GEORGE E. WOODBERRY

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

Nathaniel Hawthorne

George E. Woodberry

Contents:

Nathaniel Hawthorne, G. E. Woodberry
Jazzybee Verlag Jürgen Beck
86450 Altenmünster, Loschberg 9
Germany

ISBN: 9783849641047

www.jazzybee-verlag.de
www.facebook.com/jazzybeeverlag
admin@jazzybee-verlag.de

Nathaniel Hawthorne

PREFACE

The narrative of Hawthorne's life has been partly told in the autobiographical passages of his writings which he himself addressed to his readers from time to time, and in the series of "Note Books," not meant for publication but included in his posthumous works; the remainder is chiefly contained in the family biography, "Nathaniel Hawthorne and his Wife" by his son Julian Hawthorne, "Memories of Hawthorne" by his daughter, Mrs. Rose Hawthorne Lathrop, and "A Study of Hawthorne," by his son-in-law, George Parsons Lathrop. Collateral material is also to be found abundantly in books of reminiscences by his contemporaries. These are the printed sources of the present biography.

The author takes pleasure in expressing his thanks to his publishers for the ample material they have placed at his disposal; and also to Messrs. Harper and Brothers for their permission to make extracts from Horatio Bridge's "Personal Recollections of Nathaniel Hawthorne," and to Samuel T. Pickard, Esq., author of "Hawthorne's First Diary," and to Dr. Moncure D. Conway, author of "Nathaniel Hawthorne" (Appleton's), for a like courtesy.

COLUMBIA COLLEGE, April 1, 1902.

I. FIRST YEARS.

The Hathorne family stock, to name it with the ancient spelling, was English, and its old home is said to have been at Wigeastle, Wilton, in Wiltshire. The emigrant planter, William Hathorne, twenty-three years old, came over in the Arbella with Winthrop in 1630. He settled at Dorchster, but in 1637 removed to Salem, where he received grants of land; and there the line continued generation after generation with varying fortune, at one time coming into public service and local distinction, and at another lapsing again into the common lot, as was the case of the long settled families generally. The planter, William Hathorne, shared to the full in the vigor and enterprise of the first generation in New England. He was a leader in war and peace, trade and politics, with the versatility then required for leadership, being legislator, magistrate, Indian fighter, explorer, and promoter, as well as occasionally a preacher; and besides this practical force he had a temper to sway and incite, which made him reputed the most eloquent man in the public assembly. He possessed—and this may indicate another side to his character—a copy of Sir Philip Sidney's "Arcadia," certainly a rare book in the wilderness. He was best remembered, both in local annals and family tradition, as a patriot and a persecutor, for he refused to obey the king's summons to England, and he ordered Quaker women to be whipped through the country-side.

The next generation, born in the colony, were generally of a narrower type than their fathers, though in their turn they took up the work of the new and making world with force and conscience; and the second Hathorne, John, of fanatical memory, was as characteristically a latter-day Puritan as his father had been a pioneer. He served in the council and the field, but he left a name chiefly as a

magistrate. His duty as judge fell in the witchcraft years, and under that adversity of fortune he showed those qualities of the Puritan temperament which are most darkly recalled; he examined and sentenced to death several of the accused persons, and bore himself so inhumanely in court that the husband of one of the sufferers cursed him,—it must have been dramatically done to have left so vivid a mark in men's minds,—him and his children's children. This was the curse that lingered in the family memory like a black blot in the blood, and was ever after used to explain any ill luck that befell the house. The third heir of the name, Joseph, was a plain farmer, in whose person the family probably ceased from the ranks of the gentry, as the word was then used. The fourth, Daniel, "bold Hathorne" of the Revolutionary ballad, was a privateersman, robust, ruddy of face, blue-eyed, quick to wrath,—a strong-featured type of the old Salem shipmaster. His son, Nathaniel, the fifth descendant, was also bred to the sea, a young man of slight, firm figure, and in face and build so closely resembling his famous son—for he was the father of Hawthorne—that a passing sailor once recognized the latter by the likeness. What else he transmitted to his son, in addition to physique, by way of temperament and inbred capacity and inclination, was to suffer more than a sea-change; but he is recalled as a stern man on deck, of few words, showing doubtless the early aging of those days under the influence of active responsibility, danger, and the habit of command, and, like all these shipmasters—for they were men of some education—he took books to sea with him. He died at Surinam in 1808, when thirty-two years old. He had married Elizabeth Clarke Manning, herself a descendant in the fifth generation of Richard Manning, of St. Petrox Parish, Dartmouth, whose widow emigrated to New England with her children in 1679. Other old colonial families that had blended with the Hathornes and Mannings in these American years were the Gardner,

