

PROCEEDINGS.

AN ANNUAL MEETING, OCTOBER 21, 1887, AT THE HALL OF THE
SOCIETY IN WORCESTER.

THE President, the Hon. GEORGE F. HOAR, LL.D., in
the chair.

The following members were present (the names being
arranged in order of seniority of membership): George E.
Ellis, Edward E. Hale, George F. Hoar, Andrew P. Pea-
body, George Chandler, Nathaniel Paine, Joseph Sargent,
Stephen Salisbury, Samuel A. Green, Elijah B. Stoddard,
George S. Paine, Francis H. Dewey, James F. Hunnewell,
John D. Washburn, Edward H. Hall, Reuben A. Guild,
Charles C. Smith, Hamilton B. Staples, Edmund M. Bar-
ton, Thomas L. Nelson, Lucius R. Paige, Franklin B.
Dexter, Charles A. Chase, Samuel S. Green, Justin Winsor,
Henry W. Haynes, Edward I. Thomas, Andrew McF.
Davis, J. Evarts Greene, Henry S. Nourse, William B.
Weeden, Daniel Merriman, Reuben Colton, William W.
Rice, Henry H. Edes, Grindall Reynolds, Edward Chan-
ning, George E. Francis, Frank P. Goulding, Henry W.
Foote, and Edward H. Thompson, a foreign member.

The Recording Secretary read the record of the last
meeting, which was approved.

FRANKLIN B. DEXTER, A.M., read a report which had
been prepared by him and adopted by the Council as a
part of their report to the Society.

NATHANIEL PAINE, Esq., Treasurer, submitted his
report in print, and EDMUND M. BARTON, Esq., Libra-
rian, read his report.

These reports, as together constituting the Report of the Council, were, on motion of JUSTIN WINSOR, Esq., accepted and referred to the Committee of Publication.

The Recording Secretary communicated from the Council their recommendation of the following named gentlemen for membership in the Society :

THOMAS CHASE, LL.D., of Providence, R. I.

EDWARD GAY MASON, A.M., of Chicago, Ill.

CHARLES KENDALL ADAMS, LL.D., of Ithaca, N. Y.

And as a foreign member, Rt. Hon. WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE, D.C.L., of London, England.

All of whom were elected, a separate ballot being taken on each name.

The Society then proceeded to choose a President, Mr. HOAR declining to be a candidate, in accordance with the statement made by him at the semi-annual meeting. A ballot being taken STEPHEN SALISBURY, A. M., was chosen, and was welcomed to the office by the retiring President, who spoke as follows :

Before making the formal announcement of the result of the vote the Chair desires to say a few words. In laying down the honorable trust which this Society has conferred upon me, I wish to express my grateful sense of that uniform kindness and support, without which its administration must have been a failure. The Society was never better equipped for its special work than it is now, as it enters upon the fourth quarter of its first century. I have had occasion lately to make some researches into the history of the settlement of the Northwest. I have been astonished at the wealth and completeness of the collections of material for history contained in our library. We have a body of young workmen who will more than make good the places of their predecessors.

It cannot be indelicate to allude to the elders who are still spared to us, who bring down to us their personal recollections of our founders. Mr. Bancroft and Mr.

Winthrop, whose names ornament our roll, have bestowed most of their historical labors elsewhere. But the successor of Mr. Winthrop in the presidency of our famous sister society¹ is with us to-day, and I believe now, for the thirty-seventh time, brings to our annual meeting the benefit of his sound judgment and affluent learning. We all of us had, I am sure, a feeling of personal pleasure and pride, when our oldest University at her centennial, bestowed her highest honor on another of our brethren,² as "Master among students of American history." We have another³ always constant at the meetings of the Council and the Society, who for sixty years has kept abreast of the best American scholarship, and of whose influence upon the character of his generation far better things even than that might be said. Dr. Hammond Trumbull, whom we are sorry to miss to-day, knows the history, the life, the manners, even the gossip of every New England generation from the beginning, as if he had been a contemporary. What a resource has this Society in the rich learning and indefatigable zeal in its service of another of our associates⁴—our Defoe, who possesses the two rarest of gifts, that to give history the fascination of fiction, and that to give fiction the verisimilitude of history!

