

PROCEEDINGS.

ANNUAL MEETING, OCTOBER 21, 1897, AT THE HALL OF THE
SOCIETY IN WORCESTER.

THE Society was called to order by the President, Hon.
STEPHEN SALISBURY.

The following members were present :

Edward E. Hale, George F. Hoar, Nathaniel Paine,
Stephen Salisbury, Samuel A. Green, Elijah B. Stoddard,
Edward L. Davis, William A. Smith, James F. Hunnewell,
Egbert C. Smyth, Edward G. Porter, Reuben A. Guild,
Charles C. Smith, Edmund M. Barton, Franklin B. Dexter,
Charles A. Chase, Samuel S. Green, Andrew McF. Davis,
Cyrus Hamlin, J. Evarts Greene, Henry S. Nourse, William
B. Weeden, Robert N. Toppan, Henry H. Edes, Edward
Channing, George E. Francis, Frank P. Goulding, A.
George Bullock, G. Stanley Hall, John McK. Merriam,
J. Franklin Jameson, Calvin Stebbins, Wilberforce Eames,
Henry A. Marsh, Simeon E. Baldwin, Thomas C.
Mendenhall, William T. Forbes, Leonard P. Kinnicutt,
George H. Haynes, Charles L. Nichols, Joseph F. Loubat.

The records of the last meeting were read by the Secre-
tary, and approved.

Professor FRANKLIN B. DEXTER read the Report of the
Council, and also a paper prepared by himself on "The
Presidential Office at Yale College."

Mr. ANDREW McF. DAVIS, referring to the inference
drawn in the paper from the use of the title "Rector," that
it was to avoid attracting attention to the institution, men-
tioned the fact, that in 1686, during the inter-regnum,

after the first charter of the Colony of the Massachusetts Bay was annulled, and before the charter of the Province was granted, while the affairs of the Commonwealth were being administered by a Council of which Joseph Dudley was President, the Council met at Cambridge and appointed Increase Mather, Rector of Harvard College. This use of the word at Cambridge and New Haven might, perhaps, indicate a fashion of the times.

PROFESSOR DEXTER said :—

The point that I intended to make was, that the position of the officer at the Collegiate School at Connecticut was different. They did not make him in any sense President, and they adopted the term that was least noticeable.

JUDGE SIMEON E. BALDWIN said :—

Possibly the term Rector was adopted by the Trustees as well as the term Collegiate School in view of the fund which had been bequeathed by Gov. Hopkins for the advancement of education in New England, both at the grammar school and college. Harvard in fact obtained a share of that fund on the death of Gov. Hopkins's widow as a college institution. In the Hopkins Grammar School at New Haven, which has always been maintained on the original foundation, the head master has been styled the "Rector" from the first, I believe, and the government is in the hands of a board known as the "Hopkins Committee of Trustees."

Professor Dexter has painted to us in strong colors the character of President Dwight. Of all the college presidents in that era, the era closing with the middle of the present century, it seems to me that Dr. Dwight presents the most distinct personality. His influence was felt not only in the immediate sphere of his college duty but on all the institutions of the State. If any man was entitled to be called the leader in ecclesiastical matters of southern

New England it was Dr. Dwight. But all that tended, in magnifying his office, to isolate him in a measure from the student-world. I have heard that after President Day—a very mild-mannered man—succeeded Dr. Dwight, he was one day visiting in Colchester and stopped to dine at the tavern. One of the trustees of the college was with him. A student from Yale, living in the town, happened to pass by, and President Day rose from the piazza where he was seated, stepped into the street, said “Mr. Smith, how do you do?” and shook hands with him. The trustee on his return reported the affair and said, “I then felt that good manners had departed from Yale College forever.”

I might add another reminiscence which came to me many years ago from his private secretary, Dr. Joseph D. Wickham of Vermont, who occasionally visited New Haven in his old age.

President Dwight’s eyesight was very indifferent, so that he always had an amanuensis, who was employed for the purpose by the corporation, generally a student. Wickham was one of these. During the last years of the President’s life he was attacked by the disease that proved fatal, and at one time was for some weeks unable to conduct the Sunday services at the chapel. He rallied, however, and when he was about to resume his pulpit composed a sermon on pride. He dictated it to Wickham, who was then his amanuensis. As he described the evil character of pride, spiritual pride and the pride of life, warning with his subject he proceeded thus: “Young gentlemen, I feel that I have been a sinner in this matter myself. During the months of weariness and sickness from which I have just emerged, I have seen that my life during past years has been too much governed by pride and self-seeking.” The amanuensis threw down his pen. “*Write it down*, young man; **WRITE IT DOWN**,” thundered the President, and he did write it down, and a profound impression it afterwards made on the student audience.

