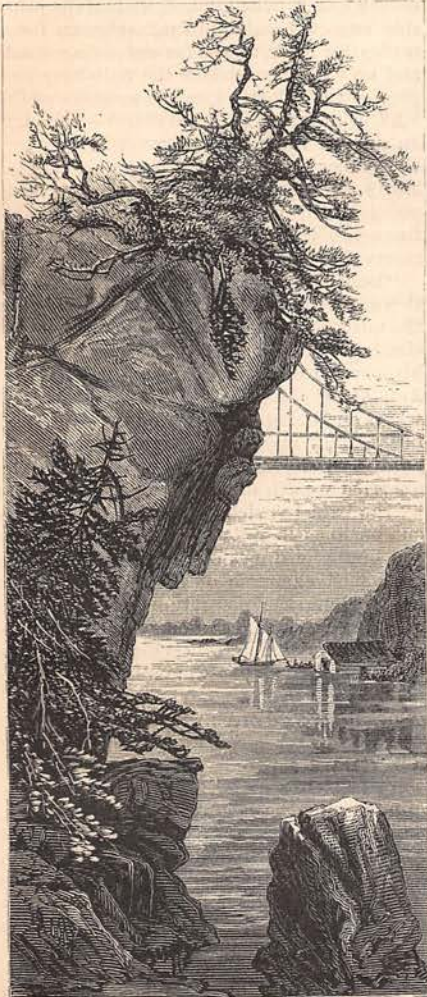


# HARPER'S NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

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## NEWBURYPORT AND ITS NEIGHBORHOOD.

By HARRIET PRESCOTT SPOFFORD.



DEER ISLAND, ON THE MERRIMAC.

**W**HETHER it be true or not, as Plutarch says, that the first essential of human happiness is to be born in a famous community, it has always been accepted as

a fact by the citizens of that old town whose rulers once changed its name to Portland, but whose people scorned to do so much as even to refuse the new name, but continue to the present day to call it Newburyport.

Though she were, indeed, famous for nothing else, Newburyport would have to be so for the excellence of her situation. For she lies on a ridge at the mouth of the Merrimac, and at the extremity of that long line of the Essex beaches, which are unrivaled for their splendor of scenery and their storied interest—a stretch of coast beginning with the surge-eaten cliffs of Nahant, that rise some hundred and fifty feet above the sea, the first of all our beaches chosen for pleasuring; running down the long Lynn shores, and over the bold Swampscott headland of Black Will's Rock, where the Atlantic blows and beats an open reach from Europe to America; down the beautiful Beverly beaches, and past the Singing Beach of Manchester, a wonder of the world, where the sands, owing to some singular conformation of the atoms, triturate against each other with a keen musical vibration; and then across the immense Cape Ann cliffs, till it ends, just beyond the Merrimac, in the smooth levels of the Salisbury Sands.

It is not, however, till you have threaded the stately Manchester forest, opening now on villas set in shaven lawns, and now on sea views—all the more charming if you should come on them when the scarlet fires of sunset are flying across them, and the many light-houses of the great bay are flaming up in the soft twilight and fluttering from their invisible towers; till you have skirted the gigantic rocks, where is doubtless the most picturesque portion of the whole range of coast, with short shingly beaches between the storm-rent crags, a fine surf rolling in in pleasant weather, and the tempests from no point being more magnificent—that you have your first glimpse of Newburyport. You hear the hammers of great quarries resounding in the woods; and turning at any of the countless outlooks, you see all the bright sea life upon the water's edge, the white sails of the fishing fleet, or of some



pilot-boat lying in wait on the horizon, or of a ship disappearing into a bank of vapor, till she stands like a dark phantom of herself shrouded in the mist. You have either doubled the cape, in all its bewildering wind-blown beauty, or have taken the rocky drive across its neck on a road which, lying so high and with such a multitude of meadows underneath—meadows in every variety of brilliant green and rusty red, interspersed with glittering arms of the sea, and still, silvery lagoons of salt-water repeating the sky—causes one to feel as if in a land of sorcery, traveling a road that hangs midway between earth and heaven; and it is just after you leave all this behind you that you see the light sparkling upon the spires of Newburyport, twelve miles away across the little bay.

Still approaching, you come where shines the snow-white Ipswich beach, not yet invaded by fashion, but with here and there a lonely tent; and opposite begin the nine miles of the sand hills of Plum Island—once known as Isle Mason—separated from the reedy shore by the waters of the sound, commonly called Plum Island River, into which empty numerous streams, while it makes a connection with the Merrimac a little way above the remarkably lovely mouth of the latter. This sound, which is the summer play-ground of Newburyport, stretches in great bow-knots of silver ribbon between beds of marsh, where the coarse thatch grows to the full height of the tide, so that its tips just twinkle against the light as you glide over them. At the flood it lies one broad mirror from shore to shore of these marshes, whose emerald-green is threaded by glistening creeks. Far down its distance lie the bare brown Ipswich hills, known as the Hundreds, and foams the white Ipswich bar; and while remote hills and woods encircle the matchless scene with azure hazes on two sides, on the other are the yellow sand hills of Plum Island, like castled ruins wreathed in wild smilax and poison-ivy. The waters here are a miracle of color—sometimes blue or pearl-gray; again, where the tide creams in across a sand bar or over a bank of broken shells, the faintest beryl; and in another place green as chrysope with the long streamers of the eel-grass. At sunrise, when they double a burning heaven through which the white gulls dart, or at night, when they paint the whole Milky Way beneath the keel, and you hear the sturgeon splash, the bitter cry, the seal slip into the water, you feel again like one in a forbidden region where the beauty is a thing of witch spells; and all the more when from behind Grape Island—that lies in the curve of the larger island, and that Captain John Smith, the navigator, pronounced an excellent place for gardens—an atmospheric echo chances to

answer your song, an echo that repeats seven syllables, as I have heard it, and refines the rudest voice to such music that you might well believe a shoal of sea sprites had risen from the other side, and among the sandy hollows there were mocking you with a hundred airy voices. At last, then, we cross the mouth of the Merrimac and come to the end of the Essex beaches with Salisbury Sands—a firm, hard drive, reaching to the great black rocks of Hampton River mouth, eight miles away, on one side of which is the slope where Whittier's "tent on the beach" was pitched, and on the other side superb breakers of palest green foam, rank after rank, up the far-extending shoal; and on this long surface the Salisbury people—out of whom came the mothers of Caleb Cushing and Daniel Webster—have had an annual reunion or harvest-home every September for a hundred years—a reunion lately changing its character from social to political, till now the whole country-side frequents it to the number sometimes of thirty thousand.

"Behold it!" said one of the speakers at this gathering a year or two since, picturing the unrivaled panorama of the place—"that circling line of our Essex coast, stretching hitherward from the dim headlands of Cape Ann along those cove-indented shores, of whose enduring elements of strength and beauty how many a stately edifice rises to remind us in every portion of the land—the quarried wealth of Rockport or of Squam; by the bald Ipswich Hundreds, their clear-cut outlines in relief against the sky; by the fantastic dunes of Plum Island, or the ambushed channels of the Rowley shore; hence along the pleasure-haunted beaches of Hampton or of Rye—how changed in aspect in the march of civilizing centuries from that hour when Champlain, the earliest of their European visitants, first trod their shingly shores; in the intermediate distance Boar's Head, its length extending into the sea, repelling with its rocky tusks the assaulting waves; and within the arc of our vision the Isles of Shoals lying white and still, like a squadron of observation at their eternal anchorage. Behold it, I say, the majestic sweep of our Essex coast, thus in its bare lineaments so rudely drawn, a scene of natural beauty and attractiveness than which, whether shoreward or seaward contemplated, you shall look in vain for one of more varied or picturesque charms, even where classic waves from their blue deeps return the glories of Italian or of Grecian skies. There is the almighty sea; here are the yellow, ever-shifting sands; we wander at our will,

'Listening now to the tide in its broad-flung ship-wrecking roar,  
Now to the scream of a maddened beach dragged down by the wave.'



Before us, reaching away to the wooded upland, there lie the lovely sun-lit meadow levels like a mosaic floor; hard by, the Merimae, most industrious and beautiful of rivers, winds in and out between its peopled banks, until it bursts the barrier of the bar, and, amidst the tumult of the breakers, gains entrance to the sea. Yonder, at the river's mouth, the Warder Island lifts its mimic battlements and towers, more sure defense than are the crumbling earth-works of the higher shore; while beyond, and in the farther distance, the Oldtown hills, the leafy woods of Newbury, the stately spires of Newburyport, in the mingling lights and shadows of a magical perspective, present themselves to view."

Such, then, is the approach to Newburyport—and surely there are few grander—and such the scene that is presented from its seaward side. It is a breezy, bowery town, lying along the hill-sides, with the sound of the sea always beating through the streets like a pulse. If you go there by rail, instead of by the charming way just indicated, bleak fields and lichened boulders warn you of the bitter sea-coast; but once past their barricade, and you are in the midst of gardens. The cross-streets run down to the water, shedding their rain rapidly, and High Street, the principal avenue, stretches parallel with the river for more than six miles, lying partly in Newbury and partly in the port, shaded by interlacing immemorial elms, and lined with rich farms and pleasant residences, that have princely lands and orchards behind them, and sloping lawns in front—the old-fashioned square three-story houses prevailing, with wide halls running from end to end, once resounding to much good cheer, though now the days of their famous hospitality are over. At one end of this street loom the Oldtown hills, from whose summit in clear weather certain of the White Mountains are visible, and where, when the first church stood on the little green below, the sentry used to pace his rounds for the advantage of its look-out over any of the forest foes. At the other end rises the wooded knoll called the Laurels, from which the ships are to be seen sailing out of Portland and into Gloucester; while just across the river out of their coppice look the pointed towers of Hawkwood, built at great cost by the Rev. J. C. Fletcher, of Brazilian fame; and, between the two, Deer Island crowns the river with its lofty pines of the primeval forest.

