our aristocratic guests did not disdain to sit upon the Eyrie floor, — a fact that

was made a subject of no little ridicule in Boston at the time, it not being known, perhaps, that it was impossible to get extra chairs.

At one fancy-dress party George William Curtis took the part of Hamlet. Our delightful neighbors, the Shaws and Russells, who were much interested in us, and who had plenty of money and many pretty things to wear themselves, not only came to these simple little balls, but generously lent many of their fine things to Brook Farmers. Jonathan Russell, a not remote ancestor, had been our Minister to Russia, and I remember that some of his court clothes appeared at our fancy parties, particularly a sky-blue silk frock coat, which J. S. Dwight wore. I recollect being dressed as a Persian girl in satin trimmings and tartan, lent by these neighbors, who made our assembly shine by their beauty and charming garments, warming our hearts by their constant kindness.

That many of the Brook Farmers went to church I know; for I remember well the hot walk with them two miles and back on summer Sundays. Most of them fulfilled their duty as citizens by voting, although a few refrained on the ground taken by Garrison and Samuel J. May, that the United States Constitution was a pro-slavery document.

Not long after the burning of the Phalanstery, Brook Farm closed its six years of existence. I cannot regard it as a failure. The influence of the fine, magnanimous living there must have carried blessing to all parts of our land, as its members scattered and planted in distant communities the seeds of the harvest they had themselves gathered at Brook Farm.

Yes, it was indeed a very happy and wholesome life. I wish I had the power to tell in earnest, glowing words how wide its influence seems to me to have been, and still to be. I have not this power, and so quote from an article by my dear friend George P. Bradford, who

lived at Brook Farm throughout the six or seven years during which it was maintained:—

“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 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."

*Ora Gannett Sedgwick.*

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### A DAUGHTER OF SAINT ANNE.

THE flat Sardinian fields lay submerged by autumnal inundations; through the falling sheets of rain could be only dimly discerned the outlines of a *nurago*, unique, mysterious monument of a forgotten civilization. All over the island these conical stone erections mock the scholar with impenetrable reserve, and seem to say, "You read the hieroglyphs of Egypt and the signs of the Assyrian, but what was I?" When the sun colors the red moss on these prehistoric *nuraghi*, and picks out the crimson prickly pear, splashed like a blood stain on the gigantic gray-green cactus hedge; when the light floods the purple "lilies of the field" and the scarlet pomegranate flowers, limning the stone pines against tropical sunset skies and horizons softly wreathed with blue mountains, there is singular beauty in this unvisited island of the Mediterranean. Its men, dark-browed and reticent, capped and clad in dense black homespun, mounted on long-tailed, softly stepping black horses, seem only sable velvet silhouettes to throw into mere salient relief the pervading brilliance of light and color; and the women, with bared bosoms, crimson stays, heavily shawled heads, and barbaric ornaments, have an Oriental aspect foreign to Italy.

But when the rains come, and the sun magician withdraws his reconciling rays, the desolation and grim misery of the island lie revealed. It is like a woman in whose eyes hope and the light of

love are quenched. Every autumn the country is flooded. Then the squalor of the low adobe huts and the poverty of the inhabitants is patent, and fever prevails. No wonder that, in spite of fine shooting, officials and army men deem it an exile to be stationed in Sardinia.

My eye vainly sought some consoling object through the mist-dimmed window panes of the second-class compartment, and came back for relief to study my three fellow travelers. Opposite sat my elect companion, the minister whose sweet, unworldly face confirmed the affectionate sobriquet of "the Angelical Doctor," and showed that this sensitive, conscientious New England nature "sloped to the southern side." As my glance lingered on his transparent face and shining blue eyes, a smile rose to my lips at recollection of one person's remark that he looked as if he had lived on nothing more material than white ostrich plumes, and the no less characteristic ejaculation of the Calabrian peasant, "He is a wax Jesus!"

In Italy a smile always finds its twin on another face, and when I raised my eyes they met the dark, sympathetic ones of a tall, graceful young officer occupying the third corner.

I am young, I am a woman, I am a blonde. In Sardinia it is enough, and there was no vanity in the conviction that at the junction of Chilivani my face at the car window had drawn this