

GABLE ENDS.

THE LONGFELLOW HOMESTEAD.

AT 105 Brattle Street, Cambridge, stands a hospitable-looking mansion, dear to the American people for its association with their greatest general and their most widely recognized poet. Here Washington made his headquarters during his stay in Cambridge, and here Longfellow passed the last forty-six years of his life. If "all houses wherein men lived and died are haunted houses," what noble phantoms must glide through this old colonial pile, for here used to gather so many of earth's greatest men—Holmes, Emerson, the gentle Hawthorne, James Russell Lowell, and the great and simple scientist who began his will—"I, Louis Agassiz, teacher."

Apart from its associations, the house is interesting. It is supposed to be one hundred and fifty years old. Built in the substantial style of the pre-revolutionary period, with many windows and doors, it is thoroughly in keeping with the eminent respectability of the university town. Everything about it is expressive of comfort, without superfluous luxury. The extensive gardens surrounding the house, and the Longfellow meadows on the opposite side of the street, are but one of the many examples by means of which much natural beauty is retained in the necessarily somewhat artificial life of Boston and Cambridge. Looking farther about us, we find that nearly every spot in the neighborhood has some claim upon our attention. Farther up the street is the house of James Russell Lowell, who succeeded Longfellow as Professor of Modern Languages and Literature at Harvard. Not far from the corner of the street is the Harvard Annex, under the shadow of the Washington elm, while across the Common are seen the chief buildings of the University to which the poet gave the best years of his life.

When, in 1836, Longfellow was appointed to the chair of Modern Languages in Harvard, he boarded at this house, then called the Craigie Mansion. Conceiving a great liking for the former home of the

Father of his country, he resolved to buy the place when he had money enough. Probably this house was in his mind when he described the Wayside Inn as

"Built in the old colonial day,
When men lived in a grander way,
With ampler hospitality."

One does not wonder at the poet's taste, if the Longfellow house of 1893 bears any resemblance to the Craigie Mansion of 1836. The well-kept terraces in front of the house, the lilacs and Virginia creeper hiding the fence, the pigeons flying over the roof, all suggest the peaceful home of the scholar, while the heavy door which might be taken for the portal of some mediæval castle, with its quaint old brass knobs and locks, seems to remind us of the warrior who once dwelt within. So few changes have been made in the house during the last decade that, when once we have crossed the threshold, we feel as if in the presence of the "Owners and occupants of earlier date." Half way up the stairs stands an old English hall clock which, though not the original of the "Old Clock on the Stairs," suggests to us all the changing scenes that it has witnessed.

On the left hand side of the hall is the drawing-room in which General and Lady Washington used to receive, while opposite it is Longfellow's study, still kept as it was when he was alive. In one corner of this room stands another tall clock, though much less handsome than the one on the stairs. The several carved book-cases and the "pleasant pictures" at once recall Whittier's description of the poet as he sat in the old historic mansion on his last birthday. This study is the castle mentioned in "The Children's Hour," by whose three unguarded doors the blue-eyed banditti used to enter, and here is shown the chair in which the poet used to sit between the dark and the daylight. The study table is still kept as if in constant use. On it is Coleridge's inkstand, which was sent over to Longfellow after the Lake poet's death. On the plate is the inscription:—