Behind the ridge of the town lies a wide low champaign country, perfectly flat, always wrapped in blue vapors, and full of a peculiar beauty of long level lines. It has, however, other than picturesque interest, for beneath it is supposed to lie an immense basin of pure water, as boring in every direction produces it, and in the low hills hud-

dled confusedly just beyond, large veins of lead and silver have recently been discovered. The existence of these mines was for some time derided by the skeptical townspeople, as it was not easy to believe such a meadow region as that below the gardens of the southerly side could be a place of metalliferous deposit. Yet this very meadow region and all around it has long been the scene of volcanic action, and earthquakes have been an important feature of its existence, the demoniac powers of the earth holding high carnival here for more than a century, and still making themselves occasionally felt. The first of this remarkable series of earthquakes occurred in 1638, on the noon of a summer day, as the colonists, assembled in town-meeting, were discussing their unfledged affairs. We can imagine their consternation—just three years established, their houses built, woods felled, fields largely cleared, and the corn greenly springing up—to find that their encampment on this spot, so rich in soil, so convenient to the sea, so well guarded from the Indian, had left them the prey to an enemy whose terrors were so much worse than all others in the degree in which they partook of the dark, unknown, and infinite. It was not long before the first earthquake was followed by another, its trembling and vibration and sudden shocks preceded, as that had been, by a roar like the bursting of great guns, while birds forsook their nests, dogs howled, and the whole brute creation manifested the extreme of terror. By-and-by there came one that lasted a week, with six or eight shocks a day,—reader, it is on indubitable record—then one where the shocks were repeated for half an hour without any cessation, and presently others where the ground opened and left fissures a foot in width, where sailors on the coast supposed their vessels to have struck. The sea roared and swelled, flashes of fire ran along the ground, amazing noises were heard, like peals and claps of thunder, walls and chimneys fell, cellars opened, floating islands were formed, springs were made dry in one site and burst out in another, and tons of fine white sand were thrown up, which, being cast upon the coals, burned like brimstone. Although there have been more than two hundred of these convulsions since they were first felt, nobody was ever seriously injured by their means, and so used to them did the people become that finally they are spoken of in their town records merely as "the earthquake," as one would speak of any natural affair, of the tide or of the moon, and for the last century their outbursts have been very infrequent and insignificant. To "the earthquake," indeed, the town owes one of the choicest bits of scenery, for in a dimple near the centre lies a pretty pond, a peaceful and innocent little sheet of water,





FROG-POND AND COURT-HOUSE.

yet born of such prodigious parentage and no other. It is backed by a hill covered with an old grave-yard, whose sunken slates, with their carved cherubs, in a tangle of black-berry vines, are saved from gloomy association by the presence of the school-children always playing about them; and it is surrounded by a handsome mall, the gift of a citizen, to terrace and turf which some years ago the whole army of townsmen turned out with their spades and shovels, while their wives and daughters waited on them with hot coffee and cold meats. The mall is planted now with tall elms and maples, and as you come up High Street on any moonlighted summer night, when the white mists are stealing through its branches from the hollow of the pond below it, it is like a vision of some unearthly land, so weird is its loveliness. Yet this pond was once an upland, where berries and other wild fruits grew, and it became a sheet of water, to the amazement of every body, during the night when all the wells upon the high plains, some mile and a half away, went dry, into which wells water has never since returned.

Earthquakes, however, are not the only extraordinary diversion of the elements in and about Newburyport; since, not to mention hail-storms with a deposit of twelve inches, of which we boast, as certain are wont to boast of their afflictions, snow-storms tunneled from door to door, or north-easters blowing the sea-spray and freezing it in salt crystals on the orchard boughs a dozen miles inland, there have been known here whirlwinds mighty enough to blow down one meeting-house and to lift another with all the people in it and set it in a different spot. These whirlwinds, though, came some years too soon, as, if they had but moved a meeting-house here at a later day, a parish would not have been so divided on the subject of location—the old building having become so sadly dilapidated that

the people sat with their umbrellas spread under the leaky roof, and the minister went skipping up the aisle to avoid the little pools of water standing there—as to fall, one-half of it, from the faith of its Puritan fathers and become straightway Episcopalians. For being driven to the wall by the stronger party in the parish and the General Court, who would not let the weaker party use the new edifice it had erected in its chosen spot, this weaker party, under the advice of a Churchman, Mr. John Bridger, the king's surveyor of the crown lands, who happened to be passing that way, petitioned the Bishop of London for immunity from taxes in support of the other meeting-house in particular, and for aid in general, receiving it in the shape of a chapel endowed by Queen Anne, subsequently replaced by the present St. Paul's Church, the second rector of which became the first Bishop of Massachusetts. Going to church in those days was no pleasant holiday affair of the new bonnet and gay ribbons; and we can better explain to ourselves the fury of the warfare concerning the location of the meeting-house if we remember that a large portion of the community were obliged to drive a distance of seven miles to the church upon the Lower Green, where the first settler leaped ashore on the bank of the Quasacacunquen, and had to hurry into their sleighs on a winter Sabbath the moment that sermon was done, that, going over the terrible old Downfall Road, then all thick woods, they might pass the hollow before night-fall on account of the wolves. Yet, for all such hardship, doubtless the defection of the St. Anne's Chapel people from the iron bands of faith was looked upon bitterly as an invasion of the Scarlet Lady; for the old Newbury settlement was a strictly Puritanical one, differing as widely as though oceans rolled between from the town of Portsmouth, only twenty miles away. Portsmouth, indeed,

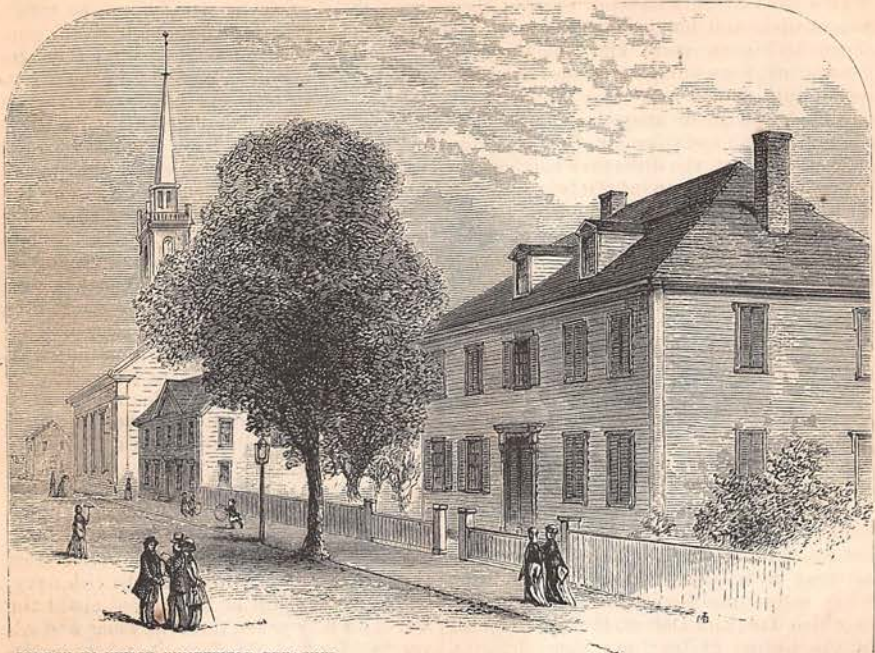


was settled by an Episcopal colony; there ceremonials and holidays, Christmases and Twelfth-Nights, state and splendor and wassailing, were things of course from the beginning, and it was, take it altogether, a sumptuous little aristocracy. So that, though wealth and splendor afterward came to Newburyport, the difference between the two places was—on an infinitely lesser scale, to be sure—that which might have existed between some long-descended city of hereditary princes and nobles, and the self-made grandees of merchandising Venice. Wealth and splendor came to Newburyport, indeed—as witness the ride which old Nat Tracy could take from thence to Virginia, and sleep every night in his own house; as witness the ship of war that singly and alone the same person presented to the general government; as witness the scene when one of the worthies here found his colored servant sipping his rare old Madeira out of a gold goblet, with the toast, “Here’s to better times!” as witness the great square houses, their Smiberts and Copleys and traditions; as witness the coach lined with white satin and drawn by six white horses, in which Tristram Dalton, the first Senator of the United States from Massachusetts, made his wedding calls; as witness the prayer of old Mr. Marquand when, one day, argosy after argosy came sailing in, “Lord, stay thy hand; thy servant has enough.” But wealth and splendor have departed from her now, for though there is possibly no other spot where so much general comfort, and more than comfort, is known, there is not—as fortunes go now throughout the country—such a thing as a large fortune in the town.

