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NATICK,

MASSACHUSETTS.

ITS

Advantages for Residence,

AND AS

A PLACE OF BUSINESS.

PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN,

By AMOS P. CHENEY.

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NATICK.

ITS LOCATION AND EARLY HISTORY.

This is one of the southern border towns of Middlesex County. It extends nearly six miles north and south, by a little less than five miles in width, with a very irregular outline, and contains a little more than 8,300 acres. Natick centre is, by air line, about sixteen miles from the State House, Boston, but by the line of the B. & A. R. R. it is seventeen miles from that city.

Natick is the aboriginal name of the township, and signifies "a place of hills." This township was granted to the Indian converts, at the request of the Apostle Eliot, by the inhabitants of Dedham, under the sanction of the General Court.

As nearly all these lands were the inheritance of the Speen family, it was thought best by Eliot and others that they should give up their right in them, which they were all very willing to do. And therefore, "on a lecture day, pub-

lickly and solemnly, before the Lord and all the people, John Speen and all his kindred, friends and posterity, gave away all their right and interest which they formerly had in the land in and about Natick, that so the praying Indians might then make a towne."

Under Eliot's direction a form of government was established on a Scriptural plan. It was the same which Moses adopted by advice of Jethro:

"Moreover thou shalt provide, out of all the people, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness, and place over them, to be rulers of thousands and rulers of hundreds, and rulers of fifties and rulers of tens. And let them judge the people at all seasons; and it shall be that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge."—Exodus xviii; 21.22.

This plan was literally carried out, but it is not known how long it continued to serve their needs. As early as 1716, however, selectmen and other town officers were chosen by them similar to those now elected in Massachusetts towns.

The first church was built on the site of the present Unitarian church at So. Natick. This church stood between two oak trees, one of which, called the Eliot oak, is still standing, and it is claimed by many that the Apostle stood beneath its branches, to preach to the Indians, before the church was built.

This was the first Indian church in America. The following is a description of the original meeting house: "There is

one large house built after the English manner. The lower room is a large hall which serves for a meeting house on the Lord's day and a school house on the week days. There is a large canopy of mats, raised upon poles, for Mr Eliot and his company, and other sort of canopies for themselves to sit under, the men and the women being placed apart. The upper room is a kind of wardrobe, where the Indians hang up their skins and other things of value. In the corner of this room Mr. Eliot has an apartment partitioned off, with a bed and bedstead in it."

This description was given by Major-General Gookin of Cambridge, who was appointed superintendent of all the Indians who had subjected themselves to the provincial government. He accompanied Mr. Eliot in his missionary tours. While one preached the Gospel the other administered civil affairs among the Indians.

Until 1733 the government of the town was in the hands of the Indians alone, but in 1745 when Natick was "erected into a precinct or parish," by the General Court, the English inhabitants only were included, the Indians being under guardianship.

The public business of the parish was transacted at South Natick until the close of the eighteenth century when, by a majority vote of the inhabitants, it was transferred to the centre of the township. Natick was incorporated in 1781. The first town-house was built in 1830.

DESCRIPTION.

While the two principal villages are built on extended plains, the greater portion of the town is broken up into hills and valleys, well furnished with springs, ponds and water courses.

Among the hills, which give the name to the town, are many prominent eminences which command extensive views of the country around. The chief of these is Pegan Hill, so called from its aboriginal owner. From its summit, which rises 420 feet above tide water, can be seen from fifteen to twenty village churches in various directions, a portion of Boston harbor, the Blue Hills, Wachusset and Monadnoc mountains, and on a clear day the White mountains can be discerned in the distance. The principal of the remaining hills are Broad's, Carver's, Train's, Loker's. Walnut and Tom's. The last is so called from its having been owned, in olden time, by a celebrated Indian who went by the name of Captain Tom.

FELCHVILLE.

The centre of this community lies nearly one mile northwest from the middle of the town. It has a more elevated site than Natick centre. North main street is the principal thoroughfare, from which diverge several streets which lead up the western slope of Walnut hill. The land is admirably adapted to residential purposes, being high and dry, with a pleasing prospect. The streets are wide and hard and the village is closely connected by horse railroad with the centre of the

town.

