

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

AT a specially called meeting of the Council of the American Antiquarian Society, March 12, 1893, to take action on the death of **Andrew P. Peabody, D.D.**,

President SALISBURY said:—

“The Council are met to take notice of the death of their associate, Rev. Andrew Preston Peabody, D.D., LL.D., of Cambridge, who died March 11, instant, at his home, after a brief illness, occasioned by the effects of a fall from which he failed to recover though strong hopes were entertained that his life would be spared. Dr. Peabody was born in Beverly, March 19, 1811, and was the ninth in seniority on the list of members of the Society, having been elected in October, 1856. His first service to the Society was in acting as a delegate to the archæological congress at Antwerp, in 1866, with Dr. Charles Deane and Dr. Samuel F. Haven, when these gentlemen together visited England, Scotland, Belgium and Switzerland, and promoted the interests of archæology by their joint investigations. Doctor Peabody was elected to the Council in October, 1884, and prepared in that year a memorial of Stephen Salisbury, late president of the Society. In October, 1885, Doctor Peabody read the Report of the Council, taking as his subject, ‘The Fallacies of History.’ In October, 1888, Doctor Peabody paid a biographical tribute to the late Dr. Joseph Sargent, and at the annual meeting the same year, he read a valuable paper upon ‘Hopkinsianism.’ In October, 1889, our associate gave as an essay in the Report of the Council an account

of 'The Farmer's Weekly Museum,' published at Walpole, N. H., 1793-1810. In his own words, it was 'the paper that contributed most largely to the nurture of American literature in the first half-century of our national existence.'

"The loving interest of this gifted scholar and writer for our Society, and his many acts of service are fresh in our minds, and I have requested our Recording Secretary, Hon. John D. Washburn, to express the sentiments of the Council."

Col. WASHBURN said:—

"The Council of the American Antiquarian Society have listened with profound interest and sorrow to the announcement by the President of the Society, of the death of their honored and beloved associate, the Rev. Dr. Peabody. In that announcement are included the leading facts relating to his connection with the Society, and his election to and service in this body, to which statement it seems unnecessary, at the present time, to add anything more. But the Council would place upon their records some brief memorial of one so dear to his associates, whose companionship was one of the most valued privileges of that association, and whose peculiar position here it seems impossible to fill.

"It was in the soft sunshine of his later years that he came to the membership of this body, bringing to our deliberations the ripe suggestions of a long and studious life. His early days had been characterized by singular promise, and his collegiate course was finished at an age at which very few young men of his time had completed the studies preparatory to admission. Graduated at fifteen, he entered at once on the active duties of life, following the steps of his honored father as a teacher of youth. It was a remark of his, made more than once to the writer of this memorial, that those years of teaching were worth more to him than the same number of years of study, and that the habit of mental accuracy then acquired had been of infinite value to him in

all the varied intellectual pursuits of his later life. This mental habit made him a keen and close observer and critic; always frank and fearless, without disparagement of others, but with a manly independence and self-respect. And here, since this is not the occasion for detailed recital of the incidents and achievements of his career, it is sufficient to say that all the promises his youth gave forth were more than fulfilled in the progress and completion of his life, and that perhaps no man of his generation had a larger influence for good.

“Protracted far beyond the prescribed and ordinary limit of human days, that life was a constant stream of benefactions to mankind. His long ministry at Portsmouth, N. H., was one to the fidelity and success of which the past generation, and the present not less, bear witness. The great University to which the best powers of his mind and heart were so freely given, is witness, also, by the grateful and affectionate acknowledgment of all her sons. To the faithfulness of his studies and expositions in literature and history, his associates in those attractive fields of intellectual labor bear witness. His many publications on subjects religious, ethical and historical have been always welcomed and appreciated by students of those subjects not less than the educated public in general, as most valuable contributions to sound learning, and aids to human progress. It was his happy fortune to live in the studious leisure of old age, in the full enjoyment of honors and appreciations so richly earned. Yet the members of the Council would do injustice to the sentiment this great loss to their membership inspires, did they fail chiefly to dwell on the peculiar value of Doctor Peabody's service here, not only as a contributor to the literature of the Society, but by his faithful attendance upon our meetings, his frequent suggestions and intelligent criticisms, and his constant encouragement to industrious and faithful effort for the promotion of the objects of the Society. His benignant presence was always

