ber, 1842, an article for the *Democratic Review*, in which he defended the simplicity of the scheme as against Fourierism. His own visits were not frequent, and it is hard to believe that he was an especially welcome, though he was a respected, guest. The little group which was undergoing a process of Catholization was doubtless his main objective point; for the general buoyancy and air of innocent joyance grated, in all likelihood, on his rugged, honest seriousness.

Though early taught to walk in the usual paths of New England Protestantism, at times he "seemed to hold a spiritual intercourse with the Blessed Mary and holy Angel Gabriel," showing the mystical temperament like his friend Hecker, albeit heredity in both called for no such manifestations. He strenuously labored in many ways for the earthly well-being and happiness of mankind from 1828 until 1842, when the trend toward Romanism definitely set in. At first a Presbyterian, he soon veered to Universalism, and at the age of twenty-two became a preacher of that sect. Then a great fervor for social reform of many kinds came on him, and lasted for some years. He felt directly the powerful influence of Robert Owen, and indirectly that of William Godwin, of whose "Political Justice" Brownson says: "It has had more influence on my mind than any other

book, except the Scriptures, I have ever read;" but Brownson-wise, after such an admission, he throws this barb: "there is scarcely a modern error that it does not contain." Erelong he found himself in coöperation with Frances Wright, Benthamite, emancipationist, and cultivated and effective orator, who, after her unhappy marriage with Darusmont, her factor, died in loneliness and poverty. "Poor Fanny" is Brownson's preface to a statement that she did "great harm, and the morals of the American people feel even to-day the injury she did them." It is hard not to see in the character of Priscilla in Brownson's "Spirit Rapper"—a dull, philosophic novel, written after he had made sure harbor—an embodiment of "Poor Fanny" Wright.

Brownson's next dissatisfaction was an alliance with the Workingmen's Party. Though retaining all his life an unaffected sympathy with "the more numerous classes," he soon gaged the futility of politics as a lever to proletarianism. Thereupon, as he says: "I resumed my old profession of preacher, though of what particular gospel it would be difficult to say." Unitarianism next attracted this restless being, and he became the friend of Channing, whom he evidently loved, but who was not "the great man many supposed him to be." In 1836, when actively began the ferment of which the

Brook Farm movement was one result, Brownson organized "The Society for Christian Union and Progress." Protestantism was already so distasteful to him as to give rise to a hope that he might reconstruct Catholicism, without regard, however, to the historic church. About this time Brownson published his "New Views of Christianity, Society, and the Church," of which he naïvely says: "it is the last word of the non-Catholic world." In 1838 followed his *Quarterly Review*, of which for five years he was almost as much author as editor. "Charles Elwood" (1840) is, as Ripley wrote in the *Dial*, "a slender thread of narrative made to sustain the most weighty arguments on the philosophy of religion." Such interest as this book may have to-day lies in the fact that it elaborates the theories of Cousin, then much engaging Brownson's attention. As he followed other illusions, so for a time he pursued St. Simonism from start to finish of its violent career. Brownson asserted, with his usual bluntness, that the "Mère Suprême" was too extreme a dogma to suit his "masculine dignity."

In 1840 Brownson awoke and found himself conspicuous if not famous. Allied for several reasons with the Democratic Party, he wrote in that year an essay on the laboring classes, in which he suggested the impairment, by political methods, of corporations and of the credit sys-

tem. The Whigs, displaying an unexpected energy, printed his paper as a campaign document. The publication of this essay may have acted as a boomerang on his party, but it did Orestes Brownson a deal of good. It refreshed him as the deliverance from the Everlasting Nay refreshed Teufelsdröckh, and marked, as he says, "the crisis in my mental disease."

Out of his spiritual turmoil he gradually evolved, not without patience and a remarkable skill, a doctrine of Life: "that of the real infusion of a Divine element into human life," by which that life should be "supernaturally elevated and rendered progressive," — not so wide a digression, after all, from the upward path of his friends the Transcendentalists. Armed and comforted with this discovery, which he seems to have owed in part to Leroux, he sought at last the refuge toward which he had long been tending. Brownson, with all his audacity, hesitated at first in taking this step; but he went forward with good grace only to find that his vicissitudes of belief had made no favorable impression on a church which had become for him a crying necessity. In May, 1844, he sought the advice of Bishop Fenwick, and in October of the same year received the baptism and the sacraments of the Roman communion. He tells, not without dignity, in his apologia, "The Convert," of the relinquishment of his cherished

discovery, and of his entrance into the haven of his salvation through a channel indicated by a kindly but dogmatic pilot. There never can be the least doubt as to the abiding satisfaction felt by Brownson himself in his latest, and, as it proved, his final decision. He trumpeted his joy on the housetops, and from that time forward proclaimed the defects of Protestantism to his heart's content. He despised the right of private judgment — how freely he had used it! he saw in the dialectic method, that powerful adjunct of non-Catholic thought, not a philosophical method but a personal foe.