The characteristics of the population seem to have been the same since time began for Newburyport, partly owing to the scenic isolation of the situation, partly to the intermarriage that has taken place there. It is true that the municipality which at an early date petitioned the General Court for relief from the burden of the old wandering negro, Juniper, is now giving a non-resident pauper an allowance out of which he has built him a cottage in a neighboring village, and purchased some shares of railroad stock; but except so far as affected by the general progress of the age, Newburyport has known little change; she has until the last few years scarcely varied from her dullness since the embargo laid a heavy hand upon her, and the great fire scattered ashes over her; and the people mind their own business today almost as they did when they pronounced the verdict upon the body of Elizabeth Hunt in 1693—“We judge according to our best light and contents that the death of said Elizabeth Hunt was..... by some soden stoping of her breath.” Strangers come into town, but the citizen takes

small heed of them usually, and so rarely do they assimilate themselves with the population that the principal names there today are the names to be found in the chronicles of 1635, and, unmixed with strange blood, generations hand down a name till it comes to stand for a trait. The town—except for one religious “revival” that lasted forty days, suspended business, drew up the shipping in the dock, and absorbed master and mistress, man and maid—has seldom been disturbed by any undue contagion of popular feeling; though she had the first of the celebrated witch cases, some twelve years before the Salem cases, her wisdom never was swept away by that terrific whirlwind; she used all endeavor to shield poor Goody Morse, kept her under sentence of death a year and a day, but never hung her; she has seldom followed even a fashion in politics unsuggested by her own necessities, and has been, in fact, as sufficient to herself as the dew of Eden. The dissimilarity of the population from that of other places is only exemplified by the story of a sailor from there, who, impressed into the British navy, and kept there till he had tossed about the world for fifty years, returned home and advertised for “an old shipmate whom he desired to share a fortune with.” Neither has the town ever been a respecter of persons; but, democratic in the true acceptation of the term, wealth where almost all are comfortable, and none remarkably poor, is as little accounted as silver was in the house of the forest of Lebanon, talent gives no more pre-eminence than can be grasped by means of it, and if it were the law now, as it was then, five leading citizens would be just as easily arrested and fined for being absent from town-meeting at eight o’clock in the morning as they were in 1638. With this there is an independent way of thinking, hereditary among the people individually. To be sure, Newburyport never reached the point attained by the neighboring town of Marblehead, where, in the midst of its wilderness of crooked lanes, all rocks and moss and bright blue sea views between, with not enough grass, as Whitefield said, for a grave-yard, there was built, more than a hundred years ago, a church “for all those whose opinions differed from the opinions of their neighbors.” Yet it is to be doubted if many other places have produced the parallel to this; and it was beyond what could have been expected, considering the era when, in 1649, Thomas Scott paid a fine of ten shillings in Newburyport rather than learn the catechism, and, which was more remarkable, was allowed to do so. A century later Richard Bartlett refused communion with a church whose pastor wore a wig, asserting with assurance that all who wore wigs, unless repenting before death, would certainly be damned. Not long before, the





CHURCH IN WHICH WHITEFIELD PREACHED,  
WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON'S BIRTH-PLACE.

WHITEFIELD'S RESIDENCE.

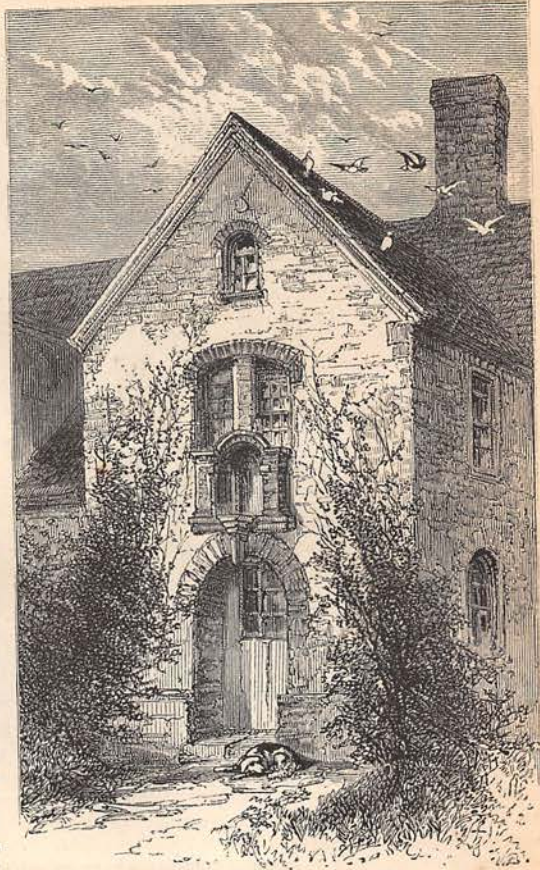
Rev. John Tufts struck a death-blow at Puritanism by issuing a book of twenty-eight psalm tunes to be sung in public worship, where only five had previously been used—an act so stoutly contested as an inroad of Rome (for, said his opponents, it is first singing by rule, then praying by rule, and then popery) that it was probably owing to the persecutions of the long contest that subsequently the innovator left his parish under a charge of indecent behavior. And though none of the churches quite rivaled the unconscious blasphemy of one some dozen miles away, which voted, "This meeting, not having unity with John Collins's testimony, desires him to be silent till the Lord speak by him to the satisfaction of the meeting," yet there stands on the record the instruction to a committee appointed to deal with certain recusants—the St. Anne's Chapel people—"to see if something could not be said or done to draw them to our communion again, and if we can not draw them by fair means, then to determine what means to take with them!" It was once said that Newburyport was famous for piety and privateering, but in these instructions the piety and privateering are oddly intermingled. This same independence of thought found notable expression when, in the early days, Boston and Salem, alarmed at the incursions of the Indians, proposed to the next settlements the building of a stone wall eight feet high to inclose them all as a rampart against the common foe, which proposition

Newburyport answered with disdain, and declared the wall should be a living one, made of men ranging to and fro and scouting the forest, and forthwith raised a company and built a garrison-house on her borders.

The situation of this garrison-house is still a subject of dispute among the antiquaries of the town, these contending that it is the manor-house of the old Pierce farm—once a homestead of the race that gave a President of that name to the United States—and those contending that the manor-house was not built until some twenty or thirty years after the period assigned, and would never have been built in so costly and elaborate a style (the style of a wealthy residence) for any rough garrison usage. The great porch of this old house is said to be the most beautiful architectural specimen in this part of the country, although it doubtless owes part of its beauty to the mellow and varied coloring which two hundred years have given it; yet the beveled brick of its arches and casements, and the exquisite nicety of its ornamentation, lead the careful scrutinizer to side with those who dismiss the idea of its having been a garrison-house, and to conjecture that that idea gained currency from the fact that it was once used to store powder in—a fact that was fixed in the popular memory by an explosion there which blew out the side of the house, and landed an old slave of the occupant on her bed in the boughs of an adjacent apple-tree.



This rather remarkable freedom of opinion belonging to the people of Newburyport, of which I have already spoken, has received illustration on a still larger stage than in any of the examples yet given, as, for instance, when, some time previous to the famous tea-party in Boston Harbor, the first act of the Revolution was signalized in Newburyport by the confiscation of a cargo of tea, under direction of the town authorities, and its public burning in Market Square. It was the same characteristic, too, that prompted the Stamp Act Riots, and made it a fact that not a single British stamp was ever paid for or used in Newburyport, and that, during all the long and trying struggle of the Revolution, did not allow a single town school to be suspended. The old town has no trivial history, as these circumstances indicate. Long before the Revolution, at the popular uprising and the imprisonment of Sir Edmund Andros, old Sam Bartlett galloped off, so eager for the fray that "his long rusty sword, trailing on the ground, left, as it came in contact with the stones in the road, a stream of fire all the way." It was Lieutenant Jacques, of Newburyport, who put an end to the war with the Norridgewock Indians by killing their ally and inciter, the French Jesuit, Sebastian Rallé. Here Arnold's expedition against Quebec recruited and sailed, with its dashing young officer, Aaron Burr; and here were built and manned not only the very first of the privateers—twenty-two of which, with a thousand men, were never heard from after sailing—but many others which raked British commerce to the value of millions into this port, and the sloop *Wasp*, which fought as fiercely as her namesake fights, in three months capturing thirteen merchantmen, engaging four ships of the line, and finally, after a bitter struggle, going down with all her men at the guns and all her colors flying. It is still interesting to read of her exploits, copied in the journal of the old Marine Insurance Rooms, as the news came in day by day, and to see, as you can see, the ardor and spirit with which those words were penned by hands long since ashes—ardor and spirit universally shared, since, before that brief career of valor, Newburyport had, on the 31st of May, anticipated the Declaration of Independence, published on the 19th of July following, by instructing the Congress at Phil-



GARRISON-HOUSE PORCH.

adelphia that, if the colonies should be declared independent, "this town will, with their lives and fortunes, support them in the measure." Here, too, was built the first ship that ever displayed our flag upon the Thames—a broom at her peak that day, after Van Tromp's fashion, to tell the story of how we had swept the seas. Nor is the town that gave John Paul Jones his two lieutenants, Henry and Cutting Lunt—the former of whom was with the commodore in all his cruises in the *Bon Homme Richard*, the *Alliance*, and the *Ariel*—unfamiliar with such daring deeds as that done during the Revolution, when a British transport of four guns was observed in the bay, veering and tacking to and fro in the fog as if uncertain of her whereabouts, and, surmising that she supposed herself in Boston Bay, Captain Offin Boardman, with his men—the captain already the hero of many an adventure—went off in a whale-boat, and offered his services to pilot her in. The offer was of course accepted, the ship hove to, and Captain Offin Boardman was presently standing on the quarter-deck, exchanging the usual





HOME OF THEOPHILUS PARSONS, BUILT IN 1702.

greetings with the master of the transport, while his companions mounted to his side. That done, he suddenly turned and ordered the British flag to be struck; his order was executed, and, wholly overpowered in their surprise, the crew and the transport were safely carried over the bar, and moored at the wharves of Newburyport.

