

A NEW ENGLAND VILLAGE



THE "STOCKBRIDGE BOWL," OR MOUNTAIN MIRROR.—COTTAGE IN WHICH HAWTHORNE WROTE THE "HOUSE OF SEVEN GABLES."

A PROPER New England village is a thing unique, the product of a new and peculiar type of civilization. As such, the history of hardly any one can be sketched without unfolding much that is of general interest. Some of these villages, however, stand out by themselves, and eminent above the rest, on account of certain marked peculiarities which have characterized their origin or their subsequent development. Among such, and yielding to none in features calculated to interest general readers, is one near the centre of Berkshire County, Massachusetts.

The tide of summer tourists sets strongly every year through this westernmost portion of the State, and many a denizen of the crowded and sultry city has learned that there is new life to be found in an abode of even a few weeks among its picturesque hills and valleys. But as the traveler, thread-

ing his way among them, comes upon the wide plain which had been made by Housatonic in its almost vain effort to pass the mountain barriers that seem here to hem it in, and say, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther," obliging it to turn and double upon itself for a distance of nearly six miles without gaining as many rods in its general course toward the south; and as he passes along the noble street, level as the meadow whose course it follows, and of proportionate width, bordered on either side by stately elms, such as are found only in the valleys of New England, and from beneath their emerald arches looks out upon the gleaming river and the graceful slopes which stretch away in every direction, save where their gentle beauty is contrasted and heightened by the bare and rugged cliffs of Monument Mountain on the south, whose touching legend Bryant has sung in his own sweet verse, and as all around him, on every house,

and in every field and door-yard, and even in the nicely graveled foot-paths by the roadside, he sees the marks of care and culture — he seems to have found the most admirable blending of nature with art and taste, and altering only a little the verse of Goldsmith, is disposed to exclaim,

“Sweet *Stockbridge*! loveliest village of the plain!”

But how few of those who from year to year are surprised by this scene of loveliness are aware that this most beautifully set jewel of Berkshire was only a little while ago the wild hunting-ground of the Indian, kept as such long after the surrounding region had come under the ownership of the whites! It is but a step from there are those alive to-day in Stockbridge who were living there when the Indian tribe who owned its whole territory had not yet parted with it nor removed to their new home nearer the setting sun. Such is the change wrought within a human lifetime. The later settlements of the West, aided by our modern appliances of railroads and telegraphs, may show greater changes in a briefer period of time, but for New England the change here wrought is little less than a marvel. The growth of our country during the first century and a half, if we may not say two centuries, was comparatively slow. The day of railroads and steamships had not come. It was a hundred years after the settlement at Plymouth before Massachusetts had any white inhabitants west of the Connecticut River valley, or the region properly included in it. Westfield, as its name tells us, was then the westernmost settlement, the very outpost of civilization. All beyond to the Mississippi, and to the Canadian line on the north, was a wilderness. But in the year 1722 the wave of migration, which had rested for sixty years in the fertile meadows of the Connecticut, rolled forward to the valley of the Housatonic. Upon the petition of Joseph Parsons and nearly two hundred other inhabitants of Hampshire County—which then embraced almost all the western half of Massachusetts—for the grant of two townships of land upon the Housatonic River, a committee was appointed for the purpose of purchasing the Indian title to the designated tract, and dividing the same properly among the settlers. The committee was instructed also to reserve a suitable portion of the lands for the first minister, for the subsequent maintenance of the ordinance of the Gospel, and for the support of schools. Thus the new settlements were begun in the true Puritan style, with scrupulous regard to the rights of the aborigines, and with a zealous interest in behalf of education and religion.

The townships thus granted and opened to settlement embraced all the lower part of the

present county of Berkshire, with the reservation of a small portion on the southern border, and another larger portion (including nearly all of the present town of Stockbridge), which were then Occupied by Indians. These Indians, the sole inhabitants of this whole region, were a small band of the Mu-he-ka-ne-ok, or River Indians, as they were called, from their residence being on and near the Hudson River. Their name signifies “the people of the continually flowing water.” That portion of the tribe who resided in Berkshire came to be known as the Housatonic Indians, from the name they gave to the river on whose borders they lived. They had a tradition that their tribe came originally from a country northwest of their present home, having, as they said, “crossed the great water at a place where this and the other country are nearly connected.” They said, also, that in coming from the west “they found many great waters, but none of them flowing and ebbing like Muhekaneok until they came to Hudson River.” Then they said, one to another, This is like Muhekaneok, our nativity.” Here, then, we have a tradition which, if to be relied upon, indicates that one tribe of Indians at least found its way hither from Eastern Asia by way of Behring Strait an origin which agrees; it is well known, with the theory of some of the best ethnologists.

The committee charged with the duty of laying out the new townships set about their work at once. In a few months they had received the names of fifty-five proposed settlers; and in April, 1724, the Indians gave a deed of the land, signed by Koukapot, their king, or chief, and twenty others. The consideration in the case is somewhat peculiar, but indicates strongly the change, in some respects, which has taken place in the usages of society. The land was given, as the deed says, “in consideration of £450 three barrels of cider, and thirty quarts of rum.”

As the settlers occupied their newly granted lands, and thus came into contact with the Indians, they were surprised to find them well disposed and of good moral character, and that Koukapot, their chief; was even favorably inclined toward the Christian religion. This coming to the knowledge of Rev. Samuel Hopkins, of Springfield, he became very desirous that the Indians should have the Gospel preached to them. After conferring with some others, he made his wishes known to the Commissioners of Indian Affairs at Boston. This board, embracing among others the Governor of the colony, was an agency of the London Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts. The Commissioners approved the plan of Hopkins, and requested him, in conjunction with Rev. Stephen Williams, who in his youth had been carried away as a captive from Deerfield by the Indians in their fa-



SOLDIERS' MONUMENT AT STOCKBRIDGE.

mous attack upon that place, and who; by residence among them, knew their character and habits, to procure a suitable person to act as missionary to the Housatonic tribe, or, as they were afterward called, the Stockbridge Indians, and authorized the pledge of £100 a year for his support.