The question is often raised whether our work is, after all, of any value. The doubt is raised, often, whether history be a science, or whether it has anything trustworthy to tell with which science can deal. It is said that all history is a lie, is only the story which those who have played their parts in it choose to have told. The men who inculcate this scepticism are, very often, men whose own career has been such that they are, to say the least, quite unwilling to have the truth known and believed in their own case.

Secret archives are sometimes uncovered which overthrow established beliefs as to great events and as to the

¹ Dr. George E. Ellis. ² Dr. Charles Deane. ³ Dr. Andrew P. Peabody.
⁴ Dr. Edward E. Hale.

character and service of great men. But I believe that the picture of human life, human character, human manners in the past, which makes up what we call history is, in the main, a true one. Those who raise these doubts, do not, I think, sufficiently consider the value of that sense or instinct in our intelligence, which enables us to recognize truth when it is presented to us and to distinguish it from falsehood. We are misled by false witnesses and false judgments, sometimes, in the conduct of our own affairs. But, in general, we are able to discern truth from error well enough to secure our own happiness and well-being.

An instance of this recognition of truth as truth, and of the purpose to tell the truth in the narrator, by the instinct common to humanity which recognizes facts as they present themselves, is the Greek historian, Thucydides. We have little by which the accuracy of his narrative can be tested. No contemporaries have dealt with the same period. No records or archives of Athens have survived, or of the states which were her allies or antagonists in the Peloponnesian war. He was an actor in the events of the war, a partisan, and for a long time an exile. Yet I suppose it never occurs to any man to doubt the absolute verity of a statement of Thucydides. In reading his matchless narrative we trust our instinctive recognition of its absolute truth, as we trust our vision, or our sense of hearing or smell.

Nothing remains, but to greet and welcome my successor, and to wish all good fortune in his office and in his life, to

— “the destined heir,
From his soft cradle, of his Father’s chair,
Whose even thread the Fates spin round and full,
Out of their choicest and their whitest wool.”

In accepting the office, Mr. SALISBURY said—

The action you have just taken affects me with a deep sense of the responsibility devolving on the president of this Society, and of my own too slender qualifications for

the office. After the very successful administration of yourself, Mr. President, with all the advantages to the Society of your position, attainments and exceptional gifts, the small measure of usefulness I can offer disappears from consideration, and I should greatly prefer that the place should be filled by some other selection. My interest in the objects of your organization is such that I feel that I could do more good in a subordinate position. Still, if it is your wish to place me in the chair, I shall endeavor to discharge the duties of presiding officer faithfully, relying on your constant assistance and kindly forbearance. Having always regarded the growth of the library as of primary importance, I desire to call the attention of the Society to the fact that for a long period one-half at least of our yearly accessions, which are very considerable, have been received from other sources than from members of the society. In return for these gifts the library has offered, and should continue to offer, such facilities for study and investigation as the most liberal policy of management will admit. Regretting exceedingly that our honored president so decidedly declines a longer continuance in office, I reluctantly accept the position, and will request that Senator Hoar consent to preside during the remainder of this session.

A committee, of which Hon. SAMUEL A. GREEN, M.D. was chairman, was appointed to nominate candidates for the remaining offices to be filled by election.

The committee reported the following nominations:—

Vice-Presidents:

Hon. GEORGE BANCROFT, LL.D., of Washington, D. C.
Hon. GEORGE F. HOAR, LL.D., of Worcester.

Secretary of Foreign Correspondence:

Hon. J. HAMMOND TRUMBULL, LL.D., of Hartford, Ct.

Secretary of Domestic Correspondence:

CHARLES DEANE, LL.D., of Cambridge.

Recording Secretary:

Hon. JOHN D. WASHBURN, LL.B., of Worcester.

Treasurer:

NATHANIEL PAINE, Esq., of Worcester.

All of the above officers being *ex-officio* members of the Council. And the following Councillors:—

Rev. EDWARD E. HALE, D.D., of Boston.

JOSEPH SARGENT, M. D., of Worcester.

Hon. SAMUEL A. GREEN, M. D., of Boston.

Hon. P. EMORY ALDRICH, LL.D., of Worcester.

Rev. EGBERT C. SMYTH, D. D., of Andover.

SAMUEL S. GREEN, A. M., of Worcester.

Rev. ANDREW P. PEABODY, D. D., of Cambridge.

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

Hon. EDWARD L. DAVIS, of Worcester.

FRANKLIN B. DEXTER, A. M., of New Haven.