In a later generation the remembrance of Captain Boardman's mettle was rivaled by that of Captain William Nichols, a famous privateersman, who brought unnumbered prizes into port. Captain Nichols's first achievement was in the brig *Alert*, where, having been boarded and vanquished by a party from the *Semiramis*, he bided his time, till, off Ushant, he and his companions rose on the British seamen and regained possession of the vessel, securing the hatches over four men in the hold, and sending the rest adrift in a jolly-boat, only, however, to be overhauled in a few days by another British man-of-war, the *Vestal*, commanded by one Captain Berkeley. Some time after this Captain Nichols became the master of the brig *Decatur*, and in her adventuring to within a few leagues of the

British coast, he took nearly thirty prizes of great value, several of them after a short but sharp action. He ascribed his almost invariable success to his singularly effective if savage rule of keeping the enemy's helm clear by means of trusty marksmen, helmsman after helmsman being picked off, so that the enemy became unmanageable. The *Decatur* was finally captured, however, in the West Indian waters by the frigate *Surprise*, of thirty-eight guns. She was carried into the Barbadoes, and her commander admitted to parole, till, as ill luck would have it, the Captain Berkeley who had taken him in the *Alert* put into port, and through his influence our old sea-dog was arrested, and confined, as Tamerlane confined Bajazet, in a seven-foot cage, and that, too, with a more than Oriental barbarity, on the quarter-deck of a prison-ship, exposed to curious gaze, and under the fierce tropic sun. No sooner, though, was Captain Nichols released than he was up and at the enemy again, this time in the *Harpy*, in which in three weeks he took four prizes, sixty-five prisoners, and cargoes to the value of nearly half a million of dollars.



Nor are these the only old faces looming out of the past with historic interest upon us in this vicinage. Here sprang that Sewall family who have occupied the judicial bench for eighty-four out of the hundred and forty-eight years of the Supreme Court's existence in Massachusetts, three of whom have held the place of Chief Justice, one of them that superb old Samuel Sewall who, at the close of the witchcraft delusion, was not ashamed publicly to acknowledge his error, rising in his place in church and supplicating forgiveness, and every year thereafter, so long as he lived, keeping a day of humiliation and prayer for his offense. Here the weighty jurist, Theophilus Parsons, was born and bred, and, studying law with him, Robert Treat Paine and Rufus King and John Quincy Adams passed the days of their early manhood; while here a romance of the latter's life took place in the rejection of his suit by his first love, a lady who, marrying another, and removing into the wilds of Maine, became the mother of the poet known as the Boston bard. Washington, Lafayette, Monroe, have all, of course, come to make famous various spots in Newbury and in the Port. Here also came the gentle and gallant band of the stately old French refugees, some from San Domingo, some from the Barbadoes, and some from France, of whom so many legends are still cherished; here lived Talleyrand, next the house of Lord Timothy Dexter; from here Brissot went back to France, to lose his head on the scaffold of the Girondists; here Whitefield preached and died and lies entombed; here died Josiah Bartlett, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence; here Cushing rose, and Garrison and Gough; here the great giver, George Peabody, once dwelt, and often came, and made large bequest; here belonged another philanthropist, Will-



CALEB CUSHING.

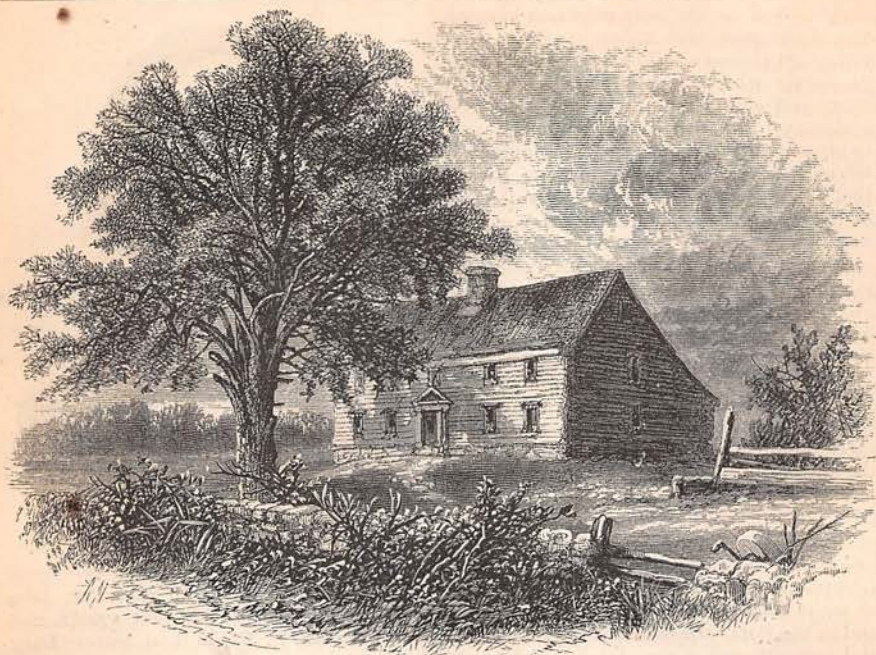
iam Wheelwright, the author of the great system of South American railways; here John Pierpont wrote his best verses, and here Hannah F. Gould and sweet Lucy Hooper sang; here Harriet Livermore, that ardent missionary of the East, whom *Snow-bound* celebrates, was born; here James Parton makes his summer home; here Leonard Withington has unraveled the rapt mystery of the Song of Solomon; here the artist Bricher first found inspiration; here the Lowells sprung; here the Jacksons, famous in mechanics, in physics, and in law; here the Tyngs; here the Springs; here the Chases; and here Master Nicholas Pike, the author of the first American arithmetic. Hardly more than a gunshot off on one side is the ancestral home of the Longfellows, and on the other Whittier lives and sings. It is, indeed, the principal point, in such interests, of that region of the Merrimac which, with its Longfellows, Lowells, Feltons, Whipples, Storrs, Adamses, Websters, Parsonses, Choates, Phelps, Emersons, Thoreaus, Hawthornes, Alcotts, Whittiers, all of whom, with a host of others, belong either to the banks of the Merrimac and its tributaries or to its near neighborhood, has some right to consider itself the Attic region of America.

Indeed, the history of Newburyport, and of her mother Newbury, much of which has become incorporated with herself, is replete with striking facts and marvels. She had not only the first of our ships upon the Thames, as has been noted, but the first chain-bridge on this side of the sea, as well as the first toll-bridge; she initiated the first insurance company; took the first daguerreotype taken in America; had the first incorporated woolen mill; the first incorporated academy; the first female high school; two of the first members of the Antislavery



THEOPHILUS PARSONS.—[AFTER STUART'S PORTRAIT.]





THE LONGFELLOW HOMESTEAD.

Society, which numbered twelve in all; the first volunteer company for the Revolution; the first volunteer company against the rebellion—the first, that is, in point of time of leaving home, summoned as it was by wild bell-ringing at the dead of night, though, owing to distance, not arriving the first upon the field of action; the first regularly educated physician of New England, Dr. Thomas Clarke; together with the first Bishop of Massachusetts, the Right Rev. Edward Bass, and the first graduate of Harvard—an institution to which she has given some presidents and many professors, notably Webber, Parsons, Greenleaf, Noyes, Felton, and Pearson.

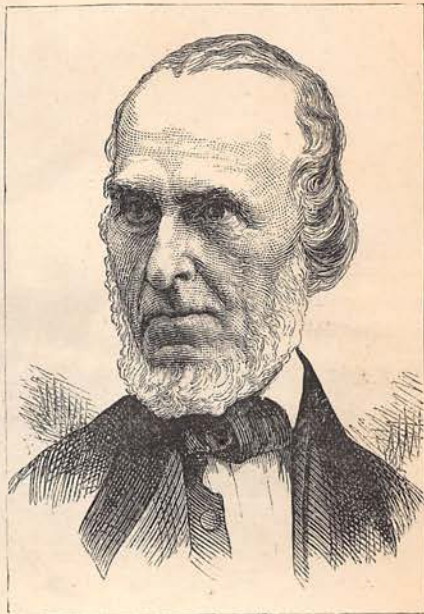
Here also has been the home of various inventors of renown. Here the compressibility of water was discovered by Jacob Perkins, the illustrious inventor of steel engraving by a simple and beautiful process; here was invented the machine for making nails, which had previously been painfully hammered out one by one; here an instrument for measuring the speed with which a ship goes through the water; and here a new span for timber bridges, used now on most of our larger rivers. Almost every mechanic, in sooth, has some fancy on which he spends his leisure; one amusing himself with making the delicate calculations necessary, and then just as delicately burnishing brazen reflectors for telescopes, before his heart was broken by the refractors with which Safford and Tuttle (both former residents of the

town) have swept the sky; another occupying himself with the model of a machine in which all his soul was wrapped, but which, unknown to him, an ancient had completed a couple of thousand years ago; another inventing the first propeller screw that, it is believed, ever cut any waters, taking it up and down the Merrimac by night, and then, satisfied with his own achievement, unshipping it and hiding it away in a loft where it never saw the day; while others are busy with the useful low-water reporters, and with those improvements in the manufacture of tobacco which have all sprung from a son of the town. It is in mechanics that Newburyport excels; her ship-yards once lined all the water-side, as many as ninety having been seen upon the stocks at one time, and now, after a long rest, they are beginning to be active again. Shortly after the Revolution, wishing to export lumber, and having but few craft, she bound the lumber together in firm rafts, with a cavity in the centre for provisions and possible shelter, and furnishing them with secure though rude sailing apparatus, consigned them to the winds and waves, and after voyages of twenty-six days they were registered in their ports on the other side of the Atlantic. But before that experiment her ships were, and they still are, models to the whole world, for here were launched those fleetest clippers that ever cleft the wave, the *Dreadnaught* and the *Racer*.

