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# The publishing and literary activities of the predecessors of Ticknor and Fields, 1829-1849

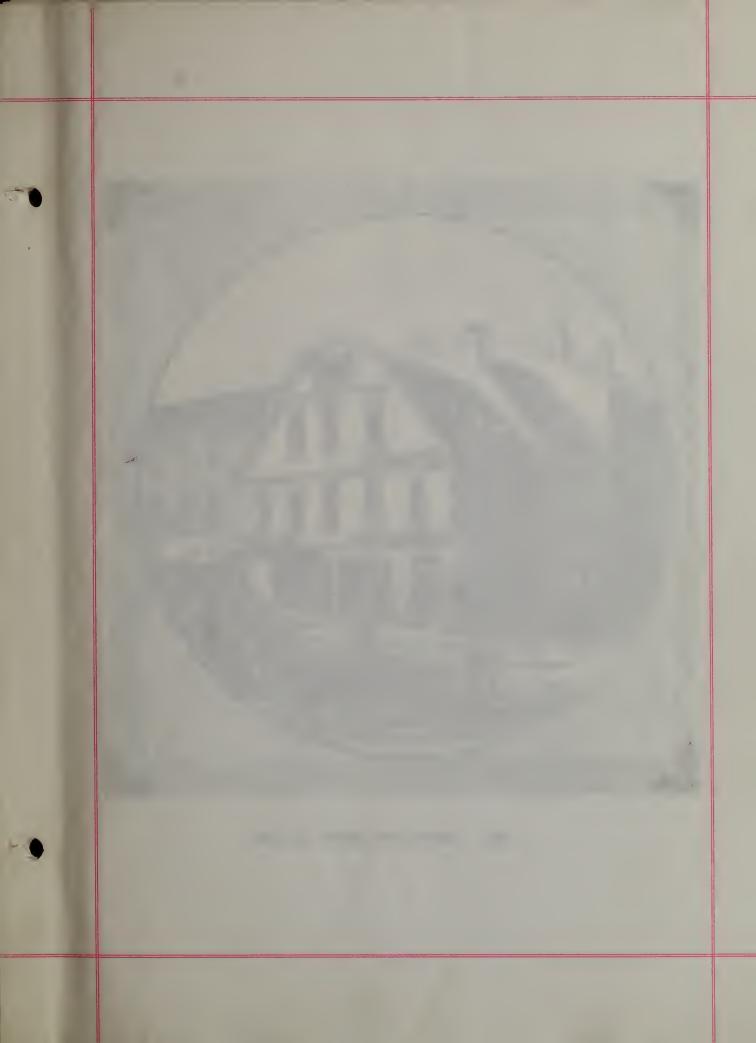
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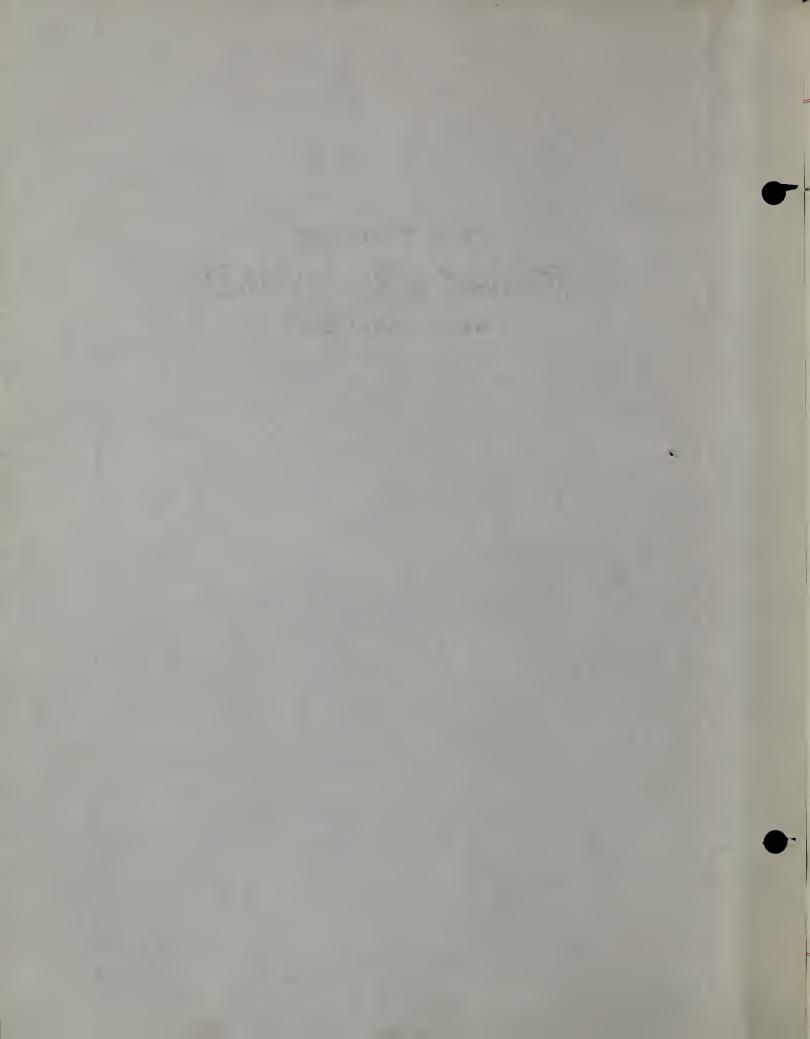


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THE OLD CORNER BOOK STORE. 1850 ?



Boston's Old Corner Bookstore

In an old-fashioned building
On a very busy street,
A poet hale and hearty
Has a coveted retreat,
Where behind a green baize curtain
He finds relief from care,
And has for many callers
A cordial welcome there.

Heaven save that ancient building 'From the innovator's hand!
As a landmark of our fathers
Let this corner bookstore stand;
For cherished memories lure us,
As we wander down the street,
To the poet in his corner—
To the scholar's calm retreat.

-- Henry S. Washburn.

# BOSTON UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL

# Thesis

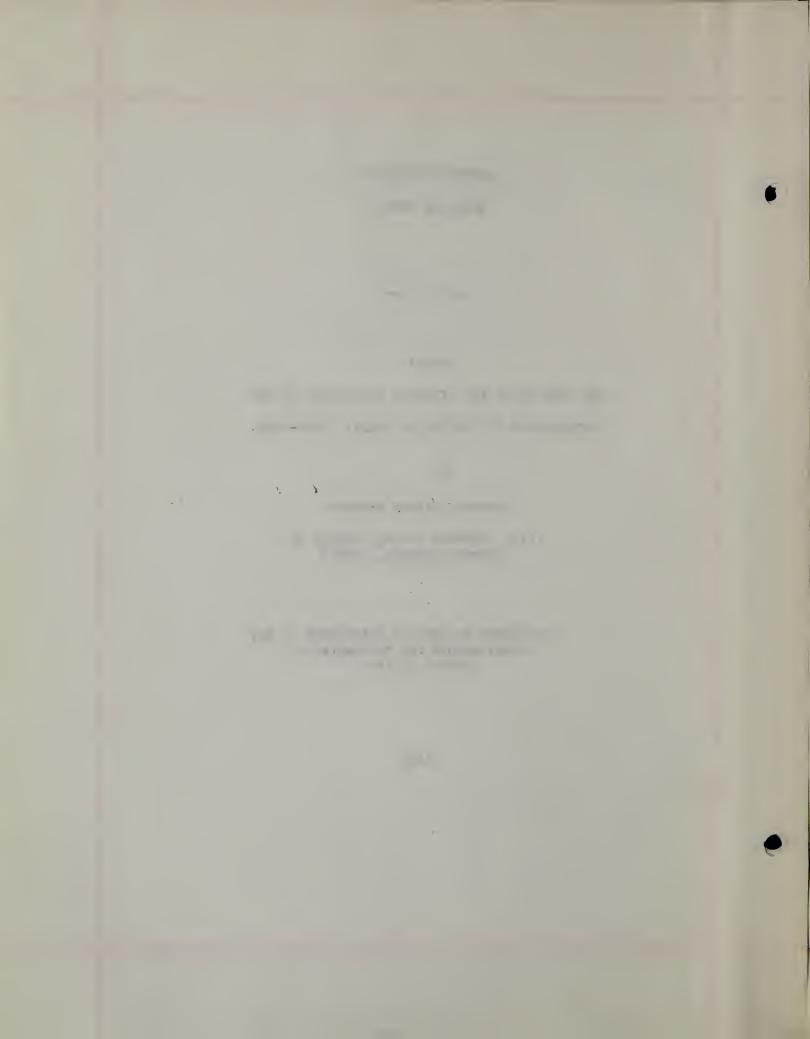
THE PUBLISHING AND LITERARY ACTIVITIES OF THE PREDECESSORS OF TICKNOR & FIELDS. 1829-1849.

by

Florence Wilson Newsome

(B.S., Simmons College School of Library Science, 1935.)

submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts



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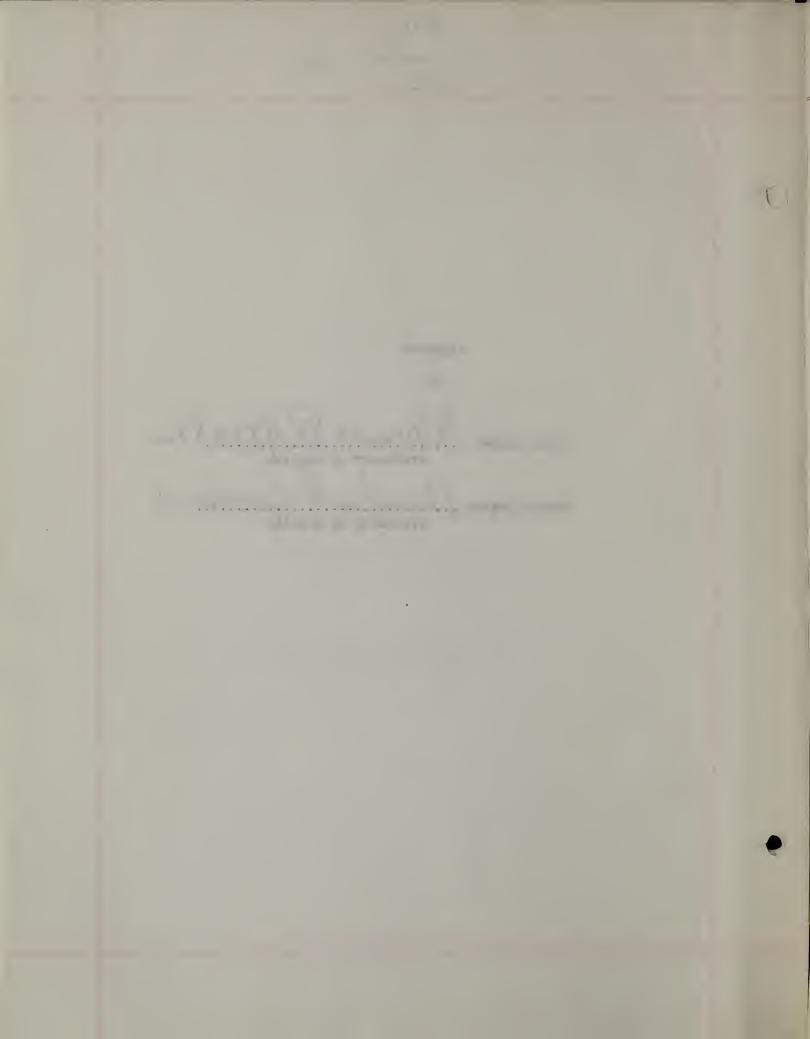
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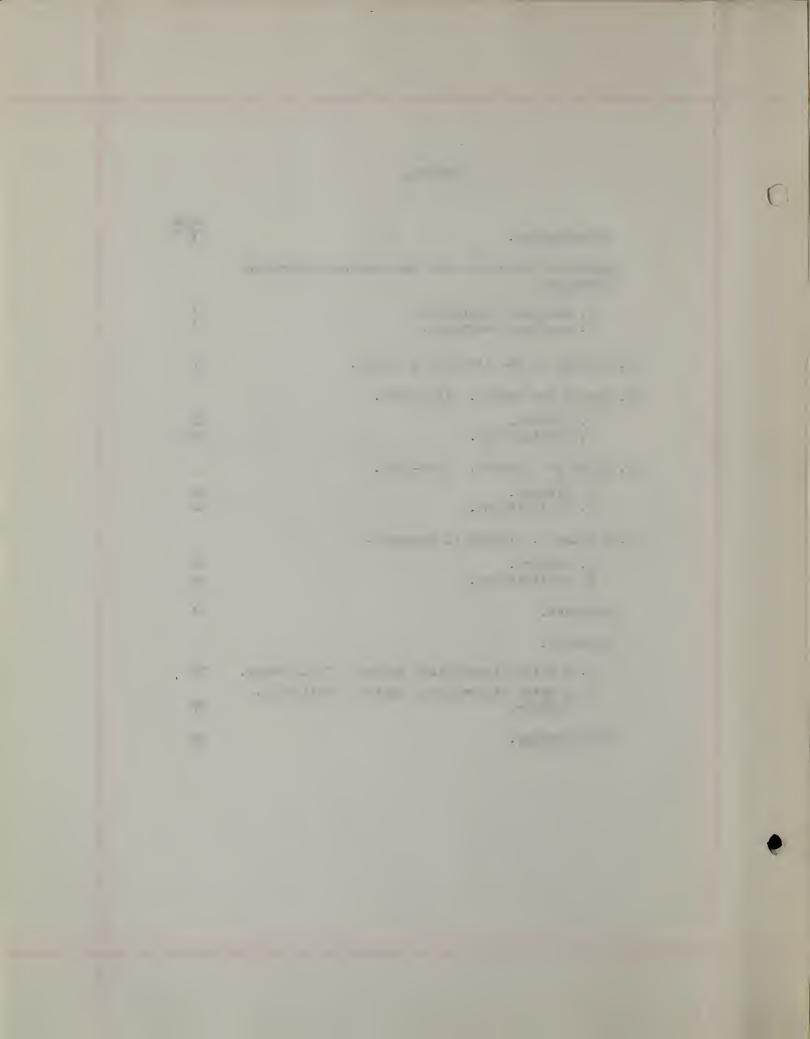
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Professor of English



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### INTRODUCTION

This thesis was originally planned to embrace a history of the publishing and literary activities of the Boston firm of Ticknor and Fields and their predecessors from the genesis in 1829 through 1889 when the firm merged with Houghton Mifflin. In execution it has not been found practicable to fulfil this plan. In spite of the tremendous, albeit scattered, mass of source material available, there are many gaps, particularly in the period after 1854, which it has not proved possible to fill without the aid of documents and records either in the possession of Houghton Mifflin or destroyed by fire. In addition, it was discovered that a doctoral dissertation has been underway for the past ten years which, if the above mentioned material may be accessible, will more adequately cover the period from 1849 to 1871 than I could hope to do. Therefore, the period covered by this thesis was reduced, and the emphasis on the American literary connections was increased in the hope that in this form it might also meet with more favor from students of belles-lettres than the original plan emphasizing as it would the historical and bibliographical aspects. It is the intent of this work to trace briefly the history of the firms of Carter and Hendee, Allen and Ticknor, and William D. Ticknor and to outline the development of American literature as revealed in the publications of these firms.

It is unfortunate for the research worker that there is no history of the important American publishing houses, and it is additionally unfortunate that there is no adequate or sufficiently detailed biography of

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 America has now in progress a proposed history of the American publishers of the nineteenth century, but it is estimated that at least five more years will be necessary to bring the project to completion. Very brief biographical sketches of Timothy Harrington Carter and William D. Ticknor are available in extremely limited editions and, by reason of the scarcity of copies today, these sketches are reproduced in full in the appendix to this work. Some information is available in such memoirs as Annie Fields's "James T. Fields, Biographical Notes and Personal Sketches" and "Memories of a Hostess" and Caroline Ticknor's "Glimpses of Authors" and "Hawthorne and His Publisher", but most of these recollections, anecdotes and letters cover a later period than this thesis. It is the individual biographies of authors, volumes of their letters and journals, the periodicals, the newspapers, and the all too few manuscript collections in the East which it has been necessary to comb for information.

In regard to the efforts to secure a checklist of all the books published by these firms another lacuna must be mentioned. The copyright lists ordinarily available at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. have been closed for public inspection for the duration of the war. The only trade bibliography covering the first half of the nineteenth century is Roorbach's "Biblioteca Americana". This four volume work covering the period from 1820-1861 is acknowledged by all who use it to be inaccurate, inadequate and altogether undependable. But, in lieu of a better, it must suffice. The only other sources known to me for use in compiling a checklist of the books printed during this period are the periodicals and

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knickerbooker, The American Monthly Review and others, cannot be relied upon to include all books published and only too often after a few years give up the literary lists entirely, or omit the name of the publisher. The newspapers, in addition to the lengthy, eye-straining task of plowing through deteriorated pages, very often do not discriminate between the books published by a firm and those merely offered for sale by the firm. But, in spite of these handicaps, I believe I now have a checklist of the titles published by Carter and Hendee, Allen and Ticknor, and William D. Ticknor, which, while making no claim to completeness, is at least adequate to base statistics and classifications of the productions of these firms. In addition to the sources mentioned above, library catalogues and publishers's advertisements in the more than two hundred volumes examined by me personally have added to the relative completeness of the checklists.

In conclusion, I wish to express my deep appreciation and gratitude to the following individuals for material aid so generously afforded me:

Messrs. Albert H. and Richard B. Carter, for making available and photostating for me the biographical sketch of their grandfather, Timothy Harrington Carter, which appears in the Appendix of this thesis, and of which they possess the only known extant copy.

Mr. Frederic Melcher, Editor of the <u>Publishers' Weekly</u>, for allowing me to use the notes made by his predecessor, Adolph Growoll, for a proposed history of nineteenth century publishing, as well as the miscellaneous scrapbook and newspaper clippings available in his office.

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Mr. Rollo G. Silver, of the Bibliographical Society of America, for innumerable suggestions and references.

Miss Edith Ticknor, for allowing me to copy and quote from manuscript letters in her possession, as well as for permitting me to go through her bookshelves in quest of her grandfather's publications.

Professor Thomas Ray Mather, for his most generous expenditure of time and patience and most helpful and sympathetic advice during the years of the progress of this work.

Professor Winslow Loveland, for many suggestions which have very definitely improved the final result of this thesis.

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## CHAPTER I

AMERICAN LITERATURE AND THE AMERICAN PUBLISHER. 1830-1850.

American literature in 1830 was still in its infancy. Although the United States had achieved political independence, it was still extremely provincial and sectional and New England, partly because of the large scale emigration of the young and energetic to the West and partly because of the absorption of conservatives like the elder Channing with controversial religious tracts, was definitely in a literary eclipse.

New York had the Knickerbocker group with Cooper, Irving and Bryant, exemplifiers of the early nineteenth century American genius in romance, essay and poetry, as its chief representatives. Of these, because of the paucity of communication and transportation, only Bryant was known in Boston.

It might be advantageous, however, to mention briefly the names of a few of the group of minor literary writers who were active in Boston in the years from 1820 to 1833, for many of their works appeared under the imprint of the predecessors of Ticknor and Fields, the leading publishers of the New England writers when New England was preëminent in literature. The acknowledged leaders were probably Daniel Webster, the political orator; Richard Henry Dana, the poet editor; and William Ellery Channing, the literary theologian. Webster is recalled today for his political rather than his literary achievements, but his brilliant orations—solid, formal and dignified as they were—reveal his

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 magnificent and extremely clear intellect and were published and declaimed throughout the East. Richard Henry Dana was probably the most able writer of the New England group and, in spite of the egotism which made him extremely unpopular and his lack of regard for the established literary canons, the poems and miscellaneous essays and reviews of this later New York editor were very popular. William Ellery Channing is undoubtedly remembered as a liberal Unitarian leader and yet he probably possessed more genuine literary talent than any of his contemporaries. He was the leading writer of the two outstanding controversial movements of the time, the religious controversy of the liberal Unitarians versus the orthodox Congregationalists, and the later anti-slavery movement. William Ellery Channing had a brilliant mind and a clearness of style which make it unfortunate that his works gained only a limited reading on account of the very nature of the subjects with which he dealt.

