

CHAPTER XV.

HOW THE EARLY SETTLERS LIVED, OR THE INDUSTRIAL HISTORY OF CHESTER.

Everybody will understand that the first tenements must have been log-huts with stone chimneys. As a specimen of the early chimneys, Joseph Basford built a frame house on the place where Wells C. Underhill lives, which was sold to Moody Chase in 1769, who reared in it a large family. His daughter Mary (wife of B. P. Chase) used to relate that they could see to work the longest by the light which came down chimney, of any place in the house; and that the child who sat the farthest back against the back-log was the one who complained most of the cold. Cranes to hang their kettles over the fire were not in fashion, but two pieces of wood called "cross-bars" were put into the chimney, some three feet above the mantel-piece (which was of wood), and another called a "lug-pole" across them on which to hang "trammels." The ovens were built in beyond the back of the fireplace, so that the smoke came into one common flue. Then came half-flue ovens, being built about half way from the back to the jamb. Next came ovens built out to the jambs with a separate flue for the smoke, called whole-flue ovens. Perhaps there were no chimneys built without cranes, or with back ovens, since 1800, but a great many have been in use since then. Some of the fireplaces were so capacious as to burn wood four feet long. They would first put on a "back-log," from a foot to a foot and a half in diameter, and a "back-stick," smaller, on the top, then a "fore-stick," and small wood in front laid on andirons, if they were able to have them, if not, on stones. Where such a fire of good

hard wood was in operation, it gave out a great amount of heat, and the cooking had to be done over such a fire.

The ancient windows were of what was called "diamond glass." The sides of the panes were about five inches and the angles oblique. The longest diagonal stood perpendicular, so of course the outside of the casement was half-panes. The outside sash was of wood, and between the panes was lead. At a meeting of the Congregational parish April 21, 1743, Jacob Sargent, Benj. Hills and Enoch Colby were chosen a committee to sell the old lead and glass, and glaze the house with new sashes and glass.

STOVES.

I make a few extracts relating to the history of stoves, from an article in the "Scientific American" of Nov. 9, 1867.

"Stoves are comparatively of recent general use, though they were known in this country as early as 1790. In that year Mr. Pettibone of Philadelphia was granted a patent for a stove which he claimed to be capable of warming houses by pure heated air. Pettibone's stove was soon after put up in the alms-house at Philadelphia. This was probably the first attempt to use, at least in this country. From this time forward, for many years, the stove was confined to public places; its use for warming private houses or for cooking purposes not having been thought of. The long box-stove, capable of taking three-feet wood, was the only stove our ancestors knew anything about. The first advance towards a cooking stove was making the Franklin stove with an oven; and the first that deserves the name was an oblong affair, having an oven running the whole length, the door of which was in front, directly over the door for supplying fuel; and having also a boiler-hole and boiler on the back part of the top near the pipe. Then a stove similar in arrangement, with swelling elliptic sides was made, generally called the nine-plate stove.

"About 1812 cooking stoves were made at Hudson from patterns made by Mr. Hoxie, who was the first to elevate the fire-box above the oven. In 1815 William T. James of Lansingburgh, afterwards of Troy, made the stove known as the 'James stove,' which not only continued the leading cooking stove for nearly a quarter of a century, but may

yet be seen on board of small eastern coasting vessels, where, being cheap and durable, it supplies the place of a caboose."

In the James stove, the oven was directly over the furnace, and the sides were swelled out to give place for an oval boiler on each side; they were cast heavy and were very durable. They were very liable to burn whatever was in the oven, unless the utmost care was used. I have heard it related that when one of these stoves was first set up, the goodman waited to be called to breakfast until out of patience, and upon going into the house found the goodwife in a perfect storm: the stove was good for nothing, — the biscuit were burned, — and as a penalty for getting such a piece of furniture he would have to dispense with his breakfast. With a good deal of coaxing he prevailed on her to mix another batch, which, with careful attendance, *he* succeeded in baking, and at ten or eleven o'clock succeeded in having his breakfast. There was a cooking-stove made at Franconia (a heavy, coarse-made concern) earlier than the James stove was used here, but I think was never used in Chester. Jonathan Aiken, Esq., of Goffstown, had used one of them several years and thrown it by previous to 1836. Other patterns were soon introduced with the oven by the side of the furnace and under the furnace.

People were very punctual in going to meeting, and some of them riding three, four, or even six miles on horseback, when there was not sleighing, their horses standing out of doors exposed to the cold, and they remaining in the meeting-house without fire during two long services and intermission, except that a part of the men would resort to the neighboring tavern where they could warm inside as well as outside. In 1821 Samuel D. Bell, Esq., drew up a subscription paper and carried it round and collected money and purchased a stove which was put into the Congregational meeting-house. In 1822 the Rev. Clement Parker went round at the Long Meadows and procured a subscription, and when people plead poverty he offered to

advance the money and take his pay in wood. The stove was procured and put into the house in the broad aisle in front of the pulpit, the funnel going up nearly to the ceiling, and then out at the front window. The first time a fire was kindled the stove cracked, when the *conservatives* said, "*I told you so.*"

The first cooking stove in Chester was bought by Daniel French, Esq., in 1824. The next about the same time by Hon. Samuel Bell. The James pattern was perhaps the earliest here.

The first cooking stove in the Long Meadows was one of the James, by Hon. John Folsom, about 1830, but not liking it, he carried it back; and the first to permanently remain was a rotary, in which the top turned to bring five different boilers over the fire, bought in January, 1835, by the writer; and several others were bought the same winter.

Before cooking stoves were generally introduced, the tin baker was invented, and used to bake cakes, pies, &c., before an open fire. It consisted of a tin box about twenty inches long, the bottom about a foot wide, inclining about twenty-two and a half degrees, and set on legs; a perpendicular back four or five inches wide, with a hinge, and the top similar to the bottom, with a sheet-iron bake pan suspended between them, so that when the baker was set before the fire at a suitable distance, the inclined surfaces, top and bottom, reflected the rays of heat upon the materials to be baked. The first of these in the Long Meadows—probably in Chester—was bought by the writer in the spring of 1832.

Previous to the stove or baker was the Dutch-oven, for baking, frying, &c. It was a shallow cast-iron kettle, with a cast-iron cover. The articles to be baked were put into it, over the fire, and the cover filled with coals.

Previous to any of these devices, for roasting meat a *spit* was used. It was an iron rod about a yard long, with a crank at one end. The andirons had bearings to support the spit riveted to the side next the fire. The meat was attached to the spit, which was laid into these bearings,

and the crank turned to bring all sides to the fire. I have seen the apparatus, but I think not in use.

Another mode, which I have seen a great many times, was to suspend the spare-rib by a hook and line before the fire, with a dripping-pan under it, and one of the children would turn it with a stick. When the line became hard twisted, it would turn itself the other way until untwisted.

Before the introduction of stoves, they endeavored to "keep fire" by burying a good hard-wood brand in the ashes. When fire was lost, and neighbors were not at hand to borrow from, resort was had to flint and steel, with *tinder* (a cotton or linen rag burnt to coal) to catch, and a sulphur match to take from that; or a gun, with a little powder and tow, was sometimes used. When stoves became common, about 1832 or '33, friction or lucifer matches were introduced.

A story used to be told of a "Mother Hoit," who, when her fire was low, poured powder from a horn, intending to stop it off with her finger, but it proved too quick for her, and the horn went out at the top of the chimney. It used to be a saying, "as quick as Mother Hoit's powder-horn." Oliver Eaton, of Seabrook, informed us that it occurred there, and that he once heard the expression used on a wharf in New York by an English sailor, who said that he had heard it used on the wharves of London.

The milk-pails then in use were wood, and the pans of earthen, tin not being used until within the present century. Their dishes were of pewter, the *dresser* — a set of open shelves — being set off with platters and plates, basins and porringers. These may be seen in the background of the cut illustrating combing flax and spinning linen. Then the children had wooden plates, or, perhaps, a square trencher to eat from. I used a wooden plate when a boy, also a pewter spoon. Their spoons were mostly made of pewter. They were clumsy, and very liable to be broken.

Robert Leathhead, who lived where Matthew Dickey

lately lived, used to *itinerate* with ladle and spoon-mould to *run* pewter spoons. He was a religious man, a Presbyterian, and knew nothing of responses, or the use of *amen*, except as a *finis* to a religious exercise. On one occasion he put up with a family of Freewill Baptists or Methodists, who invited him to lead in their family devotions. He had but just commenced, when there came a loud, responsive "amen," which Mr. Leathhead took as a signal for him to close, which he reluctantly did.

