

## THE WHITE MOUNTAINS

Of these places of entertainment some are still taking care of patrons as satisfactorily as ever without increased room, but many more have been either largely rebuilt or succeeded by more capacious and elegant houses on the same sites, while yet others have succumbed to the fire fiend and have never been rebuilt. Space can be taken to narrate the history of only a few of the more important of these establishments.

Systematic attempts at the development of Bethlehem as a summer resort began toward the close of the Civil War. In 1859, the Sinclair, now the leading hotel of Bethlehem village, was a small two-story and a half gable-roof house — a “well-kept stage tavern with a few rooms for boarders.” As business increased, additions had to be made from time to time and the older portions of the structure had to be modernized. Thus, the huge and commodious hostelry of to-day has developed by successive increments and alterations.

In 1863, the Honorable Henry Howard, of Providence, Rhode Island, who was afterward governor of that State, was visiting the region with a party, and, the coach in which he was coming down Mount Agassiz being overturned and most of its occupants severely injured, several weeks were necessarily spent in Bethlehem until the injured ones recovered sufficiently to go to their homes. During this stay Governor Howard spied out the land and was greatly impressed with the healthfulness and attractiveness of the village's location. Becoming convinced that Bethlehem had great possibilities as a summer re-



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sort, he made extensive purchases of land there, and showed his faith in the opinions he had formed as to the future of the place by selling building-lots on credit and by lending money to those who were disposed to go into the summer-hotel business.

When it was discovered that, in addition to its unusual general healthfulness, Bethlehem afforded speedy relief to visitors who were afflicted with hay-fever, a new element was added, for many people, to the charms of the place. The adoption of Bethlehem as the headquarters of the American Hay-Fever Association has made the fame of the village nation-wide.

Since the time of Governor Howard's activity in promoting the development of Bethlehem, houses for the care of summer boarders, who have become the town's chief, and indeed almost its only, source of revenue, have multiplied until they are counted by the score. The people of the town were, it is said, somewhat slow to appreciate their opportunity, but when, at length, the destiny of the place became evident to them, they were very willing to hasten its development, and provision was made for a water supply, sewer system, and other adjuncts necessary to make the village an attractive place of residence. The spirit of enterprise has ever since characterized the town and no steps have been left untaken to attract summer visitors. Bethlehem's frequenters number annually many thousands. In August and September, in the height of the hay-fever season, the village is the place of sojourn of many victims of this distressing malady, who return year after year, thus constituting a permanent clientèle for the hotels



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and boarding-houses, and there are also staying in the village many other people, who enjoy the wonderful air, the coolness, the fine views, and the pleasant life of this highest of New Hampshire villages.

Another man whose name has become indissolubly connected with Bethlehem was Isaac S. Cruft, a Boston merchant, who came to the village in 1871. His business sagacity made him realize the soundness of Governor Howard's belief as to the possibilities there and led him to acquire a large tract of land for summer-resort purposes. This property, known as the "Maplewood Farm," is situated about a mile east of the center of Bethlehem at the point on the highway to Fabyan where the Whitefield road joins it. The comfortable farmhouse then standing on this slightly location was remodeled and opened as a hotel. The new resort immediately sprang into favor. In 1876, Mr. Cruft erected on the site an elegant and spacious hotel, the celebrated Maplewood. Its magnificent distant view of the Presidential Range and the excellence of its appointments soon caused the hotel to grow into high favor, necessitating the building, in 1878, of a large addition. Maplewood, which has its own railroad station and post-office, a group of cottages, a large and attractive casino and spacious grounds, and which provides every comfort and luxury that can be thought of and facilities for all kinds of indoor and outdoor diversion, has long been a fashionable resort and has ever ranked among the foremost of the great Mountain hotels.