

PROCEEDINGS.

ANNUAL MEETING, OCTOBER 23, 1889, AT THE HALL OF THE
SOCIETY, IN WORCESTER.

THE President, STEPHEN SALISBURY, A.M., in the chair.

The following members were present (the names being arranged in order of seniority of membership): George E. Ellis, George F. Hoar, Wm. Sumner Barton, Andrew P. Peabody, George Chandler, Nathaniel Paine, Stephen Salisbury, Samuel A. Green, Elijah B. Stoddard, George S. Paine, Edward L. Davis, William A. Smith, Henry M. Dexter, John D. Washburn, Edward H. Hall, Edward G. Porter, Reuben A. Guild, Charles C. Smith, Edmund M. Barton, Thomas L. Nelson, Lucius R. Paige, Franklin B. Dexter, Charles A. Chase, Samuel S. Green, Justin Winsor, Henry W. Haynes, Edward I. Thomas, Horatio Rogers, Frederick W. Putnam, Solomon Lincoln, Cyrus Hamlin, J. Evarts Greene, Henry S. Nourse, William B. Weeden, Daniel Merriman, William W. Rice, Joseph Anderson, Henry H. Edes, Edward Channing, Frank P. Goulding, Granville S. Hall, John M. Merriam.

The records of the last meeting were read by the Recording Secretary and approved.

The report of the Council was read by the Rev. ANDREW P. PEABODY, D.D., of Cambridge.

The report of NATHANIEL PAINE, Esq., the Treasurer, was submitted in print.

The Librarian, Mr. EDMUND M. BARTON, then read his report.

Rev. LUCIUS R. PAIGE, D.D., said:—"I move you that the several documents composing the report of the Council be referred to the Committee of Publication. While I do this, I wish to avail myself of the privilege that Dr. PEABODY grants to every member of the Society, to say that while I have been very much interested in his report generally, I still, in regard to the "Boston Massacre," adhere to the opinion which I believe was the universal opinion for the first hundred years after the events occurred. I wish to be considered as dissenting from what has been said in regard to that. As long as no argument was offered on that side, I offer none on the other. I merely state my dissent."

Dr. PEABODY:—"In presenting that report I assume the whole responsibility for that sentence."

Rev. GEORGE E. ELLIS, D.D., said:—"I second the motion for accepting the report and referring it to the Publishing Committee, and I wish to express not only my accord with DR. PEABODY, but also my gratitude for his frank and honorable way of stating it. The only patrons that I have seen of that monument are some of our colored citizens and Irish emigrants in the city of Boston. I wish also to express my gratitude to Dr. PEABODY for the research, industry, ability and judgment he has shown in that sketch of our early writers of periodical literature. We owe very much to them. And I am especially grateful for his tribute to Mr. Buckingham, whom I knew very well and very intimately. He was a man who had strong enemies which he made in a righteous cause, mostly by his frank and honorable course—by his criticisms. He was a man, I think, by some of his contemporaries rather misunderstood, and not fully appreciated. Was it not so, Dr. PEABODY?"

Dr. PEABODY:—"It was."

Dr. ELLIS:—"I wish to refer particularly to the fact that his son has a very valuable collection of his father's man-

uscripts. He has spoken to me about them. I think they would yield information of great value, and I hope that some effort will be made to get them, if the son does not digest them; and I hope they will come here.

“I wish to suggest a subject that may be treated with the same ability,—that is, a history of the ministry—of the Christian ministry—in the State of Massachusetts. The materials are scattered in church and town records, and in biographies like Dr. Sprague’s, but the whole subject ought to be presented in an historical digest. It embraces several salient points; the development of change of opinion in the Congregational Church, of which, I think, the earliest has hardly received due notice, that of Mr. Rogers, of Leominster, an ancestor of mine. Then besides the changes of opinion, there is a vast deal of interest about the subject of the perplexing and difficult relations of the ministers with the parish at the time of the depreciation of the currency. There is an exceedingly valuable set of papers of that sort by historical men. When Dr. Belknap’s granddaughter was writing a memoir of her grandfather, Jeremy Belknap, I aided her somewhat in the work. She had a very valuable lot of papers, but her father, John Belknap, was a singular man, and compelled that memoir to be written in the most brief and concise way. Among the papers was a large bundle relating to Dr. Belknap’s inability to obtain means of support from his parish at Dover, N. H. Mr. John Belknap wished those papers to be destroyed, but the granddaughter said: ‘Your father has preserved those papers; he didn’t wish them to be destroyed.’ And they have been preserved. They were presented by the granddaughter quite recently to the Massachusetts Historical Society, and are in the cabinet. There are other matters in relation to the ministry, particularly in relation to the tenure of office. The elder gentlemen here will remember that long and sharp controversy between John Pierpont and