They had a piece of cooper's ware, called a *piggin*, holding about a gallon, one stave of which projected four or five inches above, for a handle. It served as a ladle to dip water, and also as a wash-dish. They also used a gourd-shell as a ladle. It had a long neck, like some species of squash, which made a convenient handle. One may be seen lying on the floor in the forementioned cut. Hard-shell pumpkin-shells were used to store balls of yarn and remnants of cloth. It was told of one old lady that at her death she had pumpkin shells which she carried from her father's at her marriage, fifty years before.

Almost as a matter of course, coming poor into a new and hard, rocky country, our ancestors must have fared hard, and sometimes had a scanty living. I have heard it related that a lad, some sixty or seventy years ago, remarked that he supposed Mr. So-and-so's folks lived well; that they had meat *all the year round*—implying that his folks had not, which was probably true. I have heard the woman of the other family relate that they were short of meat, and boiled a small piece with some sauce and greens; that they had a caller to dinner who was probably meat-hungry, and he took the whole and ate it.

It was usual for a man who had a family to go to the "Falls," or to Haverhill, and get and salt a barrel of alewives, or the Derryfield folks of lamprey-eels. Once when the fish were rather short at the Falls, and many were waiting, one of the fishermen fell in and went down through the falls some distance, and when he got his head above water one of the anxious customers inquired: "And saw ye any fish in your downcoming?"

The English, by boiling beans very soft with their boiled dish, and thickening the liquor, made bean-porridge, which was a common and favorite dish. It has been said — I do not vouch for its truth — that when the man was going away with his team the woman would make a pot porridge and freeze with a string in, so that he could hang it on his sled-stake, and when he wanted to bait, would cut off a piece and thaw it. The Irish had a corresponding dish in barley-broth, barley being substituted for beans. It was related of old Mrs. Linn that she had company one day, and had some charming good broth, but forgot to put in the meat. The Irish used to churn their milk and cream together, and use the buttermilk as a common drink.

There was another dish which was a great luxury, which was baked pumpkin and milk. In the autumn and early winter, take hard-shell pumpkins and cut a hole in the stem end sufficiently large to admit the hand, and scrape the inside out clean, and replace the top. If the oven was not, like Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated, it was a great deal hotter than usual, and after the pumpkins were in, it was plastered around the lid to keep the heat in. Dr. Bouton, in his "History of Concord," says that they filled them nearly full of new milk, and ate directly from the shell, and that Governor Langdon, when boarding at Deacon Kimball's, preferred that mode as being the most genteel. I never saw that mode practiced, but have eaten pumpkin and milk a great many times. The shells were very useful to hold balls of yarn and remnants of cloth.

Some wheat was raised, and the flour used, but most of the bread used was brown, composed of rye and Indian. Such a thing as purchasing flour was hardly known previous to 1810, or later.

A favorite and good method of cooking potatoes was to open the hot embers on the hearth, and put the potatoes in and cover and roast them.

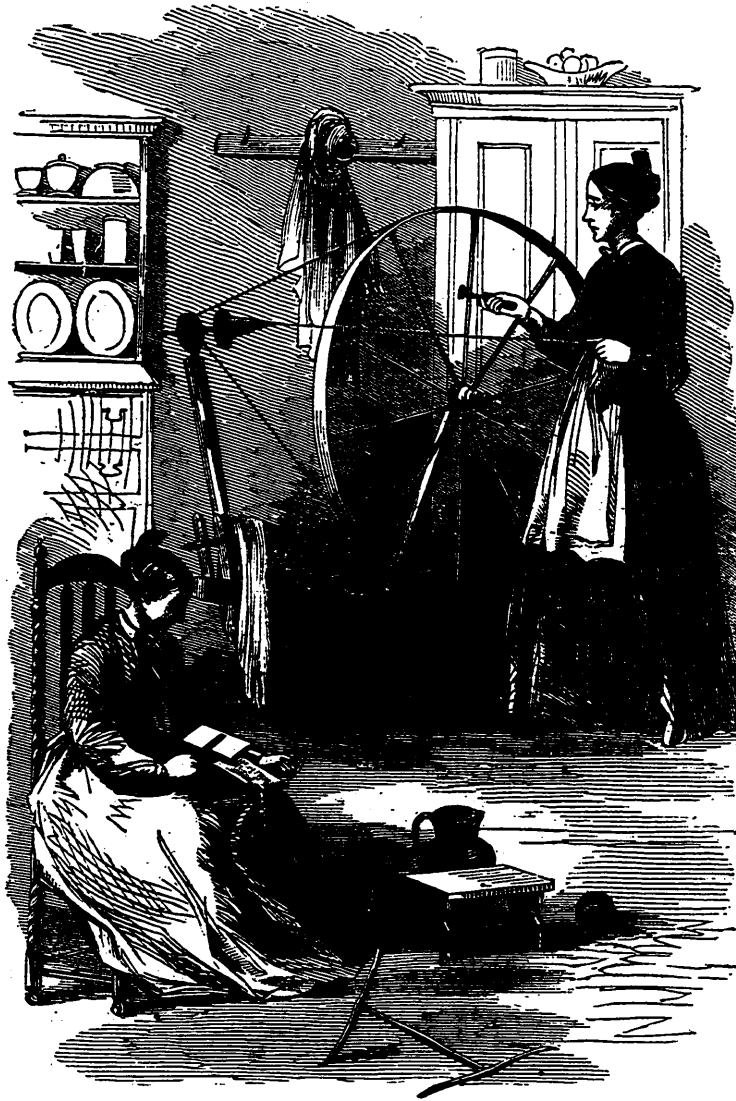
The most common drink was cider, but in warm weather beer was made. In some places malt-beer was used,

but I have seen no indications that it ever was in Chester. It was commonly made of hops, though sometimes by boiling spruce boughs. Spruce beer has been made at my father's long since my recollection. Beer would be an indispensable article for every innholder in cold weather, for the purpose of making *flip*.

When the people had large families it was not uncommon to have but one suit for each of the children, and the mother must wash and dry the clothes after the children were in bed. I have heard an old man say that when he was a boy his mother made him wear his shirt backside forward half of the time, to make it wear out alike.

The clothing was mostly of domestic manufacture. The men, however, sometimes wore leather *small clothes* of moose-hide, buck-skin or sheep-skin. The Committee of Safety (Col. N. H. Hist. Soc., vol. 7, p. 63) "agreed with Mr. Daniel Gilman for 100 coarse moose hide breeches at 18s." Simon Berry and William Locke came from Rye about the same time, and their fathers soon made a journey to Chester to see their sons. Mr. Berry wore a pair of sheep-skin breeches, and being caught in a shower, the breeches got wet and sagged to the calf of the leg. Mr. Berry took his knife and cut them off at the proper place at the knee; soon the sun came out, and the breeches shrank, so they were as much too short as they had before been too long.

Their sheep were of a coarse-wooled kind. The wool was carded with hand-cards, which was very laborious work for the women. Sometimes, to make it more cheerful, they would have a *bee* or *wool-breaking*. It was, I believe, as much work to card as to spin it, and a woman's stint of spinning was five skeins per day, for which the usual price was fifty cents and board per week, perhaps less sometimes.



CARDING AND SPINNING WOOL, COTTON OR TOW.

In Coffin's "History of Newbury," under date 1794, it is said: "In June of this year the first incorporated woolen factory in Massachusetts was erected at the falls of the river Parker, at Newbury. The machinery was made in Newburyport, by Messrs. Standring, Armstrong and Guppy." This was probably the first wool-carding done by machinery in this region, if not in the country, and I am so informed by Mr. Dustin, of Salem, N. H. The next was by Mr. Alexander, where Mr. John Taylor's factory now is, in Salem, N. H., soon after the year 1800. The people of Chester used to go there with their wool, and pay about

eight cents per pound for carding. I believe Mr. Alexander did some manufacturing.

In 1805, Samuel Haynes, of Chester, procured a carding machine, and ran it that season, and then returned it to the vender. The next carding machine in this region was made at Chelmsford, Mass., and put up at Poplin Rocks, by Samuel Gibson, who came from Methuen, Mass., in 1806. The next carding machine was made by D. & J. Marsh, Haverhill, Mass., for Moses Chase, and set up in the Haynes fulling-mill, in 1810. Some of the conservatives, or fogies, were much offended at the innovation, as it would ruin the women, and make them idle and lazy. The cards were then all set by hand, giving employment to women and children to set the teeth.

