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DECEMBER MEETING.

A stated monthly meeting was held this day, Thursday, 9th December, at 11 o'clock, A.M.; the President, Mr. WINTHROP, in the chair.

The Recording Secretary read the record of the previous meeting.

The Librarian read a list of the donors to the Library, which included Mr. Savage, the senior member of the Society, in whose name a number of valuable manuscripts and pamphlets were presented by his daughter, Mrs. Rogers.

The Corresponding Secretary said he had received a letter of acceptance from Mr. Theodore Lyman, who was present at this meeting.

Mr. Edmund Quincy, of Dedham, was elected a Resident Member.

A copy of a lithographic portrait of the late Mr. George Peabody was presented by the publisher, Mr. A. Trochsler, of Boston.

The President read the following memorandum from Mr. Henry Gillman, of Detroit, presenting a number of interesting relics to the Society: —

The following named relics appearing more in keeping with the objects of the Historical Society, I have reserved them from among those deposited at the Peabody Museum.

No. 9. A portion of the flag-staff of Old Fort Mackinac (Michilimackinac), on the south shore of the Straits of Mackinac. When the writer in 1851 visited the site, so interesting from its historical associations, nothing remained on the bleak sandy point to denote the original works, save a few shapeless mounds, and the remnants of the pickets which once formed the sally-port, near which was the stump of the flag-staff, projecting about two feet above ground. These last were fast being undermined by the waters of the Straits which washed within a

few feet of them, and in stormy weather swept clear over them, so that, in all probability, they have long since disappeared. The great massacre occurred on June 4, 1763. The place has not been occupied, since about ten years after that. See Schoolcraft's "N. A. Indians," with Mr. Henry's singular narrative, and other works.

No. 10. Stemless brass button with initials R. A., and figure 2 enclosed by wreath; found a few years ago on a lot near the site of the old Fort at Detroit — now one of the most thickly settled parts of the city. The initials no doubt denote Royal Artillery, and this button probably dates back to the occupation of the British.

No. 28. Copy of map of "The Town and Fortifications of Detroit, as they stood before the year 1796. T. Smith, 30 May, 1816 (Copy)." This shows the town as it was in the time of the British occupation, all standing within pickets, which was rendered necessary by the Indians. Among other interesting details, it shows the position of the river Savoyard, — a stream which then ran through the town, and was large enough for the citizens and their wives to amuse themselves on in their canoes of a summer evening; but which has long since disappeared through the march of improvement.

HENRY GILLMAN.

December 6, 1869.

A new book, entitled the "Primeval World of Hebrew Tradition," was presented by the author, our associate, Dr. Hedge.

A memoir of the late Col. T. B. Lawrence was presented by Mr. Abbott Lawrence, through the Librarian.

Mr. Adams exhibited, and afterwards presented to the Society, a manuscript, labelled "Tory Account of Whig Characters before the War," dated London, 18th April, 1775. He read some portions of the paper, which he thought, on the whole, hardly came up to the dignity of an historical document.

The President presented a quantity of paper money of the Colonial period.

The thanks of the Society were ordered for the various gifts presented at this meeting.

The President made some remarks, and read a number of communications relative to the recent alleged discovery of a

petrification or ancient statue, called the "Cardiff giant," among which was the following from the Rochester "Daily Union":—

THE CARDIFF GIANT A HUMBUG.

Prof. O. C. Marsh, who occupies the chair of Palæontology in Yale College, has lately examined the "Cardiff Giant," and the "Buffalo Courier" is permitted to publish a letter written from this city by him to a friend containing his views thereon. From such a source opinions are entitled to great weight on such a subject, and it must be admitted that the testimony of Prof. Marsh finally settles the claim of the monstrosity to be of antique origin. The following is the letter:—

ROCHESTER, Nov. 24, 1869.

Dear —, — I saw the "Cardiff Giant" last evening, and in accordance with your request I will tell you what I think of it, although I can now only give you my conclusions. The reasons for them would make a longer letter than I have at present time to write.

By especial permission of the proprietors, I was allowed to make a more careful examination of the statue than is permitted to most visitors, and a very few minutes sufficed to satisfy me that my first suspicions in regard to it were correct; viz., that it is of very recent origin, and a most decided humbug.

The figure is cut from a block of gypsum, similar to that found in Onondaga county, and at other localities of the Salina formation in the State further west.

The peculiar position of the body and limbs, which has occasioned so much remark, was apparently determined in a great measure, by the form of the block of stone, which was water-worn on at least three of its sides before the sculptor began his work. These rough water-worn surfaces were not entirely removed in cutting. Portions of them still remain on the sides of the head, and on the limbs and feet, and have erroneously been regarded as indicating for the work a high antiquity.

The tool-marks are still very distinct on different parts of the statue, especially where they have not been obliterated by the imperfect polishing which evidently completed the work. On the more prominent portions of the figure these marks appear as small pointed depressions, but in the less exposed places, where the polishing was more carelessly done, or omitted, they are nearly as distinct and fresh as when first cut. In several places they are very near or immediately surrounded by the water-worn surfaces (*i. e.*, in the opening of the right ear), and therefore are evidently of subsequent formation.

