

# A YANKEE MOTHER IN ISRAEL

BY DOROTHY CANFIELD

Of course I never saw her. She died years before I was born. But she left behind her a portrait so full of her personality that no living figure is more human to me than my great-grandmother.

I do not at all refer to the portrait over the dining-room mantelpiece, showing her as a withered old woman in a frilled cap, which by the time I was old enough to take an interest in her was the only tangible sign of her existence left in her old home. No; that might have been any withered old woman in a frilled cap.

There is another portrait of my great-grandmother not done on canvas with oils. Here are some of the strokes which have painted it for me.

WHEN I was about eight years old, I went out one day to watch old Lemuel Hager, who came once a year to mow the grass in the orchard back of the house. As he clinked the whetstone over the ringing steel of his scythe, he looked down at me and remarked: "You favor the Hawley side of the family, don't you? There's a look around your mouth sort o' like Aunt Almera, your grandmother—no—my sakes, you must be her great-granddaughter! Wa'l—think of that! And it don't seem more'n yesterday I saw her come stepping out same's you did just now; not so much bigger'n you are this minute, for all she must have been sixty years old then. She always was the *littlest* woman. But for all that she marched up to me, great lummox of a boy, and she said, 'Is it true, what I hear folks say, Lemuel, that you somehow got out of school without having learned how to read?' And I says, 'Why, Mis Canfield, to tell the truth, I never did seem to git the hang of books, and I never could seem to git up no sort of interest in 'em.'

"And she says back, 'Well, no great boy of eighteen in the town I live in is a-goin' to grow up without he knows how to read the Declaration of Independence,' says she. And she made me stop work for an hour—she paid me just the same for it—took me into the house, and started teaching me. Great land of love! if the teacher at school had 'a' taught me like that, I'd 'a' been a minister! I felt as though she'd cracked a hole in my head and was just pouring the l'arning in through a funnel. And 'twasn't more'n ten minutes before she found out 'twas my eyes the trouble. I was terrible near-sighted. Well, that was before the days when everybody wore specs. There wa'n't no way to git specs for me; but you couldn't stump Aunt Almera. She just grabbed up a sort of magnifying-glass that she used, she said, for her sewing, now her eyes were kind o' failing her, and she give it

to me. 'I'll take bigger stitches,' says she, laughing; 'big stitches don't matter so much as reading for an American citizen.' Well, sir, she didn't forgit me; she kept at me to practice at home with my magnifying-glass, and it was years before I could git by the house without Aunt Almera come out on the porch and hollered to me, 'Lemuel, you come in for a minute and let me hear you read.' Sometimes it kind o' madded me, and sometimes it made me laugh, she was so old, and not much bigger'n my fist. But, by gol, I l'arned to read, and I have taken a sight of comfort out of it. I don't never set down in the evening and open up the Necronsett 'Journal' without I think of Aunt Almera Canfield."

ONE day I was sent over to Mrs. Pratt's to get some butter, and found it just out of the churn. So I sat down to wait till Mrs. Pratt should work it over, munching on a cookie out of her cookie jar and listening to her stream of talk—the chickens, the hail-storm of the other day, had my folks begun to make currant jelly yet? and so on—till she had finished and was shaping the butter into beautiful round pats. "This always puts me in mind of Aunt Almera," she said, interrupting an account of how the men had chased a woodchuck up a *tree*—who ever heard of such a thing? "Whenever I begin to make the pats, I remember when I was a girl working for her. She kept you right up to the mark, I tell you, and you ought to have seen how she lit into me when she found out some of the pats were just a little over a pound and some a little less. It was when she happened to have too much cream and she was 'trading in' the butter at the store. You'd have thought I'd stolen a fifty-cent piece to hear her go on! 'I sell those for a pound; they've got to *be* a pound,' says she, the way she always spoke, as though that ended it.

"'But, land sakes, Mis Canfield,' says I, 'an ounce or two one way or the other—it's as likely to be more as less, you know! What difference does it make? Nobody expects to make their pats just a pound! How could you?'"

"'How could you? How could you?'" says she. 'Why, just the way you get anything else the way it ought to be—by keeping at it till it *is* right. What other way is there?'"