They were fortunate in finding very soon a man eminently fitted for the proposed work. This was John Sergeant, a native of New Jersey, and at that time a tutor in Yale College. He had been beard to say that he would prefer the life of a missionary to the Indians rather than any other. Accordingly, when applied to on behalf of the Commissioners, he engaged at once, if the college authorities would consent, to spend half the year with the Indians and half the year at the college, until he should have carried the class he was instructing through their course, which he was anxious to do, and then, if his missionary efforts gave promise of success, to devote his life to the Indians.

He was soon on his way to his new field of labor. A company of twenty adults was gathered to meet him almost as soon as he reached the Housatonic, and he began at once to preach the Gospel to them by means of an interpreter. The name of this interpreter was Poohpoonuc. He had lived among the whites, and those of the better character, and had gained from them a knowledge of the Christian religion. Under the preaching of Sergeant he was disposed to avow

his faith openly, and, after a proper examination, was publicly baptized, assuming the English name Ebenezer. With this Indian convert began the church in Stockbridge as it exists today. It is surprising and interesting as one looks into the catalogue of that church, as it is printed most recently, to find standing second on the list of its officers the name of Peter Pan-qua-nau-peat; while Ebenezer Poohpoonuc heads the roll of members, followed by such a succession as this: Captain John Koukapot, Mary Koukapot (wife), Catharine Koukapot (daughter), Lieutenant Aaron Umpachenee*, Hannah Umpachenee (wife), Isaac Wuaumpee. And so the roll goes on for more than fifty years, the names of whites and Indians mingled; the latter, however, gradually losing their predominance as the white population becomes relatively more numerous, and finally, with the removal of the Indians to their new home in New York, their names disappear; the church ceases to be a mission church and takes its place with the other churches of the commonwealth.

The peculiar growth of this New England village is shown also in the fact that for many years the town offices, as well as those of the church, were shared by the Indians. Thus in 1761 we find Johannes Mthoksin and Captain Jacob Cheek-son-kun were selectmen, Frederick Poh-pou-seet constable, Peter Nau-nee-wau-nau-koot tithing-man, and King Benjamin Kau-ke-we-nau-naunt and Captain Cheek-sou-kun on the committee for seating the church. In the year 1765 a constable's return reads thus: "By virtue of the foregoing order I have warned all the Indian inhabitants within a said town as within described, to meet at time and place within mentioned. Per me, Joseph Quinsqaunt, Constable."

When Sergeant came to Stockbridge he found the Indians living in two villages several miles apart. Divided thus into two bands, and of roving habits at the best, it was felt that it would be difficult to reach them in the most effective manner. This difficulty was in part removed by the agreement of the Indians to take up their residence in the winter at a point midway between their two villages, building there a school-house, and pitching their huts or lodges around it. Here the missionary taught a school during the week-days, and on the Sabbath preached to his dusky auditors. But no sooner had the spring begun to return than he found his parishioners forsaking him and going into the woods for the purpose of making maple sugar. It seems we are indebted to these Housatonic Indians for the discovery of that delightful sweet, so universally relished; for in the history of the

*Governor Belcher had conferred the commission of captain and lieutenant upon Koukapot and Umpachenee.

mission by Hopkins, published soon after Sergeant's death, he not only describes the process of making maple sugar, but the article itself, and gives its name, as though something previously unknown. He speaks thus, also, of the sirup "The molasses that is made of this sap is exceeding good, and considerably resembles honey. Three, or at most four, barrels of this sap, reduced to one by boiling, will ferment and make a very pleasant drink, which is sufficiently spirituous and, I suppose, by being distilled, would make excellent rum, though the experiment has not, that I know of, been yet made." He suggests also that if the business were to be properly taken up, maple-trees are so abundant that the whole country might be Supplied with sugar from this source.

As the Indians would go to the woods to make sugar, the faithful missionary resolved to go with them. Night and morning he led their devotions, and, when the daily work was done, taught them to sing. When the sugar-making season was ended the Indians returned to their central camp for a little while, but soon went to their separate settlements, as the planting season came on, that they might engage in their rude agriculture and follow the chase. This scattered and unsettled condition of the natives was so unfavorable to the work of instruction that, after the experiment of a year or two, an effort was made to induce them to settle permanently in one place. This was favored by the General Court, as the government of Massachusetts was called, and a tract of land six miles square was set apart and given to the Indians. This tract included the upper and larger settlement of the Indians and a considerable portion besides, and embraced the present township of Stockbridge, with that of West Stockbridge, and some land in addition. There were already a few Dutch and English settlers on this land, but their titles were purchased by the colony. The Indians were pleased with this action on their behalf, and almost immediately gave up their lower village, and settled together on the Great Meadow, or W-nahkta-kook, which afterward was incorporated as a town by the name of Stockbridge. The work of preaching and teaching was now prosecuted with increasing interest and success by Sergeant and his worthy assistant, Mr. Timothy Woodbridge.

It was part of the plan, in gathering the Indians together in one place, to introduce into the settlement a few white families of the best character for the sake of their influence both in civilizing and Christianizing the natives. By consent of the Indians one-sixtieth part of the land assigned them was reserved for each of four such families, as well as for Sergeant and Woodbridge. These families were carefully selected by a committee appointed for the purpose by the Legislature. The

result of this arrangement was that a choice society of whites was formed at Stockbridge from the beginning. Men and women of Puritan descent laid its foundations. Begun thus with families of the highest respectability and the best character, rather than by any company of adventurers or speculators, and pains being taken at the same time to remove the few of doubtful character who had previously gained a foot-hold, such as may always be found in or near new settlements, it was only a natural consequence that, in subsequent years, the spot which came into notice as the seat of a mission to heathen savages should be distinguished for the high-toned character of its people and the many persons of eminence who have had their abode there.