Bowditch, and Phelps stocks, on the one side, and the Giddings, Potter, and Lord, on the other. Of such descent, Nathaniel Hawthorne, the second child and only son of this marriage, was born at Salem, July 4, 1804, in his grandfather Daniel's house, on Union Street, near the wharves.

The pleasant, handsome, bright-haired boy was four years old when his mother called him into her room and told him that his father was dead. She soon removed with him and his sisters, of whom Elizabeth was four years older and Louisa two years younger than himself, to her father's house in the adjoining yard, which faced on Herbert Street; and there the young mother, who was still but twenty-seven, following a custom which made much of widows' mourning in those times, withdrew to a life of seclusion in her own room, which, there or elsewhere, she maintained till her death, through a period of forty years; and, as a perpetual outward sign of her solitude, she took her meals apart, never eating at the common table. There is a touch of mercy in life which allows childhood to reconcile itself with all conditions; else one might regret that the lad was to grow up from his earliest memory in the visible presence of this grief separating him in some measure from his mother's life; it was as if there were a ghost in the house; and though early anecdotes of him are few and of little significance, yet in his childish threat to go away to sea and never come back again, repeated through years, one can but trace the deep print of that sorrow of the un-returning ones which was the tragedy of women's lives all along this coast. His mother cared for him none the less, though she was less his companion, and there seems to have been no diminution of affection and kindness between them, though an outward habit of coldness sprang up as time went on. He had his sisters for playmates at first, and as he grew up, he was much looked after by his uncles. His first master

was Dr. Worcester, the lexicographer, then just graduated from Yale, who set up a school in Salem; and, the lad being lamed in ball-playing, the young teacher came to the house to carry on the lessons. The accident happened when Hawthorne was nine years old, and the injury, which reduced him to crutches, continued to trouble him till he was twelve, at least, after which, to judge by the fact that he attended dancing-school, he seems to have entirely recovered from it. The habit of reading came to him earlier, perhaps because of his confinement and disability for sports in these three or four years; he was naturally thrown back upon himself. He is seen lying upon the floor habitually, and when not playing with cats—the only boyish fondness told of him—reading Shakspere, Milton, Thomson, the books of the household, not uncommon in New England homes, where good books were as plenty then as all books are now; and on Sundays, at his grandmother Hathorne's, across the yard, he would crouch hour after hour over Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," that refuge of boyhood on the oldtime Sabbaths. It is recollected that, by the time he was fourteen, he had read Clarendon, Froissart, and Rousseau, besides "The Newgate Calendar," a week-day favorite; and he may be said to have begun youth already well versed in good English books, and with the habit and taste of literary pleasure established as a natural part of life. "The Faërie Queene" was the first book he bought with his own money. He was vigorous enough now; but the two outward circumstances that most affected his boyhood, the monotone of his mother's sorrow and his own protracted physical disability, must have given him touches of gravity and delicacy beyond his years. It is noticeable that nothing is heard of any boy friends; nor did he contract such friendships, apparently, before college days.

In the fall of 1818, when Hawthorne was fourteen years old, the family removed to Raymond, in Maine, where the

Mannings possessed large tracts of land. The site of this township was originally a grant to the surviving members and the heirs of Captain Raymond's militia company of Beverly, the next town to Salem, for service in the French and Indian war; and Hawthorne's grandfather, Richard Manning, being the secretary of the proprietors, who managed the property and held their meetings in Beverly, had toward the close of the century bought out many of their rights. After his death the estate thus acquired was kept undivided, and was managed for his children by his sons Richard and Robert, and finally at any rate, more particularly by the latter, who stood in the closest relation to Hawthorne of all his uncles, having undertaken to provide for his education. He had built a large, square, hip-roofed house at Raymond, after the model common in his native county of Essex, as a comfortable dwelling, but so seemingly grand amid the humble surroundings of the Maine clearing as to earn the name of "Manning's folly;" and, about 1814, he built a similar house for his sister, near his own, but she had not occupied it until now, when she came to live there, at first boarding with a tenant. It was pleasantly situated, with a garden and apple orchard, and with rows of butternut-trees planted beside it; and perhaps she had sought this retirement with the hope of its being consonant with her own solitude. The country round about was wilderness, most of it primeval woods. The little settlement, only a mill and a country store and a few scattered houses, lay on a broad headland making out into Sebago Lake, better known as the Great Pond, a sheet of water eight miles across and fourteen miles long, and connected with other lakes in a chain of navigable water; to the northwest the distant horizon was filled with the White Mountains, and northward and eastward rose the unfrequented hill and lake country, remarkable only, then as now, for its pure air and waters, and presenting a vast solitude. This was the Maine home of Hawthorne, of which