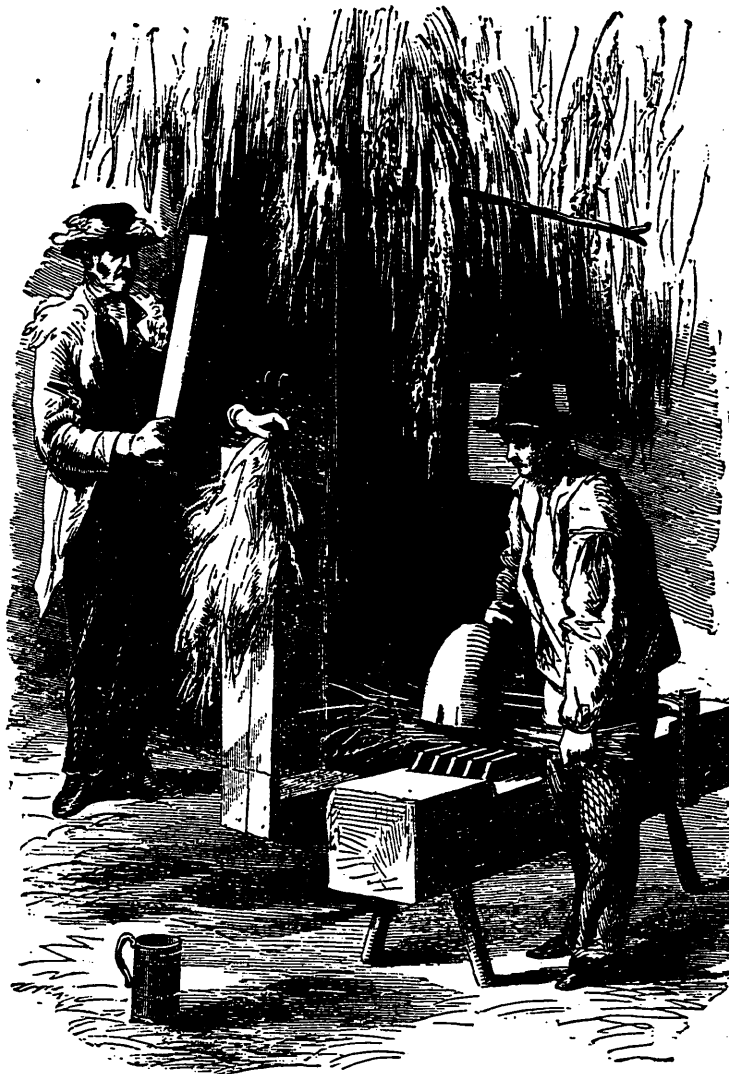
For men's wear, fulled cloth was made and dressed by the clothier at from ninepence to one shilling and sixpence per yard. Sometimes, to save this expense, heavy waled cloth was made and dyed with bark at home. For women's winter wear, "baize" was made and dyed green, or without any fulling or napping, dyed with redwood or camwood, and pressed, and called *pressed cloth*; or sometimes merely dyed with bark at home. Nearly every good house-wife would have a blue vat, in the form of a "dye-pot," in which, instead of dissolving the indigo at once with sulphuric acid, it was put in a bag and dissolved gradually in urine. Those old enough to remember the operation will retain vivid recollections of the operation of "wringing out the dye-pot," on their olfactories. Here was dyed the wool for stockings, and mother's and grandmother's woolen aprons. Many times when I was a small boy, when I came from sliding, or other recreation, with my hands aching with cold, I had them wrapped in grandmother's blue woolen apron.

For summer wear the men had a cotton and linen cloth called *fustian*. The women had for dresses, aprons, &c., plaids of various patterns. So occasionally a web was made for handkerchiefs.

The raising of flax and the manufacture of linen was

first introduced by the emigrants from Ireland to Londonderry, in 1719, and they were eminent in that line of manufacture. It may be wise to preserve a knowledge of the various processes of it.

After the flax was "pulled," the seed was threshed off, and the flax was spread to rot. It lay exposed to the dews, rain and sun, until the woody part had become tender, so as readily to break in pieces. The fibre would meanwhile turn of a darker color, and become more pliable. After the sledding had broken up, about the first of March, the flax was "got out." The first operation was breaking.



BREAKING AND SWINGLING FLAX.

The flax-break was an oak stick some six feet long and a foot square, set on legs, with about four feet of it about half cut away diagonally, leaving one foot square of each end. Here were inserted four hard-wood slats, edgewise, with the upper edge sharp. To match this were another set of slats, one end inserted in a block called a "head," and the other in a wooden roller hung to the back part of the body of the break. The operation of breaking was to raise the top slats with the right hand, by means of a pin or handle in the head, and with the left hand put the flax into the break, and it was operated until the woody part of the flax was broken fine, and most of it fallen on the floor. The next operation was combing the seed ends by drawing it through a comb of twelve or sixteen iron teeth inserted in a board. The next operation was swingling. A board about seven inches wide and four feet long was set in a heavy block to keep it steady and upright. This was a "swingling board." A heavy wooden knife about two feet long was used to beat the flax over this board to separate the finer "shives" and the coarser tow. This operation was called "swingling." A very smart man, with good flax and a good dry day, and leaving it rather rough, would swingle forty pounds in a day, though twenty pounds would be an ordinary day's work. The breaking was about equal to the swingling, which would make ten to twelve pounds on an average, as an ordinary day's work of dressing from the straw.

The next process in the manufacture was combing. The flax comb was made by inserting teeth made of nail rods, say six inches long, and pointed, into a board or plank, which would be secured firmly to a chair, or something else. My grandmother's, yet in good condition, has twelve teeth, about half an inch apart, and seven deep, the teeth in each row standing opposite the spaces of the preceding row. The flax was drawn continually through this comb, until the "tow" or short and imperfect fibres of the flax were all drawn out. The flax was then ready to put upon the "distaff." The Irish, or linen wheel, was about twenty

inches in diameter, hung on an iron crank, and was operated by the foot on a treadle. The wheel had two grooves in its circumference, one to receive a band to drive the fliers and the other to drive the spool with a quicker motion to "take up" the yarn. The distaff was a sapling about an inch thick, with four or five branches, which were tied together at the top. The flax was put on this and the thread drawn from it. Two "double skeins" was a day's work.



COMBING FLAX AND SPINNING LINEN.

The linen manufacture was quite a business with the Scotch Irish of Londonderry and Chester, making fine linen cloth and thread, and bleaching it and sending it to

the towns to market. The beach of Massabesic was a favorite place for bleaching. Linen constituted a very important part, with cotton, of household fabrics and barter,—shirts, sheets, table linen, summer dresses, handkerchiefs, meal bags, &c.

There was a process to facilitate bleaching, called “buckling.” It was to put the cloth or yarn into a tub, cover it with a cloth, and fill the tub with ashes, which were leached, the lye passing through the cloth. The process was repeated at pleasure.

After bleaching the cloth, came the final operation of “beetling,” which was performed by folding the cloth and laying it on a flat, smooth stone. The beetle was of maple, or some hard wood, perhaps two feet long and five inches in diameter, two thirds the length turned down to a suitable size for a handle. The cloth was beaten with this, and the folds continually changed, until the whole web was rendered sufficiently pliable and soft. I have seen the operation performed by laying the cloth on the stone hearth, and using the pestle.

The smaller girls would take the “swingling-tow” and beat out the shives, and spin and double and twist it, and sell to the merchant for wrapping-twine. The older ones, to make their purchases at the store, would make all-tow, tow-and-linen, or cotton-and-linen cloth, to barter with the store-keeper. My sisters tell me that when one was about nine and the other thirteen, in 1810, the elder one spun the warp and the younger one the filling, and made a web of tow cloth, and bought them dresses; and that they now have pieces of those dresses.

Also the shoe-thread was of linen, and all shoes were then sewed. Pegging the soles is a modern invention. The people wanted ropes for bed cords, and other purposes, which were frequently, if not universally, of home manufacture. The flax or tow was spun and warped in three strands, of the required length. A machine was made by taking three pieces of hard-wood board about a foot square, and making round tenons or bearings on the opposite corners, forming cranks, one end of which was inserted in a

stationary standard with hooks, to which to attach the three strands of the rope. A shorter and movable piece of board with corresponding holes was put on to the other tenons, by moving which gave a crank motion, and twisted the strands. A simple crank at the other end twisted the rope. A small block, with three grooves for the strands, aided in "laying the rope even."

In the culture of flax there was a weed very prolific in small seed, called "wild flax." This increased so fast that it was necessary once in two or three years to clean the seed. This was done by having a cylinder of tin or sheet-iron, perforated so as to let the wild seed pass and retain the flax seed. This screen was suspended on bearings, the seed put in and the machine turned by crank until the seed was cleaned. The two last named machines, I think, might have been seen about the premises of the late Jacob Chase, a few years since, probably made and owned by his grandfather. Tow was carded and spun on a large wheel like cotton or wool.

