

new floor laid there also. This was hardly finished (the last nails were just driven) when the steamer, with its large company, touched the wharf. There was barely time to arrange the seats and to place a table with flowers where the guests of honor were to sit, and Agassiz himself was to stand, when all arrived. The barn was, on the whole, not a bad lecture-room on a beautiful summer day. The swallows, who had their nests without number in the rafters, flew in and out, and twittered softly overhead; and the wide doors, standing broadly open to the blue sky and the fresh fields, let in the sea-breeze, and gave a view of the little domain. Agassiz had arranged no programme of exercises, trusting to the interest of the occasion to suggest what might best be said or done. But, as he looked upon his pupils gathered there to study nature with him, by an impulse as natural as it was unpremeditated, he called upon them to join in silently asking God's blessing on their work together. The pause was broken by the first words of an address no less fervent than its unspoken prelude.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the day, which had been anticipated

<sup>1</sup> This whole scene is fitly told in Whittier's poem, *The Prayer of Agassiz*.