there is no record. People who felt doubts of the moral character of their butcher, simply because he was a butcher, could not take kindly to hunting, and probably not even to fishing. Dr. Codman says: "I do not remember ever seeing a gun on the place;" and the chances are that the woods about the Farm and the quiet waters of the Charles held undisturbed the life within them.

PUBLIC READING ROOM
DURANGO

CHAPTER III

THE SCHOOL AND ITS SCHOLARS

THE most immediate and at times the only source of income was the school, the establishment and maintenance of which always held a conspicuous place in this scheme. The transcendental philosophy could not well avoid laying particular stress on intellectual development and culture, and the student life of the farm was animated by a pervasive enthusiasm and held to an unvarying standard. In certain particulars the educational policy was ideally good, proceeding as it did on the theory that perfect freedom of intercourse between students and a teaching body of men and women whose moral attainments were not distanced by their mental accomplishments, could not fail to justify itself. During the first two years the chief disciplinary measures consisted in the attempt to arouse a sense of personal responsibility, and to communicate a passion for intellectual work. There were no study-hours. Each pupil studied when and where he would, and recitations for the older students were distributed through the latter part of the day.

The farm was always short of "hands," but there was never any lack of heads in the Department of Instruction — an incidental testimony to the superiority of the Association's brain power as compared with its muscular ability. There was an infant school for children under six; a primary school for those under ten; and children whose purpose it was to take the regular course of study laid down by the institution were placed in the preparatory school, which fitted youths for college in six years. Otherwise the studies were elective. There was also a course in theoretical and practical agriculture, which covered three years, and which was in charge of John S. Brown. It was understood that each pupil should give an hour or two each day to some form of manual labor — a requirement that met with disfavor from some, at first; but resentment quickly gave place to interest, if not to devotion, and an outsider usually found it impossible to distinguish between the members and the pupils of the Association in the matter of attachment to the cause. One of the commonest avocations for the boys was hoeing, and the girls helped at dish-washing and other of the lighter household tasks. Much stress is laid on the quality of the class-room work in consequence of the wholesome physical condition produced by this unique environment. On the other hand, it is not to be denied that some

of the pupils who worked eight or ten hours a day, as an equivalent for board and instruction, and studied hard besides, met with the usual fate of those who ignore physiological laws. Much of the boisterousness of youth was lacking; partly because many of the usual artificial conditions against which boisterousness is a natural protest were absent, and partly because all but the youngest realized something of the seriousness of the purpose which underlay the undertaking. Laughter and merriment there were, in large measure, but few outbursts of wild hilarity or uncontrolled animal spirits.

Mrs. Kirby says that the Farm was a "grand place for children." They were quick to feel the sympathetic interest in their pleasure and work, and they too were affected by the general sense of freedom. One of the teachers in the infant school declined at first to accept this duty, on the ground that it was unwise to subject a young child to restraints for which he felt an instinctive and healthy dislike, such as sitting still and learning the primer. Mrs. Kirby and Miss Abby Morton both gave efficient service in this section of the school, which was reorganized under a stricter discipline when the Fourier movement took possession of the place.

Miss Marianne Ripley presided over the primary department, and had with her in the

Nest the two sons of George Bancroft, George and John; the two Spanish boys from Manila, Lucas and José Corrales; and James Lloyd Fuller, the youngest brother of Margaret Fuller. The latter had no intention of remaining a neglected genius, and it is recorded of him that he kept a diary which it would be absurd to call private, since it was his habit to tear out pages and leave them about so that the objects of his displeasure could not well avoid finding them.

The curriculum of the preparatory school had always included such branches as Latin, Italian, German, moral philosophy, and the English classics; but the advent of many young men for the special purpose of study made it necessary to introduce Greek, mathematics, and other advanced courses. There were students from Manila, Havana, Florida, and Cambridge — for Harvard College indicated Brook Farm as a fitting resort for young men whose consecration to extra-collegiate interests rendered them subjects for temporary seclusion, and preferably a country life. Reasonably enough, perhaps, botany was exceedingly popular with those who were feeling their first real contact with natural beauty; and since the neighborhood provided liberally in the way of specimens, there was every excuse for rambles to wood and river. Mr. Ripley taught mathematics and

philosophy, using Cousin as a text-book in his philosophy classes. Mrs. Ripley was responsible for imbuing many minds with a taste for history and modern languages. She had the power to transmit her own intensity of interest to most of those whom she instructed, and she inspired in them a genuine fervor for culture.

