

**A MEMORIAL ADDRESS ON THE
LATE MARSHALL PINCKNEY
WILDER, PRESIDENT OF THE NEW
ENGLAND HISTORIC
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**

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A memorial address on the late Marshall Pinckney Wilder, president of the New England Historic Genealogical Society by Andrew P. Peabody

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ANDREW P. PEABODY

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MEMORIAL ADDRESS

ON THE LATE

MARSHALL PINCKNEY WILDER


PRESIDENT

OF THE

NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

BY THE
Secretary
REV ANDREW P PEABODY D.D., LL.D.

[DELIVERED BEFORE THE SOCIETY JANUARY 18, 1888]


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The Author.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

At the annual meeting of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, January 5, 1887, it was voted that an address in memory of the late president, MARSHALL PINCKNEY WILDER, LL.D., be delivered before the Society at a convenient time, and the matter was referred to the Directors with full powers. The Rev. Dr. Peabody accepted an invitation to perform the duty, and a committee of arrangements was chosen consisting of the president, Mr. Abner C. Goodell, Jr., the Rev. Henry A. Hazen, the Hon. Charles L. Flint, Mr. Hamilton A. Hill and Mr. Cyrus Woodman. The time fixed for the address was Wednesday, January 18, 1888, and the Massachusetts Horticultural Society opened its Hall for the occasion. A large number of ladies and gentlemen were present, the latter representing various societies and institutions in which Mr. Wilder had been interested. The president, Mr. Goodell, opened the proceedings with the following remarks :

"FRIENDS AND ASSOCIATES :

When a good man dies — one who has contributed to the elevation and happiness of his fellow-men by his example of pure

and noble living, or by his resistance, either in the field, through the press, or on the rostrum, to some great public wrong, or by his successful efforts to increase the physical comfort or the intellectual growth of mankind — the living pause not merely to lament and condole: the shock, the grief, the sense of ir retrievable loss, are accompanied by a desire to know more of his character and his personal history; to trace his

“Foot-prints on the sands of time;”

to review his acts of beneficence; to commend his example; to compare his deeds with those of other benefactors who have preceded him, and to assign to him a place in the temple of fame.

This is the purpose to which we are to devote a brief hour stolen from the routine of life's duties to-day.

On Thursday, the 16th of December, 1886, expired Marshall Pinckney Wilder, who for nineteen years, by successive annual elections, held the office of President of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, to the members of which he was endeared, not more by the munificent gifts which the Society had received through his exertions, than by strong personal attachments formed independently of the official relations he held to them.

Appropriate notice of his decease was taken at the annual meeting of the Society last year; and it was resolved by the Board of Directors to set apart a special time for a commemorative discourse, at a place convenient for the assembling, not only of the members of this Society, but of others who have been associated with him in trade, in offices of trust and honor, or as members of other corporate bodies.

The hour appointed in accordance with that resolution has arrived, and the life now closed is to be fittingly reviewed by one preëminently qualified for the task, who has laid aside other duties in order to gratify the wish of the Society that he address us upon this occasion.

This gentleman, universally beloved and venerated in New England, needs no introduction. It, therefore, only remains for me to ask you to listen to the words of the Rev. Dr. Peabody."

At a meeting of the Directors of the Society, January 23, 1888, a vote was unanimously adopted, heartily thanking Dr. Peabody for his address, and asking for a copy for publication. He complied with the request, and the discourse is now printed under the direction of the committee of arrangements.

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ADDRESS.

ST. Paul advised Titus to avoid genealogies, not, however, those of men, but those of the æons with which in complicated series of mystic generations the Gnostic theosophy had peopled the entire realm between God and man. As to human genealogies, inasmuch as Titus was a Christian pastor, St. Paul, I have no doubt, would have bidden him to study them, and would have told him that they were fully of as much worth to him in making him acquainted with the flock of Cretians under his charge as the pedigree of their sheep could be to the shepherds on Mount Ida. The diagnosis of his parents and his grandparents is the prognosis, the horoscope of the child. We have many New England surnames which stand this day for traits bodily, mental and moral that belonged to those who bore the same names two hundred or two hundred and fifty years ago. In some cases the traits are intensified in their transmission; in others, where there has been intermarriage with families of strong peculiarities, they are slightly attenuated. In the children of the female members of one of these old families, you can always trace tokens of the mother's lineage,