The formal ordination of Sergeant to his missionary work was a peculiar scene, and is eminently a fit subject for the canvas of the artist. It shows the remoteness and difficulty of access of the Housatonic region that this installation took place at Deer field, fifty miles from Stockbridge. It shows, too, the connection of the colonial government at that time with the religious affairs of the people, and especially with this mission to the Indians, that it took place by direction of the Governor and Council, and with their personal presence and participation. The scene is thus described by our historian: August 25, the Governor and a large committee from the Council and House of Representatives arrived, and the week was spent in forming a treaty, ratifying the peace and friendship which existed, and exchanging pledges. On the evening of Friday, the 29th, Mr. Sergeant reached Deer field, and the morning of the Sabbath, August 31, was set apart for the services of the ordination. The neighboring ministers attended, the usual congregation worshipping in the church assembled, many of the Indian delegates were grave spectators of the scene, the Governor and Council were in their places, and the Housatonic Indians, seated by themselves, completed a motley and interesting group. As an introduction to the ordination, the Rev. William Williams, of Hatfield, addressed the Governor, and humbly asked if it were his Excellency's pleasure that the pastors there convened should proceed to set apart Mr. Sergeant for the work to which he had been appointed. The Governor manifested his approbation. Mr. Williams then asked Mr. Sergeant if he were willing to devote himself to that work; Mr. Sergeant gave his assent, and the ordination services were performed. After the fellowship of the elders had been given, Rev. Dr. Williams, of Longmeadow, asked the Indians, through an interpreter, if they were willing to receive Mr. Sergeant, thus solemnly set apart to the work of teacher, among them. The Indians signified their assent by rising."

When Sergeant came to his missionary field he found a greater obstacle to his success in the lawless and immoral conduct of some whites from the Dutch plantations on the Hudson than from the paganism of the Indians. As one has said, "the trials incident to other missionaries were to be encountered—perils among the heathen, perils in the wilderness—and one peril which the apostle does not mention—peril among the Dutch." It is the old story which runs through all our Indian history. Even in those early times there were to be found those who, for their selfish purposes, were ready to make victims of the aborigines. Rum was then, as it has been ever since, the grand instrument of their success. Happily the influence of the missionary was so great, and such the good sense and moral principle of a portion of the red men, that they were led early to take strong measures against the threatening evil. It was not a year after Sergeant came among them when they passed a resolution "to have no trading in rum." The General Court also came to their assistance with its law, antedating the "Maine Law" by more than a century, making it a criminal offense for any private person to sell strong drink to an Indian. The Dutch traders, fearing, like those of old who made silver images of Diana, that the hope of their gains would disappear in proportion as the Gospel should produce its effect upon the Indians, endeavored to excite their opposition to the missionary and to the colonial government, telling them that the latter was unfriendly to them, and seeking to deprive them of their liberty in not allowing liquor to be freely sold them. But their confidence in their pastor enabled him to convince them that the law was enacted for their welfare, and that the traffickers in rum were their real enemies.

In 1734, when the mission was begun, the number of Housatonic Indians within its reach was not more than fifty. In two Years this number had increased to ninety, and it was not long before the faithful labors of Sergeant and those associated with him had made such an impression upon the Indians of the vicinity that the settlement at Stockbridge embraced more than four hundred of the children of the forest. Sergeant was not content, however, with the endeavor to enlighten and Christianize the few families he found residing upon the Housatonic. He designed, rather, the mission here to be a focal point of influence which should make itself felt through a wide region. Early in the history of his labors here he formed the plan of a manual-labor school. In this school he hoped to gather not only the children of the Indians living in the vicinity of Stockbridge, but those of more distant tribes, who might be induced to avail themselves

of its benefits. Here he proposed, in addition to the common education of the school and the instructions of religion, that the boys should be taught the arts of agriculture, and the girls those of domestic economy. It was an intelligent and far-sighted plan, worthy of the apostolic zeal and love of such a man as Sergeant. It enlisted much interest, also, not only among the ministers and churches of New England, but among the people of Great Britain. The mission to the Housatonic Indians had, indeed, derived the main portion of its pecuniary as well as moral support from abroad ever since its beginning. The Commissioners of Indian Affairs at Boston were the agents of the Society in London for Publishing the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and Sergeant, as well as Edwards and West, his Successors, received their salary largely from that source. The plan of the boarding school was formed in consultation with gentlemen of piety and distinction abroad, and had their encouragement from the first. Rev. Isaac Hollis, of London, a nephew of Hollis, the distinguished benefactor of Harvard College, had been interested in the mission from its start, and had offered to support twenty of the Stockbridge Indians at an annual charge of £500. When the larger scheme was proposed he was quite ready to second the plan. Rev. Dr. Watts also took up a collection among his friends in its behalf; and sent Sergeant £70, together with a copy of his treatise on the Improvement of the Mind," a little volume which is cherished as a memorial among the descendants of Sergeant to this day. Other English clergymen took hold of the matter with interest. The Prince of Wales, also, and the Dukes of Cumberland and Dorset, and Lord Gower, with others, became liberal subscribers to the mission and to the school. Dr. Francis Ayscough, of London, clerk of the closet and first chaplain to the Prince of Wales, also made a donation of a copy of the Scriptures in two large folio volumes, gilt and embellished with engravings. Upon the fly-leaf was written, "Presented by Dr. Ayscough to Rev. John Sergeant, missionary to the Stockbridge Indians, in that vast wilderness called New England." It is creditable to the catholicity of Dr. A. that, when he was informed that Mr. Sergeant was a Dissenter, he replied, "What if he be a Dissenter? It is time those distinctions were laid aside..... I love all good men alike, let them be Churchmen or Dissenters."

The Indians cherished these volumes of the Scriptures with great regard, and took them with them in their several migrations after they removed from their old Stockbridge home.

But the plan of the boarding-school, though in itself so generous and so generously helped, was not altogether successful.



SERGEANT'S HOME, STOCKBRIDGE.

The Stockbridge Indians did their part, not only by sending their own children to the missionaries, but by offering a portion of their lands to the Mobawks and Oneidas, if they would come and settle with them, and receive the benefits of the school; and at one time there were as many as ninety of these New York Indians resident on the Housatonic. But the outbreak of the war between England and France created great disturbance among the red men, and other causes combined to defeat the plan. The Indians from the other tribes returned to their homes after a while, and left the Stockbridge tribe as the only direct subjects of the missionary work begun in Berkshire.

