CHAPTER XVII.

ANCIENT MATTERS.

RELATIVE to the entire period of our history which has been gone over, are various matters which could not be conveniently classed under any general head, nor placed in chronological order, but which are of sufficient importance to require a separate chapter.

ANCIENT GRAVE-STONES IN THE OLD BURYING-GROUND.

The late David George, who died in 1838, aged 71, lived nearly all his life close by the ancient grave-yard; often visited it, and inspected the grave-stones. He said he could remember when there were only six grave-stones in the yard with inscriptions on them, and these were probably put up prior to 1790. They are thick, clumsy stones, not prepared either with taste or skill; the letters are ill shaped and not deep enough.

1. At the grave of James Osgood, who died April 6, 1757, aged 50.

2. At the grave of Jeremiah, son of Thomas and Anna Stickney, who died December, 1763, in the 3d year of his age.

3. At that of Mary, daughter of Thomas and Anna Stickney, who died December 5, 1763, aged 8 years.

4. At that of Jeremiah Stickney, who died April 11, 1763, in the 61st year of his age. By the side of these a large granite monument has recently been erected.

5. At that of Ezra Carter, Esq., [Doctor,] who died September 17, 1757, in the 48th year of his age.

6. At that of Jeremiah Hall, who died October 8, 1770, in the 24th year of his age.

There are also several misshapen stones *without* inscriptions, and a few on which there were probably inscriptions, now illegible.

Mr. George also was accustomed to point out other stones, erected since 1790, to the memory of persons who died many years before, viz.:

1. At the grave of Dolly Hutchins, wife of Col. Gordon Hutchins. She died December 17, 1777, aged 41 years.

2. At that of Sarah Walker, wife of Rev. Timothy Walker, who died in 1778, in the 77th year of her age.

3. At that of Rev. Timothy Walker, who died in 1782, aged 78 years. These were not erected till many years after.

4. At that of Mary Wilson, wife of Mr. Thomas Wilson. She died 1773, aged 31 years.

5. At that of Mary, the second wife of Mr. Thomas Wilson. She died in 1796, aged 44.

6. At that of Dea. Joseph Hall, (senior,) who died April 8, 1784, in the 77th year of his age.

7. At that of Deborah Hall, wife of Dea. Joseph Hall. She died October 5, 1801, aged 96.

8. At that of Dea. Joseph Hall, (junior,) who died June 10, 1807, in the 70th year of his age.

9. At that of Lot Colby, who died April 2, 1790, in the 73d year of his age.

All the nine foregoing stones are *slate slabs*, and they form what may be called the *second era* of grave-stones: — the first being of granite, or other coarse stone. Ornamental cuts on some, represent human or angelic heads, with wings; on others, an urn overhung with cypress.

ANCIENT BURIALS.

The ancient mode of carrying coffins to the burying-ground was to select twelve men as bearers, who carried them on a bier from every part of the town — sometimes the distance of six, seven and eight miles. In this way it is remembered that the body of

Mrs. Rachel, first wife of Daniel Abbot, was carried from the west side of Long pond to the old burying-ground by the meeting-house.

There is a tradition* that on the death of a man on the east side of the Merrimack river, opposite the Rolfes, his neighbors were afraid his body would be attached for debt — as the law then allowed. To avoid this, the body was concealed in the cellar for a few days; then, on the advice of Dea. George Abbot, a litter-bier was constructed, to be carried by men on horseback; a grave was dug at sundown on Sabbath evening, and soon after the company started with the body from a Mr. Blanchard's house, ferried it across the river, and taking it on the litter proceeded as fast as they could to the old burying-ground. By some delay, however, they did not reach the spot till near sunrise, when they found the grave was too short. Just then, discovering an officer riding on horseback up Main street, they pitched the coffin end foremost into the grave, which they immediately began to fill up. The officer, supposing the body to be buried, turned about and went away. Afterwards they dug the grave longer, placed the coffin in, and buried it in a proper manner.

Lieut. John Webster, who was a famous mast-master, in his latter years was involved in debt. He died in a small house situated in the lot back of Mr. Ezra Ballard's, at Little pond. His body was at first concealed in a potato hole, which was covered over with straw, and logs laid on it. At the time of the funeral the bearers rode on horseback, with drawn swords, which, the sheriff perceiving, he dare not molest them.†

MARBLE MONUMENTS.

The first marble monument erected in the old burying-ground, probably, stands at the grave of Rev. Israel Evans, who died in 1807, aged 60.

Another, supposed to be the second, stands at the grave of Col. Gordon Hutchins, who died in 1815, aged 85.

BURYING-GROUND AT MILLVILLE.

The land for the burying-ground at Millville was given by Mr. Warren Bradley. The first person buried there is said to have

* The tradition is uncertain whether a Mr. Blanchard or Webster.
† Tradition by Mr. Timothy Walker.

been Mrs. Sally, first wife of Mr. John Dimond, about 1797. Mr. Ezekiel Dimond was the second. He selected the spot for his own grave, and was buried in February, 1800.

In the burying-ground at Horse-hill, the first person buried was Miss Rebecca, daughter of Mr. Oliver Hoit, in 1819, aged 28.

ANCIENT VEHICLES FOR RIDING.

The following notices of ancient vehicles are derived from conversations at different times with aged inhabitants of the town, as within their memory, or known by tradition.*

The Rev. Timothy Walker rode in a *chair*, as it was called. It seems to have had no top or covering, and was wide enough to carry two persons.

The first *chaise* owned in Concord belonged to Col. Benjamin Rolfe; was purchased probably between 1767 and 1770. It had a standing canvass top, and probably cost about fifty dollars. Dea. Joseph Hall, the elder, about the same time purchased a chaise like Col. Rolfe's.

Col. Peter Green, at the death of his father-in-law, Col. Bulkley, of Groton, Massachusetts, had a chaise, belonging to his estate, which he brought to Concord and used. This was between 1770 and 1775.

Benjamin Thompson (Count Rumford) who married the widow of Col. Rolfe, 1772, bought a curricle, which was much the most expensive carriage at that time known in these parts. Thompson sometimes rode in this with two horses, and sometimes with one.

Robert Harris had a chaise when he came to Concord, and always afterwards. He had also a coachee, or Philadelphia wagon, in 1793 or 1794, which probably cost about $300.

William Duncan and Edward St. Loe Livermore married daughters of Mr. Duncan. Each of them had a chaise.

Dea. David Hall owned a chaise, probably previous to the year 1790, but he did not keep it many years.

Rev. Israel Evans, who settled in Concord, 1789, then owned a chaise, in which he rode with one horse. Afterwards he owned a carriage with four wheels, in which he rode, sometimes with one horse and sometimes with two.

* For these traditions I am greatly indebted to Moody Kent, Esq.

In 1791 or 1792 the late Judge Walker purchased a chaise at Cambridge, Mass., made for him by Mr. Prentice, of that place.

Previous to 1800 there were very few carriages or wagons in town. The people generally rode on horseback or went on foot. There were very few *sleighs*. In heavy snows, horse or ox-sleds were commonly used to convey people from one place to another.

OLD CLOCKS.