Now, as gypsum is soluble in about four hundred parts of water, a very short exposure of the statue in the locality at Cardiff would suffice to oblit-

erate all traces of tool-marks, and also to roughen the polished surfaces, but these are both quite perfect, and hence the giant must have been very recently buried where discovered.

Altogether, the work is well calculated to impose upon the general public; but I am surprised that any scientific observers should not have at once detected the unmistakable evidence against its antiquity.

The President concurred substantially in these views of Prof. Marsh; but Mr. SALISBURY, on the other hand, who had also seen the statue, dissented from some of the positions taken in this communication.

The President read the following letter from Mr. Henry Pickering, son of the late Octavius Pickering, placed in his hands by our associate, the Hon. Charles W. Upham:—

Boston, April 9th, 1869.

Rev. CHARLES W. UPHAM, Member of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

DEAR SIR,— My father, as you already know, intended giving to the Massachusetts Historical Society the bound volumes of Col. Timothy Pickering's manuscript correspondence, and such of his unbound papers as should be thought proper to accompany them,— with the exception of the first four volumes containing private and family letters,— and a will was drawn in which was embodied the above bequest to the Society. My father did not live to execute this will, and the property in the manuscripts and papers passed to me as his sole heir.

It is my desire to carry out my father's intention by presenting to the Society the books and papers now in your hands: it being understood that they are to remain with you, or in the hands of such person as shall carry on or complete the biography of Col. Pickering, as long as may be necessary for that purpose.

Will you oblige me by laying this communication before the Society, or asking their acceptance of the bound manuscripts and of such of the unbound papers as you consider worthy of preservation for the objects of the Society, in any way you think proper; and when you have finished your examination of them, and have no further use for them, will you give them into the hands of the Society as their own property?

I am, Sir, yours very respectfully,

HENRY PICKERING.

Rev. CHAS. W. UPHAM.

Voted, That the Society gratefully accept the papers presented by Mr. Henry Pickering, and that they will take charge of them when deposited in the Library.

The President announced a new number of the "Proceedings," embracing the transactions for June, July, and August, 1869.

The President exhibited a manuscript, comprising notes of a course of Lectures by Prof. John Winthrop of Harvard College, taken by a student about the year 1740; and presented it to our associate, Mr. Sibley, for Harvard College Library.

The President read a letter from our associate, Dr. Ellis, making some suggestions relative to another course of lectures to be delivered by members of the Society at some future time.

The Librarian read a letter from Mr. N. Goodwin, of Framingham, explaining a passage in the journal of Mr. Samuel Davis, published in a late number of the "Proceedings". In passing through Wethersfield, Conn., Mr. Davis says, he saw Beadle's House and Shop, both of which were closed, as no one would occupy them.* "Perhaps few if any persons know," writes Mr. Goodwin, "the cause of this house and shop being closed and avoided. Dr. Lazarus Le Baron, of Plymouth, grandson of Dr. Francis Le Baron, returned from Barbados after a residence of fifteen years there; and, in 1756, October 14th, married for his second wife the widow of Ansell Lothrop, — Mary (Thompson) Lothrop. At the time of her second marriage, Mrs. Lothrop had one child, a daughter, Lydia Lothrop. Soon afterwards the daughter was married to William Beadle of Wethersfield, Conn., a merchant or trader of considerable property. By her he had four children, all of whom with his wife he murdered, then cut his own throat. Hence arose the reluctance to occupy his house and shop."

Mr. APPLETON exhibited a rare picture of Bunker Hill, pro-

* Ante, p. 14.

cured by him in New York. It was probably by an American artist, and evidently taken soon after the battle of Bunker Hill. It is inscribed as follows: "An Exact View of The Late Battle at Charlestown, June 17th, 1775," &c. By B. Romans. It is from a copperplate, 16 1-2 by 11 inches, and colored by hand.

The President announced that the Standing Committee had accepted the invitation of our associate, Mr. Mason, for the Society to meet at his house on Tuesday evening, the 21st inst.

SPECIAL MEETING.

A social meeting of the Society was held at the house of Mr. R. M. MASON, No. 1 Walnut Street, corner of Beacon Street, on the evening of Tuesday, the 21st of December, at seven and a half o'clock; the President in the chair.

In his opening remarks, the President indulged in some reminiscences relating to the house in which the Society were assembled, it having once been the residence of his father, the Hon. Thomas L. Winthrop, a former President of the Society.

The President read the following letter from our associate, Mr. W. S. Appleton, noticing the death of a Corresponding Member, Mr. John Bruce, F. S. A., of London.

Boston, Dec. 10, 1869.

DEAR MR. WINTHROP,—Had I supposed that the death of our Corresponding Member, John Bruce, F. S. A., would not have been noticed at the meeting yesterday, I would have sent you an extract from some English paper announcing it. He died on the 28th of October, aged 67, and the following appeared in the "Illustrated London News" for Nov. 13; the "Athenæum" and "Notes and Queries" have also printed memoirs:—

"John Bruce, Esq., F. S. A., an eminent antiquary, has just died, aged sixty-seven. He was of a Scottish family, and passed some time