

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
New Jersey Historical Society.

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No. 4.

NEWARK, *May 20th*, 1869.

THE Society met in their rooms, according to the By-Laws, at 11:30 A. M., the Hon. RICHARD S. FIELD, President, in the Chair.

After the reading of the minutes of the last meeting by the Recording Secretary, a report of the correspondence since January, was made by the Corresponding Secretary, who laid before the Society letters from Rev. Dr. R. K. Rodgers, acknowledging his election as one of the Vice-Presidents, and regretting his unavoidable absence; from Messrs. L. F. Randolph, Augustus Pruyn, Barton F. Thorn, Daniel Price, Andrew Kirkpatrick, George Haskins and Francis M. Tichenor, accepting membership; from Historical Societies of Maryland, Maine, Iowa, Minnesota and Georgia, Smithsonian Institution, Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Philadelphia, and New England Historic and Genealogical Society, acknowledging the receipt of or soliciting the publications of the Society; from Mr. Wm. Duane of Philadelphia, transmitting some specimens of early New Jersey Currency; from Mr. S. H. Coutts of Perth Amboy, with an ancient manuscript; and from Rev. Joseph T. Tuttle, D. D. of Indiana, in relation to his paper on the Early History of Morris County, and regretting his inability to be present.

The Treasurer reported a balance in the Treasury of \$554.27, and made a verbal statement of the general condition of the finances. At his suggestion it was

Resolved, That the Treasurer and the Chairman of the Executive Committee be authorized, as a committee, to make such arrangements for the safe keeping of the invested funds of the Society, as they may think advisable, and to make such changes in the character of the securities as to them may seem best for the interest of the Society.

Selections from Correspondence and Papers,
LAI'D BEFORE THE SOCIETY, MAY 20, 1869.

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FROM REV. JOSEPH F. TUTTLE, D.D.

WABASH COLLEGE,)
CRAWFORDSVILLE, INDIANA, MAY, 1869. {

W. A. WHITEHEAD, Esq., *Cor. Sec. N. J. His. So.*

MY DEAR SIR:—Permit me through you to greet the members of the Society of which it was once my privilege to be a member, and to assure them that the report of their meetings are read by me with the most lively satisfaction. As members of this Society ours has been a “work of faith and a labor of love” that cannot be fully appreciated except by those who have sought to rescue from swift coming forgetfulness the facts, the names, the incidents which belong to local history. The stock market has no quotations by which to determine the price or the value of this labor, which pays dividends in the pleasure caused by an unselfish enthusiasm in pursuits involving large expenditures of time, patience and strength—and I may add of money also—a pleasure which is above price to him who knows its worth.

Let me ask the Society's indulgence in making a few statements, which are in a sense personal, but which are made as bearing on the general designs which we as local historians, are supposed to keep before our minds. When I began my pastorate in Rockaway, in November, 1847, many very aged people were still living there, many of whom preserved their mental powers to an unusual degree. It soon became to me a pleasure, often indulged in, to visit these venerable representatives of our Revolutionary period, and not only lead them to talk about what they remembered so well, but to record the substance of their statements. Some of the pleasantest hours of my life outside the pastoral work, were spent in hearing and recording these reminiscences, many of which have been given to the public through the columns of the Newark Daily Advertiser, and other newspapers.

In addition to this it was my wont to spend an occasional day of leisure in the Library of your Society, and among the old records in the State Department at Trenton. Now and then a visit was made to the rich collections of the New York Historical Society, the old Franklin

Library in Philadelphia and other Libraries, to find and record in my scrap book facts concerning Morris County history. Not a few journeys have I made to get hold of old documents in the keeping of gentlemen who were willing to give them up to one who valued them. The "Erskine Papers," which were deposited in your Library seven years ago, cost me a ride of nearly forty miles on a very cold day, to the residence of the late Hon. Jacob M. Rycerson of Ringwood. Many fruitless journeys have been made to garrets in Morris County, in the hope of finding some precious old papers. In several instances my vexation has been extreme, to find that either not long before my visit a wagon load of old papers belonging to some Revolutionary official had gone to the paper mill, or been consigned to the flames, by some tidy housewife who was afraid the mice might find a harbor among them! For instance in one of my expeditions I found that large bundles of letters, accounts, receipts, and other documents of Mr Joseph Lewis, of Baskenridge, who was a Deputy of Quarter-Master General Furman, had been regarded as a nuisance by an over nice lady and banished to a corner of the barn, where they were soon destroyed. In another case, the most of the papers pertaining to the management of Lord Stirling's Furnace had been consigned to destruction, because the mice loved them more than their truly estimable and intelligent owners did. In still another case a quantity of papers and books of the same sort had been sent to the paper mill which, more savage than the foolish monks of the dark ages, is not content merely to partially *erase* the old words, leaving the *palimpsest*, but reduces the most valuable records to a hopeless *pulp*. In this way irreparable damage has been done to our local history. But some documents and facts were rescued, and from old garrets, old books, old newspapers, old deeds, old wills and old people, I have collected many facts which for the present are buried in several manuscript volumes, in such thorough confusion as to resemble the land of which the patriarch speaks, "*a land of darkness without any order, and where the light is as darkness.*"

And yet these new books full of old things are very pleasant to me. Often for the sheer pleasure of it I take them down and thumb their leaves and enjoy the incidents they seek to perpetuate. Let me add that if my own intentions are not changed, these books of Morris County and Jersey scraps will find their way at some future time into your Library.

This egotism would hardly be sufferable but for the good design of it, to provoke, especially your younger members, to constitute themselves into a vigilance committee to find and preserve in good shape, docu-

ments, newspapers, pamphlets, letters, books, deeds, wills, traditions written and unwritten, and to consign them to the care of that fire-proof building which the enterprising men of New Jersey are to build for your Library and Rooms.

Very truly yours,
JOSEPH F. TUTTLE.

Donations

ANNOUNCED MAY 20, 1869.

From the Georgia Historical Society—Historical sketch of Tomo Chi Chi, Mico of the Mimocraws. By Charles C. Jones. 1868.

From the Maine Historical Society—Collections of the Maine Historical Society. Second series. Documentary History. Discovery.

From the Minnesota Historical Society—Annual Report of the Society for the year 1868.

From the Essex Historical Institute—Collections of the Institute. Second Series. Part 2. Vol. 1; and Bulletin of the Essex Historical Institute, No. 1. 1869.

From the New England Historic Genealogical Society—New England Historical and Genealogical Register, No. 2. Vol. XXIII.

From the Wisconsin Historical Society—Memorial to Congress on Water Communication between the Mississippi and the Lakes. Prepared under direction of Lucius Fairchild, Governor of Wisconsin.

From the Iowa Historical Society—Annals of Iowa. January, 1869.

From Mrs. E. O. Smith—United States Magazine. 1854, 1855. Edited by Seba Smith and Family. Two vols.

Way Down East, or Portraits of Yankee Life. By Seba Smith.

My Thirty Years out of the Senate. By Major Jack Downing.

New Elements of Geometry. By Seba Smith.

Miscellaneous Notices from Newspapers concerning Mr. Smith's works, with an Engraved Portrait of the original Jack Downing. (Seba Smith.)

From H. H. Bowne—History of the Insurrection in the Four Western Counties of Pennsylvania in the year 1794. By Wm. Findley. Member of H. R. of U. S. A.

The National Calendar, and annals of the United States for 1824. Vol. V. By Peter Force.