From the Boston Transcript.

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The *Old Home* movement which is now in full swing in New England, though not entirely a new thing, has many features of interest and novelty, which serve to make its study of somewhat exceptional interest. For one thing it seems to be organizing the prevailing instinct for public gifts, with reference to the old towns; and giving body and form to the sense of obligation which all well-bred people feel for the soil which gave them birth.

It would be difficult to state just what the total effect of these annual visits to the rural towns and villages is, but there can be no question but that the results are good; in many cases more than good. Dwellers in these towns can see the improvement in the cemeteries and the streets; in the better keep of the lawns, and the general recognition of a public apart from the private duty of keeping the places neat and clean. Even the most stolid are responding and cutting down and clearing away the brush, straightening the driveways, and otherwise furbishing up for the coming of the former residents.

Almost every town thinks its own history is unique and exceptional. Of the town of Boscawen, N. H., this may be affirmed without fear of successful contradiction from any source. Indeed it may be questioned if there is a town in the country which has the singularly full and productive record of this town.

I have before me as I write, the list, (or a partial list,) of the men who have made names for themselves in State and National history. It is a wonderful body. It includes generals and soldiers of every rank and figuring in all kinds of wars; statesmen and lawyers of the very first rank; financiers and diplomats; men of invention and commerce, together with ministers innumerable, and college presidents sufficiently numerous as not to be at all exceptional.

Boscawen, so called after the famous English Admiral, Lord Boscawen, was settled by Massachusetts men, in 1733; and for some years after its settlement, its meetings were held in Massachusetts. The town then embraced what is now Penacook, Webster, and practically Salisbury. It speedily became the rallying place for the entire region; and for the period of a century was the radiating source of the most distinguished company of people that ever saw light in a single New England village.

It is interesting to know that in part this was due to the fact that from the first this old town has had a most distinguished list of ministers, who had the educational impulse strongly developed. The first three ministers were graduates of Harvard; and later, Williams and Dartmouth have sent strong, capable men, who have kept alive the best traditions of the place.

Among these was the mighty man of valor,—Dr. Samuel Wood. This was he who trained the Websters,—Daniel and Ezekiel,—for Dartmouth; and was generally the educational Prime Minister of the town. One does not dare to repeat the stories that are told of this man's wonderful influence. It is enough that Daniel Webster was never weary of acknowledging his indebtedness to him, and through him to the Church for its educational influence in the town and in the country generally.

A glance at some of the striking features of historic interest in this village will give a very fair idea of the rest: Within a stone's throw of the place where I am now writing, were born General John A. Dix, William Pitt Fessenden, and Gov. Moody Currier. Within the same radius Ezekiel Webster lived and the old Webster homestead stands; and from this very house, the great Interpreter of the Constitution of the United States first hung out his shingle as a practising lawyer.

I like to think myself in great company when my eyes close at night, for that mighty man's office is now my own bedroom. In this very house, also, General Dix was born, and this is the historic mansion of the Dix family, fairly brimming with the incitements to Love of Country and

of Home. The career of both these men is too well known to need recapitulation.

The career of William Pitt Fessenden is also well known and this is the place where he first saw the light. The full history of his mother,—Ruth Greene,— in some respects a remarkable young woman, has never been written. Of her, when he came to manhood, Mr. Fessenden gave expression to most glowing eulogies, which the circumstances made as remarkable as the woman herself.

Moody Currier was a man who came of a remarkable mother, whose devotion to him in childhood had much to do with the development of the great talents which he displayed later in life, not only as Governor, but as Banker. His early history, and hers, probably had not a little to do with the very respectable poetic talent which he displayed.

Just across the street from his birthplace, is the Webster homestead, already alluded to. Here Ezekiel Webster lived; and there are many competent judges who state, that in some respects, he was the equal at the bar, of the great Daniel. He was unquestionably, as his memorial tablet affirms,—"a loss to the Town, the State, the Nation."