The name was derived from the leading family of the neighborhood. Asa Felch, one of its earliest members, is entitled to the distinction of being the first person in Natick to engage in the manufacture of pegged shoes for the wholesale trade. His enterprise had a modest beginning. He bought only a small lot of upper leather and of sole leather from manufacturers of neighboring towns. The cutting of this stock, making it into shoes, finishing and packing them for market, was entirely the work of his own hands. That was in 1827, some four years before the railroad from Boston to Worcester was commenced, and fifteen years before any express company existed. Therefore, Mr. Felch took his first lot of "Natick brogans" into Boston with his own one-horse team. They were readily sold to a shoe and leather merchant, who in return delivered what leather he desired and paid the balance in cash. It was a successful venture, and our pioneer extended his business and soon employed assistants in several departments of the work. His example was contagious, and a few years later there were several manufacturers established, not only in Felchville, but in other parts of the town. The new industry drew in workmen from other communities. The completion of the Boston & Worcester railroad gave a strong impuise to the increase of business and growth of the town. This has been continued, and now the expansion of Felchville and that of the centre of the

town has brought them nearly together. In addition to the horse railroad there is a Felchville station on the Saxonville branch of the Boston & Albany railroad. If the projected spur of the Massachusetts Central railroad should be extended to Natick, it would pass directly through this village, giving excellent railway facilities.

SHEETS OF WATER.

Long Pond, more often called by its Indian name, Lake Cochituate, covers 659 acres. It is well known as one of the sources of Boston's water supply. Its head rests near the centre of Natick, whence it stretches away more than seven miles in a northerly direction, passing into the town of Wayland. This lake is a favorite resort of boatmen. The Natick Boat Club and others have more than 100 boats upon it during the season.

Dug Pond lies just above Lake Cochituate and covers fifty acres. It furnishes the inhabitants of Natick with water for fire and domestic use. Various theories have been advanced as to the reason for its bearing this name. Some say that the steep descent of the banks suggest the idea that the basin occupied by the pond was dug or artificially excavated. Near the shore this pond has a gravelly bottom, but, a short distance out, it is found to be solid rock which suddenly terminates in an almost perpendicular descent to an unknown depth, as all efforts to sound it have proved unsuccessful. Another peculiarity of this pond is that, as stated by Biglow, "It has no

natural inlet, except from the clouds above, or the springs beneath; and no outlet but by evaporation or absorption." Early in this century, however, a small stream was diverted from its original channel and made to flow into this pond, and an artificial sluice now conducts its surplus water into Lake Cochituate. Although Dug Pond is separated from the latter by only a few rods its surface is many feet higher. There is an interesting legend connected with this pond. In the earliest days of the Massachusetts colony, the white visitors observed at night, apparently at great depth in the water, a brilliant light. The Indians regarded this phenomenon with great awe, as they believed it to be a special manifestation of the Great Spirit. In time the fame of this light extended to England, and a native of that country, excited by curiosity, crossed the Atlantic and visited this pond to see for himself, this wondrous light. He engaged an Indian to take him in a canoe to a point directly over the luminous spot. Having carefully observed it, the stranger suddenly plunged into the water for the evident purpose of reaching and securing the brilliant object. The Indian, surprised at such an act of rashness, and uttering an exclamation of horror, paddled swiftly to the shore and fled from the neighborhood, leaving the presumptuous stranger to whatever fate such a defiance of the Great Spirit should bring upon him.

Nonesuch Pond, on the northeastern

boundary, is about the size of Dug Pond. The smaller ponds are Pickerel, Mud and Jennings' all not far from Nonesuch. Morse's Pond lies near the southern line of the town. This and Jennings' Pond are utilized as the source of water power.

CHARLES RIVER AND SMALLER STREAMS

This beautiful river, often called "the winding Charles," well deserves that appellation. It is said that two bridges crossing the river in this vicinity are but five miles apart by the highway, but if a person goes from one to the other by boat, on the river, he will make a journey of thirty miles before reaching his destination. The Charles river flows through the south village affording a valuable water power in that place. Many dwellers on its banks enjoy boating in summer, while in winter, hundreds of skaters are often gathered on its surface to enjoy that exhilarating and healthful sport.