welcomed here, his counsels listened to with unflinching deference, his wise and thoughtful comments upon the papers prepared for submission to the Society, always accepted as most valuable aids to their completeness and success. And of no other member of the Council can it be more truly, if as truly, said that his personal companionship lent a charm to our meetings which association merely literary cannot afford.

“Here, in the familiar intercourse of friends, he overflowed with good will and loving kindness for all. Here he was wont to express himself with an easy informality and grace of language which caused every utterance of his to be awaited with interested expectation and listened to with unflinching delight.

“Not, therefore, to the eminent divine and theologian, nor to the able critic and scholar, nor yet to the accomplished man of letters, is this tribute of the Council chiefly paid; but to the loved associate, the encouraging and stimulating companion, the true and great-hearted friend. As such the members of this body, amid the general admiration of his noble life, great attainments and adornment of every department of learning which he touched, love best to recall him in this hour of bereavement, and dwell in grateful affection on his memory.”

Mr. J. EVARTS GREENE said:—

“I can add nothing of importance to Mr. Washburn’s eloquent and beautiful tribute to Doctor Peabody’s memory, but I wish to say that, during the short time of my association with Doctor Peabody as a member of this Society, I have been especially impressed with the length of his life, greater than the number of his years would indicate, because the period of boyhood and youth was shorter, and the time of active, responsible manhood began with him so much earlier than with most men.

“He was the associate on terms of personal intimacy with

men, some of them eminent, who died more than sixty years ago, so that his experience of active life and of men was that of one ten years older than his actual age. This personal knowledge of the men and affairs so remote from us in time, gave an especial interest and charm to his conversation.

“His early maturity of mind was not that precocity which sometimes in manhood disappoints the promise of youth, but was healthy and natural. The current of his life flowed yearly broader, deeper and stronger until the last that we knew of him.”

DR. G. STANLEY HALL said:—

“My acquaintance with Doctor Peabody began in 1876. I was then teaching at Harvard, and received a few spontaneous and encouraging lines from Doctor Peabody, whom I had then never met. These kindly words were, under the circumstances under which they were given, as needed and as helpful as they were thoughtful on the part of the sender. This incident, trivial in itself, may illustrate Doctor Peabody’s kindness and sympathy with young men, which, perhaps, was really his most dominant trait of character. A few weeks before his death, in speaking at an alumni dinner of Williams College in Boston, Phillips Brooks spoke at some length of Doctor Peabody, who was present, in a strain of mingled praise and raillery, suggesting Alcibiades’s description of Socrates in the Symposium, and describing Doctor Peabody as *the* man whose heart was youngest of all present, who had in some way circumvented nature in combining the wisdom and the serenity of age with all the geniality and enthusiasm of youth; as the man who attended more dinners, knew more men, heard more speeches and sermons, said and felt more beneficent things than any man of his age, and was really more of a hearty good fellow, and a better illustration of conserved youth than could anywhere else be found.”

Mr. SAMUEL S. GREEN said:—

“Mr. President, I have known the late Rev. Dr. Peabody for more than thirty years, and his death is felt by me as a personal loss. I never have described to him any undertaking of importance without warm expressions of his sympathy; the completion of undertakings has always been greeted by him with hearty congratulations. He has said of me and my work some of the kindest words that have ever been spoken regarding the one or the other. I do not make this statement for the purpose of bringing my own affairs into notice, but as illustrative of a trait in Doctor Peabody which has already been spoken of more than once to-day, and which struck every acquaintance of his as characteristic of him. His kindness was his most conspicuous quality; every member of this Council who has known him for several years feels as I do, and knows that he has lost in Doctor Peabody a personal friend. Thousands of friends and acquaintances in New England and throughout the United States are mourning to-day, as we are, the loss of a personal friend.