"I didn't think you could, I *knew* you couldn't; but you always had to do the way Mis Canfield said, and so I began grumbling under my breath about bossy, fussy old women. But she never minded what you *said* about her, so long as you did your work right, and I fussed and fussed, clipping off a little, and adding on a little, and weighing it between times. It was the awfulest bother you

ever saw, because it spoiled the shape of your pat to cut at it so much, and you had to do it over again every time. Well, you wouldn't believe it, how soon I got the hang of it! She'd made me think about it so much, I got interested, and it wasn't any time at all before I could tell the heft of a pat to within a hair's breadth just by the feel of it in my hand. And I never forgot it. You never do forget that kind of thing. I brought up my whole family on that story. 'Now you do that spelling lesson,' I'd say to my Lucy, 'just the way Aunt Almera made me do the butter pats!'"

I WAS sitting on the steps of the Town Hall, trying to make a willow whistle, when the janitor came along and opened the door. "The Ladies' Aid are going to have a supper in the downstairs room," he explained, getting out a broom. I wandered in to visit with him while he swept and dusted the pleasant little community sitting-room where our village social gatherings were held. He moved an armchair and wiped off the frame of the big portrait of Lincoln. "Your great-grandmother gave that, do you know it?" he observed, and then, resting on the broom for a moment and beginning to laugh, "Did you ever hear how Aunt Almera got folks stirred up to do something about this room? Well, 'twas so *like* her! The place used to be the awfulest hole you ever saw. Years ago—oh, *years* ago, before there was a good county jail—they'd used it to lock up drunks in, or anybody that had to be locked up. Then after that the sheriff began to take prisoners down to the new jail. But nobody did anything to the room—it belongs to the town, you know, and nobody ever'll do anything that they think they can put off on the town. The women used to talk about it—what a nice place 'twould be for socials, and how 'twould keep the boys off the streets, and how they could have chicken suppers here, same as other towns, if this room was fixed up. But whose business was it to fix it up? The town's of course! And wa'n't the selectmen shiftless because they didn't see to it! But of course the selectmen didn't have the money to do anything. Nothing in the law about using tax money to fix up rooms for sociables, is there? And those were awful tight times, when money came hard and every cent of tax money had to be put to some good plain use. So the selectmen said *they* couldn't do anything. And nobody else would, because it wasn't anybody's business in particular, and nobody wanted to be put upon and made to do more than his share. And the room got dirtier and dirtier, with the lousy old mattress the last drunk had slept on right there on the floor in the corner,

and broken chairs and old wooden boxes, and dust and dry leaves that had blown in through the windows when the panes of glass were broken—regular dumping-ground for trash.

"Well, one morning bright and early—I've heard my mother tell about it a thousand times—the first person that went by the Town Hall seen the door open and an awful rattling going on. He peeked in, and there was little old Aunt Almera, in a big gingham apron, her white hair sticking out from underneath a bandanna handkerchief, cleaning away to beat the band. She looked up, saw him standing and gaping at her, and says, just as though that was what she did every day for a living, 'Good-morning,' she says. 'Nice weather, isn't it?'

"He went away kind of quick, and told about her over in the store, and they looked out, and sure enough out she come, limping along (she had the rheumatism *bad*) and dragging that old mattress with her. She drug it out in front to a bare place, and poured some kerosene on it and set fire to it; and I guess by that time every family in the street was looking out at her from behind the window-shades. Then she went back in, leaving it there burning up, high and smoky, and in a minute out she came again with her dustpan full of trash. She flung that on the fire as if she'd been waiting all her life to have the chance to get it burned up, and went back for more. And there she was, bobbing back and forth all the fore part of the morning. Folks from the Lower Street that hadn't heard about it would come up for their mail, and just stop dead, to see the bonfire blazing and Aunt Almera limping out with maybe an old broken box full of junk in her arms. She'd always speak up just as pleasant and gentle to them—that made 'em feel queerer than anything else, Aunt Almera talking so mild! 'Well, folks, how are you this morning?' she'd say. 'And how are all the folks at home?' And then *stosh!* would go a pail of dirty water, for as soon as she got it swept out, didn't she get down on her creaking old marrow-bones and scrub the floor! All that afternoon every time anybody looked out, splash! there'd be Aunt Almera throwing away the water she'd been scrubbing the floor with. Folks felt about as big as a pint-cup by that time, but nobody could think of anything to do or say, for fear of what Aunt Almera might say back at them, and everybody was always kind o' slow about trying to stop her once she got started on anything. So they just kept indoors and looked at each other like born fools, till Aunt Almera crawled back home. It mighty nigh killed her, that day's work. She was all crippled up for a fortnight afterwards with rheumatism. But you'd better believe folks stirred around those two weeks, and when she was out and around again there was this room all fixed up just the way 'tis now, with furniture, and the

floor painted, and white curtains to the windows, and all. Nobody said a word to her about it, and neither did she say a word when she saw it—she never was one to do any crowing over folks."

