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revenue raised by low rates soon exceeds the utmost that could have been wrung from the people by the heaviest. By this financial system, in the words

of Adam Smith, "Great Britain seems to support with ease a burden which, half a century ago, nobody believed her capable of supporting."

*Brooks Adams.*

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### HOME LIFE OF THE BROOK FARM ASSOCIATION.

MUCH interest has been expressed at various times to learn the real home life of the Brook Farm Association, and many of my friends have urged me to tell what I know of it. My experience extends through nearly four years of its existence, and if length of time could insure the ability to delineate all the various motives which brought together and held through so many years its members, bound by no sectarian creed and united solely through inclination, the knowledge which my position gave me might at least serve to satisfy curiosity. Being one of the least known of its members, I enter on this undertaking with much hesitancy. I cannot understand why no one of those who better comprehended all the machinery which kept the wheels going through many trying vicissitudes (though I suspect sometimes the operators themselves felt doubtful how it was done) has ever brought its interior life to view, since a real history of its aims and endeavors after a truer life has been asked for.

What was my object in joining this association is of no consequence; I am not writing my own life, and those who were its leaders were calculated to have much more influence on the world than my insignificant self. No matter if I even thought that the whole nation would be charmed by our simple, unobtrusive life, and that in time it would all resolve itself into associations of which ours should take the lead. I know there were many with us who felt that the world must come to us, and that we should, in a more gentle manner than the chosen people of old,

gather unto us the possessions of the Amorites and the Canaanites, and that our laws and government should extend and finally annihilate the existing executive of the country. Perhaps even wilder and bolder visions passed before our eyes ere our final dismemberment. In this paper I shall endeavor to give a concise account of the first movement of the originators of the Association of Brook Farm, and to supply some idea of its internal life, both material and mental.

It was on a bleak November afternoon that I entered Brook Farm as one of its permanent residents. The weather, not bright even in the morning, had gradually grown darker, and a cold drizzling rain sent a chill through you and permeated your inmost being, as well as added to your exterior discomfort. I had some weeks before passed several days with the association, that I might in some degree understand the life that lay before me. I confess that when I was made acquainted with its details, its poetic phase was drowned in the water in which I washed the teacups. The reasons which first induced me to apply for admission as one of its members still existed, and the latent energy of my nature forbade my receding merely because my personal comfort, if not quite destroyed, was at least interfered with beyond what was pleasant. Dreary as was this afternoon, my thoughts were more dreary still, and as I drove from my comfortable home the life I had undertaken rose before me in all its bare and cheerless routine. I knew but little of the motives which had drawn its mem-

bers together and sustained them through all the difficulties of their arduous undertaking. I had not sympathized with the idea for which they lived, indeed had not in the least understood it; and the gloomy evening upon which I entered on my work almost overcame my resolution. Accustomed to the greeting with which worldly usage meets one, I was not prepared for the indifferent looks cast upon me by the dwellers of the Hive as I alighted at its door. This was the building nearest the entrance, and which usually received all comers. No one spoke to me, although I had previously seen some of the members; they kept about their occupations utterly regardless of me. At last a young man appeared whom I had known in the world, and offered to go with me and find Mrs. R—. As I knew the building I was to occupy, I accepted his escort there, and learned from him that my belongings had arrived the day before and I should find all ready for me. This was the only cheerful thing which had met me since I left my home, and with a more buoyant spirit I entered the Cottage, which was to be my abiding place. There was a room called the parlor, which contained only a few chairs, and was appropriated to my use as well as that of the three or four other inmates of this building. There was another parlor, but a lady who had contributed much to the erection of the building was its exclusive occupant. A fire soon burned brightly in the grate, my own rocking-chair was placed near it, and I began to take a more cheerful view of things in general, so that when the horn sounded for supper I entered the dining-room with a less lackadaisical demeanor than I had shown an hour or two before; and the next morning I rose with a spirit more willing to encounter what I still considered the ills of life. No snow had fallen, and the hills were brightly tinged with the coming rays of the sun, which had not yet risen, as I wended my way down to the Hive, the only eating-house of the establishment. The other three dwelling-houses had no kitchens in their interior arrangements. I was not alone,

and the shouts and laughter of the young students around me drew me out of myself, and tended much to bring back the natural gayety of my disposition. They were not all strangers to me, and they soon discerned that I should throw no damper on their mirth. I will at once say that during my long stay in this association the good-fellowship which existed between me and this youthful appendage of its graver members was never lessened, and the tie between us still exists, although I am an old woman and they are no longer in their early youth.

As I did not join the Brook Farm Association until about a year and a half or perhaps two years after its first members had entered upon their novel enterprise, I can give but a very vague account of its beginnings. I think there were not more than seven or eight persons who formed its first household, and the only building occupied by them was the original farmhouse which afterwards received the name of the Hive, as most of the domestic occupations were performed there. I cannot now recall who were its first occupants. From causes unknown to me, several had left before my arrival. What I now write is from my own personal knowledge, and I shall endeavor to give as faithful an account as my memory will enable me after the lapse of so many years.

When I first entered Brook Farm the Hive was a common-sized house with two rooms on either side the front door and two others back of them. The front door was but little used, there being a more convenient one between the two rooms, on the side of the drive-way or avenue, by which we always entered, being nearer the refectory, which was the back room on that side of the building. The front room was the common parlor for the dwellers in the house, and was also used for the reception of strangers. The rooms on the other side of the front door were occupied by a lady and her children. She was not an associate, but her sympathies united her with the members and she became a permanent boarder. Back of the dining-room was the kitchen, not large, and connected

with it were the pantry and a room used for a laundry, but rather circumscribed in its proportions. The chambers above were used as sleeping apartments for the inmates of the house, and as there were many residents at the Hive, I need not say no one could have the luxury of a separate room, excepting one scholar who was an invalid. When we began to increase our numbers we had also to increase our accommodations; the Hive received many additions, and the existing interior was much altered. The front and back rooms were thrown into one, making a long and convenient dining-room. The kitchen was much enlarged, and the laundry appointments made suitable to our increased population. More sheds for farming and domestic use were erected, and rooms were built over them, which gave us many more dormitories. The dwellers here were principally those whose domestic avocations were chiefly in that house. After the admission of mechanics to the association, the greater number of them lived at the Hive, especially those with families, the apartments being more convenient for their use. It was the only eating-house on the place, and was of course the only cooking establishment. Our food was very plain, but good; we did not always have fresh meat, but we became accustomed to the privation and really enjoyed whatever was placed before us. Brook Farm brewis has always been a pleasant remembrance to me, and I even yet indulge occasionally in a good breakfast of it. Our head farmer, with his family, resided at the Hive during all my stay at Brook Farm, and was one of its most conspicuously attractive inhabitants. There was a small terraced flower garden near the house which led to the brook that gave the name to the place. A long ridge, crowned with a pleasant grove, looked down upon it, and between it and the house a large elm spread its grateful shade around. It was the only spot on my first arrival which had any appearance of having been cultivated with an eye to adornment, and its natural advantages added much to its beauty.