Most of the remaining minor Boston writers of this period were among that group of young professional men who instituted the literary and social Anthology Club. This club was an informal organization founded in Cambridge in 1803. The members were the publishers of the "Monthly Anthology" and chief mainstays of "The North American Review" when that literary journal was started in 1815, as well as the founders of the Boston Athenaeum. Among its members we find Edward T. Channing, George Ticknor, Edward Everett, Joseph Story, Jared Sparks, John Quincy Adams, William Tudor, Joseph Buckminster, and President Kirkland of Harvard. These names are probably better known today in other fields

of endeavor than literature, but they did offer a contribution to the literature of the first half of the nineteenth century, slight though it may now be considered.

While it is freely admitted that New England had no major writers during the first thirty-five years of the nineteenth century, yet our dependence upon England, once our mother country, cannot be entirely attributed to our own deficiency. England at this time was producing some of her most noteworthy literary gems--books which in any age would have been widely reprinted here. For were not Byron, Wordsworth, Keats, Scott, Jane Austen, and Maria Edgeworth producing their best works at this time? Not since the Elizabethan age had English literature been better fitted to exert a strong and an inspiring influence. Small wonder American publishers reprinted English novels and poems in preference to our own native strivings, and small wonder too American writers looked to the English masterworks for guidance and leadership!

The demand for books was still extremely limited in the United States of 1830. The vast majority of Americans had little leisure from the unceasing economic struggle, and when they did read, they spent months over one volume until they had really mastered the contents of that volume. One can easily see where a Bible might occupy the whole lifetime of many an American. But, even if there were few books being published, there was no lack of periodicals. Quoting from Professor William B. Cairns:

The most significant literary fact of the period is the founding of magazines. A magazine could be started with

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slight financial backing, and could be filled with short miscellaneous contributions by a variety of authors—material not suitable for publication in a more pretentious form. 1

Weekly, monthly, and quarterly miscellanies sprang up on all sides.

Some endured, but many shortly made way for other equally short lived magazines. The Portfolio, the Analectic Magazine, and later Graham's Magazine made Philadelphia the recognized periodical center of the United States. But the Boston of 1815 had the North American Review, which has been said to mark the beginning of American literature. It certainly numbered among its contributors nearly every recognized American writer; and among its editors were such distinguished names as William Tudor, Edward Tyrell Channing, Edward Everett, and later James Russell Lowell and Charles Eliot Norton. Bryant's "Thanatopsis", the first important imaginative poem from the pen of an American, appeared in the North American Review in 1817, and in 1828-31 Longfellow contributed articles on the romance languages. And it was in 1831-32 that the first two papers of "The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table" appeared in the New England Magazine, published in Boston.

Later our American men of letters not only contributed to periodicals, but edited them as well. In 1843 James Russell Lowell originated the ill-fated <u>Pioneer</u>, and Emerson, Margaret Fuller, and George Ripley published <u>The Dial</u>, organ of Brook Farm transcendentalism. It

William B. Cairns, "On the Development of American Literature From 1815 to 1833," Bulletin of the University of Wisconsin. Philology and Literature, Vol. I, No. 1, p. 35.

is impossible to underestimate the importance of the periodical in the American literary scene. Our American literary men in 1830 and 1840 devoted more effort to having their works appear in periodical than in book form. It was not until the middle of the century with the establishment of Harper's Magazine [1850] and the Atlantic Monthly [1857] that the American periodical ceased to be miscellany. These two periodicals, and many another, complemented rather than took the place of books. New England literary geniuses by 1845 -- thanks to William D. Ticknor and Company, Harper Brothers, and other leading publishers -- no longer had to devote their energies to securing a publisher for their work, but could devote that extra time to composing poems and essays especially for the periodical press. By 1850 books and periodicals each moved in their own sphere. And yet the early periodical met the intellectual needs of the sturdy pioneer Americans, who, after devoting their physical energies to satisfying the needs of everyday existence, still had a keenly intelligent interest in literary pursuits.

But by 1833 the literary supremacy of America had returned to New England and specifically, to Boston. Although the New York Knicker-bocker School continued to write, after 1833 they added little to their reputation and attracted no noteworthy adherents to their number. Professor Cairns tells us that in New England

It was the beginning of an era of vigorous mental activity and moral questioning, and it was fitting that the descendants of the most virile of the Puritans should take the lead. The literary ascendance of Massachusetts was not geographical but racial. The leaders whose names will be mentioned later could almost without exception trace their

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ancestry back to the immigrants of the early seventeenth century.2

These new leaders will not be mentioned here since most of them were published by the predecessors of Ticknor and Fields and will receive mention in the chronological sequence which follows.

But some note should be made here of two important developments-both educational--which exerted quite a good deal of influence upon the literature being written during the period 1830-1850.

The lyceum, or lecture circuits, provided for the adult population what the schools supplied for the children. The founder of the lyceum movement was Josiah Holbrook, who, in November 1826, established the first American lyceum in Millbury, Massachusetts. By 1829 there were eighty-one such lyceums throughout the state, and by 1834 the United States as a whole could boast of over 3,000. The object of the lyceum as stated by the New Bedford branch was "the improvement of its members in useful knowledge, and the advancement of popular education." This was accomplished mainly through lectures, although many lyceums also presented programs of debates and conversations. In the beginning gratuitous home talent was the order of the day, but after the first ten years most of the lecturers were imported and paid from \$5. to \$20. a lecture. All of our New England literary men participated in the programs at one time or

William B. Cairns, A History of American Literature. p. 221.

Anna L. Curtis, A Brief History of the Lyceum. p.20.

another, and the fact is that many made their living in this way and not by their writings as we today so fondly presume. Emerson, Thoreau, Henry Ward Beecher, Edward Everett Hale, James Russell Lowell, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Edwin P. Whipple, and James T. Fields were foremost among this group. Several of our present-day institutions, the Essex Institute at Salem and the Lowell Institute in Boston, can trace their origin back to the lyceum. Membership in the lyceum was generally \$2. a year, or fifty cents to \$2. for a course of ten to fifteen lectures. Reform was the keynote of the lyceum lecturer, and temperance, woman suffrage, and abolition were the most important subjects during the height of the lyceum movement, which continued unabated until after the Civil War. Other organizations, the American Institute of Instruction and the Mercantile Library Association, also presented series of lectures and classes. Many had well-equipped libraries which increased the demand for books.

The Massachusetts public school system received a tremendous expansion and improvement during this period. Legislation passed in 1827 required that each town select a school committee who would have the general oversight of all the schools in the town and would determine the teachers employed and the textbooks used. This meant there was henceforth a uniformity in the schools which had not been present up to this date. Arithmetic, geography, and history were added to the reading and writing curriculum in 1821. This uniformity and expansion naturally increased the market for school textbooks and almost all of the Boston publishers participated in the scramble for the profits to be gained from the publication and sale of these books.

The second secon The state of the s  During the latter part of the period under discussion, two additional movements influenced the literature being produced in New England.

These were transcendentalism and abolition.

In Boston in 1834 Bronson Alcott opened the Temple School with Elizabeth Peabody, sister of Hawthorne's wife Sophia and owner of a popular circulating library and foreign bookshop, as his assistant. Alcott is accepted by some authorities as the forerunner of transcendentalism for the object of his school was "to turn the mind of the child inward upon itself, that the child might gain a knowledge of the divinity in his inner being, and that he might learn to appeal to that inner principle as a guide to conduct". 4 Whether or not Alcott influenced the formation of Emerson's theories is a moot point, but suffice it to state here that in 1837 with Emerson's "The American Scholar" and in 1838 with his "Divinity School Address", the major ideas of the philosophy of transcendentalism were fully developed. September 19, 1836 marked the formation of the Symposium or Transcendental Club in Boston. This was an informal organization of many of the leading transcendentalists -- among them Emerson, Alcott, Margaret Fuller, Hawthorne, Thoreau, James Freeman Clarke, William Ellery Channing, and George Ripley -- who met at frequent intervals to discuss the new thought of the day. But this interest in and discussion of the new ideas was not limited to the men, and in November 1839 Margaret Fuller started her famous "Conversations" in Elizabeth Peabody's library

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>Dorothy McCuskey, Bronson Alcott, Teacher. p. 82.

on West Street. Lydia Maria Child and the wives of Theodore Parker and Ralph Waldo Emerson were among the group of twenty-five women who met weekly in order to "supply a point of union to well-educated and thinking women in a city, which, with great pretension to mental refinement, boasts at present nothing of the kind".5

The upper classes were involved in the passion for a broader intellectual development. Ladies held fashionable morning drawing classes at their houses, there were also mixed evening parties of young men and women at the house of Miss Nancy Lowell (an aunt of the poet) which were to some extent an innovation.

In such a place impressions spread rapidly; theories were infectious; phrenology, Unitarianism, vegetarianism, emancipation, Transcendentalism, worked their way from street to street like an epidemic. A new course of study or a new thought was as exciting as news of a European war could have been. A lady remembers meeting another on Tremont Street during the full glow of the Emerson lecture epoch and exclaiming, 'Oh, there's a new idea! Have you heard it?'

'Don't talk to me of ideas', retorted her friend, 'I'm so full of them now that I can't make room for a single new one.'6

From these small groups which met to discuss the new thought of their time, there emerged the literary movement based upon the philosophic conception which we call transcendentalism. The idealistic conviction that within the nature of man there is something which transcends all human limitations and is intuitively understood by the human mind dominated the literary and philosophical scene in the 1840's. As the

<sup>5</sup>Mary Caroline Crawford, Romantic Days in Old Boston. p.68.

<sup>6&</sup>quot;Literary and Social Boston", Harper's New Monthly Magazine, LXII:382-83. February, 1881.

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movement developed it sponsored two important activities: the publication of several literary periodicals including The Dial [1840-1844] and The Harbinger [1845-1849], to which the majority of the literary and theological men of this time contributed, and the establishment of that Utopian communal experiment, Brook Farm. The experiment at Brook Farm is so universally known as not to require description here. Suffice it to state that "The Brook Farm Institute of Agriculture and Education" was put into operation in April, 1841 in West Roxbury by a joint stock company of nearly seventy members led by George Ripley, a Unitarian minister and friend of William Ellery Channing and Theodore Parker, who resigned his pastorate in order to lead the enterprise. It aimed to provide an opportunity to its participants for cultural pursuits and leisure in conjunction with the manual labor required of each in order to provide for the common livelihood of all. Several of our literary men spent some time at Brook Farm -- notably Hawthorne, who wrote about the experiment in his "Blithedale Romance", Margaret Fuller, George William Curtis, and Charles A. Dana -- while many others including Emerson, Thoreau, Alcott, and Theodore Parker were frequent visitors. While the experiment was a financial failure and was abandoned in 1846 after the burning of the uninsured new building, The Phalanstery, it was an important part of the Transcendentalist movement and has left its impact upon the literature and thought of the 1840's and 1850's.

The other movement which dominated this period but did not come to a head until the Civil War was the crusade against slavery. Even as early as 1831 William Lloyd Garrison established The Liberator in Boston

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and he and his associates organized the New England Anti-Slavery Society; the following year Allen and Ticknor published Lydia Maria Child's tract "An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans". The leading orators and statesmen debated the question upon the lecture platforms throughout the country; the speeches of Charles Sumner, Wendell Phillips. Daniel Webster. Henry Ward Beecher and many others were on the lips of most of the people of New England and, of course, in addition to the publication of these speeches by William D. Ticknor and other Boston publishers, the ideas contained therein aroused some of the New England literary men to written denunciation. Although there was a diversity of opinion among our writers, it may be said that while most of the transcendentalists opposed slavery, few took an active part in the movement. Of the New England literary men, Whittier and Lowell were the most forceful supporters of abolition, and undoubtedly the most conspicuous literary figure in the anti-slavery agitation immediately preceding the Civil War was Harriet Beecher Stowe. Her fame rests mainly upon the novel "Uncle Tom's Cabin", which appeared as a serial in The National Era during 1851-52 and was rejected for publication by Ticknor and Fields only to be welcomed to the list of their successors, Houghton Osgood and Company, in 1879, after Jewett and Company, who published the novel in 1852, had gone out of business.

In order to more fully understand the sections of this thesis which follow, it is deemed advisable to make a brief survey of the more important conditions affecting the publication of books in the United States from 1830-1850.

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The total number of books published in the United States in 1830 is estimated by various authorities to be in the neighborhood of one hundred volumes. By 1852 the total had risen to 1,288. From our discussion of the status of American literature in 1830, it is not surprising to note that there were relatively few American books being published.

In 1820 about thirty per cent of our publications were by our own authors; by 1840 it was approximately half, though the large increase in school books during the thirties had much to do with the rise. In 1856 the proportion had risen to about eighty per cent. The vast bulk of the remaining portion is, in each case, composed of British publications. If to this be added the fact that sometime in the late forties the rage for Americana became pronounced, the middle of the nineteenth century may be taken as the turning point of nationalism in our publishing history.

Based upon population statistics, the following statement is also of interest:

From 1825 to 1840 the number of American publications show an aggregate of 1,115. Of these 623 were original and 492 were reprints from foreign works. The population of the United States in that year was 17,000,000. In 1853, 733 new works were published in the United States, of which 278 were reprints of English works, 35 were translations of foreign authors and the remainder were original American works. The population of the United States had reached about 25,000,000, an increase of 50 per cent compared with 1840. The original American works published in 1853, compared with the fifteen years ending in 1840, show an increase of about 800 per cent

<sup>7</sup>Samuel Beeton, Dictionary of Literature, Fine Arts and Amusements. p. 80.

<sup>8&</sup>quot;American Publications for 1852", Norton's Literary Gazette, III:2. January 15, 1853.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup>Earl L. Bradsher, Book Publishers and Publishing. p. 542.

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in less than 20 years. In other words, the original American publications of the book trade seem to have advanced about fifteen times as fast as the population. 10

And, reiterating the same point more graphically, we find

	1820	1830	1840	1850
American	30	40	55	70
British	70	60	45	3011

The value of the books had risen enormously and the following figures are quoted in proof of this fact:

 1820
 \$2,500,000.
 1840
 \$5,500,000.

 1830
 \$3,500,000.
 1850
 \$12,500,000.

The outstanding publishers and booksellers of the country--Carey and Hart of Philadelphia; Charles Wiley, D.Appleton and Company, Harper Brothers of New York; and Hilliard, Gray and Company of Boston--were either reproducers of English books or of purely utilitarian American ones. Many authorities tell us that it was positively injurious to the commercial credit of a bookseller to announce a title as of American authorship in 1830. In fact, on one occasion a publisher went through the farce of having a manuscript packed up as coming from England in order to realistically convey the impression that the announced work was of English origin! But by 1850 American books were not only regularly received and reviewed in England, but American works were printed simultaneously in England and

<sup>10 &</sup>quot;Publishing, American", The Encyclopedia Americana, XXII:784.

<sup>11</sup> Samuel Goodrich, Recollections of a Lifetime, II:388-89.

<sup>12</sup> Beeton, op. cit., p.80.

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America. Time and steam wrought many changes!

The methods of book distribution had changed but little since the Revolution and were four in number -- the subscription agent, the peddler, the auction, and the retail bookstore. The subscription books were of two types -- those, especially the novels of Dickens and Scott, issued in parts: and long sets of books like encyclopedias and dictionaries. Carey and Hart published many sets of general information books on a subscription basis and employed the celebrated Parson Weems as one of their agents, but this method of distribution did not become popular in New England until after the Civil War. The peddler, despite harsh regulatory legislation and the ill repute into which these functioneers fell, performed a vital service in distributing books, particularly in the schools and homes of the rural districts. The auction or literary fair was a means of ridding the publisher of his surplus stock. In 1824 Henry Carey initiated the first American trade sale in Philadelphia consisting entirely of his own overstock. The idea spread to New York and to Boston, and semi-annual sales of the books of all publishers were offered by the leading auction houses. By 1860 the joint sales of New York and Philadelphia amounted to well over a million dollars annually; but, by 1860 too, trade sales were found to be more of a handicap than a convenience to the booktrade because small town and country booksellers would stock up at these reduced prices and would not return to buy the new books. Gradually this type of book auction became a thing of the past. Today we call these surplus books remainders or publishers's overstock and sell them in lots to second hand dealers or to large bookstores for bargain sales. The retail bookstore

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was generally carried on in conjunction with publishing as it was many years before a publisher could make a living by that trade alone. These stores frequently carried a line of notions or drugs as well as books and were sometimes located in the local postoffice, newspaper office, or other center of interest.

Many of these bookseller-publishers, in order to increase the number of books issued under their imprint, participated in what was called the exchange system, probably originated by Matthew Carey of Philadelphia. Under this arrangement, Carey and Hart for example would send Carter and Hendee of Boston a specified number of copies of a certain book published by them with Carter and Hendee's imprint on the title-page either alone or in conjunction with their own and other firms on their exchange list. Carter and Hendee would then advertise and sell the book as their own publication. Likewise Carter and Hendee would send their more popular publications to publishers in other cities in much the same fashion. The exchange book of Carey and Hart, portions of which are now preserved in the archives of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in 1813-14 lists fourteen booksellers in New York, sixteen in Boston, and others in the South. 13 The distribution problem, which is solved today by wide advertising, the publication of trade lists, and by rapid communication, in 1830 was solved by the use of these exchange lists, which were a means of keeping a full and varied supply of standard and popular books on the shelves of all booksellers. By 1835 our present methods of distribution

Earl L. Bradsher, Mathew Carey: Editor, Author and Publisher. p. 15.

had almost entirely supplanted the exchange lists.

With the exception of the exchange system, there was little attempt at cooperation among the publishers and booksellers. Not enough large firms had developed to bring about the issuing of too many editions of the same work. Each publisher printed what he wanted to print and engaged in almost a strictly local business. But with the expansion of the booktrade in the 1830's and 1840's and the increased transportation facilities, the book market frequently found itself glutted with many editions of the same work. The era of piracy, underselling, and copyright reform was at hand and bookseller cooperation was imperative.

It is an indisputable fact that the publication of books by American authors was not profitable to the publishers of 1830 and 1840 simply because there was more money in pirating the works of established English writers than in paying copyright to native authors of less ability and less public recognition. The Copyright Act of 1790, which was still in force at this time, protected the rights of American authors only and only within their own country. The idea of the best seller had taken hold of the book publisher, the eagerness for large profits from a few popular books rather than small returns from each title on an extended general list became the order of the day. Most of the gentlemen's agreements and friendly scruples of the past were discarded and the publisher who was able to secure the proof-sheets of the latest English work first had the advantage of being able to place his reprint on the market ahead of his competitors. This was a temporary advantage only as it did not prevent the competitors from issuing their own cheaper and more distorted

reprints, but the first publisher had the "edge on the market". The actual printing of these pirated volumes was divided up among several printers and the cheap, paper-covered, badly printed volumes were often on sale within twenty-four hours of the receipt of the proof sheets.

In addition to these cheap reprints by reputable publishing houses, mammoth literary newspapers containing complete or serial reprints were hawked about the streets of New York, Boston and other large cities.

Frederic Hudson describes this situation in part as follows:

About the time the Atlantic began to be traversed by steamships, several large papers, published weekly, were established in New York and Boston. They were entitled the Boston Notion, and the New World and Brother Jonathan of New York. They were literary sheets, and made news of literature. Park Benjamin, an associate of Horace Greeley and Henry J. Raymond on the New Yorker in 1838, Rufus Wilmot Griswold, George Roberts, and Jonas Winchester, were the publishers. John Neal, Louis Fitzgerald Tasistro, Griswold, and Benjamin were the chief editors; but they impressed Bulwer, James, Dickens, Ainsworth, Lever, Sheridan Knowles, Lover, and all the writers of note, into their service nolens volens. They made war, by their enterprise, on the Harpers and other large book publishers and brought literature into the market at reduced prices. They were a sensation in New York. What the New York Herald, New York Sun, Boston Times, and Philadelphia Ledger endeavored to do with the political, commercial, criminal, financial, and marine movements of the day, these energetic litterateurs and publishers attempted to accomplish with Bulwer's Zanoni, Dickens's American Notes, and Knowles's Love-Chase. Zanoni was published by the Harpers, the New World, and Brother Jonathan in the spring of 1842. It sold for 12 1/2 cents, and in some instances at 6 1/4 cents. The Harpers and a few other booksellers would issue such works as these, taking their own time, and charging \$1 and \$1 50 for a copy. Although there was no copyright law, these book publishers had as much of an monopoly as if Bulwer, James and Dickens wrote exclusively for them. 14

<sup>14</sup> Frederic Hudson, Journalism in the United States. p. 587.

