HOW TO DO IT

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Chapter I.

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Introductory.--How We Met.

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The papers which are here collected enter in some detail into the success and failure of a large number of young people of my acquaintance, who are here named as

Alice Faulconbridge,
Bob Edmeston,
Clara,
Clem Waters,
Edward Holiday,
Ellen Liston,
Emma Fortinbras,
Enoch Putnam, *brother of* Horace,
Esther,
Fanchon,
Fanny, *cousin to* Hatty Fielding
Florence,
Frank,
George Ferguson (Asaph Ferguson's *brother*),
Hatty Fielding,
Herbert,
Horace Putnam,
Horace Felltham (*a very different person*),
Jane Smith,
Jo Gresham,

Laura Walter,
Maud Ingletree,
Oliver Ferguson, *brother to* Asaph *and* George,
Pauline,
Rachel,
Robert,
Sarah Clavers,
Stephen,
Sybil,
Theodora,
Tom Rising,
Walter,
William Hackmatack,
William Withers.

It may be observed that there are thirty-four of them. They make up a very nice set, or would do so if they belonged together. But, in truth, they live in many regions, not to say countries. None of them are too bright or too stupid, only one of them is really selfish, all but one or two are thoroughly sorry for their faults when they commit them, and all of them who are good for anything think of themselves very little. There are a few who are approved members of the Harry Wadsworth Club. That means that they "look up and not down," they "look forward and not back," they "look out and not in," and they "lend a hand." These papers were first published, much as they are now collected, in the magazine "Our Young Folks," and in that admirable weekly paper "The Youth's Companion," which is held in grateful remembrance by a generation now tottering off the stage, and welcomed, as I see, with equal interest by

the grandchildren as they totter on. From time to time, therefore, as the different series have gone on, I have received pleasant notes from other young people, whose acquaintance I have thus made with real pleasure, who have asked more explanation as to the points involved. I have thus been told that my friend, Mr. Henry Ward Beecher, is not governed by all my rules for young people's composition, and that Miss Throckmorton, the governess, does not believe Archbishop Whately is infallible. I have once and again been asked how I made the acquaintance of such a nice set of children. And I can well believe that many of my young correspondents would in that matter be glad to be as fortunate as I.

Perhaps, then, I shall do something to make the little book more intelligible, and to connect its parts, if in this introduction I tell of the one occasion when the *dramatis personae* met each other; and in order to that, if I tell how they all met me.

First of all, then, my dear young friends, I began active life, as soon as I had left college, as I can well wish all of you might do. I began in keeping school. Not that I want to have any of you do this long, unless an evident fitness or "manifest destiny" appear so to order. But you may be sure that, for a year or two of the start of life, there is nothing that will teach you your own ignorance so well as having to teach children the few things you know, and to answer, as best you can, their questions on all grounds. There was poor Jane, on the first day of that charming visit at the Penroses, who was betrayed by the simplicity and cordiality of the dinner-table--where she was the youngest of ten or twelve

strangers--into taking a protective lead of all the conversation, till at the very last I heard her explaining to dear Mr. Tom Coram himself,--a gentleman who had lived in Java ten years,--that coffee-berries were red when they were ripe. I was sadly mortified for my poor Jane as Tom's eyes twinkled. She would never have got into that rattletrap way of talking if she had kept school for two years. Here, again, is a capital letter from Oliver Ferguson, Asaph's younger brother, describing his life on the Island at Paris all through the siege. I should have sent it yesterday to Mr. Osgood, who would be delighted to print it in the Atlantic Monthly, but that the spelling is disgraceful. Mr. Osgood and Mr. Howells would think Oliver a fool before they had read down the first page. "L-i-n, lin, n-e-n, nen, linen." Think of that! Oliver would never have spelled "linen" like that if he had been two years a teacher. You can go through four years at Harvard College spelling so, but you cannot go through two years as a schoolmaster.

Well, I say I was fortunate enough to spend two years as an assistant schoolmaster at the old Boston Latin School,--the oldest institution of learning, as we are fond of saying, in the United States. And there first I made my manhood's acquaintance with boys.

"Do you think," said dear Dr. Malone to me one day, "that my son Robert will be too young to enter college next August?" "How old will he be?" said I, and I was told. Then as Robert was at that moment just six months younger than I, who had already graduated, I said wisely, that I thought he would do, and Dr. Malone chuckled, I doubt not, as I did certainly, at the gravity of my answer. A nice set of boys I

had. I had above me two of the most loyal and honorable of gentlemen, who screened me from all reproof for my blunders. My discipline was not of the best, but my purposes were; and I and the boys got along admirably.