It was a very busy life that I had come

into, one totally different from my accustomed habits and avocations, but still one which the old-fashioned training of my extreme youth had not entirely unfitted me for. I was early taught to clear-starch, as it was called, and this knowledge had always adhered to me, and I was not a little proud of having my laces and muslins uncommonly nice-looking; so in this busy little world I gradually found my place. I entered somewhat into the teaching, and offered to make up the muslins of all on the place who wore them. In the minds of some this might seem a great undertaking, but as many considered such finery useless, and as none were permitted to give me more than two pieces a week, the task was not at all arduous. One little child always called me "lady love," but another, I must own, gave me not so poetical a title, and knew me only as "Miss Muslin." I had other domestic avocations, for occasionally I washed the dishes, and during my stay at Brook Farm I always belonged to the ironing-room. I think Mrs. R— and myself were amongst its most indefatigable workers, and we have stood side by side for ten hours or even longer at a time, only leaving long enough for our dinner, which did not occupy much time, the number of our courses not being indefinite. As I have already said, my entrance on this life did not open joyfully to me, but as time went on I became much interested in it and very much attached to my co-workers. Their earnestness commanded my respect, and although I did not always fully comprehend the meaning of what they said, I felt the fault was in me, not them, and my dull brain was alone accountable. It was not the days of evolution, but of involution, if not of language, of thought. Our life was really very monotonous, and, looked upon at a distance by one accustomed to the stirring life of a city, would have appeared unbearable; yet it was strange how much variety we contrived to put into it. A casual observer would think us occupied solely with the dull routine of our domestic avocations, which were not lightened by paid

domestics. Such a one could not see how much thought filled the minds of those steady workers. A few bright words, listened to the evening previous, lifted them above their occupations, and you might have heard a great problem discussed even over the wash-tub by one whose brightness shed light on all around.

Brook Farm was an association, not a community. The members were not called upon to divide their worldly possessions among their associates, but all contributed such portion as they thought they could afford towards the support of the institution. There were many who had nothing to give, but no distinction was made amongst the members; all met on an equality, and in reality it was just that it should be so, for worldly advantages were overcome by useful labor. Each on his application for admittance was received on probation. I think three months was the time designated, and then the established members met in council and discussed the merits of the applicants, and whether their admission would be beneficial to the association. A vote was then taken, and if I remember rightly two thirds were necessary for an affirmation. I suppose all had very much the same feelings as myself when they knew they were to go before this awful tribunal; and if any one had told me three months previous that I should have waited in trembling fear for its decision, I could not have believed it of myself. A change had been wrought in me which even now, after the lapse of so many years, seems little less than magical. Naturally exclusive and fastidious, a spell was woven around me which entered into my very heart and led me to nobler and higher thoughts than the world ever gave me. I was not even then in my early youth, but I felt the influence of a vigor and freshness the remembrance of which still clings to me after nearly forty years have passed away.

The most profitable source of our income was that derived from the pupils sent us. Harvard did us the honor to place two or three with us whom it was judged a rustic life might benefit; and

I need not say they were a pleasant social element in our life. Several also came to be prepared for a collegiate course. One of these served nobly in our late war, and gave his life on one of its battle-fields. Another, whose name was even more famous in the same cause, was when with us a mere child, and gave but little promise of what he was to be, the gallant hero of many battles, and now a brilliant member of the bar in one of our largest cities. There were many others who were children when with us, and who if less prominent were not less earnest to assist our nation in its greatest need. All honor to them, wherever they are now scattered. Several came to us who never joined us as members, but who enjoyed the freedom of our life from the conventionalities of society. One in particular is before the world as a literary man of eminence, whose noble thoughts and words have always been enlisted on the side of progress. The number, when I first joined the association, was not large, I should think not over forty, and yet when I recall them to my mind it seems to me one would scarcely find forty persons with more strongly marked individuality; not loudly proclaimed and only after much study to be understood, but contributing a peculiar influence to the place, and making Brook Farm a problem in the minds of men.

As Christmas approached it became a question as to how we should celebrate it; after much grave deliberation a fancy party was suggested, and the chiefs were applied to for their consent, which I need not say was easily obtained. We certainly had no idea of extending our invitations beyond the limits of the place, and our ingenuity was exerted to produce the costumes in which to make our appearance. Everything which could furnish even a remote idea of what we wished to represent was called into requisition, and the preparation became a great amusement to us. Our simple ideas, alas! were doomed to fade away before the magnificence of some of our pupils, who even hired costumes from the theatres. I must here remark that

our own manufactured costumes eclipsed, with their simple classic taste, the tawdry finery of the stage. Our little festival becoming known to some of our outside friends, invitations were asked for, and our visitors added much to the brilliancy of our entertainment. Hamlet was well represented in his customary suit of black velvet; Greeks and Circassians figured largely, and even an Indian left his native forests for our amusement. Little Nell and her grandfather moved quietly through the scene, and Spanish bolero dancers performed wonderful evolutions. Altogether it was a success and enjoyed by all immensely. Fancy balls were not as common then as now, and I doubt whether any of us had assisted at one before. Little dances were common amongst us, and very short notice was given when one was to take place. Ball dresses were unknown, and a knot of ribbon was often the only adornment added to our usual dress. Having so many young people under our charge, these little recreations were almost a necessity, and the enjoyment was quite as great as if we had been dressed in the finest Paris robes, and had entered the ball room at ten instead of leaving it at that hour. With our early morning habits, late evening parties, as a general rule, were out of the question, and excepting on the occasion of our fancy ball, I never knew them extended beyond ten o'clock. Our usual social intercourse was principally confined to the Aerie, where Mr. and Mrs. R— resided, and where every evening were collected those who wished to hear or themselves take a part in the pleasant and often brilliant conversation of many of our associates. Music, too, lent its charm to these reunions, and I need not say that the Aerie was seldom lonely.