**T**HE hassocks in our pew began to look shabby, and my aunt brought them home from church to put a fresh cover of carpeting on them. They suggested church, of course, and as she worked on them a great many reminiscences came to her mind. Here is one: "I used to love to ride horseback, and grandmother always made father let me, although he was afraid to have me. Well, one summer evening, right after supper I went for a little ride, and didn't get home till about half-past seven. As I rode into the yard I looked through the open windows, and there was grandmother putting her bonnet on; and it came to me in a flash that I'd promised to go to evening prayers with her. I was a grown-up young lady then, but I was scared! You did what you'd promised grandmother you would, or something happened. So I just fell off my horse, turned him out in the night pasture, saddle and all, and ran into the house. Grandmother was putting on her gloves, and, although she saw me with my great looped-up riding skirt on and my whip in my hand, she never said a word nor lifted an eyebrow; just went on wetting her fingers and pushing the gloves down on them as though I was ready with my best hat on. That scared me worse than ever. I tore into my room, slipped off my skirt, put on another right over my riding trousers, slammed on a hat, threw a long cape around me, and grabbed my gloves. As the last bell began to ring and grandmother stepped out of the house, I stepped out beside her, all right as to the outer layer, but with the perspiration streaming down my face. I'd hurried so, and those great thick riding trousers were so hot under my woolen skirt! My! I thought I'd die! And it was worse in the church! Over in our dark, close corner pew there wasn't a breath of air. It must have been a hundred by the thermometer. I was so hot I just had to do something or die! There weren't but a few people in the church, and nobody anywhere near our corner, and it was as dark as could be, back in our high pew. So when we knelt down for the General Confession I gathered the cape all around me, reached up under my full skirt, unbuttoned those awful riding trousers, and just cautiously slipped them off. My! What a relief it was! Grandmother felt me rustling around and looked over sharp at me, to see what I was doing. When she saw the riding trousers, she looked shocked and frowned; but I guess I must have looked terribly hot and red, so she didn't say anything. Well, I knew it was an awful thing to do in church, and I was so afraid maybe somebody *had* seen me, although old Dr. Skinner, the rector, was the only one high enough up to look over the pew-

top, and he was looking at his Prayer-Book. But I felt as mean as though he'd been looking right at me. Well, he finally got through the prayers and began on the First Lesson. It was something out of the Old Testament, that part about how the Jews went back and repaired the ruined walls of Jerusalem, each one taking a broken place for his special job, and then how they got scared away, all but a few, from the holes in the walls they were trying to fix up. Dr. Skinner always read the lessons very loud and solemn, as though he were reading them right at somebody, and he'd sort of turn from one to another in the congregation with his forefinger pointed at them, as if he meant that just for them. What *do* you suppose I felt like when he turned right towards our corner and leaned 'way over and shook his finger at me, and said in a loud, blaming tone, 'But Asher continued and *abode* in *his* breaches!' I gave a little gasp, and grandmother turned towards me quick. When she saw the expression on my face (I guess I must have looked funny), she just burst right out into that great laugh of hers—ha! ha! ha! She laughed so she couldn't stop, and had to actually get up and go out of church, her handkerchief stuffed into her mouth. We could hear her laughing as she went down the walk outside!

"You'd have thought she'd be mortified, wouldn't you? I was mortified almost to death! But she wasn't a bit. She laughed every time she thought of it, for years after that. It was just like her! She did love a good laugh! Let anything happen that struck her as funny, and she'd laugh, no *matter* what!"