Rev. Mr. Walker brought the first clock into Concord from England. Dea. Joseph Hall, senior, owned the second clock. When people who had no time-piece saw the deacon coming from the "Eleven Lots," on the Sabbath, they knew it was time for them to go. Ephraim Potter made wooden clocks, which were set up in some houses about 1775, and later, and which kept good time. Levi and Abel Hutchins set up the clock-making business about 1785, which they carried on till about 1819. Their clocks were noted as good time-keepers, and are still found in many of the old families. Major Timothy Chandler also manufactured excellent clocks, which are seen now and then among the ancient things.

ANCIENT DWELLING-HOUSES STILL STANDING.

Mr. Richard Herbert, when in his 94th year and in possession of all his faculties, said, that all the houses in Concord main village, except sixteen, were built within his recollection, viz.:

1. The house of Joseph B. Walker, Esq., which remains as it was when he (Mr. Herbert) was a boy, except alterations made a few years ago.

2. Capt. Coffin's house; was built one story, with two rooms. The back part and one story have been added since.

3. The house owned by Mr. Charles H. Stearns; was built by Capt. Benj. Emery, who sold it to Dr. Carrigain. Capt. Emery afterwards built the house where Capt. E. S. Towle lives. His wife was reluctant to move, and said she "had rather watch the hogs three hours a day, than go up into the woods to live!" *

4. The house of Mr. Shadrach Seavey; was built by Capt. Nathaniel Abbot, one story, and stood where the new North church stands. It was the residence of Capt. Joshua Abbot. Mr. Herbert remembered when the back part was added.

5. The "Dearborn house," recently moved from the hill where

* The hogs then run at large, and were an annoyance about the houses on Main street.

the new City Hall is located; was built by Lieut. Richard Herbert, about 1756. He paid ten dollars for one acre of land there. In this house Mr. Herbert was born. In the summer of 1854 the house was purchased by Mr. Reuben F. Foster, and moved to what is now called Fosterville, north of Richard Bradley's, where it has been refitted, and stands conspicuous among other houses by its cupola, or observatory.

6. The Stickney house, now the residence of Joseph P. Stickney, was a garrison. It has since been enlarged and much altered.

7. The Edward Abbot house, which stood where Dr. Chadbourne's house now is, south corner of Montgomery street; was also a garrison. It now stands in the rear of Dr. Chadbourne's, in the humble position of a wood-shed and stable.

8. A part of Capt. Richard Ayer's house — now the Union Hotel, opposite the Free bridge road — was built before Mr. Herbert can remember; — also,

9. The old Osgood house, which was burnt down in August, 1854.

10. The Farrington house, now owned by Mr. David G. Fuller, on Pleasant street.

11. A part of the old store on the corner of Main and Pleasant streets, occupied by Mr. William P. Hardy.

12. A part of Mr. Benjamin Gale's old tavern, which stood opposite the new Phenix Hall; now forms a tenement on Warren street.

13. Dea. George Abbot's house, where Mr. John B. Chandler lives, on Fayette street. This house presents a good specimen of the ancient style of building — two stories in front, with a low, slanting roof on the back side. In this house Hon. Thomas W. Thompson formerly resided.

14. The Capt. Roach, or Arthur Rogers house, east of the house of the late Gov. Hill, built in the same style as the preceding.

15. Dea. Joseph Hall's, or Dea. Wilkins' house, at the Eleven lots.

16. The Rolfe house, or Countess of Rumford mansion; also at the Eleven lots.

DWELLING-HOUSES — DOMESTIC AND SOCIAL HABITS AND CUSTOMS.

The *first* order, or, as it may be called, *generation* of dwelling houses in Concord, was built of hewn logs. They were all situ-

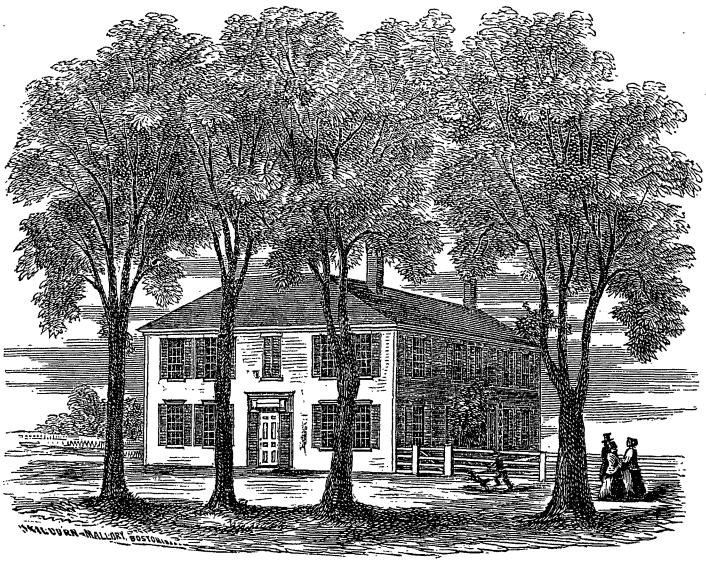
ated on lots laid out in the "first and second range" of house lots, as surveyed in 1726. But as soon as saw-mills could be erected and materials provided, these gradually gave place to framed houses, one story in height, about sixteen to twenty-four feet on the ground, with from one to three rooms. The *second* order of houses was more scattered over the territory, and now and then appeared a house of larger dimensions, two stories in height, with gambrel roof; or two stories in front, with low, slanting roof back. The *third* order of houses appeared after the Revolutionary war, from 1785 to about 1800. They were built two stories, with what is called a hip-roof, with two front rooms, a door in the middle, and entry and hall running through, and an L, one story, on the back side, for a kitchen. Of this kind was the house built by Maj. Daniel Livermore, the late residence of Dr. Bouton; also, the houses owned by Rev. Israel Evans, Rev. Dr. McFarland and Charles Walker, Esq. The Evans and McFarland houses have recently been altered, by changing and raising the roof. Tradition represents that in the first, and many of the second order of houses, the windows were either of paper, or mica, or diamond-cut glass. Chimneys were built of stone, with huge fire-places, and an oven on one side running back. In the chimney, across the flue, was a *lug-pole*, as it was called, made of oak, from two to four inches in diameter, and on which were hung hooks and trammels, of wrought iron, so constructed as to be raised or lowered to suit the convenience of pots and kettles, suspended thereon for culinary purposes. These lug-poles were liable to be burnt by the fire which blazed beneath, or broken by the weights suspended on them, and hence in due time gave place to the *crane*, which was constructed of iron, and fastened on one side into the chimney-jamb, while the end swung over the fire, with the hooks and trammels on it. The first crane was introduced in 1757 by Stephen Farrington.*

The fire was made by placing a large log, called a back-log, three feet long, or more, on the backside of the fire-place; two rocks in front of it served for *andirons*, with a large *fore-stick*, resting on the rocks, and a *back-stick* upon the back-log. Then smaller wood, from three to four feet in length, was piled on. The whole was lighted with a pitch-knot, or other combustibles. This made a glorious fire. At each end or corner of the fire-

* See story of it, as before related, pp. 231-2.

place were small benches, on which children sat, and roasted first one side and then the other; while the old folks enjoyed the full blaze in front — and hauled off and on, as they were able to bear it! Instead of modern gas light, or oil, or even dipped candles, they used in the evening pitch-pine knots, which gave a clear and brilliant light, by which the women could see to sew or knit, and others, (if they had books,) to read. Splinters of pitch-pine were lighted, to carry about the house and into the cellar, instead of lamps and candles.