The Aerie was the first house built on the place after it became the property of the association. It was placed on a large rock, which formed the cellar and on two sides the foundation walls of the structure. That cellar was an odd-looking place and did justice to the inventive power of the builders of the house. It did not exactly illustrate the text about

the durability of such a foundation, for when left to take care of itself the winds and the storms soon demolished the entire building, and it now lies in ruins, if there is a vestige left of it. As it was built on the top of this large, high rock, many steps were needed to reach the terrace in front of the door, on either side of which was a large room, one used as a parlor, the other as a library. Behind these rooms were four small dormitories. Above, I think they were not divided in the same manner, but a greater number of rooms was made of the space, leaving two rather larger than the others. Mr. and Mrs. R— occupied one of these, and the others were given to the scholars. At first the library was used as a recitation room, and I believe Mr. R— still continued so to use it even after we had regular school rooms. Mr. R— occupied himself with some of the farming operations, but there was other work for him to achieve, in exchange for which manual labor must have seemed a recreation. It is needless to say that as the founder of the association he felt himself, if not wholly, yet greatly responsible for its success, and the wear on his mental powers must have been great in his earnest endeavors to secure it. I do not think I realized at the time how arduous his task was; his pleasant wit and jocose manner deceived us as to the weary labor which worked his mind to the extent of its powers. He never failed to greet us with a joke, and his face bore no evidence of the anxiety which almost crushed him. His self-control was wonderful, and through it we were enabled to assist, to our utmost, the efforts which he made to insure our success. We did this without really knowing the danger we were in, and hope lightened our labors and enabled us to be of more use than if we had shared in his sometimes hopeless view of our situation. That this dark feeling was continuous with him could not be; some bright beams will lighten the darkest days and give energy to pursue a nobler course than that prompted by despair. It seems almost superfluous for me to dwell for a moment on the mental culture of Mr. R—, yet many of

the present generation may not be aware of his surpassing scholarship. His classical education was thorough, and as a theologian few surpassed him. The German language, which was not then as generally studied as at present, was well understood by him, and his knowledge of it comprised also the peculiar philosophy of that nation of deep thinkers, and was no doubt one of the agents in his philanthropic attempt at Brook Farm.

Of Mrs. R— I speak with a tenderness and affection which many long years have never chilled. I had known her before we met at Brook Farm, though not intimately. It was there that a friendship was formed between us which, on my part at least, existed as warmly as at first until her death. It is impossible to give an idea of the life she infused into all around her. To talk with her gave us strength for any effort, for "impossible" seemed a word unknown to her. She never shrank from any task she thought right for her to undertake. But there was one self-imposed task which none but a truly Christian woman would have undertaken; which almost all would have recoiled from, and few but those inured to such duty would have voluntarily performed. Among the pupils sent from abroad was a boy from Manila. He was apparently perfectly well when placed at Brook Farm, and it was not until after some months that a most loathsome disease made its appearance, and it was easily seen why he was sent so long a distance from his home, as a cold climate was deemed the only cure for him. His malady was elephantiasis. Mrs. R— performed all the duties of a nurse, and cleansed and bound up the leprous spots without ever betraying to him the sickening feeling which more than once nearly overcame her. By her efforts the disease was arrested for a time, and for more than three years he enjoyed his life with us; but, poor fellow, he was not cured, and the malady again made its appearance with more virulence than ever. About this time guano was much talked of as a remedy for all forms of this disorder, and it was tried for him; it did for a time alleviate, but there was

no permanent cure for him. Every kindness was shown him by all on the place, for his gentleness and amiability had drawn us towards him, and he remained with us until the final dissolution of the association, when he and a brother who was with him left to return to Manila, which he did not live to reach. Perhaps this digression from my subject may seem unnecessary, but I feel it due to Mrs. R— that her true nobility of soul and innate goodness should be made known in this slight sketch of her. Of her intellectual capacity it is not requisite to speak, for it is well known, and her brilliant conversational powers were appreciated by all who had the happiness to know her. Mr. C—, of New York, a brilliant lecturer and well-known literary man, whose noble thoughts and words have always enlisted themselves on the side of progress, with his brother also lived in this house for more than a year after my residence on the place. They were not associates, but were drawn towards us by sympathy with the movement, and they left us, as did several others, when our life in a great degree was changed by our new organization. The other residents were, as I have said, scholars.

Most of our pupils had their rooms in the Aerie, and the freedom of their intercourse with their teachers added much to the charm of our social gatherings. Thus the winter passed quickly away; but when the spring opened and farming operations commenced, I observed a shade of anxiety on the brows of those to whom we looked for the knowledge we received of our material success. It was evident that all was not smooth and prosperous, and that our income did not meet our expenses. A more economical system as regarded our table was then suggested, although how we could live upon less was a close question. As is usual on such occasions, butter was first attacked, and the quantity heretofore allowed was much reduced. I cannot enter into all the details of our cutting down operations, but I know coffee was among the victims, or rather we coffee drinkers were. Still all this retrenchment did not relieve us. A few new

pupils were added to our educational department, but not enough to give much assistance. People were shy of us; we were supposed to nourish some very fantastic views which encroached much on the decencies of society. I will not enumerate all the absurd stories which were circulated with regard to us; and although our outside friends, who still continued to feel an interest in us, paid no heed to these ridiculous inventions, there were thousands who looked upon us as little less than heathens who had returned to a state of semi-barbarism. Even many who understood us and our lives felt timid when it was a question of the education of their children; I do not mean it should be understood they were afraid of any influence we might have over them; and although they knew that our teachers were not only highly educated but had made their mark as learned men, they chose rather to give their children inferior teaching than to trust them to the wild theories of Brook Farm. There were some who rose superior to these prejudices, and I have never heard that they regretted it.