The smaller streams consist of six brooks bearing the following names, viz.: Snake, Sawin, Pegan, Bacon, Steep and Jennings. They are distributed widely apart throughout the town, and are tributary to the river, ponds and lake.

SCENERY.

The scenery in and around Natick is charming. Pleasant walks and delightful drives are found in every direction.

Starting from the railway station for a drive, take Washington, East Central, and Union streets to South Natick; thence turning to the left of the Unitarian church, by the Wellesley road, to the

estate of H. H. Hunnewell, Esq. Return home by the Pond road, so called, and East Central street. On Union street, to the left, on the height, is the reservoir of the Natick Water Works. A little farther on, near the residence of S. W. Childs, a very extended view breaks upon the sight, including not only the village of South Natick, but portions of Dover, Wellesley, Needham and Dedham. Just east of the Unitarian church at South Natick, may be seen, the Eliot Oak tree before mentioned. At the entrance to the Hunnewell grounds, hitching posts are found for the convenience of those who come with a carriage. Through the kindness and liberality of Mr. H. H. Hunnewell visitors are allowed to go over his grounds, where the art of landscape gardening in many forms is carried to a high state of perfection.

A very interesting drive is to take the same course to South Natick, passing, this time, to the right of the Unitarian church. We are now in the public square. The whole open space before us is full of historic interest. The streets to the right and left, as well as the park, and the grounds of the Bacon Free Library were within the limits of the original Indian burying place. This is the scene of the first successful apostolic labors of John Eliot among the Indians. Here, in the park is the monument to his memory, while near by, at the left on the opposite side of the street, is the grave of Daniel Takawampait, the Indian preacher, ordained by Eliot, and who was his imme-

diate successor. Over this grave stands the original headstone which is the only one known to have been erected to the memory of any of the Natick Indians. South Natick is the village made famous, also, by Harriet Beecher Stowe in her well known book "Oldtown Folks." Her husband, Professor Stowe, who figured as one of the prominent characters, was a native of this village. Continuing our drive we reach the stone bridge which spans the Charles river, from which point, on either side, charming river views may be obtained. Pegan Hill, the highest eminence in Natick, is the objective point of this drive, and the extended prospect from the summit, as previously described, well repays the visitor. The varied views, as one descends the hill, are also highly pleasing.

A short, and for a portion of the way, rather wild drive is through Marion, Bacon and Oak to Worcester street. On Bacon street are located the famous Waban Conservatories, devoted chiefly to the culture of choice roses. This is said to be the largest establishment of its kind in New England. From the heights of Walnut hill on the return a commanding view of the centre of the town is obtained.

The village of Cochituate lies three miles north of Natick. Near it is the gate house of the Boston Water Works. This is a pretty place to visit. One can go by carriage or horse-cars.

South Framingham is four miles from Natick, and Framingham centre lies two miles beyond. In the latter village the

State Normal School is located. The Sherborn Reformatory for women is in full view from South Framingham, and a short distance from its southern border.

A drive to the ancient town of Sherborn, three miles distant, and back by South Natick, will be interesting. The first white settlers in the Indian town of Natick came from Sherborn to the south village. When Gen. Washington was on his way to Boston, he passed over this road. On approaching South Natick, when he beheld the river and the neighboring hills he remarked: "Nature has here lavished all her charms." By this drive one passes the former residence of Rev. Stephen Badger, one of the successors of Eliot as minister to the Indians. During his ministry, in 1753, a deputation of Indians, one bearing two elm trees on his shoulders, applied to him for permission to plant those trees before his door as a mark of their regard, or as they called them, "the trees of friendship." One of these trees is still standing in front of that house, which is now occupied by Mr. Z. H. Stain.

A pleasant and romantic walk can be enjoyed by going over Walnut and Worcester streets to Pickerel Pond. Not far from the junction of Worcester and Oak streets, the path leaves the highway by a private road, a mile in length, through the woods. As the road branches in various directions, a guide will be needed over this portion of the way. Those who are not good walkers would find it necessary to ride to the entrance

of the forest path.