Vice-President HOAR said :—

I think Judge Baldwin might have made the statement which he so courteously made, without any limitation whatever. President Dwight has always seemed to me the most interesting single figure among American College Presidents. Of course I am not speaking of the living. But I do not think it would be any overstatement to say, that for a grand personality and power, Dr. Dwight was the most striking man who ever filled that office in the United States. He was, I suppose, a powerful force in the whole political and public life of Connecticut, as has been said: his was the single controlling mind to whose judgment great men as well as small men submitted, and whose counsel was sought. While some of the poetry in the *Conquest of Canaan* may excite amusement, yet Dr. Dwight still had it in him to draw a pretty lofty stroke as a poet. He left at least one hymn which I think the Church will preserve. There is a book with which I was very familiar in my early childhood. Dr. Dwight was a very intimate family friend in the household of my grandmother in New Haven. He married my father and mother. I used to hear a great many personal anecdotes of him and was brought up to reverence him, as my children have been brought up to reverence Dr. Hale. There was a little book, I do not know whether it is remembered very much now, but we had it in our library, which my mother brought from New Haven, called "Dwight's Decisions of Questions." He used to have the students, either a debating society or, perhaps, the whole membership of the senior class, debate questions which he proposed, and at the end of the debate the Doctor gave the decision as if he were the court. Those decisions are full of wisdom and sense and suggestions about all sorts of subjects, and full of a great deal of history, which is not to be found elsewhere. I remember his telling the students in his fashion,

about Col. Stoddard of Northampton, and using this phrase about him: "that he managed Massachusetts as a man manages his walking stick."

I would like to add one anecdote of President Day which I heard in my childhood. As Professor Dexter has said, he was a man of mild and quiet behavior and speech, but not without a shrewd wit. Old Dr. Porter, who was, I suppose, the father of the late President, came to New Haven to make a visit. He came to my grandmother's house, where Mr. Day was also a guest, and was invited to lead in the family prayers. That was a daily custom in that household. Dr. Porter asked to be excused, saying that he was a stranger. Mr. Day said, "Are you a stranger to prayer, Sir?"

The Report of the Treasurer was read by Mr. NATHANIEL PAINE.

The Report of the Librarian was read by Mr. EDMUND M. BARTON.

The several reports were accepted as the Report of the Society.

President SALISBURY said:—

At a meeting early in October the death of our associate and Secretary for Foreign Correspondence, James Hammond Trumbull, was brought to the notice of the Council of the Society, and remarks were made by various members. The action of the Council will be presented with the present Proceedings.

On a ballot for President of the Society, the Hon. STEPHEN SALISBURY, A.M., was unanimously elected.

MESSRS. FRANK P. GOULDING, SAMUEL S. GREEN and JOHN M. MERRIAM, appointed a committee to nominate other officers, reported the following list:—

Vice-Presidents :

HON. GEORGE FRISBIE HOAR, LL.D., of Worcester.
 REV. EDWARD EVERETT HALE, D.D., of Boston.

Secretary for Foreign Correspondence :

FRANKLIN BOWDITCH DEXTER, M.A., of New Haven,
 Connecticut.

Secretary for Domestic Correspondence :

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS, LL.D., of Lincoln.

Recording Secretary :

CHARLES AUGUSTUS CHASE, A.M., of Worcester.

Treasurer :

NATHANIEL PAINE, Esq., of Worcester.

All the above being *ex-officio* members of the Council;
 and the following—

Councillors :

HON. SAMUEL ABBOTT GREEN, LL.D., of Boston.
 REV. EGBERT COFFIN SMYTH, D.D., of Andover.
 SAMUEL SWETT GREEN, A.M., of Worcester.
 HON. EDWARD LIVINGSTON DAVIS, A.M., of Worcester.
 JEREMIAH EVARTS GREENE, B.A., of Worcester.
 GRANVILLE STANLEY HALL, LL.D., of Worcester.
 WILLIAM BABCOCK WEEDEN, A.M., of Providence,
 Rhode Island.
 HON. JOHN DAVIS WASHBURN, LL.B., of Worcester.
 THOMAS CORWIN MENDENHALL, LL.D., of Worcester.
 JAMES PHINNEY BAXTER, A.M., of Portland, Maine.