he cherished the memory as the brightest part of his boyhood. The spots that can be named which may have excited his curiosity or interested his imagination are few, and similar places would not be far off anywhere on the coast. There was near his home a Pulpit Rock, such as tradition often preserves, and by the Pond there was a cliff with the usual legend of a romantic leap, and under it were the Indian rock-paintings called the Images; but the essential charm of the place was that in all directions the country lay open for adventure by boat or by trail. Hawthorne had visited the scene before, in summer times, and he revisited it afterward in vacations, but his long stay here was in his fifteenth year, the greater part of which he passed in its neighborhood.

The contemporary record of these days is contained in a diary [Footnote: Hawthorne's First Diary, with an account of its discovery and loss. By Samuel T. Pickard. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1897. The volume has been withdrawn by its editor in consequence of his later doubts of its authenticity.] which has been regarded as Hawthorne's earliest writing. The original has never been produced, and the copy was communicated for publication under circumstances of mystery that easily allow doubts of its authenticity to arise. The diary is said to have been given to him by his uncle Richard "with the advice that he write out his thoughts, some every day, in as good words as he can, upon any and all subjects, as it is one of the best means of his securing for mature years command of thought and language,"—these words being written on the first leaf with the date, "Raymond, June 1, 1816." Whether this inscription and the entries which follow it are genuine must be left undetermined; there is nothing strange in Hawthorne's keeping a boy's diary, and being urged to do so, in view of his tastes and circumstances, and it would be interesting to trace to so early a beginning that habit of the

note-book that was such a resource to him in mature years; but the evidence is inconclusive. Whether by his hand or not, the diary embodies the life he led in this region on his visits and during his longer stay; the names and places, the incidents, the people, the quality of the days are the same that the boy knew, wrote of in letters of the time, and remembered as a man; and though the story may be the fabrication of his mulatto boy comrade of those days, it is woven of shreds and patches of reality. After all, the little book is but a lad's log of small doings,—swapping knives, swimming and fishing, of birds and snakes and bears, incidents of the road and excursions into the woods and on the lake, and notices of the tragic accidents of the neighborhood. It has some importance as illustrating the external circumstances of the place, a very rural place indeed, and suggesting that among these country people Hawthorne found the secret of that fellowship—all he ever had—with the rough and unlearned, on a footing of democratic equality, with the ease and naturalness of a man. Here at Raymond in his youth, where his personal superiority was too much a matter of course to be noticed, he must have learned this freemasonry with young and old at the same time that he held apart from all in his own life. For the rest, he has told himself in his undoubted words how he swam and hunted, shot hen-hawks and partridges, caught trout, and tracked bear in the snow, and ran wild, yet not wholly free of the call-whistle of his master-passion: "I ran quite wild," he wrote a quarter-century later, "and would, I doubt not, have willingly run wild till this time, fishing all day long, or shooting with an old fowling-piece; but reading a good deal, too, on rainy days, especially in Shakespeare and 'The Pilgrim's Progress,' and any poetry or light books within my reach. These were delightful days.... I would skate all alone on Sebago Lake, with the deep shadows of the icy hills on either hand. When I found myself far from home, and weary with the exhaustion of

