

PROCEEDINGS.

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING, APRIL 26, 1905, AT THE HALL OF
THE MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY IN BOSTON.

THE meeting was called to order by the President, the
HON. STEPHEN SALISBURY.

The following members were present:—

Edward E. Hale, Nathaniel Paine, Stephen Salisbury, Samuel A. Green, Edward L. Davis, James F. Hunnewell, Edward H. Hall, Albert H. Hoyt, Charles C. Smith, Edmund M. Barton, Franklin B. Dexter, Charles A. Chase, Samuel S. Green, Andrew McF. Davis, Solomon Lincoln, Daniel Merriman, Reuben Colton, Henry H. Edes, George E. Francis, J. Phinney Baxter, G. Stanley Hall, Charles P. Greenough, Francis H. Dewey, Carroll D. Wright, William T. Forbes, George H. Haynes, Charles L. Nichols, Waldo Lincoln, Edward S. Morse, John Noble, Austin S. Garver, A. Lawrence Rotch, Samuel Utley, E. Harlow Russell, Benjamin T. Hill, Edmund A. Engler, Alexander F. Chamberlain, William MacDonald, Roger B. Merriman, Victor H. Paltsits, Daniel B. Updike.

The report of the Council was presented by Judge SAMUEL UTLEY and ANDREW MCFARLAND DAVIS, A.M., of Cambridge. The latter read a paper, entitled, "Emergent Treasury-Supply in Massachusetts in Early Days."

Judge WILLIAM T. FORBES of Worcester said, that in the records at the Registry of Deeds in Worcester, he

found that Mr. Davis's ancestor, the first Isaac Davis in Worcester County, bought some real estate, the old Davis homestead, the consideration for which was so many ounces of plated silver. Judge Forbes enquired whether that signified silver bullion, silver plate or plated silver. Mr. Davis thought there was no question that silver bullion was meant.

G. STANLEY HALL, LL.D., of Worcester, read a biography of his "former colleague, and very near neighbor and friend," Herbert Baxter Adams, LL.D., of Baltimore, Md.

The Recording Secretary reported that the Council recommended for election Deloraine P. Corey of Malden, Mass., as a resident member, and Dr. Émile Levasseur of Paris, as a foreign member. Both gentlemen, on formal ballot, were declared elected members of the Society.

In presenting a paper, "A Scheme for the Conquest of Canada in 1746," VICTOR H. PALTSITS of New York said: "I bring also the greetings of our associate, Wilberforce Eames, of New York, who was unable to be here, but wished me to extend his greetings to you. The subject of my paper is, 'A scheme for the conquest of Canada in 1746.' The allusions to it which are in print are quite inaccurate. I might say this study has its origin from an examination of the books and journals of the various legislative bodies, and extracts from the Public Record Office of London, and from official or semi-official contemporaneous publications of the time."

The Society next listened to a paper on, "Jeremy Taylor and Religious Liberty in the English Church," by Rev. DANIEL MERRIMAN, D.D., of Worcester. In presenting his paper, Dr. Merriman said: "It is perhaps proper to say that this paper was prepared at the earnest solicitation of our distinguished and beloved associate, the late Senator

Hoar. Mr. Hoar was himself a Puritan of Puritans, and as you all know, extremely jealous of their honor; his enthusiastic love of good learning, and fondness of poetry, and the literary and antiquarian charm connected with the established church led him to be insensibly intimate with the great worthies of the church, and also desirous of doing them entire justice. He desired very much himself to present to this Society a paper on 'Jeremy Taylor and religious liberty in the English Church,' and that is the topic of the paper I am about to read."

DR. G. STANLEY HALL: "There is one work of Jeremy Taylor to which my attention was called many years ago, in a rather singular way. I was studying at Baltimore what might be called the 'psychology of conscience,' and I was talking with the Bishop of Baltimore, and he said: 'If you want to see the most monumental work on conscience, if you want to see the work that has in it all the sugared-off results of the experiences of the Catholic confessional plus all those questions that arise in cases of Protestant scrupulosity, read Dr. Taylor's "Ductor Dubitantium."'" I got it many years ago, and made a very careful study of it, and it seems to me it is a work of very great significance. So I rise merely to ask the essayist whether in his very interesting paper he will not modify the statement which was in effect that this work had little significance and attracted small attention. If I remember aright, it was this work on which he bestowed more labor than on any other, keeping it by him many years. At a recent alienist conference, the statement was made that in this work alone we have one of the most acute studies of casuistry and ultra-scrupulosity ever made. Thus in the field of ethical aberrations this great work is of monumental value. A brilliant French alienist said in substance last summer that he had heard that a Boston physician had invented the phrase 'New England

conscience,' but that the thing itself dated back to the 'Ductor Dubitantium.' Every problem concerning the rectitude of this, that, or the other opinion on settled and controverted points, as well as on those of practical life and worship;—all these are discussed. It has been a great question to me—and I asked the Catholic Bishop about it, and he could throw no light on it—how it could be that a man of that type, living in that age, could seem to have got all the sugared-off results of the Catholic confessional boiled down into such a systematic treatise as is there given. I think that this proposition of our French visitor last summer, indicates that whatever may be its faults, it is going to have a great historic significance. Senator Hoar was acquainted with this work, but I do not think even he appreciated its immense historical and, I might say for the psychologist, its profound scientific value."