There is not a more interesting or curious



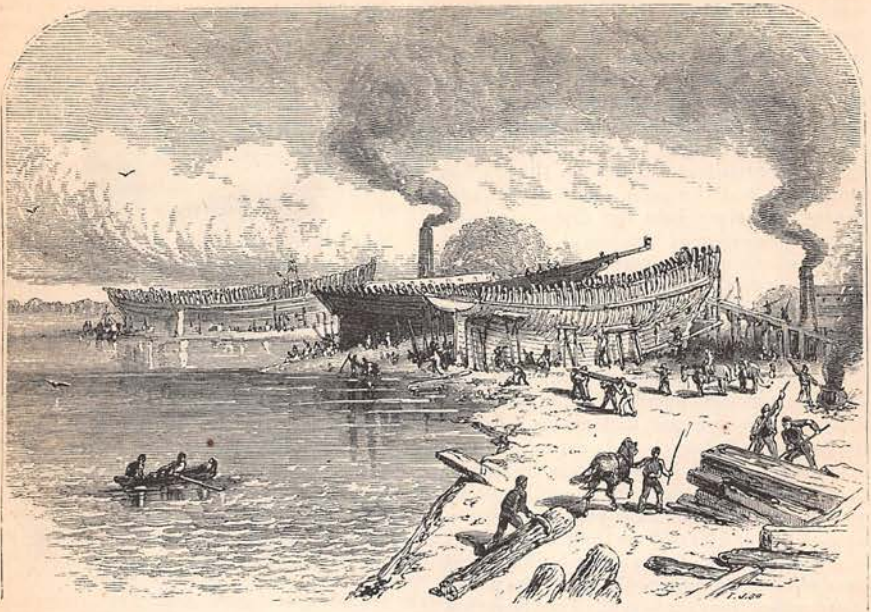
work in the whole round of occupations than that of the ship-builders. From the felling of the first timber in the depth of the forests to the knocking away of the last block at the launch, there are poetry and romance all about it; and so fine is the artianship required, and so exquisite the nicety of the architectural design, that it has long since lost the mere character of carpentry and risen into the domain of art. From the design of the naval architect a model is built on a reduced scale of so many inches to the foot, and from this model the whole ship is fashioned. The proportions of the great frames or ribs are all enlarged from the model and drafted at full size on the floor of a loft, and according to this drawing a mould is made of thin boards exactly of the shape and dimensions required for the frame in length and curve; and that being taken into the yard, or into the woods, every frame is then got out according to its own mould, with the most precise measurement of line and level, from the great oak logs which some of the best master-builders will have cut only at certain phases of the moon, in order that their timbers shall not be rotted by the sap which the "great governess of floods" may call up into their veins. A rude builder may get out his frames so carelessly that he has to chip away half of them after they are raised in place, and so weaken his ship disastrously; but a skillful builder has them perfect as they lie upon the ground. Meanwhile the keel, composed of enormous beams scarfed together for their whole length, is laid on blocks in the yard arranged with a slight incline, which has to be very accurately determined in the beginning, as half an inch too much there would become a serious matter at the end of one of those keels, two hundred feet long, on which are built our twelve or thirteen hundred ton ships. When the frames are ready, the midship frame is raised into position, and the others on either side of it, tapering off fore and aft, and secured by a band from one to the other; the stem and the stern-post and transom are put into their respective places, and the cants are raised into the space where the great frames cease. The keelson is then laid, consisting of huge timbers scarfed together and built one on the top of the other till the structure is several feet high, upon which the whole is bolted through the frames to the keel with immense copper bolts, sometimes eight feet long, clinched and headed under the keel. To protect the ship from injury, after she is completely built she is shod with a long plank shoe from stem to stern, one end of which, called her forefoot, is allowed to project a little way; and this shoeing can be knocked off by any casualty without serious harm to the ship. The keelson laid, the ship is thoroughly planked outside and



JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

ceiled within; after which the lower-deck beams are laid, from side to side, being kneed out across the frames with lodging knees, and supported, moreover, by hanging knees where they join the frame, and resting on great stanchions, the whole again thoroughly bolted. The water-ways—thick streaks of planking lining the ship between decks—are then attended to, and above them the upper deck is laid, with lodging and hanging knees like the former, and stanchions beneath each beam. Meanwhile the bows have been strengthened by breast-hooks—solid timbers bolted together in the protruding shape of the bows, many feet thick—and the stern by pointers or cross-pieces stretching diagonally from the stern-post to the frames at the side; the whole so firm, so solid, so huge, that it is almost impossible for the human mind to imagine the power of any waters to crush this great body together like a shell. The hollow of the ship is designed for her cargo, and the cabin and the forecabin are usually built above the upper deck, the former finished off with such delicate joinery and cabinet and inlaid work as the finest drawing-rooms might envy. After the launch, and when an immensity of detail has been wrought out, the masts are stepped to the keelson while the hull is lying at the wharf, the t'-gallant-mast and the royal are raised, the yards are sent aloft to complete the sparring of the ship, and the rigging is set up. But nothing can ever present a livelier appearance than the ship-yard while all the previous work is going on—the cheery sound





SHIP-YARDS ON THE MERRIMAC.

of the ringing axes, the flaming of the blacksmith's forge, the boiling of the tar; and the whole scene reaches a climax of interest when the launch takes place, with as many thousands in attendance as if it were the first that ever was. No part of the whole affair is more wonderful than the raising of the stupendous bulk of the complete ship so that her weight shall no longer rest upon her keel, but on the ways—a cradle that has been built up on either side, close to her keel and directly under the bilge, consisting of one immense beam, thoroughly greased with tallow and lying in a slight groove on the top of another beam. When this has been arranged, numberless wedges are carefully driven between the ship and the ways, lifting the ship gradually and imperceptibly upon the latter; the after-blocks are then knocked away, which throws the weight still more upon the ways, and finally, the forward blocks being knocked out, she settles down into her cradle, which gives way and slides with her off into the deep water that rises with a surge of welcome to receive her. There is not such a heart-stirring sight any where to be seen—a sight of every-day life into which enters so much awe—as at this instant, when the great inert mass throws off the character of mere matter, and dipping down into her element, puts on life and becomes, as it were, a living and moving being. In former times, when the after-blocks were knocked away the last, instead of the first as now, through the reversal of the process that has obviated all danger, there was a singular human interest

about it too, for the man who knocked away that last block could have no time to escape without the hazard of being caught and crushed in all the loose flying and falling timbers, and he was obliged to throw himself down where he stood and let the great monster pass over him, which she did at a height of some feet above him, leaving him in safety except in case of very rare accident. Usually the launch takes place by daylight, but in some courses of the tide, when higher water chances to come at night, a moon-lit launch, or one lit with smoking torches, increases the picturesqueness of the thing beyond words.

They go out, these children of the shipyards, but they never come back. Great merchant ships, after their sun-soaked voyages, no longer ride at anchor in the offing as they used to do. The bar of the Merrimac, which once in about a hundred years accumulates into such an insuperable obstacle that the waters find a new channel, is a foe they do not care to face when once piloted safely over its white line; and though many things have been done with piers and buoys, and a breakwater built by government, and crushed like a toy by the next gale, it still binds its spell about Newburyport commerce. It has been thought that if by any other magic the town could ever grow sufficiently to require the filling up of the flats, and if the sunken piers could be removed—piers that were sunk in echelon across the channel to keep out British vessels, our own pilots being furnished with the necessary bearings for guiding a ship



safely between them, and that now, with the accumulating mud about them, have raised the bottom of the river considerably—then the stream, inclosed in a narrower and deeper space, would find the force in its mountain-born waters to drive before it the envious sands which the Cape Ann currents sweep into its mouth. But lately, through the exertion of General Butler, the river has been cleared of obstacles as far as the town of Lawrence, and that in itself has already largely increased the depth of water on the bar.

Nevertheless, the bar alone is not adequate to account for the financial misfortunes of the town; ships go up to New Orleans over more dangerous waters; and the embargo of the early part of this century bears much the larger share of responsibility. Then and afterward the great hulks rotted at the wharves unused, with tar barrels, which the angry sailors called Madison's night-caps, inverted over the topmasts to save the rigging, while their crews patrolled the streets in riotous and hungry bands, and observed the first anniversary of the Embargo Act with tolling bells, minute-guns, flags at half-mast, and a procession with muffled drums and crapes. It was on the occasion of some civic demonstration of an opposite kind that one of the old citizens, sitting in his doorway, wheeled his chair about and turned his back on the procession, declaring that he "wished hell could be boiled down to a half pint, and Madison had to drink it!" Perhaps it was owing to this state of feeling in the town that the old slanders of her showing blue-lights to the befogged enemy arose. Certain it is that Newburyport disapproved of the war at that time, as she had a perfect right to do, and she appointed a committee, of whom John Pierpont was one, to prepare an address to the Legislature, in which address the inhabitants boldly declared themselves in the following sublime fashion: "We wish, therefore, firmly and decidedly to express to your Excellency and Council that, under your command, we are ready to march for the purposes expressed in the Constitution, namely, 'to suppress insurrection, to repel invasion, and to enforce the laws,' and *we will march under no other*..... Some of us were born, and we have all lived, freemen. Our soil we will defend; but without the command of our lawful captain [the Governor, *i. e.*, as commander-in-chief of the militia], *conscripts or not conscripts, we will never stir an inch.*"