skating, I would sometimes take refuge in a log cabin where half a tree would be burning on the broad hearth. I would sit in the ample chimney, and look at the stars through the great aperture through which the flames went roaring up. Ah, how well I recall the summer days, also, when with my gun I roamed at will through the woods of Maine!" In these memories, it is evident, many years, younger and older, are diffused in one recollection. For him, here rather than by his native sea were those open places of freedom that boyhood loves, and with them he associated the beginnings of his spirit,—the dark as well as the bright; near his end he told Fields, as his mind wandered back to these days, "I lived in Maine like a bird of the air, so perfect was the freedom I enjoyed. But it was there I first got my cursed habits of solitude." The tone of these reminiscences is verified by his letters, when he went back to Salem; in the first months he writes of "very hard fits of homesickness;" a year later he breaks out,—"Oh, that I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly hence and be at rest! How often do I long for my gun, and wish that I could again savageize with you! But I shall never again run wild in Raymond, and I shall never be so happy as when I did;" and, after another year's interval, "I have preferred and still prefer Raymond to Salem, through every change of fortune." There can be no doubt where his heart placed the home of his boyhood; nor is it, perhaps, fanciful to observe that in his books the love of nature he displays is rather for the woods than the sea, though he was never content to live long away from the salt air.

It was plainly the need of schooling that took him from his mother's home at Raymond and brought him back to Salem by the summer of 1819, when he was just fifteen years old. Even in the winter interval he seems to have gone for a few weeks to the house of the Rev. Caleb Bradley, Stroudwater, Westbrook, in the same county as Raymond, to be tutored.

He remained in Salem with his uncles for the next two years, and was prepared for college, partly, at least, by Benjamin Oliver, a lawyer, at the expense of his uncle Robert, and during a portion of this time he earned some money by writing in the office of his uncle William; but he was occupied chiefly with his studies, reading, and early compositions. At the beginning of this period, in his first autumn letters, he mentions having lately read "Waverley," "The Mysteries of Udolpho," "The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom," "Roderick Random," and a volume of "The Arabian Nights;" and he has learned the easy rhyming of first verses, and stuffs his letters with specimens of his skill, clever stanzas, well written, modulated in the cadences of the time, with melancholy seriousness and such play of sad fancy as youthful poets use. He laid little store by his faculty for verse, and yet he had practiced it from an early childish age and had a fair mastery of its simple forms; and once or twice in mature life he indulged himself in writing and even in publishing serious poems. In these years, however, verses were only a part of the ferment of his literary talent, nor have any of them individuality. He practiced prose, too, and in the next summer, 1820, issued four numbers of a boy's paper, "The Spectator," bearing weekly date from August 21 to September 18, and apparently he had made an earlier experiment, without date, in such adolescent journalism; it was printed with a pen on small note-paper, and contained such serious matter as belongs to themes at school on "Solitude" and "Industry," with the usual addresses to subscribers and the liveliness natural to family news-columns. The composition is smooth and the manner entertaining, and there is abundance of good spirits and fun of a boyish sort. The paper shows the literary spirit and taste in its very earliest bud; but no precocity of talent distinguished it, though doubtless the thought of authorship fed on its tender leaves. Such experiments

belong to the life of growing boys where education is common and literary facility is thought to be a distinction and sign of promise in the young; and Hawthorne did not in these ways differ from the normal boy who was destined for college. Nothing more than these trifles is to be gleaned of his intellectual life at that time, but two or three letters pleasantly illustrate his brotherly feeling, his spirits, and his uncertainties in regard to the future, at the same time that they display his absorption in the author's craft; and they conclude the narrative of these early days before college. The first was written in October, 1820, just after the last issue of "The Spectator," to his younger sister Louisa, and shows incidentally that these literary pleasures were a family diversion:—

Dear Sister,—I am very angry with you for not sending me some of your poetry, which I consider a great piece of ingratitude. You will not see one line of mine until you return the confidence which I have placed in you. I have bought the "Lord of the Isles," and intend either to send or to bring it to you. I like it as well as any of Scott's other poems. I have read Hogg's "Tales," "Caleb Williams," "St. Leon," and "Mandeville." I admire Godwin's novels, and intend to read them all. I shall read the "Abbot," by the author of "Waverley," as soon as I can hire it. I have read all Scott's novels except that. I wish I had not, that I might have the pleasure of reading them again. Next to these I like "Caleb Williams." I have almost given up writing poetry. No man can be a Poet and a bookkeeper at the same time. I do find this place most "dismal," and have taken to chewing tobacco with all my might, which, I think, raises my spirits. Say nothing of it in your letters, nor of the "Lord of the Isles." ... I do not think I shall ever go to college. I can scarcely bear the thought of living upon Uncle Robert for four years longer. How happy I should be to be able to say, "I am Lord of myself!" You may cut off this part of my

letter, and show the other to Uncle Richard. Do write me some letters in skimmed milk. I must conclude, as I am in a "monstrous hurry"!

