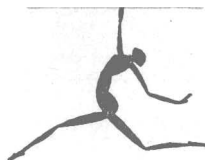


THE COMPLETE NOVELS
AND
SELECTED TALES OF
NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION, BY
NORMAN HOLMES PEARSON



THE MODERN LIBRARY
NEW YORK

INTRODUCTION

by

NORMAN HOLMES PEARSON

ALTHOUGH a century has now passed since Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales* first appeared before the American public, not even the changes of taste that have swept so many of his contemporaries from the affections of the people have done much to alter the admiration with which he has been read. A great deal of what flowered in New England now seems faded with the passing of time, despite the rare quality which it possessed and the extraordinary enthusiasm with which it was tended. But the pure beauty of Hawthorne's style and his deep perception of human nature have spread beyond the small region where he lived and over the years which separate his time from our own.

There was no truer child of the religious mood and the cultural heritage of New England. Most of Hawthorne's life was spent uneventfully there. He was born in the seaport town of Salem in 1804, and died sixty years later during a short journey from his Concord home. As an older man, his tales and most of his novels written, he spent some seven years in England and in Italy; but this late taste of cosmopolitanism came when he no longer needed it, or, at least, when he had already established both his approach to life and his manner of writing. He substituted the consulate at Liverpool for the custom house at Salem, the lichen of an English cathedral for the mosses of the Concord manse. The scene was altered, but he learned little that was new. This is not to say that Hawthorne knew all things about man and nature from his limited New England experience, but certain fundamentals he understood profoundly, and this understanding was expressed with a keener sense of the beauty of words and the cadence of language than any American had hitherto achieved. In Hawthorne, America had for the first time a writer of fiction for whom no apology was needed.

His life passed without much excitement. He did not, like Dana, round Cape Horn, the great jib flying to leeward and the fury of the waves breaking over the bow. He did not, like Melville, wander through the fragrant valley of the Typees with Fayaway, olive-skinned and flower-girdled, on his arm. He did not even stride the barren moors with dour Carlyle at Craigenputtock, as Emerson, his Concord neighbor, had. But as a boy he roamed the crooked streets of Salem, or, heels-up, lay outstretched upon the floor at home, reading Spenser and Bunyan and Milton, reading them again and again. He learned of the share his ancestors

had had in the panic that seized Salem Village, when, near the close of the seventeenth century, witches had worried the minds of the villagers and pricked them into terror. He heard the old wife's tale of a curse hurled by the husband of a witch at grim Judge Hathorne. And he dreamed of the great inheritance of land that should have been his family's had deeds and titles been preserved.

The Hawthorne family was old, but it was not rich. Hawthorne's father had been a sea-captain and had died at Surinam. The log-book of one voyage of his father's ship *Herald*, from Boston to Madeira and the Indies, he owned when a child, and the report of the fight with a French privateer, in which the British *Cornwallis* was rescued, fascinated him. But his mind was more often ashore. For economy's sake, his widowed mother with her two daughters and her son left Salem for a time to live with her brother in Maine. There the boy went wandering through the woods about Sebago Lake with his uncle's dog, Watch, gunning for partridges and fishing for fat trout. "It was there," he said, "I first got my cursed habits of solitude." And later at Bowdoin College he still liked most of all to watch logs tumbling down the Androscoggin or to go bat-fowling in the summer twilight. Longfellow was in his class, but the two saw little of each other. It was not until years after, when Longfellow was an established author and Hawthorne was determined to be one, that they became in any sense friends. Longfellow was too elegant; and Hawthorne, when he took part in the life of the college, turned to the group which risked a fine to meet secretly at Ward's Tavern, or cut chapel, or gathered together for a little friendly gambling. He made friends, like Bridge, who later paid for the publication of the *Twice-Told Tales*, and Pierce, who as President gave him the Liverpool consulship; but usually Hawthorne remained aloof, preferring then, as throughout his life, to observe rather than to participate. He read enormously from the library of his college society, good novels by Scott and "that damned ranting stuff" of Neal and others' which he relished so much. At various times, with two or three other students, he donated to the library a set of Johnson, Percy's *Reliques*, a complete Swift and other volumes.