These cheap literary folios attained enormous circulations, but, fortunately for the American booktrade, they were too sensational to last. In April, 1843 the Post Office Department increased the rate of postage for these oversize newspapers from the low newspaper rate of less than a half a cent to the pamphlet rate of two and a half cents. This factor, coupled with their complete dependence upon the foreign production and the evanescent sensationalism of their appeal, accounts for the disappearance of these huge literary folios from the scene in 1845 and 1846.

The injustice arising from the absence of international copyright fell with greater force upon an American author than upon a foreign author, for his books were not only unprotected abroad, but the low prices obligatory on all foreign books republished in this country, resulted in disastrous discrimination against him. A novel, say by Dickens or Thackeray, would retail here at from ten cents to a dollar, whereas the price of a romance by Hawthorne or Irving would be at least a dollar and a half. This state of affairs did not tend to encourage literary production in the United States, and was one of the main reasons for the strenuous efforts made by American authors and publishers to procure international copyright. 15

And yet there are at least two sides to every question, and it must be admitted that the free reprinting of the works of English literature was a boon to the American craving cultural enlightenment, and the dissemination of the English authors's works in this country led to a great increase in their reputations and was indirectly of financial benefit to them.

The most reputable of our American publishers, instead of resort-

Joseph Henry Harper, The House of Harper. p. 115.

ing to the pirating so prevalent at this time, made arrangements with the English publisher or with the author directly to buy the advance sheets of a new work even before it was published in England. In this way the American publisher was able to place a moderately acceptable piece of bookmaking on the market long before his competitor could possibly get hold of a copy to print from. Thus, even without legal obligation, some American publishers paid a small sum to the English author for the use of his work. It must be admitted that many of the most popular English writers received fair treatment and considerable financial reward from their authorized American publishers.

In 1837 Carey and Co. [of Philadelphia] issued the \*Pickwick Papers" in parts and, addressing "Mr. Saml. Dickens (perhaps confounding his author with Mr. Weller), offered a draft for "L25 at 4 mos. which we beg you will accept not as a compensation, but as a memento of the fact that unsolicitated a bookseller has sent an author, if not money, at least a fair representative of it. The amt. is small, and you will understand why it is not more when we state that we shall publish the whole 12 pts., done up in 3 vols. to the trade for about five shillings net. After paying the cost of making, this does not leave much for the Bookseller or Author." Dickens, just emerging from obscurity with the sudden popularity of "Pickwick" in England, recognizes the offer as a gracious gesture, but rather oddly declines it. "I should not feel, under the circumstances, quite at ease in drawing upon you for the amount you so liberally request me to consider you my debtors in, but I shall have very great pleasure in receiving from you an American copy of the work, which coupled with your very handsome letter, I shall consider sufficient acknowledgement of the American sale". Within five years Dickens had come to take a very different attitude, realizing how vast were the sales of his work in America, and how impossible any real share of the profits for the author. 16

Henry Walcott Boynton, Annals of American Bookselling, 1638-1850.

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One of the main objectives of Charles Dickens's visit to America in 1842 was for the purpose of arousing interest in an international copyright agreement with England. The main social event of Dickens's stay in Boston was the public dinner tendered him by the Young Men of Boston at Papanti's Hall the evening of Bebruary 1, 1842. Tickets were expensive—\$15 each—and practically all literary, social, artistic and political Boston attended. Among the literary men of interest to us were Oliver Wendell Holmes, George Stillman Hillard, James Russell Lowell, George Bancroft, Richard Henry Dana jr., and James T. Fields. In response to President Josiah Quincy's greeting, Charles Dickens, after speaking briefly of his writings, made the following reference to international copyright:

But before I sit down, there is one topic on which I am desirous to lay particular stress. It has, or should have, a strong interest for us all, since to its literature every country must look for one great means of refining and improving its people, and one great source of national pride and honor. You have in America great writers -- great writers -- who will live in all time, and are as familiar to our lips as household words. Deriving (which they all do in a greater or less degree, in their several walks) their inspiration from the stupendous country that gave them birth, they diffuse a better knowledge of it, all over the civilized world. I take leave to say, in the presence of some of those gentlemen, that I hope the time is not far distant when they, in America, will receive of right some substantial profit and return in England from their labors; and when we, in England, shall receive some substantial profit and return in America from ours. Pray do not misunderstand me. Securing to myself from day to day the means of an honorable subsistence, I would rather have the affectionate regard of my fellowmen, than I would have heaps and mines of gold. But the two things do not seem to me incompatible. They cannot be, for nothing good is incompatible with justice. There must be an international arrangement in this respect; England has done her part, and I am confident that the time is not far distant when America will do hers. It becomes the character of a great country; firstly, because it is justice; secondly, because without it you can never have, and keep, a literature of your own.

America and England; and may they never have any division but the Atlantic between them. 17

Dickens found the general public far from enthusiastic or even interested in an international copyright agreement, and before he had been in this country three weeks all expectation of the adoption of such a measure had passed.

An attempt was made at this time by some American publishers, led by George P. Putnam, to take some action on the question of international copyright. In 1840, soon after Mr. Putnam's arrival in London to establish a branch for the New York firm of Wiley and Putnam, he prepared what is now believed to be the first printed agreement in behalf of such a law which had appeared in this country. In 1843 he obtained the signatures of nearly one hundred publishers, booksellers and printers, including those of T.H.Carter and Company, W.D.Ticknor and Company, Crocker and Brewster, Otis Broaders and Company of Boston, John Owen of Cambridge, John Allen, and D.Appleton of New York, to a memorial which was presented to Congress December 16th of that year. The final paragraph of this memorial reads as follows:

Your memorialists, therefore, respectfully request your honorable body to take into consideration the present law of copyright in the United States, and to enact such law as may secure to the authors of foreign nations the right to dispose of their works to American publishers to be printed in this country, providing that such right shall extend to the authors of those countries only whose Governments have granted, or may grant, a reciprocal privilege to our authors, and with such other pro-

Thomas Gill and William English, Report of the Dinner Given to Charles Dickens in Boston, February 1, 1842. p. 14-15.

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visions as may seem to your wisdom to be desirable and just. 18

The measure was not clearly understood, even by many of the book publishers, so that practically nothing concrete was accomplished at this time.

In addition to a beginning of interest and action toward an international copyright agreement, the cut-throat competition among many of our better known American publishing houses for these English best sellers forced many publishers by 1840 to specialize in fields where competition was not so general and returns were more stable. Many firms withdrew altogether from the publication of belles-lettres to that of school-books, religious or medical books and/or books of technical or scientific content.

In conclusion, it may be truthfully stated that the period from 1830 to 1850 saw a complete revolution both in American literature and in the American booktrade. During this period we changed from a colonial, dependent nation to an almost wholly independent, self-sufficient nation, the forerunner of America of 1940.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Memorial Presented to Congress by the Booksellers, Publishers, and Printers", Executive Documents of the House of Representatives, 1844, Number 10. p. 3.





## CHAPTER II

## HISTORY OF THE SITE AND BUILDING

The plot of land bounded by Court, Washington, School and Common Streets upon which the Old Corner Book Store was established in 1829 has an ancient lineage. The first records obtainable show that it was bought by Isaac Johnson, the defeated rival of Governor Winthrop in the Boston mayoralty contest of 1629, who prophesied that this site would become the center of the future city. More than two centuries later it was known as the literary center of America! In 1624 it was used by William and Anne Hutchinson as a garden plot across the street from their residence on the corner of Washington and School Streets. There were several changes in ownership and divisions of land between 1639 when the estate was sold by the Hutchinsons and 1707 when it was purchased by Thomas Creese, an apothecary. Then came the great fire of 1711. During the night of October 2-3 the fire burned all the houses on both sides of Cornhill (now Washington Street) from School Street to Dock Square, the First Church and the Town House, in addition to portions of King Street and Pudding Lane. Nearly one hundred houses were destroyed.

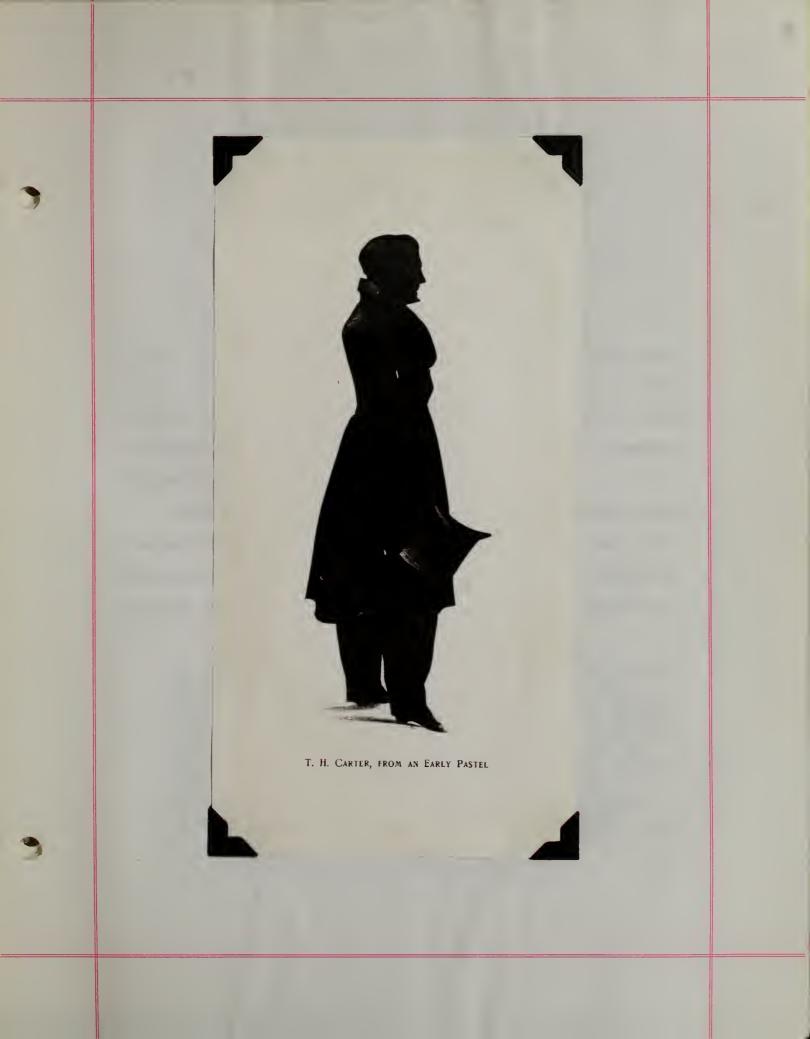
The following year Thomas Creese erected the building which has endured to the present day. The new building was a two story brick

structure with a gambrel-roof which had a double pitch toward Cornhill and backwards with two attic windows on the east side. According to studies made at the time the building was reconstructed in 1937, the main entrance must have been on the Washington Street side of the building in the northern bay of the house, and the doorway was reached by three or four steps. Here Thomas Creese probably had his shop. From this corner building projected the dwelling portion of the house which one might enter through a gateway on the School Street side. Such then was the structure known as the Thomas Creese house.

During the next century the house passed from the hands of one merchant to another until, in 1817, it was bought by Dr. Samuel Clarke, the father of James Freeman Clarke. In 1824 the name Washington Street replaced that of Cornhill and the building was variously numbered until by 1828 when Timothy Harrington Carter leased the building it had obtained the number 135.

Gambrel? gambrel? Let me beg
You'll look at a horse's hind legFirst great angle above the hoofThat's the gambrel - hence gambrel-roof.

Oliver Wendell Holmes. Parson Turell's Legacy.





## CHAPTER III

## CARTER AND HENDEE. 1829-1832.

Late in the year 1828 Timothy Harrington Carter leased the building at 135 Washington Street and organized the bookselling and publishing firm of Carter and Hendee.

Timothy Harrington Carter was born in Lancaster, Massachusetts

December 23, 1798; in 1815 he came to Boston and soon found employment

as a clerk in the bookstore of Cummings and Hilliard, then in business

at Number 1 Cornhill at the corner of Spring Lane and Washington Street.

In accordance with the usual arrangement of that period, his compensation was forty dollars a year and board.

Shortly after coming of age, he was accepted as a partner in the firm and, with his brother Charles, started the first typefoundery in Boston under the name of Timothy H. Carter and Company. In an autobiographical sketch, Mr. Carter refers to this period of his life as follows:

Mr. Cummings, a superior teacher, kept a young ladies' school, and Mr. Hilliard lived in Cambridge, having the care of a book-store and a printing-office belonging to the same establishment; in consequence of this, the whole management of the Boston business very early devolved mainly on me. The Boston business growing rapidly, I advertised for a clerk, and engaged Charles C. Little; subsequently I brought in Mr. Wilkins, and then Mr. Gray, as nominal partners, each in charge of special departments. My management of the business was very successful. When I went into the firm, the business was struggling for existence; when I left it, it was yielding some

twenty-five thousand dollars a year profit.1

In 1827 Mr. Carter left the bookstore and sold his type and stereotype foundery in order that he might spend a year in study at home and abroad. But a short period of study in Paris convinced him that it was too late to make up the deficiencies of his early education; his mind was too active in planning and executing to spend the time in elementary studies. He returned to the United States, where for a short period in 1828-29 he was associated as a partner with Benjamin Perkins, bookseller, at 63 Market Street; but, tiring of the limited routine of retail bookselling, he began to look around for a new venture.

At this time, in 1828, there were at least nine bookstores in the City of Boston and all but two of these were in business on Washington Street. According to Dorothea Lawrence Mann, ". . . this small section between School Street and Cornhill, on Washington Street, was . . . so thickly besprinkled with bookstores that practically everyone who was not a bookseller or publisher was a bookbinder or printer". Timothy Carter's first plan had been to set up a publication trust for the manufacture and sale of books too costly or too extensive for a single firm to undertake, but the plan aroused jealousy and fear among his competitors, who exerted trade influence in the legislature and secured the in-

Timothy Harrington Carter, A Brief Autobiographical Sketch.
p. 3. See Appendix.

Dorothea Lawrence Mann, A Century of Book Selling. . . . p.7.

sertion of a clause in the charter forbidding the publication of any work of less than five volumes. This clause effectively prohibited such a plan at that time.

Therefore, Mr. Carter was forced back into the regular wholesale and retail book trade. He leased the building at the corner of Washington and School Streets for a term of six and one-half years at the rate of \$2000. per year. A longer lease was refused because the owners determined to rebuild at the end of that time. They reckoned, however, without business depressions, and today the building is still standing:

Mr. Carter did secure a verbal agreement from George Brimmer, the owner, that when the building was torn down he would allow him to take away whatever he had put upon the estate. With this security and at the expense of some seven thousand dollars, he had the first floor lowered to the street level and large show windows installed on either side of the Washington Street entrance. The five windows on the School Street side were replaced by two large central windows which were flanked by doors. Mr. Carter also built a new brick extension where the garden had stood for a block along School Street as far as number eleven. In the rear of this extension and concealed by it, a large wooden building was erected for the seven presses of his printing establishment. At first these presses were run by a treadmill and a team of Canadian horses, which were later replaced by steam.

The partners used the front room of the Washington Street building for the retail bookstore and rented the upper floors for other enterprises. Mr. Isaac R. Butts moved his printing office from Wilson's Lane to the second floor of this building and there for many years compiled his numerous legal and commercial works; later Peter Low, a skill-ful but irascible and not always punctual bookbinder, occupied the third floor. Samuel G. Goodrich, better known to us as "Peter Parley", rented the second floor of the School Street building, where he and several assistants engaged in writing, editing and publishing. Here too Timothy Carter maintained his counting room. At the end of the long row of shops on the street floor of the School Street building was Mrs. Abner Haven's popular coffee shop. By 1832 rentals on the property amounted to well over \$4,000. a year.

When the undertaking was fully underway, Timothy Carter sold one-third of the business to his younger brother, Richard B. Carter, who was not then of age, and one-third to Charles J. Hendee, a clerk.<sup>3</sup>
Richard Bridge Carter was born at Lancaster, Massachusetts in 1808, and after receiving a common school education in his native town, in 1821 followed his elder brother to Boston and to the bookstore of Cummings and Hilliard. He remained with that firm, spending more than one year of this time in Virginia, until 1829 when he became the senior partner in the rival publishing and bookselling firm of Carter and Hendee.

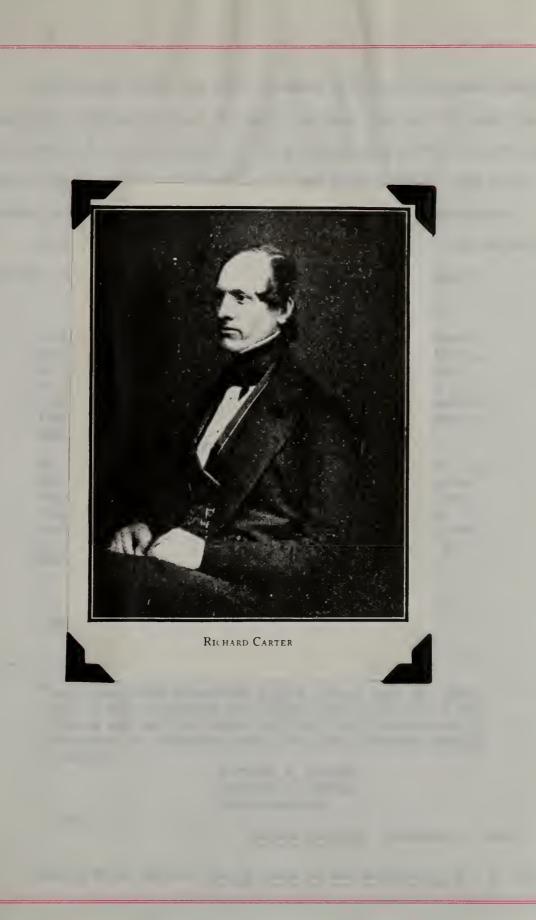
RICHARD B. CARTER. CHARLES J. HENDEE.

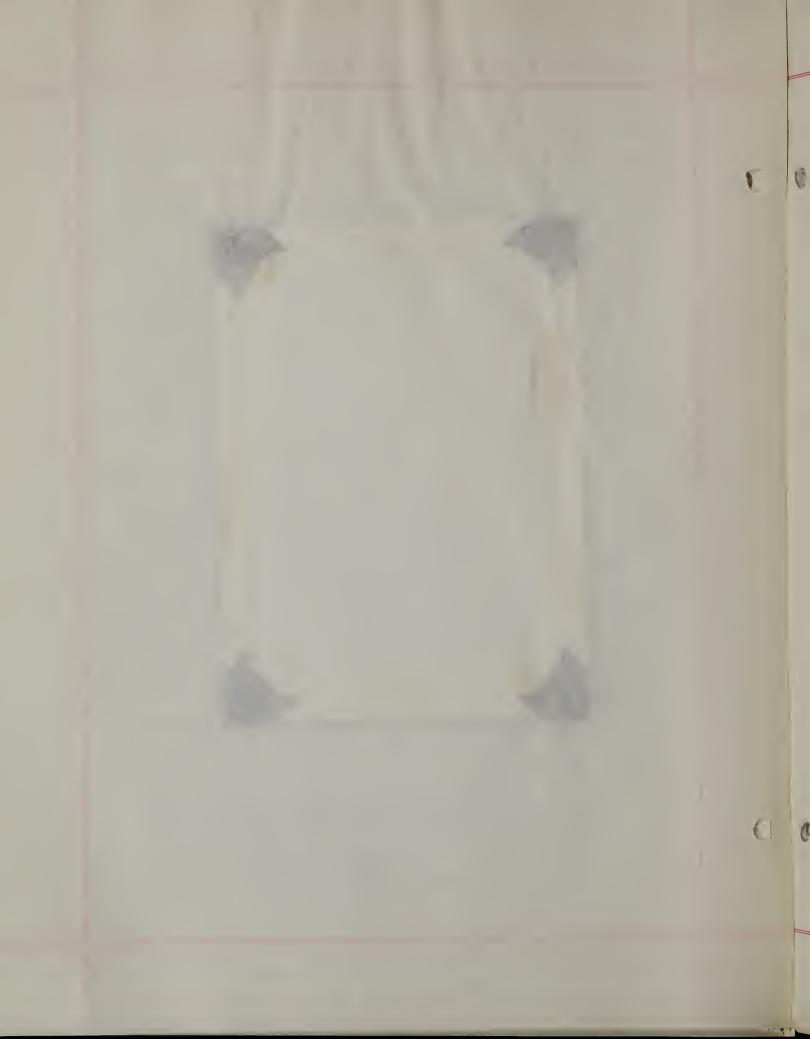
Corner of Washington and School Streets.

ap. 1.