In early times every family kept close at hand a flint and steel, with which to strike fire. The fire fell on a piece of old punk, or upon tinder kept in a tin box. From the punk or tinder thus ignited a candle or pitch-pine splinter was lighted, and thence communicated to wood on the fire-place. Careful house-keepers, however, took pains to rake up the coals on the hearth at night, covering them with ashes, and thus keep fire till morning. But in warm weather this method would often fail, so that the flint, steel and tinder, were indispensable.



The preceding cut presents a fair view of the house built by Major Daniel Livermore, in 1785, with the addition of the back

part, which was built by Dr. Bouton in 1840. The beautiful trees in front were set out about the time the house was finished, in 1786 or 1787. The south end of the house is nine inches over the line of the street, while the north end is exactly on the line. The reason assigned for this position by the late Richard Herbert, was, that "when Maj. Livermore was building his house he was courting one of Judge Walker's daughters, at the North end, and he wanted it skewed a little, so that he could look up that way." After the establishment of the upper Concord Bank, in 1806, the house and land was bought by the bank proprietors of Maj. Livermore, and occupied by Samuel Sparhawk, Esq., cashier of the bank. The north room, with a projection built out for the vault, was used for the counting-room, or bank-office. The south room was the family parlor, in which was also Mr. Sparhawk's library. At a party given by Mr. Sparhawk, about 1818, among the invited guests was Mr. S. F. B. Morse, now distinguished as the inventor of the electric telegraph, who was that evening introduced to Miss Lucretia P. Walker, daughter of Charles Walker, Esq., who was accounted the most beautiful and accomplished young lady of the town, and whom Mr. Morse subsequently married. In 1829 Rev. Mr. Bouton bought the house and land belonging thereto, of the president, directors and company of the Concord Bank, where he resided twenty-six years.

ANCIENT WELLS.

Ancient wells were dug at a distance of from ten to forty feet from the house, and water was drawn with a bucket suspended on one end of a small pole, the other end being fastened to a long well-sweep, as it was called, which was supported at a proper height by a strong, erect post, and swung on an iron or wooden pin, so balanced that when the bucket was filled with water it could be easily drawn up. Specimens of the old fashioned well-sweep, and

"Of the old oaken bucket, that hung in the well,"

may still be seen in various sections of the town: one at Mr. Jacob Hoyt's, on the Mountain; another at Mr. Jerry Abbot's, west of Long pond. Another mode of drawing water from wells was by means of a windlass, erected over the well, — the bucket

being fastened on the end of a rope, or chain, of suitable length, and then lowered and raised by turning a crank. But the well-sweep and windlass have generally given place to the *pump* in outer sections of the town, while in the main village many families are supplied with spring water, by means of wooden or lead pipes from fountains in the adjacent upland.

The cut here subjoined presents a fair view of the residence of Jacob Hoyt, Esq., on the Mountain, in which the old "well-sweep" is apparent.

The frame of this house, of large, heavy oak, is believed to be the oldest on the east side of the river. It was first erected at "the Fort," by Capt. Ebenezer Eastman, a short time before his death, in 1748. The house being left in an unfinished state, it was sold to Ebenezer Virgin, taken down, and moved to its present location on the Mountain. Tradition relates that at the raising of the house by Capt. Eastman there was a great gathering of people, with "young men and maidens," who were to celebrate the raising by a dance in the evening. Abigail Carter, mother of Jacob Hoit, asked her parents if she might go. They said, "Yes, if parson Walker's girls go." The parson consented that his daughters should go, and proposed also to go with them. After the raising was over, Mr. Walker's girls asked him if they

might stay in the evening. He said, "Yes, yes, only come home in good season." So the girls all stayed till the dance was over, and were then waited on by young gentlemen to go home. But on coming to the ferry to their great disappointment they found the parson there waiting to take the girls under his own protection!

Mr. Ebenezer Virgin sold the house and adjacent farm, containing about two hundred acres, to Jeremiah Haskell, of Newbury, who came to Concord about 1812. Haskell married a daughter of Ebenezer Moulton, of Newburyport, into whose hands the house and farm fell by mortgage. In 1818 Haskell left Concord and went to parts unknown, and nothing certain was ever heard of him. In April, 1819, the property was sold at public auction, and bid off by Mr. Jacob Hoyt, for $2.375. On this elevated spot Mr. Hoyt has resided till the present time, having made great improvements on his farm, and keeping the old mansion in good repair. The site is one of the most desirable, and furnishes one of the most extensive and beautiful prospects on the east side of the river.

FOOD.

The ordinary food of early settlers, and of their descendants of the first and second generation, for breakfast and supper, was bean or pea-porridge with bread and butter. On Sabbath morning they had, in addition, coffee or chocolate. The bread was what is called brown-bread, made of rye and Indian meal. Occasionally wheat bread was used. For dinner they usually had baked or boiled meat, and peas or beans, with baked or boiled puddings.

For the information of our wives and daughters, I give the following ancient recipe for bean-porridge: Take one quart of beans or peas, four gallons of water, and two or three pounds of beef or pork — or, if you please, both; put them into an iron pot or kettle, and boil them together until the meat is thoroughly cooked. Take out the meat, and thicken the liquid with Indian meal, and you have the porridge.

The most approved and genteel way of eating the porridge was on this wise: The porridge was dipped out into wooden bowls, each member of the family having one, and was eaten

with a wooden spoon. On the authority of my friend, George Abbot, Esq., I can add, "that this was a delicious meal. Every father at his own table was, to appearance, as happy as a *king* with his nobles at a banquet of wine!" Often, to close the repast, the following lines were sung or chanted by the children:

"Bean porridge hot, bean porridge cold;
Bean porridge best when nine days old!"

There was another dish, said to be a still greater luxury, viz.: baked pumpkins and milk. It was prepared in the autumn in the following manner: Take pumpkins that had hard shells; cut a hole with a gouge in the stem end, large enough to admit a large sized hand; scrape out the seeds completely; then fill the cavity almost full of new milk; heat the oven hotter than necessary for ordinary baking; place the pumpkins in carefully, and fasten up the lid so that no fresh air can penetrate; keep them in twelve hours or more; then, withdrawing the pumpkins, pour into the cavity more new milk, and with a spoon begin to eat, digging out the inside as you proceed, and leaving nothing but the shell! In this truly primitive mode Gov. Langdon used to feast on pumpkin and milk, when a boarder at Dea. John Kimball's. The governor preferred this mode, as decidedly more *genteel* than to scrape out the contents first and eat from a bowl!

DRINKS.