Dana's classes were in Greek and German, the latter being full of pupils who yearned not only to discover the beauties of German literature, but who admired the rather severe methods which the scholarly young tutor introduced. The shame of the youth who entered Dana's class-room with an unlearned lesson differed in quality from that which he felt in other class-rooms under the same circumstances. The teaching of music and Latin fell to the lot of John S. Dwight; in the former he was assisted by his sister Frances, and in the latter by his sister Marianne. So penetrating an influence was his musical instruction that there has been no occasion to consider his merit as a Latin teacher, although it seems just to believe that if he had done anything extraordinarily good or bad in this department, somebody would have noted it. A class in singing was started; the masses of Haydn and Mozart were gradually taken up; and in instrumental music the standard from the beginning was high. Music was not the only art which was encouraged. Miss Hannah

B. Ripley, a niece of George Ripley, taught drawing, and Miss Amelia Russell, who communicated life to the Association in many ways, gave lessons in dancing, which one suspects to have been much in demand. The department of belles-lettres was confided to George P. Bradford, a graduate of Harvard and a man of much cultivation and charm. His endeavors in behalf of unprofitable knowledge could not have been arduous among these "unworldlings."

At the end of the second year there were in the school thirty boys and girls, whose fathers and mothers believed with Mr. Fuller that it was a good thing to send children where they "would learn for the first time, perhaps, that all these matters of creed and morals are not quite so well settled as to make thinking nowadays a piece of supererogation, and would learn to distinguish between truth and the 'sense sublime,' and the dead dogma of the past." This was a rare demand on a secondary school, and rarer still was the disposition to meet it; but for this very reason the school could never have been popular. The wonder is not that this part of the institution declined under the later attacks of the press against Fourierism, but that it so long held its prestige. While it is manifestly impossible to gage the intellectual impetus referable to the Brook Farm school, it is equally impossible to ignore it in the face of much direct testimony

and in view of the honorable career and high character of many of its students.

A son of Orestes A. Brownson was there; Miss Deborah Gannett, a niece of Ezra S. Gannett, familiarly known as Ora, who was notable for having dared to tease Hawthorne, and who afterward became the wife of Charles B. Sedgwick of Syracuse; Miss Caroline A. Kittredge, afterward married to James Theodore Allen of West Newton; Miss Sarah F. Stearns, a niece of Mrs. Ripley, who was also a member of the Association, and who became a Roman Catholic and entered a convent; Miss Annie M. Salisbury, who has published a little pamphlet on Brook Farm; Horace Sumner, a younger brother of Charles Sumner, — a delicate youth, of less intellectual force than his brothers and sisters, — whose admiration for Margaret Fuller led him to join her later in Europe, whither he had gone in quest of health, and who, returning with the Ossolis on the doomed *Elizabeth*, met his death with them, — these were all there at one time or another.

One young woman who was a pupil-teacher, and who should be especially considered, was Georgianna Bruce, afterward Mrs. Kirby, and quoted throughout this book under that name. She was about twenty-two years old when she went to Brook Farm on the agreement that she was to work eight hours a day for board and

instruction. She had with her there a brother, fourteen years of age, who was also received as a pupil-worker. Her first duties were ironing on certain days, preparing vegetables for dinner every day, and helping to "wash up" after supper. At the end of a year she was admitted as a *bona fide* member of the Association, when it included only a dozen people. She was an English girl of reputable but somewhat humble birth. She early found that she had her own living to earn, and this she contrived to do in many and eventful ways. She had great vivacity, some sentimentality, and a disposition which might have been peppery had she not possessed sufficient discretion to control herself. After an experience in England and America, well calculated to develop her natural strength of character, she found herself in the family of Dr. Ezra Stiles Gannett, the Unitarian clergyman of Boston, as a sort of nursery governess. Imperfectly educated, she did not lack ambition, and was constantly seeking to improve herself. Her "Years of Experience" contain some lively chapters on Brook Farm, for she observed shrewdly, although she was not unappreciative, and she often does justice to her surroundings. In 1871 and 1872 she contributed several unsigned papers entitled "Reminiscences of Brook Farm" to *Old and New*. The narrative must not be taken too seriously, although it and her