It was the old schoolhouse. I believe I shall explain in another place, in this volume, that it stood where Parker's Hotel stands, and my room occupied the spot in space where you, Florence, and you, Theodora, dined with your aunt Dorcas last Wednesday before you took the cars for Andover,--the ladies' dining-room looking on what was then Cook's Court, and is now Chapman Place. Who Cook was I know not. The "Province Street" of to-day was then much more fitly called "Governor's Alley." For boys do not know that that minstrel-saloon so long known as "Ordway's," just now changed into Sargent's Hotel, was for a century, more or less, the official residence of the Governor of Massachusetts. It was the "Province House."

On the top of it, for a weathercock, was the large mechanical brazen Indian, who, whenever he heard the Old South clock strike twelve, shot off his brazen arrow. The little boys used to hope to see this. But just as twelve came was the bustle of dismissal, and I have never seen one who did see him, though for myself I know he did as was said, and have never questioned it. That opportunity, however, was up stairs, in Mr. Dixwell's room. In my room, in the basement, we had no such opportunity.

The glory of our room was that it was supposed, rightly or not, that a part of it was included in the old schoolhouse which was there before the Revolution. There were old men still living who remembered the troublous times, the times

that stirred boys' souls, as the struggle for independence began. I have myself talked with Jonathan Darby Robbins, who was himself one of the committee who waited on the British general to demand that their coasting should not be obstructed. There is a reading piece about it in one of the school-books. This general was not Gage, as he is said to be in the histories, but General Haldimand; and his quarters were at the house which stood nearly where Franklin's statue stands now, just below King's Chapel. His servant had put ashes on the coast which the boys had made, on the sidewalk which passes the Chapel as you go down School Street. When the boys remonstrated, the servant ridiculed them,--he was not going to mind a gang of rebel boys. So the boys, who were much of their fathers' minds, appointed a committee, of whom my friend was one, to wait on General Haldimand himself. They called on him, and they told him that coasting was one of their inalienable rights and that he must not take it away. The General knew too well that the people of the town must not be irritated to take up his servant's quarrel, and he told the boys that their coast should not be interfered with. So they carried their point. The story-book says that he clasped his hands and said, "Heavens! Liberty is in the very air! Even these boys speak of their rights as do their patriot sires!" But of this Mr. Robbins told me nothing, and as Haldimand was a Hessian, of no great enthusiasm for liberty, I do not, for my part, believe it.

The morning of April 19, 1775, Harrison Gray Otis, then a little boy of eight years old, came down Beacon Street to school, and found a brigade of red-coats in line along

Common Street,--as Tremont Street was then called,--so that he could not cross into School Street. They were Earl Percy's brigade. Class in history, where did Percy's brigade go that day, and what became of them before night? A red-coat corporal told the Otis boy to walk along Common Street, and not try to cross the line. So he did. He went as far as Scollay's Building before he could turn their flank, then he went down to what you call Washington Street, and came up to school,--late. Whether his excuse would have been sufficient I do not know. He was never asked for it. He came into school just in time to hear old Lovel, the Tory schoolmaster, say, "War's begun and school's done. *Dimittite libros*"--which means, "Put away your books." They put them away, and had a vacation of a year and nine months thereafter, before the school was open again.

Well, in this old school I had spent four years of my boyhood, and here, as I say, my manhood's acquaintance with boys began. I taught them Latin, and sometimes mathematics. Some of them will remember a famous Latin poem we wrote about Pocahontas and John Smith. All of them will remember how they capped Latin verses against the master, twenty against one, and put him down. These boys used to cluster round my table at recess and talk. Danforth Newcomb, a lovely, gentle, accurate boy, almost always at the head of his class,--he died young. Shang-hae, San Francisco, Berlin, Paris, Australia,--I don't know what cities, towns, and countries have the rest of them. And when they carry home this book for their own boys to read, they will find some of their boy-stories here.

Then there was Mrs. Merriam's boarding-school. If you will read the chapter on travelling you will find about one of the vacations of her girls. Mrs. Merriam was one of Mr. Ingham's old friends,--and he is a man with whom I have had a great deal to do. Mrs. Merriam opened a school for twelve girls. I knew her very well, and so it came that I knew her ways with them. Though it was a boarding-school, still the girls had just as "good a time" as they had at home, and when I found that some of them asked leave to spend vacation with her I knew they had better times. I remember perfectly the day when Mrs. Phillips asked them down to the old mansion-house, which seems so like home to me, to eat peaches. And it was determined that the girls should not think they were under any "company" restraint, so no person but themselves was present when the peaches were served, and every girl ate as many as for herself she determined best. When they all rode horseback, Mrs. Merriam and I used to ride together with these young folks behind or before, as it listed them. So, not unnaturally, being a friend of the family, I came to know a good many of them very well.