Cotton has been a constituent part of clothing as far back as I have any knowledge. It was of course carded and spun by hand until the starting of factories, when cotton warp was made and sold at the stores, and the weaving done by hand. Cotton was also sold at the stores. The weaver's reed or "slaie," was made of sticks of cane, whittled with a knife, and the twine wound by hand. Peter Aiken and James and Alexander Shirley were famous in Chester for making them. Their looms were heavy, clumsy things. The web was sprung by the feet, the shuttle was thrown and the "lathe" swung to beat in the filling with the hands, so that with every throw of the shuttle and beat of the "lathe," the hands had to be changed from one to the other. Five or six yards was a day's work of weaving. The yarn was reeled in threads of two yards each, forty of which made a "knot," and seven knots a "skein," and fourteen knots a "double skein." The warp, for warping was wound on "spools," and the filling on "quills" made of elder. The spooling and quilling gave employment to boys and girls.

Another branch of household manufacture was yarn coverlets for bed covers, in which a good deal of taste and mechanical ingenuity were displayed in the colors and figures. Among those eminent for weaving this article in a great variety of figures was the wife of John Locke, and after her death his daughter Polly, now the wife of John Currier of Sandown.

The tanners had no chemical process or hot liquor. To grind the bark they used a circular stone, generally a worn out mill-stone. They fitted a central post or shaft with wooden bearings, with a horizontal shaft or axletree, one end working with a wooden bearing in the post, the other end fitting and passing through the eye of the stone far enough to attach a horse. A circular platform of wood was built nearly twenty feet in diameter. As the horse made his circuit, the stone rolled over, crushing the bark. A hand was always in attendance to continually rake the coarse bark out under the stone, and shove the fine to the centre.

The first bark-mill was invented and patented in 1808, by Paul Pillsbury (an uncle of Parker Pillsbury of abolition notoriety), who was born at West Newbury, and lived at Byefield. Instead of the cylinder and cone being cast whole, as in modern mills, they were cast in segments, and fitted to wood. He sold his patent for two thousand dollars, but never got his pay. The first bark-mills introduced into Chester were at a later day, probably about 1812, and were cast whole, the cone being fitted to a perpendicular wooden shaft, and standing in the centre of the platform, and the horse attached to a sweep and traveling in the old track. The farmers were their own butchers, and carried the hides to the tanners, who tanned either by the piece or upon shares. Upper leather would tan in the course of the summer, and it would be a winter business to curry it. It was all shaved down with the currying-knife, there being no splitting-machines before 1810 or 1815. The sole leather took a year or more to tan. There is the name of Lemuel Clifford of Chester, tanner, in a deed as early as

1734, but whether he actually tanned here is uncertain. Ichabod Robie, a grantee, was a tanner at Hampton Falls, and taught his sons the art. He settled his son John on home lot No. 35, about 1733, who had a yard where Robinson's yard lately was, and he taught his sons the art. Samuel Robie settled on his father's lot, 116, and had a yard where the Blake yard lately was, and taught his son Edward the art, who once carried on the business in Candia at the brook north of Parker's Corner. Tanner Martin set up the business in Chester Woods about 1780, and James Wason at the Long Meadows about 1785, and Capt. Ezekiel Blake came to Chester in 1792 and did quite a business at the Samuel Robie yard.

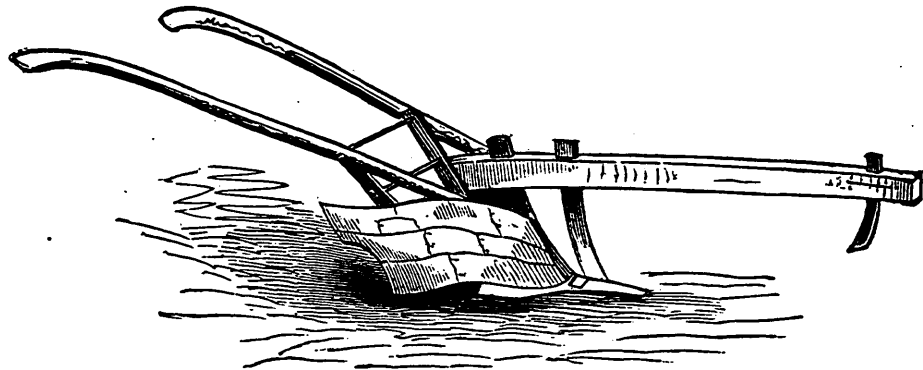
There was no such thing as sale-shoe work then. The people carried their stock to the shoemakers, or sometimes shoemakers *itinerated* from house to house with their "kit." I recollect about fifty-five to sixty years ago, Mr. Stocker, a very small man, father of Aaron Wilcomb's wife, used to go through our neighborhood. It is said of Samuel Murray that he would make shoes for Dea. John Hills, and that the Deacon would pay him in labor on the farm; that Mr. Murray would work with the Deacon day-times and make shoes to pay him nights.

At that time the utmost economy had to be practiced. All of the young people and some of the old ones went barefoot during the summer, and the maidens when going to meeting would either go barefoot until nearly there or wear thick shoes and carry the "morocco" ones in their hands to save the wear. Long within my recollection, the maidens going across to the Long Meadows to meeting carried their shoes in their hands until across the brook. The father and mother, if not the grandfather and grandmother, had the horse with the saddle and pillion, and the younger ones walked, sometimes from three to six miles.

The heel pegs were made with a knife. Sometime, probably from 1812 to 1815; Mr. Pillsbury, the inventor of the bark-mill, fixed a tool to plow grooves across a block of maple, and then cross-plow it, which pointed the pegs, and

then they were split with a knife and mallet. Mr. Pillsbury soon got up improved machinery and did a large business at making pegs, and then pegged shoes were introduced. (See Shoe and Leather Reporter, July 16, 1868.)

Boots were not in common use. They had "leggings" or "buskins," knit to reach from the knee to the shoe, with the bottom widened so as to cover the shoe, and leather strings to tie them down. I wore them myself when a lad, and I have heard my grandfather say that he never had a pair of boots nor an outside coat before he was twenty-one years old. Boots made by crimping in the ankles were not in use before 1805 or '6, and they were known for many years as "Suwarrow boots," from the name of the Russian General Suwarrow. Before that the fronts were in two parts. The foot had a tongue which went up two or three inches into the leg. They were generally worn with white tops and small clothes or "breeches" which came down just below the knee. Breeches were generally worn till about that time, and some old men wore them as long as they lived.



P L O W S.

The plows had the wrought-iron shares, the beam being very long with wooden mould-board, plated with old hoes and other scraps of iron. What are now bent for handles were then straight, and were called "thorough-shots," as was also the stud at the forward part of the irons, which

projected far enough above the beam to attach the handles to it. The handles were long pieces of wood attached to the forward "thorough-shots," and also to those behind, with wooden pins, and extending back two feet or more behind, making a very long plow. Franklin Crombie, Esq., says that he measured one that formerly belonged to Matthew Templeton, which was nearly fourteen feet long. After a while the crooked handles were introduced, though within the present century. They then went into the woods and found a tree with as good a turn as they could, and split out their handles. When the turnpikes were built, in 1805, the Dutch plow was introduced. It was a triangular piece of iron, so made as to form a wing and point, and the forward part of the mould with a wooden land-side, plated and attached to the wood by a bolt. The plow was very short. Many of them were afterwards made by Abraham Sargent, Jr., and Daniel Wilson, as late as 1830. The first cast-iron plows, so far as I know, were the Hitchcock pattern. Probably the first brought into Chester was by Hawley Marshall of Brentwood, 1830-1833.

Iron or steel shovels were not much, if any, used here, previous to building the turnpikes in 1805. They used to take a large red-oak tree and split out the shapes and make wooden shovels and have the edge shod with iron, which were called "shod shovels." July 9, 1775, the committee of safety ordered James Proctor paid nine pounds for "sixty *Shod Shovels* by him delivered." In Stephen Chase's diary Feb. 24, 1797, is an entry "Sawed great oak log,—making shovels." Mr. John Brickett of Haverhill was, as late as about 1810, famous for making shod-shovels.

The manure-forks were of iron, very heavy, with long handles like a pitch-fork handle.

Hoes were made by common blacksmiths, of iron and laid with steel, and were frequently new-steeled.

The scythe-snaths were either straight or with a natural bend, and home-made. Probably there were none manufactured by being steamed and bent previous to 1810.

The rakes were also of home manufacture, and much

heavier than the modern ones. The first that my father had of a different kind was a Shaker rake in 1808.

The pitch-forks were iron and very heavy and clumsy at that, steel ones not being used much before 1830. My grandfather's, made about 1762, are yet in good condition.

WAGONS.