Even in childhood, Hawthorne had toyed with the idea of writing, and as he grew older an ambition to devote himself to literature was strengthened. Once his college life was ended he returned to Salem, where for over a decade he did little more than write. *Fanshawe*, published in 1828, was the first result, and although no one would call it a good novel, a great many in their zeal have made it out to be a much worse story of adventure than it is. It is full of Neal's damned rant and Scott's "racing and chasing o'er Cannobie Lee," which he used as a motto to one of his chapters. The setting is autobiographical though the events are not; and Hawthorne, not yet deep enough in the past to write *The Gray Champion*, nor mature enough to mold characters outside his own experience, seems to have derived more profit from Bowdoin in retrospect than in residence.

Hawthorne was always his own best critic; though he had paid for the

publication of *Fanshawe* he withdrew it from circulation and tossed it to the flames. But he kept on writing. When in 1837 his next volume, the *Twice-Told Tales*, appeared, the toneless and awkward style of *Fanshawe* had been refined into a melodious and graceful delicacy. That Hawthorne should have turned from the writing of novels to a shorter form is not strange, for though he was not destitute, he still had to sell in order to live; and in an age when only the newspaper, the magazine and the annual flourished vigorously enough to support a native literature, a writer could not choose his form. It was thrust upon him, and Hawthorne, early in his career, wrote to an editor, "I have complied with your wishes in regard to brevity." Yet if ever a nation's failure to patronize its own literary figures ultimately resulted in some good it has been in America; for it is to this neglect we owe whatever we have contributed to the development of the short story. Thus Hawthorne kept his attention on the type of writing which he could sell and his eyes open for material to write about.

Not much is known about Hawthorne's life in the years immediately after college, and they have come, with his own romantic and somewhat self-conscious help, to be veiled in an air of mystery as pervading as that of his own tales. At times he travelled through New England; once westward even as far as Detroit. He was alert for detail to be jotted down in journals. "Think nothing too trifling to write down, so it be in the smallest degree characteristic. You will be surprised to find on reperusing your journal what an importance and graphic power these little particulars assume." This was the advice he wrote to a friend bound on a voyage to Africa; this was advice he followed himself on his cruise along Lake Champlain. Throughout the tales, and even later in his novels, these entries from his journals reappear. In *The Great Stone Face*, *The Great Carbuncle*, *Ethan Brand*, here and there, as though thrown in as ballast to keep his romanticism from floating away, these descriptive bits of realism can be found. Seated on a Berkshire stoop, Hawthorne chatted one evening with a filthy, one-armed soap-maker. "'My study is man,' said he. And looking at me 'I do not know your name,' said he, 'but there is something of the hawk-eye about you too.'" Evenings at home in Salem, Hawthorne walked past the rich, white-pillared doors of homes he might have entered, sitting down beside the toll-gatherer, as the tin peddlers, the pickle manufacturers and the young girls strolled across the bridge or hurried by. He listened to the legends of the past from old women crouched all day over the kitchen fire, clicking their knitting-needles, or taking a turn at the spit; and in sending some of his earliest tales to a publisher in 1829 he wrote: "You will see that one of the stories is founded upon the superstitions of this part of the country. I do not know that such an attempt has hitherto been made, but, as I have thrown away much time in listening to such traditions, I could not help trying to put them into some shape. The tale is certainly rather wild and grotesque, but the outlines of many not less so might be picked up hereabouts."

What the life about him could not give, he got from books. In an

election sermon of the Puritans he grew to know the terror of the Black Man better; from older histories like Cotton Mather's and newer ones like Peter's *General History of Connecticut*; in English *Annual Registers* and *State Trials*; in the newspapers and court-records of New England he steeped himself until his intimacy with the past was worthy of a professional historian. Here his hereditary affiliation and childhood fascination coincided with the interest of a young and self-conscious nation and a general literary fashion made popular by Walter Scott.

What Scott did not give him, however, and what he owed to his New England heritage, was a sense of the depth and complexity of man's inner life. The Puritan instinct, however it may have been expressed, was one of honest and sober introspection. It penetrated the sham of man's exterior to his more animal nature beneath. It knew that man's heart is better to be trusted than his lips, and this duplicity it attempted to lay bare. All nature lay like an emblem-book spread open; each movement had its own divine significance. The rush of wind, the roll of thunder, the gentle springtime sun, equally showed the steady hand of God. Inextricably connected, divinely interwoven, was man with man and man with nature. By Hawthorne's time the theology of Calvinism, which armed the Puritan instinct, had largely disappeared. Hawthorne was no Calvinist—he was not even a church-goer—but the Puritan instinct was still his.