Later on, as we carried the hassocks back to the church and put them in our pew, my aunt said, reflectively, looking round the empty church: "I never come in here that I don't remember how grandmother used to say the Creed, loud and strong—she always spoke up so clear: 'From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost: The Holy Catholic Church: The Communion of Saints: The Forgiveness of sins—' and then she'd stop dead, while everybody went on, 'The Resurrection of the body;' and then she'd chime in again, 'And the Life everlasting, Amen.' You couldn't help noticing it, she took the greatest pains you should. But she always said, if anybody said anything about it, that she didn't believe in the resurrection of the body, and she wasn't going to say she did. Sometimes the ministers would get wrought up, and one of them went to the bishop about it, but nobody ever did anything. What *could* you do? And grandmother went right on saying the Creed that way to the day of her death."

**O**NCE I was taken to see an old Irish woman who had come, as a young girl, from Ireland just after the great famine in '48, and had gone to work for

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great-grandmother, who was then sixty-three years old. She told me this story, in her thick, thick early-nineteenth-century brogue, which I will not try to reproduce here: "There was a pretty girl, young and happy-looking, that lived up the road with her father, a poor weak rag of a man with a backbone like a piece of string, and with her stepmother, a hard woman, her heart made of a flintstone. And when they found out the girl was in trouble, and her sweetheart that was the cause of it off up in the North Country for the winter to work as a lumberjack, didn't they turn the poor girl out—yes, out like a dog. And old Mrs. Canfield—that was some kin to you, I forget what—where I was working, she went right out and brought her in, and kept her there safe and sound all winter, treating her as nice as anybody, letting her sew to pay for her keep, and helping her make the baby clothes. She'd go with her to church every Sunday, the girl right on her arm, and nobody daring to say a word, for fear of old Mrs. Canfield's tongue. 'For,' she used to say, 'let 'em say a word if they dare, and I'll tell a few things I know about some folks in this town who had to be married in a hurry, and whose babies came into the world ahead of time.' You see, she was so old she knew everything that had happened from the beginning almost. She'd say, 'There's lots worse things done every day in this town,' she'd say, and nobody to answer her back a word.

"But behind her back everybody was thinking it very certain that the man would never come back, and if he did, he'd never own the child, nor have anything to do with Margaret, poor girl! You see, in those days there weren't any mails that were carried 'way back off in the woods, and she neither had any word of him nor he of her. Well, old Mrs. Canfield knew what they were saying all right—she knew what everybody was saying—and I could see that she was troubled in her mind, though she never lowered her high head by an inch. Margaret's time drew near, and no sign from John Dawson, that was away. But Margaret never lost her faith in him a minute. 'When John is back,' she'd say, just as sure of him as though they'd been married by the priest; but I could see old Mrs. Canfield look queer when she'd hear Margaret talking that way.

"And then one morning, in April 'twas, and we'd all the doors and windows open for the first time, Margaret had gone down the walk to look at the lilac bush to see if there were any buds on it, and around the corner came John Dawson!

"Her back was to him and he hadn't any idea she was there, so when she turned round, they stared at each other for just a minute, as if they'd never seen each other. Margaret stood there, just frozen, now the moment had come, just waiting like a little scared, helpless—I had the half of me hanging out the kitchen window to see what would hap-

pen, and I'll never forget it—never—never—never—the look on his face, the astounded look on his face, so full of pity and love, so strong with pity and love. 'Margie! Margie!' he said in a loud voice, and threw his sack off his back and his gun from his hand, and ran, ran to take her in his arms, so gentle, so strong.

"Well, when I could see again, I went off to tell old Mrs. Canfield, and there was the old lady in her own bedroom, standing bolt upright in the middle of the floor, and crying at the top of her voice. Her wrinkled old face was just a-sop with tears. Faith, but it was the grand cry she was having! And the good it did her! When she came to, she says to me, 'Well,' says she, 'folks aren't so cussed as they seem, are they?'

"And then we went downstairs to get out the fruit-cake and the brandied peaches; for the minister married them in our parlor that afternoon."

