

as it received its first charter as a town from King John in 1209, it was not till the eighteenth century that it began to be of importance—not, indeed, until the introduction, at the end of that period, of raw cotton from the United States; “which,” we are told, “created modern Liverpool, and it may be said, modern Lancashire.” Of course, the invention of the steam-engine played a large part also. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the population of the town was about 6,000, and the vessels belonging to the port 100 of an average of 85 tons each and manned by 1,100 seamen; at the opening of the nineteenth the population numbered about 80,000, while over 5,000 ships, of half-a-million tonnage, were registered. The census of 1891 made the population 517,980. Steps are now being taken to include in the city suburban areas which really form a part of it, so that “Greater Liverpool” will have a population of not far short of the million. The claim is made that it then will be the second English city in the empire.

There is little or nothing of historical or antiquarian interest about the Liverpool of to-day. All its ancient landmarks have been swept away by modern improvements: even its first wet dock, itself on the site of the *pool* from which Liverpool takes its name, begun in 1709, has been filled up to form the site of the present custom-house. Many of the public buildings, however, possess high architectural merit, particularly St. George’s Hall—an edifice well known from photographs or other illustrations all over the world. This imposing structure is said to be one of the finest specimens of the classic revival erected in modern times, and was designed by Harvey Lonsdale Elmes, an architect of brilliant promise who did not live to see its completion. Near St. George’s Hall are three splendid buildings devoted to the purposes of a public library, natural history and

antiquarian museum, and an art gallery—the last of which contains the originals of some celebrated pictures. The Town Hall, in Castle street, and the municipal offices, in Dale street, are also handsome edifices, while the Exchange, whose buildings along with the Town Hall form a quadrangle, is extremely interesting, especially to Trans-Atlantic visitors, as on the inclosed, uncovered space known as the “flag,” are transacted the operations of the great English cotton market, which is to a large extent but a reflection of the American. Not far away is the wheat market—the “Corn” Exchange, wheat being universally talked of as “corn” in England—the American corn being spoken of as maize.

But the most interesting objects in Liverpool are its magnificent docks, which its good people consider, not without reason, the admiration of the world. The story of Liverpool is written in colossal characters in this splendid series of docks—a story, as has been said, in many respects typical of the development of the whole of Britain’s commerce. Tributary to Liverpool and forming an integral portion of it are the docks at Birkenhead, on the opposite, or Cheshire side of the Mersey.

The docks on the Lancashire side are located on the margin of the river, abutting, for the most part, along the deep water of the channel, for a length of over six miles, and for a width varying from 700 to 2,200 feet, the foreshore having been enclosed from tidal influence by the construction of a continuous sea-wall, except where entrances were required into the range of docks behind it. The dock, known as the Old Dock, first constructed, at the beginning of last century, was only four acres in extent, and was designed to accommodate a hundred vessels. With the exception of a wet-dock built a few years earlier on the Thames at Rotherhithe, originally called the Howland Great