book have furnished a good share of the material usually drawn upon. She felt compelled to disguise real personages, and "in one or two instances to combine one character with another." This license and some palpable errors into which her imperfect recollection of things long past betrayed her, give almost the effect of a fictitious narrative. In view of the genuine kindness shown her and her somewhat troublesome brother, it has been intimated that her recollections betray signs of unfairness and an acid temper.

The Associates used to write many letters, not only to outsiders, but to each other, and at any time of day or night. The letter which follows was written certainly not before the summer of 1842, by Georgianna Bruce to a girl friend in Boston. It gives such a clear picture of the actual movement of the life at Brook Farm, and is so full of good spirits, that it is given entire. It is an admirable epitome of the earlier days.

EYRIE, BROOK FARM, *Saturday Night*.

I received yours, dearest, this afternoon by Dr. Dana, who, with I don't know how many others, was out here. We met Barbara Channing and others on the doorstep on our return from a boat ride. Three or four of the boys have clubbed together and bought a boat, painted it, fitted it up with sails, compass, etc., and especially a carpet (Paris they say) for the ladies' feet, in arranging which

they have taken, as you may suppose, clear comfort, as well as kept clear of mischief of some sort, I dare say. And this afternoon was the first time that it was honored with our presence. Four of us girls, — Mary G.[annett], Abby Morton, Caddy Stodder, and myself, with five boys, — our Spanish Manuel being Captain *for the day*, — set sail in Charles River after having walked a mile through the fields and woods, not to mention swamps. We sailed a good way up, passed under the Dedham bridge, then down, singing away, Abby and I. Oh! the woods round Cow Island are so rich, the young pale green birch, down by the bank, contrasted with the dark tall pines, the sky with just enough of *life* in the clouds to satisfy me, and the deep water with just a ripple on the surface, and so warm that you could hold your hand in, formed a picture that seemed perfect. But then came in *man* to mar and disfigure. Two men with hatchets cutting down those same beautiful trees and another with a line hooking the fish (for mere amusement, most likely). I really sympathize with Mr. Bradford who writes me that "in cutting down the green young branches for pea-sticks he is really afraid of the vengeance of the wood demon and looks around to see if any Brownies are near." Well, we got home perfectly safe as I informed you, and after tea a large party of all sorts came up here to hear some music, so here I must stop to tell you that to my inexpressible joy the piano and Mr. Dwight have at length come. The piano is a handsome one of a sweet tone, and Mr. D. has some of the best of music which I use, principally German. You will know that every spare moment is devoted to music now. We are going to get up a glee club forthwith. George and Burrill Curtis (of whom I will speak or perhaps have spoken before) take the bass and tenor, I and Abby the soprano and second. Then a large number who know very little about music are going to commence with the rudiments. Poor Mr. D. said to-night, when we

