

**A PLEA FOR HARVARD: SHOWING THAT  
"THE UNIVERSITY AT CAMBRIDGE" WAS  
NOT THE SAME NAME ESTABLISHED  
FOR THIS SEMINARY BY THE  
CONSTITUTION OF MASSACHUSETTS**

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A plea for Harvard: showing that "The University at Cambridge" was not the same name established for this seminary by the constitution of Massachusetts by Josiah Quincy

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**JOSIAH QUINCY**

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PLEA FOR HARVARD:

SHOWING THAT

7829

“THE UNIVERSITY AT CAMBRIDGE”

WAS NOT THE NAME

ESTABLISHED FOR THIS SEMINARY BY THE CONSTITUTION OF  
MASSACHUSETTS,

BUT THAT

THE NAME AUTHORIZED BY THAT INSTRUMENT

WAS

“HARVARD UNIVERSITY.”

BY AN ALUMNUS.

Joseph Quincy

BOSTON:  
WM. CROSBY & H. P. NICHOLS,  
111, WASHINGTON STREET.

1849.

5771465  
O/S 92/465

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## PLEA FOR HARVARD.

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A REMARKABLE change, of a character alike extraordinary and unexpected, has been introduced within the last three years in reference to Harvard University. Ever since October, 1846, all the official correspondence of the head of this institution, all its semi-annual Catalogues, all official communications to the Board of Overseers, have been carefully issued under the name of *The University at Cambridge*; and the long-known and previously approved name of *Harvard University* has been as carefully avoided. This change was made without any known vote of the Corporation, — without any sanction of the Board of Overseers, sought or suggested, — without any reasons, publicly offered, for its necessity, utility, or propriety. It was, however, of course, regarded as, in fact, the act of the Corporation, although, for some good reason, not avowed at the time to be theirs; since it was impossible to imagine that any single functionary or any minor authority of the seminary would have ventured on a change so likely to be offensive to some and so questionable in the view of

all, without the official sanction of the presiding board. At no previous time had the Fellows of that Corporation enjoyed more entirely the confidence of the community, from their known talent, integrity, and fidelity. There was no disposition in the public, or among the Alumni, to cavil at any of the measures of the government of the seminary, or to question their wisdom; although they would have been grateful, if, at the time the change was made, the motives leading to it had been communicated.

Concerning the nature of the policy there could be no question. The end proposed was, plainly, to separate, forever, the name of *Harvard* from that of *University*, -- to throw it back and confine it exclusively to its Colonial association with that of *College*; in consequence of which, the University, being deprived of any *name*, would be compelled to take its designation from its locality.

The mysterious silence which was maintained for more than two years, in regard to the motives for this change, gave time and scope for much discussion, in private circles, concerning its object and usefulness. The dissatisfied, although numerous, were not disposed, however, publicly to animadvert upon a measure which they trusted might yet be explained and justified.

In due time the Triennial Catalogue made its appearance, but in a shape so questionable that its identity could scarcely be recognized. Instead of the old, simple name of *Catalogus Universitatis Harvardianæ*, -- The Catalogue of Harvard University, -- which that venerable publication had notoriously enjoyed for more than sixty years uninterruptedly, it now ap-

peared under the title of *Catalogus Collegii Harvardiani* SEU *Universitatis Cantabrigiensis*, -- The Catalogue of Harvard College, or, of the University at Cambridge; -- this alternative form being obviously devised to express both the title which that publication had enjoyed in former times, and that which it was intended it should enjoy in future.

The oddity of this Janus-faced title having excited no inconsiderable animadversion, a continuance of the mysterious silence on the subject of the motives of this change was no longer practicable. A public declaration of the reasons which had led to the disconnection of the name of *Harvard* from that of *University*, and to the apparent intent to confine it altogether, in future, to its connection with the humbler title of *College*, was at length made; not, indeed, where it might have been expected, in the hall of legislation and before the Board of Overseers, but in a small pamphlet, intended chiefly for the use of the immediate government and students, which, discarding the long-established and approved name affixed to similar publications, was now entitled "A Catalogue of the Officers and Students of the University at Cambridge, for the Academical Year 1848-49." Four times, during the two previous years, a like pamphlet had been issued with a like change in the name of the seminary, but never before were the motives for the alteration made manifest to the public. This manifestation appeared in the last page of the pamphlet above referred to, by way of "Note" to its first page, which gives the seminary the new title of *The University at Cambridge*, by which the Note maintains it ought to be called. The exact terms of this Note are annexed, marked A.