Boston Courier. April 1, 1829.

The subscribers respectfully give notice that they have formed a connection in business under the firm of CARTER & HENDEE, for the purpose of publishing and vending books.





In December 1830, the young partners were joined by Edwin Babcock, the former brokerage partner of Francis W. Dana, and the firm name became Carter, Hendee and Babcock. From the profits of the business they paid off their notes to Timothy Carter, who had assumed all the risks, capital and expense at the time of the inception of the enterprise.

In March, 1831 Mr. Richard Sullivan wrote the following letter to fourteen year old James T. Fields of Portsmouth, New Hampshire:

Brookline, March 4, 1831.

I have procured you a place, James, in Carter & Hendee's Bookstore. I consider this the best situation in Boston in this line of business. Mr. Carter says that a boy, who is good, active and industrious and desirous of giving satisfaction to his employers, may be sure of getting forward, and doing well in this business when he comes of age.

If you like the trade and are pleased with the place, you can come as soon as your mother pleases. The gentlemen with whom you are to live are excellent young men, and very much respected in Boston. They do a great deal of business, and you must do your best to please them, and if you succeed in this, you will be amply rewarded in their friendship. You will go, at first, on trial.

Very truly, your friend,
Rich. Sullivan.
Master James Fields.5

RICHARD B. CARTER. CHARLES J. HENDEE. EDWIN BABCOCK.

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Boston Courier. December 2, 1830.

The subscribers respectfully give notice that Mr. Edwin Babcock has associated with them in the business of Publishing and Selling Books, and that their business will hereafter be conducted under the firm of CARTER, HENDEE & BABCOCK.

<sup>5</sup> Edward Waldo Emerson, Early Years of the Saturday Club. p. 378.

Thus was James T. Fields, son of a Portsmouth sea captain, embarked upon his long literary career.

Boston merchants at that time were in the habit of receiving some of their younger employees in their own homes, and James, upon arriving in Boston at the end of his school term, went to live with the junior partner, Charles J. Hendee. His first duties in the store were the dusting and arrangement of the bookstock, but within a short time he was promoted to the position of clerk. James proved an apt pupil and observer and quickly learned all the details of the business, wholesale and retail. With an especial quickness, soon observed by his employers, he acquired a knack of anticipating what book was wanted by a customer before the wish was expressed and likewise of predicting what books would be popular. This proved a most valuable asset. Of his early years in the bookstore and of Mr. Hendee, Mr. Fields wrote years later:

Mr. Hendee was an indulgent master and pleased to make the boys in his shop happy. According to the fashion of those times he had a box at the theatre and always invited one or more of his clerks to go every night. In this way I saw the elder Booth, Fanny Kemble as Juliet, her father, and, in short, all the good actors who came to America at that time. 6

Toward the latter part of 1831 Edwin Babcock withdrew and the firm name again became Carter and Hendee. The ever increasing retail business was greatly augmented in July of the following year by the purchase of the bookstock and publishing interest of Richardson, Lord and Holbrook,

<sup>6</sup> Dorothea Lawrence Mann, op. cit., p. 9.

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next door neighbors and rivals at 133 Washington Street. A few days later Carter and Hendee sold their retail store and miscellaneous publishing interests to John Allen and William D. Ticknor. The firm now became Carter, Hendee and Company and engaged in the wholesale and publishing business upstairs at 131 Washington Street until 1836, when the closing of the Second Bank of the United States and the subsequent withdrawal of the chief currency of the country from circulation brought about the failure of Carter, Hendee and Company.

MELVIN LORD.
JOHN C. HOLBROOK.

Boston July 14, 1832.

Boston Courier. July 16, 1832.

8CARTER & HENDEE give notice that they have purchased the well-known bookselling establishment of Messrs. Richardson, Lord & Holbrook, & that they will continue the publication of their books, in connection with those published by themselves, under the firm of CARTER, HENDEE & CO., at the stand lately occupied by R., L. & H., 131 Washington and School Streets, upstairs. Having disposed of the retail department of their establishment to Messrs. Allen & Ticknor, they respectfully solicit a continuance of the patronage of the former customers of both establishments.

Boston July 14.

Boston Courier. July 16, 1832.

The Copartnership heretofore existing between the subscribers, under the firm of RICHARDSON, LORD & HOLBROOK, was dissolved by mutual consent on the 4th instant. John C. Holbrook is authorized to settle the concerns of the late firm. Having transferred their establishment to Messrs. CARER & HENDEE, they would express a hope that the favor so long shown them, may be continued to their successors.

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In common with other publisher-booksellers of the first half of the nineteenth century, Carter and Hendee made their profits in retail sales and not in publishing. The following advertisement gives a fairly good idea of the extent and variety of retail trade engaged in by this Boston firm:

CARTER & HENDEE,
Publishers, Booksellers, and Stationers,
Corner of Washington and School Streets,
Keep constantly on hand
A large collection of
ENGLISH, FRENCH, SPANISH, AND ITALIAN
BOOKS

A complete assortment of Medical Books, and a supply of the best STATIONARY.

They have also for sale, Gardner's Twelve Inch GLOBES, and a supply of the most approved SCHOOL BOOKS.

All of which they will sell, at wholesale and retail, on the most liberal terms.9

But the fact that the retail store was financially successful must not be credited to the sale of books alone. The stock ranged from books and stationery to drugs and yard goods:

During the nearly four years of publishing at the Old Corner Book

Store, Carter and Hendee issued approximately one hundred and sixty volumes

under their single imprint. Like other publishers of the period the firm

often acted as an agent for firms in other cities or even in Boston, and

as a return courtesy had their firm name included in the imprint of titles

<sup>9</sup>Boston Annual Advertiser, 1829.

really published by other publishers. During the last half of 1830 and the first part of 1831 the line "Baltimore: Charles Carter" sometimes appeared in the imprint of school books published by Carter and Hendee. Charles Carter, it will be remembered, was the younger brother of Timothy Harrington Carter and Richard Bridge Carter, with whom the eldest brother had established the type and stereotype foundery in Boston in 1823, and who at this time was an agent of the Baltimore Typefoundery in Maryland.

In April 1829 we find record of two publications bearing the imprint of Carter and Hendee. At that time the sole number of "The School Magazine", proposed by the proprietors of the Journal of Education and planned as a monthly adjunct to "The American Journal of Education", made its appearance. This was a twenty-four page, duodecimo brochure dealing

Legends of New England.

Hartford. Hanner & Phelps.

Sold by Packard & Butler, Hartford; Carter, Hendee & Babcock,
Boston; G. & C. & H. Carvill, and E. Bliss, New-York; A. E.

Carey, and A. Hart, Philadelphia; and by the Booksellers
generally. 1831.

This book was copyrighted by Hanner & Phelps. Obviously Carter, Hendee & Babcock had nothing to do with the publication of the book itself, but merely served as a distributing outlet for the sale of the volume. That this courtesy was returned is exemplified in this miscellany:

Bowen, Abel.

The Young Lady's Book: A Manual of Elegant Recreations, Exercises and Pursuits.

Boston. Published by A. Bowen and Carter & Hendee. Carey & Lea, Philadelphia. [1830].

One example of this practice is to be found in John Greenleaf Whittier's first book:

with the subjects of elementary instruction and consisting for the most part of book reviews. The other publication copyrighted in April 1829 was a novel, "Ourika", published anonymously according to the then current usage and translated from the Franch of Claire de Durfort, duchesse de Duras. The copyright notice for the book is of historical interest to us and is therefore quoted in full as an example of the copyright regulations of this period.

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, to wit:
District Clerk's Office.

Be it remembered, that on the twenty-third day of April, A.D. 1829, in the fifty-third year of the Independence of the United States of America, CARTER & HENDEE, of the said district, have deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as Proprietors, in the words following, to wit:

"Ourika; a Tale, from the French.

This is to be alone, this, this is solitude:
Byron.

From the second Paris Edition."

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned"; and also an Act entitled "An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled 'An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned'; and extending the benefits thereof to the acts of designing, engraving and etching historical and other prints."

JNO. W. DAVIS, Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.

Contrary to the prevailing practice of the period, Carter and Hendee thus early set the precedent for the later encouragement of native American writers so widely advocated by their successors, Ticknor and THE RESIDENCE OF THE PARTY OF T THE RESERVE OF THE RE

Fields; and, in comparison with their competitors, published relatively few works by the English and writers of other continental countries. Like the other Boston publishers -- Monroe & Francis; Wells & Lilly; Hilliard, Gray and Company; Crocker and Brewster -- nearly one-half of the works published by Carter and Hendee were either in the field of education or juveniles. There had been few text books, particularly graded series of texts, before 1825, and it was only now with the wide spread interest in the so-called "infant schools" that the readers, primers and other juvenile books made their appearance. Carter and Hendee published their full share of these. One of the most prolific of the juvenile-text book authors was Samuel Griswold Goodrich. Several of his history, geography and Peter Parley books were on Carter and Hendee's list of publications. Goodrich started a new trend in children's books in which, to use his own words, "the general idea . . . was to make nursery books reasonable and truthful, and thus to feed the young mind upon things wholesome and pure . . . in short, [the idea] that the elements of nursery books should consist of beauty instead of deformity, goodness instead of wickedness, decency instead of vulgarity". 11 For about four years from 1828 to 1832, Goodrich wrote steadily for fourteen hours a day, and, since he was unable to read on account of the weakness of his eyes, employed others to block out the work for him. The result was read to him, rewritten by "Peter Parley" and dictated to his wife. In this way Goodrich turned out five or six volumes

<sup>11</sup> Goodrich, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 172.

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a year. Carter and Hendee also published some of the text books of Samuel Worcester, the Reverend Hosea Hildreth, Josiah Holbrook (the father of the lyceum movement), Francis J. Grund, and "The Little Philosopher" by Jacob Abbott.

Hendee's list. We find represented there the sermons and discourses of most of the literary Unitarian clergymen of the time--William Ellery

Channing, Joseph S. Buckminster, and Francis Greenwood. Political speeches such as the "Speeches of the Honorable Robert T. Hayne and the Honorable

Daniel Webster, Delivered in the Senate of the United States, January 21 and 26, 1830 . . " were also included. A number of medical works, notably the first American edition of James Paxton's "An Introduction to the Study of the Human Frame", were published at this time, a significant foreshadowing of William D. Ticknor's later attempt to specialize along this line.

The American public did not read for pleasure in the 1830's as we of today, and what little they did read was for instruction. It was the beginning of the lyceum movement, lecturers held forth almost nightly in Boston and the few social and theatrical amusements languished for want of patronage. Therefore it is only natural that we should find few titles in the field of belles-lettres being published by Carter and Hendee. Most of these were poems, and in this group Henry Pickering, Isaac McLellan, and the anthologist, George B. Cheever, held top honors. In 1832 an anonymous poem entitled "Moll Pitcher" was published. Although John Greenleaf

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Whittier excluded this poem from his collected works, in a letter dated November 13, 1886 the poet acknowledges the authorship of this poem. 12

It was printed in Newburyport and published in Boston and is an octave volume of twenty-cight pages. In the preface the poet writes: "Moll Pitcher (there's music in the name) is the offspring of a few weeks' such leisure as is afforded by indisposition, and is given to the world in all its original negligence, the thoughts fresh as when first conceived". That Whittier endeavored to suppress this work is made evident by the fact that this edition is now one of the rarest of American first editions. Portions of the poem are included in several of the bard's later works. There were only a half a dozen novels published by Carter and Hendee and, with the possible exception of "The Young Emigrants" by Mrs. Sedgwick, it is safe to state that none of these are remembered today.

The firm was not left behind in the race for the profits to be gained during the short popularity of the annuals and gift books. The first American annual, "The Atlantic Souvenir", had been issued by Carey and Hart in Philadelphia in 1825, and in 1830 Carter and Hendee published Samuel Goodrich's "The Token", Francis Greenwood's "Youth's Keepsake", and "The Scrap Table". The following year they issued only the "Youth's Keepsake". The original plan of making an annual anthology of the best con-

<sup>12&</sup>quot;The pamphlet described in thy note I am ashamed to own is mine. I hoped it had died out of print and am rather sorry that old Moll has materialized herself."

Luther Livingston, "Some Early American First Editions", The Bookman, VI:3. September, 1898. p. 42.

temporary prose and verse came from Europe, but the Americans soon adapted it to their own needs and the annual soon came to represent the best of American literature and art. Since these volumes attained enormous sales, publishers and authors profited alike. Payment to contributors was good, averaging from one to five dollars a page for prose or verse. Nearly every American writer of reputation contributed and in the three annuals mentioned above published by Carter and Hendee, we find the prose and verse of N.P. Willis, Samual G. Goodrich, Mrs. Sigourney, Mrs. Child, Francis Greenwood, John Pierpont, and Oliver Wendell Holmes. In 1827-28 Longfellow had contributed his first poems to the "Atlantic Souvenir", and later in 1835 Hawthorne and Whittier were numbered among the contributors to "Youth's Keepsake". The two little poems, "Crossing the Ford" and "The Fairy World", by Oliver Wendell Holmes which appeared in the 1831 "Youth's Keepsake" were among the juvenilia which he in after years forbade republication. Holmes had begun to make verses long before he graduated from Harvard in 1829 and when asked what were the earliest works that were printed, he used to say: "I can't be quite certain on this point, but of one thing I am quite certain, that, so far as I know, no vestige of talent is to be found in any one of them."13 This is a fair evaluation of these two poems.

Periodicals were not omitted from Carter and Hendee's concern.

Three of the four periodicals of which we now find record were definitely

<sup>13</sup> Tbid, p. 141.

educational. The earliest of these, "The School Magazine", has already received mention here. In 1829, with Number 37, Carter and Hendee replaced Wait, Greene and Company and Samuel Goodrich as publishers of the monthly "American Journal of Education", and in 1831 changed the name to "American Annals of Education". In September 1831 Putnam and Hunt turned over the publication of "The Juvenile Miscellany", a children's bimonthly, which consisted mainly of short stories, essays and poems and was edited by Mrs. Lydia M. Child, to Carter and Hendee. Volume I of "The Naturalist", containing treatises on natural history, chemistry, domestic and rural economy, manufactures and arts, was edited by D.J. Browne and published jointly by Peirce and Parker and Carter and Hendee from December 1830 until it was continued by Allen and Ticknor with Volume II in 1832.

In conclusion we can do no better than repeat the words of the compiler of a history of the Old Corner Book Store.

Carter and Hendee's imprint, although not familiar to the present generation, may be found on many excellent books, which were highly valued in their day, and some of them still linger on the upper shelves of our family libraries. 14

A History of the Old Corner Book Store, p. 22-23.

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## CHAPTER IV

## ALLEN AND TICKNOR. 1832-1834.

Late in 1830 or early in 1831 John Allen bought the Washington
Library from Adonis Howard, who had opened this bookstore the previous
year on School Street. Like most of his contemporaries in the bookselling business, Mr. Allen soon decided to branch out and publish as
well as sell; and for this purpose, in 1831, he formed a partnership
with Daniel Goddard under the firm name Allen and Goddard. The firm did
not publish many books, but among the few were Nathaniel Hobart's "Life
of Emanuel Swedenborg" and a weekly magazine, "The Juvenile Rambler".
Early in 1832 Mr. Goddard withdrew and the senior partner continued the
business alone for several months.

John Allen may have heard of the proposed sale of the retail store of Carter and Hendee from Charles J. Hendee, his fellow lodger at 7

Franklin Street; but, in any event, in the spring of 1832, he approached William D. Ticknor with an offer of partnership in the store.

William D. Ticknor was born in Lebanon, New Hampshire August 6, 1810. When he was seventeen, he sold the sheep he had raised on his father's farm, and, with the small profits of that transaction in hand, came to Boston to assist in the brokerage of his uncle, Benjamin Ticknor. In 1829 Benjamin Ticknor died and William continued the business alone until September 1831 when he was appointed teller of the newly incorporated Commercial Bank of Boston. The Ticknors had always bookish tastes

and sympathies; in fact his cousin George was the first Smith Professor of Modern Languages and Literature at Harvard College from 1819 to 1835.

Therefore William D. Ticknor gladly accepted John Allen's offer of partnership under the firm name Allen and Ticknor, and in July of 1832, they moved into the store on the ground floor at 135 Washington Street. The new partners retained the fifteen-year old James T. Fields as a clerk in the store.

Toward the end of 1834 John Allen decided to devote himself entirely to publishing, and, after selling his share of the partnership to Mr. Ticknor, 2 John Allen started his own publishing business upstairs over the retail store under the name John Allen and Company. 3 A few years later

JOHN ALLEN.
W. D. TICKNOR.

july 16

Boston Courier. July 18, 1832.

<sup>2</sup>The copartnership in the Bookselling and Publishing business heretofore existing between the subscribers is, by mutual consent, this day, dissolved.

JOHN ALLEN.
WILLIAM D. TICKNOR.

Boston, Nov. 1, 1834.

Boston Courier. November 1, 1834.

Boston Courier. November 17, 1834.

The subscribers give notice that they have formed a co-partner-ship in business under the firm of Allen & Ticknor, as Booksellers & Stationers, and have taken the store occupied by Messrs. Carter, Hendee & Co., corner of Washington and School streets.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>John Allen gives notice to his friends and the public that he has taken rooms over the Bookstore of W.D. Ticknor, corner of Washington and School streets, where he will carry on the business of Book Publishing, under the firm of JOHN ALLEN & CO:

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when the financial crisis reached a climax, Mr. Allen gave up the unequal struggle and moved to New York, where for many more years he continued his own publishing interests.

Allen and Ticknor immediately engaged in the publishing as well as in the selling of books at retail. Business conditions had naturally changed but little from those under Carter and Hendee, and the retail store continued to be the profitable side of the business. Allen and Ticknor were apparently more cautious than their predecessors and of the nearly seventy-five titles published under their single imprint more than one-third were reprints—some of them pirated—of foreign publications. According to Samuel G. Goodrich:

In judging of publishers, one thing should be considered, and that is that two-thirds of the original works issued by them, are unprofitable. An eminent London publisher once told me that he calculated that out of ten publications, four involved a positive, and often a heavy, loss; three barely paid the cost of paper, print, and advertising; and three paid a profit.<sup>4</sup>

It appears quite normal then that young men starting business in an era of financial stress and with limited financial backing should endeavor to publish the money-making reprints rather than speculate with American works of unknown merit. Allen and Ticknor also continued to act as agents for the sale of books published by Carter, Hendee and Company; Carey and Hart and Key and Biddle of Philadelphia and other firms of less importance.

John Allen brought a few live publications from his old firm, and

Goodrich, op. cit., Volume 2, p. 277.

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Allen and Ticknor gained a few periodical and book contracts from Carter and Hendee. With these the firm made its start. In July we find the partners continuing several periodical publications of their predecessors as well as starting a new periodical of their own. Among these were the two juvenile magazines, "The Juvenile Miscellany", a bimonthly edited by Mrs. Child and containing over one hundred pages of stories, essays and poems purportedly of interest to children; and "The Juvenile Rambler; or, Family and School Journal", a weekly four page folio initiated by John Allen in January 1832 and continuing until July 1833 when the publishers inserted the following notice:

The subscribers having found it inconsistent with their business to attend to a weekly paper, have thought it necessary to give up the care of the Juvenile Rambler. It will be issued hereafter by Brown and Peirce, Booksellers, to whom all communications and payments should hereafter be addressed.

ALLEN & TICKNOR.

Boston, July 1, 1833.5

The miscellary continued to be published by Allen and Ticknor until August 1834, when Mrs. Child terminated her editorship with the following moral note:

After conducting the Miscellany for eight years, I am now compelled to bid a reluctant and most affectionate farewell to my little readers. May God bless you, my young friends, and impress deeply upon your hearts the conviction that all true excellence and happiness consists in living for others, not for yourselves. In whatsoever situation Divine Providence may place you, be governed by this spirit, in all things, both great and small, and you will find a peace within your own

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>Juvenile Rambler, II:27. p. 108.

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hearts, while you prove a blessing to those around you. I intend hereafter to write other books for your amusement and instruction; and I part from you with less pain, because I hope that God will enable me to be a medium of use to you, in some other form than the Miscellany.

