

**AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE
CHURCH MISSIONARY
ASSOCIATION OF THE EASTERN
DISTRICT OF THE DIOCESE OF
MASSACHUSETTS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649196302

An historical sketch of the Church Missionary Association of the Eastern District of the Diocese of Massachusetts by William Stevens Perry

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

WILLIAM STEVENS PERRY

**AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE
CHURCH MISSIONARY
ASSOCIATION OF THE EASTERN
DISTRICT OF THE
DIOCESE OF MASSACHUSETTS**

AN
HISTORICAL SKETCH
OF THE
CHURCH MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION
OF THE
EASTERN DISTRICT OF THE DIOCESE OF MASSACHUSETTS,

BY THE
Rev. WILLIAM STEVENS PERRY, M. A.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE ASSOCIATION.

3^d
BOSTON:
E. P. DUTTON AND COMPANY.
Church Bookstore.
MDCCLXIX.

US 12641-17.

359

1868

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1868, by
E. P. Derron & Co.
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.

RIVERSIDE, CAMBRIDGE:
PRINTED BY H. O. HOUGHTON AND COMPANY.

NOTE.

IN the preparation of the following sketch, great use has been made of information furnished by the Rev. Dr. Packard of Lawrence, and Charles Wingate, Esq. of Haverhill, with reference to the parishes, which, by God's blessing, they have been respectively the means of upbuilding. The thanks of the compiler are also due to the Rev. Alfred L. Baurý, of Boston, for the use of materials in his possession, illustrating the history of the Church in Hopkinton; to the Rev. Drs. Edson and Mason, for kind suggestions and advice; and to the Rev. Messrs. Chase and Monroe, for sketches of the present condition of their missions.

With these acknowledgments, the following pages are offered to the Association in the hope that their recital of its past successes may quicken the zeal of its members and awaken a deeper interest in the work of church advancement in Eastern Massachusetts.

W. S. P.

WATERTOWN, MASS.

December 9, 1858.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

THE records of the Church Missionary Association of the Eastern District of Massachusetts begin, without preface or preamble, with the annals of the meeting at St. Anne's, Lowell, on Tuesday and Wednesday, December 9th and 10th, A.D., 1845. The object of its organization, and the preliminary measures taken to effect the same, must be learned, the one from its name and subsequent action, the other from diverse and independent sources.

Following closely upon the formation of the Clerical Convocation for associated home-missionary effort which had sprung up in Rhode Island about the year 1830, were numerous endeavors to introduce this system into Massachusetts. But in spite of the earnest support of the judicious Griswold, and the many indications of success attending the occasional gatherings of the clergy in different sections of the State for special missionary service, it was only after repeated attempts that the earnest labors directed to this end by the Rev. Theodore Edson, Rector of St. Anne's, Lowell, were met with favor, and his parish church, where subsequently the Church Missionary Association of the Eastern District

was organized, became the birthplace of its elder sister-society, the Clerical Convocation of Eastern Massachusetts.

Recommended by the Bishop as a means suited to promote brotherly love among the clergy, and to deepen the piety and awaken a more lively zeal for the advancement of the church among the associated parishes, this new enterprise pursued its way in charity and faith. Seeking both the revival of decayed and feeble churches and the upbuilding of new ones,—gathering to its varied services those who had long been deprived of the means of grace, or adding to the flame of earnest zeal already burning in others' breasts, its labors from parish to parish were both abundant and fruitful. To its successful efforts the church in this diocese owes, under God, some of its strongest congregations, and even where adverse circumstances compelled for the time the relinquishment of a field, the seed then sown has since yielded its rewarding harvest.

In the eloquent language of one who was himself a master-spirit in its work, we find its course described and its usefulness pointed out. "Never," writes the Rev. Dr. Stone, "it is believed, did any body of Christian ministers labor with a more single aim for one object, the growth of religion in their own hearts and in the hearts of their people. At its meetings was often heard rising the prayer, which drew all hearts into one before a Father's throne. Silent tears often fell there at the thought of a Saviour's love for sinful men. The hand was often opened there to give of the little, which it held, to the holy work of missions. Plans were often devised

there, and labors projected, for planting the church on some hitherto neglected spot, or for rebuilding it in some of its waste places. Congregations were often gathered there, from amid the toils of the week, to listen solemnly to the word of life, as it sounded forth in the tones of love, and as it called to the work of repentance and faith, and to the labors of charity and zeal. And ministers of Christ often separated thence, blessing God that He had awakened them to new sympathy in His cause, and to new evidence of their sonship with Christ; or that He had given them fresh experience of the blessedness of brotherly love, and fresh proofs of the luxury of at least striving to do good. . . .

“Sweet is the memory of those days, on which ministers of Christ used to meet together upon that field of labor, sometimes with their Bishop in the midst of them, and always with an assurance that his prayers were rising in their behalf; days full of the blessedness of brotherly love, and familiar with the peaceful and elevating power of a consciousness that they were praying, and laboring, and sacrificing for that one object, which brought their Saviour down to earth, the salvation of sinful men.”

It was in the midst of the labors of the Convocation that the Convention of 1836, established at the suggestion of the Rev. Dr. Morss, of Newburyport, the “Board of Missions for the Protestant Episcopal Church of Massachusetts.” In this body, agreeably to the intentions of its founders, were gradually merged all the missionary organizations within the limits of the diocese. Itself the immediate successor and representative of the Massachusetts Episcopal Missionary Society,—an association