Committee of Publication :

REV. EDWARD E. HALE, D.D., of Boston.
 NATHANIEL PAINE, Esq., of Worcester.
 CHARLES A. CHASE, A.M., of Worcester.
 CHARLES C. SMITH, A.M., of Boston.

Auditors:

WILLIAM A. SMITH, A.B., of Worcester.

A. GEORGE BULLOCK, A.M., of Worcester.

The above-named gentlemen were elected on a single ballot.

The Secretary, in behalf of the Council, recommended for membership:—

JOSEPH FLORIMOND LOUBAT, LL.D., New York.

MAJOR WILLIAM ROSCOE LIVERMORE, United States Army.

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMSON, A.M., Belfast, Maine.

The three gentlemen were elected.

WILBERFORCE EAMES, A.M., read a paper on "The New England Catechism."

Vice-President HOAR said:—

There was a Catechism in existence, and I am quite sure in use in one of the churches in Worcester, when I came here fifty years ago. Part of it read something in this way,—I can give the language substantially: "What is hell? Answer: A place beneath the earth full of fire and darkness. Who live in hell? Satan and his angels and all wicked men. What do they do in hell? They curse God and sin continually. Do you deserve to go there? I do."

Professor SMYTH, after expressing interest in the paper which had been read, referred to the investigations of a Scottish historian [Dr. Alexander F. Mitchell]; into the sources of the Westminster Assembly's *Shorter Catechism*, for a long time generally used in the Congregational churches of New England. The interesting fact has come to light that this catechism, through a manual previously

drawn up in connection with the proceedings of the Assembly, was influenced in its construction by a catechism founded upon the *Apostles' Creed*, and prepared by the Rev. Ezekiel Rogers, who subsequently became the first pastor of the church in Rowley, Mass. Mr. Rogers was assisted and succeeded in this ministry by the Rev. Samuel Phillips, afterwards pastor of the church in Andover, Mass., and ancestor of many persons distinguished in our history, of whom I may mention the founders of the well-known academies at Andover and Exeter, also Wendell Phillips and Phillips Brooks. The influence of Rogers's Catechism on the *Shorter Catechism*, and the interest in this catechism of descendants of Samuel Phillips, who participated in the foundation of important educational institutions, are worthy of notice.

Rev. EDWARD E. HALE said :—

In Mr. Northend's very valuable book, published this summer, he gives a whole chapter to the influence of New England on the Westminster Conference.

Professor J. FRANKLIN JAMESON read a paper on "The History of the Early Political Uses of the Word Convention."

T. C. MENDENHALL, LL.D., called the attention of the Society to the disputed portion of the Alaska boundary line, exhibiting some recent English and Canadian maps showing, presumably, the line which would be claimed by Great Britain. Fortunately the newly discovered gold fields were unquestionably within Canadian territory, besides being in the neighborhood of that part of the line concerning which there can be no dispute, that is, the one hundred and forty-first meridian. He pointed out the necessity, however, of an early settlement of the boundary of Southeast Alaska, which is the uncertain and doubtful part of the whole, mineral resources of considerable importance

having been already found in the territory claimed by both nations. He declared that an effort would undoubtedly be made to break the traditional coast line of Alaska by what he believed to be a forced interpretation of the treaty defining the boundary line, and expressed the fear that in our general indifference regarding outlying interests, our government would be too willing to yield, especially if tempted by something which seemed to be of more immediate importance.

President SALISBURY said:—

At the meeting in April the fact of the celebration of the Cabot landing was borne in mind, and a committee was appointed to visit Halifax with the credentials of our Society. I will ask Mr. J. Evarts Greene to give us a statement of his experience.

Mr. J. EVARTS GREENE said:—

Having had the honor, which I shared with the Rev. Mr. Porter, our associate, of representing this Society at the meeting of the Royal Society of Canada in Halifax last spring, I now at our President's suggestion offer to the Society this informal report of the meeting.