When wagons were first introduced into Chester is not known. The first that I have seen any mention of a wagon is August, 1797. Lieut. Josiah Underhill charges Joseph Hall with "binding of wagon wheels," and in October of the same year, credits Mr. Hall for his "wagon to Haverhill, 3s. 6d." It appears from Lieut. Underhill's accounts, that soon after that time he had a wagon built himself, and often let it to others. Simon M. Sanborn says that the first ox-wagon in that part of the town was owned by his grandfather, John Hoit, he thinks, not more than sixty-five years ago. Capt. Noah Weeks, born 1790, says that the first ox-wagon on the street was procured by Mr. Sweetser to draw his store-goods on; and that he had taken eight barrels of cider on a cart with bags of apples on the top, and driven the team to Newburyport. It is related of one Moses Williams of Sandown, that he procured an ox-wagon to move a family from Danvers, and that he lay awake the night before starting, planning how he should turn his wagon when he arrived there.

The mode of drawing boards on one pair of wheels was to have "drafts,"—a spire about twenty feet long spread very wide, pinned on the top of the axletree and extending back four or five feet, so that the boards were to bear on the drafts before and behind and not tip on the axletree. On such a vehicle large quantities of boards were drawn to Haverhill and Sweat's Ferry. It has been done within my own recollection by my father.

The earliest light, one-horse wagons were about the year 1810. Deacon Walter Morse says that he had the first one in Chester, about 1811. They were rather rough and

heavy, the body on the axletrees, without thorough-braces or springs. The first gig-wagon in the Long Meadows was owned by Deacon James Wason, I think, about 1812. John Ordway, Esq., says the first he ever saw or heard of was made by Samuel Smith, of Hampstead, about 1809 or 1810. Before this, a few of the wealthiest had a heavy, clumsy, square-top chaise. In 1805 there were about twenty persons taxed in Chester for a chaise. The tire of wheels was formerly cut in pieces the length of the felloes, and nailed on. The whole or hoop-tire came into use with the gig-wagon. The first on ox cart wheels was about 1820. Short boxes were used,—for cart wheels, about three inches long, and for light wheels about two inches. The pipe boxes and iron axletrees, I think, were not used previous to 1820. The boxes were then made with a chamber, so as not to bear in the middle. They were not made without a chamber before 1830.

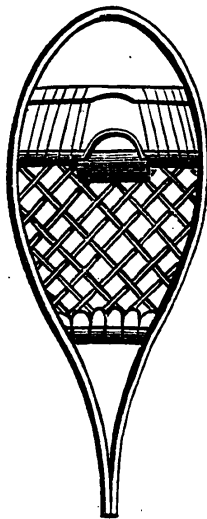
Most of the traveling was done on horseback, and frequently *double*,—the man before, and the woman on the *pillion* behind. Much transportation, especially of small and light articles, such as bottles, jugs, sugar and butter-boxes, was done in saddle-bags. Most of the going to mill was also on horseback. Sometimes larger and heavier articles were transported long distances. When Wells Chase built his house in 1771, he brought windows ready glazed on horseback from Newbury. When he built a pair of cart-wheels in 1780, he and another man went to Deerfield for the iron on horseback. I find on his account-book a charge, “By myself and horse to Deerfield, 4£ 16s., Old Tenor, to E. Fitts;” also for a day “tiring the wheels.”

This iron was made in Deerfield by Daniel Ladd, on the Lamprey river, about a mile above Robinson’s mills, South Deerfield. The ore was the bog ore, and was dug near the base of Saddleback mountain, and near Northwood line, and transported to the furnace. The quality was indifferent, containing sulphur, or some other foreign substance, which made it difficult to weld; but it answered a purpose, the supply from the mother country being cut off by the war.

It is related of Deacon Jonathan Hall, that when he visited his daughter, the wife of Deacon Joseph Dearborn, at Rumney, he carried her a bag of meal on horseback. When Jonathan, the son of Deacon Jonathan Hall, moved to Rumney with his wife and child, they went on horseback with two horses, and carried their bed and cooking utensils, and a child. She sometime—probably afterwards—carried a linen-wheel before her on horseback to Rumney.

SNOW-SHOES.

Snow-shoes were much used in traveling on foot on deep snows, and, presenting so large a surface, prevented slumping. The following description and the annexed cut are made from a pair of snow-shoes which my grandfather bought about one hundred and five years ago, which are now in good condition:



The snow-shoe consisted of a piece of tough, hard wood, generally about seven-eighths of an inch thick, bent at the front part in a semicircle about sixteen inches in diameter, and the hinder part elongated, so that the ends came together side by side, and were riveted and loaded with a small piece of lead, so that when walking that end would trail on the snow. The extreme length was three feet. Near each end, and tenoned into the bow, were flat pieces of hard wood, to which, and to the bow, was fastened a strong netting of leather or green-hide. The foot was fastened near the toe by means of a leather strap and strings, while the heel was left free. A man used to them would travel with great ease, some said easier than on bare ground without.

In 1703 Captain Tyng raised a company of volunteers at Dunstable, and marched to Winnipiseogee against the Indian enemy on snow-shoes, for which the survivors had

a grant of land from the General Court of Massachusetts in 1736, lying on the east side of Merrimack river, three miles wide, extending from Litchfield to Suncook, which was called "Tyngstown." Once within my recollection my father took a bushel of corn on his shoulder and traveled on snow-shoes to Blanchard's mill, a distance of two miles and a half. I have, many times since I have kept house, traveled across to the Long Meadow meeting-house to meeting on snow-shoes. I have heard my grandmother tell of being caught out in a snow-storm at a childbirth, or other occasion, and walking home on snow-shoes.

BLACKSMITHS.

The blacksmiths did all kinds of work. They not only did the jobbing, such as shoeing, forging chains, plow-irons, &c., but made the axes and hoes, shod the shovels and made scythes. Slitting-mills were not common, and they took the Russia and Swede's bars and split them with a chisel, and drew the iron to its proper size and shape.

Swings for shoeing oxen, I think were not used much, if any, before 1810, and not uniformly used until a much later date. A bed of straw was prepared; the ox was thrown down and turned upon his back; a man sat and held his head; the fore and hind legs were drawn and lashed together, so that they crossed each other between the knee and ankle, and were shod in that position. Lieut. Josiah Underhill used to prepare the shoes and nails, and go up to Deacon Kelly's and in his stable shoe all the oxen from there to Martin's and White Hall. I find on Lieut. Underhill's ledger, 1798, charges for "a scythe, 6s.; laying a broad-axe, 9s.; laying a hoe, 2s. 6; two new hoes, 9s.; shoeing a shovel, 3s.; laying an axe, 3s.; a crooked shave, 3s.; new axe, 8s.; breasting a mill-saw, 1s. 4. [The saw was of iron, and when worn so as to be hollow on the breast, was heated, and the back struck on the anvil and so straighted.] Cutting new teeth on a mill-saw, 3s."

SCYTHES.

Although Lieut. Josiah Underhill, and perhaps other blacksmiths, made scythes, a large portion of those used in Chester must have been brought from abroad; and although not particularly relating to the history of Chester, some facts may be worth preserving, and illustrate the history of the times.

Maj. Benjamin Osgood made scythes by hand at Methuen about fifty or sixty years ago. He was a very powerful man to work, and of great endurance; and he once told me that he had worked from four o'clock in the morning till eight at night, with two sledgemen, who took turns in blowing and striking. They took Russia bars and split them up with a chisel, and also the steel, and they would make eight scythes in a day, so that four scythes would be a very large day's work to make. The earliest scythes that I recollect were stamped with the name of "Waters."

Sutton, now Millbury, Mass., was a great place for making scythes, and I have the following facts from Mr. Nathaniel Waters, an aged man, through his grandson. He says that the first scythes made in this country were made at Salem, Mass., about the year 1700, entirely by hand. Quite early a man by the name of Putnam commenced making scythes by hand on Putnam Hill, in Sutton. There was an act of Parliament cited in the history of McMurphy's mill, in this work, forbidding the use of tilt-hammers. Putnam, to evade the law, as he supposed, ran one by horse-power many years. About 1770 Deacon Asa Waters erected a shop in Sutton, and ran tilt-hammers in violation of the law, and several other shops were built in that region about 1795. The "Waters" scythes and "Sutton" scythes, much used in Chester from fifty to sixty-five, or more, years ago, came from there.

COOPERS.

Coopers' work was of course done by hand and with coarse tools. The earliest howel for crozing the staves for the head, which I ever saw, was a small adz with the edge curved and a short handle, somewhat resembling in shape a shoe-hammer. When I was a lad they had one at Dea. Morse's with which we used to crack nuts. This gave way before my day to a crooked shave or drawing-knife, with an iron shank for the right hand in the barrel, and a handle for the left outside. About 1815 the stock howel, a kind of heel-plane with a curved iron, was introduced. At that time and later, a large business was done at fish barrels, also on beef barrels; and of course staves and hoop-poles were quite an article of traffic, as they were before that time. It appears by Lieut. Underhill's ledger, mentioned under the head of "Blacksmith," that he took them in pay for his work and hired them drawn to Haverhill and Newbury.