Malt beer was a very common drink in early times. Malt was manufactured from barley, which was raised more or less by every farmer. The first manufacturer of malt in Concord was Lieut. Richard Herbert, about 1765 — who had a malt-house in the rear of the dwelling which he built, where his son, Capt. Samuel Herbert, now lives. Some twenty years afterward the same business was taken up by Jeremiah Abbot, son of Capt. Nathaniel Abbot, who married a daughter of Col. Stickney. His malt-house was on or near the spot where Nathan Stickney, Esq., now lives. Abbot sold out to William Stickney, the taverner, who continued the business till about 1816. After Mr. Stickney ceased to manufacture malt, the old malt-house was used for smoking bacon. At times, in the fall and winter, from two hundred and fifty to three hundred fine legs of bacon, belonging to

different families, would be hung up to smoke at once. The beautiful elm tree, now growing in the yard of Nathan Stickney, germinated in the cellar of the old malt-house, and may be called the *malt-elm*.

In making beer a quantity of malt was mixed with hops and boiled in water, of greater or smaller measure, as was wanted. This was transferred to a cask, or large jug, and left to ferment a day or two, when it was fit for table use.

Cider succeeded, and soon supplanted beer. This was a universal drink at every meal — morning, noon and night. In the fall farmers gathered their apples and made cider. They usually laid in from fifteen to thirty barrels for a year's stock. Mr. Reuben Abbot — now living on the old homestead, west of Long pond — says that he and his father used to put up sixty barrels every good year. Hon. Jacob A. Potter says that his father, Richard, and uncle Ephraim often laid in one hundred and twenty barrels. So free was the use of cider that the whole quantity would be drank up before the ensuing fall — scarcely enough left for vinegar! In old times — and those times coming down to 1828, and still later — there were in every neighborhood noted cider topers, who would guzzle down a quart without stopping to breathe, and, smacking their lips, hold out the mug for one drink more! Such fellows would go from house to house, and call in just to get a drink of cider — carrying, wherever they went, a bloated, red face, and pot-belly. Of one such I have heard it said he "would get drunk on cider-emptyings!"

A favorite and very common drink in old times was *flip*, which was made on this wise: A mug was nearly filled with malt beer, sweetened with sugar; then a heated iron, called a "logger-head," was thrust into it, which produced a rapid foam. Instantly a quantity of the "ardent," (a half pint of rum was allowed for a quart mug,) was dashed in, a little nutmeg grated on the top, and the whole was quaffed off by two men or more, as they could bear it, which had the effect often to set them at "logger-heads." Mr. Nathan Stickney says, that when a young man, in his father's tavern, he has drawn out, on public occasions, two barrels of beer a day, and made it into flip. The price of a quart mug of flip was twenty or twenty-five cents.

Another drink was *toddy*, which was made of rum and water, well sweetened. A stick, about six or eight inches long, flattened at the end, for crushing the sugar and stirring it up, was called the "toddy-stick." It was celebrated for the ringing music it made against the sides of a glass tumbler in olden times.

Another favorite drink was *egg-nog*, which was composed of an egg beaten and stirred together with sugar, milk and spirit, or with cider and sugar. The stick used for this purpose was split at the end and a transverse piece of wood inserted, which was rapidly whirled round, back and forward, between the palms of the hands. Skilful men made graceful flourishes with "toddy" and "egg-nog" sticks, in those days. Still another mode of drinking intoxicating liquor, was, to mix it with the juice of certain strong herbs, as tansy, spearmint and garden wormwood, with a little water and sugar. This was drank before breakfast, to create an appetite!

From the year 1760 to 1830, rum, brandy, gin and wines of different kinds, were used as a common beverage, more or less in every family. Every taverner and store-keeper in town was licensed to sell. The bar-room of taverns was furnished with spacious shelves, or open cup-boards, where liquors of every variety were displayed in decanters. Every store had one end of a counter appropriated to drinking customers. On this stood decanters, glass tumblers, with water, sugar, spoon, and toddy stick, all ready for use. In the families of the more wealthy and fashionable, spirits of various kinds were arranged and displayed on an elegant side-board, and every visiter was invited to drink. Farmers carried well filled bottles of rum into the field, both summer and winter, and for harvesting usually laid in from ten gallons to a barrel, under the idea that the use of it was indispensable. In 1827, when the temperance reform commenced in Concord, the writer ascertained, by careful investigation, that the whole quantity of ardent spirits sold in town in one year (not including wine) was about four hundred hogsheads, or forty-six thousand gallons; and, as estimated by the traders themselves, the amount sold to the inhabitants of the town was not less than fifteen thousand gallons; or, on an average, about four and a half gallons a year to every man, woman and child in the town!

The cost of this liquor to the consumers was not less than nine thousand dollars, which was more than twice the amount of taxes the year previous, for town, county and State expenses, and for the support of schools. One fact alone shows the extent of the temperance reformation in Concord since that time, viz.: The use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage is now as universally proscribed and relinquished as formerly it was allowed and practised. *There is but one place in the whole town where ardent spirits of any kind can be lawfully sold*, or where they can be safely bought, and that is by special license only "for medicinal and mechanical purposes."*

The oldest form of drinking vessel was a *noggin*, made of wood, largest at the top, with a wooden handle on one side. This varied in size, from one to four quarts. Afterwards pewter, or earthern mugs, were used. On the table were wooden plates and platters, or, at a later period, pewter basins, porringers and spoons, plates and platters. When not on the table these were displayed on an open cup-board, or shelves in the room. Specimens of these are still preserved in some of the ancient families. Sarah and Lois Abbot, sisters of Nathan K., at the family mansion, west of Long pond, have a large *pewter platter* — bright almost as silver, bearing on the back of it the stamp of a crown — which has come down to them from their great grand-mother, Mercy Wheeler, of Rowley, and must be at least two hundred years old. They have also a wooden platter, in a good state of preservation, which their grand-mother inherited from her ancestor, Thomas Abbot, of Andover. Formerly this was used as a dinner-dish for vegetables, but in later times — that is, for eighty years — it was used for brown bread.

George Abbot, Esq., has a large armed chair, which belonged to Thomas Abbot, of Andover, 1728, and an ancient wine bottle, owned by his grand-mother, who died 1769.

As a specimen of those good old times I can state, on the authority of Mr. Nathan K. Abbot, that the house which his father (Daniel Abbot) first built, just south of the present one, was one story, with only one room and a chamber, which was

* See History of Temperance Reform in Concord, in a discourse by Rev. Mr. Bouton, December 10, 1843.

reached by a ladder. The room was about sixteen feet square, with a fire-place, which would take in wood eight feet long. In this one room eleven children of Mr. Abbot's were born and lived in *close* union. During a part of the time, also, he accommodated his neighbor, Jonathan Emerson and wife, as boarders, whose first child was born in the same room! Mr. Abbot built, but only partly finished, the two story house where Nathan K. and his sisters reside; but with the first occupancy of it is associated the death of his wife, on the birth of her twelfth child; both dying and were buried together — the babe lying in its mother's bosom. Jonathan Emerson's house, west of Mr. Abbot's, where Isaac Emerson now lives, remained several years after he built it, without any windows.