A very enjoyable excursion can be made to Wellesley College, about two miles distant, going by way of East Central street to the lodge at the entrance, and thence by the driveway which leads to the college buildings. One can return, if he wishes to vary the route, by either Wellesley or South Natick.

ADDITIONAL OBJECTS OF INTEREST.

Numerous objects of interest have been noted in connection with drives. In addition, we may mention the site on Hartford street, near Tom's Hill, of the home of Crispus Attucks, the famous Indian mulatto. He was the first person who fell in the Revolution, being killed in the Boston Massacre, March 5, 1770.

On South street, not far from Morse's mill, is the site of the first white settlement in Natick, by Thomas Sawin, the land being deeded to him by the Indians in 1686.

Beside the Indian burying place in South Natick, near Charles river, there is another one of later date on Pond street, near Main. A fatal epidemic breaking out among the Indians about 1754, this ground was taken for the purpose of interment. Ever since the extinction of the race in this vicinity, it has been lying in a neglected state, until recently, when the Wamsquon Association was formed for the purpose of reclaiming and converting it into an Indian memorial park.

On West Central street, not far from Spring street, may be seen the former

home of Henry Wilson, the late Vice President of the United States, who was, for more than forty years, a resident of Natick. This house is now occupied by Dr. G. C. Smith.

PARKS.

Every large town needs a public park, and Natick is so fortunate as to possess one. It is located on the borders of Dug Pond and comprises about fifty acres of land. As it is a recent acquisition, its beauties and advantages have been but partially developed. A considerable portion is covered with well-grown trees. There are, also, good natural facilities for boating on the pond. These advantages have already made it a popular resort.

In both the centre of the town and the south village there is a small park or common, each well furnished with trees. In the former, stands a monument to the memory of the soldiers, and in the latter may be seen the only monument erected in honor of the Apostle Eliot.

GROVES.

There are several groves in and around Natick where picnic parties—large or small—or other public gatherings can be held. These are furnished with facilities for boating and other amusements usually found in connection with such grounds.

HEALTH AND LONGEVITY.

Few towns in Massachusetts of the size of Natick can present a better record for healthfulness. During the past year,

which was not an exceptionally good one, the rate of mortality was less than 1.5 per cent. One third of the deaths were of persons more than sixty years old, one of whom had reached the advanced age of ninety-two years. With so fair a record in the past, and with plenty of pure air, an abundance of excellent water for all purposes, and the competent and efficient Board of Health now in service to look after and suppress all sources of danger to public health, we feel warranted in claiming exceptional advantages in respect to health and longevity.

As an assurance that the health record of Natick will be maintained, we have fifteen resident physicians, of whom eight are members of the Mass. Medical Society, and two belong to the Homœopathic School of Medicine. Happily, however, their services are not limited to this community; but, located, in Natick, and connected by telephone with all adjoining towns and villages, their field of usefulness extends over a circuit having a radius of eight to ten miles.

CHURCHES.

There are in Natick nine places of public worship. Of these, six are in the centre of the town, of the following denominations: Congregational, Methodist, Baptist, Universalist, Episcopal and Roman Catholic. The remaining three are in the south village, viz.: Unitarian, Congregational and Roman Catholic. The officiating clergymen are all able preachers.

SCHOOLS.

The people of Natick consider the public schools as of first importance. This they have always shown by making liberal appropriations for their support, having, on several occasions, exceeded the estimates made by the school committee. There are, in the town, thirty-nine schools in which are 1892 pupils under the instruction of forty-six teachers, at an average cost, per pupil, of about \$17. They occupy twelve school buildings, so located as to most conveniently accommodate all the pupils. A most successful evening school was established toward the close of 1888. This will be continued in the centre of the town, and another will be opened in the south village the coming winter.

HOME SCHOOL.

For those who desire to place their children under private instruction, the Home School, on Park avenue, offers all the advantages one could desire. It has an efficient corps of teachers, and its record during the series of years since its establishment is a sufficient guarantee, to the public, of the excellence and thoroughness of its work.

MUSIC AND ART.

Lovers of music and art will find in this town unusual advantages and congenial companionship. Natick has always been noted for the musical talent of its people. It is stated, on good authority, that more than 1300 pianos are in use here.