It is much to be regretted that Sergeant has not left behind him such an account of the Indians as his rare knowledge of them so well fitted him to give. From the brief memoranda he has left, however, we are led to ascribe a high character to the Stockbridge Indians as compared with many others. President Dwight, writing near the close of the last century, speaks of them, also, in a commendatory way, and says that "this tribe was, both by itself and the other tribes, I acknowledged to be the eldest branch of their nation, and as such regularly had the precedency in their councils." Ebenezer, his interpreter, told Sergeant, as they were on their way to attend a religious ceremony of the Indians, that the latter now gener-

ally I believed in one supreme invisible being, the maker of all things, though some believed the sun to be God, or, at least, his body. He also gave him one of their beautiful traditions, which was that the seven stars are so many Indians translated to heaven in a dance; that the stars in Charles's Wain are so many men hunting a bear; that they begin the chase in spring, and hold it all summer; by the fall they have wounded it, and that the blood turns the leaves red; by the winter they have killed it, and the snow is made of its fat, which, being melted by the heat of the summer, makes the sap of the trees. A beautiful legend, certainly.

The Stockbridge Indians, as they were eminent for their good morals, were also distinguished for their peaceable character. So far as we know, they never had any hostile encounter with

the whites living near them, and when the French war, so called, broke out, they endeavored to prevent the other tribes from engaging in the threatening conflict, urging upon them a position of neutrality. The superior influence of the French prevented the success of their endeavors. But if they did not succeed in holding others apart from the conflict, they became a very great protection to the whites in the region of Western Massachusetts and Connecticut, below them. These people lay directly in the natural pathway of the Indians coming down with the French from Canada; but so great scorns to have been their dread of meeting the Stockbridges, in alliance with the whites among whom they were living, that the hostile tide swept on either side of them, and left the people of this region unharmed. And to the last, through all their history in connection with the whites, whether at Stockbridge or in their subsequent settlements elsewhere, the Housatonic Indians have sustained the most amicable relations with their pale-faced neighbors. Hardly any thing of the traditional character of the savage is found among them.

At the solicitation of the Indians, soon after their settlement on the tract assigned them, the Legislature of the colony appropriated funds for the erection of a church at Stockbridge and a suitable school-house.

This church stood on the ample "Green" on which the present house of worship stands, and its oaken timbers—though, after the removal of the Indians to New York, they were put to a different use from their original one—have been in a good state of preservation until within a few years; and quite recently the remains of them have been wrought into various articles of ornament and use, which may still serve as mementoes of the history of a century and a half ago, and of life in the wilderness.

No bell rang out its call to worship through the primeval forests. But the people of Boston gave the little Indian church what was deemed a very handsome substitute for one, in the shape of a conch shell, then recently imported from the tropics. This was blown lustily at the hour of worship, and usually by an Indian. Hence, perhaps, the tradition that it was of such size that no ordinary man could even lift it. The shell, however, is now to be seen in the museum of the Stockbridge Library, and though somewhat worn by its long use, is of the usual dimensions; The office of blowing the conch seems to have been an important one, as we find the town at various times voting to make contributions for the purpose of paying David Nai-nau-nee-ka-nuk for this service. Under the labors of Sergeant and those associated with him, the rude aborigines were constantly growing in enlightenment and virtue. At the time of his death in 1749, fourteen years after his missionary work began, one hundred and eighty-two of the Indians had been baptized by him, and forty-two were then professed Christians. Forsaking the society of scholars that he might instruct a heathen race, enduring poverty and the many privations incident to a life in the wilderness, incessant in labors in behalf of his adopted people, his death was felt by them as a sore bereavement; and the stone which still marks his resting-place in the cemetery at Stockbridge bears this quaint inscription, composed

by one of his Indian pupils, a token at the same time of their regard for him, and of the civilizing and religious work he had wrought upon them:

"Where is that pleasing form? I ask: thou canst not show;

He's not within, false stone; there's naught but death below.

And where's that pious soul, that thinking, conscious mind?

Wilt thou pretend, vain cipher, that's with thee enshrined?

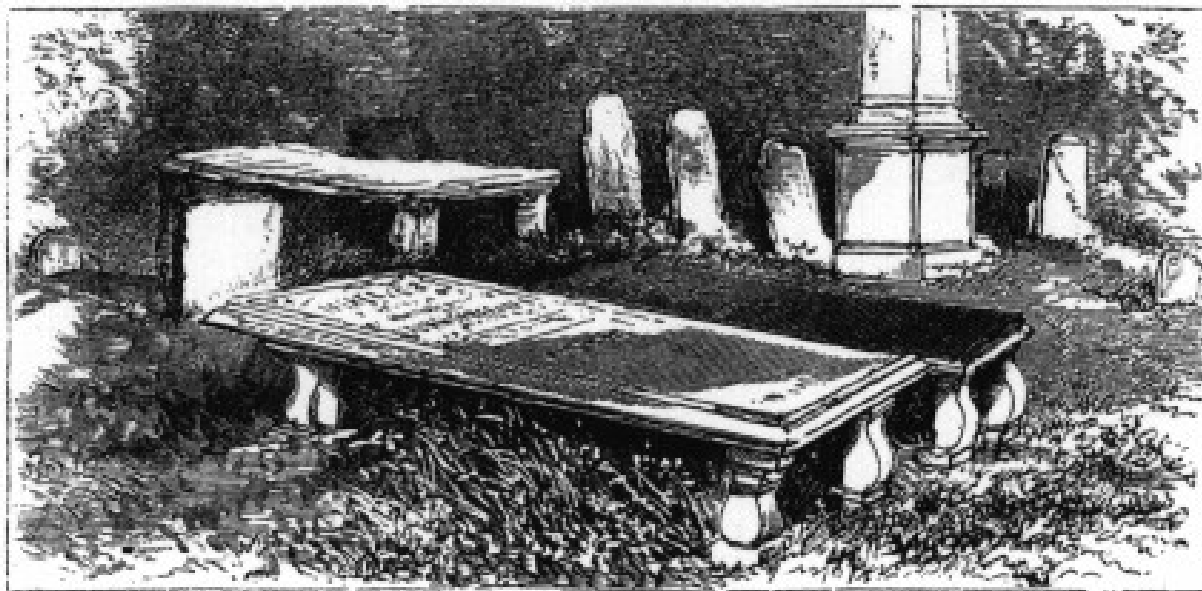
Alas, my friend, not here with thee that I can find;

Here's not a Sergeant's body or a Sergeant's mind.