But it is in its Educational traditions, that this town excels. From the very first there has been a passion among these people to get and to give the best education possible; and as a result, there is a living stream extending to this very moment, of men and women from Boscawen, to most of the Colleges of the land, either as students, professors, presidents or otherwise. In this way are represented Harvard, Williams, Dartmouth,—the latter including President Bartlett, who was born in Salisbury, in fact, though not in name, a part of Boscawen, who fitted in Boscawen Academy; and later on, President Tucker, who for a period resided in town also. Western Reserve, and Adelbert, and Oberlin, come into this stream of tendency; while the same is true of Yale, the University of Vermont, and Amherst. Middlebury College and numerous others, are in the list too extensive to quote.

The late Charles Carleton Coffin, with that felicitous touch which always distinguished his literary work, caused to be inserted, when he published the History of Boscawen in 1878, a list of Minister's Wives, "who have thus been influenced in moulding society," whereof we are witnesses. This list, comprising no less than twenty-four names, embraces Methodists, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Christians and Presbyterians; thus giving the most substantial evidence that there was no disposition to draw the sectarian lines very closely when it came to the question of matrimony.

And this wonderful stream of educated people has flowed all over the country, embracing nearly all the Northern States from Maine to California.

Nor was the power of this educational impulse confined to this land; for from this place went forth missionaries of the gospel to Siam, South Africa, and other places. The stream turns up intermittently in Honolulu, and the Island of Malta as well.

Later the story of Boscawen's educational stream told in Oberlin College, has carried it to other lands beyond the sea, where the influence of this place and of its early settlers is making modern history.

Of course no historian could possibly follow this flood in all its numerous flowings. But that it has been a world-encircling influence is absolutely beyond doubt. From these hills, and from this street alone, have gone forth world-making forces, the end of which has not yet been reached. It is probable that if the whole story could be told, no such array of educational effect, could be gathered from any single town in the world.

The fact that half a century, as Mr. Coffin remarked at the Celebration of the One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary, before the action of the community at large, Boscawen annually remitted the minister's tax to Samuel Fowler, a member of the Society of Friends, shows that this basal principle of "the education of citizens as the safeguard of Liberty," was fully comprehended here long before it was emblazoned on the Boston Public Library.

That the power of ideas is greater than any other power is being illustrated also in the fact, that the history of this town, is steadily causing to come back into it, men and women of the type who gave it character in the early day. Like begets like, it is said, and of late years not a great influx, but a steadily increasing flow into the town, has begun, of men and women who have been moved thereto chiefly by the traditions of the place, and the natural impulse which such people feel to make them live again.

There is one very singular fact, which is worth noting in connection with the productiveness of the town of Boscawen. While it has sent into the world inventors and mechanics and successful men of business, the millionaire captain of industry does not appear to have originated here. This makes one wonder whether there is not some inherent relation between a high level of educational life, and only the moderate acquisition of wealth?

These people have all been of the world's best workers; but few of them have been rich, and none of them in the sense in which that term is used to-day. The sacrifices which some of them endured for purposes of education and religion, are incredible; but when they became productive and able with their accumulations, to satisfy the tastes and desires with those things which could be got for money, they chose rather than these, the simpler products of the understanding and the mind.

The Re-unions, as the years have gone, have brought back no modern Crœsus, to give the town a Library or a Public Building. None of the great names of Boscawen figure in the great Corporations, or in Wall Street. But hardly a College or School in the Northern half of the land, but knows of a son or a daughter of this town, by birth or marriage, who has carried into life the greatest riches,—a liberated and tolerant intelligence.

One wonders if there is not a sort of cause and effect relation between these things? Learning and character, as ideals to be striven for, and sacrificed for, somehow

have a determined effect upon the productiveness of great fortunes and vast personal possessions.

With Generals, Statesmen, Teachers, Preachers and Lawyers, almost without number, the *financiers* who figure in the list of Boscawen's sons, are of that modest type which would hardly be counted as among the class today.

Just a closing word about the Educated colony which is here at the present time :

In the little circle which meets casually in the summer time, we have represented Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Oberlin, Cornell, and the University of Vermont,—by which tokens we hope that the latter glory may not be unworthy of the former greatness.