were washing up the tea things with two or three of the gentlemen wiping, and groups here and there discussing, "How *fast* you *live* here; I *like* it, but really my head, my head suffers," and then we had a talk about it, and Burrill said that he had noticed how we seemed to drive with everything, but that we were in debt and must not therefore be at leisure, and that we must be willing to bear the consequences of the errors and sins of past time for a season, and after all he could not think of living in the old way again; it seemed like stagnation, vegetation. Burrill is not of age, and his brother only eighteen. They both have large fortunes, I believe, and have come out of the most fashionable society of New York, their father entirely absorbed in *banks* and dollars. Burrill is a perfect beauty, entirely unconscious, and then (as Sarah [Stearns] says) so human. If you speak to him, he listens as if he thought there was *at least* a chance that you were worth listening to. He stands alone and acts for himself. His brother looks to him and is unconsciously influenced by him. George has a rich voice and they sing duets together — the Irish melodies which I love so much, etc. George plays beautifully and entirely by ear. Is it not grand to see them come out so independently and work away at the peas!!! We have had the Mortons from Plymouth to make a visit, leave two of their boys and Abby, and choose a building spot. You would like Mr. M. He looks just as you can fancy the most loving of the Puritans looked, and really *is* one, divested of all their superstition and bigotry. He read a letter to us before he left, that he had written to a nephew now in Germany, explaining the community principles, etc. I wish you could have heard it. It is so strange, as well as pleasant, to hear the ideas which different persons entertain of the same subject, expressed in their own peculiar way; and really if I should judge by the most beautiful letters I have read, written by one and another among us, I should

think that our *grandchildren* would not waste time were they to collect some of them if they wanted to trace the history of the *first community*.

We number over sixty and several more are coming. We have now a long table in the entry. Mrs. Barlow is going to New York for a week, and I have offered to take the *joys* and cares of a mother to her two boys during her absence, concerning which duties and pleasures we have had no little merriment. "*Orah dear*" [Gannett] has not returned, but her sister Mary has come — a smart, pleasant, trusting child. Of course I do not love her as well as Orah yet, but I have a sort of a *motherly* feeling to her, and she turns to me as one does to a sister. To-morrow I must write her. Only think of my writing all this after twelve o'clock with Sarah snoring away, and Sophia [Ripley] would not hear of my practising. And now I have not told you of the beautiful wild flowers I found in the woods and gave them to Mr. Dwight because he loves them, nor of how I took my scholars to walk this morning and we sang in the woods. But I must say good night, dearest, or shall lose my breakfast to-morrow. Now you will kiss dear little Kit for me, won't you? and give my love to all. I had an invitation to ride in and out last Sunday, but having sprained my ankle and not feeling very well, I did not think that even to *see you* I ought to risk making myself more sick. I got the medicine, etc. Be sure and come out if you can; I have much to tell you which I cannot write. I took a walk in the woods to-night. If I am ever so tired or excited, this always has a calming, quieting influence.

Your loving sister,

GEORGY.

Postscript. What a horrid matter of fact concern this is; but you must take what there *is*, not what you wish

for, and the spirit moved in the direction of *facts*. Do come and spend the day if you can with Mary Anne.

I have just thought of the interesting fact that if I had related the story of the boat in Boston to any one not feeling as much interested as yourself, without specifying the ages of the boys, 15–19, etc., it would have been reported round that at Brook Farm the little boys were allowed to go on the river at all times and seasons without any restraint, and that a *few* had already been drowned!

The terms for board and tuition, including all branches, is five dollars for a girl and four for a boy per week. This includes music, drawing, etc., there being no extra charges except washing.

Mrs. Kirby's fellow-teacher in the infant school, Abby Morton, has, as Mrs. Diaz, become known in American literature for the excellent quality of her humor. The author of the "William Henry" books is even more thoroughly imbued to-day with the spirit of Brook Farm than she was during her slight affiliation with the community.

Dr. John Thomas Codman, whose book, "Brook Farm: Historic and Personal Memoirs," is the most comprehensive account as yet published, is still living, and practising the profession of dentistry in Boston. Dr. Codman has told his own story so generously that little remains to say, beyond the important fact that, although he did not arrive as a pupil with his parents and brother and sister until March, 1843, when some of the choicest spirits were

already gone, and although he stayed on well into the bitter end, he champions the cause of his youth with undimmed ardor. He saw the worst, and is the most copious witness of the latter days and still he is a Brook Farmer. His brother Charles H. Codman was also there, and lived to carry his early imbibed principles into the conduct of his picture shop. This brother died by a painful accident on September 18, 1883. The sister Rebecca married Butterfield, one of the printers of the *Harbinger*, and is still living.