For another set of them--you may choose the names to please yourselves--the history of my relationship goes back to the Sunday school of the Church of the Unity in Worcester. The first time I ever preached in that church, namely, May 3, 1846, there was but one person in it who had gray hair. All of us of that day have enough now. But we were a set of young people, starting on a new church, which had, I assure you, no dust in the pulpit-cushions. And almost all the children were young, as you may suppose. The first

meeting of the Sunday school showed, I think, thirty-six children, and more of them were under nine than over. They are all twenty-five years older now than they were then. Well, we started without a library for the Sunday school. But in a corner of my study Jo Matthews and I put up some three-cornered shelves, on which I kept about a hundred books such as children like, and young people who are no longer children; and then, as I sat reading, writing, or stood fussing over my fuchsias or labelling the mineralogical specimens, there would come in one or another nice girl or boy, to borrow a "Rollo" or a "Franconia," or to see if Ellen Liston had returned "Amy Herbert." And so we got very good chances to find each other out. It is not a bad plan for a young minister, if he really want to know what the young folk of his parish are. I know it was then and there that I conceived the plan of writing "Margaret Percival in America" as a sequel to Miss Sewell's "Margaret Percival," and that I wrote my half of that history.

The Worcester Sunday school grew beyond thirty-six scholars; and I have since had to do with two other Sunday schools, where, though the children did not know it, I felt as young as the youngest of them all. And in that sort of life you get chances to come at nice boys and nice girls which most people in the world do not have.

And the last of all the congresses of young people which I will name, where I have found my favorites, shall be the vacation congresses,--when people from all the corners of the world meet at some country hotel, and wonder who the others are the first night, and, after a month, wonder again how they ever lived without knowing each other as brothers

and sisters. I never had a nicer time than that day when we celebrated Arthur's birthday by going up to Greely's Pond. "Could Amelia walk so far? She only eight years old, and it was the whole of five miles by a wood-road, and five miles to come back again." Yes, Amelia was certain she could. Then, "whether Arthur could walk so far, he being nine." Why, of course he could if Amelia could. So eight-year-old, nine-year-old, ten-year-old, eleven-year-old, and all the rest of the ages,--we tramped off together, and we stumbled over the stumps, and waded through the mud, and tripped lightly, like Somnambula in the opera, over the log bridges, which were single logs and nothing more, and came successfully to Greely's Pond,--beautiful lake of Egeria that it is, hidden from envious and lazy men by forest and rock and mountain. And the children of fifty years old and less pulled off shoes and stockings to wade in it; and we caught in tin mugs little seedling trouts not so long as that word "seedling" is on the page, and saw them swim in the mugs and set them free again; and we ate the lunches with appetites as of Arcadia; and we stumped happily home again, and found, as we went home, all the sketch-books and bait-boxes and neckties which we had lost as we went up. On a day like that you get intimate, if you were not intimate before.

O dear! don't you wish you were at Waterville now?

Now, if you please, my dear Fanchon, we will not go any further into the places where I got acquainted with the heroes and heroines of this book. Allow, of those mentioned here, four to the Latin school, five to the Unity Sunday school, six to the South Congregational, seven to vacation

acquaintance, credit me with nine children of my own and ten brothers and sisters, and you will find no difficulty in selecting who of these are which of those, if you have ever studied the science of "Indeterminate Analysis" in Professor Smythe's Algebra.

"Dear Mr. Hale, you are making fun of us. We never know when you are in earnest."

Do not be in the least afraid, dear Florence. Remember that a central rule for comfort in life is this, "Nobody was ever written down an ass, except by himself."

Now I will tell you how and when the particular thirty-four names above happened to come together.