It is pathetic to have to recognize that Brownson is a really forgotten man, for at one time he stood between contending forces a seemingly powerful figure. But against the subtle individualism of the Protestant mind he contended with singularly little result. So doughty a champion probably inspired his new friends with a measure of dismay, while it may fairly be doubted if he ever succeeded in winning a notable convert to his own new way of thinking. In this respect the contrast between him and Father Hecker is striking. The unsympathetic mind commonly regards him as a sort of ecclesiastical recidivist, who, having tried one form of spiritual error, soon abandoned it, only to seek another which in turn he would presently repudiate. His conceit, of which he always

made frank acknowledgment, led him firmly to maintain that all this was consistent progress. The finest sentence he ever wrote, according to his acquaintance, Joseph Henry Allen, was one in which he upholds "that glorious inconsistency which does honor to human nature, and makes men so much better than their creeds." Just before the eventful change he had discontinued, in 1843, his *Quarterly*, and had immediately started another, which was continued until 1875 under the name of *Brownson's Quarterly Review*. He died in 1876.

Many considerations drove Brownson to his great affirmation, but one of them, considering the natural audacity of the man, deserves attention. It was nothing less than a strong desire for personal safety in eternity, or to use his own words: "because he would escape hell and gain heaven." He told Mr. Allen that on October 20, 1844, he "became a Christian." "But suppose," asked his questioner, with mild derision, "the process that made you a Catholic had stopped short at a certain point; suppose, for instance, that you had died on the nineteenth of October?" "I should have gone to hell," he replied, instantly and grimly. Like good Christian on his toilsome path to the City, though not afraid of an encounter, Brownson knew when it was time to use his legs.

It is unfortunate that so few traditions remain

of Brownson's contact with Brook Farm, for he went there at the most critical moment of his life, when, as a Brook Farmer once said, "he walked backward into the Catholic church." A few anecdotes indicate plainly that when Brownson turned up the road leading to the Hive he brought his disputatiousness with him, and that he was apt to veer conversation around to matters which interested him if nobody else. Mrs. Kirby says, with her occasional tartness, that he was "not the prince of gentlemen in debate." "Do you approve of the priests of the Inquisition roasting off the feet of children under fourteen?" Cornelia asked. "Certainly," he replied, according to the same authority. "It was better for them to have their feet roasted off in this world than their souls to be roasted forever in the next." No one can doubt the sincerity of such a convert, but he was just as sincere in his errors as in his assurances, and this is a snare to the carnally minded. Perhaps he himself has furnished an escape from the dilemma when he says in the "Spirit Rapper": "I never was so constituted as to be able to strike a balance between truth and falsehood, or to accept a principle and deny its consequences."

Brownson certainly was not a "comfortable" man; lack of breeding may cause a man to appear to be too honest. It would be interesting to

know what George Ripley thought of Brownson aside from the respect due his natural powers. Even in that gentle, strong heart must have been aroused the responsive opposition which the neglected pages of the great Catholic protagonist are still able to set going. One often-told anecdote must not be suffered to pass. At forty Brownson was obliged to study the classics the better to aid his ecclesiastical pursuits. He found much trouble with his Latin quantities. Ripley, so the story goes, dreamed that he went to confession, and that Brownson was the priest who should hear him. "Kneel, my son," said the priest, "and for penance repeat after me the fifty-eighth Psalm in the Vulgate." Ripley awoke, crying in his agony: "O Lord, my punishment is greater than I am able to bear." Another story evinces the feeble impression made by Brownson's vicissitudinary earnestness. A preacher once invited to the communion table the members of all Christian churches. Some one remarked that Brownson was the only person in the church who could "fill the bill."