The meeting, as you know, was held at Halifax, because that city was the nearest available place to the probable land-fall of John Cabot on his famous voyage whose result was the first landing of Europeans on the continent of North America, except, if you please, that of Leif Erikson and his Northmen. Cabot sailed and returned in 1497, and at the close of the fourth century thereafter the Royal Society of Canada determined to give to its annual meeting of this year the character of a commemoration of that event, so momentous to England and to the world.

The Historical Section of the Society had at this meeting the precedence of the other sections, at least in the general interest in its proceedings. Many eminent Cana-

dian scholars were present and contributed papers or shared in the oral discussions, as did also several representatives of learned societies in the United States, some of whom are well known for their successful pursuit of historical and antiquarian studies. Two gentlemen, each of whom had been the mayor of the city, represented at the meeting the city of Bristol in England, the port from which Cabot sailed.

Your representatives were cordially welcomed by the Royal Society, and courteously and hospitably entertained during their stay in Halifax by its officers and the officials of the city and province. Our thanks are due especially to His Grace Archbishop O'Brien of Halifax, the President of the Royal Society, His Honor Lieutenant-Governor Daly, to the Mayor and Recorder of the city, and to Sir Sanford Fleming for their kindly courtesies, which added much to the interest and pleasure of our visit. The time of the meeting was coincident with that of the Queen's Jubilee celebration, which helped to fill Halifax with people and with ceremonies and pageants to give the city a holiday aspect.

Our attention was given especially to the meetings of the Historical Section of the Society, at which we listened to papers and oral discussions by scholars from Canada and the United States, mostly concerning the voyages of the Cabots, and particularly those questions which have long been the occasion of controversy: "What land was first seen by John Cabot and his companions on the western shore of the Atlantic on their first voyage in 1497?" and "What is the just estimate of Sebastian Cabot as a navigator and discoverer?"

Without attempting to give a summary or even a review of the discussions, I will venture to say that the weight of opinion seemed to be that John Cabot's land-fall was on the northeastern coast of Nova Scotia, and probably on Cape Breton Island. There were, however, advocates of a

land-fall on the coast of Labrador and of one on that of Newfoundland, and the President of the Society, Archbishop O'Brien, read a learned and ingenious paper proving, as he contended, that John Cabot passed between Newfoundland and the main without sighting either, and that the first land he saw was the northwestern coast of the island of Cape Breton.

As to Sebastian Cabot, though his character was not discussed at great length, I think I am justified in saying that the historical and antiquarian scholars at that meeting did not accept Mr. Henry Harrisse's estimate of him as a mere braggart, liar and charlatan, who gained such credit as he had by usurping for himself the merit of his father's enterprise and skill as a navigator.

After listening to what was said there and reading much of what has been written upon the subject, it seems to me at least a reasonable conjecture that as much of the honor for the voyage of 1497, by which the continent of North America was discovered and the name of Cabot made famous, belongs to the son as to the father and perhaps more.

Of John Cabot we know practically nothing, except that he made one voyage across the Atlantic and started upon another. Of his earlier life or his previous reputation as a navigator we have no knowledge.

Of Sebastian Cabot we know that he was associated with his father in King Henry the Seventh's patent; that he accompanied his father on both voyages; that he won or was conceded, and maintained through a long life, great distinction in Spain and England as a navigator and cartographer; that no letter, report or narrative written by himself or by his direction or authority describing his voyages is known, nor any map or chart which can be identified as his; that such accounts of his voyages to North America as we have, purport to be reports of conversations held with him many years after, in which he says little or

nothing of his father, but seems to claim the whole credit for himself.

If these reports, imperfect and doubtless more or less inaccurate, seem from one point of view to make plausible Mr. Harrisse's contemptuous estimate of Sebastian, they are from another consistent with the more charitable and equally reasonable conjecture that this man, who, if a charlatan, maintained his credit with his contemporaries and for some centuries afterward, and was not found out for four hundred years, was the actual originator and inspirer of that famous voyage, and that the patent was issued and the command given to the father because confidence was placed in his age and presumed experience, rather than in the ardor and enterprise of the adventurous youth. The fact that John Cabot's disappearance from history after starting on his second voyage was apparently unnoticed or disregarded makes this conjecture seem more probable. Edmund Burke said that to Sebastian Cabot Great Britain owed its claim to territory in North America. Recent historical scholars have thought that he erred in substituting the son's name for the father's, but perhaps he was right after all.

