

ACTION OF THE COUNCIL ON THE DEATH OF
ISAAC DAVIS, LL.D.

At a meeting of the council, held April 3, 1883, to take notice of the death of Hon. Isaac Davis, President Salisbury said :

GENTLEMEN: We have another lesson, most impressive for its connection with ourselves and its conspicuousness, that earth is not the permanent abode of man. He appeareth for a time in a vesture of decay, capable of longer or shorter wearing, and evidently designed for transition to other experience of the same wisdom and love that sustains him here. And this lesson comes to us with a repeated illustration in the same street of this city in a period of twenty-four hours. On March 31, at 9 o'clock P. M., Rev. George Allen was released from his painful infirmities at the age of ninety-one years and two months. We cannot boast of him as an associate in the council or the society. Many years ago he was elected to membership and courteously declined it, with the remark that he could be more useful to the society without it. This implied promise was fulfilled by his gifts of desirable publications and by imparting his wonderful knowledge of history, especially of ecclesiastical controversies and doctrines in his long and energetic life. He was one of those friends better than brothers, to whom this society always acknowledges obligation.

The second shaft has struck within our circle. The senior elected member of this council, Hon. Isaac Davis, LL.D., died at his home in this city, of pneumonia, at 4 P. M. on April 1, at the age of eighty-three years and ten months, wanting one day. He was born in Northborough, and was graduated at Brown University, to which he rendered great service as a trustee and by his repeated gifts. He made himself a leading man of affairs rather than a scholar, and sought to direct learning to its best uses. In his large practice as a lawyer he was more distinguished for his professional connection with the business of his time than for his power as a jurist or an advocate. Yet he spoke with confidence and influence. He obtained his position and his success in life by the strenuous use of his native powers without the aid of patronage. It is unnecessary to recall his many public offices. He has placed on them marks of utility that will cause them to be remembered. So we may trace his forty-two years of membership with generous and

judicious acts for this society. For thirty-three years he has sat with us in this council, aiding us by willing labor and wise counsels, stimulating us by his liberal example and making the hours more happy by his spirited and agreeable companionship. That the council may express on their records the sentiments that are excited by the interests of the society and by the merit of our lost associate, and by the respect and friendship that we entertain for him, I offer the following resolutions :

Resolved, That while we consider with sadness the death of Hon. Isaac Davis, the senior elected councillor of this society, and lament that his work on earth is ended, we cannot regret his removal from depressing and increasing infirmities, and we are grateful that he accomplished so much in his long and earnest life, not only for this society, but for all within the reach of his benevolence or his example.

Resolved, That we hold in honor the good qualities by which Mr. Davis was distinguished. We call to mind the energy and perseverance, the reverence for good things, the conservative disposition, the hopeful spirit, the cordial and dignified address, the generous impulses, and the love of well-earned approbation that were prominent in his character and gave him a large measure of worldly prosperity and honor.

Resolved, That we cherish the memory of Mr. Davis as one who rendered faithful service to the State and the city in the performance of various public offices, and in aiding religious and benevolent objects, and in the investment of his wealth, which was in the direction of the growth and welfare of this city. His numerous private gifts for the relief of suffering and for assistance in obtaining education and in carrying on business, should surround his tomb with an unexpected and grateful company.

Resolved, That it is not necessary to transcribe from our records the details of the faithfulness of Mr. Davis as a member and an officer of this society, in his constant and prompt attention, and in his frequent gifts of desirable objects and money, and especially in founding the collection of rare and costly books relating to Central and South America, which the council has placed in an alcove of the library marked as the "Isaac Davis" alcove.

Resolved. That the council will attend the funeral of Mr. Davis, and we invite such members of the society as can conveniently join us to be with us in this act of affection and reverence.

Resolved, That a copy of this action of the council in relation to our honored and beloved associate shall be presented to the family by the recording secretary, with an assurance of our respect and sympathy.

The foregoing resolutions and their introduction were adopted by a unanimous vote of the council.

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