But together with the embargo came the great fire. Every wooden town has suffered a conflagration, and Newburyport has always been a prey to the incendiary; but her celebrated fire broke out on a spring night something more than sixty years ago, and spread with the speed of the lightnings over

a tract of sixteen acres in the most compact portion of the town. Such an immense property was destroyed that the whole place was impoverished, and many families were totally beggared. People hurried to the scene from twenty miles away, women passed the buckets in the ranks, and helpless crowds swung to and fro in the thoroughfares. The spectacle has been described as terribly sublime; a strong wind drove the flames in awful columns high into the air, and stretched a sheet of fire from square to square; the moon became obscured in the murky atmosphere that hung above the town, but the streets were every where lighted as brilliantly as by day, and the heat melted the glass in the windows of houses not destroyed; while the crash of falling walls, the thunderous roaring of chimneys, the volumes of flame wallowing upward from the ruins and filling the air with showers of fire into which the birds fluttered and dropped, the weird reflection in the river, the lowing of the cattle, the cries of distress from the people, made the scene cruelly memorable, till eclipsed by the greater terrors and splendors of later conflagrations. The incendiary of this fire was never discovered; but some years subsequently a boy of seventeen was convicted of another arson, and endured the penalty of the law; and it would seem as if a flaming Nemesis fell thereat upon the town, perhaps for having allowed the boy's execution. For ever since that time other incendiaries, emulous of his example, have made her their victim, one in particular, now expiating his offense by a life-sentence in the State-prison, being so frequent in his attempts during the long course of twenty years that on a windy or stormy night the blaze was so sure to burst forth that the citizens could not sleep in their beds; he appeared to be the subject of a mania for burning churches, almost all of the sixteen in town having been fired, sometimes two together, and on several occasions successfully, by means of a candle lighted and left in a small oil-drenched pine box, whose leather hinge, that could have been fastened by a single tack, was fastened by a hundred, as if a maniac had gloated over every stroke that drove them in. No dweller in Newburyport will easily forget the night on which the North Church was burned, when every flake of the wild snow-storm seemed to be a spark of fire, and more than one superstitious wretch, plunging out into the gale, could find no centre to the universal glare, and shuddered with fright in belief that the Day of Judgment had come at last. Nevertheless there are not wanting doubters who absolve the incendiary in this single case, and hold, perhaps because the blaze broke out in the belfry, that it was the work of the lightnings, declaring that the bolt of Heaven fell to destroy the pulpit where had



first been preached the doctrine of the damnation of babies!

The business of the town, it may well be conjectured, has suffered great depression under so many accumulating disasters. Several large cotton mills, and some shoe and comb and other factories, have prevented stagnation, however; lately, too, the Philadelphia and Reading Coal Company has established a distributing *dépôt* here; and here, in the fall of 1874, there was the cheering sight to be seen of nearly a dozen good ships upon the stocks in the ship-yards. Meanwhile the fisheries continue to be more or less a feature of the lower town, most of whose schooners are sailed on shares by master and men, every one of whom is then equally and democratically concerned in the venture; but others are sailed on the account of single individuals, who, when wisely managing, reap a goodly profit. Always interesting with the story of their hazard and exposure, they are never more picturesque than at the season of the herring fishery, when the swarm of boats put out to sea at night with torches, to cast and haul their nets "spangled with herring scale." It is, however, to its natural advantages that a town must generally look, and the natural advantages of Newburyport are her railroad and river facilities of communication with the back country. Her adjacent territory, indeed, is netted in rivers and rivulets, some of them merely streams of exquisite beauty for a boat to penetrate, some affording access for her laden barges to the more inland towns. There is the broad Merrimac, with its strange estuary guarded by the long bulwarks of Salisbury Sands and Plum Island, some two or three miles in width, and its clear current of an ineffable beauty never twice the same, lonely and lovely by dawn-light, full of alluring mystery, with its shadows and its colored harbor lights by night. There is the little Artichoke, a mere succession of pools lying in soft gloom beneath an

overhanging growth of feathery branches, each pool so infolded that one slides along with the tide, lifts a bough, and slips into the next, where some white-stemmed birch perhaps sends a perpetual rustle through the slumberous air, wild grape-vines climb from tree to tree, or an early-reddening tupelo shakes its gay mantle in the scattered sun, and with its reflex in the dark transparency, wakens one from the sleepy spell of the enchantment there. These streams, with the Quasacacunquen or Parker, the Little, Powow, Back, and Rowley rivers, and their slender but foaming black and white affluents, all make it a place of meadows; and he who desires to see a meadow in perfection, full of emerald and golden tints and claret shadows, withdrawing into distance till lost in the sparkle of the sea, must seek it here, where Heade found material for his dainty marsh and meadow views—here, where in the woods of the Stack-yard Gate the carriage wheels crackle through winding miles of fragrant brake and fern, and on either hand open outlooks which steal away, unbroken by any thing save the soft outlines of huge hay-cocks, to a horizon where curve the mazy tides of the tortuous Plum Island River, now baying out in broad blue coves that bear the gundalow laden with salt hay and thatch, and now only guessed by the sail that seems to wind its way through the grass; or else where, up on the higher meadows across the river, you find yourself in an illimitable world of infinite distances by ocean and shore, in an atmosphere blown from the gray mid-deeps themselves, and underneath the soaring arch of an immense and unobstructed heaven.

The people, well acquainted with the beauty that surrounds them, are very fond of their chief river; it is the scene of frolicking the summer long; they sail upon it from June until November, camping and picnicking, for sleep or lunch, on the sands at its mouth, till it looks as though there



JOPPA, NEWBURYPORT.



was more life upon the river than on the land; and even in winter its black and ice-edged tides seem sometimes to be the only pulses of the frozen town. Boats, from the clumsy floats and Joppa-chaises to the trim and tidy yachts, are always to be had, with a skipper who knows, he will tell you, every drop of the river, and whose talk, if you encourage it, will initiate you into the wild and fearful romance of the lives of the fishing people, out of whose upper windows you can always see a spy-glass pointed to rake the field of the sea where the husband

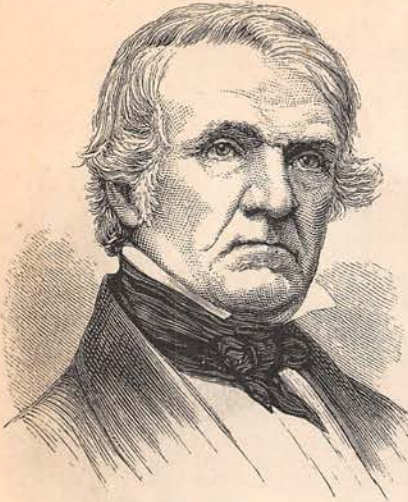
or the lover is afloat. For there are, indeed, in this old burgh two as distinct towns as if there were a mayor and corporation for each of them respectively. One of these towns, the great High Street, all embowered with century-old elms, its sweet silence scarcely disturbed on a summer's day by any thing more noisy than the bird-calls with which it is vocal, the whirring of the wings of oriole and swallow, the floating garments of ladies, or the swift beating of horses' feet, with its noble mansions and lawns—this lofty town will scarcely give one an idea of the other town at the foot of the hill where the river runs; where the great wharves, once laden with the wealthy freights of foreign bark and brig, now slowly drop to pieces with the flow and ebb of the tides; where the fleet of fishing dories anchor, and the fishermen's dwellings line the causeway and look out to sea. The scene there any evening has a picturesque charm—the black and blistered schooners at the side of the wharf, and the reflection of their yellow masts and their brown shrouds rippling in the dock-water till it resembles some wonderful Scotch pebble; down stream the hull of a new launch ready to receive her masts and rigging; a little way up stream, reared against the light, all her lines of spar and yard and cordage standing out darkly on the airy gold and carmine of the west, just complete, and waiting for the tug that is to tow her out into the yet untried deeps, a great East Indiaman, a shadowy mystery, keeping to herself her dream of the torrid



FLOATING ISLAND AND OLD TOWN CHURCH.

heats and heavens and drenching dews that she is to know down underneath the equator; across the way, the almost moss-grown village of Ring's Island, bathed in the mellow evening ray till it sparkles as if crusted with a thousand rubies; far out, the light-house and its lamps, ghost-like in the gathering purple mist that dimly curls in above the white line of the breakers; and every where the level floor of the wide stream shining with splendid tints and lustres; the old watermen, ancient and amphibious-looking creatures, their pink faces coiled and knotted and covered with little mole-like projections, like an old conch-shell, and their two oars rising and dipping, as they gain distance, like the strange fins of some tame and placid water monsters; the children scooting in their stolen boats like darting water-bugs in one place and another, naked as cherubs, diving and swimming and frolicking as if they had no shipwreck to grow up to; while the brown fishermen smoke restfully along the shore, and their wives gossip over the sills of each other's windows, arms rolled in aprons, with news or with inquiry concerning the *Lizzie Janerin* or the *Hannah Grant*. Though to some the life this scene suggests is only play, to others it is deadly earnest; for a large portion of those that live along the banks on the Water Street, really the most picturesque of the highways, are these fishermen and their households, familiar with all the dangers of the seas—the babies there rocked in a dory, the men, if they are





JOSHUA COFFIN.

not wrecked on the North or South Breaker, in sight of their own doors, sooner or later wrecked upon the Georges, since the storm that makes twoscore widows in Gloucester makes many in Newburyport.