Your affectionate Friend, Mrs. Child.6

But in the very next issue under the new publishers, Mrs. Child writes:

I have already informed my readers that I relinquished the editorship of the Miscellany because the subscription list was not sufficiently large to defray its expenses. 7

William D. Ticknor probably initiated the new periodical, the monthly "Medical Magazine", which started in July 1832. That this sixty to seventy page professional journal met with a cordial reception is evidenced by the following comment from a contempory review:

It had long been a matter of marvel with us, that, with so much medical talent and science in our community, medical literature should have so few contributors amongst us . . . Thus far, certainly it [the Medical Magazine] will compare very fairly, indeed we think advantageously, with any American periodical devoted to similar objects. B

The journal was edited by three medical men, Abel Lawrence Peirson, Josiah B. Flint, and Elish Bartlett and contained original papers as well as selections from the foreign periodicals. Allen and Ticknor also published

<sup>6</sup> Juvenile Miscellany, 3rd Series, VI:3. p. 323.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, Monthly Series, I:1. p. 1.

American Monthly Review, III:2. p. 157.

the "Annals of Education and Instruction" mentioned in the section on Carter and Hendee, as well as two natural history publications taken over from Carter and Hendee, "The Naturalist", and "Scientific Tracts Designed for Instruction and Entertainment, and Adapted to Schools and Families", edited by Josiah Holbrook. It is because of the relative importance of periodical literature that we have dwelt upon the periodicals and serials published by Allen and Ticknor. It was these that people read. But Boston could not compete with Philadelphia as the acknowledged magazine center of America and our strivings were but short-lived and today totally forgotten.

One suspects that the money to be realized in the stampede for profits from the ever-expanding infant and other schools was in the field of text books. Allen and Ticknor's educational books, while numerous, were not distinctive and consisted mostly of primary and French readers. William A. Alcott's "Word to Teachers; or, Two Days in Primary School" is probably worthy of mention since the author was not only a pioneer in education but also a cousin of Amos Bronson Alcott. Juvenile books were still numerous, but a catalogue of titles would mean little to us of one hundred years later. We can trace the beginnings of William D. Ticknor's medical list at this period with the publication of such titles as "The Class Book of Anatomy . . ." by Dr. Jerome V. C. Smith, "The Dissector's Guide" by William Tuson, and "The Sources of Health and Disease in the Community . . by Henry Belinaye, "said by the editors to be the first elementary book on the subject of Hygiene, which the American press has offered."

<sup>9</sup>American Monthly Review, IV:2. p. 120.

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At the time Mrs. Child gave up the editorship of the "Juvenile Miscellany" she published an abolition tract entitled "An Appeal in Favor of that Class of Americans Called Africans". This was by far the most controversial book published by Allen and Ticknor and one, it is said, which cost Mrs. Child a great deal in social position and reputation. The question of slavery was just beginning to be a pertinent issue, and the battle raged between the Colonists and the Abolitionists. Several texts dealing with the subject of slavery had already been published, but Mrs. Child's was the first to take a broad anti-slavery ground. One reviewer wrote as follows:

Her "Appeal" is written with the affections of a woman and the strength of a man. But we deeply regret that a lady, who by her writings has done so much credit to herself and her sex, so much for the improvement of her country women, and of mankind, should venture with her bark on such a troubled sea, upon a voyage of discovery, with such pilots as she would seem to confide in. 10

Mrs. Child herself has this to say in regard to the book-

It is quite impossible for any one of the present generation to imagine the popular surprise and indignation which the book called forth, or how entirely its author cut herself off from the favor and sympathy of a large number of those who had previously delighted to do her honor. Social and literary circles, which had been proud of her presence, closed their doors against her. [The Boston Athenaeum, which had offered Mrs. Child the free use of the library, now voted to rescind the privilege lest it prove an inconvenient precedent:] The sale of her books, the subscriptions to her magazines, fell off to a ruinous extent. She knew all she was hazarding, and made the great sacrifice,

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, IV:2. p. 298.

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prepared for all the consequences which followed. In the preface to her book, she says: "I am fully aware of the unpopularity of the task I have undertaken; but though I expect ridicule and censure, I do not fear them. A few years hence, the opinion of the world will be a matter in which I have not even the most transient interest; but this book will be abroad on its mission of humanity long after the hand that wrote it is mingling with the dust. Should it be the means of advancing, even one single hour, the inevitable progress of truth and justice, I would not exchange the consciousness for all Rothschild's wealth or Sir Walter's fame."11

Novels took a marked increase, but if they were all in the same category as John Galt's "Stanley Buxton", which one reviewer called trash, 12 we cannot feel that the increase was a gain. Nearly all the novels published by Allen and Ticknor were reprints and since nine-tenths of them were issued under the exchange agreement with Carey and Hart or Key and Biddle of Philadelphia they cannot be deemed representative of Messrs. Allen and Ticknor's selection.

But, turning to poetry we find a more encouraging picture. At least two outstanding collections were published in 1833; one, a reprint and the other, a translation.

Mrs. Caroline Norton, granddaughter of Richard Brinsley Sheridan and inspirer of George Meredith's novel "Diana of the Crossways", began

<sup>11</sup> Lydia Maria Child, Letters. . . . p. ix.

<sup>12 &</sup>quot;We wonder that Mr. Galt, when he read over this novel, had not the goodsense to commit it to the fire rather than to the press. The reading world, we assure him, would have been no loser. He has but added to the flood of trash with which we are continually inundated."

American Monthly Review, IV:3. p. 243.

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her literary career in England in 1829 with the publication of "The Sorrows of Rosaline: a Tale and Other Poems" and "The Undying One and Other Poems". She immediately became a popular writer and editor of several English literary annuals; and by 1833 her fame had spread to America. In that year Allen and Ticknor pirated a collection of her poems from the English periodicals in which they had originally appeared and thus became one of the first of the long line of American publishers to reprint

Mrs. Norton's works in the United States. Caroline Norton has been termed "the Byron of poetesses" and many of his qualities are exemplified in this little one hundred and forty-eight page volume of "Poems". Two of the fifty-odd poems reprinted, "Joe Steel" and "The Faded Beauty", reveal the witty Irish humor which was her heritage.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's first literary effort, exclusive of text books, to be published as a separate volume was a translation, the "Coplas de Don Jorge Manrique". In the fall of 1831 during his third year of teaching at Bowdoin, Longfellow expanded a portion of his inaugural address of 1830 into a forty-page article entitled "Spanish Devotional and Moral Poetry" which was printed in the April, 1832 "North American Review". In August of the next year he wrote Charles Folsom that he was about to make a translation of the poems of Manrique and for him to borrow the Spanish original from the Harvard College Library for his use. The translation was completed by fall, and Longfellow sought in vain for a

<sup>13</sup> Dictionary of National Biography, XIV:651.

publisher. On October 17, 1832 he offered the "Coplas" to Hilliard, Gray and Company, successors to the publishers of his earlier text books, and gave the following instructions concerning publication:

The book will be small--about 150 or 200 pages 12mo. I offer it to you on the following terms:

- 1. That the book will be printed on as good paper, and in the same form and style as "Syllabus de la Grammaire Italienne" published by Gray and Bowen last spring.
- 2. That the work be done at the University Press, Cambridge.
- 3. That the proofs be sent to me for correction after they have been read by Mr. Folsom--and
- 4. That I shall have 25 copies of this work for distribution and half the profits arising from the sale, after the expenses of publication have been paid.

My wish is to make rather an elegant book than a large one and as the number of pages is rather small it will be a matter of some importance to have the paper thick. 14

Even this hard business sense did not convince Hilliard, Gray and Company, and finally Longfellow was forced to give "Coplas" to Joseph Buckingham for the "New England Magazine" of December, 1832. His payment was one year's subscription to the magazine. The following spring in the midst of his difficulties with the publication of "Outre-Mer", Longfellow again made the rounds of the publishers with "Coplas". Allen and Ticknor finally accepted the book, but with the remark-

We presume it [the book] would find a slow and perhaps limited sale; yet as it is not large the expense cannot be great. We therefore believe it will pay for itself

Luther Livingston, A Bibliography of the First Editions in Book Form of the Writings of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, p. 18-19.

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Less than two weeks later, the manuscript was mailed to the publisher with the following letter:

Portland. May 25, 1833.

Gentlemen,

I send you by to-day's mail the "Introductory Essay" of the Specimens of Spanish Poetry. I wish you to send me the proof-sheets, as I shall feel great anxiety to have everything perfectly correct; as the copy may not in all instances be perfectly intelligible, many errors might on that account slip into the work.

If it can be done, without interfering with previous engagements, I feel very desirous of having the book printed at the University press in Cambridge. Mr. Folsom is, as you well know, a thorough scholar; and as part of the work is to be in a foreign language, it would be a great advantage to have it appear under his supervision. Besides, having a Library at hand, he would be able to furnish all the Spanish part of the work therefrom, and would then save me the trouble of much copying.

One thing more; -- in addition to my share of any profits, which may arise from this work, I shall expect you will allow me a few copies -- say eight or ten -- for distribution among my friends, as it is absolutely necessary to send round a present of the kind to those, who have done me the same favor with their own publications.

If you get out a proof before the middle of next week--that is before the 1st of June please send it to me here. Otherwise send it to Brunswick.

In great haste, very respectfully yours.

H. W. Longfellow. 16

And on July 16, 1833 we find Longfellow writing the following letter to

<sup>15</sup> Lawrance Thompson, Young Longfellow. p. 187.

<sup>16</sup> Ms. letter interleaved in Miss Edith Ticknor's copy of Glimpses of Authors.

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his friend George W. Greene:

I have also another little book in the press. A translation of the "Coplas de Don Jorge Manrique a la Meurte du su Padre", the original to be printed with the translation--le texte en regarde, as we say in France. There is also an Introductory Essay, and a few additional Specimens of the Moral and Devotional Poetry of Spain. I know not when it will be finished for at the rate the printer creeps along I should think it would take him two years. It is printed in Boston.

Well--and what do you suppose the profits of this writing, and printing are to be?--A mere nothing. I do maintain, that the publishers of our country are as niggardly a set as ever snapped fingers at a poor devil author. If the whole edition of Outre-Mer No. 1 sells I shall make fifty dollars! Of the other book, I am to have half the profits if there are anying books from the publisher's store! Prodigiously encouraging. 17

By the spring of 1834 not enough copies had been sold to even defray the expense of publication.

Mr. Thomas Niles (of the firm of Roberts Brothers), the Boston publisher, says that when he first went into the book-trade, many years ago, he found in his stock one hundred and fifty copies of "Coplas de Manrique". He does not remember what became of these books, but thinks they went to the paper-mill, being then unsalable. They would now, probably, be worth their weight in gold. 18

The volume itself was a thin duodecimo of eighty-eight pages, printed by I. R. Butts of Boston. It consists of a condensation of the general "Introductory Essay on the Moral and Devotional Poetry of Spain", the forty-two stanza Spanish and English translation of Manrique's monody

<sup>17</sup> Livingston, op. cit., p. 19.

<sup>18</sup> W. Sloane Kennedy, Henry W. Longfellow. p. 30.

on the death of his father, and a few miscellaneous translations of the sonnets of Lope de Vega, Aldana and Medrano. The translation was acclaimed by such a qualified critic as George Ticknor, who in December 1833, wrote Longfellow in part:

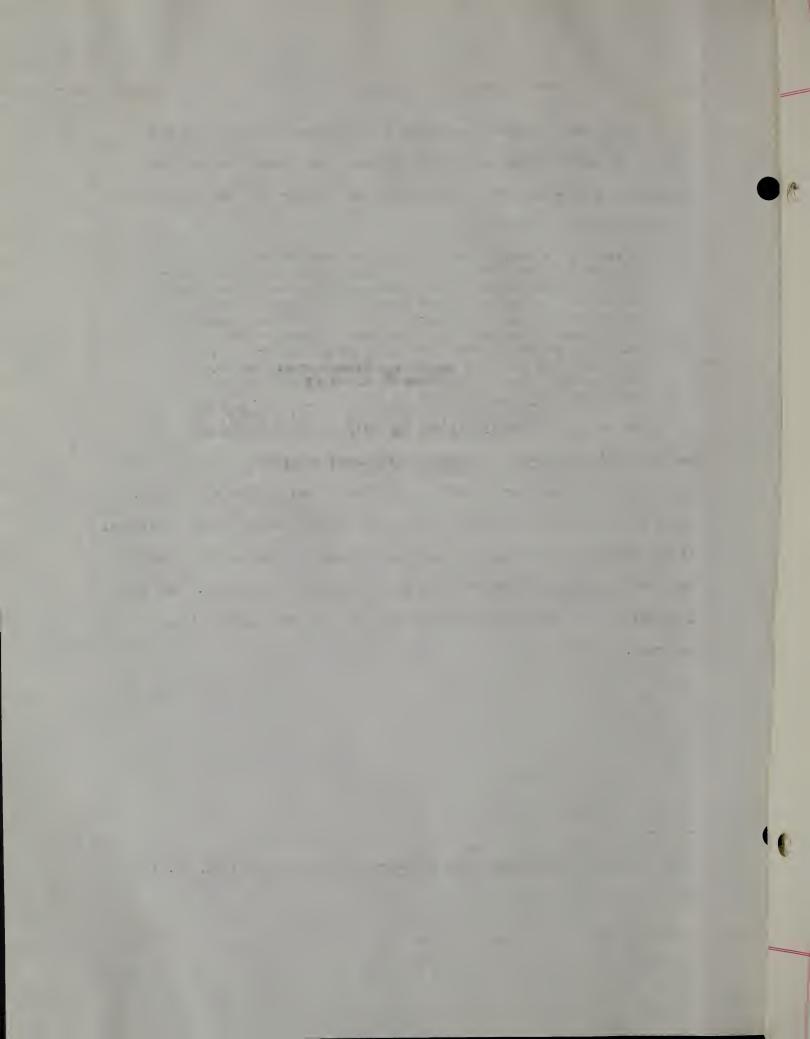
A few days since, I received through your publishers a copy of your translations from the Spanish. They are more faithful and valuable than either Bowring's, Lockhart's, or Lord Holland's; to say nothing of those of Rodd and the early versifiers, which do not deserve to be in any way compared with them. I cannot help adding that I hope you will be induced to proceed further both in prose and poetry. . . . In your versions from the Spanish, you open a pure and lovely vein of rich ore, little known to the world, but which runs very deep into the mysteries of life and passion. 19

By way of conclusion, it may be stated that in two special fields—medicine and poetry—the publications of Allen and Ticknor laid the foundations for the later glory of William D. Ticknor and Ticknor and Fields.

It is all too true that without the author, of what value is the publisher:

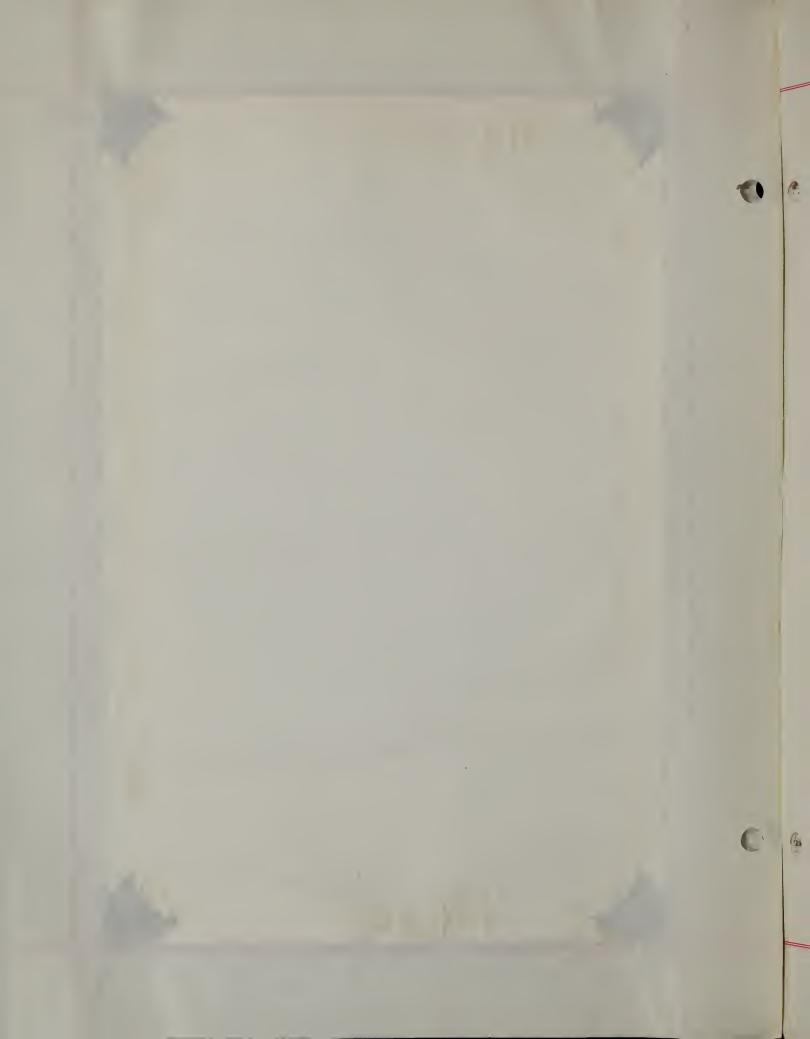
It was through no intrinsic limitations of these two early firms, humble beginners though they were, that we do not remember them today. New England had not yet come of age, her writers had not yet reached their maturity.

Samuel Longfellow, Life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, p. 197.





WILLIAM D. TICKNOR, AT THIRTY



## CHAPTER V

WILLIAM D. TICKNOR [AND COMPANY]. 1834-1849.

Thus, at the age of twenty-five William Davis Ticknor found himself the sole owner of a prosperous retail bookstore and publishing concern. Mr. Ticknor retained James T. Fields as clerk and employed several other young men as well. In 1843, when the increasing retail and publishing interests made imperative the formation of a partnership for the better conduct of the business, Mr. Fields's native ability and diligence received fitting recognition. On July 1st of that year, a partnership was formed under the name W.D. Ticknor and Company, with John Reed, Jr., and James T. Fields as junior partners. To Mr. Fields was delegated the responsibility for the literary and social contacts of the firm, while Mr. Ticknor devoted his attention to the financial and mechanical aspects of the business. John Reed, Jr. was little more than an investor in the company.

Boston Courier. November 17, 1834.

WM. D. TICKNOR.
JOHN REED, JR.
JAMES T. FIELDS.

July 1.

Boston Daily Advertiser. July 3, 1843.

The subscriber having purchased of Mr. John Allen his interest in the business heretofore conducted under the firm of Allen and Ticknor, will continue the same business, in all its branches, at the old stand, corner of Washington and School streets.

WILLIAM D. TICKNOR.

The undersigned have this day formed a copartnership under the firm of W.D. TICKNOR AND CO. for the purpose of carrying on the Publishing and Bookselling Business, in all its various branches at the well known stand of W.D. Ticknor, corner of Washington and School streets.

 John Reed, Jr., the son of Lieutenant-Governor John Reed of Massachusetts, was born in Yarmouth, Massachusetts in 1812. He came to Boston while still in his early twenties and for several years was employed as a clerk in various Boston bookstores before joining William D. Ticknor.

Little change had taken place in the interior of the store despite ever increasing business and consequent enlargement of stock. As one looked in the front entrance of the store, one could see the green curtained enclosure in the upper left-hand corner where Mr. Fields's desk was located. It was here the authors came to consult their friend and publisher about their latest work, to examine the new books and manuscripts which were strewn about the broad window seat, and to exchange the gossip of the day with other kindred spirits on the same mission. Mr. Fields's life-long friend, Edwin P. Whipple, has described this activity as follows:

One thing has always puzzled me in reference to Fields, and that was how he contrived to get time to attend to his own affairs. His place of business was always thronged with visitors. Some dropped in to have a chat with him, and they dropped in every day; others had letters of introduction, and were to be received with particular attention; others were merciless bores, who severely tried his patience and good nature. On some forenoons he could hardly have had a half an hour to himself. Then he was continually doing kindly acts which required the expenditure of a good deal of time. In spite of all these distractions, he was a singularly orderly and methodical business man. He made up for the hours he lost, or was robbed of, by accustoming himself to think swiftly and decide quickly on business matters. 3

In the opposite corner was the small, quiet counting-room over

<sup>3</sup>Edwin P. Whipple, "Recollections of James T. Fields", Atlantic Monthly, XLVIII:257-58.

which Mr. Ticknor presided. The counting-room was elevated a few steps above the level of the store, and nothing that transpired below escaped the senior partner's keen surveillance. Mr. Ticknor was rather more quiet and retiring than his partner and is therefore a less brilliant person about which to write, but he was there all the while maintaining his unobtrusive but firm rein for the best business interests of his firm.