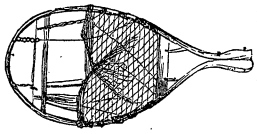
The common *ancient dress* of the men was a woolen coat, striped woolen frock, tow frock, and woolen, velvet, tow, or leather breeches. The breeches, with long stockings, were fastened at the knee with a buckle; in winter, they wore woolen or leather buskins, and thick cow-hide shoes, fastened with buckles on the instep. The best hats, as worn on the Sabbath, were what are now called cocked-up hats, with three corners, and the more noted men wore wigs. Cocked-up hats continued to be worn by aged, venerable men, till within the memory of some of the present generation. Those distinctly remembered as wearing them were Rev. Mr. Walker, Rev. Mr. Evans, Capt. Reuben Abbot, Capt. Joshua Abbot, Capt. Joseph Farnum, and Col. Thomas Stickney. Col. Stickney had a hired man, named Levi Ross, who would also put on his dignity, and march with his cocked-up hat to meeting every Sabbath.

The late Gen. Benjamin Pierce, when governor of the State, in 1827 and 1829, wore his tri-cornered hat, short breeches, buckled at the knee, and high boots. The hat was the same that he wore when general of the Hillsborough militia, and was the last ever worn in Concord on a public occasion. This hat, and also the military coat which Gen. Pierce wore as brigade inspector of the militia of Hillsborough county, at their first organization, about 1785, were deposited in the rooms of the New-Hampshire Historical Society, by Gen. Franklin Pierce, in 1840.

The ordinary outer dress of the women in summer was tow and linen gowns, checked *tyers*, or aprons; and in winter woolen gowns and aprons, thick woolen stockings, and cow-hide shoes. The clothing was of their own manufacture. Every house might truly be termed "a home factory." The females carded and spun their wool and flax, and wove their cloth in a hand loom. They also manufactured cloth and made garments for their husbands, sons and brothers. They could all understand without a commentary or dictionary Solomon's description of a virtuous woman: "She seeketh wool and flax and worketh diligently with her hands; she riseth while it is yet night and giveth meat to her household; she girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms; she layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She looketh well to the ways of her household and eateth not the bread of idleness." We credit fully the tradition of those days in which the mothers and daughters of the first, second, and even third generation, bloomed with health, strength and beauty; when their own fair hands disdained no sort of domestic labor, and they needed no "help;" when their most beautiful garments of "fine linen and wool" were of their own manufacture, by means of the hand-card and hatchel, the foot-wheel and the hand-wheel, the hand-loom and the inkle-loom.

These terms now require definition and description as matters of *ancient* history! But our grandmothers understood them. In those days boys and girls—and they remained *boys* and *girls* till they were married—generally went bare-foot in the summer. *Snow-shoes*, as they were called, were then in common use by men, in traversing the woods, hunting, &c. They were also occasionally worn by females, as is authentically related of the grandmother of Dr. Ezra Carter, who lived on the hill west of Long pond, and of the wife of the elder Henry Martin, who traveled about three miles on the snow to Horse hill, to attend a sick woman; and also of the late Mrs. Elizabeth Hazeltine, whose constitution remained vigorous one hundred years.

Snow-shoes consisted of a light piece of wood, commonly ash, about an inch thick, bent into an elongated curve, like an egg, about two feet long and one foot wide, till the ends met, which were fastened together so as to make a handle. About three



inches from each end of the curved-bow was a thin, flat piece of hard wood, to which, with the sides of the bow, a net-work of strong, elastic leather strings was firmly fastened. On this leather netting the feet were placed for walking, and the shoes fastened on to them by strings. The material of which the snow-shoe was made was very light; the elastic leather net-work both gave a spring to the step in walking, and prevented its sinking more than an inch or two into the snow. The opinion is common that a person could walk faster and farther in a day on snow-shoes, than he could on bare ground without them.

The labor of females was almost entirely *in doors*. The only exception was that sometimes they assisted in pulling and spreading the flax which was afterwards to be spun and woven by their hands. As this article was formerly of great use in domestic manufacture, the method of raising and preparing it may here be stated. Nearly every farmer had a plat of ground for flax. The quantity of seed sown varied from one and a half to three bushels per acre. The stalk, or stem, when growing was of a pea green color and from two to three feet in height, bearing a blue blossom, which ripened into a ball that contained the flax-seed. When the flax was ripe it was pulled up carefully by the roots, tied up in small handfuls, left to dry on the ground a day or two, then set up in small stooks, and after being well dried was stacked in the field a fortnight or more. Then the seed was thrashed out. Next, it was sometimes immersed in water for a week or more, and then thinly and evenly spread upon the grass, to be rotted. This being sufficiently done, it was stowed away for the winter; but as soon as fair days appeared in spring, there was a general turn out of the men for dressing flax. The dressing was to separate the fibrous thread from the stalk. This was done by the use of several implements, called the brake, the hatchel, the swingling board and knife. It was a laborious and dirty process, but a smart man would dress on an average forty pounds a day. Being thus dressed and twisted together in bunches, it was handed over to the good house-wife and daughters, to spin, weave, whiten, and convert into thread, cloth, and neat beautiful

garments. *How* they did it, I shall allow my friend George Abbot, Esq., to describe: "First, the *hatchel* was brought and fastened into a chair with a string or stick; and the mother, with her checked apron and a handkerchief pinned about the neck, and another handkerchief tied about her head to keep off the dirt, sat in another chair; winding one end of the flax tight around the fingers of the right hand, and holding it, she drew the flax through the hatchel until it was thoroughly combed. Then changing, she combed in a similar manner the other end. Next it was snarled or wound upon the *distaff*, and spun into thread, or yarn, upon the *foot*, or *linen wheel*. What was drawn out by hatcheling was called *tow*, and it was carded by hand with *hand cards* and spun upon the large wheel. This was called *tow yarn*. From the wheel it went to the *reel;* from the reel to the loom, with which about every family was provided, and every woman knew how to use. Some families, however, hired their spinning and weaving done. Old Mrs. Elliot now glories in it, that she spent many a day in spinning and weaving "for Judge Walker's and Esquire Bradley's folks." Many other women either "took in work" of this kind, or "went out" to do it.

The custom of *rising* and *retiring* early was universal. The former was at the dawn of morning, and the latter by eight or nine in the evening. The oft repeated adage was,

> "Early to bed and early to rise,
> Will make you healthy, wealthy and wise."

"*Going to meeting*," as it was called, on the Sabbath, was for seventy-five years and more the universal custom. Elderly people, who owned horses, rode *double* — that is, the wife with her husband, seated on a pillion behind him, with her right arm encircling his breast. The young people, of both sexes, went on foot from every part of the parish. In the summer, young men usually walked bare-foot, or with shoes in hand; and the young women walked with coarse shoes, carrying a better pair in hand, with stockings, to change before entering the meeting-house. The usual custom of those west of Long pond was to stop at a large pine tree at the bottom of the hill west of Richard Bradley's, where the boys and young men put on their shoes, and the young

women exchanged their coarse shoes for a better pair, drawing on at the same time their clean white stockings. They left the articles thus exchanged under the tree till their return, having no fear that any one would be guilty of such a sacrilege as to steal them on the Sabbath! In a similar manner the young people from the east side of the river came on foot, crossing Tucker's ferry, and exchanged and deposited their walking shoes under a willow tree near Horse Shoe pond.