What his heritage made natural his early reading of Spenser, Bunyan and Milton made literary. He saw the characters he wrote about in moral chiaroscuro, and like Spenser's knights and Bunyan's brown-clad Puritans his figures moved in spiritual shadows. He sensed an intimacy of nature with the action of his tales. In Milton's epic of *Paradise Lost* the heavens groaned at the fall of the angels, and in Hawthorne's tale of Goodman Brown the winds whispered in sorrow the young man's loss of Faith. Because Hawthorne believed in no theology, his knowledge of the complexity of man's inner life was psychologically similar, in its literary applications, to what he might have learned today. All this he made a part of his story-telling, and it is from this sense of the total nexus of things that the atmospheric intensity and the unity of tone result.

Until *The Scarlet Letter* appeared in 1850, he published nothing but tales and essays. With these he was increasingly dissatisfied. "They have," he wrote, "the pale tint of flowers that blossomed in too retired a shade." Part essay, part tale, his stories centered in some mood or incident. They recalled some episode in history, or probed some individual problem of the soul. As the taste of the age demanded and the nature of the author approved, they bore their lessons, but rather as though a new Deucalion had cast moral tracts over his shoulder and found them grown into literature. Yet Hawthorne's material for such tales was limited, and his increasing interest in psychological relationships demanded larger form. "In the humblest event I resolved at least to achieve a novel that should evolve some deep lesson and should possess physical substance enough to stand alone."

Meanwhile he experimented in living. Partly because at last he wanted a share in common life, mostly because he wanted an income large enough to marry on, he went to work as a surveyor in the custom house at Boston. There on long winter days he paced the icy decks of salt-ships and coal-vessels, or fled the freezing north winds by climbing down into dirty little cabins to warm himself beside red-hot stoves. His mind was too entangled in weights and measures, his emotions too concerned with love, to leave much energy for the creation of fiction, though he did manage a hack job or two to fill his pocket-book. He turned hopefully from Long Wharf to the fields of Brook Farm in an effort, as he first put it, to escape "all the fopperies and flummeries which have their origin in a false state of society;" and there, frocked in blue woolen, shod in heavy cow-hide boots, he passionately attacked a heap of manure. Reality stifled his hope. "It is my opinion, dearest," he wrote to his fiancée, "that a man's soul may be buried and perish under a dung-heap or in a furrow of the field, just as well as under a pile of money. . . . The real Me was never an associate of the community." Hawthorne wanted security much more than he cared what kind of society gave it to him, but he failed to find it in the transcendental socialism of Brook Farm. This hope gone, he cast his native prudence to the winds, married and went to live in Concord. In the old manse where Emerson had written *Nature* and a line of preachers had filled the attic with manuscripts of sermons, Hawthorne continued their didactic tradition. There by the gnarled apple-trees and sluggish stream lapsing through the meadow behind the house most of *Mosses from an Old Manse* was written. He lived here for four years, but, as his family increased, the old necessity for security urged him on, and for the following two years he was employed in the custom house at Salem. When this period was cut short, the bitter experiences of which he told in his introduction to *The Scarlet Letter*, he wrote at last his novel.

It made him famous. No novel so fine had appeared in America, and few so fine have appeared since. From a seventeenth-century New England punishment, an earlier mention of which he made in *Endicott and the Red Cross*, he drew a symbol of the diverse and protracted effects of sin. The great beauty of *The Scarlet Letter* as a literary achievement lies in its flexible unity within a strictly patterned complexity; the speculation within the characters' own minds gives the novel an inner as well as an outer action. The spiritual enrichment of Hester, the decay of Dimmesdale, the wizing of Chillingworth are each intensified by the development of the others' natures. The moral of the story lies in Pearl's rebuke to Dimmesdale as they meet in the silence of the woods: "Thou wast not bold!—thou wast not true!" Chillingworth's revenge was not in itself the wrong; it was his hidden persecution of Dimmesdale and his relentless pursuit of a single aim, twisting his nature and warping his soul, which wrought evil in him. Because Dimmesdale confused his own conscience, rather than because he sinned, his body wasted away as though in sympathy with his soul. Not even Hester, whom nature forced