For a season, making "shooks" was quite a business. They were red-oak hogsheads for molasses, set up, trussed, pared and howeled, and taken down and bundled and sent to the West Indies. But so many unskillful men and cheats went into it that they ran it under. Corresponding with this was making hoops to go with these shooks. Making staves and heading was once quite a business, as was also cutting hoop-poles. Wood land was owned by non-residents, and the old hoop-pole men were not over-particular about their lines. One of them had a novice at the business helping him one day, who inquired if they had not got to his line; he replied, "My line always goes till sunset, sir." Rum, beef and fish barrels, also molasses hogsheads, were made in Chester, and large quantities of stock carried to Haverhill, Newbury and other places and sold.

There were no pail- and tub-factories,—all was done by hand. When we consider the enormous quantities of such articles turned out at these establishments now, we are led

to wonder what is done with them on the one hand, and how our ancestors got along on the other. Their work was from the best materials and was heavy and substantial, and was carefully used. My grandmother was married in 1760, and soon went on to a farm, and procured a cheese-tub and milk-pail which were in use long after my recollection, I think till her death in 1814, — at least fifty years.

HATS.

The wool for hats had first to be carded by hand and then "bowed." The bow was a catgut line fastened to a wooden bow, similar in form to an Indian's bow, which was struck by a wooden pin and snapped into the wool, which threw it into a light mass into the desired form. The bowing was quite a trade to learn. Probably "Hatter" Underhill was the earliest hatter in town, afterwards Daniel Greenough, Perley Ayer, Stiles, Daniel Langmaid and James French.

POPLAR AND PALMLEAF HATS.

Daniel Pressy was a wool-hatter, and resided below Ingalls' hill where Francis Chase now lives in Sandown, and had a brother-in-law by the name of Mason Lincoln, also a hatter, who worked with him, who was the inventor, or brought the art of getting out the stuff and making the hats. A gauge with several spurs at suitable intervals, from one-sixteenth to one-eighth of an inch, was passed heavily over a piece of poplar wood about eighteen inches long, then a jointer with the iron lying very flat cut the stuff off, which was braided with seven strands and sewed into hats. Mr. Lincoln and Micajah Rogers, who lived where John Hunkins lately lived, got up a set of tools, and commenced the business of getting out the stuff. Jonathan Bond, who lived where Ezekiel Currier now lives, got sight of the tools, some said clandestinely, and did a great business in getting out the stuff. It was at first a great secret, but it soon became an open one. This was in 1806, and

the first hats sold for fifty cents each. It became a great business in all the region, nearly all the women and children going into it, and all of the traders dealing in the hats. They were sent South and West in vast quantities. The price of common coarse hats eventually came down to four or five cents each. They were very light,—good summer hats, and in a rain would swell so as not to leak badly. The business was however overdone as to quantity and quality. William Hazelton of Chester, and John Ordway of Hampstead, dealt largely in these hats, and happened to be in Boston together in March, 1827. A dealer who purchased of them had just imported some palmleaf, and got a man by the name of King, from Rhode Island, to instruct in the art of making hats. They purchased stock and hired Mr. King to come up and instruct the girls at two dollars each. Mr. Hazelton and Mr. Ordway had twelve or fourteen girls each to learn the trade. From this beginning it became a great business. The leaf was then split with a knife by hand, and the hats were pressed by hand. For the fine hats they then furnished stock and paid one dollar each for making, and sold in Boston for one dollar and fifty cents. They were sent to South America and sold there for five dollars each.

These facts are communicated by Mr. Ordway. Since writing the above, I have received the following account from Mr. Jabez Boyden, of South Dedham, aged about eighty years. He says that the first he ever knew of the palmleaf-hat business was in 1823 or '4, he does not remember which. He was engaged in the sennit or braided-hat manufacture, and used to peddle them in Rhode Island. One day at a tavern in Newport, some one asked him why he did not hire a man by the name of King, whom he knew in that place, who knew how to make palmleaf hats braided whole. The man King said he had been a sailor, and had been captured by the Spaniards and put in prison where he learned to braid palmleaf hats. Mr. Boyden hired Mr. King to come to South Dedham and teach the girls to make them. He says that the first hat cost him

fifty dollars. After he got everything ready he had to give five dollars for the first hat to new beginners, and one dollar each afterwards. The hats sold at from three to ten dollars each, according to quality. After Mr. King had worked for him three or four months, some one from New Hampshire offered him great pay to go there and teach the girls. He went and was gone a few months and returned. Mr. King was dissipated and would not work when he had money. About the time Mr. King came to South Dedham, a woman at Dedham Centre took an old hat to pieces and learned to make them, made one for her husband and claimed to be the first to invent the art of making them, and threatened to sue Mr. Boyden for infringing upon her rights. He got his first leaf from South Carolina, but it was not strong, so they chartered a schooner from Salem to go to Cuba and get a cargo. The first lot of hats he sent to New York was sold wholesale at two dollars and fifty cents each.

POTASH.

The boiling of potash was quite a business in early times. The early inhabitants burnt good hard, green wood, in an open fire, and made good ashes and an abundance of them, and nearly every trader took in ashes in pay for goods. I think that Col. Webster was a manufacturer. I find in merchant Blasdell's ledger, date 1770, an account of what his potash cost. The "potash Citals" were three hundred and twenty pounds; bringing "the Citals from Haverhill," twelve pounds. The whole expense was six hundred and six pounds, equal to one hundred and one dollars. Robert Calfe made potash, and paid ninepence per bushel for ashes. In 1790 Samuel Shirley had a potash manufactory near the pond and paid eight pence per bushel for ashes. Afterwards George Bell, son of William, had a store on the east side of the road, opposite the pond, and made potash where Mr. Shirley had done. For a long period after John Bell came to Chester he had a manufactory, which I think was the last in Chester.

CLOCKS.

The early inhabitants had few clocks. The people were poor, and clocks were scarce and dear. As a substitute, sun-dials were used. The dials were made of pewter with a triangular piece called the "gnomon" placed on the meridian to cast a shadow, and the circumference was graduated to show the hours. The English school-books then used gave rules for dialing. But dials were useless in the night and in cloudy weather.

The earliest clocks were of English manufacture, and some had only an hour hand and struck but once at each hour. One, apparently very ancient, was owned by Dea. Richard Haselton, and afterwards by his son Thomas. I am informed by the Rev. T. H. Miller that there were clocks made in Portsmouth about one hundred and fifty years ago, and that there was a clock-maker there by the name of Fitz, who flourished about one hundred years ago and later. There was a David Blasdell of Amesbury, born in 1712, who was a clock-maker. I have seen several of his clocks, one with the date 1741 on it. His son Isaac came to Chester in 1762 and carried on the clock-making business until his death in 1791.

The clocks were of brass, rather heavily made, and to run one day. The line was of linen, passing over grooved wheels armed with points to prevent slipping. One line and one weight carried both time and striking. Chester people and others were supplied with these clocks as far as they were able to purchase. My grandfather, Wells Chase, made a great effort, and in 1788 purchased one, for which he paid twenty dollars for the movement, and had the case made. He paid a part of the purchase in wood at eight shillings per cord, drawn to Chester, where John West now lives. Col. Stephen Dearborn had one about the same time with the name of Mr. Blasdell's son Richard on it. My grandfather's is yet good, and I have it running. Mr. Blasdell made a few eight-day clocks near the close of his

life. There was a Simon Willard, of Roxbury, Mass., who was a celebrated clock-maker, but I believe none of his clocks came to Chester. Timothy Chandler, of Concord, born April 25, 1762, first learned the trade of card-making, (wool cards) and at the expiration of his apprenticeship traveled on foot from Pomfret, Conn., about 1784. He did not go into card-making, but hired a man by the name of Cummings, who was an apprentice to Mr. Willard, and set up clock-making in Concord, and did a large business. He made eight-day clocks of a lighter and better finish than the Blasdell clocks. Several of these clocks came to Chester.