Two of the students afterward achieved reputation as able soldiers in the Civil War. One — General Francis Channing Barlow — was born on October 19, 1834, in Brooklyn, New York, and was graduated at Harvard College in the class of 1855. Though a lawyer by profession, at the opening of the Civil War he was doing editorial work on the *Tribune*. Entering the volunteer service as a private, he was soon commissioned as Lieutenant Colonel of the Sixty-first Regiment, New York Volunteers, and was made Brigadier General in September, 1862, for distinguished services at Fair Oaks. He was twice severely wounded, was with Grant in the late campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, and was mustered out with the rank of Major General. From the State of New York he held the office of Secretary of State, from 1865 to

1868, and of Attorney General, from 1871 to 1873, when he was instrumental in the prosecution of the Tweed Ring. During the last twenty years of his life he was a brilliant member of the New York bar, and died on January 11, 1896.

Another soldier, Colonel George Duncan Wells, was a youth of about fifteen, whose connection with the Farm has seldom been mentioned, although he prepared for college there under Dana's particular attention. He was a Greenfield boy and was a fine, manly fellow, with long blond curls; erect and handsome, he was equally attractive to the young and old of both sexes, and the young boys especially conceived a high admiration for his superior skill in all youthful sports. Arthur Sumner, a pupil who has published some interesting pages of recollections, refers with enthusiasm to his appearance as an Indian brave in the famous "gypsy picnic." He entered the Sophomore class at Williams in 1843, showing evidences of unusual training for his age. The activity and grasp of his mind, his superior literary taste, especially in poetry, and his wide reading occasioned general comment. After studying law in Greenfield and at Harvard, he practised it for several years in Greenfield; he served two terms in the Massachusetts Legislature, attracting more than

ordinary notice both as a lawyer and as a legislator, on account of his brilliant forensic ability; in 1859 he became a justice of the Police Court in Boston.

When the war broke out, Wells, though far from sympathizing with the abolition sentiment, threw himself into the movement for the preservation of the Union. Like General Butler, he would have been glad if this consummation had been possible without the necessity of freeing a single slave, and he frankly stated his position in his recruiting speeches. He was appointed Lieutenant Colonel of the First Massachusetts Infantry on May 22, 1861, and became Colonel of the Thirty-fourth Massachusetts Infantry on July 11, 1862. His efficiency as an officer may be justly inferred from the requests entered at different times, at the War Department, by Hooker and Doubleday, to have the Thirty-fourth Massachusetts sent to them as a special favor. Such commendation indirectly confirms the testimony of his official associates that he was brave and cool, strict in discipline, and yet never unmindful of the comfort of his men; jealous of the reputation of his regiment, but anxious to recognize good service on the part of any of his soldiers. One reminiscence which calls up the traditions of Brook Farm states that "the Colonel and Chaplain have thus far been masters of the butter which is, nevertheless, decidedly strong; but the rest confess themselves beaten."

Wells was mortally wounded on October 13, 1864, in a skirmish which preceded the battle of Cedar Creek, and the diary of his successor contains these words: "God only knows how tenderly and sincerely we all loved him. The 34th has lost its idol."

George William Curtis and James Burrill Curtis

Among the young men at Brook Farm there was a high level of good looks, but no others excited so much attention as the two Curtis brothers. *Ambo Arcades* they certainly were, tall and strong of limb, graceful, and endowed besides with attractive social qualities. Burrill, as he was called, was two years older than his brother, who was born on February 24, 1824. Until the latter was twenty-five years of age the brothers were closely united, sharing all duties and pleasures. They were at school together at Jamaica Plain, at Providence, after their father's second marriage, at Brook Farm, and at Concord.