After remarking, in a slight way, that "the name of 'Harvard University' prevails extensively," the authors of the Note proceed to intimate that this appellation, as though it were a recent novelty, derives its chief sanction from "the high authority of Mr. Peirce and President Quincy, in their respective histories." As if those gentlemen took upon themselves any special responsibility in this respect, or did any thing more than adopt a name which was so "extensive" as to be in a manner *universal*! That the authority for the use of this name rests no way with them, it need only be stated, that the Catalogue of the Library of the seminary, published, under the special sanction of the Corporation, three years before the History of Mr. Peirce, and ten years before that of Mr. Quincy, was entitled "A Catalogue of the Library of *Harvard University* in Cambridge, Massachusetts." It is proper to add, that Mr. Peirce's History was a posthumous work, and that its title was given to it by the late John Pickering, under whose auspices it was published; a man inferior to none, among the graduates of the College now living, for love of Harvard and love of accuracy.

Notwithstanding the tendency of the tenor of this Note to mislead the public mind as to the material facts upon which the right of the seminary to take the name of "Harvard University" depended, it did not seem to be from its nature important enough, nor yet, in view of the circumstances under which it was issued, to have a sufficient degree of publicity, to justify any public comment upon its statements and objects.

The recent Annual Report of the state of the Uni-

versity for the academical year 1847-48, presented in January last, by the head of the institution, to the Board of Overseers, in conformity with the standing orders of that Board, has altered the relations of things, in this respect, altogether, and has rendered some animadversion upon this attempt to change the name of the seminary necessary and unavoidable. In a "Paper" appended to that Report, and submitted with it to the Overseers, not only is the name of "Harvard University" silently set aside, but it is assumed that *the name* given by the Constitution of the Commonwealth to Harvard College was "The University at Cambridge." That Paper is hereto subjoined, marked B.

On its general tenor it is not intended here particularly to remark. All that it states about the language used by the magniloquent Mathers, or in diplomas issued prior to the adoption of the Constitution of Massachusetts, has, obviously, nothing to do with the subject in dispute. No man ever pretended, or can pretend, that Harvard College ever had a legal right to assume the name of "University" antecedently to the Constitution of 1780. The question in controversy is, — *What name did that instrument authorize Harvard to assume?* The authors of the Paper appended to the abovementioned Report allege that *the name legally established by the Constitution of the Commonwealth for Harvard College was THE UNIVERSITY AT CAMBRIDGE.* In opposition to which, it will be the endeavour in this publication to maintain the following points: —

1. That "The University at Cambridge" was not *the name* given to this seminary by the Constitution, or intended to be given to it by its framers.

2. That "Harvard University" was *the name* which the Constitution of the Commonwealth authorized the seminary to assume, and that such was the intention of the framers of that instrument.

3. That "Harvard University" was *the name publicly and officially given to the seminary by its authorities, immediately upon the adoption of the Constitution*, — and this, under and by virtue of the provisions and intentions of that instrument, *as practically expounded by its framers themselves*.

4. That the name thus given it, in the great documents particularly intended for the public, and to which the expression of its true name was essential, it has used and maintained, without a single known interruption, ever since, until the year 1846.

These points will be, it is believed, satisfactorily demonstrated from history and unquestionable public documents.

The name given in 1638 to "the school or college" in Cambridge, which had been established in 1636, was "Harvard," with an intention, at this day altogether unquestionable, that "Harvard" should *thenceforth and forever be THE NAME* of the institution. Accordingly, when, in 1650, a charter of incorporation was granted to it by the Colonial legislature, it was declared, that the authorities constituted by that act should "*have perpetual succession and be called by the name of 'President and Fellows of HARVARD COLLEGE.'*"

This was the only *name* by which the institution could legally and with strict propriety be designated. Notwithstanding this, it obtained in the earliest