We who were living so quietly within ourselves did not realize all this, or understand how much evil was attributed to us. In the mean time, if we were to keep together, we must live, and how to do so became a very serious question. Many plans were thought of, but were not found to be practical. At last it was decided to increase the association by admitting members who should bring an industry with them. It was also agreed that workshops should be erected, and mechanics who had applied for admission, but for whom at the time there had been no place, should be recalled and should thus try to do for us what farming alone had not effected. I have not ventured to speak of the capabilities of the place with respect to cultivation, for being a woman I am not supposed to know much about its working details; but having lived for the greater part of my life in the country I think I know somewhat of the quality of land when I see it, and I do not think much of that possessed by Brook Farm was suited to

arable purposes. It is not for me to criticise the knowledge of those so infinitely my superiors, but I cannot say that gravel and sand, interspersed with picturesque rocks, produce very rich grass.

There was much natural beauty surrounding the place. The pine woods adjoining, though not belonging to it, were an endless source of enjoyment to its inmates, and became almost a place of worship to them. I remember we several times held divine service in one of its open glades. Our officiating clergyman was the Rev. W. H. Channing, then for a time making his home with us.

At last our experiment commenced, and we were to decide upon the efficiency of our mechanical labor. I was not one of the financial committee and cannot give the details of its working, and must wait until I have arrived at the proper epoch to state its results. Our new inmates were quite a respectable class of persons, and generally inclined to fulfill their duties; though I suspect you might have picked out one or two who thought they would lead an easier life with us than battling with the world. Among those who joined us at this time was a florist, a Dane by birth, and one who understood his business well. How really lucrative he made it for us I never knew, but he certainly added much to the beauty of the place. Greenhouses were erected for him, and everything which could insure success within reasonable bounds was placed at his command. Before his advent some of us had endeavored to cultivate flowers, but not prosperously, the soil being too sterile to insure their growth; but with the power which was given to him as an experienced person, our small beginnings became a beautiful reality. He was æsthetic in his ideas, and perhaps studied beauty a little more than profit. He felt so superior to the rest of us in the knowledge of his own art that he was impatient of the least control, and not willing to understand the necessity of economy in the exercise of his vocation. His wife and daughter came with him. The latter improved much, both mentally and personally, whilst with us, and be-

came much endeared to her young companions, who sincerely mourned her early death. This did not take place while with us, but not many years after our final dissolution. The father and mother were both extremely fond of dancing, a knowledge of which they had brought from Denmark, but in outward appearance it seemed in them a most solemn affair. The German did not exist in those days. All dances were welcome to us, and no one thought it a bore to join in a square dance. The waltz was not universally known, and when danced was not so affectionate as our young people now make it.

With the spring our hopes revived; our workshops were in operation, and many looked forward to a brilliant future; but there were those who did not take so cheerful a view of our situation, and I am afraid they were those who best understood its real condition; still no one was utterly despondent, and the cheerfulness of the place was not disturbed. Our amusements went on as usual, mingled with our graver avocations, and outsiders generally believed in our prosperity. As the pleasant weather came on, our visitors increased, some drawn towards us merely from curiosity, but, I am happy to say, many more from friendly feelings cherished for us. It was at the time when the Hutchinson family were at the height of their popularity. As they had shown some interest in our undertaking we invited them to visit us, which invitation they accepted, and passed a night with us. One great charm of their singing was the perfect accord of their voices. There was but little of the art of high training, but I think in listening to them you never felt its want.

During the summer months we received as an inmate a songstress of far different type, — Frances or Eliza Ostinelli, perhaps better known to the public as Signora Biscaccianti. She was then quite young, not more than seventeen, or even younger. She was given in charge to us by her father; and it was thought best by those in authority to place her under the immediate care of

one of our staid members. She was very pretty, and her musical talent made her doubly fascinating, so that I am afraid some of our pupils were not as attentive to their studies as it was proper for them to be. It was rather an arduous task for her chaperon, and she sometimes had to call assistance in sending to their homes these young admirers at the stipulated hour. It was a rule that all should be in their several houses by ten o'clock. I remember a ludicrous adventure resulting to myself from this rule. A party of us were playing whist at the Cottage; we all belonged there excepting the youngest, who was a pupil, and lived at the Hive. Being interested in our game we had not noticed the hour, when we were startled by the appearance of one whom we always recognized as chief, and on whose countenance we observed a menacing expression. He himself was somewhat disturbed when he saw who were the party at the table, and we could not help smiling at his evident annoyance. Our poor young friend was, however, immediately seized upon and very austere questioned as to his being at that hour, a quarter past ten, absent from his dwelling place. The young man did not seem in the least discomposed, but answered quietly. We did not interfere, being much amused at the effort with which our worthy chief maintained his gravity. At last he asked, "And how do you expect, sir, to enter the house, when you know the doors are locked at ten?" "Oh," said our undaunted youth, "I always get in at the pantry window." I need not say that bursts of laughter greeted this answer, in which none joined more heartily than the questioner himself. This was all well enough for once, but we thought it better either to limit our whist parties to the residents of the Cottage, or to be more careful about hours, feeling that rules should be observed.

But to return to Biscaccianti. Her music was a great delight to us, although her voice at that time had been little cultivated. It had great power and sweetness combined, and it must have possessed some peculiar quality, for our

friends on Spring Street told us they could distinctly hear her when singing in the open air in the evening, though the distance was at least three quarters of a mile in a straight line. I have since thought this could not have been very beneficial to her voice, but it was very pleasant to us. I think probably the happiest part of her life was whilst with us at Brook Farm, and perhaps it would have been better for her if she had remained longer with us. She was at Brook Farm but a few months, and then went with her father to Europe to complete her musical education. During her stay with us we had a small fancy party in the woods, principally for her gratification. The costumes were confined almost wholly to the younger residents, although the elders lent their countenance to it by their presence. It was a merry scene and ended with sunset. One group represented gypsies, and their encampment was really picturesque; there seemed almost a reality in it, and we could not refrain from holding out our hands to have our fortunes told. It was a bright afternoon, not too warm, and all the children on the place contributed to its gayety.