ONE day old Mr. Morgan, the one-armed Civil War veteran, took me along with him, to get out of the buckboard and open gates, on the back road along the river. He was going up to a hill pasture to salt his sheep. It took forever to get there, because his horse was so slow, and he had time to tell me a great many stories. This was one of them: "When I was a boy at school, I worked at Aunt Almera Canfield's doing chores night and morning. I remember how she used to loosen herself up in the morning. She was terribly rheumatically, but she wouldn't give in to it. Every morning she'd be all stiffened up so she couldn't stand up straight, nor hardly move her legs at all; but she'd get herself dressed somehow, and then two of her sons came in to help her get started. She'd make them take hold of her, one on each side, and walk her around the room. It was awful to hear how she'd yell out—yell as though they were killing her! And then they'd stop, the sweat on their faces to see how it hurt her, and then she'd yell at them to go on, go on, she hadn't asked them to stop! They were over sixty, both of them, with grandchildren themselves, but they didn't dare not do what she said, and they'd walk her round again. She'd kick her poor legs out in front of her hard, to get the joints limbered up, and holler with the pain, and kick them out again, till by and by she'd get so she could go by herself, and she'd be all right for the day. I tell you, I often think of that. Yes, lots of times, it comes back to me."

Up in the sheep pasture, as we sat to rest the horse, he told me this: "I always thought Aunt Almera knew" all about the John Brown raid before most folks did—maybe, she sent some money to help him. She wasn't a bit surprised, anyhow, when she heard of it, and all through the whole business she never thought of another thing, nor let anybody else. He was caught—any of us

that lived in that house those days will never forget a one of those dates—and put in jail on the 9th of October, and his trial lasted until the 31st. Aunt Almera made us get together in the evenings, me and the hired girl and one of her grandsons and her daughter, all the family, and she'd read aloud to us out of the 'Tribune' about what had happened that day at his trial. I never saw her so worked up about anything—just like ashes her old face was, and her voice like cold steel. We got as excited about it as she did, all of us, especially her grandson, that was about my age, and when we knew he was going to be hanged—and the day of his execution—December 2d, it was—Aunt Almera came at dawn to wake me up. 'Put on your clothes,' says she, 'and go over to the church and begin to toll the bell.' I didn't need to ask her what for, either. I'll never forget how awful she looked to me.

"Well, we tolled the bell all day long, one or the other of the family, never stopped a minute. You never heard anything so like death. All day long that slow, deep clang—and then a stillness—and then *clang!* again. I could hear it in my head for days afterwards. Folks came in from all around to find out what it meant, and Aunt Almera called them all into her parlor—she sat there all day and never ate a mouthful of food—and *told* them what it meant, so they couldn't ever get the sound of her voice out of their ears. Between times she'd read to whoever was there out of the Bible, in a loud voice, 'Avenge thou thy cause, O Lord God of battles,' and 'It is time for thee, O Lord, to lay to thy hand, for they have destroyed thy law,' and 'Let there be no man to pity them; nor to have compassion of their fatherless children.' It was the darndest thing to hear her!

"You'd better believe when the first call for men came from Washington there wasn't a boy of military age in our town that didn't enlist!"

AN old, old cousin had just died, and as we sat downstairs talking with the doctor, he said to my aunt, who had been taking care of the sick woman: "She took it hard! She took it hard!"

They both frowned, and my aunt looked rather sick. Then the doctor said, "Not much like your grandmother, do you remember?" "Oh, yes, I remember," said my aunt, her face quivering, her eyes misty, her lips smiling. The doctor explained to me: "Your great-grandmother was an old, old woman before she ever was really sick at all, except for rheumatism. And then she had a stroke of paralysis that left her right side dead. She lived four days that way—the only days she'd spent in bed in years, since she was a young woman, I suppose. Her mind wasn't very clear, she couldn't talk so that we could understand her, and I don't think she rightly knew anybody after her stroke. I guess she went back, 'way back, for we saw

from what she did that she thought she had a little baby with her. I suppose she thought she was a young mother again, and that was why she was in bed. She'd spread out her arm, very gentle and slow, the only arm she could move, so's to make a hollow place for a little head, and then she'd lie there, so satisfied and peaceful, her face just shining as if she felt a little warm, breathing baby there. And sometimes she'd half

wake up and stretch out her hand and seem to stroke the baby's head or snuggle it up closer to her, and then she'd give a long sigh of comfort to find it there, and drop off to sleep again, smiling. And she'd always remember, even in her sleep, to keep her arm curved around so there'd be room for the baby; and even in her sleep her face had that shining love on it—that old wrinkled face, with that look on it! I've seen

lots of death-beds, but I never—he stopped for a moment.

"Why, at the very last—do you remember?"—he went on to my aunt, "I thought she was asleep, but as I moved a chair she opened her eyes quickly, looked down as if to see whether I had wakened the baby, and looked at me, to warn me to be quiet, her finger at her lips, 'Sh!' she whispered.