Brownson was, in spite of his uneasiness, essentially conservative. "I had no natural relish for the Newness," he once said. How thoroughly he lacked a delicacy of touch is well seen in the chapter, "A Lesson in World Reform" in the "Spirit Rapper," where he crudely, and as he said, with "some degree of levity,"

serves up his old friends, the Transcendentalists, and other reformers, with a strong, coarse relish. The noblest of them is plainly caricatured in Mr. Egerton, "a thin, spare man, with a large nose, and a cast of Yankee shrewdness in his not very handsome face." With his recession, however, from early affiliations, died Brownson's real potency, and certainly the picturesqueness of his life. Powerful as he was in argument and logical statement, he rested at last on a fallacy. To one who once asked him how it was that he felt so sure of his final decision, he replied: "When I was a Presbyterian, or a Universalist, or a Unitarian, or whatever I may have been, I was sure each time that I was right; but now I know that I *cannot* be wrong."

Brownson gives a portrait of himself in "The Convert," which is probably as just as it would be possible for one to give, in whom a desire of self-exculpation was ever alive. It is worth quoting: "I am no saint, never was, and never shall be a saint; but I always had, and I trust I always shall have, the honor of being regarded by my friends and associates as impolitic, as rash, imprudent, and impracticable. I was and am, in my natural disposition, frank, truthful, straightforward, and earnest; and, therefore, have had, and, I doubt not, shall carry to the grave with me, the reputation of being reckless, ultra, a well-meaning man, perhaps an able man, but so

fond of paradoxes and extremes, that he cannot be relied on, and is more likely to injure than serve the cause he espouses. So, wise and prudent men shake their heads when my name is mentioned, and disclaim all solidarity with me."

Theodore Parker and Francis George Shaw

Theodore Parker's frequent visits to the Farm gave him a pleasant two-mile walk every few days across the fields from his house on Centre Street in West Roxbury, and furnished him at least wholesome exercise. Personal affection for George Ripley was the strongest element in his friendliness toward the institution, although his sense of humor was gratified by much that went on there, and perhaps his recognition of certain non-humorous aspects of the life may have been deeper than he cared to show. It was Parker's way to discover and laugh at the weakness of reforms to which he gave his support, and it is certain that he afforded some very practical assistance to Brook Farm.

The beginning of Parker's own perplexities was almost coetaneous with the establishment of Brook Farm, for his "Discourse of the Transient and Permanent in Religion," which was preached at the ordination of Mr. Shackford in South Boston, on May 19, 1841, occasioned the division of the religious community for and against him. Parker himself wrote of this discourse: "The sentiments in the South Bos-

ton sermon had so long been familiar to me, I had preached them so often with no rebuke, that I was not aware of saying anything that was severe;" and at another time he affirmed, in regard to this same matter, that he had read it to a friend (presumably Ripley), who said it was the weakest thing Parker had written for a long while. As the defection of friends which ensued was a deeper grief to him because he was quite unprepared for it, so the stanch adherence of Ripley and a few others was a greater consolation. The obnoxious sermon was followed in the fall of 1841 by his lectures in the old Masonic Temple in Boston, "A Discourse of Matters pertaining to Religion," and the gulf was perceptibly widened by his utterances. The substance of these lectures, which were published in an enlarged form in the spring of 1842, was carefully talked over with Ripley, in whose literary and philosophical judgment he had the highest confidence. Parker's critical faculty was much less fine than that of Ripley, his scholarship was less accurate, and his intellectual temper less firm; but the two men were in close touch on most vital questions, widely as they differed in method, and were always mutually tolerant and sympathetic. That Parker had, at one time, some thought of Brook Farm as a temporary residence, he himself says in a letter to Dr. Francis, on June 24, 1842. Having

spoken of the refusal of all but one or two of the Boston Association of Ministers to have any ministerial intercourse with him, and of the likelihood of his having to desert the pulpit, he writes: "I mean to live at Spring Street, perhaps with Ripley;" but the emergency passed, his parish sustained him, and for another year he worked hard in behalf of liberal Christianity. Signs of exhaustion began to develop in the summer of 1843, and in September, through the thoughtfulness of one of his friends, he went to Europe for a year. When he came back to the toil that he loved, the continuing trouble with his head, which debarred him from the arduous labor that he would have preferred, left him free to see much of his friend Ripley. This was the last winter in which they were to meet often and freely; for in December, 1845, Parker accepted a call issued by a new society which held services in the Melodeon — the 28th Congregational Society — and very soon after left West Roxbury for an absorbing, troubled, but valiant career. The attachment between the two men ended only with Parker's death in 1859. After Ripley went to New York they saw little of each other, but each followed the other's course with unabated interest. Parker wrote to Ripley in the early part of the last year of his life: "I count your friendship as one of the brightest spots in my life." It is quite possible that

while they had strengthened and supported each other, Parker may have benefited more from the friendship. As men, they were equally honest; but Ripley could give and take a rebuke or a criticism more generously than Parker; he could see his antagonist's side of an argument more clearly than Parker; and his caution often placed a wholesome check on Parker's impetuosity.