Independence of opinion and freedom of conduct do not always coexist, but an entire self-assertiveness showed early in George Curtis. The experience at Brook Farm, with the constant though good-natured clash of theories, could not prove other than valuable to his unformed character, for he is properly to be considered as a scholar, not as a full associate. Able as the

brothers were through fortunate circumstances to do what seemed desirable to them, they were by no means free from the impressionability of youth, and fell under the double spell of Emerson's genius and the vague but alluring influence of Transcendentalism. It was natural, therefore, that they should, in 1842, go to Brook Farm, where they became boarders for two years, George being twenty years of age when the stay ended. They were industrious in their studies of German and of agricultural chemistry, but in particular of music under Dwight. It is probable that they took a hand in more exacting pursuits, even when their spirit of gallantry made no suggestions, for when Arthur Sumner first saw George he was "chopping fagots with a bill-hook behind the Eyrie all alone;" but for picnics these "young Greek gods," as Miss Russell calls them, had a genuine predilection. It has often been told how the younger of the two, dressed in a short green skirt, danced as Fanny Elssler — a celebrity much in vogue in those days. The same kindly memory recalls a picture of George Curtis and George Bradford, on cold, stormy washing days, "hanging out the clothes for the women — a chivalry equal to that of Walter Raleigh throwing down his cloak before the Queen Elizabeth."

They were true amateurs throughout their brief stay, and there is nothing to show that

they held more than a well-bred complaisance toward the various phases of cultivated radicalism. George, in writing to his father, to whom he seems never to have yielded a single point of opinion, said, having the Farm in view: "No wise man is long a reformer, for wisdom sees plainly that growth is steady, sure, and neither condemns nor rejects what is or has been. Reform is organized distrust." In after life all that he said of these two years was softened by the gracious autumnal mist of memory; if there was any sourness in his recollections, he concealed it. It is possible to exaggerate, also possible to underrate, the effect upon him of the Brook Farm experience. A practical soul who disliked Curtis's views on the rights of women, once flung out his conviction that "there must be a screw loose somewhere in a man who graduated from that lunatic school at Brook Farm." There was, however, a thread of revolt in the pattern of his character, else Curtis would not have sought as he did almost at once, in the company of his brother, the influence of Concord. Here, as at Brook Farm, was the mixture of farm work and of association with cultivated minds. The brothers simply passed from one grade to another of the same curriculum. Undue parental restriction would have worked no wise result in the upbringing of a young man who could ask his father:

"What does it matter to me or God whether Lowell or Manchester be ruined?" A believer in a high tariff might well have despaired, as David for Absalom, over a son who left a Rhode Island merchant as an interested third party out of such a calculation.

When the Curtises left Brook Farm, they must for a time have created a void. A love for all that is beautiful had its place among the residents there, and when George Ripley spoke of the "two wonderfully charming young men," it was with that same fondness with which Miss Russell mentions Burrill as having a typical Greek face and long hair falling to his shoulders in irregular curls. Of George she notices that, though only eighteen years old, he "seemed much older, like a man of twenty-five possibly, with a peculiar elegance, if I may express it — a certain remoteness of manner, however, that I think prevented persons from becoming acquainted with him as easily as with Burrill." In recording his contribution to the music at Brook Farm, Mrs. Kirby tells with gratitude that Curtis was never "guilty of singing a comic song."

In spite of the potent influence of Emerson, and later of the direct companionship at Concord, during intervals of farm work, of Emerson himself, and of Hawthorne, Thoreau, Alcott, and the poet Channing, "the extremely practical,

unspeculative quality of his mind was making itself felt." Determined on a career of literature, he first put forth in 1845 a few letters from New York to the *Harbinger*. The brothers did not leave Concord, however, until they had fully tried the merits of a combination of physical labor and intellectual life. They delved, while they thought, in their three separate residences, first with Captain Nathan Barrett, who speedily set them to getting out manure to "test their metal," next with Edmund Hosmer, and last with Minot Pratt, — all of them capable of appreciating the young men beyond their mere capacity as amateur "hands" for farm work.

After the interesting and profitable sojourn at Concord, both Burrill and George returned to New York, and then travelled much in Europe, where they went in 1846, and where Burrill remained for four years. "Our cousin the Curate" in "Prue and I" gives, it is said, a sketch of Burrill, softened and modified from the actual personality. Burrill went finally to England, where he was a curate in Cambridge; he received the degree of Master of Arts from Cambridge University. He died about two years ago. Colonel Higginson says that Burrill was the more interesting and perhaps the handsomer. He was at one time during his stay at Brook Farm passing through a trying experience, and may on that account have excited a more than usual degree