Committee of Publication:

Rev. EDWARD E. HALE, D. D., of Boston.

CHARLES DEANE, LL. D., of Cambridge.

NATHANIEL PAINE, Esq., of Worcester.

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

Auditors:

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

REUBEN COLTON, A. B., of Worcester.

The report of the committee was accepted and the gentlemen named therein were elected by ballot to the respective offices.

HENRY W. HAYNES, Esq., said :

At our late meeting in April, at which we had the pleasure of hearing so many interesting particulars in regard to various institutions of learning, our associate, J. EVARTS GREENE, Esq., contributed an agreeable outline in detail of an especially notable one, the Roxbury Latin School. In it, however, there occurs a statement, the accuracy of which I will venture to call in question. Mr. GREENE remarks : "This school is doubtless the third in age of the institutions of learning in the United States. Its only seniors are the Boston Latin School and Harvard College. It was founded in 1645."¹

Now in a very rare pamphlet, published in London in 1643, it is stated that there is at Cambridge "by the side of the Colledg a faire Grammar Schoole for the training up of young Schollars and fitting of them for *Academical Learning*, that still as they are judged ripe they may be received into the Colledg. Of this Schoole Master Corlet is the Mr."² The exact date of the founding of this school is not known, but it evidently must have been prior to 1643.³

But we do know the exact date of the founding of a school at Dorchester. The records state—"It is ordered the 20th of May 1639 that there shal bee a rent of 20^{li} yereely forever imposed upon Tomson's Iland to bee payd to such a schoolemaster as shall undertake to teach English, Latin and other tongues, and also writing."⁴ "October 31, 1639. It is ordered that Mr. Waterhouse shall be left to his liberty on that point of teaching to write."⁵ Further on there are set forth at length rules and orders concerning the school, which were confirmed by the major part of the inhabitants then present."⁶

¹ Proceedings of American Antiquarian Society (N. S.), vol. iv. p. 348.

² New England's First Fruits, p. 12.

³ Paige's History of Cambridge, p. 366.

⁴ Dorchester Town Records, p. 43 (Fourth Rep. Record Commr's of Boston, p. 39). ⁵Ibid., p. 44. ⁶ Dorchester Town Records, pp. 63-66.

At a date even earlier than this there can be found on the records of the town of Charlestown: "1636. June 3. Mr. W^m. Witherill was agreed with to keep school for a twelvemont to begin the eighth day of August."¹

The historian of Salem writes: "Of our first schoolmasters was Rev. John Fiske, who appears to have commenced his duties here in 1637."² It was under him that the celebrated Sir George Downing pursued his studies.³

On the records of the Grammar School at Ipswich there is the following note, though it has the appearance of having been copied: "1636. A Grammar School was set up, but does not succeed."⁴

Thus it would appear that Mr. Greene was hardly justified in making for his beloved school the claim of "taking the third rank in age among the existing schools of this country," although it may be impossible to determine to which this honor really belongs.

Rev. GEORGE E. ELLIS, D.D., desired to call the attention of Col. WASHBURN to the expression used by him in his remarks at the April meeting as to the bequests of Count Rumford. They were gifts, made in Count Rumford's life-time, not bequests, a very important distinction, and one on which depended largely the authority and jurisdiction of the Court.

Mr. HAYNES, referring briefly to what Mr. HOAR had said of Thucydides, said that an inscription relative to a treaty had recently been discovered at Athens, which is in exact accordance with the account given by Thucydides.

On motion of Rev. EDWARD E. HALE, D.D., the thanks of the Society were unanimously voted to the retiring president for his distinguished services in the chair.

¹Frothingham's History of Charlestown, p. 65.

²Felt's History of Salem, vol. i. p. 427. See Hist. Coll. of Essex Institute, vol. i. p. 37.

³Sibley's Harvard Graduates, vol. i. p. 29.

⁴Felt's History of Ipswich, Essex and Hamilton, p. 83.

Rev. GRINDALL REYNOLDS read a paper relating to King Philip's war and the fight at Brookfield.

Rev. LUCIUS R. PAIGE, D.D., read a paper upon the same general subject, entitled "Wheeler's Defeat, 1675. Where?"