We have two excellent art stores and numerous teachers of the various kinds of drawing and painting can be found in this town.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

In this department of her educational facilities which has so happily been styled the "people's college," Natick has been singularly favored. The Town Library was founded in 1857. Natick being the home of Henry Wilson, its library received from him a large number of public documents, as they were issued.

By the will of Mary Ann Morse, a native and resident of this town, she gave her entire estate to the town for library purposes. In 1873, according to her expressed wishes, a building was completed by the trustees who had been chosen by the town. They also made a large purchase of books, with which were united those of the existing town library. The whole constituted the "Morse Institute," having in its various classes 7311 volumes for circulation and reference. At the end of February, 1889, they had increased to 15,172 volumes, beside a valuable collection of pamphlets. There is one reading room devoted to magazines of various classes, both home and foreign, while the other contains daily and weekly newspapers. The library and reading rooms are open at specified hours daily.

At the South village is located the Bacon Free Library. Oliver Bacon, Esq., a native, and for more than eighty-one years a resident in that village, by will

appointed a board of trustees as his residuary legatees. They were required to give bonds for faithful service under his instructions. They erected a fire-proof building, purchased books, and established the library. It was opened in 1881, like the Morse Institute, "for the free use of all the inhabitants of the town." This library now contains about 3450 volumes, and the tables in its reading room are supplied with choice periodicals. In connection with it, the library of the Historical Natural History and Library Society of South Natick, which includes 1000 volumes and is located in the same room, is also open to the public as a reference department.

THE HISTORICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY. ITS LIBRARY AND MUSEUM.

This society was founded in 1870. Its objects were to gather all facts of local history which could be obtained; to make a collection of historical relics of local interest; to secure specimens in all departments of Natural History; and to form a library composed of books relating to each department of the society's work, and also of such books as, from their age or character, were esteemed valuable or interesting.

This society has succeeded in gathering together a library of 1000 or more volumes, while the departments of the museum are of exceptional interest and value. There are few places, outside of cities, where can be found so rare and extensive a collection, especially in bot-

any, conchology, ornithology and mineralogy. These have all been carefully classified and arranged by experienced naturalists.

The museum is placed in the Bacon Free Library building, the founder of that institution having instructed his trustees to provide suitable rooms for the free and permanent use of that society.

WATER WORKS.

The Natick Water Works were commenced early in 1874, and have steadily grown in public favor. There are now more than twenty-six miles of street mains in use with 145 hydrants for service by the fire department. There are also large drinking fountains in each of the three business centres of the town, Natick, South Natick and Felchville.

FIRE DEPARTMENT.

Natick has excellent facilities for protection against fire. The apparatus includes two steam fire engines, one hook and ladder company, and five hose companies, which in connection with the numerous hydrants, form a most effective fire service. The introduction of the Gamewell system of Electric Fire Alarm Telegraph has greatly increased the availability and value of this department. Nine signal boxes have been established, and about 11 miles of wire connect these points with the several stations of the fire apparatus. The provisions for security against fire in Natick hold a high rank in the state. No better proof of

this is needed than the fact that the rates of fire insurance risks in our town are quite as low as in any other community in eastern Massachusetts. Indeed, they are much lower than in many other towns of the same size.

MAILS, TELEGRAPH AND TELEPHONE.

Natick has an exceptionally good postal service. Each day five mails go to Boston and the east, and eight arrive from those points. Five mails go to the west and south and four arrive. Two mails go to the north and two arrive in Natick from that direction. A smaller number of mails go from and are received at the South village, but the people of that place are well accommodated in this respect. At the B. & A. R. R. depot there is an office of the Western Union Telegraph Co., open day and evening. The New England Telephone and Telegraph Co. is located in Winch's block, South Avenue, and can be used at any time, day or night.

NEWSPAPERS.

Our town supports three local newspapers, the "Natick Bulletin," "Natick Citizen," and the "Natick Weekly Review." These papers furnish full reports of all that transpires within its limits, with a brief *resume* of life in the adjacent villages.

HORSE RAILROAD.