Just inside the Washington Street entrance was a tall, gilt framed mirror, which had been on that wall since the days when James Freeman Clarke's father dispensed his medicine in that corner. At this time, in the late 1830's and early 1840's, the Old Corner was very much of a church bookstore and was said to have carried the only stock of Oxford Bibles in town.

Lectures, readings and many concerts depended upon the interest of the Old Corner for the sale of their tickets, and . . . many a charity, church or library looked hither for an agency to dispense its [lottery] tickets even to distant places. These were the palmy times of the old New England lecture system, when the oleverest, strongest and most attractive speakers were to be had almost for the asking. The average fee for a lecturer was rarely more than ten dollars, but a poet or first class reader got five, possibly ten dollars more. Mr. Ticknor's long connection with the Boston Lyceum and the Institute of Instruction made the store a headquarters for speakers and for committees, and many a winter course was arranged there. 4

An indication of some of the fun and good fellowship that was to be found in the store at this time is gained from this paragraph-

Mr. Ticknor used to be at his desk at 7:30 of a morning, while

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>Caroline Ticknor, Hawthorne and His Publisher, p. 26.

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the apprentices—some of whom, by the way always lived in his family—were there at 7:00 to dust the store. Even before 7:30, however, huabitues of the store would arrive. The eccentric poet, John G. Saxe, was one of those who often came at 7:00 A.M. A nephew of Mr. Ticknor's, who had been a boy in the store, related how Mr. Saxe would stretch himself at full length on a huge packing table at the back of the store, place a pile of books under his head, and proceed to recite droll poems for the boys who grouped about him with idle dusters. He would lie there composing and reciting until one of the boys, casting a stealthy glance out of the window, would see Mr. Ticknor approaching, when the poet would arise and the dusting would proceed. 5

The depression which culminated in the financial crisis of 1837-39 was weathered successfully by Mr. Ticknor, but it was certainly not a period of expansion and development in any business. By 1840 times were normal again and business started and continued on a steady, upward trend for the firm inhabiting the Old Corner.

An important social event occured in Boston in 1842 with the first visit of Charles Dickens to America. And this concerned James T. Fields for it marked the beginning of the long friendship between Dickens and his later authorized American publisher. It was during this visit that Dickens sat for the Francis Alexander portrait long in the possession of Mrs. Fields and now in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

For the first few years, partly because of the financial crisis which caused a scarcity of currency and the consequent excessively high interest rates, and partly because of his native Yankee caution and sagac-

Mann, op. cit., p. 13.

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An Old Bill with Signatures of Mr. Ticknor and Mr. Fields



ity, Mr. Ticknor concentrated for the most part on the retail sales rather than on the publishing side of the business. The following advertisement shows clearly that the emphasis was still on the retail sales at this time:

WILLIAM D. TICKNOR,
Publisher, Bookseller and Stationer,
and Importer of English and Foreign
Books and Periodicals.
Corner of Washington and School Streets.

Old Books rebound; Music rebound; Cards engraved and printed, at short notice. Subscriptions received for all the popular Periodicals of the Day.

Particular attention paid to the retail department.

As stated above, few titles were published by William D. Ticknor during the period immediately preceding and following the panic of 1837, and the selection of these naturally followed the pattern set by Carter and Hendee and Allen and Ticknor. It must also be remembered that in 1840 only one-half of the books published in the United States were written by American authors, and this fact is borne out in the publications as well in the retail sales of William D. Ticknor.

Of the more than two hundred titles published by William D. Ticknor during this fifteen year period, nearly one-fourth were in the realm of poetry. Speeches, medicine and education account for about one-eighth each, and the remaining three-eighths consisted largely of juveniles, theology, essays and natural history. The scanning of the list of publications of the firm in the year 1847 classifies the publications of that

Boston Daily Advertiser. 1837-1840.

----- year as follows:

Poetry - 14 Juvenile - 18
Medical- 15 French - 3
School - 8 Miscellaneous 22<sup>7</sup>

Law is probably the only classification not represented on this list and this is doubtless because of Little Brown's specialization in this field.

Both William D. Ticknor and James T. Fields were active in the social and club life of Boston, and many of these contacts led to valuable business contracts. For several years Mr. Ticknor served as treasurer of the Boston Lyceum while Mr. Fields filled the position of curator.

Mr. Ticknor served for years as treasurer of the American Institute of Instruction, an organization formed in Boston in August 1830 by the Common School teachers of eleven Eastern States "to promote the cause of popular education, by diffusing useful knowledge in regard to it." The Institute met annually in a three or four day session and also sponsored twelve to seventeen lectures a year on educational subjects. William D. Ticknor published the annual volumes of the proceedings of the Institute as well as many separate pamphlets containing the individual lectures. In similar fashion Mr. Ticknor became the publisher of the Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and the "Tenth Annual Report of the Trustees of the Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind".

Alexander V. Blake, The Bookseller's Complete Reference Trade List. p. 109-111.

<sup>8</sup>George B. Emerson, History and Design of the American Institute of Instruction. p. 4.

The Mercantile Library Association was an organization formed in 1820 by the merchants of Boston in order to provide educational opportunities in the form of classes, lectures and a library for their employees. Any young man employed by some respectable merchant willing to pay \$2. a year dues, plus one or more books or \$2. additional upon joining, was eligible for membership. James T. Fields early became very active in the association as the following extract from Edwin P. Whipple's recollections testify:

My acquaintance with Fields began at the Boston Mercantile Library Association when we were boys of eighteen or nineteen. It happened that both of us were inflamed by a passionate love of literature and by a cordial admiration of men of letters; . . . that both of us could write verse in various measures, and each then thought that the ten-syllabled couplet of Dryden and Pope was the perfection of poetic form; and that Fields had made his reputation a few days before our acquaintance began as the first anniversary poet of the association. Before a large audience he had read an original poem which commanded general applause.

It was my fortune, or misfortune, to follow Fields in his brilliantly successful anniversary poem. Of what I wrote I can hardly remember a line. The whole thing has gone out of my memory as thoroughly as it has gone out of the memory of the public. But what I do remember is this, that Fields was anxious that I should succeed. Being under the age when a free American can vote, I naturally thought my couplets were quite bright. Fields did all he could to confirm me in my amiable illusion. By suggesting new "points", he worked with me as though he desired that my performance should eclipse his own; and was the foremost among the lads who, after the agony of delivery was over, were pleased to congratulate me on what was called my "success". This disinterestedness made me at once a warm friend of Fields. 9

<sup>9</sup>Whipple, op. cit., p. 253.

The anniversary poem delivered by Mr. Fields, which shared the program with an address by Edward Everett on September 13, 1838, was printed on the request of the association by William D. Ticknor.as was many another speech and poem originally presented before that organization.

Mr. Ticknor was an active member of the Baptist Church, "receiving the rite, according to the custom of that time, in Charles River, and becoming a member of the Federal Street--subsequently the Rowe Street-society, then under the pastorate of the Reverend Howard Malcom. 10 Many theological sermons and addresses by Baptist, rather than by Unitarian, ministers appeared under the imprint of William D. Ticknor, and the most prolific among these were the aforementioned Howard Malcom, Daniel Sharp, William Hague, and Francis Wayland.

It was during this period that Mr. Ticknor developed an extensive and strong medical list. Henry Ingersoll Bowditch, Henry J. Bigelow, John Jackson, John C. Warren, and Oliver Wendell Holmes were all practicing and lecturing in Boston during this period, and it was to William D. Ticknor and Company that they turned for the publication of their lectures and writings. On several of the volumes published at this time Mr. Ticknor's imprint read:

Boston: William D. Ticknor & Co., Medical Booksellers, Corner of Washington and School Streets.

<sup>10</sup> Howard Malcom Ticknor, A Brief Biographical Sketch of William D. Ticknor, p. 9. See Appendix.

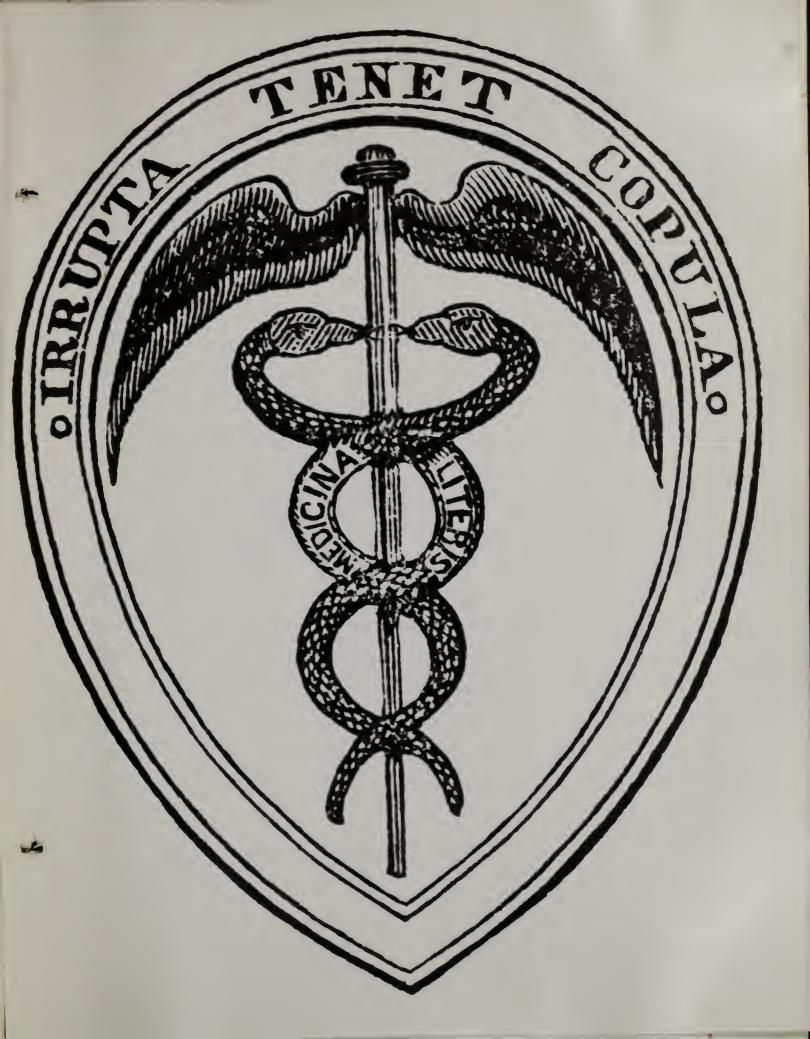
By 1845 he had started the use of the colophon reproduced on the next page. Of the medical books, many of which were Boylston Prize Dissertations or treatises published under the direction of the Massachusetts Medical Society, two lectures by the young Oliver Wendell Holmes are of interest to us. In 1842, six years after his graduation from Harvard Medical School, Holmes delivered two lectures before the Boston Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge which were published in a seventy-two page, duodecimo brochure entitled "Homeeopathy, and Its Kindred Delusions". M. A. DeWolfe Howe has summarized these lectures as follows:

. . . in medicine he was primarily a man of science, and homoeopathy was nothing better, in his eyes, than a "pseudo science". In the first of the two lectures on homoeopathy he dealt with the Royal cure of the King's Evil, the Weapon Ointment and Sympathetic Powder, the Tar-water mania of Bishop Berkeley, and the Metallic Tractors, or Perkinism -all in the light of kindred delusions. When he came, in his second lecture, to Hahnemann and his homoeopathic theory and treatment there was no mincing of words -- a few of which, summing up the conclusions for his study of the subject were these: "A mingled mass of perverse ingenuity, of tinsel erudition, of imbecile credulity, and of artful misrepresentation, too often mingled in practice, if we may trust the authority of its founder, with heartless and shameless impositioh." So he expressed himself in the vigor of young manhood. 11

And five years later Mr. Ticknor was also the publisher of Oliver Wendell Holmes's "An Introductory Lecture Delivered at the Massachusetts Medical College, November 3, 1847", the first of many a lecture delivered during his thirty-five year tenure as Parkman Professor of Anatomy and Physiology in the Harvard Medical School. Of this lecture a contemporary critic

<sup>11</sup> M. A. DeWolfe Howe, Holmes of the Breakfast Table. p. 58-59.

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has written:

The high expectations in regard to the new Professor of Anatomy in the Harvard University have not been dissapointed.
. . . It is the best discourse ever delivered in the Medical School of Harvard University. It abounds with bright thoughts and there is a kind of elasticity and vigor running through its pages that refresh the readers. 12

But it was the school books that, while forgotten today, were the basis of William D. Ticknor's financial success. Like other publishers, Mr. Ticknor issued several series of inexpensive, cheaply bound text books. Bumstead's Primary School Series, which sold at prices from seventeen cents to fifty cents and which, according to the advertisements, was used in the primary schools of Boston, Cambridge, Lowell, Salem, New Bedford, Portsmouth and Providence; and Palmer's series, "The Moral Instructor", priced at twelve and one-half cents to fifty cents each, were only two of the many similar series issued by this firm. Several additional "Peter Parley" books as well as the series of American history books by "Lambert Lilly, Schoolmaster" were the best sellers of their time.

Although William D. Ticknor depended upon these more substantial texts for his real profits, he did not neglect the foreign reprints. But, rather than relying entirely upon the established English best sellers as did many of his quick-profit seeking rivals, he sought to introduce the new and unknown foreign writers to the American audience.

In 1841 with the publication of "The Confessions of an English

Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, XIX:3.

Opium Eater" by Thomas De Quincey the beginning of the new era in publishing by William D. Ticknor may be said to have really begun. The first American edition of "The Confessions" was a sixteenmo, cloth bound volume of one hundred and ninety pages, printed by Mr. Ticknor's upstairs neighbor, Isaac R. Butts, and sold for seventy-five cents. The volume was issued anonymously with the following publisher's note:

The American publisher having received orders for this work he was unable to fulfil in this country or in England, has been induced to issue to issue the present edition. To those who became acquainted with it twenty years since in the pages of the London Magazine, as well as to those whose knowledge of it is only traditional, he trusts its reappearance will not be unwelcome. As for the authorship and authencity of these "Confessions", the former has been attributed without denial to De Quincey, and the latter is believed to be unquestionable. 13

The next year the firm published the beautifully printed two volume edition of the "Poems" of Alfred Lord Tennyson which served to introduce that poet to America. Arrangements were made for the American edition by a gentleman from Cambridge, Massachusetts who was travelling to London and who made the arrangements for the simultaneous publication of the poet's work in the United States by William D. Ticknor and in England by Edward Moxon. For an edition of one thousand copies Mr. Ticknor paid the author one hundred and fifty dollars, which, so far as we know, constituted the first real copyright payment made to an English author by an American publisher. Unfortunately, it took nearly three years to sell this edition,

Thomas De Quincey, Confessions of an English Opium Eater. Introduction.

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but, notwithstanding the lack of profits, in 1848 Mr. Ticknor stuck to his agreement and issued "The Princess". In connection with the copyright payment, an exchange of letters between William D. Ticknor's son and Tennyson forty-seven years later is of interest.

211 Tremont Street.

Boston. August 6, 1889.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson,

Dear Sir:

I venture to send my cordial congratulations to you upon your anniversary today; and I trust they will not seem inappropriate, and will be felt as sincere, coming from the son of your original American publisher, who first put in practice upon your poems, forty-seven years ago, the principle of international copyright, and whose name was for many years the sole American publisher of your works.

Today is his birthday also; had his lamented life been spared, he could have been 79 years old today. So that it is with a double recollection and association, that I send you heartfully my felicitations and my best hopes and wishes for many happy returns of the day.

Believe me, sincerely and Respectfully yours:

Benjamin H. Ticknor. 14

In reply Tennyson wrote:

To B. H. Tickmor, Esqu.

Sepber 4th 1889.

Dear Sir:

I thank you most sincerely for your kind words upon my eightieth birthday. It is an especial pleasure to me to receive them from the son of one who gave so honorable an example to his countrymen of justice in the highest sense.

<sup>14</sup> Ms. letter interleaved in Miss Edith Ticknor's copy of Glimpses of Authors.

## Truly and gratefully yours,

## Tennyson. 15

Several other English poets made their first appearance on the firm's list at this time. Foremost among these works were Barry Cornwall's "English Songs and Other Small Poems", John Bowring's "Matins and Vespers", Richard Monckton Milnes's "Poems of Many Years", Leigh Hunt's "Rimini and Other Poems" and three collections of the poems of William Motherwell.

There had been no English edition of Motherwell since 1832, and Miss Mitford relates in 1849 how a friend searched all over London for a copy to emerge in final triumph with the American edition! In 1844 when Hunt's "Rimini and Other Poems" was published Mr. Fields received the following letter from James Russell Lowell:

Elmwood, January 16, 1844. I owe you an apology for not having thanked you sooner for your kindness in sending me your Leigh Hunt. My own engagements during the past week must plead my excuse. I am truly glad that you have reprinted this volume, for I think that Hunt is less known here than he deserves to be. Two or three years ago I planned an edition of his poems myself, which, however, would have been more extensive in its selection than yours and would have contained his truly admirable preface. In case of a second edition, let me suggest to you the propriety of reprinting it. It is to be found in the last London edition. There are one or two more of his sonnets and some extracts from his poems on the nymphs which I think would add to the value of your book . . . . 16

It was during the last half of the period now under discussion that several of the early works of many of the writers who later were to

Caroline Ticknor, Glimpses of Authors. Following p. 322.

<sup>16</sup> Luther A. Brewer, Some Letters from my Leigh Hunt Portfolios. p. 93.

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achieve fame as part of "the flowering of New England" first appeared under the imprint of William D. Ticknor and Company. Notwithstanding the limited demand by the American public for English poetry of note to say nothing of the almost total lack of interest in our own native talent, Mr. Ticknor, ever in sympathy with the native, imaginative writers, did not hesitate to publish the works of Oliver Wendell Holmes, John Greenleaf Whittier, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Holmes's first essentially literary production entirely by his own hand, the "Poems", had been published in 1846 by Otis, Broaders and Company in Boston. At Mr. Ticknor's suggestion the collection was printed in London by Obadiah Rich and Sons in 1846 and in 1849 he himself published a new and enlarged edition. The preface, consisting of an extract from a letter of the author, is quoted here in full:

As these productions are to be given to the public again at your particular request, I must trust that you will make all proper explanations. I need hardly remind you that a part of them appeared in a volume published about a dozen years ago; that when this volume had been some time out of print, another edition was printed at your suggestion, in London, but I suppose sold principally in this country, and that the present edition is published to please you rather than to gratify myself. You will, therefore, take the entire responsibility of the second and third appearances, except so far as my consent involved me in the transactions.

Let me remark, also, that it was only to suit your wishes that several copies of verses, which sound very much like school exercises, were allowed to remain unexpunged. If any body takes the trouble to attack them, you may say that they belong to the department of "Early" or "Juvenile" Poems, and should be so ticketed. But stand up for the new verses, especially those added in this edition. Say that those two names, "Terpischore" and "Urania", may perhaps sound a little fantastic, but were merely intended as suggestive titles and fall back upon Herodotus. Say that many of the lesser poems were written for meetings

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more or less convivial, and must of course show something like the firework frames on the morning of July 5th. If any objection is made to that bacchanalian song, say that the author entirely recedes from several of the sentiments contained in it, especially about strong drink being a natural want. But ask, if a few classical reminiscenses at a banquet may not be quite as like to keep out something worse, as to stand in the way of something better.

If anything pleasant should be said about "the new edition", you may snip it out of the paper and save it for me. If contrary opinions are expressed, be so good as not to mark with brackets, carefully envelop, and send to me, as is the custom with many friends.

I have looked over the proof-sheets pretty accurately, and arranged them in something like order. The first one hundred and fifty-eight pages contain all that were printed in the edition of 1837; the next thirty-two pages were added in that of 1846; and the remaining ones are now added.

You can take this note of mine as the basis of some kind of a programme or advertisement; but that "Preface" and "Biography" made rather too heavy a portico for so slight a structure as the volume they introduced, and had better be abstracted. 17

Among the new poems added to the collection was "Urania: a Rhymed Lesson", which had already been published as a separate in 1846 by William D. Ticknor. This poem was originally delivered before the Mercantile Library Association, October 14, 1846 and went through two editions that same year. It was this poem that brought about a heated exchange of letters between Lowell and Holmes in which Holmes refutes the accusation that he had arrayed himself against the causes—war, slavery, temperance, claims of the poor, and reform in general—of which Lowell accuses him.

<sup>17</sup> Oliver Wendell Holmes, Poems. 1849. p. v-vi.