Among the many visitors of this summer was Margaret Fuller, and as may be supposed, much interest was excited by her visit. She was looked upon by her admirers as the most wonderful woman of the age, and, in many respects, she was so. So many men of acknowledged intellectual power did homage to her mind that every one must grant to her uncommon talent. I never so fully appreciated her as many of my friends did, and when listening to her wonderful conversations, — which, by the way, were limited to one person, herself, — and straining my mind to comprehend her meaning, I must own I have sometimes wished her English was rather plainer. Her sad fate has shrouded her in a romance which perhaps will be remembered longer than the impress of her mind will be felt, for she has left no writings of sufficient weight to insure her the fame she hoped to attain. In con-

nection with her I must here mention a young member of the association. His reverence for her was heartfelt, and he dwelt upon every word from her lips as something sacred. If you had asked him of her personal appearance I am sure his description of her would never have brought her before you as she was. The ideal which was impressed on his mind was all beauty, and he would hardly have understood you if you had dared to assert the contrary. When she left this country for Europe, had it been possible, he would have accompanied her, but his extreme youth made his friends oppose, for the time, such a project. He often talked to me of his great desire to see Europe, and what most fascinated his imagination was the wonderful cathedrals he had read of. After a few years his desire was gratified; he joined Miss Fuller, then the Marchesa d'Ossoli, in Italy. He returned with her in the fated vessel, and ended his life with hers.

In passing the laundry one day, the merry voices of its occupants, mingled with laughter, made me feel it must be a very pleasant place, and I had a strong desire to enter and offer myself as an assistant. They greeted me joyfully, as more assistance was needed, and I immediately began my work. It was something new to me to stand over a wash-tub, and from its novelty rather exciting, so I worked with all my power and complimented myself upon being so useful. Alas for poor human pride or vanity! I was not destined to long rejoicing, and when most exalted I ignominiously fell on being declared inefficient and of no use. I would not have it supposed this was any harsh decision, for it was both given and received in the pleasantest and merriest manner; and when I left the workers I laughingly told them that the time might come when they would be glad to have me, but I would never come to them again. My threat was doomed to be fulfilled, for not a great while afterwards I was sent for in great need, but I wisely held to my determination, being myself fully convinced of my total incapacity for usefulness in that line.

## HOME LIFE OF THE BROOK FARM ASSOCIATION.

## II.

WITH all our pleasant social intercourse, our industrial powers were not idle, and if in any way one could add a little to the treasury it was cheerfully contributed. All who had skill in any kind of fancy work made it useful, and every effort was used to enable us to continue our life at Brook Farm; and we murmured at no retrenchment that was thought necessary. Baked pork and beans were to us a Sunday luxury, and to hard workers they were not injurious; but an English baronet, not young, and more daintily nurtured, once dined with us on a Sunday, and the consequences were sad to him, for he died of apoplexy that same night. He had placed a man with us in whom he was interested, I do not know from what cause. Perhaps he had been his servant, but a nearer connection was whispered among us; at any rate he was better educated than most of his class at that time in England, and was a close observer and not an unwise thinker. His quaint remarks were very amusing, and there was no peculiarity of person or mind that escaped his observation. One lady, who was tall and very thin and remarkably erect, he always addressed as "your perpendicular majesty," and she good-naturedly answered to the title. He amused us much by his shrewd sayings, which often contained more wisdom than words of more pretension. He was a favorite with all, and particularly with the children on the place, for he had always a kind and merry word for them.

One evening, when we were still in the dining-room, after our tea, I was startled by the appearance at the door of what, for a moment, I really thought must be a ghost, so unearthly seemed the vision; and with dilated eyes and blanched cheeks I turned to Mr. R—, wondering if it were visible to him. His amused smile reassured me, and he whis-

pered, "It is Horace Greeley." My mind was very much relieved, and I became able to study the singular apparition before me. His hair was so light that it was almost white; he wore a white hat; his face was entirely colorless, even the eyes not adding much to save it from its ghostly hue. His coat was a very light drab, almost white, and his nether garments the same. I so long protested that his shoes matched the rest of his dress that I cannot now clearly remember whether they were really black or not. It is impossible for me to describe the effect he produced upon me, and it was not until I became acquainted with his gentle and pleasing manner that I could entirely overcome this first impression. I remember his reading to us, when we were all assembled in the parlor at the Aerie, some paper upon which he was desirous of receiving the criticism of our literary world. I am sorry to say the remembrance of its subject has passed from me, but I have an indistinct idea that it was something in reference to our own enterprise. The modesty of his bearing, the deference with which he listened to the remarks made, impressed me strongly. He was not then a politician, but earnest in his ideas of progress; perhaps not always as practical as common-sense persons would advise, but true and unselfish.

We had many other pleasant visitors whose agreeable conversation amused us for the few hours they stayed, but who left no mark on our minds, and we could think of them only as society callers, for whom we would get up a card receiver if it were not certain they would always find somebody at home. This summer an amusing though rather annoying incident happened. The house I lived in, the Cottage, had been built without a cellar; and it was thought it would be more healthy and less damp if one could be dug under it; so one of our members undertook to have it done. The necessary

workmen were procured, and when I remember the result of their work I feel happy to say they were not residents of the place. We have been often laughed at for our unpractical efforts, for our strange vagaries, and for the want of average common-sense actions, but these outsiders entirely outdid us and overcame us on our own ground. The mover of this enterprise was called away, but supposed he had left his instructions plain enough to be understood by those whom he left to do the work. The work went on with apparent smoothness, and we had no doubt as to its being rightly done, until one day, sitting in the parlor, I heard a strange noise, and looking up was horrified to see a yawning chasm where there ought to be and had been a fire-place. My room, which was over the parlor, was half filled with bricks. The chimney on the other side of the house shared the same fate, but fortunately for the lady who occupied the room she was not present, for her parlor fared worse than mine, the whole chimney having apparently taken possession of it. The workmen did not understand that chimneys without any foundation to support them could not stand, and by digging underneath them and leaving them hanging in the air they prepared the way for their inevitable fall, fortunately in this instance with no more consequence than a little disturbance to the nerves of a few of us. We amused ourselves on the return of the professor in congratulating him on the success of his experiment.

I have spoken of music as being one of our evening recreations at the Aerie. We had some pleasant voices amongst us, whose singing we enjoyed. The piano was also well played by one of our members, although not in the most popular style, and we listened to it with much pleasure. Happily for us, Brook Farm proved very attractive to a lady whose cultivated and sweet voice added much to the enjoyment of our lives. She visited us often, and at last became almost a permanent resident among us; although she was never a member of the association, we loved to think of her as

belonging to us. I cannot speak of all the friends who came to us during this summer, but among them Mr. R. W. Emerson must not be forgotten. His mere presence bore a charm with it which all must feel who have the privilege of associating with him, and I think he did us much good by his visits; the sweetness of his nature reached our hearts. He had always something interesting of his own to read to us, and there was a general feeling of delight when one of his visits was announced.