It may not be improper to give here a short description of the manner in which clock work was once done, which I have from Abiel Chandler, son and successor to Maj. Timothy Chandler. The wheels were cast blank and the teeth were cut on a gear engine which was turned with one hand and the tool held down with the other. The teeth were rounded up with a file. The pinions were imported cut, but the lever had to be rounded with a file. Mr. Chandler, however, thinks that on the earlier pinions the teeth were sawed out by hand. The pivots were turned in a lathe composed of a spring pole overhead with a line passing from it and around the piece to be turned, to a treadle operated by the foot, so that when the treadle was borne down the piece turned towards the operator and his tool would cut, the spring of the pole carried it back again. Sometimes, in such light work as clock-making, a bow similar to a fiddle bow was used, the string passing round the piece to be turned, and operated by one hand and a file held on by the other. I think the spring pole and treadle was the only lathe then in use by chair makers and cabinet makers. Tobias Cartland, of Lee, born 1765, did quite a business at chair making, and got out and carried a great deal of stuff to Portsmouth on horseback, and his lathe was standing two or three years ago. Mr. Chandler says that when Low & Damon set up chair making in Concord, in 1806, and for several years after, they used such a lathe. Levi and Abel Hutchins, of Concord, learned their trade of

Mr. Willard and set up the business there about 1788, perhaps a little later than Maj. Chandler. The first, or one of the first clocks made by Abel Hutchins, is now owned by his grandson, and is running. The dial or face was made of an old brass kettle. Quite a number of their clocks came to Chester and sold for from fifty to sixty dollars each. They were well made and in well finished cases, and some of them at the top of the face showed the phases of the moon. Levi Hutchins, in his autobiography, says that probably he and his brother Abel made the first brass clocks that were made in New Hampshire, but Isaac Blasdell made clocks in Chester twenty-five years before they did in Concord.

James Critchet, of Candia, was a man of great mechanical genius. When a young man he saw a clock which had a cuckoo that crowed instead of striking, which excited his curiosity, and he made quite a number of wooden clocks which ran twenty-four hours; one he made for Dea. Abraham Bean, and altered it to an eight-day clock. Making wooden clocks was not much of a business previous to 1820. From 1820 to 1830 the Connecticut clocks were hawked about the country by peddlers, and the movement sold for about twenty dollars, and many of them were put up in a corner of the room and run for many years without a case, and did good service.

UMBRELLAS.

It is said that there were a few umbrellas used in France and England early in the eighteenth century, but were not common there until about 1775, and a few were imported, but were not common previous to the year 1800. I think the first owned in the Long Meadows was bought by my mother, in 1804, and is yet in existence. The first in Chester is said to have been bought by Josiah Morse, Jr., the precise date not known, but probably a little earlier. The first owned in Sandown is said to have been purchased by a daughter of Deacon Nathaniel French, soon after the death of her father, which occurred April 30, 1803, for which she paid five dollars.

VARIOUS ACCOUNTS.

In order to show how our ancestors lived, in what they trafficked, and the prices of articles, I make extracts from various old accounts :

Exeter, Nov. 14, 1754.

Rec^d of Mr. James Wilson, two thousand and a half of red oak hogs^d staves, at sixteen pounds old tenor, per thous^d.

JOHN GILMAN, Jr.

That would be five dollars and thirty-three cents per thousand, drawn to Exeter.

The next is from a ledger of "Merchant" Blasdell, who traded at Chester Street and did an extensive business, commencing in 1759. The money was old tenor, of which it would take six pounds to make a dollar. He charges Jesse Johnson with

	£	s.
200 board nails,	2	4
A pound of Coffee,	1	6
A gallon of Molasses,	3	0
A pound of alum,	0	12
A thousand of boards,	24	00

He gives credit for "30 primers, at £6 each ; 67 pair of buckles, large ones, at £1 : 10 ; small ones, at £1 : 5."

This seems to have been with a dealer, as it is all on one page :

	£	s.
2 doz. and three buttons,	1	16
3½ y ^{ds} of serg,	22	15
¼ y ^d buckram,		9
4½ y ^{ds} black shaloon,	12	7
½ y ^d cotton cloth,		1
Wife making a coat,	4	10
" " jacket and breeches,	9	00
Bed blanket,	15	00
2 gallons N. E. rum,	8	00
2 qts. W. I. rum,	3	00
4 lbs. sugar,	2	8
4 thousand shingles,	32	00
1 paper of pins,		15
A mug,	1	00
1 lb. powder,		2

Pewter bason,	3 10
An ounce of indigo,	18
1½ yard of broadcloth,	18 00
1½ lbs. cotton wool,	2 17
1 gallon of molasses,	3 00
2 bread pans,	1 4
1 pair of cards and a slate,	6 18
2 bushels of corn,	6 00
1 gill of rum,	1 10

He charges James Croset with articles "when you broke your leg."

From Wells Chase's account-book, 1771, Caleb Hall is charged "for self and oxen to Suncook, 12s." This was to the Catamount hill, in Allenstown, after mill-stones.

1791, Samuel Shirley is charged with "ashes at 8 pence per bushel." He is credited with "rum, at 1s. 4 per quart, and tobacco at 2 pence per yard." They had tobacco for chewing, called "pig-tail," which was twisted into a cord about five-sixteenths of an inch thick, and rolled into bundles and sold by the yard.

I will next give some items from a ledger of Lt. Josiah Underhill, commencing in 1797. The money is lawful, six shillings to the dollar. Although Mr. Underhill began very small at first (probably not far from 1780), his business was now large, extending to Daniel Davis and Jedediah Kimball, at White Hall in Hooksett, to John Clarke, Bricket and Murray, and to Dea. John Hills and Simon French, in Candia.

John Clarke is charged "for a mill-saw, £2: 8: 0; for breasting a saw, 1s., 4." Their saws were iron, and when worn hollow, were heated, and the back struck on the anvil and straightened. "Mending a mill-saw."

In 1799, Alexander and James Shirley were charged with "paying for a German mill-saw 13 dollars." This was probably one of the earliest steel saws. The Shirleys owned the Oswego mill. They are at the same time credited with "1000 boards at the mill, \$5.00." There are several saws charged which he made, and quite often breasted. Scythes are quite frequently charged, usually at

7s. 6d., or 8s. each; narrow axes, at 8s.; new steeling, 4s. to 5s.; new hoes, 5s., new steeling, 2s. 6d.; shoeing oxen, 7s. 6d.; horse, 5s. 4d. James and Silas Hunter are charged "to making an instrument to haul teeth, 2s. 6." So it seems that he made surgical instruments. Stephen Chase is charged with "a pair of corks for his boys, 1s. 4; shoeing a shovel, 2s. 6; for a gripe for the *shay*." Paul Adams is charged for "a hook and buckles for a sleigh harness and bits, 4s. 6." The hooks were attached to the leading lines to hitch to the bits. He is also charged with "making a *loggerhead*, 9d." They had a drink called *flip*, for cold weather, composed of rum and beer. The *loggerhead* was heated red hot, and immersed in the liquor to warm it and make it foam. There is work charged to the Folsoms, for "making and repairing their nail machinery." There are several charges for flax-comb teeth; mending and making cranks for linen wheels; spindles for woolen wheels, &c. He took much of his pay in barter. Heading was about four shillings per hundred, and staves about the same price. They were counted six score, or one hundred and twenty, to the hundred. They were then drawn to Haverhill at about four dollars per thousand. He took coals at six cents per bushel. There are frequent credits for loads of pine (pitch wood for lights).

From the account-book of Richard Dearborn the following prices are learned:

1811, rum, 70 cts.; molasses 60 cts.; scythe, \$1.00; salt, \$1.00; souchong tea, \$1.00. 1812, mowing 67 cts. per day; bark at Hampstead, \$6.00 per cord; cotton, 23 cts.; sugar, 17 cts.; dry pine wood, \$2.00 per cord at Chester; calico, 34 cts.; glass, 9 cts. per light. 1815, war prices, N. E. rum, \$1.33; nails, 12 1-2 cts.; scythe, \$1.00. 1816, N. E. rum, 67 cts. 1817, rye was two dollars, in consequence of the cold season of 1816. James French is credited for a "napt hat," \$4.00; a wool one, \$1.75. 1815, James Wason is credited with a "four-wheel carriage to Deerfield." This was the first gig-wagon at the Long Meadows.

From B. P. Chase's book: 1804, Polly Blasdel is cred-

ited with twenty-one weeks' work — housework and nursing — \$10.50, and with an umbrella (the first in the Long Meadows and yet in a condition to be used), \$3.00. She is charged with "a yard and a half of baize, 75 cts.; Pair of calf skin shoes, 1.12; Six yards of calico and a fan, 2.06; Five yds. drugget, 2 1-4, checked, 3.50."

1803 to 1806, another girl, who worked for fifty cents per week, is charged: "Horse and side-saddle to Bow, 16 miles, 83 cts.; Sheeting, 50 cents, & India cotton, 42 cts.; [This India cotton was a very coarse and thin cloth, not so good as the lowest priced shirting of the present day] 1 1-2 yds. striped linen for a loose gown, 50; 8 yards of calico, at 3s. 8, and a pair of mitts, 5.65; 4 yds. of woolen cloth for a great coat, & making, 4.83; one pair silk gloves, 1.08, 1 pr. calf.skin shoes, 1.04,— 2.12; 6 yds. cotton and linen cloth, 3.00; Yellow baize, 42 cts. per yard."