Parker made merry over the dress of the community; his congregation, however, always numbered a fair percentage of Brook Farmers, who shared his religious sentiments, and felt the humanity beneath his blunt self-assertion. His library was freely opened to the youth of the neighborhood; but it is not known how freely this offer was accepted, for hardly a person remains there to-day who could have come under his influence at that time. The little church still stands, having been temporarily rescued from the destroying hand of improvement by the private means of one who will, it is hoped, preserve this humble monument to the memory of Theodore Parker's early struggles for religion as opposed to theology.

Had Emerson and Parker connected themselves with Brook Farm, the first bringing his genius, and the other his religious nature, they would have effectually added to the intellectual equipment, strong already in Ripley's philo-

sophical attainments, Dwight's earnestness for music, and Mrs. Ripley's and Dana's devotion to the school. No ultimate results were changed by their not joining these allied forces; yet had they become Brook Farmers, the humanities would have been handsomely represented in a sort of Agrarian University.

There ran in Parker's veins the blood of a hard-working, farming race, shrewd to discover the impractical side of a character or an undertaking. Parker may, through this inheritance, have reflected the general opinion of the inconspicuous yeomen of West Roxbury, in his standing off a little from his friends at the Farm — not hostilely, but somewhat quizzically and disdainfully, as a countryman might, who knew himself to dig and delve on New England soil. Besides the honest folks who mainly composed the population of the town, there were several families of refinement and great respectability who lived there, not exactly *en grand seigneur*, but preserving the aloofness so characteristic of our incomprehensible democracy — always with the people, never of them. Among these families were the Shaws, the Russells, and a few others. Mr. Francis George Shaw, one of the most estimable of these local patricians, early gave his hand to Brook Farm. If, like Parker, he entertained his own reserved opinion as to the venture, he went further

than Parker in extending sympathy. From gradually formed social intimacies grew deep and lasting friendships. Years later Curtis married Shaw's daughter, the sister of Robert Gould Shaw, West Roxbury's loved and honored hero of the Civil War. Another daughter, Ellen, married General Francis Channing Barlow. Shaw is best remembered for excellent English renderings of several foreign works of note, especially of George Sand's "Consuelo," which first appeared in the *Harbinger*. Of him, shortly after his death, Curtis, with the usual serenity and delicacy of the Easy Chair, wrote: "He was allied by sympathy more than by much previous actual association with the founders of Brook Farm. But when they chose the site for their enterprise not far from his house, he was soon in the pleasantest relations with the leaders, for their spirit and purpose were in harmony with his own." He was as useful to George Ripley as to his nearer neighbor, Theodore Parker, and his friendliness to the Association was the more significant by reason of his social conservatism. Like a few other reserved men of his standing, he was a radical on the question of slavery, and was a friend to such leaders as Garrison, when this sort of allegiance cost something. He instinctively shunned extravagance of life, but his home always preserved its individuality. He had sympathy and heartiness, and an undying

"devotion to the well-being of other men." "Kindly, but firmly, he protected his own seclusion, and he permitted no man, in Emerson's phrase, to devastate his day."

Christopher Pearse Cranch

The appearance of Cranch at Brook Farm was always an event. This uncircumscribed genius, by his very presence, made everybody forget the dilapidated condition of the parlor furniture at the Hive; and by his singing, which he himself accompanied either with guitar or piano, he contrived to infuse an atmosphere of affluence into the place which lent grace and elegance to this little world. Curtis says that he became simultaneously acquainted with Cranch and Schubert; for Cranch had made a manuscript copy of the "Serenade," which he sang with such deep feeling as to move sensibly his audience; and when, on his first visit to the Farm, he sang the ballad "Here's a health to ane I lo'e dear," tears were the tribute from some who heard him. His powers of entertainment were almost unlimited: he had a good baritone voice; he played piano, guitar, flute, or violin as the occasion came; he read from his own poems or travesties; and his ventriloquism, which embraced all the sounds of nature and of mechanical devices, from the denizens of the barnyard to the shriek of the railway locomotive, held the younger members spellbound with amusement, or led to loud expressions of approval.