Although dancing was a very popular amusement, we varied it by others in which the intellect was more called into play. Tableaux were favorites with us, and during this time we had several exhibitions of them, some ludicrous, but oftener pictures in which beauty was aimed at, and sometimes produced in them. Much ingenuity was exerted in manufacturing our costumes and in arranging the groups. As we had no pictures for studies, the composition was entirely our own, and many of them did us credit. History was studied for our subjects, and one can easily imagine that Scott's novels supplied us with many for our most pretentious exhibitions. Charades and proverbs were also frequently acted, and our wits were called into requisition by our impromptu dialogues. These last were entirely unstudied, often our words not having been selected until the moment of performance, and only a rough idea given the actors of the manner in which the meaning should be conveyed to the spectators. There were often brilliant conversations which made one forget they were only for dramatic effect. To those who were entirely unacquainted with any of us it would be impossible to convey an idea of the brilliancy inclosed within this little circle. To be sure, it was a circle within a circle, and was destined hereafter to mar the entire unanimity which now existed among us.

One day two or three gentlemen came out to visit a member of the association, and as in showing the attractions of the place to strangers the pine woods were almost always visited on such occasions, they were escorted thither. One or two

of our gentlemen accompanied the party, and one of them, attracted by something on the other side of a fence, without much thought jumped over it, and to his great surprise sunk in a quagmire to the waist. He struggled to release himself, but ineffectually, for some time. Another of the party, oblivious to the reality and dreaming only of beauty, with his mind filled with musical or poetic visions alone, called to him, "What is it, a flower?" Our poor friend in the mean time was anything but a flower himself, when the more practical members of the party succeeded in assisting him from his very disagreeable situation to firmer ground.

I like to dwell upon this summer, for it was one of the pleasantest in my life. The members of this nucleus are now widely scattered, and, what is still more sad, not more completely separated by length of space than by the total dissimilarity of feeling and opinion which now divides those once so closely bound together. The present generation, to whom Brook Farm is entirely unknown, can never realize the excitement it once produced in its effort for social reform. Human nature must be remodeled before its bright visions can be realized. If social reformers would begin by elevating the moral natures of their followers, instead of exciting their passions, we might feel that in the course of ages Utopia could be a reality on earth; but I fear human nature, as it is, has much to overcome before such results can be obtained. What I have now said does not in the least apply to Brook Farm, for its one idea was to elevate and cultivate all that was good in every one, and a noble ambition that should govern men's moral and intellectual life and lead them to perfection. The so-called social reforms of to-day have a much more worldly object in view, and a spiritual life is very secondary to a material one.

As autumn approached, and a long winter was before us, much anxiety was felt by our leaders as to what the result might be before the spring opened upon us, and whether it might not end in the dissolution of our little community. The

immediate benefits from our industrial pursuits did not meet their hopes; unused to commercial pursuits, the slow process so often needed to establish and successfully prosecute a business was to them a mystery; and I really believe that some of us thought that to place men in a workshop was sufficient to make our fortune. We were children in the ways of the world, financially speaking, and we could not compete with the sharper, trained heads of lifelong workers. I think also that most of our mechanics were those who had not had much success in the world, and the same reason which probably prevented their being able to overcome the difficulties of a struggle which needed more energy than nature had given them was also the cause of their failure with us. I wish to throw no reflection on them, for no one can judge what they had to overcome but those who have been similarly placed. I can only say they did not succeed with us as we had anticipated, and the prospect before us was anything but cheerful. I must here remark that we had several skilled in their own line who under different circumstances would have been of material assistance to us, as has been proved by their after success when again thrown into the world to work their own way in it. It is pleasant to think that whilst with us they may have felt some influence which acted on their after lives. At any rate, success has attended them, and they are now valuable members of society. If at this time of our great need we could have had a good practical, experienced head, with full power to direct the industries of the place, who understood thoroughly the details necessary to insure success, he might have placed us in a situation to overcome the difficulties which beset us. As it was, we still worked on, and did not dare to whisper to each other what we dreaded to hear confirmed.

Our amusements went on as usual, and as the long evenings advanced we added Shakespeare readings to our other recreations. We had several very fine readers; and these were evenings which

we elder persons particularly enjoyed. I can recall many amusing incidents connected with them, such as very bad reading from *Romeo*, by one who was fully capable of rendering the part to the satisfaction of all, because the *Juliet* was excessively distasteful to him. For the credit of the place I will say that *Juliet* did not belong to us, but was an occasional resident. Coasting, during the winter, became a favorite amusement with our young people, and even the older ones joined in it. The hills around us afforded every facility for the exercise, and the moonlight evenings were pleasantly employed in this merry recreation. One evening I remember as being a particularly jovial one, as the boys had collected tar barrels and other materials for bonfires, and all "went merry as a marriage bell" until the runners of an old sleigh were introduced, with seats affixed to them, and three of our ladies were induced to place themselves on this rather risky conveyance; the remainder of the improvised sled was covered with boys hanging on wherever they could get a hold, and in this way was begun the descent of a steep hill. There were no means of guiding the vehicle, and it can easily be seen how dangerous was its progress. It was started all right for its destination, but unfortunately it swerved a little in its descent, and a cry burst forth, "They will go on to the rock!" The boys who were clinging to the mammoth sled threw themselves off, but the three ladies could not extricate themselves; one was thrown immediately on the rock, which was very large, almost making a small hill; another fell beside it, and the third, without knowing how she came there, was picked up on the other side of the rocky elevation. She must have been thrown over it, as she was on the opposite side from where the sled struck; she was totally unhurt. The only sufferer was the poor girl who was dashed on the rock; she was taken up senseless. She was soon carried home, but did not fully recover her consciousness until towards morning. Wonderful to say, her injuries were very trifling and she was only stunned for the time,

and was able to pursue her avocations, or at least a part of them, on the following day. This accident of course broke up the coasting for that evening, and we were rather a doleful returning party. The danger was soon forgotten, and coasting was as much in favor as ever, though sleighs were not again substituted for sleds.