into the open, was herself quite honest; had she been, the scarlet letter would have dropped of itself from her breast. Silently she permitted the revenge of Chillingworth, wittingly she perceived Dimmesdale's torture. For each of the characters, retribution was possible only where the sin was committed; and the flight which Hester and the minister planned would have brought no escape from the mind. This understanding was at the core of Chillingworth's outraged cry when Dimmesdale at last confessed. This was the reason Hester returned to live out her life near Boston. ["The breach which guilt has once made into the human soul is never, in this mortal state, repaired,"] said Hawthorne; yet he understood the bitter kind of knowledge and sympathy, the enrichment of the soul this breach, by all the flooding in of experience, can bring. The moral paradox which Milton presented in *Paradise Lost* made Hester, like a Puritan Eve, a foreshadow of a new age for women. This new age, when knowledge should bring woman a deeper and a richer character, was in the future, as were the realizations of all of Hawthorne's reforms; but Hester had gone one step, and her Pearl, when grief matured the child into sympathetic understanding, went still further. In her the sin was expiated and the reward approached. Even Dimmesdale's ministry was deepened through his ill-earned sympathy. A similar knowledge of the evil of the world had come to Goodman Brown, but Hawthorne had himself matured since Brown had fled his fellow men.

Hawthorne's next two novels followed quickly. *The House of the Seven Gables* appeared in 1851 and *The Blithedale Romance* in the following year. With these he abandoned the directly historical, and made more and more use of his observation and his own experience. The general method, however, was not much altered. In *The House of the Seven Gables*, the great gray mansion brooding over the scene, he portrayed the tenacity of evil, the disintegration of a class, and the enlivening effect of the introduction of common and normal life through the sunny Phoebe and Holgrave, the daguerreotypist. The material was family history: the witch's husband's curse and the lost land grant. In *The Blithedale Romance* he used his experience at Brook Farm, patterning it with his study of individual types, and probing into the general movement of reform. Most of all he concerned himself with the character of Zenobia, who possessed something of the quality of the new woman in whom he was so interested, and who, like certain blue-stockings of his own day, felt herself possessed of much more than was actually there. Intellectually she was further advanced than Hester; morally she had left her heart behind, and her sympathy for those about her had gone with it. Hollingsworth was Hawthorne's study of the social reformer, a man whose goal was worthy enough, but who, in burying himself completely in one concern to the exclusion of his spiritual growth, had withdrawn into an isolation as barren as that of Ethan Brand, of Rappaccini, or even of Chillingworth. Hollingsworth ought, Hawthorne observed, "to have commenced his investigation of the subject by perpe-

trating some huge sin in his proper person, and examining the condition of his higher instinct afterwards."

In 1853 Hawthorne was appointed United States Consul at Liverpool, and the pressure of his duties there kept him from publishing anything new, though he filled the pages of his journals with minute observations of all he saw while in England and later during a year and a half in Italy. Finally, in 1860, *The Marble Faun* appeared. Here in an Italian mist, among a group of expatriate American artists who hoped to find Beauty wrapped in a Roman toga, Hawthorne's thrice-told tale of the moral growth of man was written once more. The carefree, faun-like Donatello and the dove-like Hilda were slowly transformed to maturity through the stain of sin. With Donatello it was through crime committed, and with Hilda through crime observed. Something fresh and innocent was lost to each, but life had grown so sadly serious, as Hawthorne knew, that there was no longer any place for such as they had been.