I'll seek him hence, for all's alike deception here;

I'll go to heaven, and I shall find my Sergeant there."

After the death of Sergeant the Indians and the few whites at Stockbridge were without any pastor for nearly two years. Then there succeeded to that vacant office in the wild woods one whose name is not only highly honored throughout this land, but better known and more honored abroad, perhaps, than that of any of our countrymen except Washington. As a preacher, a philosopher, and a person of devoted piety he is unsurpassed. In his days of boyhood he found his enjoyment in the study of natural science and mathematics, and was an acute observer both of objects in the outward world and in the world of mind. Locke "On the Understanding" was his source of youthful recreation. When hardly beyond his majority he had been called to the pastorship of one of the most important parishes of New England, and had soon become distinguished as an eloquent and effective preacher. His fame had crossed the Atlantic, and eminent men in Europe were his friendly correspondents. But now, after a most successful ministry of more than twenty years, a controversy had arisen between him and his people, and they had thrust him out from them rudely and almost in disgrace. The subsequent adoption of his views, not only



SERGEANT'S GRAVE.



EDWARD'S HOUSE AT STOCKBRIDGE.

at Northampton but throughout the churches of New England, has abundantly vindicated his position in that lamentable controversy. But at the time it was a sore trial to him. Driven from his place of labor, unpopular by reason of his well-known views on the qualifications for church membership, with a large family dependent upon him, even his strong faith was hardly sufficient to sustain him as he thought how little likely the churches were to employ him in their service. It was at this time and in such circumstances that he received an invitation from the little church in the village of Stockbridge, then containing but twelve white families, to become the successor of Sergeant. And this was Jonathan Edwards, whose descendants, from Minnesota to Maine, have lately collected at Stockbridge to rehearse together the story of the life and virtues of their great ancestor, and to erect an abiding monument to his memory.

But he was not too great in his own estimation to accept the place now offered him. Without any sense of wounded pride or mortified self-esteem, he stepped down from his high and conspicuous position at Northampton and became a missionary to the Indians in the wilderness. He gave himself at once with earnestness to the work before him. In his preaching, however, he made use of an interpreter. He deemed himself too old, perhaps, and was too much occupied with metaphysical and theological studies, to give the necessary time for mastering the difficult language of the Indians. Besides, that language was very deficient in words expressive of moral and religious ideas. Edwards therefore thought it desirable for the Indians to learn the English tongue, and through it receive their instruction.

Allusion has been made to the studies in which Edwards was engaged while prosecuting his work as a missionary. It would be leaving out a most important item in the history of Stockbridge not to speak of these. When the Indians and the mission to them are forgotten, this quiet village among the mountains will be memorable on account of the work which this eminent man wrought there at the time almost in secrecy and silence. Edwards, on coming to Stockbridge, purchased the house which Sergeant had erected, but which the latter soon left for another he had built half a mile northward, upon a hill which overlooks the village. The house he first built still stands, and until quite recently was little changed from its original appearance. It is the oldest house in Stockbridge, having been built in 1737. It stands near the centre of the village, fronting the south, and commanding a fine view of the beautiful meadows, and of Monument Mountain, and other elevations in that direction. The room on the left hand, as one enters the door-way, is pointed to as the library, perhaps serving also as parlor. On either side of the ample chimney there was, until quite lately, a closet, in dimensions about four feet by six. Tradition had it that the closet in the southwest corner of this room, with its one little window looking toward the west, was Edwards's study—his intellectual workshop—where he wrote his world-famous treatise on the "Freedom of the Will," as well as those other treatises on "Original Sin," "God's Last End in Creation," and the "Nature of True Virtue," which are hardly less celebrated. It is one of the finest moral and intellectual pictures which the history of the race affords—that of this man, who ranks with Plato and other greatest masters



JONATHAN EDWARDS.

of thought, sitting down in that little closet in the wilderness, and amidst a flock of rude savages, to compose in the space of not more than four or five years those essays which have moulded and modified the thinking of a large part of the world, and which will always be referred to by students of the human mind with the utmost respect.

The private life and personal habits of such a man become a matter of interest. Edwards was pre-eminently a student. Tall in person, and having even a womanly look, he was of delicate constitution. He was, however, so temperate and methodical in his living that he was usually in good health, and able to give more time to study than most men. Twelve or thirteen hours of every day were commonly allotted to this. So devoted was he to his work as a student that he was most unwilling to allow any thing to disturb it. Though he was careful to eat regularly and at certain fixed hours, yet he would postpone his meals for a time if he was so engaged in study that the interruption of eating would interfere with the success of his thinking. He was so miserly also in his craving for time that he would leave the table before the rest of the family and retire to his room, they waiting for him to return again when they had finished their meal, and dismiss them from the table with the customary grace.

Edwards was almost a thinking machine. Wherever he was, wherever he went, his pen was with him as the means of preserving his thoughts, and if by chance he failed to have it with him in his walks or rides, he would fasten pieces of paper to various parts of his clothing by means of pins, and associate with

each some train of thought or some important conclusion, to be thus preserved until he could get to his ink and paper. So, also, at night he would fasten pins into his bed curtains as the mementoes of his thoughts during his wakeful hours.