“He was a link between a past and the present generation. His acquaintance with distinguished men began early, and his recollections of them and anecdotes regarding them made his conversation delightful. I constantly met with surprises in his presence. Thus it seemed to me a little strange when he told me that he was a fellow-tutor with Benjamin Pierce in Harvard College, and that while he held that position, our venerable associate, Rev. Dr. Ellis, was an undergraduate in the college. Not long ago, I met him in Boston at the University Club on the evening when it was opened. The fiftieth anniversary of the settlement of Rev. Dr. Osgood over a church in Cohasset had just been celebrated. I said, ‘Doctor Peabody, I see that the papers class you as a contemporary of Doctor Osgood.’ ‘I remember,’ he said, ‘preaching in a town in New

Hampshire while Doctor Osgood was attending school in the town.'

"It was a great privilege, Mr. President, to have Doctor Peabody for a friend. He was always ready to place at the service of such a one anything that was wanted from the vast stores of learning which he had gathered during the many years of his studious life. He was ready, too, to exert his influence in behalf of a friend, in a good cause, whenever it was called for, and that influence was of the greatest value, for he always enjoyed the acquaintance and had the confidence of the most influential and powerful men of his time.

"A quality which, joined with his real intellectual power, his accomplishments and kindliness, gave the older men in the community confidence in Doctor Peabody, was his conservatism. I remember reading, when a boy, a volume of doctrinal sermons which he had delivered to his people in Portsmouth, and afterwards published. His views of Jesus were conservative for the denomination to which he belonged. Unlike Channing and many other Unitarian ministers, he did not hold to the humanitarian view of Jesus, but, like Rev. Dr. Aaron Bancroft, one of the founders of this Society, he was an Arian. I do not know just what his theological views were when he died, but I am sure that he always held very conservative views regarding Jesus. He probably never reached the view entertained recently by so many prominent thinkers and ministers, that God is immanent in all men, in the members of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, and in the material world, as well as in Jesus, and that there is no difference but one of degree between the inner self of Christ and that of human beings generally.

"But I did not mean to illustrate Doctor Peabody's conservatism by reference to his theological views. I had the honor to read, as part of the report of this Council, a few years ago, a paper on The voluntary maintenance of

ministers in the early days of the colonies of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay, and in the paper had occasion to allude to the amendment of the Constitution of Massachusetts by which, since 1834, the voluntary system, tried at the start in Plymouth and at least in some parts of the Massachusetts colony, had been made permanent here. Doctor Peabody rose and made a statement which seemed strange to young men sitting before him, namely, that he had not been in favor of making the support of religious institutions voluntary, and opposed the passage of the amendment to the constitution referred to; 'Although I took a stand against the amendment,' he said, 'I am glad that it was voted upon favorably. The results from its adoption have been good.'

"Doctor Peabody was not a leader of the advanced guard, but a conservator of established institutions.

"Thirty years ago, the young men of the time found Doctor Peabody a very kind man, but one who felt it to be his duty to oppose and discourage in them advanced theological and philosophical thought. I regret that I did not seek, late in his life, to enter into conversation with him on theological matters. I am sure that he would always have preferred that a man should be true to his own convictions, even if he regarded his views as erroneous. It must be that his kindness and good judgment would have always led him to feel sympathy for earnest men, irrespective of their views. I should like to have found out before he died, whether in the light of the advance of knowledge which enables the followers of the scientific method in theology to make to-day affirmations by which religious and moral enthusiasm is irresistibly awakened, he could with hearty sympathy bid God-speed to advanced thinkers."

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