Going on foot to meeting was not, however, confined to the young people. Old Mrs. Elliot says, that she "always went a foot from her house, at the Borough, about six miles; yes, and often carried a baby, too!" The first wife of Daniel Abbot, daughter of Capt. Nathaniel Abbot, used to go a foot, following a path across the woods, carrying a babe, attended by one or two children on foot. She would go early, leave her child at her father Abbot's, attend meeting; then, with babe in her arms, walk home. Married women from Horse Hill, a distance of seven miles, usually walked. This practice was indeed continued as late as 1825. The wife of the late Mr. Isaac Runnels says she has often walked from her house, seven miles, to the old North church, leaving a nursing babe at home. She would start in the morning about eight; and going out of meeting immediately after sermon in the afternoon, walked homeward till overtaken by persons who rode on horseback or in a wagon, and occasionally would get a ride part of the way, and reach home at four in the afternoon.

It is remembered with pleasure that in the old meeting-house the venerable old men sat on a seat prepared for them at the base of the pulpit, wearing on their bald heads a white, linen cap in summer, and a red woolen or flannel cap in winter. This practice continued as late as 1825 and 1830.

Among the ancient men who thus sat in the "old men's seat," the following are distinctly remembered: Reuben Abbot, senior, Christopher Rowell, senior, John Shute, Capt. Joseph Farnum, Samuel Goodwin, Moses Abbot, Reuben Abbot, 2d, Nathan Abbot, and Chandler Lovejoy.

The intermission was short — an hour in winter and an hour and a half in summer. The people all stayed except those in the immediate vicinity — and hence, as *every body* attended the same

meeting, a fine opportunity was afforded for *every body* to be acquainted. Old people now say that they used to know every person in town. Thus public worship greatly promoted social union and good feeling throughout the whole community. Whatever new or interesting event occurred in one neighborhood, such as a death, birth, marriage, or any accident, became a subject of conversation, and thus communication was kept up between the people of remote sections, who saw each other on no other day than the Sabbath. Previous to about 1822 there was no stove to warm the meeting-house. The practice then was, for each family who thought it necessary for their comfort, to carry a small hand-stove, made usually of perforated tin, or sheet-iron, fastened in a wooden frame, about eight or nine inches square, in which was placed a little pan of coals. Those who traveled a considerable distance would step into some house near by, before meeting — such as Dea. Kimball's, Judge Walker's, Esq. John Bradley's, Mr. Hannaford's, Mr. Coffin's, or Robert Davis's, and fill up their little pan with live coals. This would keep their feet warm, and two or three dozen such stoves would, by afternoon, give a softened temperature to the whole house. At the intermission the elderly people usually stepped into Dea. Kimball's, or some other hospitable neighbor's, where they found a good fire blazing out from the great chimney, and, forming a circle around the room, sat and conversed of the sermon and any thing else that was fit for the Sabbath, making sure to hear and tell all the news of the week. There they would eat the lunch which they had brought, and one of the boys, at the motion of his father, would bring in and pass round a mug of cider — all relishing equally well!

On the west side of the old meeting-house was, and is, a horse-block, famous for its accommodations to the women in mounting and dismounting the horses. It consists in a large, round, flat stone, seven and a half feet in diameter, or about twenty-two feet in circumference, raised about four feet high, with steps. Tradition says it was erected at the instance of the good wives who rode on pillions, and that they agreed to pay a pound of butter apiece to defray the expense. This horse-block deserves to be celebrated, not only for the "aid and comfort" it

afforded to the elderly folks, but for the many glorious *jumps* off of it and sports around it, which the children have had for three generations. I believe it was an understood condition in the sale of the meeting-house that the *horse-block* and *weather-cock* should remain forever!

ANCIENT SINGING.

In the early period of the settlement, from 1730 till about the time of the Revolution, the singing on the Sabbath was led by some one appointed for the purpose; he, giving out the tune and reading two lines at a time of the psalm or hymn which was to be sung — and the singers, with as many of the congregation as were able, joining in the service. What was called "Tate & Brady's Collection" was then used. After Mr. John Kimball, subsequently deacon, came into town, some innovations were introduced. Being one of the singers, Mr. Kimball proposed to Rev. Mr. Walker to dispense with the *lining* of the hymns, as it was called, on the Sabbath; but as Mr. Walker thought it not prudent to attempt it first on the Sabbath, it was arranged between them to make the change on Thanksgiving day. Accordingly, after a hymn had been given out, the leader, as usual, read two lines; the singers struck in, but, instead of stopping at the end of the two lines, kept on, drowning the voice of the leader, who persisted in his vocation of *lining* the hymn! This was the *first* change.

When the meeting-house was finished, in 1784, it was fitted up with a singers' pew in the gallery opposite the pulpit. This was a large, square pew, with a box, or table, in the middle, for the singers to lay their books on. In singing they rose and faced each other, forming a hollow square. At this time the chorister used, for pitching the tune, what was called a *pitch-pipe*, made of wood; an inch or more wide, somewhat in the form of a boy's whistle, but so constructed as to admit of different keys. Under the ministry of Rev. Mr. Evans, who was himself very fond of music, some instruments were introduced, which was the *second* great innovation, and attended with so much excitement and opposition, that, according to tradition, some persons left the meeting-house rather than hear the profane sounds of "the fiddle and flute." During this period Dea. John Kimball and Capt.

David Davis are remembered as being leading singers. Master Flagg and Simeon G. Hall — the latter a son of Dea. David Hall — dressed in small clothes with knee-buckles, played the flute. About this time Watts's Psalms and Hymns were used in singing, and an old singing book called the Worcester Collection.

Mr. Asa McFarland was first introduced to Concord as a teacher of music, about 1793, and after his settlement a musical society was formed, which obtained an act of incorporation. The society was duly organized September 10, 1799, at a meeting in the old town-hall, and the following officers chosen: Timothy Walker, Esq., president; John Odlin, clerk; Jacob Abbot, Jr., treasurer; Timothy Chandler, Richard Ayer and Jonathan Eastman, trustees; Jacob Abbot, Jr., chorister; Thomas Stickney, Jr., assistant chorister.

At an adjourned meeting, October 7, 1799, Nathan Ballard, Jr., was elected 2d assistant chorister; Thomas Stickney, Jr., collector, and Jacob Abbot, Jr., librarian; and a tax of twenty-five cents laid on each member.

To this society Dea. Joseph Hall made a donation of five hundred dollars, as a permanent fund,* "from a desire to encourage and promote the practice of sacred music in the town of Concord," which fund, safely invested, has proved highly conducive to the proposed end; the interest annually accruing therefrom being devoted to the object. The following persons have

* Whereas I, Joseph Hall, of Concord, in the County of Rockingham and State of New-Hampshire, gentleman, from a desire to encourage and promote the practice of sacred music in said town of Concord, have thought proper to make a donation to the "Concord Musical Society" of the sum of five hundred dollars in the funded debt of the United States, bearing at this time an interest of six per cent. per annum. Now, to the intent that a full understanding of my will in respect to the said donation may be known to the members of the said society and all others, whom it may concern, I do hereby voluntarily enter the same on the record of the said society.