In 1819 he charges another girl, who, I have good reason to know, was one of the very best, who worked for sixty-seven cents per week at house-work, including spinning, milking, and nursing an invalid woman, "1 pair cow-hide shoes, 1.34; 1 pair calf-skin shoes, 1.42; 1 pair morocco shoes, 1.57."

THE DATE OF SOME OF THE HOUSES IN CHESTER.

Capt. Samuel Ingalls was the first settler, had the first child born, and built the first framed house about 1732, which was taken down several years since to give place to the one where Humphrey Niles lives, on Walnut Hill. Probably the oldest house now standing is the old Fitts house. Dea. Ebenezer Dearborn deeded to his son Benjamin home lot No. 132, in 1735, and he is rated for a D (two-story) house in 1741, and the house was probably built between those periods. Dearborn sold to Nathan Fitts, in 1767. Lt. Ebenezer Dearborn was married in 1730 or '31, and the L part of the house (where James R. Gordan lives) probably was his first house, and older than the Fitts house. He afterwards built the front part, date not known. Francis Hills says that the house where Benjamin Hills lives, built by his great grandfather, Benjamin, Sen.,

was a garrison, and that the port holes may yet be seen through the boarding, though covered on the outside with clapboards. If that be the fact it was probably built as early as 1750. Wells Chase and a fellow apprentice by the name of Moses Haskall took their tools on their backs, at Newbury, and came to Chester and built a house for Stephen Morse, in 1755, being the old part of the house where Gilman Morse now lives. The L part of the John Bell house, where William Greenough lives, was built by the Rev. Mr. Flagg; time not known, but probably as early as 1750 or '60. It was moved back, and the front part built by John Bell, Esq., in 1806. Col John Webster built what is now Bachelder's hotel, in 1761.

Probably the oldest house in Auburn was built by Joseph Calfe, who was married in 1746, and it might have been built previous to that, or they might have lived awhile in a log house. Barnard Bricket built the house where his grandson David P. Bricket lives, in 1766. Wells Chase built a one-story house where his grandson, Pike Chase, lives, in 1771; second story added in 1828. Col. Stephen Dearborn built a house the north side of the Borough road, east of the saw-mill, in 1761, but soon moved it on to the hill, and it is a part of the L or low part of the present house. The front, or two-story part, was built in 1776 or 1777. Samuel Murray lived in the cellar kitchen while building his house in 1781. Isaac Blasdel built the house in which John West lives; Lt. Josiah Underhill and Jacob Chase built houses in 1785. Tappan Webster built where Mr. Orcutt lives, in 1787.

1788. William Hicks built where Woodbury Masters lives.

1791. Dr. Benjamin Page's house was burnt, April 5; a new frame raised April 30, sold to Joseph Robinson, who finished it.

1793. Alexander Eaton built the house opposite the Long Meadow meeting-house.

1794. Dr. Thomas Sargent built his house where John White lately lived. Cornet Isaac Lane built where his son Isaac lives.

1796. Nathaniel Woods and Joseph Linn built at the Long Meadows, and the Rev. N. Bradstreet where John W. Noyes lives.

1798. Samuel Underhill built where Geo. S. Underhill lives.

1799. Amos Kent built where Mrs. Aiken lately lived.

1800. Daniel French, Esq., built his house. Joseph Wetherspoon built where Henry Moore lives. It has been occupied by Moses Emerson, Charles Goss, John Bryant, and others.

1804. Gilbert Morse built what has been the Congregational parsonage, where Sarah Robinson lives.

1807. Jacob Elliott built about this year.

1808. Thomas Anderson built where his son Samuel now lives, in Auburn. Capt. David Hall built where Hazen Davis lives, in Auburn. Joseph Mills built about this year.

1809. Benjamin Hills built at the John Powel place, where Daniel Wilson lately lived. He had not moved into it before the cold Friday, January 19, 1810, and the wind moved it on its foundation.

1812. Josiah Haselton built where Lewis Kimball lives, on Walnut Hill.

1822. Thomas Coffin built where Rev. James Holmes lives.

1832. Jay T. Underhill built where Mr. Chamberlain now lives.

1833. Hon. Samuel Bell built his house.

FIRES OCCURRING, SO FAR AS ASCERTAINED.

Samuel Eastman and Samuel Eastman, Jr., house and goods, Candia, 1759; James Fullonton's house, Raymond, 1763; David Bean's mill and house burned in Candia; Dea. Richard Hazelton had his grist-mill burned, time not known; Jonathan Berry's house, April 15, 1786; Phillip Griffin's house, March, 1788; Nathaniel Head, two barns and six oxen, Nov. 25, 1788; John Crawford's house, July 10, 1789; Dr. Page's house and barn, April 5, 1791; Joseph Blanchard's clothier's shop, July 10, 1795; Capt.

Locke's saw-mill, March 27, 1796; Haselton's barn, October, 1799; John Haselton's house, June 14, 1800; Daniel True's house, Jan. 6, 1801; James Stevens' blacksmith-shop, Dec. 12, 1801; Silas Cammet's house, May 1, 1802; Moses Preston's shop, Sept. 7, 1805; John Melvin's blacksmith-shop, Dec. 11, 1807; Capt. Fitts's blacksmith-shop, Jan. 7, 1814; John Clark's house, July 15, 1818; William Coult's fulling-mill, and two carding-machines and clothiers' tools, 1820; Samuel Anderson's tavern-stand in Candia, including a large two-story house with L, a large stable and barn, and all of the contents, including twenty-three horses and eleven swine, Oct., 1821; the house of the widow of Robert Forsaith at Walnut Hill, May, 1822; the saw-mill and grist-mill of Samuel Hook and Sebastian Spofford, April, 1825; the grist-mill and old nail-shop at the Blanchard mills owned by Col. S. D. Wason, burned in the fall of 1825; the house of John French of Candia, April 21, 1831; Zaccheus Colby's house, May 24, 1837; Candia meeting-house, Jan. 25, 1838; Jesse J. Underhill's edge-tool shop, 1841; the Hall grist-mill, owned by Noah Clark, about 1845; the Knowles saw-mill, 1847; Ephraim Kelly's house and shop, April 25, 1850; William P. Underhill's barn and L to his house, Sept. 20, 1850; John Moore and John Wason's saw- and shingle-mill, 1851; Samuel Colby's house and barn, March 2, 1853; Hale True's house, formerly the house of Robert Wilson, Esq., 1853; Richards and Greenough's store, and school-house No. 1, Dec. 28, 1856; William P. Underhill's house and barn, Dec. 20, 1857; Capt. Moses Haselton's barn by lightning, 1862; Pollard's steam saw-mill, 1864; the Perley Chase house, June, 1867.

TREES.

Paul and Sylvanus Smith came from Hampton to Chester about 1730. Soon after making an opening they brought from Hampton some apple-trees on horseback and set out, one of which bore a peck of apples in 1868. A large elm at the Templeton place, at the Long Meadows, was set out when Matthew was just large enough to steady it, probably

about 1745. Barnard Bricket came to Chester in 1765, and the great elm, whose top now extends eighty-five feet, and whose trunk at four feet from the ground, which is its smallest place, girts about fourteen feet, was then a small sapling, which he then pruned. It has several large branches, so that it is larger ten or twelve feet from the ground. The elm at Isaac Lane's was either a sapling growing there when Cornet John Lane came there in 1749 or set soon after. The elms in front of the French office, opposite the house, were set by H. F. French about 1829. The other trees above the old Melvin place were set by Mr. French, aided by T. J. Melvin and others, from 1831 to 1834. Those opposite the Melvin place were set by Mr. Melvin and John White in 1843. The trees on the Haverhill road, near where the old Baptist church stood, were set by Silas F. Learnard in 1845. The three elms nearest the house of the writer, were set by Benjamin Chase, Jr., in 1855. The other elms and maples were set a year or two later. The maples in front of the house were set in 1867.

CHAPTER XVI.

TOWN OFFICERS, OR THE OFFICIAL HISTORY.

It may not be improper, preliminary to giving a list of town officers, to say something about the duties of some that have become obsolete. There probably were laws on the subject previous to those I have examined.

DEER INSPECTORS.

It was supposed to be beneficial to preserve the deer and to destroy the wolves, though deer, being the natural game of the wolf, probably had a strong tendency to preserve the wolves.

By an act of the 14th of George II, it is enacted that no deer shall be killed from the last day of December to