Meanwhile the men mackerel all summer down in the Bay of Chaleurs, pilot off and on the coast dark nights and dreary days, run the bar and the breakers with a storm following the keel. Such of them as escape the fate of castaways, indeed, leave their sea-faring as they advance in life, and settle down at shoe-making, or buy a plot of land and farm it in an untaught way, but just as many find their last home in a grave rolled between two waves. When a storm comes up, and the fog-banks sweep in from sea with the tide, hiding the ray of the twin harbor lights, and the rote upon the beach, which every night breathes softly through the quiet streets, swells into a sullen and unbroken roar; when the ship-yards are

afloat, the water running breast-high across the wharves, the angry tides rising knee-deep in the lower lanes, and the spray tossed over the tops of the houses there, whose foundations sometimes tremble and whose dwellers fly for safety—then the well-sheltered people up in the remote High Street, where little is known of the storm but the elms beating their boughs about, may have sorry fancies of some vessel driving on Plum Island, of parting decks and of unpitied cries in the horror of blackness and breaker, may even hear the minute-guns in pauses of the gale; but the stress of weather falls upon the homes and hearts of these watchers on the Water Street, for to them each burst of the blast means danger to their own roof, and the life perhaps snatched from a husband's or a father's lips. Mrs. E. Vale Blake, in her history of Newburyport, makes thrilling mention of these storms, with the wrecks of the *Primrose*, the *Pocahontas*, the *Argus*, and others—wrecks from one of which eight coffins have been carried into church together—and every resident of the place has had before his eyes the picture which she draws of “the heavy moaning of the sea; a bark vainly striving to clear the breakers; blinding snow, a slippery deck, stiff and glazed ropes, hoarse commands that the cruel winds seize and carry far away from the ear of the sailor; a crash of tons of falling water beating in the hatches; shrieks which no man heard, and ghastly corpses on the deceitful shifting sands, and the great ocean cemetery still holding in awful silence the lost bodies of the dead.” Such things, of course, make the place the home of story; and Mr. George Lunt, a poet of no mean pretension, and a native of the town, has founded his novel of *Eastford* on the incidents her daily life affords; while Miss Sarah Emery has wrought the romance of the yet earlier years into her narrative of *Three Generations*, a book both fascinating in itself and notable for its pre-Raphaelitic fidelity to fact.



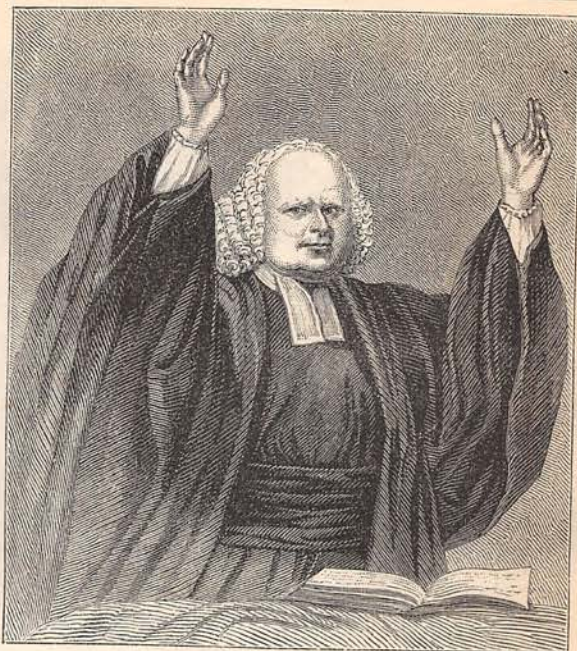
JOSHUA COFFIN'S RESIDENCE.



Yet there are other aspects of Newburyport perhaps of as much interest to those who do not care to be disturbed by the vivid emotions of this tragic side, and the lover of the pastoral and the curiosity-seeker have only to stroll through the principal streets to be well repaid for their trouble. They will find at the lower end of the town, nearly opposite an old graveyard abounding in such epitaphs as

"Come, all ye children whose name is Noyes,  
Make Jesus Christ your only choice,"

and at whose foot is a pond with a floating island of great willows with moorhens' nests among them, which is blown about from wind to wind, a quaint mansion sitting on a level sward, and nearly enveloped in vines. It is one of the few very old houses left, and is built round a vast chimney-stack with spacious fire-places, with windows large and small opening in pleasant surprises, some on closets and some on staircases, and with walls that, when stripped of their papering, display such landscape frescoes as were wont to decorate fine dwellings



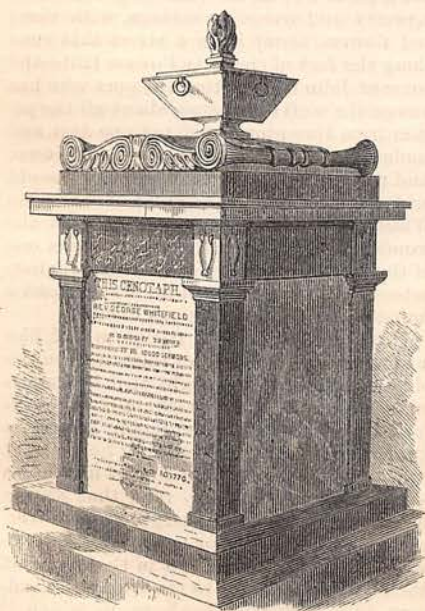
GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

in the days of the Stuarts. This was the home, and the long-inherited home, of Joshua Coffin, the historian of Newburyport, whom Whittier has celebrated in his poem of the *School-master*, and whose genial and kindly spirit and subtle humor all readers of his book acknowledge, though it was never more quietly shown than in a "notice" made by him, in his capacity of town-clerk, after the little-relished annexation of a large section of Newbury to the Port: "The annual town-meeting of *what is left of Newbury* stands adjourned to Monday, May 12, 2 P.M., at the Town-house, now in *Newburyport*."

Passing along High Street, and going down Federal; our travelers will presently come to the old church in whose vault Whitefield lies buried, and at one side of which he will enter the narrow little School Street, in whose first house upon the left William Lloyd Garrison was born, and in the next one George Whitefield breathed his last, a man of whom Mr. Buckle says that, if oratory is to be judged by its effects, he was the most eloquent man since the apostles, and of whom Cowper writes:

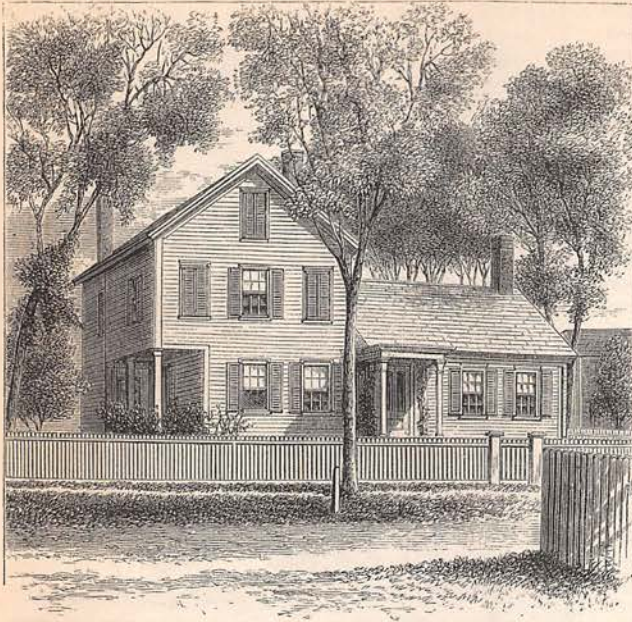
"He loved the world that hated him; the tear  
That fell upon his Bible was sincere.  
Assailed by slander and the darts of strife,  
His only answer was a blameless life."

Retracing their steps, and going from Federal through Temple to State Street, they will observe at the second door from State Street an old house from which James Russell Lowell took away the panel that his grandfather



CENOTAPH IN MEMORY OF GEORGE WHITEFIELD.





HOME OF WHITTIER, AMESBURY.

had placed over a fire-place there, painted with the representation of a clerical party engaged as Willy was when "Rob and Allan came to see," with rolling smoke and frothing ale and full canonicals, beneath the legend,

"In essentialibus unitas, in non-essentialibus libertas, in omnibus caritas."

Professor Lowell's grandfather was once a prominent clergyman of the town, almost, if not quite, the earliest of liberal preachers any where. He was succeeded, after the Rev. Mr. Cary, by Dr. Andrews, who, when he was settled, was settled for life; and one of Dr. Andrews's immediate successors was the Rev. Thomas Wentworth Higginson.

A few steps across the way from the old Lowell residence is the fine public library, located in the great Prince House, of many thousand volumes, founded and endowed by several private citizens, and a reading-room, open day and evening, and supplied with all the current literature through the liberality of Mr. William C. Todd. Going on High Street again, opposite the Mall will be seen a fine edifice of brick and brown stone, built according to the will of the late Oliver Putnam—to whom be all honor—and known as the Putnam Free School, a school which has few like it in Christendom, for it is free to the whole world for the education of youth of every race, religion, sex, color, or condition.

If this is not a sufficient stroll for one morning, our visitors can take the street car on the water-side, and a mile will bring them to the ship-yards, and another mile to

the airy and picturesque Chain Bridge, beside which stands Eaglenest, a fine home school for boys, of which Dr. Lloyd Hixon is head-master. Here the road crosses the beautiful Deer Island, near which was the scene of the famous sham robbery, an affair which, in the less scandalous times of its occurrence, aroused the attention of the country—one Goodrich, a bearer of a large sum of money, shooting himself and pretending to have been robbed, and afterward, by the divination of the hazel rod, finding his marked gold pieces in the cellars of his innocent neighbors, one of whom on his acquittal

was drawn home in triumph by the hands of the towns-people, though he was so heart-broken that he never came down into the town again, and the occasion of the trial of the others having called forth one of Daniel Webster's best and earliest legal efforts, and brought about the first meeting between that great man and Rufus Choate. Not a great way farther, and they will reach a pretty and irregular cottage, with vines and flowers about it, in a street that runs along the foot of the lofty Powow Hill—the home of John G. Whittier, the poet who has woven the web of his song about all the region from Hampton Beach to Cape Ann, and made the hearts of all the people his own. And returning in a circle, by way of the old bridge, they will pass the grave of that John Wheelwright who shared the exile of the wonderful Anne Hutchinson, and was one of the most picturesque of all colonial characters, both as a victim of intolerance and a founder of civil and religious liberty.