I am writing entirely from memory, with no notes to guide me, for I kept no journal of those days, so I will not be positive that I may not commit some inaccuracies in the placing of incidents. All the facts I state I can vouch for, and the matter-of-fact way in which I have related them will absolve me from any accusation of having drawn on my imagination. I have tried to give some idea of what Brook Farm really was, and to show how quietly our lives passed there. I have said but little of our farming, for its details were unknown to me. Whether our cows were even commonly good I do not know, but I am sure they were not Alderneys. Our head farmer was indeed the only person on the place who really understood what farming should be, and I know that he did all that was in his power to make it profitable for the association. He was one of the most straightforward, upright, honest, and, let me add, industrious persons I ever met with; a man of few words, but what he said was to the purpose, and you knew they might be depended on. Gentle in his manner, I never heard of a rough word escaping him; there was no servility of manner; his nature was mild but with no lack of manliness; and when I met him lately at a social gathering of the remnant of Brook Farmers, I looked upon him as one who had been a guiding star among us. If he had had some half dozen men equal to himself to assist him in his labors, Brook Farm might have been a success; but to depend on men for digging, hoeing, mowing, etc., whose only implement of labor heretofore had been a pen, one could easily see would result in failure. As I look back it does not seem to me difficult to see why we did not succeed; but at the time our enthusiasm made the most of us believe

that failure was impossible, and that in some way, very indistinctly seen, our endeavors would end prosperously. I do not speak of those who held the reins of government, for they knew better, and whilst we romanced and idealized they were anxiously and almost hopelessly endeavoring to avert a catastrophe. I think the idea of only following one's impulses must by this time have received a check in their minds, if it had ever existed there, which I very much doubt, for however visionary they may appear, they must have known that a higher motive than mere self-gratification was necessary to overcome the distaste in many minds for active occupation. Among our more recent inmates, I fear there were many who held this idea, and consequently they were not as useful as had been hoped for. In vain a remedy was sought after. True, they might have been voted out of the association, but who would fill their places?—and labor was absolutely needed in every department, except in that of teaching. No wonder these were dark days for us.

Among the new-comers there had been admitted a man strongly imbued with Fourieristic ideas. He endeavored to inculcate the doctrine, but at first little heed was paid to him. Fourier's works had never reached us, and very vague notions of their contents dwelt in the minds of the most of us. But this ignorance was not to last; sufficient reached the ears of our chiefs to stimulate their curiosity and make them wish to look farther into this philosophy of the French social reformer. His works were procured and an earnest study of them commenced. The regular routine inculcated—continual labor, varied in its character, which would act as a recreation on the laborer—seemed a revelation to those who longed to bring order out of the existing desultory method of conducting our industries. For once New York had taken precedence of Boston in an "ism," and in a small clique of that city Fourier's writings had been much studied. Intercourse was opened with the leader of this clique, and much information obtained from him as to the work-

ing of the system. As he had never practically tried it himself, his knowledge must have been based only on the ideal visions of the author. I believe he was sincere in his own convictions of the good which might result from this mode of life according to his own ideas of what life should be, and his subtle reasonings, if they did not entirely convince, had at least the power to overcome any reluctance to change the entire organization of our association. The determination to do so was no doubt influenced in a great degree by the absolute necessity there was of some bold effort to enable us to exist, and there seemed no other alternative than either to adopt this course or to dissolve the association. To many of us this would have been as a dissolution of family ties, for although much had crept in during the last six or eight months which was distasteful to the æsthetic natures of many of the associates, yet the remembrance of what had been clung closely around them and bound them firmly together. These were weary times; a great change was before us. For myself, personally, I did not at all enter into the Fourieristic movement. Visionary as our past life may have seemed to many, it was really reasonable compared to the one before us. The small details of the Fourier system were, to be sure, extremely dry and unpoetical, but the higher flights to which it pointed soared far beyond reasonable belief or scientific knowledge of the solar system.

I have before said that when I first entered the association it was not from any sympathy with the peculiar views of its members, but because I became so attached to them personally that imperceptibly I dwelt more on the real beauty of their lives than on what had appeared to me fantastic. At first a strong sense of the ludicrousness of my position had been the dominant feeling, and even now I think it wonderful how soon this feeling melted away. At this time I thought much of this change which had taken place in me, and it influenced me in my resolve not to leave the place, as I at one time had serious thoughts of

doing. Perhaps curiosity had also some influence in my remaining. As spring approached, a movement was made towards commencing our new organization. I was notified that my quarters were to be moved to the building known as the Pilgrim House. The reason of its being so named was that it was built by two brothers from Plymouth, who were interested in the first association formed, and who at one time intended occupying it themselves with their families. I do not know why this project was abandoned, or on what terms the house was ceded to the association. Neither externally nor interiorly did it possess much attraction.

Having originally been intended for two families, it had none of the quaint appearance of even a common country house. It was very much like two houses placed *dos à dos* instead of side by side, and was a very uncouth building, with many rooms in it which were useful for our increased numbers, but did not satisfy an eye for symmetrical proportions. Among them were two large parlors, joined by folding doors, which became our ball room whenever we were inclined for a dance, and were occupied on all convivial occasions. As very little furniture was needed at such times, chairs were the only decoration of the rooms, and their every-day appearance was desolate enough, very different from the cheerful parlor of the Aerie.

In speaking of the buildings I would mention one which, although not belonging to us, yet entered into our history, being, excepting for a very short interval, occupied by some of our community. It was directly opposite our entrance and was called the Nest; why so named I do not know, except that among its first occupants was a family with small children. It was a pleasant little place, but somehow those who lived there seemed in a degree separated from us, living more entirely by themselves, more like a separate family who visited us as neighbors, and even in that way seldom joining us in our social meetings. It was as if the atmosphere which encircled us did not reach beyond our gates,

and the moment that we crossed the road we had left Brook Farm far in the distance. I cannot invest with poetry our domestic life, which was, of course, monotonous, for we could not carve out any very original way of making beds, cooking, and washing dishes, all of which fell to our lot, unæsthetic as it may sound. Excepting the cooking, all the domestic duties were generally performed by the younger females on the place, and a more willing set of workers could hardly be found. Among them was one of whom I wish to say a few words. She was uncommonly pretty and had already gained the love of one of the foreign pupils. She was devoted to the ideas which first brought the associates together, but felt no sympathy with the new ideas which afterwards became the governing principle, and left us when the whole nature of the place was changed. She has since become known by her charming stories, which illustrate many of the truths deep-seated in her mind. I remember her as one of the most active in our lighter domestic work, and with five or six of her own age she gave grace and brightness to our life. I cannot call them a merry set, for their lives were deeply impressed with a thoughtfulness beyond their years; yet youth, with the usual happiness attending it, must always give a brighter color to its surroundings than falls to the lot of maturer years. I think there is not one of them now alive who would not say that was one of the happiest periods of her life. Some of them, I have heard, have had greater trials than often occur to us dwellers on earth, but they have nobly borne them and lived them down. There were no feeble spirits among these first members of Brook Farm. Their lives were earnest and their aims noble, and if they did not attain the life they hoped for, their natures enabled them to bear the hardships of life with fortitude. I would once more speak of these young girls and their work. They felt it no grievance to toil for the general good, and their neatness and activity were pleasant to see. To be sure, our rooms did not contain the elaborate adornments