EDWARD H. THOMPSON, Esq., a foreign member and United States consul at Merida, Yucatan, presented to the Society the plaster reproduction of a façade of a ruined building at Labna, Yucatan, allusion to which was made at the April meeting. The plaster cast, a picture of which appears in this connection, secured by Mr. THOMPSON through the liberality of the President-elect, is set up in the west hall of the Society. The members present repaired to this room to inspect the work and the various casts and photographs made in connection with it.

In describing his work, Mr. THOMPSON said: During my earliest researches among the ruins of Yucatan, there grew in my mind the desire to give in some manner to the student of archæology, and to others interested more casually perhaps, an adequate idea of these mysterious edifices. Pen pictures, at best, give but a faint idea of them. Photographs, while fulfilling admirably certain conditions, nevertheless, give but little more than a phantom-like resemblance to reality. Therefore, the best, the only way, to fully accomplish my desires in this respect, was to reproduce an edifice, or such portions of it as would best serve my purpose. Furthermore, this reproduction must be an accurate one, else its value as an object of study for archæologists would be lost. True, with the aid of proportional photographs and measurements, a tolerably good reproduction could have been made, sufficient to be an object of interest to the casual visitor, but to my mind, the accuracy desired by the scientist could be obtained only by making moulds of some material, plastic enough to receive every impression, however faint, hardening afterward, in order to retain the impression when once received, and strong

enough to withstand the inevitable shocks and casualties of a long journey upon the backs of men and mules, upon springless drays and railroad trains.

After some months of experimenting, I succeeded in producing a composition containing all of the above qualities, and subjected it to thorough trial by practical tests. I then sought for the façade of an edifice, that should contain, within a suitable area, the characteristic examples and effects produced by the ancient builders.

While upon my expeditions to Labna, a certain façade had especially attracted my notice, as containing upon its surface, remarkably striking characteristic effects. It was a typical structure of the ancient workers. During explorations among nineteen recorded and unrecorded groups of ruins, I failed to find one other, that upon an equal surface, combined so much that was typical in character and striking in design. Having arranged these matters to my satisfaction and being convinced as to the practicability of the scheme, I communicated the idea to our fellow-member, Mr. STEPHEN SALISBURY, and aided by his kind offices and counsel, began the task, which, I am pleased to say, was completed successfully.

There were in this, as in other undertakings, disappointments, delays and obstacles, but they were not insurmountable, and to-day we have the honor of presenting to the Society, a cast representing a section of the most interesting façade in the ruins of Labna, a typical specimen of the ancient architecture of Yucatan.

The edifice of which this structure represents a section, is the largest one in the group of ruins known as Labna, and seems to have been still unfinished when deserted, and partially destroyed. Its carved and sculptured front, with its numerous turns and angles, has a length of over three hundred feet. Twenty or more chambers are as yet visible. Some of them, especially the one of which the entrance is here represented, are in a very perfect state, others are

buried and broken into almost utter ruin. The façade, of which the section before us is a part, is thirty-five feet long by eighteen feet high, and the entire upper portion of it is incrustated with rich carvings and ornaments. Complete moulds have been taken of this elaborate work and are now within this building. This section represents about one-fifth of the entire façade. It will be observed that the hieroglyphics inscribed upon the up-raised portion of the Serpent symbol, closely resemble some of the characters given in the Landa alphabet. Whether an American Rosetta Stone will enable us ever to decipher them is a question for the future to determine.

On motion of Hon. HAMILTON B. STAPLES, LL.D., the thanks of the Society were tendered to Mr. THOMPSON for his very valuable work in bringing to light one of the interesting ruins of Yucatan.

WILLIAM B. WEEDEN, Esq., read a paper on "The Early African Slave-Trade in New England."

ANDREW McF. DAVIS, Esq., read by its title a paper entitled "A History of the First Scholarship at Harvard."

REUBEN A. GUILD, LL.D., read by its title a paper on "Roger Williams, Freeman of Massachusetts."

Rev. EDWARD E. HALE, D.D., presented a paper written by Mr. Edwin D. Mead, entitled "John Hampden in America."

For all the above-mentioned papers, the Society voted its thanks, and they were referred to the Committee of Publication.

On recommendation of the Council, it was voted that the Society refer to the Committee of Publication with power to act, the question as to a separate presentation and publication of the Report of the Council in its business portion, and the essay which has for many years been published as a part of it.

The meeting was then dissolved.

JOHN D. WASHBURN,

Recording Secretary.

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