The themes of Hawthorne's works occur and recur. The reading of them is the pleasure of meeting an old friend slightly changed; giving not the excitement of a new acquaintanceship, but rather a touch of something fresh to what is known well. The familiarity by which one recognizes the spirit of Wakefield in the character of Ethan Brand, which draws Phoebe and Hilda together, binds all of Hawthorne's work into a single study of man's life. For with the deeper significance which lies behind each tale and each novel, except *Fanshawe*, the characters not merely become figures in particular plots, but reflect and set off others in the total expression of what might be called Hawthorne's moral study of humanity. Thus in the larger, somewhat accidental synthesis of the body of his writing there is something of a repetition of the function and the more conscious beauty of the symbolism which integrates the individual works. Hawthorne's use of symbols is like Wagner's use of *leitmotif* to recall what has come before, and to bring the mind a greater consciousness than the ear alone can comprehend. The effect of this device is like that of T. S. Eliot's borrowed lines from the past, which not only have their direct and proper part in the progress of the poem but bring in allusive parallel the scenes from which originally they came. Symbolism is like a curl of wind that lifts three leaves to play, or for a moment bends a flower aside. Nothing essentially there is changed, but things are seen in new dimensions and new beauty. Touched by one of Hawthorne's symbols, thought spreads outward farther and farther until it embraces the whole book, then recedes to concentrate once more upon the particular object, before the eye goes on. The perplexed gesture with which Donatello tosses the little worm from the tower at Monte Beni reenacts all of *The Marble Faun*, yet it is the matter of but a sentence or two. The spirit of Zenobia is in her flower, the punishment of Hester in her letter, the innocence of Hilda in her doves. And in establishing the relationship between the idea and the fact, each reader becomes his own author.

Hawthorne's writing is not designed for broken or rapid reading; nor, certainly, is any style which depends upon the evocation of atmosphere and a unity of impression. It was for this reason that Hawthorne never permitted any of his novels to be serialized in magazines; and to one begging editor he wrote: "In all my stories, I think, there is one idea running through them like an iron rod, and to which all other ideas are referred and subordinate; and this circumstance gives the narrative a character of monotony; which, possibly, may strengthen the impression which it makes, if read off at once, but would become intolerably wearisome, if dragged slowly before the reader, through a term of weeks or months." Hawthorne depended on this rod-like structure to give body and direction to the air of unreality which hung like a mist over his stories and colored the romantic form in which he wrote. To a contemporary and very minor poet who asked Hawthorne's opinion of his manuscript poem, the novelist replied: "In a story like this, it is allowable, and highly advisable (as you yourself have felt) to have as much mist and glorified fog as possible diffused about on all sides, but still there should be a distinct pathway to tread upon—a clue that the reader shall confide in, as being firmly fastened somewhere. People will not advance far into a poem, unless they know—or, at least, begin to know, or fancy they are about knowing—something of the matter in hand."

As with the old story-teller of one of his earliest and least important tales, Hawthorne's "groundplots, seldom within the widest scope of probability, were filled up with homely and natural incidents, the gradual accretions of a long course of years, and fiction hid its grotesque extravagances in this garb of truth. . . ." These incidents, as he said of certain passages in *The House of the Seven Gables*, "ought to be finished with the minuteness of a Dutch picture." Thus in his account of the scene in which Clifford peers down from behind his curtained window at the inconsequential life in the street below, or in his brutally vivid relation of the grim night when Zenobia's drowned body is found by the river-bank, Hawthorne's dexterity in descriptive prose can be observed. Except that a scene like the first is integrally blended into the structure and background of the whole, it has the completeness of one of his essays.

Hawthorne complained in his preface to *The Marble Faun* that America lacked the antique detail necessary to a writer like himself. "Romance and poetry, ivy, lichens, and wall-flowers, need ruin to make them grow." Yet it is the obtrusion of these details in *The Marble Faun* which makes it at times resemble a fictionalized guide-book, and its very absence in the American scene led him to substitute for concrete background the highly developed mental metaphor. To this substitution, perhaps, is owed the excellence of such a chapter as "Clifford's Chamber" in *The House of the Seven Gables*, with its extended description of Hepzibah's hesitation, or so intricately developed and Jamesian a passage as that in which the probings of Chillingworth into Dimmesdale's mind are described:

Then, after long search into the minister's dim interior, and turning over many precious materials, in the shape of high aspirations for the welfare of his race, warm love of souls, pure sentiments, natural piety, strengthened by thought and study, and illuminated by revelation—all of which invaluable gold was perhaps no better than rubbish to the seeker—he would turn back discouraged, and begin his quest towards another point. He groped along as stealthily, with as cautious a tread, and as wary an outlook, as a thief entering a chamber where a man lies only half asleep—or, it may be, broad awake—with purpose to steal the very treasure which this man guards as the apple of his eye. In spite of his premeditated carefulness, the floor would now and then creak; his garments would rustle; the shadow of his presence, in a forbidden proximity, would be thrown across his victim. In other words, Mr. Dimmesdale, whose sensibility of nerve often produced the effect of spiritual intuition, would become vaguely aware that something inimical to his peace had thrust itself into relation with him. But old Roger Chillingworth, too, had perceptions that were almost intuitive; and when the minister threw his startled eyes towards him, there the physician sat; his kind, watchful, sympathizing, but never intrusive friend.