Your affectionate brother,

NATH. HATHORNE.

P. S. The most beautiful poetry I think I ever saw begins:—

"She 'a gone to dwell in Heaven, my lassie,
She's gone to dwell in Heaven:
Ye're ow're pure quo' a voice aboon
For dwalling out of Heaven."

It is not the words, but the thoughts. I hope you have read it, as I know you would admire it.

A passage from a second letter, six months later, March 13, 1821, to his mother, reveals the character of his relationship with her:—

I don't read so much now as I did, because I am more taken up in studying. I am quite reconciled to going to college, since I am to spend the vacations with you. Yet four years of the best part of my life is a great deal to throw away. I have not yet concluded what profession I shall have. The being a minister is of course out of the question. I should not think that even you could desire me to choose so dull a way of life. Oh, no, mother, I was not born to vegetate forever in one place, and to live and die as calm and tranquil as—a puddle of water. As to lawyers, there are so many of them already that one half of them (upon a moderate calculation) are in a state of actual starvation. A physician, then, seems to be "Hobson's choice;" but yet I should not like to live by the diseases and infirmities of my

fellow-creatures. And it would weigh very heavily on my conscience, in the course of my practice, if I should chance to send any unlucky patient "ad inferum," which being interpreted is, "to the realms below." Oh that I was rich enough to live without a profession! What do you think of my becoming an author, and relying for support upon my pen? Indeed, I think the illegibility of my handwriting is very author-like. How proud you would feel to see my works praised by the reviewers, as equal to the proudest productions of the scribbling sons of John Bull! But authors are always poor devils, and therefore Satan may take them. I am in the same predicament as the honest gentleman in "Espriella's Letters:"—

"I am an Englishman, and naked I stand here,
A-musing in my mind what garment I shall wear."

But as the mail closes soon, I must stop the career of my pen. I will only inform you that I now write no poetry, or anything else. I hope that either Elizabeth or you will write to me next week. I remain

Your affectionate son,

NATHL. HATHORNE.

Do not show this letter.

A third letter, June 19, 1821, also to his mother, on the eve of his departure for college, is interesting for the solicitude it exhibits for her happiness in the solitary life she had come to live.

"I hope, dear mother, that you will not be tempted by my entreaties to return to Salem to live. You can never have so much comfort here as you now enjoy. You are now

undisputed mistress of your own house.... If you remove to Salem, I shall have no mother to return to during the college vacations, and the expense will be too great for me to come to Salem. If you remain at Raymond, think how delightfully the time will pass, with all your children round you, shut out from the world, and nothing to disturb us. It will be a second Garden of Eden.

'Lo, what an entertaining sight
Are kindred who agree!'

"Elizabeth is as anxious for you to stay as myself. She says she is contented to remain here for a short time, but greatly prefers Raymond as a permanent place of residence. The reason for my saying so much on this subject is that Mrs. Dike and Miss Manning are very earnest for you to return to Salem, and I am afraid they will commission uncle Robert to persuade you to it. But, mother, if you wish to live in peace, I conjure you not to consent to it. Grandmother, I think, is rather in favor of your staying."

A few weeks later, in the summer of 1821, being then seventeen years old, Hawthorne left Salem for Bowdoin College, in Brunswick, Maine, by the mail stage from Boston eastward, and before reaching his destination picked up by the way a Sophomore, Franklin Pierce, afterwards President of the United States, and two classmates of his own, Jonathan Cilley, who went to Congress and was the victim of the well-remembered political duel with Graves, and Alfred Mason; he made friends with these new companions, and Mason became his room-mate for two years. Bowdoin was a small college, graduating at that time about thirty students at its annual Commencement; its professors were kindly and cultivated men, and its curriculum the simple academic course of