Dr. MERRIMAN: "I am extremely glad that Dr. Hall has called attention to this work, and in reply to him let me say at once that if I were a professor of psychology I should probably be interested in the 'Ductor Dubitantium.' A distinguished professor of church history has lately said: 'This is to me perhaps the most interesting book that Taylor wrote, and if I were to have a long imprisonment, next to the Bible, I should wish to take it to my cell.' A man who has given attention professionally to the history of conscience, or to the study of the human mind, as Dr. Hall has, would be greatly interested in this book. It is one of the most significant evidences of the extraordinary minuteness and extent of Taylor's learning. But compared with his 'Life of Christ,' for example, it must be regarded as a highly technical and out of date treatise. This book was conceived very early in Taylor's career, and he had it on hand all his life. It was not printed until six or seven years before his death. While

the subject matter has long ceased to be of interest to the mass of people—so different is the twentieth from the seventeenth century—yet to the philosopher, psychologist or historian, it is of undoubted value.”

Vice-President EDWARD E. HALE said: “I want to thank the authors of the three papers we have heard, which I consider not only the most interesting, but perhaps the most important papers we have had at our meeting. Every one of them deserves a vote of thanks.

“I happened to be intimately connected with the history of the French Fleet, which was alluded to in the paper by Mr. Paltsits, and it is a matter of surprise to me how it could have been so nearly left out of American literature, being of great importance in the development of the republic. What brought me into connection with it was something of local interest, the preservation of the Old South Meeting-house. When the great fire took place and swept away the most of commercial Boston, our friends at the Old South Meeting-house had a valuable piece of property, and they sold it for \$400,000, and that \$400,000 had to be raised some way, and we were all very enthusiastic in our wishes to preserve the old meeting-house. I met Henry Longfellow in the street one day, and I said, ‘Longfellow, you have got to help in preserving the Meeting-house.’ He said, ‘All right; how much do you want?’ I said, ‘How much? I want you to write us a poem.’ He was very good-natured about it, and said, ‘If the spirit moves, I will write the poem.’ I was not quite satisfied with that. I said, ‘The spirit must move, it has got to move, and I hope it will move,’ and we parted. That week Longfellow wrote his ballad on the French Fleet, and, according to me, it is the best American ballad written. It is ascribed to Thomas Prince, the minister of the Old South. Longfellow has made a magnificent ballad out of it. I think I see gentlemen here old enough to have

heard traditions,—how Prince was praying in the pulpit when the tempest swept over the town, and shook the tower, and for our purposes destroyed the Fleet.

But curiously enough, that event is almost omitted from the histories of New England. But a page or two is given to it in most histories, and I think this is the reason: Shirley was Governor here; and by the way, some of the young men who want to devote their time to some good work, should write the life of Shirley, which has never been written; one of the greatest men we have had. Shirley knew that the French King was going to revenge himself; so Shirley got his Council together, and sunk this vessel and that vessel in the harbor, and he proclaimed a Fast Day, and it was on that Fast Day that Prince was making this prayer in the Old South Meeting-house. But you may look through the Boston newspapers of that summer, and week after week, the papers published nothing about the French Fleet. Not an allusion to the fact that the army of the State was in Boston; not an allusion to the fact that the Council was in session, and I think that the historians of America read carefully through the newspapers of the time, and did not find anything about the French Fleet. What would have happened if anything had been printed about it, would have been that Shirley would have sent down to the newspaper office, and have thrown out the window every man who had anything to do with the publication of such a thing. There was nothing in the papers because they had a Governor who understood what war meant. The only reference to it is on the occasion of the death of Lady Shirley,—that “the body was accompanied by the train bands of the Province to her grave.” That poor girl of twenty years accompanied by the train bands of the Province who were encamped on Boston Common! Why was the largest army that ever assembled in Boston, on Boston Common at that time? Why was it they accompanied this lady to her grave?