1st. The sum of five hundred dollars shall always be kept on interest, entire and undiminished: Therefore the payments which government may from time to time make of the principal of the aforesaid stock, shall, by the trustees of said society for the time being, immediately upon receipt thereof, be again put to interest upon good security, so that lawful interest upon the said sum of five hundred dollars may annually and forever accrue to the said society.

2d. The interest which shall arise upon the aforesaid donation shall always be subject to the disposal of the society in that way which they shall judge will best promote and encourage the use and practice of sacred music in said town.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this thirtieth day of April, Anno Domini one thousand eight hundred and one. JOSEPH HALL. [L. S.]

Signed and sealed in presence of Obadiah Carrigain, Philip Carrigain, Jr.

been appointed choristers by the Society, who were also leaders of the choir in the old North meeting-house, viz:

1799 — Jacob Abbot, Jr.	1806 – 9 — James Ayer.
1800 — Timothy Chandler.	1810—George Hough.
1801 — George Hough.	1811 – 15 — James Ayer.
1802 — Thomas Stickney, Jr.	1816 – 19 — Samuel Fletcher.
1803 " " "	1820 – 1 —George Stickney.
1804 — Timothy Chandler.	1822 – 41 — Samuel Fletcher.
1805 — Dyer Abbot.	1842 – 45 — James Ayer.

When the addition was made to the meeting-house, in 1802, the old singers' pew was taken away, but seats assigned them in the same relative position opposite to the pulpit. They stood in singing, but did not turn round. The musical instruments which were used for many years, more or less, were the violin and bass-viol, the flute and clarinet.

The first organ used in town was in the Unitarian meeting-house, and which was burnt with the house in 1854; the second in the Episcopal church; the third in the South Congregational; the fourth in the New North; and the fifth in the First Baptist meeting-house.

Music has for a number of years past been cultivated as a science. In this, as in every considerable place, there are gentlemen wholly devoted to it, as a profession.

In the families of the original settlers, and also in those of their descendants of the second and third generation, religious order was maintained. The late aged Mrs. Hazeltine gave the writer the names of all the families that lived on Concord Main street when she was a little girl — about 1746 — and says they all had "family orders" — that is, attended family prayer. Having very few books, the Bible was daily read, and the Assembly's Shorter Catechism committed to memory and recited by the children, who were also trained to habits of strict submission, and obedience to parental authority. Most of the heads of families also were members of the church, either on the "half way covenant," or in full communion, and their children were baptized. Commonly each family had a nice white blanket, called the "baptism blanket," in which their children, in succession, were carried out

to meeting for baptism. George Abbot, Esq., and his sister Betsey, wife of Amos Hoyt, have the white linen blanket, about a yard square, which was used as the baptism blanket for all of Dea. George Abbot's family, *nine sons*, and of his son Ezra's family, eleven in number. It has been used for the baptism of children to the sixth generation, besides being borrowed for the same purpose by neighbors. It is now more than one hundred years old, and not a brack in it!

The social manners and customs of the people in early times were simple, friendly and unceremonious. *Visiting* was common and frequent among neighbors, and often without formal invitation. When a company of neighbors was invited, the women went early and "spent the afternoon," taking their knitting or other handy work, and *their babies* with them. Their husbands either accompanied them, or went in season to take supper and return early in the evening. Tradition relates that on one occasion the women who lived near the meeting-house made a visit to their friend, Mrs. Elizabeth Hazeltine, living about three miles distant, on what is now called the Silk Farm, to assist her in quilting. Being young mothers, they took their babies and reached the house early, expecting to finish the quilt so as to be home by sundown. But night came on and the quilt was not out. Candles were then wanting, for the lack of which Mr. Hazeltine went to his wood-pile, and, picking out a large pitch-pine stump, placed it whole on the fire. The light was wonderful — all but equalling the orb of day — enabling the women to finish "the flowers" in the quilt in the handsomest style. The husbands being now present, all partook of a well cooked supper, and at such an hour as a modern party begins, this closed. The babies were wrapped in their warm blankets, and each one placed in its mother's arms after she was seated on the nice blue pillion behind her husband; and all started for "home — sweet home!"

The suppers on these occasions consisted of plain, wholesome food — new bread, pies, dough-nuts, sometimes roasted meat, or turkey, with good cider for the men, and a cup of tea for the ladies. The ancient customs of the early settlers are still preserved in a considerable degree in the "West Parish," and in the eastern section of the town. But in the main village the

change is entire. This, however, was gradually brought about. The customs of old families — the Ayers, Bradleys, Walkers, Kimballs, Stickneys, &c., were modified and new ones introduced by new families that moved into the village. Among these may be mentioned the Harris and Duncan families, previous to 1800, who were reckoned *genteel* and fashionable. Col. William A. Kent, a gentleman of highly social qualities, and his wife, a lady of accomplished manners; Peter Green, Esq., and at a later day Hon. Thomas W. Thompson and family, took a lead in the fashions of society. The hours for parties were changed from early after dinner, to late in the afternoon; then from six o'clock to seven, eight and nine; and the hour for retiring till ten, eleven, and still later. Of course the knitting and other handy work which formed a part of the social entertainment of olden times, is not considered *genteel* at this day!

In the social gatherings of young people, of both sexes, dancing was a favorite amusement. Old Mr. Herbert says, "The young folks always danced, sometimes with a fiddle, and sometimes without, but when there was no fiddler they sung and danced to the tune;" but he adds, "we always went home by nine o'clock." On particular occasions, such as ordinations, new year, and other times, there were evening dancing parties, in which not only the young, but elderly and married people participated. Although the parson, deacons, and other members of the church, did not "join in the dance," yet they would "look on," and admit that there was "no harm simply in *dancing*, though the time might be more profitably spent."

The amusements and recreations of young men were mostly of the athletic kind. "Playing ball" was always practiced, as it still is, in the spring and fall. Wrestling was very common; but this took place at social and public gatherings, especially at raisings, when, after the labor of raising the building was over, stimulated by the good treat which all hands had received, they were disposed to show their strength in *raising* or *prostrating* one another. First, the sport would begin with youngsters trying their strength in the centre of a circle formed by spectators. Then older and stronger ones would come into the ring. Wagers would be laid, and a little more *stimulant* taken in would give wonderful elas-

ticity and strength to the parties. By and by defiant and angry words would be heard, and it was well if a *fight* did not end the sport. The most famous wrestler and fighter of old times was Ephraim Colby.* The last wrestling match that is remembered to have taken place in the Main street was at the raising of Capt. Joseph Walker's large barn, about 1831.

It should be added that it was customary at all large raisings, after the ridge pole was fairly in its place, for the master-workman to celebrate or dedicate the whole, *by dashing upon it a bottle of rum*, with three hearty cheers from the company. Atkinson Webster, Esq., says the last rum-ceremony of this kind that he remembers, was at the raising of the first Eagle coffee-house, in 1827.

