

**THE INAUGURAL ADDRESSES
OF THOMAS N. HART, MAYOR
OF BOSTON, TO THE CITY
COUNCIL, JANUARY 7, 1889**

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The Inaugural Addresses of Thomas N. Hart, Mayor of Boston, to the City Council, January 7, 1889 by Various

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VARIOUS

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INAUGURAL ADDRESS

OF

THOMAS N. HART,

MAYOR OF BOSTON,

TO

THE CITY COUNCIL,

JANUARY 7, 1889.



BOSTON:

ROCKWELL AND CHURCHILL, CITY PRINTERS,

No. 39 ARCH STREET.

1889.

CITY OF BOSTON.

Ordered, That His Honor the Mayor be requested to furnish a copy of his Inaugural Address, and that the same be printed, under the direction of the Superintendent of Printing, as a City Document, and in the volume of "Proceedings of the City Council;" the expense to be charged to the appropriation for Printing.

COMMON COUNCIL, Jan. 11, 1889.

Passed.

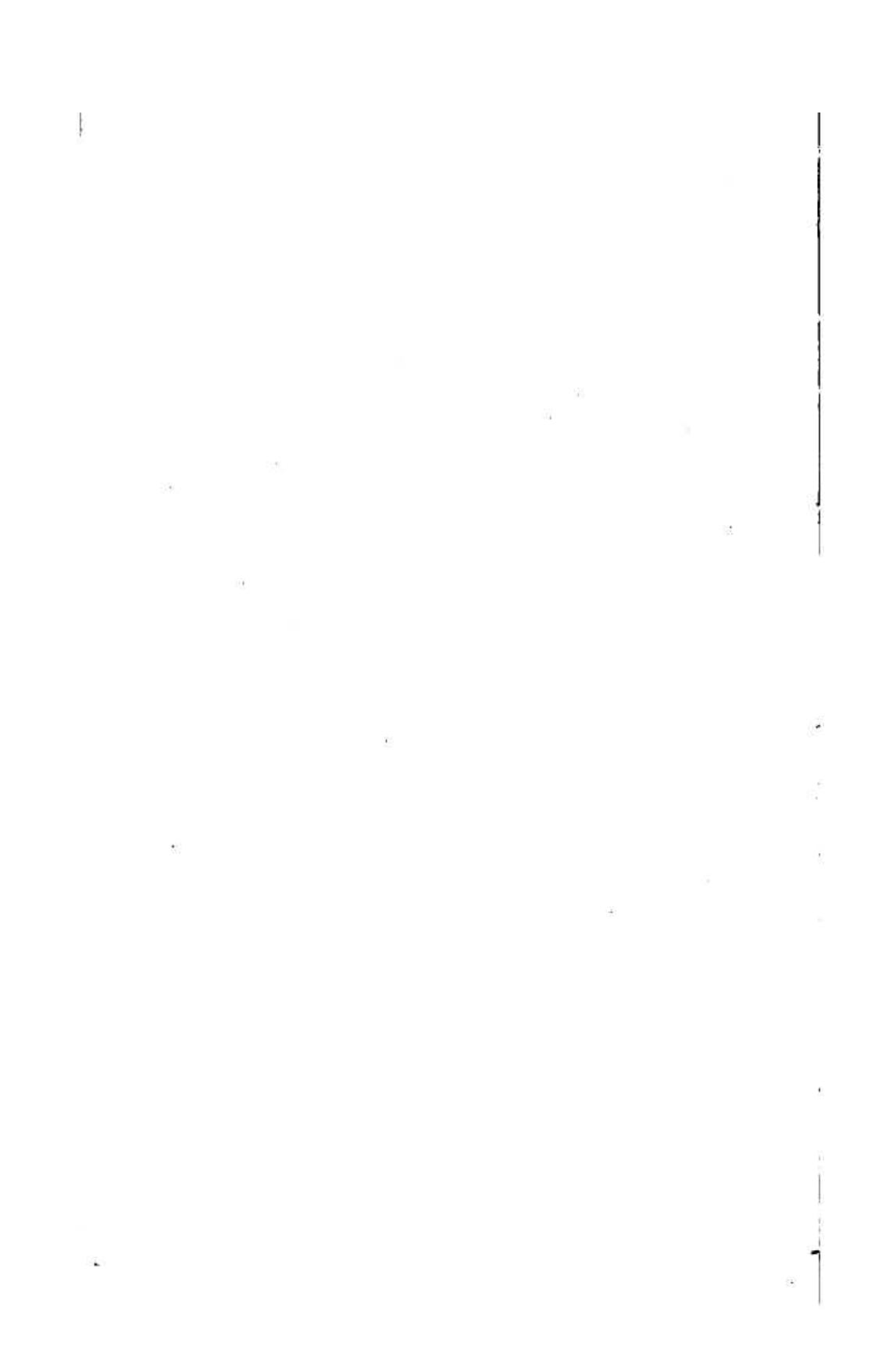
IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, Jan. 14, 1889.

