

**CHARLES HAMMOND AND HIS RELATIONS TO
HENRY CLAY AND JOHN QUINCY ADAMS;
OR, CONSTITUTIONAL LIMITATIONS AND THE
CONTEST FOR FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND THE
PRESS. AN ADDRESS
DELIVERED BEFORE THE CHICAGO HISTORICAL
SOCIETY, MAY 20, 1884**

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Charles Hammond and his relations to Henry Clay and John Quincy Adams; or, Constitutional limitations and the contest for freedom of speech and the press. An address delivered before the Chicago historical society, May 20, 1884 by Wm. Henry Smith

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WM. HENRY SMITH

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By WM. HENRY SMITH

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PUBLISHED FOR THE CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1885

TO
ROBERT CLARKE, ESQ.

AS A RECOGNITION OF HIS INTELLIGENT EFFORTS TO ENLARGE
THE SCOPE OF AMERICAN HISTORY, OF HIS PATRIOTISM
AS A CITIZEN, AND OF GENIAL AND MANLY TRAITS
THAT ARE ADMIRER BY HIS FRIENDS.

• Est. Hist. Soc. vvv vvv vvv

CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING HELD MAY 20, 1884.

An adjourned quarterly meeting of the Society was held May 20, 1884. Vice President E. B. Washburne occupied the chair. From the Librarian's Report it appeared that the accessions to the Library during the quarter were 226 bound volumes and 170 unbound books and pamphlets.

Judge Mark Skinner introduced the following tribute to the memory of the late President of the Society, Hon. I. N. Arnold, which was unanimously adopted :

Resolved, 1st, In the removal by death of the Hon. Isaac N. Arnold, the Historical Society mourns the loss of one of its original founders, of one of its most active, efficient, and reliable members, and its honored and greatly respected President.

"During all the active years of a brief and well-spent life, Mr. Arnold has been a citizen of Chicago, contributing by his indefatigable industry, unimpeachable integrity, his patriotism, his public spirit, his rare abilities, his great acquirements, his spotless moral character, his high qualifications, and his instincts as a thorough gentleman, to give luster to the city, his residence, and to the generation to which he belonged.

"A successful lawyer, that stood in the front rank of his profession, a cautious, far-seeing and wise legislator, distinguishing

himself in the halls of legislation, as well national as state, a successful public speaker, and a writer of great power and wide-spread popularity, he has left to the generations that succeed him the legacy of a noble example and a good name; therefore,

Resolved, 2nd, That the Hon. E. B. Washburne be requested to prepare and deliver before this Society, at his convenience, a memorial address commemorative of the life and character of the Hon. Isaac N. Arnold."

Mr. Washburne responded to the resolution as follows:

"I am certain that all the members of the Chicago Historical Society, and all others present, will have heard with emotion the resolution in respect to our President.

"The Society has met with a great and almost irreparable loss in the death of Mr. Arnold. Long identified with it, giving to it his attention and his services, he has done much to elevate its character and increase its usefulness. We can never forget with what courtesy and dignity he presided at our meetings, Dying, as it were, in the harness, he has left to us the recollection of an honest man, a cultivated gentleman, a good citizen, and an honored public servant. At some time in the future, the Society will pay appropriate honors to his memory."

Hon. William Bross was requested by the Society to prepare and read before it a memorial notice of the late Thomas H. Armstrong, who was for some time the Secretary and Treasurer of this Society.

Mr. E. H. Sheldon introduced the following memorial notice of the late Sir Alpheus Todd, which was unanimously adopted and ordered spread upon the records:

"Sir Alpheus Todd, late of Ottawa, Canada, was born in England in 1821, and at the age of twelve emigrated to Canada. In 1856 he became Librarian of the Legislative Assembly of Canada and held the position till the time of his death. In 1866 Mr. Todd was elected a corresponding member of this Society. He wrote several works, which were highly commended, relating to the government of Canada and England. The ability and

noble manhood exhibited in Mr. Todd's works won for him the honor of knighthood and the high esteem of those who knew him.

"As a mark of respect, this Society places his name with the honored dead upon its records."

The President appointed Messrs. E. H. Sheldon, Mark Skinner, and W. K. Ackerman a committee to draft resolutions of respect to the memory of the late Cyrus H. McCormick, an annual member of this Society.

The President then introduced Mr. Wm. Henry Smith, who read the following historical paper upon "Charles Hammond and his relations to Henry Clay and John Quincy Adams."

Upon the address being concluded, General A. L. Chetlain moved that the thanks of this Society be tendered to Mr. Smith for his excellent historical paper, and a request was made that he furnish the Society a copy for its archives. The motion was unanimously adopted and the meeting adjourned.

ALBERT D. HAGER, *Secretary.*

CHARLES HAMMOND.

In the winter of 1860-1, on the eve of the great civil war, I heard that brilliant Democratic orator, Ex-Senator Geo. E. Pugh, declare to an audience that filled the old Smith & Nixon's Hall, and embraced the intelligence and wealth of Cincinnati, that if the differences between the North and South resulted in war, the commerce of Cincinnati would be destroyed, grass would grow in her streets, and the glory of the Queen City would depart forever. The eloquent Senator doubtless expressed his honest convictions; he certainly did express the opinion of a large number of the business men of that city. Considerations of patriotism, of legal rights, and of manhood, did not enter into their thoughts. The only question was, how could the trade of the South be preserved for Cincinnati? These merchants thought most surely by asking the South to write the terms on which they would consent to remain in the Union, and continue to govern the country. They called this conservatism—a word often representing wisdom in the administration of affairs. But there is conservatism and conservatism. This of the eventful period preceding the war, was what Carlyle would have called "slothful cowardice," but what may be more accurately described

as the conservatism of cowardice—destructive of the soul.

This was but the echo of other days. The fathers of many there present had heard a similar prediction from the lips of a distinguished citizen (sometime justice of the Supreme Court, and United States Senator), if the subject of slavery were even permitted to be discussed by the press north of the Ohio river, and in this opinion there seemed to be for a season an almost universal concurrence. There was, however, one man, in that day the most eminent of the citizens of Ohio or of the West, who controverted that opinion, and who continued to discuss the subject of slavery, its relations to society and the state, despite the passionate remonstrances of friends, and in the face of mobs, with sublime courage, and a calmness and wisdom that disarmed the violent and carried conviction to thousands. This was the conservatism of life—the power of truth that ever has and ever will put the devil to flight.

The ghost of a controversy is haunting the present generation, seeking to be laid when it shall be determined who first proposed immediate emancipation. What does it matter? Gradual emancipation at one time, through restrictive measures was practicable; but the conservatism of cowardice had permitted greed and lust for power to so far override the spirit of the Constitution as to fasten the evil of slavery firmly upon the Union, so that emancipation, except by the sword, was impracticable. It has come to be fashionable to seek for heroes supposed to be, in the days when there was a shadow over the land, the sole keepers of the conscience of the Republic. Bronze monuments are