of a fashionable lady's toilet, and their simplicity made the task much easier. There were no carpets excepting on one or two of the parlors, therefore sweeping was easy, and curtains we had none. I am almost ashamed to own that a hired cook ruled in the kitchen when I first became a resident of Brook Farm, and she continued there for five or six months afterwards. Whether the task was considered too arduous, or none felt themselves sufficiently competent to undertake it, I do not know, but think it must have been the latter feeling, for I never knew any one shrink there from work that must be done, if she or he were able to do it. When reduced expenditure became more apparently necessary, a noble woman came forward and offered to undertake the duty. She had had but slight experience and must have felt many disheartening doubts of her capacity, but, with a will to succeed, what cannot be achieved? She conquered all obstacles, and kept her post until our final dissolution. Wages were saved, but her strict economy sometimes caused a small rebellion; still she continued unwaveringly on her course, and if we missed some few delicacies our food was always ample, and we had no right to complain. The laundresses were always of the residents, and Mrs. R—, as I have already said, was among the most efficient. The ironing room was moved to the Pilgrim House as soon as it was finished, and occupied the two kitchens, which were thrown into one. This was a very pleasant, cheerful place, at least inside, and we forgot its lonely exterior in the merriment with which we filled it. I would like to say a few words on one phase of our life which may be interesting to some. I have spoken of our amusements. This was not all our life. We all felt incited to study by the learning which surrounded us, and formed ourselves into different classes, some taking up one study and some another. Botany was a favorite among us, and we had able teachers, who, if they would sometimes pull my well-arranged bouquets to pieces, were nevertheless fully able to repay the desecration by the

pleasant knowledge they imparted. German was a favorite study, and Greek and Saxon were not neglected. Pleasant readings, with annotations, especially of classical authors, were very frequent, and Brook Farm, if it answered no other purpose, was a school for all who entered it.

The Pilgrim House was placed in a very barren spot, with no trees near it, and altogether the change was not pleasant to me. I had always lived at the Cottage, which was in itself a beautiful little home, and I had become attached to it. Of course I must yield my own personal comfort for what was thought to be advantageous for the good of the whole. The educational plan was to be remodeled, at least so far as concerned the smaller pupils on the place, who before had never been strictly confined to hours and rules. This was evidently a very good move, as it had always appeared wonderful to me how they had ever gained any book knowledge at all, and a more systematic course would certainly be an advantage to them, if it were only for the sake of acquiring orderly habits, which are a great help in the routine of common life. The Cottage was looked upon as the proper building to be appropriated to educational purposes. As it was decidedly the prettiest house on the place, it was thought the youthful mind would be impressed by it and lessons become easier; and it was held that every means should be employed to make the hours of school discipline pleasant, so that the pupils should forget it was not an agreeable recreation. This view is delightful in theory, but in my compulsory move I could not help remembering the state of the desks in a school-room, as well as the more immovable parts of the apartment, such as I had seen in my youth when attending an academy for both sexes. However, go I must, and I was soon domiciled in my new apartment. The new Fourierite system began to be organized, and the poetry of our lives vanished in what we hoped would prove more substantially advantageous.

Of the Cottage and its inmates I must

add a few words. It was the next building erected after the Aerie, and was altogether the best finished house on the place. The form was something like a Maltese cross, the centre being devoted to the staircase and each of the four points containing a room. It was very pretty to look at on the outside, but as three sides of each room were necessarily exposed to the weather, the Cottage was warm in summer and cold in winter, picturesqueness having been more studied than commonplace comfort. Still it was a very pleasant place to live in, bright and cheerful, and I was very loath to leave it when the necessities of the association destined it for other purposes.

The two most prominent occupants of this house were so very different in their natures that the wonder is they could have belonged to the same species. Mr. —, the elder of the two, was of a most delicately sensitive organization, and discords of every kind were as antagonistic to him as were false chords in music. His whole life seemed one dream of music, and I do not think he was ever fully awake to all the harsh gratings of this outer world. We were indebted to him for much of the pleasure of our evening social life. He was too really musical to endure the weariness of teaching beginners the first rudiments of his own art, although for some time he was our only teacher. I must say he was wonderfully patient, considering his temperament, in the task he had assumed, for his nerves must have been most fearfully taxed in some of his labors; but his outward demeanor did not bear testimony to what must often have been his earnest desire to tear his hair out by the roots. Mr. —, the younger, was so entirely different in his physical con-

struction that even his tread told you that his nerves as well as his muscles were of iron. Both these gentlemen were fine classical as well as German scholars, but the latter had more power in imparting his knowledge and was one of the finest teachers at Brook Farm. The pupils dreaded coming with an imperfect lesson to him, for although not harsh in his manner towards them, they respected his power and did not like to come under his censure. He was exceedingly pleasant in his social intercourse with us, but entered less into it than the others; yet when he could be induced to join in any amusement, no one added more to the enjoyment of the evening than himself, and it was a real pleasure to engage him in a charade.

In closing my description of this first period of Brook Farm I wish to mention the very pleasant reunion which took place since I first commenced writing my reminiscences of this exceptional part of my life. To me it was a great pleasure to meet even a small gathering of my former associates, and the mutual wonder expressed on the faces as we were made known to each other was very amusing. Many of us had not met for at least thirty years, and in that time wonderful changes had taken place. Young girls who were then in their teens were now grandmothers, and middle-aged persons were white with age. But we were none of us too old for our eyes not to brighten as we warmly shook hands and uttered our greetings. It was a good thought of those who originated this festival, and from my heart I thank them. Pleasant letters were read from many of those who from various causes could not be present, and for a time space was obliterated and we again felt ourselves Brook Farmers.