That a man thus thoughtful should yet be indifferent to many things of practical importance would not be strange. Accordingly we are told that the care of his domestic and secular affairs was devolved almost entirely upon his wife, who happily, while of kindred spirit with him in many respects, and fitted to be his companion, was also capable of assuming the cares which were thus laid upon her. It is said that Edwards did not know his own cows, nor even how many belonged to him. About all the connection he had with them seems to have been involved in the act of driving them to and from pasture occasionally, which he was willing to do for the sake of needful exercise. A story is told, in this connection, which illustrates his obliviousness of small matters. As he was going for the cows once, a boy opened the gate for him with a respectful bow. Edwards acknowledged the kindness, and asked the boy whose son he was. "Noah Clark's boy," was the reply. A short time afterward, on his return, the same boy was at hand and opened the gate for him again. Edwards again asked, "Whose boy are you?" The reply was, "The same man's boy I was a quarter of an hour ago, Sir."

Stockbridge, as a mission station, and in connection with the Indians, reached the height of its importance, perhaps, under the ministry and care of Sergeant. At the time



MRS. JONATHAN EDWARDS.

of Edwards's dismissal to take the presidency of the college at Princeton, about six years after he came to Stockbridge, the Indians numbered but forty-two families, while the white families had increased to eighteen. Stockbridge was no longer the Indian settlement it had been. The Indians seem to have felt the growing preponderance of the whites and though the latter were entirely friendly, and even devoted to the interests of the red men, the latter were soon ready to accept an invitation from the Oneidas, and relinquish their home in Berkshire for one in the neighborhood of their brethren in New York.

Still, while the Indians remained, the missionary work in their behalf was unremitted. Soon after Edwards's removal to Princeton, the Commissioners joined with the people of Stockbridge in inviting Rev. Stephen West to become his successor. For several years he preached, as his predecessors had done, both to the whites and the natives. But as it became difficult to secure a proper interpreter, and the white population was rapidly increasing, so as to be able to support a pastor independently of the colony and the Commissioners, by whom Sergeant and Edwards had been chiefly supported, in the year 1775, Dr. West, sixteen years after his settlement, gave up the instruction of the Indians to Rev. John Sergeant, son of the first missionary, who perfectly understood the Indian language, and who continued to be the minister and teacher of the natives, both at Stockbridge and after their removal to their new home in New York, until the time of his death in 1824, at the age of seventy-seven.

With this relinquishment of his care of the Indians by Dr. West, about the time of the declaration of our national independence, Stockbridge may be said to have become a white settlement. The Indians remained at Stockbridge ten years after this period, but their church was removed from the centre of the village to a place a mile westward, and they were gradually selling their lands to the whites, thus in every way admitting the ascendancy of the latter. And thus gradually, with little that was known to the world at large, a great change was wrought in the character and relations of that beautiful spot upon the Housatonic. One race silently gives way to another, barbarism to civilization, and the foundations are seen to be laid already for one of our most prosperous, influential, and distinguished New England villages.

Dr. West, the successor of Sergeant and Edwards, was, like them, a man of mark, and must ever stand forth as a central figure among the people of Stockbridge. Like Edwards, he was fitted to be the teacher and the influential leader of

the most cultivated and the best educated. And he found himself among such at Stockbridge. Though comparatively small in numbers when he came to it, his parish comprised those choice families which had been called in from various parts of the colony at the beginning of the mission to be the companions and, in an important sense, the helpers of Sergeant. To them had been added from time to time others of like character. Joseph Woodbridge, brother of Timothy, the early assistant of Sergeant in the school, had come in. Brigadier-General Dwight, a graduate of Harvard College, and subsequently judge of the Berkshire courts, was now a citizen of Stockbridge. Here were also Colonel Thomas and Ephraim Williams, relatives of that other Colonel Williams, afterward founder of Williams College, who was also one of the earliest white inhabitants of Stockbridge. Here, also, was Judge John Bacon, in early life pastor of the Old South Church in Boston, and in later life member of Congress, and judge of the Common Pleas. Here was Hon. Theodore Dwight, a brother of President Dwight, of Yale College. Here, also, were Henry W. Dwight, a son of Brigadier-General Dwight, and his eminent sons after him. And here, also, was Theodore Sedgwick, long so eminent as Representative and Senator in the State and national councils, and as judge of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts. He was often said to "govern Congress," and his name as judge is honorably connected with one of the earliest decisions in our country against slavery. His own eminence, and that of his children, especially that of Catharine, the authoress of "Hope Leslie," have associated the name of Sedgwick abidingly with Stockbridge as with no other place.

Such, not to speak of other distinguished residents, was Stockbridge when Dr. West became its minister, or during his pastorate there. A society in which such names were found could not be other than marked among surrounding communities. In this society Dr. West held his position as a leader during the long period of sixty years. He commanded the respect of all by his superior abilities of mind and excellences of heart. In social life he was gentle and tender as a woman, and no one was more welcome to every house. The children were attracted to him, and regarded him as at the same time their friend and protector. The story is told, even, of a boy in a neighboring town who, having to pass through a dark and lonely wood at dusk with his cows, solaced his fears by saying constantly, "Old Dr. West, old Dr. West," feeling sure that with such a charm no harm would come to him.

The doctor wore the three-cornered hat, the bands at the neck, and the small-clothes of the olden time, and, being small in stature at the best, his bodily presence was



MISS SEDGWICK'S GRAVE.

somewhat weak. But his face beamed with the unmistakable signs of character, and his speech was far from being contemptible. In the pulpit he was a very thunderer. No one listened to him without being impressed by the strength of his reasoning, and as an expositor of the Scriptures few have equaled him. The late Dr. Emmons, himself regarded as one of our acutest reasoners, said that Dr. West was the only man he was ever afraid of; and pronounced him the greatest divine whom he knew.

Dr. West was the most methodical of men. His boots and shoes, it is said, stood in the same place from year to year, and his hat, whip, and overcoat were always hung on the same nails. He was in the habit of visiting his friend Dr. Hopkins, of Newport, and so exactly did he plan his long journeys thither, though dependent upon his private conveyance, that his wife used to say that she knew as well when to have his tea ready for his return as though he had only gone down to the village for the afternoon.