The first mature collection of Whittier's non-political verse appeared in July 1843 under the imprint of William D. Ticknor. Whittier had become friendly with James T. Fields in 1839 when the poet was collecting material for "The North Star", a small anthology of poems issued in Philadelphia in connection with an anti-slavery fair, to which Fields contributed. In January 1842 Whittier wrote to Fields regarding the possibility of publishing a volume of his poems. This letter reads as follows:

Amesbury, 24th 1st mo. 1842.

My dear friend Fields,

I suppose there is already abundance of poetry in the market, but a wish to preserve a few floating pieces of mine, & to favor some personal friends, induces me to think of publishing a small collection under the title of "Legends of the Merrimack &c." including the following pieces some of which thee might have seen, "The Exiles", "The Merrimack", "The Norsemen", "The Fountain", "Pentucket"--and other poems: "St. John", "The Funeral Tree of the Sokokis", "The Cypress Tree of Ceylon", and three or four other pieces as yet in MS making in all about 100 pages.--I want it printed in first rate style or not at all. I am wholly unacquainted with booksellers, having never published anything of any consequence, and would be greatly obliged to thee if thee would take the trouble to negotiate for me, & let me know as soon as convenient the result of thy inquiry. I wish it to be done well or not at all.

Believe me very truly thy friend,

John G. Whittier. 18

Fields's answer was favorable and over a year later we find another letter portions of which are quoted here.

In regard to the matter of publication, -- I know little or nothing about it. I shall leave it altogether to you, think-

Thomas Franklin Currier, A Bibliography of John Greenleaf Whittier. p. 48.

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ing that if the work meets with a ready sale, you will do me justice, as I should, I am free to confess, like to realize something from it. . . . I send you the first articles, which will constitute about one-third or quarter of the book, and give it its name, "Lays of My Home, and Other Poems". There are two other poems which belong to this part of the book, "The Funeral Tree of the Sokokis" and "St. John". I have no copies of them; but you will find them in the collection of friend Griswold, or in the "Knickerbocker" for 1841, and I wish you to procure them and publish them in the following order: 1. The Merrimac; 2. The Norsemen; 3. Ballads of Cassandra Southwick; 4. The Funeral Tree of the Sokokis; 5. St. John. . . I will send the residue of the copy as soon as I can catch it, for it is scattered, like the flying leaves of the Sibyl, in all directions. . . I have two MS poems which I think are quite as good, if not better, than any I have printed, which I shall send. I send with this "The Exiles", a kind of John Gilpin legend. I am in doubt about it. Read it and decide for thyself whether it is worth printing. If published it should go in after "St. John". 19

It is of interest to note that Mr. Fields advised against the inclusion of "The Exiles". This was the first book from which Whittier received any remuneration; his previous collections had been of limited circulation and in behalf of the anti-slavery campaign. In regard to the meagre profits from "Lays of My Home", the poet wrote his publisher in part under date of 30th 10th mo. 1850:

Like a lady's P.S. the important matter of my letter comes last. By the act. forwarded me I find some \$60.56 due me. I am charged in the acct. with \$8.20 in books which I had when the "Lays of Home" were published. As these were all the books I recd from that publication I thought it might be suffered to pass. But I yield to yr. judgement entirely. Would it be convenient to send me a check for the balance due?<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Samuel T. Pickard, Life and Letters of John Greenleaf Whittier. Vol. I. p. 293-94.

<sup>20</sup> Currier, op, cit., p. 48.

But in spite of the scant financial profit, Whittier appreciated the difficulties involved and years later wrote:

• • I have a grateful remembrance of the favor done me by the old firm of Ticknor and Fields, in publishing my poems at a time when as an abolitionist my name was "cast out as evil". 21

The majority of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's early works were published by his college classmate and life-long friend, John Owen of Cambridge. But with the failure of Owen, Longfellow returned to William D. Ticknor, who promptly brought out new editions of nearly all of his poems. These works included "Voices of the Night", "Hyperion", "Ballads and Other Poems", "The Spanish Student", "The Waif", and "The Belfry of Bruges and Other Poems". These were all issued after 1846 by William D. Ticknor and Company, and in a variety of bindings and editions either as separates or as part of a more or less complete edition of his poems. In 1846 Ticknor also brought out the second edition of "Outre-Mer: A Pilgrimage Beyond the Sea", a travel book modeled upon Irving's "Sketch Book", which, after publication in parts by a Boston firm, had been issued by Harper in 1835. In 1847 an anthology, "The Estray", a collection of American and English poems including Longfellow's own "Proem: Pegasus in Pound", appeared under William D. Ticknor's imprint. And finally in 1847 came that work for which the poet is perhaps best known, "Evangeline".

The nucleus of the story of "Evangeline" was first given to Long-

<sup>21</sup> Ticknor, op. cit., p. 76.

fellow by Nathaniel Hawthorne. The two great New England writers had been classmates at Bowdoin, but it was not until 1837 with the publication of "Twice-Told Tales" that the friendship was resumed. Hawthorne became a familiar dinner guest at Craigie House, and it was at one of these dinners in 1844 that H. L. Conolly, a close friend of Hawthorne's, told the story of "Evangeline" to Longfellow. The plot as given to Longfellow is as follows:

H.L.C- heard from a French Canadian a story of a young couple in Arcadie. On their marriage day all the men in the Province were summoned to assemble in the church to hear a proclamation. When assembled, they were all seized and shipped off to be distributed through New England, among them the new bridegroom. His bride set off in search of him, wandered about New England all her lifetime, and at last, when she was old, she found her bridegroom on his death-bed. The shock was so great that it killed her likewise. 22

Hawthorne had first planned to use the plot for a romance, but, not finding it quite suitable, suggested to Mr. Conolly at dinner that he retell the tale for Longfellow's benefit. The poet was greatly impressed and Hawthorne immediately waived all prior claim to the plot. In November 1845 we find the following entry in Longfellow's journal:

28th. Set about "Gabrielle", my idyl in hexameters, in earnest. I do not mean to let a day go by without adding something to it, if it be but a single line. F. and Sumner are both doubtful of the measure. To me it seems the only one for such a poem. 23

Francis H. Underwood, The Life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. p. 138.

<sup>23</sup> Longfellow, op. cit., II:25.

The first draft was finished February 27, 1847, carefully revised in proof, and published by William D. Ticknor and Company late the same year. The success of the poem was immediate. On November 11, 1847 Hawthorne wrote the following commendation from Salem:

Dear Longfellow, -- I have read Evangeline with more pleasure than it would be decorous to express. It cannot fail, I think to prove the most triumphant of all your successes. Everybody likes it. I wrote a notice of it for our democratic paper, which Conolly edits. 24

To this Longfellow replied on November 29th as follows:

I was delighted to receive your note, after so long a silence; and also delighted to find by it that Evangeline is not without favor in your eyes. I hope Mr. Concily does not think I spoilt the tale he told, in my way of narrating it. I received his paper containing your notice of the book, and thank you both for such friendly service. Still more do I thank you for resigning to me that legend of Arcady. This success I owe entirely to you, for being willing to forego the pleasure of writing a prose tale which many people would have taken for poetry, that I might write a poem which many people take for prose. 25

Before it Longfellow was known as an excellent minor poet; now he was known throughout the English speaking world as the author of one of the most popular poems, if not the most popular poem, from the pen of an American author.

On September 10, 1849 the firm name was changed to Ticknor, Reed and Fields, and the glorious era of the publication of all the New England

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p. 98.

<sup>25</sup> Tbid, p. 99.

authors by this one Boston firm was at hand. It may be truthfully stated that all the American and English literary men not on Mr. Ticknor's list by 1849 were there before many more years had passed. But Carter and Hendee, Allen and Ticknor, and finally William D. Ticknor [& Company] had broken the ground, had more than aedquately prepared the way for the age of literary eminence and prosperity such as American has never known before or since.



THE OLD CORNER ABOUT 1845



#### ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to trace briefly the history of the predecessors of the Boston publishers and booksellers, Ticknor and Fields, from 1829 through 1849 and to record the development of American literature as revealed in the publications of Carter and Hendee, Allen and Ticknor, and William D. Ticknor [and Company].

authors as Cooper, Irving and Bryant were living and writing within the confines of that city. New England could only boast of such minor literary lights as Webster, Dana, Channing, Ticknor, and Everett, and all of these names are better known in other fields of endeavor than pure literature. The American people were still too much occupied with the exigencies of daily life to spend much time in reading, and it was only natural that they should turn to the English reprints of such acknowledged masters as Byron, Wordsworth, Keats, Scott, and Jane Austen, all of whom were at their height during this period; and that they should also turn to the periodical miscellanies, of which the United States and particularly Philadelphia had a great number.

But, by 1833 the Knickerbocker School in New York had ceased to grow, and New England, by right of inheritance, again became our literary leader. The lyceum movement, started in Massachusetts in 1826, and the expansion and improvement of the school system in 1827 increased the demand for text and general imformational books from adults and children alike. Once the inquiring mind of our Puritan descendants was started on

the right track, such far-reaching movements as transcendentalism and abolition were taken up and spread by the newspapers, periodicals, lectures, and published in books throughout the country.

In 1830 only 40 per cent of the books published in the United States were by American authors; in 1840 approximately 55 per cent were of native origin; and in 1850 nearly 70 per cent were of American origin. In this thirty year period American changed from dependent reprint trade to thriving self-sufficient American booktrade. Books were distributed by the subscription agent, the peddler, the auction sale, and the retail store, which, in order to pay a profit, was generally operated in conjunction with some other enterprise. Early in this period booksellers functioned under an exchange arrangement, and when the system ceased to function in the late 1830's and 1840's, ruinous piracy prevailed. Agitation for adequate copyright legislation, advocated by Charles Dickens and several other authors and publishers, was underway as early as 1842.

The site on the corner of Washington and School Streets on which Timothy Harrington Carter established the Old Corner Book Store in 1829 has a long and interesting lineage. The present building was erected in 1712 following the great fire by Thomas Creese, an apothecary.

Timothy H. Carter had been associated with Cummings and Hilliard in their Boston store before he branched out for himself and established his younger brother, Richard, and Charles J. Hendee as partners of the new bookstore. Edwin Babcock became a member of the firm for a brief period in 1830-31, and in the latter year the youthful James T. Fields found his

first employment as a clerk with Carter and Hendee. Although the real profits were in the retail trade, Carter and Hendee published over one hundred and fifty volumes during their four years in the Old Corner Book.

Store. The majority of these were educational or juvenile texts, theological discourses, political speeches, annuals and gift books, and a few medical works. A number of periodicals, mostly educational, were also issued. A few poems--notably Whittier's anonymous "Moll Pitcher", and collections of the works of Henry Pickering and Isaac McLellan--pointed ahead to future preeminence in the field of belles-lettres. But a publisher can be no better than his authors, and New England had not yet begun to produce the works of major literary men.

In the summer of 1832 Carter and Hendee sold their retail store to two other young men, John Allen and William D. Ticknor, and moved next door, upstairs, where they conducted a publishing and wholesale trade.

John Allen had been the owner of a Boston bookstore and it was he who persuaded William Davis Ticknor, then employed in a bank, to form a partnership under the firm name Allen and Ticknor. Retail sales continued to be most profitable, but the interest of the partners lay in the publishing of books. Nearly 75 titles were published in their two and a half years of association and these naturally followed the pattern set by Carter and Hendee. There were many educational and juvenile texts, several educational periodicals and serials, and a number of novels issued under the exchange agreement. The beginning of William D. Ticknor's later specialization in medical books is also to be noted during these years. Their most sensational book was Lydia Maria Child's abolition tract, "An Appeal in

-1 - 4 - -- Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans". Two important books of poetry, Caroline Norton's "Poems" and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "Coplas de Don Jorge Manrique", a translation from the Spanish, were also published. With the publication of these last two titles, the reader can discern the dawn of the era which made the name Ticknor and Fields preeminent in the field of belles-lettres.

In November 1834 John Allen withdrew from the partnership and started his own publishing business upstairs. William D. Ticknor, aided by his clerk James T. Fields, continued the business alone until July 1843 when John Reed, Jr. invested money in the business and the firm name was changed to William D. Ticknor and Company. In November 1849 the firm name became Tickmor, Reed and Fields. The financial crisis and depression precluded very much original publishing and expansion in the business, but by 1840 when business conditions were again normal, William D. Ticknor entered upon a period of great publishing activity. More than 200 titles were published during the period 1834-49 and of these titles nearly one fourth were poetry. Medicine, education, juvenile, lectures and speeches, and theological works account for much of their output. Mr. Ticknor consciously endeavored to develope his medical list and his publications included the works of many a noted Boston doctor -- Henry Ingersoll Bowditch, Henry J. Bigelow, John Jackson, John C. Warren, and Oliver Wendell Holmes among them -- and were often issued under the imprint "William D. Ticknor and Company, Medical Booksellers" or with their own specially designed medical colophon. Baptist, rather than Unitarian theological tracts were published under Mr. Ticknor's imprint, and both he and Mr. Fields were

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active in several Boston organizations-the Boston Lyceum, the American Institute of Instruction, the Mercantile Library Association -- and thus were able to secure the publication of the lecturesand reports of these organizations. Series of educational text books -- notably Bumstead's and Palmer's---were profit-making titles for the firm. Mr. Ticknor, however, was not overly concerned with profit-making titles, but sought to introduce many an English poet and writer to the American people. Among these works were De Quincey's "Confessions of an English Opium Eater", Tennyson's "Poems", Barry Cornwall's "English Songs and Other Small Poems", John Bowring's "Matins and Vespers", Richard Monckton Milnes's "Poems of Many Years", and Leigh Hunt's "Rimini and Other Poems". But it was with our own native American poets that Mr. Ticknor was most concerned, and it was at this time that Holmes, Whittier and Longfellow were permanently added to the list of his firm. The second edition of Oliver Wendell Holmes's "Poems" was issued in 1849 and "Urania" appeared under his imprint in 1846; Whittier's "lays of My Home and Other Poems" was finally issued in 1843; and all of Longfellow's works were taken over from John Owen in 1846 and issued in a variety of editions and bindings by William D. Ticknor and Company. This firm also published the second edition of "Outre-Mer: A Pilgrimage Beyond the Sea" in 1846 and an anthology, "The Estray", in 1847 and finally "Evangeline".

Thus, by 1849 New England had the native American authors of great literary talent and also an understanding and inspiring publisher in William D. Ticknor and James T. Fields. In both cases it was a gradual and parallel evolution and one which achieved fruition simultaneously.

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## A Brief Autobiographical Sketch.

PREPARED ON REQUEST OF MY SONS, AND READ AT A FAMILY GATHERING ON MY 90TH BIRTHDAY, DEC. 23, 1888.

DEAR JOHN, — You ask me to make a brief sketch of my business life, and in a hasty way I will do so. But I will first say something of some articles of a business creed which I adopted very early in my career, and then give some account of my father and mother. My business creed was as follows:—

1. To be always guided by what was equitable and just in

itself, whether in accord with external law or not.

2. In cases of doubt in my own mind, to go against myself; thus establishing in me the reign of justice.

3. To say or do nothing injurious to the reputation of others, unless compelled to do so by the laws of use and duty.

4. Never to take offence at candid criticism, but rather to seek it as a means of knowing myself.

5. To devote my life to the greatest use I could perform to

Society.

In corroboration of this creed I will here make an extract from a letter to my brother Richard, written when he was a minor:—

"As to money, you can make enough anywhere if your health is good. The question is, How can you make yourself most useful to the community in which you live? If this is the place you really wish to find, Divine Providence will lead you to it; and that is the place, whether rich or poor, in which you will be most happy yourself and most useful to others."

My father, your grandfather, was born in Lancaster, Mass., the son of a farmer, and one, I think, of four sons. Before mar-



riage, when a young man, he went into the woods in New Hampshire, where land was to be had for little more than the expense of clearing, and cleared for himself a farm. Some thirty years after, I went with him to see it. It was then worth, with a small house upon it, about \$2,000. But when he came to be engaged to be married, my mother would not consent to leave the then really excellent circle at Lancaster and go so far into the woods; and he therefore never occupied his farm, but subsequently kept a store in Lancaster, and also had a factory in which was made potash and pearlash. He was an upright, friendly, generous man, candid and sensible; his judgment was often sought by his fellow-townsmen, and very early he went by the cognomen, "the Judge." I have heard him say laughingly that he believed he was the oldest judge on the bench. My father was one of the Selectmen of the town, and one of the Committee in the settlement of Mr. Thayer as colleague with Mr. Harrington. He was in the Revolutionary army, and was stationed at Cambridge at the time of the Battle of Bunker Hill. He died at the age of eighty-five.

My mother, your grandmother, was a grand-daughter of the Rev. Timothy Harrington. I have heard her spoken of, by those who knew her when young, as being a beautiful person; and certainly her character was beautiful. Her sensibilities were very acute, and she was deeply religious. She was discreet and cheerful in her household cares, and enjoyed humor when impossible to wound the feelings of any one. Her perceptions of propriety required no study of rules. I do not remember of ever having known of an expression of anger as coming from her. All who knew her intimately loved her. Mrs. Judge Prescott, becoming early acquainted with my mother when residing at Lancaster, kept in affectionate intercourse with her through life. It was "dear Emily" to the last. Her hair was a rich auburn, not a hair of which changed to the day of her death. A reply she made me when chiding her for grief has come into my mind a thousand times. It was simply, "Jesus wept." My mother was a woman of true refinement

In 1807, at the age of eight years, I left home to live with an aunt at Petersham, Mass.,—a widow lady, by the name of Bridge, who the next year was married to Dr. Fisher and removed to Beverly, I going home for six months. At the end of that time I went to Beverly to live at Dr. Fisher's, where I remained until I came to Boston in 1815, into the book-store of Cummings and Hilliard, corner of Spring Lane and Washington Street, then called No. I Cornhill. My compensation was forty dollars a year and board from that time until I was twenty-one,—a usual arrangement at that time. Soon after becoming



twenty-one I was taken as a partner into the business, - the firm then being Cummings, Hilliard, and Co.

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Mr. Cummings, a superior teacher, kept a young ladies' school, and Mr. Hilliard lived at Cambridge, having the care of a bookstore and a printing office belonging to the same establishment; in consequence of this, the whole management of the Boston business very early devolved mainly on me. The business growing rapidly, I advertised for a clerk, and engaged Charles C. Little; subsequently I brought in Mr. Wilkins, and then Mr. Gray, as nominal partners, each in charge of special departments. My management of the business was very successful. When I went into the firm, the business was struggling for existence; when I left it, it was yielding some twenty-five thousand dollars a year profit. It was a specially designed enterprise of my own to establish our house as the leading law-publishing

house of New England.

I will say here that while I remained at Beverly, - some five or six years in all, — I acquired considerable expertness in the use of tools, making many little things to sell, such as bobbin looms, knitting needles, etc.; so that the ladies of the neighborhood got to coming to me to get various things made. I also made tea-pot handles for a silversmith who made tea-pots; also wash-boards, with rollers instead of the fluted board, thus subjecting the clothes to much less wear. I also took wood to saw and split, on winter evenings, for next-door neighbors, — sawing and splitting and piling, in one instance, six cords at fifty cents a cord. In this way when I came to Boston I had fifty wellearned silver dollars. In Boston, during the early part of my apprenticeship, I worked late evenings, painting maps, making writing books, and folding and stitching pamphlets. I also made liquid blacking, and black and red ink. I did such extra work until the interests of the store demanded every minute of my time. On one of my business trips (to Baltimore), while an apprentice, I traded off and sold, at my own discretion, some twenty thousand dollars worth of books.

In 1827, having acquired a moderate fortune, I left the firm with which I was connected, desiring to enter upon some course of study, and thus make up for the deficiencies of my early education. Not knowing to what it might subsequently lead, I concluded to spend a year abroad and make there a trial of study. I began my studious course in Paris, but soon found it was too late to study; the time had passed when my mind could rest in elementary studies, - it was too active in planning and executing, — and I gave it up. Having returned to America, I set out to found another publishing house, thinking finally to retire from its active operations and be a silent partner. I took a lease for six years and six months of the estate on the corner of School



and Washington streets, and at the expense of some seven thousand dollars fitted it up for a book-store and printing office. My brother Richard, not then of age, was with me, and C. I. Hendree was my clerk. When all was in profitable operation, I sold to each of them one third of the business, becoming myself a silent partner, - making the firm name to be Carter, Hendree, and Co., establishing what is now called the "Old Corner Book-store."