ANCIENT TRAVEL.

For more than eighty years Concord was the great thoroughfare for travel from the northwestern and northern parts of New-Hampshire and adjoining portions of Vermont, to Portsmouth, Salem, Newburyport and Boston, which were the principal market places. Wagons in summer and sleds in winter, loaded with produce of various kinds, were drawn to market by oxen or horses. The former were the more common as late as 1780. From Plymouth to Portsmouth the road run through Sanbornton, Canterbury and the northeast part of Concord. In that section of the town, Mr. John Hoyt, father of Jacob, built a log house (in which Jacob was born) and kept a tavern that was very celebrated in that day. The oven in it was so spacious that a boy twelve years old could go in and turn round. Mr. Hoyt charged *half a pistareen*, or about nine cents, for keeping a yoke of oxen over night. One night thirty-three teams, or sixty-six oxen, put up there. The barn was large and well filled with hay, which was chiefly cut from a meadow of natural mowing belonging to the farm. Mr. Hoyt also raised his own stock — cattle, sheep, &c., and his table was well supplied with fresh meat; but travelers usually carried their own bread and cheese. This tavern was kept there from 1780 till Mr. Hoyt's death, in 1805. Wolves and bears were common in that section, within the memory of his son Jacob, now eighty-three years of age.

Much of the travel to Portsmouth through Concord main

* See notices of him in Biographical Chapter.

village passed over "Kimball's ferry" or over "Merrill's ferry," to Newburyport, Salem and Boston. Since 1800 the travel in the winter with loaded sleighs, drawn by two horses, was so great that it was not uncommon to see fifteen, twenty, thirty and more passing through Main street in a line, at a time. As Concord was a convenient stopping place, consequently good taverns were established in sufficient number to accommodate the travel. At the north end were Mann's, Hannaford's, afterwards Barker's, tavern; George's, Herbert's and Stickney's. In the middle of the street Kinsman's, Osgood's, Gale's, Hutchins's, and at a later period others; at the lower end of the street was Butters's. These were well kept and well supported. The stables were very capacious, tables were amply furnished with provisions and cider, while the bar was always well stocked with every sort of spirituous liquor.

After the boating business was established at Concord, immense quantities of produce of every kind were conveyed to Boston market by boats; and goods in return, taken from the landing place and conveyed into the interior in heavy loaded wagons, drawn by four, six and eight horses. Thus business continued till the opening of the Concord railroad in 1842.

ANCIENT MASTING.

Concord was formerly famous for the noble mast trees which it furnished, not only for his "Majesty's royal navy,"* but at a later period for ships and vessels of various kinds built along the seaboard. The best masts were drawn from the northwesterly section of Horse-hill, conveyed to the Contoocook river, at what is now called the Mast-yard, thence floated down to the Merrimack river direct, or they were drawn by teams from the Borough to the sand-banks, or below Sewall's falls, and there thrown into the river. The first mast-master we have particular knowledge of was Lieut. John Webster. He once lived in a small house on the spot where Samuel A. Kimball, Esq., lives, and carried on masting operations in Concord and neighboring towns. Mr. Timothy Walker remembers that Lieut. Webster cut a mast in Northfield which measured thirty-eight inches diameter at sixty

* In early times the large white pines suitable for masts were marked as they stood in the forests, "G. R."

feet from the butt, and took one hundred and four oxen, or fifty-two teams, to draw it.

The next famous mast-master was Capt. Reuben Kimball. The manner in which he carried on the business was as follows: Taking a strong team in the winter, of twenty yoke of oxen or more, with sleds and an adequate number of men, he went into the woods and camped. His men were divided into sections for particular parts of the work, called swampers, teamsters, choppers, peelers and tailsmen. The swampers cleared the way; choppers cut down the trees; peelers peeled off the bark; teamsters drove the oxen; and two tailsmen walked by the side of the hind team, and in case at any time the tongue of the sled, in passing a hollow place, run so high as to lift the hind oxen up by the neck, then the tailsmen seized the tails of the oxen and drew them outward, so that in coming down the tongue of the sled would not strike them.

In going on to the ground the mast-master usually rode on horseback and gave his orders. In drawing the logs on a sled the mast-master, or other principal man, road on the sled and thence gave out his orders.

Among other mast-masters of olden time the following are well remembered: Ezekiel Carter, of the West Parish, John Bradley, Esq., and Jonathan Eastman. The late Jeremiah Pecker was extensively engaged in rafting logs down the river.

ANCIENT PORK BARRELS.

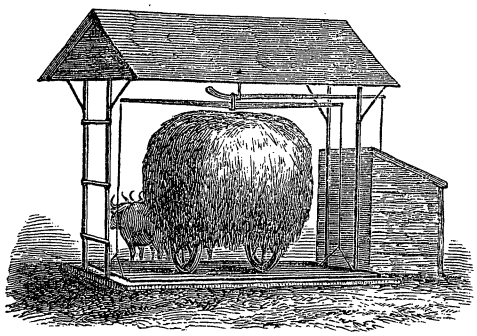
Mr. Joseph P. Stickney has now in use in his cellar, two pork barrels that were brought into Penacook by his ancestor, Lieut. Jeremiah Stickney, about the year 1731; which have been in use every year since, and still appear to be sound. They were made of what is called *heart-pine;* require to be hooped once in about twenty years. Their remarkable preservation so long is attributed to the salt and brine which are constantly in them.

AN ANCIENT PEAR TREE.

Standing on the farm of Nathan K. Abbot, and a few rods south of his house, is a pear tree that is known to have stood over ninety-five years. It grew up a seedling, but the fruit, which ripens in September, is large and of excellent quality,

nearly equal to the modern "Bartlett pear." It bears more or less every year, but abundantly every other year. Besides supplying the family with pears, it is estimated that at least four hundred dollars worth have been sold for cash. When the tree was owned by the late Thomas Abbot, his practice was in the season of the fruit to invite his friends to visit him and "eat pears," which they did do with good relish!

THE OLD HAY SCALES.



The *old hay scales*, as they were called by way of eminence, were located in the valley southeast of the Town Hall, and of which the annexed cut presents as good a view as could be obtained by a description from memory. These scales were the wonderment of boys throughout the village thirty-five and forty years ago, and the process of weighing loads of hay always attracted more or less of them, who watched the movements of Mr. Ayer* with the utmost interest. Great skill was requisite in the driver, in order to check up his cattle when the cart-wheels reached their assigned position; but they very often shot over, and then he was compelled to drive around —making a wide radius, and entering the establishment with greater caution than before. When the load reached its exact position, the cattle were detached, the cart tongue suspended by a chain, one end of which was made fast beneath the roof, and the crank turned by which to raise the load from the ground. Then the crank was made fast, when Mr. Ayer went into the little projection at the east end, and, looking first at a printed table upon the wall, and then working upon his slate, summed up the weight, to the amazement of the boys and the satisfaction of the owner of the hay. The whole affair was a perfect puzzle to village urchins, and will not soon be forgotten.†

*James Ayer. † *N. H. Statesman.*