REV. EDWARD G. PORTER said :—

I will not at this late hour attempt to add anything except that the chief object of this meeting of the Royal Society of Canada was to set up a memorial to John Cabot. They at first thought of Sydney and certain other adjacent places, for it should be said here that all Canadian scholars accept Cape Breton Island as the place of the land-fall. The President, in his very elaborate paper, is inclined to favor the northwest coast of the island. They wanted to have a statue or a tower or something that should be permanent and worthy of Cabot. As, however, there is no likeness of John Cabot, they finally decided to have a tablet and to place it in the Province building at Halifax. It

was carefully worded by Dr. John G. Bourinot and Dr. Samuel E. Dawson. They have not committed the Society to any particular theory of the land-fall. It might be either Labrador or Newfoundland or Cape Breton. They say "the northeastern seaboard of North America," and no one can dispute that. The tablet has been artistically prepared. At the top are the arms of England, the harbor of Bristol and a ship sailing away from it, also the arms of Bristol and of Venice, and the sun setting behind a hill in the distant west.

The occasion was certainly memorable, and there was a very large gathering of men who were exceedingly interested in the subject. Mr. Greene and I sat with the second or Historical Section. There were three Cabot papers. Mr. J. Boyd Thacher of Albany presented an interesting one landing Cabot somewhere near 60° North latitude. He puts him through the ice very easily. The difficulty in following Mr. Thacher in my mind is that his course is too straight and the measurement of distance too fixed. But it is an interesting contribution and will be printed with the Transactions. The paper by Dr. Dawson is virtually a reproduction of his well known monograph of 1894, which is a very careful and painstaking treatise. We all regretted the absence of Dr. Bourinot, who had been foremost in arranging for this meeting of the Royal Society.

I made the acquaintance of the two gentlemen from Bristol, ex-mayors Barker and Davies. They honored the occasion by coming and they told us much of the Bristol of Cabot's time as well as of to-day. During the same week the citizens of St. John's in Newfoundland were laying the corner-stone of a massive memorial tower on Signal Hill, a very commanding site. That is to be both an observatory and a meteorological tower. The two writers who now advocate the Newfoundland land-fall are Judge Prowse and Bishop Howley. The others have generally

forsaken that theory, although everyone allows that Cabot visited Newfoundland sometime on his first voyage.

I would also say that in London during the season there has been exhibited an interesting and artistic group representing John Cabot the elder and Sebastian his son,—John sitting, Sebastian standing by his side. It was modelled by John Cassidy, a young Irish sculptor, living at Manchester, and has been highly commended by the English critics. It is, I believe, the only thing which has ever been attempted in plastic art of either of the Cabots. I wish it could find a place in our country. It is very remarkable that until now,—the four hundredth anniversary of the voyage of discovery,—there has never been any Cabot memorial whatever in England or America. But now we are to have a fine tower at Bristol, this bronze tablet at Halifax and a tower at Newfoundland.

At the unveiling in Halifax a number of interesting addresses were made by the Governor-General, the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, the United States Consul-General and others. The delegate from Venice said that Venice was proud of her children and that among all those who had gone out on distant voyages the Cabots would be remembered as feathers—so to speak—from the winged lion of St. Mark flying away across the sea to a distant land, then utterly desolate, but now teeming with life and activity. He was loudly applauded, more so than any other speaker. He used excellent English and used it with true Italian fervor.

We were cordially entertained there, as Mr. Greene has said, in various ways, by a lunch, five-o'clock-teas, a harbor excursion and at a brilliant reception at the Government House, where we saw the officers of the army and navy and many of the representatives of Halifax society.

REV. EDWARD E. HALE said:—

A year ago, when we were here, our senior Vice-President reported to us the condition and prospect of the

Bradford Manuscript. In the year which has passed we have had the great happiness of receiving the Manuscript in a stately ceremonial which was really worthy of the occasion, and I have prepared this resolution :

Resolved, That the thanks of this Society be presented to our Vice-President, Senator HOAR, for the part which he has taken in returning the Bradford Manuscript to this country ; we recognize the value of his services from the beginning to the end, and assure him that his name will always be remembered by all patriots who use this first record of our public history.

This resolution was unanimously adopted.

Mr. SALISBURY, the PRESIDENT, cordially invited all members of the Society on adjournment to repair to his house and partake of a collation.

The meeting was dissolved, and the members enjoyed Mr. SALISBURY'S hospitality in response to his invitation.

CHARLES A. CHASE,

Recording Secretary.

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