Street cars connect Cochituate village and Felchville with the centre of the town. They run each way at frequent

intervals, and make close connection with all trains on the B. & A. R. R. A new highway, securing an easy grade, has been surveyed to the South village, through which, when completed, a street railway is projected.

SOCIETY.

Our town is conspicuous for the activity of its social life and the generous hospitality of its people. Their fondness for social enjoyment finds gratification in the frequent meetings of many local societies. Prominent among these are the Masons and the Order of the Eastern Star, I. O. O. F. and Daughters of Rebekah, G. A. R., Relief Corps, and S. of V., O. U. A. M. and Daughters of Liberty, I. O. R. M. and Daughters of Pocahontas, Co. L, 9th regiment, M. V. M., Royal Arcanum, A. L. of H., Home Circle, K. of H., Golden Cross, K. of P., Iron Hall, British Americans, A. O. U. W., Tonti, A. O. of H., W. C. T. U., Y. M. C. A., I. O. G. T., Reform Club, and F. M. T. A. & L. Association. In addition, there are more than fifty others, beside numerous societies connected with the churches and various labor organizations.

NO LICENSE.

Natick has, for several years, been a no-license town and the present indications all show that this will be her settled policy for the future. There are eight temperance organizations in town, and though each is working in its own way, they all have the same object in view, which is the banishment of the liquor

traffic. The Economy and Order Association was organized to bring about a reform in the administration of public affairs, and it has been eminently successful in the prosecution of this work. Indeed, its success was so marked that letters have been received from all parts of the country, inquiring as to the methods adopted which had effected so desirable a result.

INDUSTRIES.

The manufacture of boots and shoes is extensively carried on, giving employment to a large number of people.

The Harwood base ball factory, one of the largest in the country, is located here.

There are also several machine shops and carriage factories in successful operation.

Beside these there is a steam grist-mill connected with a wholesale flour and grain business.

J. Jennings Jr. & Son have an establishment for the manufacture of knives and other edge tools.

The Veterinary Hospital of J. B. Messenger & Son, on Pond street, takes high rank among owners of high-bred horses as being one of the best appointed and most successful equine sanatoriums in the state.

J. A. Morse & Son have a saw-mill and grist-mill in the southern part of the town.

The Maltha Manufacturing Co. at South Natick manufacture there a substitute for India Rubber.

BANKS.

Our financial institutions consist of a National Bank, a Five Cents Savings Bank, and the Henry Wilson Co-operative Bank. All these establishments are well conducted, and command the confidence of the community.

ADVANTAGES FOR BUSINESS.

It is of great importance to those who are about embarking in business, to select a location combining the largest number of advantages in order to attain the highest degree of success. Natick possesses so many of these requisites that a person seeking a location in which to establish himself would find it to his profit to come to this town to make a tour of observation.

There are some manufacturers who, after starting in business in other places, find they have made a mistake for the reason that the location selected is less suitable for their purpose than they expected, in consequence of which competitors, more favorably situated, are taking business from them. Therefore they are seeking the best place to which they may remove their works. All such persons are invited to visit Natick and investigate the advantages which it possesses for every kind of business.

Natick Centre is built upon a plain, and near the railroad is land well-suited and available for manufacturing purposes. The railroad facilities are such as to afford direct and frequent communication

with all parts of New England, and also with the west and south. Thus the local manufacturer has ready access, not only to all sources of raw material but to all markets for their goods in every direction. He also finds the bank, postal, telegraph, telephone, express and railroad (both passenger and freight) facilities entirely satisfactory.

The water power at the South village is only partially utilized. The water is peculiarly well adapted to paper making, and was for many years used for that purpose until the mill was bought by other parties engaged in another branch of manufactures. This mill was burned about five years ago.

FINE LOCATION FOR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND SUBURBAN VILLAS.

The numerous hills of Natick are admirably adapted as sites for institutions of a public character, such as a college, observatory or any educational or scientific establishment, also for a sanatorium or for summer hotels. The pure air, charming outlook and easy accessibility of these heights render them peculiarly desirable for either of the objects above named.