Concurred.

Approved by the Mayor, January 17, 1889.

Attest:

JOHN T. PRIEST,
Assistant City Clerk.



ADDRESS.

Gentlemen of the City Council:—

The oath of office we have just taken enjoins upon us a very high duty. We have sworn to be loyal to the Constitution of the United States, to bear true faith and allegiance to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and to obey its rules and regulations in discharging our duties as members of the City Government.

All selfish demands of political parties and social classes should yield to our oath of office, which requires us to serve not only those who have elected us to office, but the entire community. Political parties are right in their proper field. Their true object is defeated when men seek to establish a partisan government. What we want is *good* government. A partisan government, or a government of classes, cannot be a just government, which consists in serving all citizens alike.

To satisfy our oath of office we should have but one great object before us. Forgetting per-

sonal preferences and interests, we ought to weigh our public acts and words by the honor and welfare of the good community we are called upon to govern. To serve the people of Boston well requires, on our part, great diligence and singleness of purpose. It is essential that we should work together in harmony. The City Council and the Executive Department were separated by the Commonwealth that each might become more efficient, and that both together might do more for the public good.

The School Committee and the County officers should not decline to cooperate with the City Government, for we are *one*. No branch of the public service can safely or honorably break away from the rest; no public department can live unto itself alone. Special harmony and concert of action are needed in the several departments subject to the executive office. All servants of the people ought to avoid friction. Where the public laws speak, it is our duty to obey them to the letter. Where the laws are silent, a sense of duty toward the people should teach us to work together in harmony and mutual forbearance.

It is common to seek a remedy for all ills in the body politic by new statutes or ordinances. No doubt, many new enactments will be required in the

year just begun. But it is good policy to have as few laws as possible, because many laws occasion many transgressions. No law nor ordinance can ever take the place of good citizenship and official integrity. Even the best of laws leave something to the discretion and judgment of the public servant and the private citizen.

Where the written law is clearly insufficient, it is right to seek such additional legislation as will simplify and strengthen the public service. At present there is some doubt whether the School Committee may not incur debts which the City is required to pay. This doubt should be removed by law. In any event, the School Committee and the City Government should work together in good faith. The duties of the County officers toward the City are not clearly defined, and the question has arisen whether the officers of the City, when acting as County officers, are subject only to the authority of the Commonwealth, and not also of the City that pays the County expenses and owns all County property. This question should be settled by law or by the good sense of the City and County officers.

The law of 1885 (Stat. 1885, ch. 266), amending the charter of Boston, vests all executive power in the Mayor, but retains, with very few

exceptions, all the boards, commissions, trustees, and separate departments or offices existing at that time or since established. The number of these separate bodies exceeds fifty, some of whom are not even required to publish regular reports. It is natural that, at times, these departments should conflict, to the detriment of the public. The entire Street Department, the Sewer, Bridge, and Lamp Departments, the Superintendent of Health, and the building departments, should all be united in one harmonious board of public works. It is thus that labor, a cause near to us all, can be best placed on a permanent basis. All charitable institutions and charity work of the City should be united under one board of not more than three salaried members, who should be required to devote their whole time to the public service. In this important branch of the Government it is desirable to invoke the aid of qualified women, and one woman should be a member of the board.

The number of coördinate departments should be diminished, and the number of annual nominations to be made by the Mayor should be reduced. These nominations, instead of being many hundred, should not exceed a few dozen or score. Constables, for instance, should be