those days. Hawthorne's class, immortalized fifty years later by Longfellow's grave and tender anniversary lines, "Morituri Salutamus," was destined to unusual distinction in after life. Longfellow, its scholastic star, was a boy of fourteen, favored by the regard of the professors, and belonging to the more studious and steady set of fellows, who gathered in the Peucinian Society. Hawthorne joined the rival organisation, the Athenaeum, a more free and boisterous group of lower standing in their studies, described as the more democratic in their feelings. He is remembered as "a slender lad, having a massive head, with dark, brilliant, and most expressive eyes, heavy eyebrows, and a profusion of dark hair." He carried his head on one side, which gave a singularity to his figure, and he had generally a countrified appearance; but he took his place among his mates without much observation. He was reticent in speech and reserved in manner, and he was averse to intimacy; he had, nevertheless, a full share in collegiate life and showed no signs of withdrawal from the common arena. He did not indulge in sports, saving some rough-and-tumble play, nor did he ride horseback or drive, nor apparently did he care for that side of youthful life at all, though he was willing to fight on occasion, and joined the military company of which Pierce was captain. His athleticism seems to have been confined to his form. He played cards for small stakes, being a member of the Androscoggin Loo Club, and he took his part in the convivial drinking of the set where he made one, winning the repute of possessing a strong head. These indulgences were almost too trifling to deserve mention, for the scale of life at Bowdoin was of the most inexpensive order, and though there was light gambling and occasional jollification, bad habits were practically impossible in these directions. He was certainly not ashamed of his doings, for on being detected in one of these scrapes, at the end of his Freshman year, anticipating a letter of the President, he

wrote to his mother, May 30, 1822, an account of the affair:—

MY DEAR MOTHER,—I hope you have safely arrived in Salem. I have nothing particular to inform you of, except that all the card-players in college have been found out, and my unfortunate self among the number. One has been dismissed from college, two suspended, and the rest, with myself, have been fined fifty cents each. I believe the President intends to write to the friends of all the delinquents. Should that be the case, you must show the letter to nobody. If I am again detected, I shall have the honor of being suspended; when the President asked what we played for, I thought it proper to inform him it was fifty cents, although it happened to be a quart of wine; but if I had told him of that, he would probably have fined me for having a blow. There was no untruth in the case, as the wine cost fifty cents. I have not played at all this term. I have not drank any kind of spirits or wine this term, and shall not till the last week.

* * * * *

He takes up the subject again in a letter to one of his sisters, August 5, 1822:—

"To quiet your suspicions, I can assure you that I am neither 'dead, absconded, or anything worse.' I have involved myself in no 'foolish scrape,' as you say all my friends suppose; but ever since my misfortune I have been as steady as a sign-post, and as sober as a deacon, have been in no 'blows' this term, nor drank any kind of 'wine or strong drink.' So that your comparison of me to the 'prodigious son' will hold good in nothing, except that I shall probably return penniless, for I have had no money this six weeks.... The President's message is not so severe

as I expected. I perceive that he thinks I have been led away by the wicked ones, in which, however, he is greatly mistaken. I was full as willing to play as the person he suspects of having enticed me, and would have been influenced by no one. I have a great mind to commence playing again, merely to show him that I scorn to be seduced by another into anything wrong."

The last week of the term and the close of the Senior year appear to have been the seasons of conviviality, and Hawthorne's life of this sort ended with his being an officer of the Navy Club, an impromptu association of those of his classmates, fourteen out of thirty-eight, who for one reason or another were not to have a Commencement part on graduation. The Club met at the college tavern, Miss Ward's, near the campus, for weekly suppers and every night during Commencement week; this entertainment was for these youths the happy climax of their academic life together.

In his studies Hawthorne must have followed his own will very freely. He refused to declaim, and no power could make him do so, and for this reason he was denied the honor of a Commencement part, which he had won, being number eighteen by rank in his class; he was nervously shy about declaiming, owing, it is said, to his having been laughed at on his first attempt as a school-boy at Salem; but he either delivered or read a Latin theme at a Junior exhibition. He also paid scant attention to mathematics and metaphysics, and had no pride as to failing in recitation in those branches; but he distinguished himself as a Latin scholar and in English. His most fruitful hours, as so often happens, were those spent in the little library of the Athenaeum Society, a collection, as he writes home, of eight hundred books, among which he especially mentions Rees's Cyclopædia—such was the wealth of a boy of genius