They may also be quite as appropriately occupied by suburban villas or other style of country seat, as seen in the elegant mansion of Mrs. Hollis Hunnewell on Train's Hill, and the tasteful and charming residences which now occupy portions of Walnut Hill and its adjacent lesser eminences. Along the shores of Lake

Cochituate are picturesque, elevations and overlooking Charles river are high banks, all of which are desirable localities for summer residences. Some persons; however, prefer a level tract upon which to dwell. Their wishes, in this respect, can be acceptably met in many parts of the town, and within easy reach of schools, stores and public conveyances. While prices have been gradually rising during recent years, they are still moderate, and the present is a most favorable time for those wishing to secure a spot for a country seat, to come to Natick and select some of our charming locations for that purpose.

HOMES AT MODERATE COST.

There are many men, heads of families, whose daily life is passed in offices, stores or workshops in Boston or the adjoining cities, and who are residing within the city limits. These men and their families often feel that they are losing some portion of their birth-right of the fresh air and pleasant surroundings which are enjoyed in suburban towns. The persons thus situated are often led to consider this problem:

Where is the town, near Boston, which can be easily reached after the business hours of each day are over; where a home at moderate cost can be procured; where the air is pure, and good water abundant; the scenery varied and attractive; where there are good schools, a public library, churches, desirable society and social organizations; where the streets are well

made, furnished with sidewalks, and lighted at night; where the laws are properly enforced and vicious influences held in subjection; and where the cost of living is made reasonable by honorable competition among the local dealers in the necessaries of life?

Let all such questioners read this book carefully and then improve the first opportunity to visit Natick and see for themselves how fully this town meets their every requirement.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The business portion of Natick is nearly new, the great fire of 1874 having swept away most of the business houses. These were replaced by substantial blocks of brick and stone, which give the town an air of solidity and permanence. The largest of these, Clark's block, on Main street, is two hundred and forty feet long. Concert hall, in the central portion of this block, is said to be the largest and finest public hall between Boston and Worcester.

When erecting these buildings, modern improvements and conveniences were in all cases introduced, securing largely increased facilities for the transaction of business. Our stores are, in size and appointments the best to be found in a wide district. They are mostly heated by steam or hot water and lighted by gas or electricity, or both. They represent nearly all departments of trade, and carry large stocks of goods which are sold at prices so reasonable as to attract the

trade, not of Natick alone, but that of people in all adjoining towns, and also from points even twelve to fifteen miles away in many directions.

The south village was visited by a like disastrous conflagration in 1872, by which, also, the greater portion of its buildings for business were destroyed. Beside these, the Historical Natural History and Library Society lost its entire collections, including books, relics and specimens in natural history which had been gathered to that time. Great improvement in architectural beauty and convenience was secured in the structures erected to replace the buildings which were burned.

Although Natick is the place of hills, her streets are generally so located and built that but few steep grades exist upon them, and the most of these can be easily avoided. It is the purpose of the authorities to keep the streets safe as well as in good condition, and the pleasure of a drive is rarely marred by any accident caused by defects in our highways. Good sidewalks line the streets and extend far out from the business centres. Concrete crossings are being laid on the principal thoroughfares and are being multiplied. These latter conveniences were secured chiefly through the efforts of the Town Improvement Society, an organization recently started, which was also instrumental in procuring an increased appropriation for the further extension and improvement of sidewalks.

Shade trees are a conspicuous feature of our streets and landscape scenery.

Some of the finest trees in the State are to be found in this town.

The Natick Electric Light Company and the Natick Gas Light Company share the service of lighting the streets, stores, public halls and residences in the centre of the town, while the former extends its cables to South Natick and through Felchville to Cochituate.

Natick is a *growing* place. It has a constant accession of population. This is not limited to the natural increase of a town of its size. Since the no-license system was established here, more than three years ago, the money formerly spent in the saloons has been turned into legitimate channels, in consequence of which all branches of trade have prospered. By the banishment of the saloon the town has gained a more sober and skillful class of workmen. The manufacturing business has greatly increased, giving employment to many additional persons. For this reason it was found necessary to make large additions to many of the factories. Several handsome blocks have recently been erected, the stores and offices in which have been at once occupied.

The certainty of the enforcement of law and the ample protection of person and property, give a sense of security which has attracted numerous families to come here to reside. The increase of population has necessitated the building of a large number of dwelling houses.