In personal appearance he was of the picturesque type of beauty, with much dark curling hair, a broad forehead, delicately cut features, and great sensitiveness of expression. Tall, slight, and graceful, he was an alluring presence at all times, and especially when, as at Brook Farm, his imagination was kindled and his sympathies strongest.

Cranch had been graduated from Columbian University in 1832, at the age of nineteen, and had then gone to the Harvard Divinity School, where he formed a friendship with Dwight, who was in the class below him, Cranch's class being that of 1835. His ministry had been brief, for he abandoned the pulpit in 1842 in order to study art abroad. To this profession he devoted the remainder of his life, making his American home in New York until some time before his death, when he went to Cambridge, where he died in 1892. Much of his life had been spent in Europe, largely in Rome and Paris, and his painting was distinctly above the average. His poetical contributions to the *Harbinger* are graceful and give full evidence of his simplicity, his love of beauty, and his buoyant hopefulness. His sympathies were strongly with the Transcendental movement and with Brook Farm as an outcome of that movement. If, perhaps, it was true of him that versatility was fatal to achievement, it is also true, as Curtis wrote in

1892, that "he was of that choice band who are always true to the ideals of youth, and whose hearts are the citadels which conquering time assails in vain."

Elizabeth Palmer Peabody

Few steps in the direction of social progress in Boston, between 1830 and 1890, were taken without obtaining the pronounced support of Elizabeth P. Peabody. She loved reforms, not indiscriminately, to be sure, but as the legitimate progeny, varying in worth, of a common sentiment. Every moral effort, to her mind, deserved encouragement, and throughout her long and honorable life we find her a stanch friend of the negro and the Indian, a student on subjects ranging from Spiritualism to the Kindergarten, a writer, and a publisher of books. Her rooms on West Street, where she had a circulating library, were the resort of the men and women who, though of the literary clan, longed for action; and the early Brook Farmers and their friends — Ripley, Parker, Dwight, Samuel Robbins, Brownson, and Burton — frequently met here. Margaret Fuller, whom Miss Peabody sincerely admired, held her Conversations in these rooms, in part of which Dr. Nathaniel Peabody, Elizabeth's father, kept a homœopathic drug-shop. Her passion for knowledge was strictly impersonal, for she was not a whit more zealous to obtain it for herself than to direct others to it. James Freeman

Clarke has said that she "was always engaged in supplying some want that had first to be created." The little shop on West Street was allopathic indeed in the dispensing of cures for social and moral ills.

At sixteen she began to teach, her first pupils being her sisters Mary and Sophia, afterward Mrs. Horace Mann and Mrs. Nathaniel Hawthorne. When she was eighteen she met Emerson and induced him to give her lessons in Greek, for which the teacher later refused to be paid because he thought he could teach her nothing. Both these young creatures were shy, Emerson being a year older than herself, and not even a "chatting acquaintance" came from their studies. She was Channing's literary assistant for a time, and in 1834 gave some instruction in Mr. Alcott's Temple School, besides taking down his conversations and publishing them afterward as the "Record of a School."

This intimate transcendentalist acquaintance, joined with her delight in all spiritual agitations, naturally enough awakened her interest in Brook Farm; but she was too busy a woman to pay frequent or long visits to the community; her occasional coming, however, was counted as an especial pleasure by her friends there. She did not regard the Farm as a retreat in which to forget the demands of the world upon her, as Margaret Fuller frankly confessed to doing, but

as an opportunity for enlarging her moral and intellectual experience. Perhaps her best service to the Association was effected through some of her articles in the *Dial*, where, in 1842, appeared her "Glimpse of Christ's Idea of Society" and her "Plan of the West Roxbury Community," both written without a trace of the partisan spirit. When, in 1844, she came to write of Fourierism at Brook Farm, she preserved the same lofty and unprejudiced attitude, although there is little doubt that her feeling was against the change. One sentence of this article is, to be sure, a formidable challenge, but even in this the reader perceives the judicial above the personal tone: "The question is whether the Phalanx acknowledges its own limitations of nature in being an organization, or opens up any avenue into the source of life that shall keep it sweet, enabling it to assimilate to itself contrary elements and consume its own waste; so that, phœnix-like, it may renew itself forever in greater and finer forms."

Her intellectual vigor is all the more striking because she was naturally desultory and dreamy, and because her tendency to scatter her forces was strong. Fortunately the object of her late, and perhaps greatest interest, the Kindergarten, has achieved permanent and visible results. The Elizabeth Peabody House, on Chambers Street in Boston, reared by a body of teachers