All the capital, expenses, and risks of this enterprise had been mine, but I charged no bonus, and the young partners paid all their notes to me, as they became due, from the profits of the business; and in less than five years the business was yielding profits equal to thirty thousand dollars a year, with every reasonable prospect that it would before long yield a hundred thousand dollars a year, which I have no doubt it would have done but for the breaking up of the United States Bank. This event came upon the business community very unexpectedly, withdrawing from circulation the chief currency of the country, and causing wide-spread disaster.

Previous to this the business of the firm had become very large, \$290,000 being due them on the books, besides notes held in hand. In the failure which followed I was the greatest loser, having furnished nearly all the capital. Curious to relate, the failure occurred the year I was married. During that single year my fortunes were greatly varied. To begin with, I was worth more than one hundred thousand dollars, and had a handsome income; had purchased and furnished a house on Beacon Street (the one now occupied by Dr. Bigelow), was married, and established in housekeeping; and before the twelve months had gone I had sold all, broken up my new home, and was with my wife boarding at a friend's without charge.

I will now speak of some of the other branches of my business during this earlier period of my business life.

The first type-foundry established in Boston was mine; and in connection with it I also established the first stereotype foundry in New England. I placed my brother Charles at the head of this establishment, which was carried on under the firm name of T. H. and Charles Carter. The business outgrew a building I had erected for it in Harvard Place, and was removed to a larger building near the North Church on Salem Street. Here, having with Nathan Hale, Esq., - for whom I wish to express esteem when I write his name, - purchased the right to use the Treadwell Power Printing Presses, we added machine printing to the establishment, - the first of such printing done in the city, - first by horse-power, and then by steam. Besides this Mr. Hale had a printing office of his own, and together we jointly owned still a third, run by water-power on the



Mill Dam. Subsequently the establishment was removed to the corner of Devonshire Street and Spring Lane, where the third building was erected for it; and on the Salem Street land I built nine dwelling houses.

As the wholesale business of Carter, Hendree, and Co., grew very large, they sold the retail department to Allen and Ticknor, neither of whom however would then engage in the business unless I also continued in it; so I became a silent partner in the firm of Allen, Ticknor, and Co., and subsequently sold my share to them.

The estate at the corner of Washington and School streets was the property of rich owners, who had determined to rebuild there as soon as certain expected changes took place; so that the utmost time they would give a lease of it was for six and a half years. But under that lease of six and a half years I put the estate into so profitable a condition, erecting brick buildings in the yard, etc., that they have kept it as I left it half a century ago, putting no expenditures of their own upon it. When I took the lease they were getting but fourteen hundred dollars rent for the property; at the expiration of my lease it was yielding more than four thousand dollars income.

At the time of the failure of the firm I owned what was then called Phillips' Place, now covered by Houghton and Dutton's store. I purchased this estate with a view to building upon the upper part of it a chapel for the New Jerusalem Church, which I thought would prove just what their needs would require for a dozen years; and so it proved. The U. S. Supreme Court (Judge Story) wanted to hire it, and would have given a much higher price for it then I asked the New Church people; but it was not for a court of law or to make money that I built it, and I therefore declined a profitable offer before the court went to Temple Place. I will add here that at the time of organizing this New Jerusalem Church in Boston I, with another member, became responsible for any deficiency of income to meet its expenses, and for a considerable time I paid very largely for my seat in that church.

I also at that period owned five thousand feet of land, now occupied by the Boston Postoffice, on which I had erected a new building, which was subsequently sold to an insurance company, and by them sold for over one hundred thousand dollars more than I received for it.

In each of these estates there was a fortune if they could have been retained until the country had recovered from the panic brought about by the closing of the United States Bank; but both fell under foreclosures. I had also from twelve thousand to fourteen thousand dollars in real estate in Lancaster, all of which was lost.



In 1824, being then unmarried, I kept house on Beacon Street near Charles Street, with two sisters and a brother, pasturing my cow on Boston Common! Here I was burned out in the great Beacon Street fire, in mid-day, most of my furniture being carried upon the Common, and in the afternoon transferred from there to a house in Colonade Row on Tremont Street. On that eventful day I breakfasted a home on Beacon Street, and supped at

home in Colonade Row on Tremont Street.

In 1831, before the failure of Carter, Hendree, and Co., I obtained from the legislature an act of incorporation for a Book Manufacturing Company, - the design being to have all the booksellers unite in the publication of such large standard historical and other works as none of them were ready to undertake alone, and to attract literary men to become interested as holders of stock. But the scheme so aroused the fears of certain publishers as to lead to violent opposition on their part; and as they carried their opposition to the legislature, they succeeded in securing a clause in the charter forbidding the publication of any work of less than five volumes. This prevented the full success of my enterprise, which was designed to benefit the entire country, and Boston in particular. A company, however, was organized and the amount of fifty thousand dollars paid in; but the continued contraction of the currency caused by closing up the United States Bank, together with the limitation clause in the charter, led to an early abandonment of the enterprise, which otherwise had the prospect of great success in many ways.

About this time I began the publication of the "United States Gazette," edited the first year by Theophilus Parsons, Esq., in which many of the early productions of Bryant and Longfellow appeared. Subsequently, with Mr. Littell as editor, I began the "Living Age," which to this time has continued a successful

publication.

In 1834-35 I engaged in publishing books mostly for the young, — nearly forty different volumes being written for that purpose by Jacob Abbott, to whom many thousands of young and old are indebted. For these I must have paid him, as copyright, more than twenty thousand dollars.

In 1845 I took a fifteen years' lease of the estate I now own on Water Street, and within the term of the lease I made a purchase of it. Upon this estate, some twenty years later, I

erected new buildings.

In 1846 I purchased a tract of land at what was then called Hall's Crossing, in the town of Newton, and proceeded to make various improvements and to erect buildings upon it. In a few years I called it Newtonville.

During the last fifteen or twenty years of my life, being in



possession of an ample income for myself, I have devoted my time and means largely to helping my sons to settle in business, to which they can testify.

This, John, gives you some idea of the general run of my business life before your day. Of the last thirty years you yourself have been an observer, and therefore need no account of it from me. In running over these points of my life history, I myself am surprised that I should have been able to accomplish so much, carrying to fruition so many enterprises depending for their success on capital. I have attributed my success largely, under Providence, to the fact that the common good was my aim. I never sought property to multiply luxuries for myself, but as a power of usefulness.

The object of human life, John, is not to accumulate property, but to form character, and to learn to co-operate with Divine Providence. True riches are accumulated by efforts to benefit others, without seeking reward. The greatest happiness possible to man comes through doors that humility alone can open.

As I remarked in the beginning of this sketch, the rules of business that I have held up to myself have been good-will, equity, and justice. *Equity* is a great word; it is the equilibrium of every element in every case, — the end of all law.

My final destiny, John, will be determined not by the opinions of men, but by what I am; and so will it be with you. It is not in man to guide himself; and daily do I ask that my thoughts and my steps may be guided.

P. S. — When I read the closing words of Johnson's "Rasse-'—"No life is pleasing to God that is not useful to mankind," - they made a deep impression on me, and helped me in the formation of a settled resolution to devote my life to the greatest usefulness I could render to society; and when I became acquainted with the New Church Dispensation, it seemed to present to me an unlimited field of usefulness. My occupation was that of Publisher, and I had a Type and Stereotpye Foundry and a Printing Office of my own, as well as a rapidly growing income. Looking to the scholars of the church to watch over the translations, I formed the design of publishing all the theological writings of Swedenborg, as well as his three principal scientific works, in respectable but economical form and style adapted to the masses. I intended to distribute many copies of these writings myself, and so to dispose of the plates that after my death this work might be continued.

I began by buying up all the unsold copies of Swedenborg's Works already printed in America, and reducing the prices,—



namely, "The True Christian Religion" and "Conjugial Love," printed in Philadelphia; "Heaven and Hell," in Baltimore; "Divine Providence" and "Divine Love and Wisdom," in Boston,—at the same time negotiating for lower prices than hitherto on those imported from London. I printed "Heaven and Hell" in three forms,—one edition as low as thirty-seven cents retail; published "Noble's Appeal" and "Noble on Plenary Inspiration;" issued a prospectus of a Semi-Monthly Paper; began the first series of New Church Tracts, and republished nearly all the smaller works; and started a bookstore designed to be devoted to the publication and sale of Swedenborg's Writings and collateral literature, which was the origin of Mr. Clapp's establishment.

While I was preparing to begin the reprinting of the large works, a club of scholars of the New Church was formed, who engaged to furnish revised translations of "Conjugial Love" and the "True Christian Religion." This club consisted of Theophilus Parsons, Caleb and Sampson Reed, Warren Goddard, T. B. Hayward, and Gilman T. Worcester. After proceeding some time with the printing, it was found difficult to keep the press in copy unless each work should have some one man devoted wholly to it; and therefore Mr. Goddard took charge of "Conjugial Love," and Mr. Gilman Worcester of the "True Christian Religion,"—each devoting his entire time to the work, for which I paid them respectively five hundred and eight hundred dollars.

About a year after the publication of these books the United States Bank suddenly withdrew its circulation, in effect depriving me of more than a hundred thousand dollars and an annual income of more than ten thousand. My operations, however, had given fresh impulse to the whole work, and a club was formed in Boston which provided for the printing of the "Arcana," "The Apocalypse Revealed," and some smaller works.

When the New York Printing Society started, it was said by some that I opposed it, which was untrue. I only remonstrated against their taking up, first, the Works just stereotyped by me and Mr. Clapp, of which the market was full, for which there was therefore no occasion or excuse. It was not with me a question of property, but of principle.

I have expended over fifty thousand dollars in ways I deemed for the interest of the New Church, and not consciously a dollar

or a word adverse thereto.

T. H. CARTER.



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# Brief Biographical Sketch

OF

# WILLIAM DAVIS TICKNOR

BY

HOWARD MALCOM TICKNOR A.M.



CAMBRIDGE JOHN WILSON AND SON University Press 1895



### WILLIAM DAVIS TICKNOR

In the early years of the present century there was living in Lebanon, New Hampshire, William Ticknor, a prosperous farmer, whose wife, Betsey Ellis, brought him a large family of children. The eldest of these, the subject of this sketch, was born on August 6, 1810, and was duly named William Davis Ticknor, the middle name having been introduced to recall the patronymic of the boy's maternal grandmother.

The family, originating in England, first appeared on this side of the Atlantic in the person of William Ticknor, of Kent, who settled in Scituate, Massachusetts, in 1656, and became quite a personage in that town. His "warehouse" is mentioned in the town records in 1660. He held office as selectman, assessor, and surveyor, and was a sergeant of General Cudworth's guard during King Philip's War, in 1676.

His son William removed in 1710 to Lebanon, Connecticut, which was thereafter the headquarters of the race until 1774, when Elisha Ticknor, grandfather of our subject and of his eminent cousin, George Ticknor, the historian of Spanish literature, removed to Lebanon, New Hampshire. One branch of the stock still remained in Connecticut, however, and became somewhat noted for the skill in medicine attained by several individuals, especially Caleb, who was long a distinguished practitioner in Baltimore, and whose son Frank contributed to the cause



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of the South, during the War of the Rebellion, some of the best lyrics which it inspired. Elisha was a figure of some importance in his time, for he held a colonel's commission in the New Hampshire contingent in the expedition against Crown Point and in other campaigns of the Revolution.

In 1827, William D. Ticknor, prompted by the country boy's perennial desire to try his fortune in the city, set out for Boston, his material capital consisting in a little sum of profits from the raising of a few sheep which his father had encouraged him to keep upon the homestead farm. He was a stranger, but not without relatives, friends, and probable supporters, for two uncles were living in the city, — Elisha, a prosperous grocer, father of the cousin who was in time to be a Harvard professor and a famous literarian, and Benjamin, who was a well-to-do broker. In the office of the latter he at once found employment; and when his uncle died, a few years later, he conducted the business so well to its settlement that he was offered a position in the Columbian Bank, which he accepted and held for a year or two.

His financial ability being recognized, a better place was offered him in the bank; but the Ticknors, to whatever occupation they were bound in order to make a livelihood, had always bookish tastes and sympathies, and the young man availed himself of an opportunity to go into the book business with Mr. John Allen, who was already established in it. In 1832 the partnership was formed under the style of Allen & Ticknor. As such, however, the house was not long known. Messrs. Carter & Hendee, who were publishers as well as book-sellers, desired to give up their miscellaneous business and retire from their stand, which had been established a few years earlier in what has been known since as the "Old Corner" bookstore, at the northerly corner of Washington and School streets. Mr. Allen did not care to con-



tinue in trade long; and by 1833 Mr. Ticknor was the sole owner of that business, which developed later into the most interesting example of the book-publishing trade which this country has seen. Until 1845 the name of William D. Ticknor stood alone at the foot of his house's titlepages, as it was his judgment alone which chose the books which those titlepages introduced. It was during this epoch that Longfellow, Lowell, and Tennyson among the poets, and many eminent men among scientists and scholars, were presented to the American public by Mr. Ticknor.

In 1845, Mr. James T. Fields, who had been brought up, trained, and encouraged by Mr. Ticknor from an errand lad to a place behind the counter, — in his first years living, as the custom then was, in his employer's family, — was taken into partnership. Also, for a few years only, Mr. John Reed — son of ex-Lieutenant-Governor Reed, of Massachusetts, and best known in Boston for his long association with the direction of the Provident Institution for Savings — had an interest in the house. The imprint for the publications of the firm was originally William D. Ticknor & Company, but subsequently it stood Ticknor, Reed, & Fields, and Ticknor & Fields; but the legal constitution of the partnership was always in the first-cited form.

The rise, growth, mutations, and ultimate disappearance of the house, in the course of the many and great fluctuations which have affected the business of Boston, need not be even outlined here. They belong to the annals of trade, not to a biographical sketch of an individual.

Mr. Ticknor was admirably qualified for the business he chose, and deserved far more credit for the strength, sense, and reputation of his house than he received from the public in general. He was modest to a degree, and so long as all went well and honorably, he was quite willing that the praise should go to others who were only



doing, after all, that to which he had prompted them. As a young man, he wanted his imprint to be a guarantee of a good book; and when he acted on his own judgment, then or in after years, he rarely made a mistake. For many years he was known in various literary connections: he was a member of the Boston School Committee, an officer of the old Boston Lyceum, and of the American Institute of Instruction, when these were powers in the land, and a Trustee of the Perkins Institution for the Blind. It was his own judgment which made known De Quincey, Tennyson, Charles Reade, and other great English names on the catalogue of his house, to America, and it was his decision which transferred from the disintegrating establishment of Messrs. Phillips, Sampson, & Company the "Atlantic Monthly," although his partner Fields, who was abroad at the time, opposed the purchase urgently. Indeed, it may be truly asserted that the least successful ventures made by the house of Ticknor & Fields were those which he did not approve, and undertook at the instance of his partners or of professedly literary advisers.

As the affairs of the house extended and brought a greater and more various responsibility, Mr. Ticknor naturally was obliged to devote himself more closely to those financial interests which he alone was competent to manage, and which he conducted safely and with honor through epochs of great commercial depression and loss.

While during these later years it was more convenient and for some reasons better that the hospitalities for which the treasury of the firm made an annual allowance should be conducted by Mr. Fields, who had become the editor of the "Atlantic" and the responsible literary manager of the business, the authors whom the house represented, all understood and valued Mr. Ticknor, not only as a solid business man, a good adviser, and a trusty friend, but as a man of taste and discretion, of which he



might indeed have waived the demonstration, but which he still kept quick and keen when a doubtful point arose or an important question was to be settled. But whenever an important social event, like the receptions to Charles Mackay, Longfellow, Agassiz, and other eminent authors and connections of the house took place, Mr. Ticknor put aside his reserve, and appeared as the head of the firm and of the table.

Mr. Ticknor was not unacquainted with England and the Continent; and he is still remembered and mentioned by those who formed there the literary circles of 1840-50 for his intellectuality, his general information, and his social charm, as well as in business circles for the honesty, breadth, and liberality of his views and dealings. For it was to his initiative, undoubtedly, that the first unsolicited payments from American publishers for copyright to foreign authors and the first regular purchases of "advance sheets" were due; and his house always maintained in such matters its noble prominence.

Mr. Ticknor was in full activity and vitality when he left home in the spring of 1864 for a little Southern tour with his intimate friend, Mr. Nathaniel Hawthorne, who was in feeble health. Mr. Hawthorne had for many years relied upon that friendship, not only in the emergencies, but in the minor incidents, of life, and would undertake no enterprise without the counsel, no journey without the companionship, of Mr. Ticknor. Indeed, the sensitive romancer often made it a condition of an expedition that his name should appear on no hotel register, but that he should be mysteriously indicated as "a friend" when Mr. Ticknor's name had been written. They had only reached Philadelphia when a sudden and fierce attack of pneumonia seized Mr. Ticknor, and on April 10, he died in the Continental Hotel. Mr. Hawthorne had not only never seen any human creature die, but he had almost never seen one dead. The shock of this dissolution and



of the bereavement which came with it was so great that he could not recover from it, and a few weeks later his own death occurred.

So much for Mr. Ticknor's life as a business man. Something shall now be said of his personality and his private life. He was of middle height, very slight, elastic, athletic, and active in early life, but inclined in his last years to a sturdiness, which was not, however, sufficient to diminish his quickness and force of motion. He was a singularly handsome man, with thick, dark-brown, curling hair above a high full forehead, small features, a round, dimpled chin, and brilliant, blue eyes. Portraits of him have been printed in some magazines and trade histories; \* and persons who have not access to any of these can get an excellent idea of the Ticknor type of face from the portraits of his cousin George Ticknor, although the latter's expression was less genial and plastic.

He was of a high-strung, nervous temperament, inclined at times to be impatient toward those who appeared to be unnecessarily slow or intentionally sluggish; but he was just, kind, and generous, and ever ready to take upon himself the duty or the burden which weighed heavily on another. Capable himself of great endurance and swift execution, he required promptness and exactitude in all who were about him. On the other hand, his fairness, kindness, and considerateness won him the regard as well as the respect of all his employees and associates.

He was a loyal, earnest, and attached friend, and in his family he was affectionate, generous, indulgent, and reasonable. His home was always a happy one; and his hospitable spirit and fondness for young people made the elder visitor welcome, and assured his children that their friends would always find a place and a greeting when they came.

<sup>\*</sup> Particularly the "Massachusetts Magazine," vol. ii., p. 206; and the "Bay State Monthly," vol. iii., p. 266, each of which has a portrait on wood.



He talked well, — with nice choice of words and clear speech; he enjoyed mirth of any wholesome kind, and he was quick and appreciative in apprehension. His manners were polished and graceful; and he was so sure to be admired at once and greatly in any society that his head might easily have been turned had he not been at bottom of a stable and serious character.

For his religious nature was strong and steady. While yet a very young man, he connected himself with the Baptist denomination in Boston, receiving the rite, according to the custom of that time, in Charles River, and becoming a member of the Federal Street — subsequently the Rowe Street — Society, then under the pastorate of the Reverend Doctor Howard Malcom. He was a member there so long as he lived, and was always interested and energetic in all its work, having been its treasurer and the superintendent of its Sunday School for a score of years or more.

His domestic relations were altogether felicitous. He was married on December 25, 1832, to Miss Emeline Staniford Holt, daughter of Master Benjamin Holt, of the old Mayhew Writing School, in Boston, and Ruth Baldwin Holt, and granddaughter of the Reverend Dr. Thomas Baldwin. Their residence was always in Boston, and there were born to them seven children. Two of these — William Davis, Junior, and Richard Ellis—died in infancy; and one daughter, Alice, died in early womanhood. The survivors are Howard Malcom, Benjamin Holt, Emeline, and Thomas Baldwin. The boys were all graduated at Harvard, and all in turn entered their father's establishment. The two younger continue in the publishing business; but the eldest, after retiring from the firm of Ticknor & Fields and passing a number of years abroad, has since occupied himself with collegiate and academic instruction and general literary work.

Mr. Ticknor's sympathies and affections were always



for the best in life and work; and his private and public influence was always cast on behalf of uprightness, purity, and steadfastness in education, morality, business, the household, and the State. He was long mourned and long missed; and although he has now been gone thirty years from this world, he is still mentioned with tenderness and honor, not only by such of his contemporaries who survive, but by those who were his juniors by a generation or more. His funeral was attended by many persons of consequence; his death received much comment; and his body was interred in his own household lot at Mount Auburn.

He was elected a Resident Member of this Society, April 6, 1853, and a notice of his death, giving many genealogical details relative to the Ticknor family, was printed in the "New-England Historical and Genealogical Register," vol. xviii., pp. 381-3.



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