

his surroundings were well adapted to inspire a love for the beautiful in nature, and to foster the poetic spirit that characterized his whole life, and in the earlier days broke out into poetry. Near the head of the Arm is Melville Island, noted as a Military Prison. During the Revolutionary War, all captive insurgents were brought thither and imprisoned. It is a most interesting historical spot, and is visited by tourists now. It is still used as a military prison by the British garrison at Halifax. It was in the immediate vicinity of Mr. Howe's early home, and it inspired his fancy, for in boyhood he wrote a poem on it, from which an extract or two will be interesting, as illustrating the fervid imagination which ripened into a brilliancy of literary style rarely surpassed. He is describing the various imaginary inmates of the prison in days past. Here is one:—

“Here the grey vet'ran, marked with many a  
scar,  
Deplored the sad vicissitudes of war ;  
He loved the cannon's glorious voice to hear ;  
The cry of ‘Board !’ was music to his ear ;  
If on his soul a ray of rapture beam'd,  
'Twas when his cutlass o'er his foeman  
gleamed ;  
Shipwreck'd he oft had been, but yet the sea  
He fear'd not—on its bosom he was free.  
When no spectator of his grief was near,  
Down his brown cheek oft rolled the burning  
tear.  
And his dark eye, which up to heaven was  
turned,  
Displayed the spirit that within him burned.  
But, if some straggler should, by chance, in-  
trude  
Upon his restless, joyless solitude,  
He quickly dashed the tear-drop from his  
eye,—  
None saw him weep, or ever heard him sigh.  
In the calm hours which Nature claimed for  
sleep,  
E'en then, in dreams, his soul was on the  
deep,  
The deck resounding to his measured tread,  
His country's banner floating o'er his head,  
His good ship scudding under easy sail,  
While all around the laugh, the jest prevail ;  
Or, if the god of dreams should strew a train  
Of darker, bolder shadows o'er his brain,  
His brow is knit—his nervous, powerful hand,  
In fancied triumph grasps a well-known  
brand,

While locked with his, o'ertaken in the chase,  
Some frigate lies, in deadly close embrace ;  
Guns roar, swords flash, the dying and the  
dead,  
Mangled and bleeding, o'er the deck are  
spread—  
While the fierce shout, and faint and feeble  
wail  
Together mingled, float upon the gale ;  
With nimble foot athwart the yard he runs,  
Descends and drives the foemen from their  
guns ;  
'Midst blood and death their flag he down-  
ward tears,  
And in its place, his own loved banner rears.  
His shouts of victory through the prison  
ring,  
And startled comrades round his hammock  
bring,  
While drops of sweat his manly temples lave,  
He starts—he wakes—‘O ! God, and can it  
be !  
Am I a captive ! am I not at sea !’”

Again, the prisoner has at length been liberated and returns to his home. Here is the scene described :

“How pure the bliss, how balmy the repose  
Which, after all his toils and all his woes,  
The weary traveller doom'd no more to roam,  
Tastes in the hallowed precincts of his home.  
If of the joy the righteous share in Heaven,  
One foretaste sweet to earthly man is given,  
'Tis when his Cot—his ark of hopes and fears,  
After long absence to his view appears ;  
'Tis when that form, the dearest and the best,  
Springs to his arms and swoons upon his  
breast ;  
When woman's lip,—warm, passionate, and  
pure,—  
Is press'd to his—as if its balm could cure  
His wounded soul, if wound should there re-  
main,  
And charm it back to joy and peace again.”

Howe received no regular education. The cottage was two miles from any school-house. He walked this in summer, but stayed at home in winter. His father directed his mind to literary subjects in these long evenings, and he read and studied as best he could. At thirteen he was apprenticed to the *Gazette* printing office, and worked away at the printing business for ten years. In 1827, when he was twenty-three years old, in company with James Spike he purchased the *Weekly Chronicle* newspaper and changed its name to the *Acadian*. Through the medium of this paper, Mr. Howe came