the Hollis Street Society. Finally, when left apparently with the feeblest support, he based himself upon the claim to a life settlement. I will not go any further, but I present this subject for consideration,—the development of the change of opinion and the difficulties brought about during the war by a depreciation of the currency. For instance, Dr. Osgood, of Medford, was settled on a small sum, and they undertook to pay him in depreciated currency during the war. The old man told them they had enough other expenses to bear, and he waived his yearly claim till the thing was settled, and then he demanded all, and the parish, with some chagrin, paid him.”

Mr. HOAR said :—“The hours of this morning belong to the gentlemen who have prepared papers at your request. But I do not think I ought to let Dr. PEABODY’S paper pass without expressing my hearty accord with the view of the Boston massacre which has been stated by Dr. PAIGE. Dr. ELLIS said that nobody patronises the monument to Crispus Attucks but some Irish emigrants. I thought the Commonwealth of Massachusetts had been a patron of that monument.

“There are two things, which, as it seems to me, the critics who condemn the people of Boston so severely fail to understand. I do not doubt they all understand as well as those who differ from them, what Dr. PEABODY understands better than most men, that there is a difference in the government of States between righteousness and wickedness, between freedom and tyranny, between usurpation and law. But they do not reflect that there are occasions when tyranny and oppression get possession of the forces of government and the forms of law. What are you to do then? Are you to wait till you have converted the tyrant to your side by pacific argument? Should our Fathers have waited till they had brought George III. to change his policy by reasoning with him? I do not think much progress would have been made in that direction. There is a time when

men, knowing perfectly well that all the dominant forces of the world, the constable, and the crown, and the throne, and the judge are on the other side, take their lives in their hands and precipitate themselves against the cannon or the bayonet in the hands of their antagonists. Nothing else will so arouse the world to the issue. The deed they do is under seal. That is what our people did at the time of the Boston Massacre, with the deep unerring instinct which the common people of New England have always shown when questions of liberty were in issue. The crown had, in strict law, the undoubted right to put those regiments on Boston Common. But it was as gross an insult to the people of Massachusetts to do it, as it would be to-day should the government of the United States muster the regular army on Boston Common as a threat to the people when they were pursuing their peaceful way. The men in the ropewalk and Crispus Attucks and those who fell with him felt the presence of these troops as an insult, which they were ready to resent at whatever cost.

“Now there is one other thing that these critics do not understand. That is, how keen and susceptible a sense of honor they have, whom we sometimes call the lower classes, and how sensitive they are to a public insult. They have not the satisfactions of property, of wealth, of letters, of education. But they have a supreme satisfaction in the honor of their country. They have, as the history of the late Rebellion shows, as intense a suffering and shame when it is disgraced, as ever dwells in the heart of the child of fortune or rank. These people, when the fist of the British government was thrust against their noses, felt the insult. They resented it in the only way they had to resent it. They expressed their love of freedom in a way that could not be mistaken, and at the risk of their lives. They did nothing worse in principle than Sam. Adams did when he called on Hutchinson and demanded that he should take those regiments out of Boston, or he would bring the coun-

try people down upon them. That was the supreme moment in the life of Sam. Adams. 'It was then,' he says in his letter to James Warren, 'if fancy deceived me not, I observed his knees to tremble, I thought I saw his face grow pale, and I enjoyed the sight.' That threat was as lawless as any act committed by the mob. The principle is exactly the same. Yet I suppose we all agree in deeming that the most glorious event in the life of our great Revolutionary patriot.

"The same thing happened in our recent history when the attempt was made to send back fugitive slaves to their owners. The leading motive of that attempt was not the desire to return to the owner his slave property. It was the desire to humiliate the free spirit of Massachusetts. We have chosen into this Society a leader of the attack on the Boston Court House. We praise the honor and spirit of former ages. If we condemn the duel which men enter into to vindicate their honor when it is assailed, we never judge it harshly. Why this sudden desire to judge with such severity the people of Boston who took the only way then open to them to vindicate their honor when insulted, and to attribute to them a base, rough and rowdy mob spirit? That was never the view of John Adams, or Sam. Adams, or Quincy, or Warren. They meant the soldiers should have a fair trial. But they never thought the people should be condemned. On the contrary, they made the fifth of March a great anniversary. It held its place, and was celebrated with addresses from the foremost orators of Massachusetts, until Independence was established and the day of the massacre gave way to the 4th of July."