Hawthorne's chief problem throughout his writing was, in his words, to provide "a neutral ground where the Actual and the Imaginary might meet." It was not easy. "The fact is," he said, "in writing a romance, a man is always—or always ought to be—careening on the utmost verge of a precipitous absurdity, and the skill lies in coming as close as possible, without actually tumbling over."

These are times that try literary men's souls as well as their styles. Now that certain nineteenth-century writers are being revived and relished for their premonitions of a new political order, somewhat as Virgil kept his respectability during the Middle Ages by his supposed forecast of Christianity, criticism is relearning a respect for the didactic in art. Literature may serve as well as merely satisfy. At least it may do one or the other, and yet be art. Even the moral tag which used to be thought of as a tin can tied to a dog's tail will be seen again in time to have its own, though limited, artistic function. It is more fittingly the jewel towards which the design of a circlet is traced; it is the truth towards which the story points. Hawthorne's concern with the problems of life was not political, and not always directly social. But his writing did contain social implications: clear the world of Ethan Brands, of Rappaccinis, of Lady Eleanores; make the new Pilgrim's progress better; mature the Hildas; regenerate man, and society will itself in turn be regenerate. Was the lesson wrong? Do we know? The beauty is still there! Human experience is so diverse that a man can be estimated only by the depth with which he understands what chance has thrown his way. Hawthorne might have led other lives, might have written many things. Literature is not made up of what men might have written, but what they wrote. Understanding this fact, one is ready to read Hawthorne.

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New Haven, Conn.

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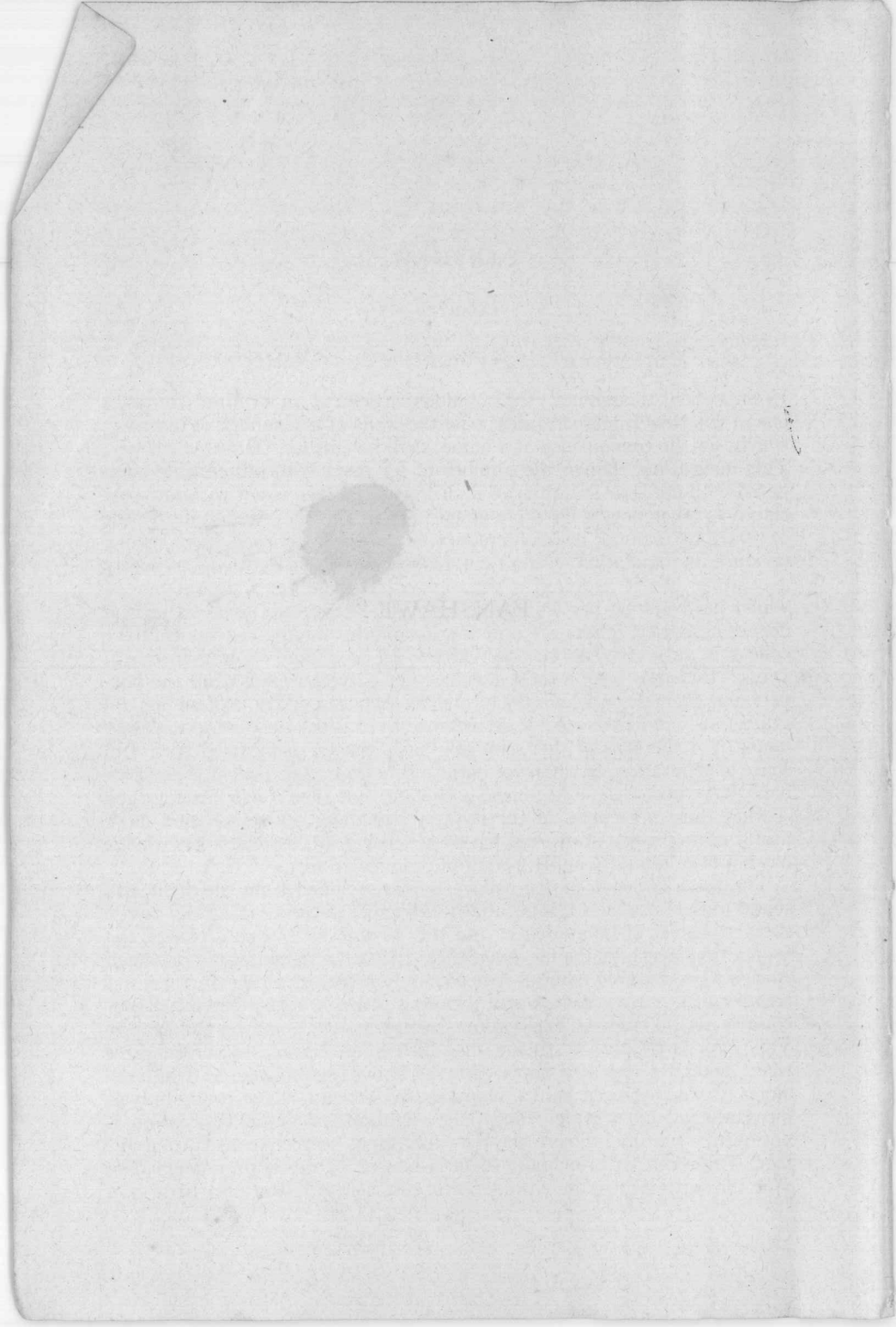
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FANSHAWE