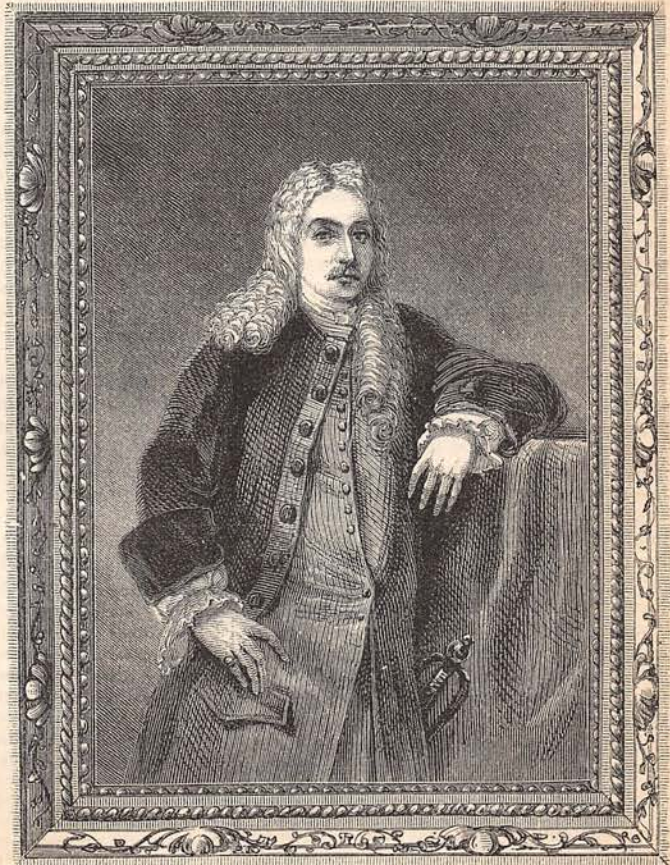
If on another day our friends would like a more extended drive, let them take to the old turnpike—which might still be haunted by some splendid apparition of the scarlet mail-coach, with its plunging horses, its guards and lights and blowing horns, as it dashed down the straight line of fifty miles—now a sweet old turfy road that Nature has retaken to herself, overgrown and over-arched with foliage for more than half its way. They will come first in the course of their afternoon drive to the Dummer Academy, in a parish of Newbury, in which it used to be considered indispensable that a



man should receive his elementary education—the oldest incorporated academy of America. The mansion-house of Governor Dummer stands near the academy, a wooden house, with its end walls stuccoed in plaster and broken glass, with spacious halls and rooms leading into one another under handsome archways. Here belongs the full-length portrait of Governor Dummer, the founder of the institution, and the son of that noble Richard Dummer who, though a sufferer under Winthrop's ignorant bigotry, contributed personally, when Winthrop's reverses came, as much as was given by all the rest of the township. Still following the road thence, presently there will be seen, sitting under its green elms, the house of Theophilus Parsons, a man of "mighty mind," as Caleb Cushing says of him, Chief Justice of the State during the latter portion of his life, the author of that powerful paper known as the "Essex Result," and a member of the famous Essex Junto, a large number of the other members of which were gentlemen of Newburyport, by-the-way. Chief Justice Parsons was one of the principal men in drafting the Massachusetts Constitution and in procuring the adoption by Massachusetts of the Federal Constitution. It was he who prepared that momentous article of the Federal Constitution, Article X., that great sentinel of all our liberties, standing forever between us and possible despotism, and with its clear voice proclaiming that "the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." He is represented as a man of wit, imagination, tenacious memory, and with such a power of concentration that his judicial decisions, it is said, had the appearance of intuitions.

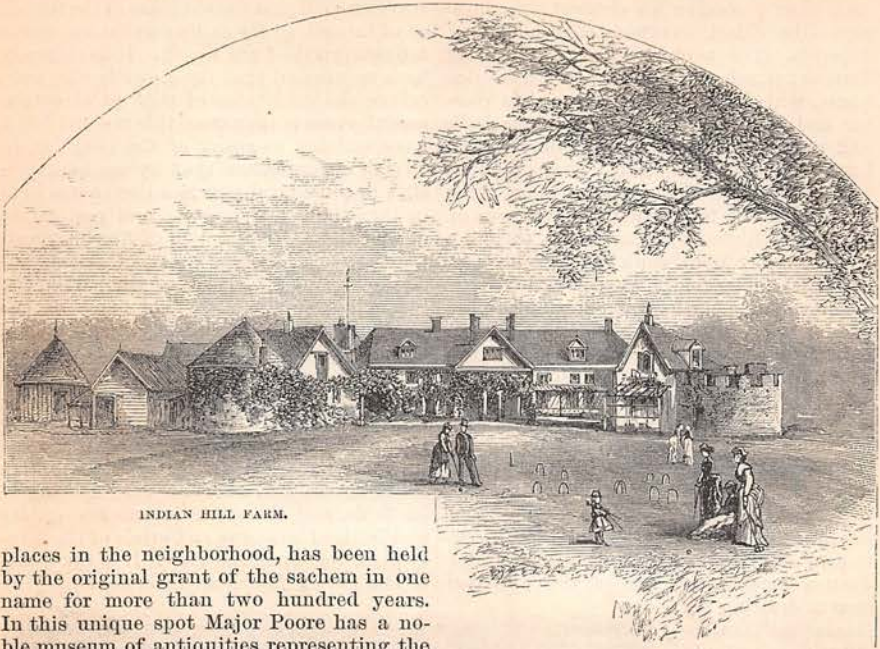
A mile or two beyond this spot our

travelers will pass the old home of the founder of Lowell, so far as its mechanical plans are concerned—Paul Moody. It has already been mentioned that the Lowells who conceived the enterprise of that great cotton manufacture sprang from this region; but I have omitted to speak of the singular, if trivial, circumstance that by an inadvertence in some legal papers a dower was held in the whole water-power and real estate of that city by one woman of Newburyport, the mother of Bishop Clark, of Rhode Island. Passing the centre of the parish, the explorer will reach the old home of the Longfells, on a slightly spot, surrounded by rich smooth fields—a house now abandoned as a dwelling, but still held in the family name, and out of which the progenitors of Henry W. Longfellow removed to Portland. A couple of miles to the westward then, and the always snow-white cattle of Indian Hill Farm are seen grazing in its fields, and the stone towers and gables and latticed windows and oriels of the lovely place rise upon the view. It is the house of Ben Perley Poore, and, like several other



GOVERNOR RICHARD DUMMER.





INDIAN HILL FARM.

places in the neighborhood, has been held by the original grant of the sachem in one name for more than two hundred years. In this unique spot Major Poore has a noble museum of antiquities representing the whole colonial history, and a collection of autographs said to be unequalled by any in the country. But approaching sunset forbids lingering here, and allows just a glimpse of the places where Professor Felton and John Cotton Smith were born, and of the adjacent home of the late Alexander Everett. Indeed, the whole country round about Newburyport, if you take that for a centre, is honey-combed, as one might say, with places and people it is worth while to see. It is only a morning's sail to the home of Celia Thaxter; it is only a morning's drive to the charming home of "Gail Hamilton"—a fifteen minutes' ride by rail; it is scarcely more to the home of Lucy Larcom, or of Miss Preston, the lovely translator of *Miræio*; to the summer residence and delightful conversation of James T. Fields; to the magnificent hospitality of General Butler; to the beautiful Crowningshield Farm, from which the noble and holy Mrs. Easty was taken to be hung for a witch, still bearing the name of its former owner, a Secretary of the Navy, though now in the possession of Mr. Thomas W. Pierce, one of the most eminent of American railway projectors; to the island at the mouth of Essex River, where Rufus Choate was born—twin growth, as has been said, both of them being exotic to the soil and foreign to its atmosphere, with the magnolia that in a swamp not far away has sprung up in superb luxuriance.

Thus I hope, because I love the sweet old place so much myself, that I have made the reader feel some charm in Newburyport, and realize how she abounds in interest. To-

day she stands by her river-side the ideal of an ancient country town, peaceful enough and almost beautiful enough for Paradise; but yesterday, when a little hamlet of not six hundred and fifty acres, of not so much land as any Western settler may preempt, she flung down, in advance of the action of the confederated colonies, her defiance of the power whose drum-beats encircle the world; and when later with her privateers she led the van of the little squadron that, almost unaided, crippled British commerce, she made herself a historic place and an enduring name. And now her municipal arms, with their quarterings of light-house and sea, of the mills and of the ship-yards, and the towers of the old English Newbury, with the motto *Terrâ Marique*, bear witness to the skill of her mechanics, to her name in every port, and to her loveliness both by land and sea.

### PHANTOMS.

MANY strange shadows does my rich Past keep,  
Giving me glimpses of them now and then,  
Sometimes amid the busy ways of men,  
But oftener in the lotus-land of sleep:  
Faces of friends that no more laugh or weep  
On this our earth bend over me as when  
They dwelt with us, and gladden me again;  
Dead lips call out to me across the deep.  
And ever in my dreams I see thee stand,  
O fairest, purest, sphered in sanctity!  
With soft sad smile, and lifted fading hand,  
Full in the pallid moon, beckonest me.  
And I, half wakened, answer thy command,  
"Go on, sweet ghost, and I will follow thee."  
T. B. ALDRICH.