

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## LIFE IN THE COLONY.

**U**NTIL time allowed for the preparation of some kind of shelter, the vessels in which the early settlers came must have continued to be their abode, except for a few of the later immigrants who were without doubt taken into the cabins of their predecessors. A space of ground had to be cleared, and without delay logs felled, out of which a house of the rudest sort was constructed. If there were other hands to assist so much the better, but generally each man had all he could do to prepare a home for his own wife and children. Probably none of the earliest ordinary houses was more than one story in height, or contained more than one room; the upper part being an attic room open to the pitch roof of thatch, grass or bark, and reached by a movable ladder. A large chimney of stones was built on the outside at one end of the house, the lower portion forming a huge fireplace. The upper part of the chimney was often of wood. The windows were little more than holes a foot or two square, and the door was of plank hewn from the log. At first the ordinary log house had no cellar.

As ballast, ten thousand bricks and two loads of chalk were sent to Naumkeag in 1628. There were also sent a large quantity of nails, a barrel of red lead for painting, a ton of iron and two fagots of steel for the blacksmith to make into hinges, hasps, nails, etc. These various materials were worked into the early houses here. The imported bricks were used for hearths only. In the summer of 1629, a kiln for the burning of bricks and tiles was built by Thomas Trusler at what is now estate numbered four

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Trusler lived on the westerly side of Beckford Street. He was in Salem in 1638, and probably came in 1629. In 1649, he was excused from training on account of his age. He married Eleanor, widow of — Phelps. She may have been a Moulton, as he speaks of "father Moulton." He had a daughter in England in 1654. He died March 5, 1653-4, and she died before June, in the spring of 1655.

hundred and twenty-four Essex Street, as brick clay was found there in quantity. He continued the business at that place until his death, which occurred in 1654. This is lot numbered 1 on plan of the layout of the town in 1629 on page 313. It was this kiln to which Rev. Francis Higginson referred in his *New England's Plantation*, in 1629, when he wrote: "At this instant we are setting a Brick Kill on worke to make Bricketes and Tyles for the building of our Houfes." For more than a century this lot was known as "Brick kiln field," and after Boston Street was laid out (in 1640) and the ancient road came into disuse (in 1666), this part of Essex Street was called "Brick kiln lane." After the manufacture of bricks was begun here, there were few, if any, importations of bricks and tiles from England.

*Tho: Trusler*

The furnishings of the dwellings were at first primitive, but through the inventiveness and skill of the settlers and the speedy importations of necessary articles from Europe they soon improved. The clay floor of the first cabins was ornamented and more or less covered by carpets—some of which, according to the records, were striped; and within a decade Turkey carpets were to be found in some of the houses. There were red and green rugs and a white coarse rug, besides mats.

The family and guests slept in a row on the floor. If privacy were desired, blankets or sheets were hung to divide the room into compartments. Corded bedsteads were soon made, however, and the use of the trundle bed for the children gave more room, since it was pushed under the bed during the day. Upon the tightly-stretched cords of the bedstead was placed the canvas bed-tick, which was filled with feathers or straw and sometimes with flock (coarse wool waste), and on the bed were sheets of fine or coarse canvas, linen or Holland. Blankets were common and generally white, but coverlets were often mixed in color. Quilts must have been rare, as only one is mentioned in the inventories of the estates of Salem people before 1650. Bolster ticks were filled with flock or feathers, and sometimes enclosed in cases. Pillows were filled with feathers. Pillow beers (cases) were made generally of flax, but sometimes of Scotch cloth, and ornamented with tassels. The best bed was often made with a frame above it, from which curtains were suspended. A tufted valance was also hung around the bed. These were often made of green say material. Warming pans were used commonly to warm the chilly linen sheets upon retiring, and so are properly mentioned in connection with bed articles.