FANSHAWE

CHAPTER I

"Our court shall be a little Academe."—SHAKESPEARE.

IN an ancient though not very populous settlement, in a retired corner of one of the New England States, arise the walls of a seminary of learning, which, for the convenience of a name, shall be entitled "Harley College." This institution, though the number of its years is inconsiderable compared with the hoar antiquity of its European sisters, is not without some claims to reverence on the score of age; for an almost countless multitude of rivals, by many of which its reputation has been eclipsed, have sprung up since its foundation. At no time, indeed, during an existence of nearly a century, has it acquired a very extensive fame; and circumstances, which need not be particularized, have, of late years, involved it in a deeper obscurity. There are now few candidates for the degrees that the college is authorized to bestow. On two of its annual "Commencement Days," there has been a total deficiency of baccalaureates; and the lawyers and divines, on whom doctorates in their respective professions are gratuitously inflicted, are not accustomed to consider the distinction as an honor. Yet the sons of this seminary have always maintained their full share of reputation, in whatever paths of life they trod. Few of them, perhaps, have been deep and finished scholars; but the college has supplied—what the emergencies of the country demanded—a set of men more useful in its present state, and whose deficiency in theoretical knowledge has not been found to imply a want of practical ability.

The local situation of the college, so far secluded from the sight and sound of the busy world, is peculiarly favorable to the moral, if not to the literary, habits of its students; and this advantage probably caused the founders to overlook the inconveniences that were inseparably connected with it. The humble edifices rear themselves almost at the farthest extremity of a narrow vale, which, winding through a long extent of hill-country, is wellnigh as inaccessible, except at one point, as the Happy Valley of Abyssinia. A stream, that farther on becomes a considerable river, takes its rise at a short distance above the college, and affords, along its wood-fringed banks, many shady retreats, where even study is pleasant, and idleness delicious. The neighborhood of the institution is not quite a solitude, though the few habitations scarcely constitute a village. These consist principally of farm-houses, of rather an ancient date (for the settlement is much older than the college), and of a little inn,

which even in that secluded spot does not fail of a moderate support. Other dwellings are scattered up and down the valley; but the difficulties of the soil will long avert the evils of a too dense population. The character of the inhabitants does not seem—as there was, perhaps, room to anticipate—to be in any degree influenced by the atmosphere of Harley College. They are a set of rough and hardy yeomen, much inferior, as respects refinement, to the corresponding classes in most other parts of our country. This is the more remarkable, as there is scarcely a family in the vicinity that has not provided, for at least one of its sons, the advantages of a “liberal education.”