"And that was the way she died."

## NOON

BY JOHN HALL WHELOCK

At noon I watched  
In the large hollow of eternal heaven  
A soaring hawk climb slowly toward the sun  
Upward, in adoration without end.  
His flight was a great prayer.

## OLD CHINOOK SURPRISES THE PARSON

BY PEARSE PINCH

I MET "Old Chinook" from away out West the other day, right here on the streets of Washington. Somehow I vaguely sensed his presence before he appeared, as I used to do out West. There he would come softly whistling or humming an air from one of the great operas, learned he would never tell where. I think he must have been whistling along the street the day I met him. We called him "Chinook" because, like that famous wind, he used to arrive so unexpectedly, and the frost lost its grip on everything at his coming. His jubilant greeting the other day drove the chill from the air, and spring seemed to be here in full tide.

"Well, Parson," he exclaimed, "where on earth did you come from, and how came you here?"

We were soon up to our ears in question and answer as to what had befallen each since the day our trails parted out there in Wyoming. "What are you doing?" he asked. "Still preachin', or workin' for Uncle Sam?"

"Preaching," I answered. "That's my work; and I could hardly do anything else, if I would; and wouldn't, if I could."

"I s'pose so," he replied. "But don't you get awfully tired of it sometimes?"

"Why should I?" I questioned in turn.

"Oh, I w's just thinkin'." Then, with a sudden turn, he seemed to be off on another tack. "By the way," he said, "how many railways run out to that town where you're preachin'?"

"Only one," I informed him, "and that is all the traffic would sustain."

"Why don't you have half a dozen?" he asked.

"Why should we," I asked, "when one barely pays?"

"Well, you see," he answered, "there are so many ways of building and running railways that every community, it

seems, ought to have the advantage of them all."

"Why, man, what do you mean?" I asked. "What are you driving at, anyway?"

I knew he had something up his sleeve which he was taking a round-about way, not uncommon with him, to produce.

He went on: "You see, there are the several kinds of power. Some like the old way, of running cars by steam. They think it more reliable, like other old things. Others like the trolley, because the cars can run oftener, and accommodate passengers any hour of the day. You know that road of ours out West? Well, they are burning oil on that branch, and nothing else. I met an old fellow up the river who is always recalling the time when the engines had nothing but wood, and he thought it more homelike than any of these new-fangled ways."

"But," I said, "all of that would be no reason for building a half-dozen roads out to our place."

"There are other things to consider," he persisted. "There are different styles in building cars. There are different kinds of platforms to get in on. There's no end of variety in choice of routes. One road could follow the hills, and another the valleys. Some folks are never happy unless they can be riding somewhere within sight of bodies of water."

I thought I began to see the direction of Chinook's parable, but to further call him out I began a protest against the whole idea.

"You know perfectly well, Chinook," I said, "that you are talking nonsense. As it is, our road is well patronized. The cars are well filled, and often crowded. A whole neighborhood of commuters ride together, and it makes a big

neighborhood sociable between our town and Washington morning and night, as cheerful and friendly a crowd as you ever saw. The road, I understand, is fairly prosperous. But if we had five or six roads, they would divide the crowd into sorry little handfuls, some becoming partisans of one road, and some of another. It would all tend to breed neighborhood dissension. As a business policy it would be suicidal, and every road would be bankrupt. I can't imagine anything more senseless."

"I know something more senseless," Chinook replied.

"In the name of all that's foolish, what is it?" I asked.

"The policy of the churches; for they are doing worse than the thing you describe as so disastrous in railroading. That's why I wondered if you don't get awfully tired of preachin'."

Chinook's parable had me tight. I confessed that the policy of our churches is a grievous trial to any man who wants to be a preacher and still be a man.

"And yet," I protested, "things will never become any better if those of us who want another policy abandon the field and leave it to the partisans who want nothing but division. I try to make my church broad enough to include all who want a larger type of Christian life."

"No chance, Parson," replied Chinook. "Folks seem to like narrow and partisan ways in everything. I don't know that they are any worse in religion than in other things; but somehow it looks smaller and more contemptible in religion; and they are smaller and more contemptible when they are narrow and partisan in a thing so big as religion. You may as well give it up, Parson, and come back with me into God's great big churchless outdoors."