Dr. PEABODY:—"I simply wanted to point out that if in circumstances like those the government had not called out the militia and had not done its utmost to quell or to prevent such riots by military force, such a government would never have had standing room in the State afterwards."

The report of the Council was then accepted.

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

HON. MATTHEW PAUL DEADY, LL.D., of Portland, Or.

HON. ANDREW HASWELL GREEN, of New York, N. Y.

WILLIAM EATON FOSTER, A.M., of Providence, R. I.

All of these gentlemen were duly elected by separate ballots.

STEPHEN SALISBURY, A.M., was then unanimously re-elected President by ballot.

President SALISBURY :—“ Gentlemen, I thank you for your renewed confidence in me. I feel very sensible of my inadequacy for the position. I accept it nevertheless, feeling that you will bear and forbear with me.”

A committee consisting of Hon. SAMUEL A. GREEN, M.D., Hon. HENRY S. NOURSE and HENRY H. EDES, Esq., was appointed to nominate the other officers to be elected.

Mr. HOAR :—“ Before proceeding farther I should like to make one statement. When Dr. PEABODY read his admirable sketch of Joseph Dennie, before the Council, it was thought exceedingly desirable that a similar service should be performed in regard to the memory of Dr. John Park, one of the accomplished journalists and gentlemen of his time. His character is exceedingly interesting, and his relation to our literature very important. It was hoped that our associate, Rev. Mr. HALL, his grandson, might prepare the sketch of Dr. Park. It is proposed that we should make publicly known this desire.”

President SALISBURY :—“ As there is a moment unoccupied, it occurs to me that it would be interesting for the strangers in Worcester from a distance to be reminded that to-day is a day of great interest to the citizens of Worcester, being the one hundredth anniversary of the visit of General Washington to the city. On his journey to New England he passed several hours here, having come from

Spencer, where he had spent the night previous, dining in a hotel nearly opposite to us, now called the Exchange Hotel. He was escorted into Worcester by a cavalcade of forty gentlemen who met him at Spencer, and he was attended in the same way on his departure."

The nominating committee reported a list of other officers, as follows:—

Vice-Presidents:

HON. GEORGE BANCROFT, LL.D., of Newport, R. I.

HON. GEORGE F. HOAR, LL.D., of Worcester.

Secretary for Foreign Correspondence:

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

Secretary for 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 being ex-officio members of the Council:
and the following

Councillors:

REV. EDWARD E. HALE, D.D., of Roxbury.

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, Ct.
 J. EVARTS GREENE, A.B., of Worcester.

Committee of Publication:

REV. EDWARD E. HALE, D.D., of Roxbury.
 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.
 A. GEORGE BULLOCK, A.M., of Worcester.

On motion, the Secretary cast a yea ballot in favor of the names presented by the committee.

PRESIDENT SALISBURY:—"Six months ago the Society had the great pleasure of meeting a member of our Society, Rev. Dr. CYRUS HAMLIN. They then passed a vote requesting him to prepare some account of the foundation of Robert College at Constantinople. I see that he is present here to-day, and I hope that we shall hear from him."

Rev. Dr. HAMLIN addressed the Society at length, and at the close of his remarks left the manuscript with the Society.

Prof. EDWARD CHANNING presented a paper on "The Navigation Laws."

Prof. FREDERICK W. PUTNAM gave a paper on "The Peabody Museum of American Archæology and Ethnology in Cambridge."

Prof. HENRY W. HAYNES submitted a paper upon the subject of "Cotton Mather and his Slaves."

On motion, all the communications were referred to the Committee of Publication.

Dr. PAIGE:—"I suppose that every one has noted the absence of one of our oldest members. I speak of Dr. DEANE, who was living this morning, but the continuance of life seems to be but the question of days, if not of hours."

President SALISBURY:—"The Chair would state that the Council at a previous meeting framed resolutions of sympathy and respect, which they transmitted to Mrs. Deane, but has been informed that the condition and health of Dr. DEANE were not adequate to his listening to them, and the Council received a very interesting letter from Mrs. Deane in regard to the matter."

The meeting was then dissolved.

JOHN D. WASHBURN,

Recording Secretary.

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