“Shirley did not mean that any notice of any preparation that he was making should get outside. This, you will say, is an old man’s story; perhaps it is, but I throw it out as a hint. I was very much interested about this ballad of Longfellow’s. I went up to the State library; I knew all the gentlemen there; I said, ‘I want the Council Records of 1746.’ They said, ‘You are forgetting that we have not got the Council Records of 1746 here; the Council Records have never been in this room, but if you will come downstairs, I will give them to you.’ We went downstairs to the Secretary of State’s desk, and he opened this drawer and that drawer, and took out the Council Records of 1746. I said, ‘Why are those things here?’ He said, ‘God knows, I suppose; I don’t; ever since I have been Secretary of State, the Council Records of 1746 have been in this drawer, and they are here now.’ I think those Council Records of 1746 were kept in some such private drawer, and had been until they were gotten out by me in 1891.”

A BALLAD OF THE FRENCH FLEET.

I.

A FLEET with flags arrayed
Sailed from the port of Brest,
And the Admiral’s ship displayed
The signal: “Steer south-west.”
For this Admiral d’Anville
Had sworn by cross and crown
To ravage with fire and steel
Our helpless Boston Town.

II.

There were rumors in the street,
In the houses there was fear
Of the coming of the fleet,
And the danger hovering near;
And while from mouth to mouth
Spread the tidings of dismay,
I stood in the Old South,
Saying humbly: “Let us pray.”

III.

“O Lord! we would not advise;
 But if, in thy providence,
 A tempest should arise
 To drive the French fleet hence,
 And scatter it far and wide,
 Or sink it in the sea,
 We should be satisfied,
 And thine the glory be.”

IV.

This was the prayer I made,
 For my soul was all on flame;
 And even as I prayed
 The answering tempest came.
 It came with a mighty power,
 Shaking the windows and walls,
 And tolling the bell in the tower
 As it tolls at funerals.

V.

The lightning suddenly
 Unsheathed its flaming sword,
 And I cried: “Stand still and see
 The salvation of the Lord!”
 The heavens were black with cloud,
 The sea was white with hail,
 And ever more fierce and loud
 Blew the October gale.

VI.

The fleet it overtook,
 And the broad sails in the van
 Like the tents of Cushan shook,
 Or the curtains of Midian.
 Down on the reeling decks
 Crashed the o'erwhelming seas;
 Ah, never were there wrecks
 So pitiful as these!

VII.

Like a potter's vessel broke
 The great ships of the line;
 They were carried away as a smoke,
 Or sank like lead in the brine.
 O Lord! before thy path
 They vanished and ceased to be,
 When thou didst walk in wrath
 With thine horses through the sea.

"An Ancient Instance of Municipal Ownership" was the title of a paper read to the Society by Hon. SAMUEL UTLEY, of Worcester, relating to an old quarry from which the inhabitants of Worcester have a perpetual right to take stone.

Mr. SAMUEL S. GREEN: "The Courts seem to have decided that the people of Worcester have a right to take stone from that quarry, but I noticed that the late Andrew H. Green, whose land surrounded the quarry, and who claimed that he owned it, still felt that he had grounds for contention. Do you know what they were?"

Mr. UTLEY: "I do not. I have known of his threatening, but I never knew of his bringing it to a conclusion. I rather thought it was more of a 'bluff game' than otherwise. I have talked with his lawyer, but of course counsel only tell what is known to have been done. Mr. Green long ago consulted Mr. Peter C. Bacon and Senator Hoar, but as no action likely to bring on a trial on the merits has at any time been taken, it is perhaps fair to assume that counsel have not found sufficient grounds to advise such a course. The statutes of Massachusetts allow a man to prevent the acquisition of title by twenty years' use, by posting notices, and Mr. Green did this. I have an idea that it was a nuisance to him to have the quarry there. They blast very recklessly and throw rocks over the adjoining premises, and probably any neighbor would be glad to get rid of it, but I have not been able to find that there is any ground for changing the legal conditions, as I have stated them."

Mr. HENRY H. EDES said: "At our semi-annual meeting in 1900, our associate Mr. Samuel Swett Green read an interesting paper on the Craigie House. Toward the end of it he inserted in a footnote an extract from a paper read by Miss Alice M. Longfellow to the Cantabrigia Club,

in which she erroneously calls Dr. Andrew Craigie's bride 'Miss *Nancy Shaw*.' Mrs. Craigie was *Elizabeth Shaw*, only child of the Rev. Bezaliel Shaw (H. C. 1762), of Nantucket, and cousin-german to Chief-Justice Lemuel Shaw. I call attention to Miss Longfellow's error in order that our Publications may contain an accurate statement of Mrs. Craigie's baptismal name.¹

It was voted that the papers of the day be referred to the Committee of Publication. The meeting was then dissolved, most of the members repairing to the Hotel Somerset for lunch.

CHARLES A. CHASE,

Recording Secretary.

¹In Volume VII. of the Publications of The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, in the Transactions at the stated meeting in April, 1902, will be found some reminiscences of Dr. Andrew Craigie of Cambridge, written by the late Mr. John Holmes (H. C. 1832). In the editorial notes appended to these reminiscences are many interesting facts concerning Dr. and Mrs. Craigie.

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