Natick is supplied with good hotels, and persons visiting the town can find

satisfactory accommodations. Bailey's hotel, by far the longest established of any in town, is located at the south village. It has acquired a high reputation and is noted far and wide for the excellence of its cuisine and the thoughtful attention given to its guests. In the season it is filled with summer boarders, and is a popular resort for wheelmen in summer and sleighing parties in winter. The Wilson House, the most commodious in the centre of the town, is conveniently located for the accommodation of strangers and other guests. It is a well kept house and commands a good share of public patronage.

Excellent restaurants and good boarding houses also abound.

HOW TO REACH NATICK.

Natick is seventeen miles from Boston on the Boston & Albany railroad. There are fifteen trains from Boston to Natick and sixteen trains from Natick to Boston each week day. These trains leave Boston at short intervals from 5 a. m. to 11.15 p. m., and leave Natick from 5.51 a. m. to 10.27 p. m. Single fares between the two places are forty cents; ten-ride tickets, \$3.60; season tickets for three months, \$20; for two months, \$15; for one month, \$10.

The four track system of the B. & A. R. R. corporation, already completed to Riverside, is being extended to South Framingham as rapidly as possible. As soon as the four tracks are laid to Natick, a new passenger station is to be built

here, and when the improvements have reached South Framingham it is expected that an increased number of trains will be put on between that station and Boston to afford the needed accommodation for the public at the stations along the new portion of the four-track system.

A movement is on foot to procure the building of a branch of the Mass. Central railroad from Wayland Centre to Cochituate, three and a half miles. Natick being but two miles distant from Cochituate, over a level country, our citizens are becoming actively interested to have the branch extended to this town. They indulge strong hopes that success may attend this scheme, and thereby a second railway connection between Natick and Boston may, in the near future, become an accomplished fact.

South Natick can be reached by the B. & A. R. R., stopping at the Wellesley station, going thence by coach two miles, to that village. This coach line makes five trips each way, daily. Public carriages are always in waiting, both at Natick and Wellesley, to convey passengers wherever they desire.

Felchville is on the horse railroad line which starts from the B. & A. R. R. station at Natick; fare, five cents.

If any persons visiting Natick to study her advantages for business or for residence, will call upon either member of the Board of Selectmen, Samuel W. Mann, Frank B. Tilton or Arthur F. Atwood, they will be cordially received and fur-

nished with every facility for effecting their purpose.



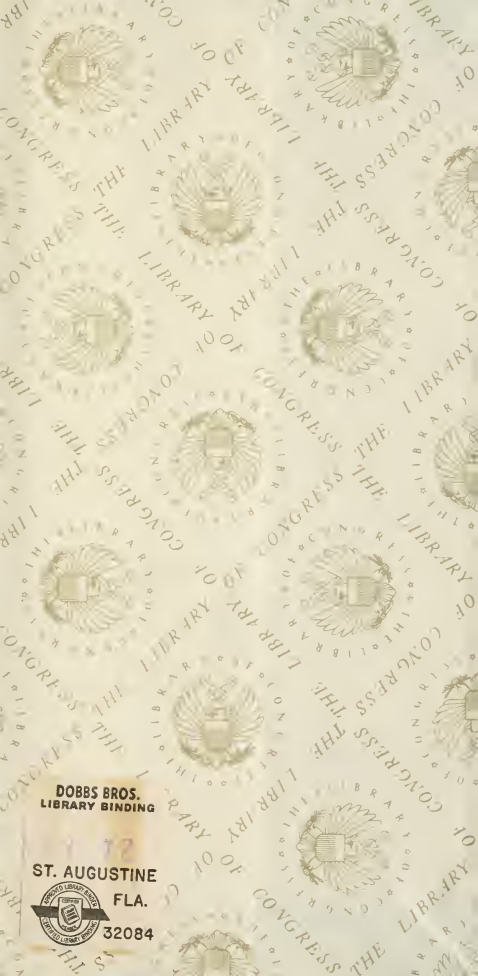
NOTE.

In the following pages, no separate description of South Natick and its advantages are given, as the leading features in that village are spoken of under their appropriate heads in connection with those of the centre of the town.

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D. S.





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