His place of residence was, on the whole, the most charming spot in all Stockbridge. It was on the point of the high ground which overlooks the village and the valley of the Housatonic from the north, and commands an unusually wide range of view and a combination of mountain, valley, and river scenery seldom equaled. The house he occupied was built by Colo-

nel Ephraim Williams, the founder of Williams College and honorably distinguished in the French and English war as the commander of Fort Massachusetts, in the northern part of Berkshire County. The site he occupied so overlooked both the northern and eastern valleys of Stockbridge that his house was made a fortification in the early and exposed times. The old well which was then dug in the cellar still remains, but the house was torn down a few years since. What was available of its materials was used, however, in building another house almost on the same site, which is now owned and occupied by Rev. Dr. H. M. Field, editor of the *Evangelist*.

The high reputation of Dr. West as a reasoner and preacher, and especially the fame of his treatise on "Moral Agency," made his house for many years the resort of students preparing for the sacred ministry, and he may be said to have converted Stockbridge from a place for the instruction of rude savages into a place for the training of the most cultivated for the highest and most difficult office known among men. For a period of thirty-five years he was thus engaged. Among his pupils were Dr. Kirkland, afterward president of Harvard University, and Samuel Spring, who, more, perhaps, than any other man, was the founder of the Theological Seminary at Andover, which may thus be traced in its roots to Stockbridge.

Dr. West died in the year 1818 at the age of eighty-four. He was born in 1735, the very year that the Indians were gathered upon the Great Meadow, and the history of Stockbridge began. His one life, therefore, measured the growth of the place from its beginning, when a missionary, without a house and with only one white associate, stood up amidst their rude huts to teach the few Indian families living here in the wilderness, until it had become one of the most enlightened and distinguished towns of New England. The change thus wrought in a single lifetime was marvelous. Even when Dr. West was ordained at Stockbridge there were only about twenty log-huts at what is now the important place of Pittsfield. The whole country north of that point as far as the Canada line was a wilderness; and toward the west, while there were a few Dutch residents on the Hudson and the Mohawk, there were no English settlements between Stockbridge and the Pacific Ocean. When Dr. West closed his ministry Stockbridge was in the midst of a garden of civilization and cultivated beauty, and was known far and wide through the names of those of her residents already mentioned. About this time also the name of Sedgwick, now one of the peculiar names of Stockbridge, and which had been distinguished by the judicial and Congressional services of the Hon. Theodore Sedgwick, was getting an additional importance and renown from the writings of Catharine, his daughter, who was then beginning

that career of authorship which has classed her, with Irving, among those who first created an American literature worthy the name, and who has endeared herself by the pure and beautiful tone of her writings to a great multitude of her countrymen and to many abroad. The name of Hopkins also, one of the early and honorable names of Stockbridge, has more recently taken an additional lustre from the character and writings of the distinguished president of Williams College, and his hardly less eminent brother, Albert, who for forty years has occupied the chair of Natural Philosophy and Astronomy in that institution, and whose character seems to have borrowed its peculiar serenity and saintliness from his converse with the stars.

Nor would the mention of Stockbridge, in its later days, be complete without allusion to another name which has reflected its light upon this village from different walks of life and literature. As with the Sedgwicks, so with the Fields, Stockbridge has become their historic home. Rev. David Dudley Field became the pastor of the church here only about a year after the death of Dr. West, and proved himself the worthy successor of that eminent man. He was the pastor of the church eighteen years, and after filling the like office in another place fourteen years returned to Stockbridge as his chosen home, where, only recently, he has died at an advanced age. Distinguished as a preacher and as a devoted student of history his sons have been even more widely distinguished in various callings and professions. They have clung also to the old village home. Two of them, and the family of a third one, recently deceased, have



CYRUS W. FIELD.

their residences there. The old Dr. West estate, as has been mentioned already, is now owned by Dr. H. M. Field. The Hon. David Dudley Field, while owning his father's homestead, also owns and occupies, as his summer residence, the beautiful estate which formerly belonged to Sergeant, the missionary. Mr. Cyrus W. Field, more widely known than the others, though not a resident now of Stockbridge, is counted as one of her sons. When his long and persistent but often baffled efforts to link the continents with electric bands had been finally crowned with success, and he had more than realized the promise to "put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes," no place was more ready to participate in the general rejoicing and congratulation, and no place felt more honored by the event, than Stockbridge; and now she feels that instead of being in the midst of the wilderness, and shut out from light and civilization, as she was a hundred years ago, one of her sons has placed her in the very centre of the world's thought and movement.

Nathaniel Hawthorne resided in Stockbridge for some time. It was here that he wrote "The House of Seven Gables." There is still to be seen on a window pane in the room which he used as his study this inscription, "*Nathaniel Hawthorne, February 9, 1851.*" This little room could only be reached through the kitchen, and had a single window overlooking the "Stockbridge Bowl," as the beautiful lake in the background was named by Miss Sedgwick. Fanny Kemble Butler called it the "Mountain Mirror." From Hawthorne's retreat he could see visitors approach on the road from Lenox, and on such occasions he frequently made good his escape by passing out unnoticed into the woods by the lake side. The house in which Hawthorne lived at Stockbridge is every year visited by hundreds of people from all parts of the world—from England especially. Herman Melville had a residence within an easy drive of Hawthorne. In 1851 Henry James, the novelist, purchased a residence in Stockbridge.

We spoke, at the outset of this article, of the combined attractions of nature and art which Stockbridge presents. The old Indian designation of the place as the "Great Meadow" indicates its characteristic feature as being an unusually wide expanse of river bottom in the midst of surrounding mountains. The peculiar conformation of the mountain ranges in this vicinity compels the Housatonic to change at Lee its southerly course for an eastern, and to keep this general direction through almost the entire breadth of the town of Stockbridge. There are indications also that what are now the meadows were once the bed of a lake, which, by some convulsion of nature, has since been drained off. However this may be, hardly



MOUNMENT MOUNTAIN, WITH GRAYLOCK IN THE DISTANCE.

any meadow scenery can be more beautiful than that which one beholds as he looks down from Sergeant Hill and traces the Housatonic as, with many a graceful turn, it winds lingeringly and lovingly along between its enameled banks. Certainly there needs only to be added to this lovely picture of tranquil beauty

the setting which is given by the background of encircling mountains wreathed around it in various shapes, like some boldly carved frame of oak around a delicate water-color, to fill the eye and soul of the beholder with a feast of beauty.