Having thus described the present state of Harley College, we must proceed to speak of it as it existed about eighty years since, when its foundation was recent, and its prospects flattering. At the head of the institution, at this period, was a learned and Orthodox divine, whose fame was in all the churches. He was the author of several works which evinced much erudition and depth of research; and the public, perhaps, thought the more highly of his abilities from a singularity in the purposes to which he applied them, that added much to the curiosity of his labors, though little to their usefulness. But, however fanciful might be his private pursuits, Dr. Melmoth, it was universally allowed, was diligent and successful in the arts of instruction. The young men of his charge prospered beneath his eye, and regarded him with an affection that was strengthened by the little foibles which occasionally excited their ridicule. The president was assisted in the discharge of his duties by two inferior officers, chosen from the alumni of the college, who, while they imparted to others the knowledge they had already imbibed, pursued the study of divinity under the direction of their principal. Under such auspices the institution grew and flourished. Having at that time but two rivals in the country (neither of them within a considerable distance), it became the general resort of the youth of the Province in which it was situated. For several years in succession, its students amounted to nearly fifty,—a number which, relatively to the circumstances of the country, was very considerable.

From the exterior of the collegians, an accurate observer might pretty safely judge how long they had been inmates of those classic walls. The brown cheeks and the rustic dress of some would inform him that they had but recently left the plough to labor in a not less toilsome field; the grave look, and the intermingling of garments of a more classic cut, would distinguish those who had begun to acquire the polish of their new residence; and the air of superiority, the paler cheek, the less robust form, the spectacles of green, and the dress, in general of threadbare black, would designate the highest class, who were understood to have acquired nearly all the science their Alma Mater could bestow, and to be on the point of assuming their stations in the world. There were, it is true, exceptions to this general description. A few young men had found their way hither from the distant seaports; and these were the models of fashion to their rustic companions, over whom they asserted a superiority in exterior

accomplishments, which the fresh though unpolished intellect of the sons of the forest denied them in their literary competitions. A third class, differing widely from both the former, consisted of a few young descendants of the aborigines, to whom an impracticable philanthropy was endeavoring to impart the benefits of civilization.

If this institution did not offer all the advantages of elder and prouder seminaries, its deficiencies were compensated to its students by the inculcation of regular habits, and of a deep and awful sense of religion, which seldom deserted them in their course through life. The mild and gentle rule of Dr. Melmoth, like that of a father over his children, was more destructive to vice than a sterner sway; and though youth is never without its follies, they have seldom been more harmless than they were here. The students, indeed, ignorant of their own bliss, sometimes wished to hasten the time of their entrance on the business of life; but they found, in after-years, that many of their happiest remembrances, many of the scenes which they would with least reluctance live over again, referred to the seat of their early studies. The exceptions to this remark were chiefly those whose vices had drawn down, even from that paternal government, a weighty retribution.

Dr. Melmoth, at the time when he is to be introduced to the reader, had borne the matrimonial yoke (and in his case it was no light burden) nearly twenty years. The blessing of children, however, had been denied him,—a circumstance which he was accustomed to consider as one of the sorest trials that checkered his pathway; for he was a man of a kind and affectionate heart, that was continually seeking objects to rest itself upon. He was inclined to believe, also, that a common offspring would have exerted a meliorating influence on the temper of Mrs. Melmoth, the character of whose domestic government often compelled him to call to mind such portions of the wisdom of antiquity as relate to the proper endurance of the shrewishness of woman. But domestic comforts, as well as comforts of every other kind, have their drawbacks; and, so long as the balance is on the side of happiness, a wise man will not murmur. Such was the opinion of Dr. Melmoth; and with a little aid from philosophy, and more from religion, he journeyed on contentedly through life. When the storm was loud by the parlor hearth, he had always a sure and quiet retreat in his study; and there, in his deep though not always useful labors, he soon forgot whatever of disagreeable nature pertained to his situation. This small and dark apartment was the only portion of the house to which, since one firmly repelled invasion, Mrs. Melmoth's omnipotence did not extend. Here (to reverse the words of Queen Elizabeth) there was "but one master and no mistress"; and that man has little right to complain who possesses so much as one corner in the world where he may be happy or miserable, as best suits him. In his study, then, the doctor was accustomed to spend most of the hours that were unoccupied by the duties of his station. The flight of time was here as swift as the wind, and noiseless as the snow-flake; and it was a sure proof of real happiness that night often came upon the student before he knew it was midday.