

**A YANKEE AMONG  
THE NULLIFIERS: AN  
AUTO-BIOGRAPHY**

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A Yankee Among the Nullifiers: An Auto-Biography by Elnathan Elmwood

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**ELNATHAN ELMWOOD**

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*Success, etc., 1788-1837.*

# A YANKEE

AMONG THE

# NULLIFIERS:

AN AUTO-BIOGRAPHY.

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BY ELNATHAN ELMWOOD, ESQ.

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And now the victor stretched his eager hand,  
Where the tall *Nothing* stood, or seemed to stand;  
A shapeless shade it vanished from his sight,  
Like forms in clouds, or visions of the night.  
*Pope's Dunciad.*

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TO THE

HONORABLE TRISTRAM BURGESS.

The friend of Equal Rights, the untiring champion of American Industry, and skilful defender of "YANKEE NOTIONS:" with admiration for his statesman-like qualities, his fearless oratory, and effective wit, this volume is respectfully dedicated, by

THE AUTHOR.

ELMWOOD RETREAT, }

Feb. 1, 1839. }

## PREFACE.

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In the numberless edifying stories related at the South, of the encounter of Northern and Southern wits, in the way of trade, one thing is constantly to be observed—namely, that the Southern man is caught by the artifices of the Northern one; he is the dupe. It follows of course, that the Yankee is the better man of the two; at least, here is an acknowledgment of the efficiency of his head, whatever may be alleged of the obliquity of his heart.

But these, it is to be recollected, are Southern pictures; and though abundantly flattering to the acuteness of the North, yet the lion is not the painter. The reader will doubtless bear this in mind in the perusal of the following pages; and if he find any story or anecdote of "Yankee tricks," bordering close upon the improbable, and at the same time not particularly complimentary to Yankee honesty, he will remember such anecdote is of Southern origin, and allow it as much credence as he can afford.



# A YANKEE

## AMONG THE NULLIFIERS.

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### CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION—BIRTH—EDUCATION—PROFESSIONAL STUDIES—FALLING IN LOVE.

THE Americans are essentially a moving people. A man cannot long be contented in the same spot ; and the son rarely stays and vegetates on the ground where his father flourished. This is particularly true of the people of New England. The tide of emigration is constantly flowing to the South and the West. Into one or the other of these currents, the sons of the pilgrims, led on by a spirit of enterprise, or a desire of change, are very apt to fall. Such was the case with me—but before I come to this part of my story, it may be well to say something of my birth, parentage, and education.

My ancestors, as far as I can discover, were among the first people in the world. I need not

say more ; and a proper regard for the dignity of my descent, would not permit me to say less. But whatever of fame or fortune my early progenitors might have enjoyed, either before or since the flood, it never came, to my certain belief, within twenty generations of me. Therefore I had to begin, as the lawyers say *de novo*, and be my own purveyor of whatever fortune or distinction I at present enjoy. But Hercules is ever ready to aid those who in earnest put their shoulder to the wheel.

I was born in Massachusetts, somewhere about forty miles from Boston, and somewhere about the beginning of the present century. Though my parents were in very humble circumstances, and could neither wear fine clothes nor afford them to their children ; they nevertheless had a proper sense of the value of that inward adorning, which as far surpasseth all outward show, as the productions of the ablest pen exceed the gilt leather in which they are enclosed. Accordingly they gave us—all they could—the opportunity of a common school education ; and taught us both by precept and example, the advantages of a pure and spotless life.

But a common school education did not satisfy me. I had heard of Colleges, where the pupil could quaff from the pure fountains of Greece and

Rome ; and I had set before me, as examples of learned perfection, the lawyer and the clergyman of our town, who seemed to my youthful fancy to be all that was great, not only in law and divinity, but likewise in ancient and modern lore.

Alas ! they were the last of the cocked hats and the bob wigs. The long grass now waves above them ; yet never shall I forget the admiration and the reverence wherewith I used to behold them and listen to their oracular tongues, the one, as he cited many a learned precedent in favour of his client's cause ; and the other, as he stood in the pulpit, giving me the best idea I have ever had of that passage in Homer,

“Shook his ambrosial curls and gave the nod,  
The stamp of fate, and sanction of a god :”

for such almost, if not quite, was the effect, in the days of my childhood, of the reverend appearance and sacred function of the pastor of the flock. But, with the silver-gray wig and three cornered hat, have passed away a great part of the awe and veneration, which once attached to the clerical character.

With such examples before me, to say nothing of other learned men whom I had chanced to read of, I resolved on going to College. But how was I to get there ? My father, as I have