And then the individual mountains them-



ICE GLEN.

selves have each their several and special attractions. Monument Mountain, which lifts itself on the southern border of the town as the grand mountain feature of the place, with its eastern wall of bare perpendicular rock to which not a tree can cling—how many know something of it since Bryant has enshrined it in his verse! From its summit one looks off upon the Catskills, and his eye sweeps from old Graylock on the north to the Litchfield hills in Connecticut, while around and beneath him the land lies like a garden of beauty.

"It is a fearful thing
To stand upon the beetling verge, and see
Where storm and lightning, from that huge gray wall,
have tumbled down vast blocks, and at the base
Dashed them in fragments, and to lay thine ear
Over the dizzy depth, and hear the sound
Of winds, that struggle with the woods below,
Come up like ocean murmurs. But the scene
Is lovely round; a beautiful river there
Wanders amid the fresh and fertile meads,
Tile paradise he made unto himself,
Mining tile soil for ages. On each side
The fields swell upward to the hills; beyond,
Above the hills, in the blue distance, rise
The mountain columns with which earth props heaven."

On the east, and quite near the village is the high range of Bear Mountain, and a walk of less than a mile brings one to Ice Glen, so called, a rift in this mountain nearly half a mile in length. The whole side of the mountain seems to have been rent asunder

and tilted over, and then huge boulders as large as houses thrown into the cleft to keep the sundered parts from coming together again. Giant hemlocks and other trees have now grown upon and among these rocks, and covered the sides of the great rift to the very top. The place is wild and impressive in the extreme. You step at once from the warm, sunny pasture-ground without into a cool, dark grotto or labyrinth. The transition is sudden and complete. You go now over and now under the great masses of rock piled, is by the hands of Titans, one upon another. Now you cross from side to side upon a bridge made by some fallen hemlock, so beautifully matted with its enveloping mosses that you

hesitate to touch it with the foot lest the wood-nymphs cry out at your invasion and pollution of their halls. Now you are fain to slide down the smooth face of a rock, steadied by your climbing-staff, and occasionally you pause to look up from some depth, and catch, as from a well, a glimpse of the blue sky, never more "deeply, darkly, beautifully blue" than from such a point of view. To go through this glen, so wildly beautiful, is an event long to be remembered. Its grand rocks can not be forgotten. Its ferns and mosses will keep their greenness and grow in memory for a lifetime.

It is but the walk of a few minutes from the northern opening of the glen to a beautiful eminence which the Housatonic seems to have cut off from Bear Mountain, and left right in the midst of the village as a little bit of wildness and natural beauty furnished for the convenience of invalids and little children. This is Laurel Hill—so called from the abundance of the kalmia, which grows upon its sides in great beauty. The hill is, perhaps, a hundred feet in height, and separated from the main street of the town only by an intervening meadow of an acre or two in extent, upon which, with an unusual felicity of position, stands the village academy. Half-way up the hill, on its western side, is a plateau large enough to accommodate two thousand people. This plateau is backed on the east by a perpendicular wall of rock thirty feet or more in height. And here, amidst the tall trees kept

free from underbrush, the villagers are accustomed to meet on occasions of public and social interest. Especially it is used by the Laurel Hill Association, which takes its name from the hill, and has for its object the beautifying of the town by causing art and taste to lend a helping hand to nature. This it does by keeping the village streets in good condition, bordering them with nicely graveled walks, kept clean and well graded; by planting rows of trees for shade along all the highways of the town; by keeping the village cemetery in proper order; and, in general, by encouraging a spirit of taste among all the inhabitants. It spends hundreds of dollars annually in this work, and every year, in August, it holds its anniversary upon the hill itself. A rostrum of earth, covered with turf, is built against the wall of rock of which we have spoken, and which acts as a sounding-board for the help of the speaker. From this rostrum the secretary of the Association reads the record of its doings for the past year. The election of officers then takes place. An oration, and usually a poem, are then recited to the listening auditors. Afterward impromptu speeches are made by one and another, and the good work is thus encouraged for another year. It is the great day of the year in this New England village.

Closely allied to the Laurel Hill Association, though not such a peculiarity of Stockbridge, is another institution, which ought, at least, to be mentioned. This is the public library. A village library, to be sure, is no new thing; and yet a truly successful library is somewhat rare. The history of too many has been somewhat like this: one or two hundred dollars expended in the purchase of a few books, so few that they were not worth the care of a special custodian or a building specially adapted to their preservation, and so were thrust into the corner of some post-office or grocery store, where, after a little interest and attention on the part of the public, and a little gratuitous service on the part of the post-master or grocer, the books were neglected, forgotten, and lost. A good village library, especially in these days, when books of some sort are found in every family, in order to live and do the proper work of a library, must be of considerable size, in most cases, at the outset. It must be large enough to make a decided im-

pression upon the public by the variety and richness of its contents. It must be large enough to have a value which shall make all feel that it is worth caring for, worth preserving, and worth making constant additions to. In such a case a proper building will be likely to be provided, a librarian will be secured, who will make the care of the books not secondary to that of groceries or dry-goods; and, what is more, the sight of such a feast will stimulate the mental appetite of the community, and the taste of the feast will cause them to secure its continuance.

Such was the start of the library at Stockbridge only half a dozen years ago. A purchase of two thousand volumes was made at the outset. A beautiful stone building was erected for them. When its doors were opened the public saw and felt that they had a treasure in their possession. The town at once assumed the payment of a librarian's services, and enabled the managers to open the library to the public every day, instead of but once a week, as had been expected, and as is so often the case with village libraries; and so almost at once the library became a manifest power in that community. The town would not be willing now to give it up for ten times what it has cost. It is the crowning embellishment of the most beautiful of Berkshire villages.



THE PUBLIC LIBRARY, STOCKBRIDGE.