

While he lived in Newton, Thomas Burrage was styled in the deeds in which his name appears, "weaver"; after his removal to Dedham he was called "Husbandman." It appears that three, if not more, of the sons of John were weavers.* We do not know how the business was conducted, but it was, of course, done by hand-loom. At that time, as has been said in another place, most all the fabrics used for clothing were home-made, *i. e.* spun and woven by hand from the raw material, either wool or flax, raised on the farm. It is probable that the men who followed it as a trade either went from house to house, working by the day, or took the yarn to their own houses or shops and wove the cloth for a certain price per yard. If we are to judge by the apparent results, pecuniarily, to those who followed the occupation, we must conclude that it was not a very profitable business,—that farming paid better. The cause of this is to be found, probably, not in foreign competition from the absence of a tariff, nor in the excessive amount of labor-saving machinery in the country, but in the competition of the industrious women, the wives and daughters of the farmers; and the fact that the demand for the articles manufactured was comparatively limited, owing to the simple and frugal habits of the people, and the superior durability of the fabrics, whose strength was not impaired by excessive heating,

* The father is also styled "weaver" in a deed dated 1724.