We were, a few of us, staying at the White Mountains. I think no New England summer is quite perfect unless you stay at least a day in the White Mountains. "Staying in the White Mountains" does not mean climbing on top of a stage-coach at Centre Harbor, and riding by day and by night for forty-eight hours till you fling yourself into a railroad-car at Littleton, and cry out that "you have done them." No. It means just living with a prospect before your eye of a hundred miles' radius, as you may have at Bethlehem or the Flume; or, perhaps, a valley and a set of hills, which never by accident look twice the same, as you may have at the Glen House or Dolly Cop's or at Waterville; or with a gorge behind the house, which you may thread and thread and thread day in and out, and still not come out upon the cleft rock from which flows the first drop of the lovely stream, as you may do at Jackson. It means living front to front, lip to lip, with Nature at her loveliest, Echo at her most mysterious, with Heaven at its brightest and Earth at its

greenest, and, all this time, breathing, with every breath, an atmosphere which is the elixir of life, so pure and sweet and strong. At Greely's you are, I believe, on the highest land inhabited in America. That land has a pure air upon it. Well, as I say, we were staying in the White Mountains. Of course the young folks wanted to go up Mount Washington. We had all been up Osceola and Black Mountain, and some of us had gone up on Mount Carter, and one or two had been on Mount Lafayette. But this was as nothing till we had stood on Mount Washington himself. So I told Hatty Fielding and Laura to go on to the railroad-station and join a party we knew that were going up from there, while Jo Gresham and Stephen and the two Fergusons and I would go up on foot by a route I knew from Randolph over the real Mount Adams. Nobody had been up that particular branch of Israel's run since Channing and I did in 1841. Will Hackmatack, who was with us, had a blister on his foot, so he went with the riding party. He said that was the reason, perhaps he thought so. The truth was he wanted to go with Laura, and nobody need be ashamed of that any day.

I spare you the account of Israel's river, and of the lovely little cascade at its very source, where it leaps out between two rocks. I spare you the hour when we lay under the spruces while it rained, and the little birds, ignorant of men and boys, hopped tamely round us. I spare you even the rainbow, more than a semicircle, which we saw from Mount Adams. Safely, wetly, and hungry, we five arrived at the Tiptop House about six, amid the congratulations of those who had ridden. The two girls and Will had come safely up by the cars,--and who do you think had got in at the last

moment when the train started but Pauline and her father, who had made a party up from Portland and had with them Ellen Liston and Sarah Clavers. And who do you think had appeared in the Glen House party, when they came, but Esther and her mother and Edward Holiday and his father. Up to this moment of their lives some of these young people had never seen other some. But some had, and we had not long been standing on the rocks making out Sebago and the water beyond Portland before they were all very well acquainted. All fourteen of us went in to supper, and were just beginning on the goat's milk, when a cry was heard that a party of young men in uniform were approaching from the head of Tuckerman's Ravine. Jo and Oliver ran out, and in a moment returned to wrench us all from our corn-cakes that we might welcome the New Limerick boat-club, who were on a pedestrian trip and had come up the Parkman Notch that day. Nice, brave fellows they were,--a little foot-sore. Who should be among them but Tom himself and Bob Edmeston. They all went and washed, and then with some difficulty we all got through tea, when the night party from the Notch House was announced on horseback, and we sallied forth to welcome them. Nineteen in all, from all nations. Two Japanese princes, and the Secretary of the Dutch legation, and so on, as usual; but what was not as usual, jolly Mr. Waters and his jollier wife were there,--she astride on her saddle, as is the sensible fashion of the Notch House,--and, in the long stretching line, we made out Clara Waters and Clem, not together, but Clara with a girl whom she did not know, but who rode better than she, and had whipped both

horses with a rattan she had. And who should this girl be but Sybil Dyer!

As the party filed up, and we lifted tired girls and laughing mothers off the patient horses, I found that a lucky chance had thrown Maud and her brother Stephen into the same caravan. There was great kissing when my girls recognized Maud, and when it became generally known that I was competent to introduce to others such pretty and bright people as she and Laura and Sarah Clavers were, I found myself very popular, of a sudden, and in quite general demand.

And I bore my honors meekly, I assure you. I took nice old Mrs. Van Astrachan out to a favorite rock of mine to see the sunset, and, what was more marvellous, the heavy thunder-cloud, which was beating up against the wind; and I left the young folks to themselves, only aspiring to be a Youth's Companion. I got Will to bring me Mrs. Van Astrachan's black furs, as it grew cold, but at last the air was so sharp and the storm clearly so near, that we were all driven in to that nice, cosey parlor at the Tiptop House, and sat round the hot stove, not sorry to be sheltered, indeed, when we heard the heavy rain on the windows.

We fell to telling stories, and I was telling of the last time I was there, when, by great good luck, Starr King turned up, having come over Madison afoot, when I noticed that Hall, one of those patient giants who kept the house, was called out, and, in a moment more, that he returned and whispered his partner out. In a minute more they returned for their rubber capes, and then we learned that a man had staggered into the stable half frozen and terribly frightened,