in those days—but among the eight hundred books it is certain that the bulk of English literature was contained. He practiced writing somewhat, though he had given up poetry; and he played a prank by sending to a Boston paper a fabricated account of one of those destroying insects which visit that region from time to time, with notes on ways of exterminating it,—all for the benefit of his uncle, who took the paper; but no other trace of his composition remains except a memory of his elder sister's that he wrote to her of "progress on my novel." His way of life intellectually had not changed since his schoolboy days, for it is noticeable that then he never mentioned his studies, but only the books he read; so now he read the books for pleasure, and let his studies subsist as best they could in the realm of duty. He was poor, and even in the modest simplicity of this country college, where his expenses could hardly have been three hundred dollars a year, was evidently embarrassed with homely difficulties; the state of his clothes seems to have been on his mind a good deal. But he was self-respecting, patient, and grateful; he formed the good habit of hating debt; and he went on his way little burdened except by doubtful hopes.

Though he was familiar with his classmates and contemporaries at college, and firm and fast friends with a few, like Pierce and Cilley, forming with them the ties that last through all things, he had but one confidant, Horatio Bridge, afterwards of the United States Navy. Hawthorne roomed at first with Alfred Mason, in Maine Hall, and being burned out in their Freshman year, they found temporary quarters elsewhere, but when the Hall was rebuilt returned to it and occupied room number nineteen for the Sophomore year. The two chums, however, did not become intimate, beyond pleasant companionship, and they belonged to different societies; and the last two years Hawthorne roomed alone in a private house, Mrs.

Cunning's, where both he and Bridge also boarded. It is from the latter, who remained through life one of Hawthorne's most serviceable friends, that the account of his college days mainly comes. He especially remembered, besides such matters of fact as have been recounted, their walks and rambles together in the pine woods that stretched about the college unbroken for miles, and by the river with its rafts of spring logs, and over to the little bay sent up by a far-reaching arm of the sea; and he recalled the confidences of Hawthorne in speaking of his hopes of being a writer, in repeating to him verses as they leaned in the moonlight over the railing of the bridge below the falls, listening to the moving waters, and in allowing him some inward glimpses of his solitary life in the brooding time of youth. Bridge was a fellow of infinite cheer, and praised him, and clapped him, and urged him on, and gave him the best companionship in the world for that time of life, if not for all times,—the companionship of being believed in by a friend. Hawthorne did not forget it, and in due time paid the tribute of grateful remembrance in the preface to the volume he dedicated to Bridge, where he recalled his college days and his friend's part in them.

"If anybody is responsible for my being at this day an author, it is yourself. I know not whence your faith came, but while we were lads together at a country college, gathering blueberries in study hours under those tall, academic pines, or watching the great logs as they tumbled along the current of the Androscoggin, or shooting pigeons or gray squirrels in the woods, or bat-fowling in the summer twilight, or catching trout in that shadowy little stream which, I suppose, is still wandering riverward through the forest, though you and I will never cast a line in it again; two idle lads, in short (as we need not fear to acknowledge now), doing a hundred things that the Faculty never heard of, or else it would have been the worse for us

—still, it was your prognostic of your friend's destiny that he was to be a writer of fiction."

The picture is a vignette of the time, and being in the open, too, pleasantly ends the tale of college. On separating, it is pleasant to notice, the friends exchanged keepsakes.

The four years had lapsed quietly and quickly by, and Hawthorne, who now adopted the fanciful spelling of the name after his personal whim, was man grown. There had been trying circumstances in these early days, but he had met them hardily and lightly, as a matter of course; he had practically educated himself by the help of books, and had also discharged his duties as they seemed to the eyes of others; he could go home feeling that he had satisfied his friends. He seems to have feared that he might have satisfied them too well; and, some commendation having preceded him, he endeavored to put them right by a letter to his sister, July 14, 1825:—

"The family had before conceived much too high an opinion of my talents, and had probably formed expectations which I shall never realize. I have thought much upon the subject, and have finally come to the conclusion that I shall never make a distinguished figure in the world, and all I hope or wish is to plod along with the multitude. I do not say this for the purpose of drawing any flattery from you, but merely to set mother and the rest of you right upon a point where your partiality has led you astray. I did hope that uncle Robert's opinion of me was nearer to the truth, as his deportment toward me never expressed a very high estimation of my abilities."

This has the ring of sincerity, like all his home letters, and it is true that so far there had been nothing precocious, brilliant, or extraordinary in him to testify of genius,—he