

**SEMI-CENTENNIAL
ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOUTH
CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY
(UNITARIAN) IN LOWELL.
FRIDAY, SEPT. 26, 1879**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649518883

Semi-Centennial Anniversary of the South Congregational Society (Unitarian) in Lowell. Friday, Sept. 26, 1879 by Frederic Thomas Greenhalge

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FREDERIC THOMAS GREENHALGE

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Lowell, Mass. First Unitarian society ¹⁸⁷⁷

SEMI-CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

SOUTH



CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY

(Unitarian),

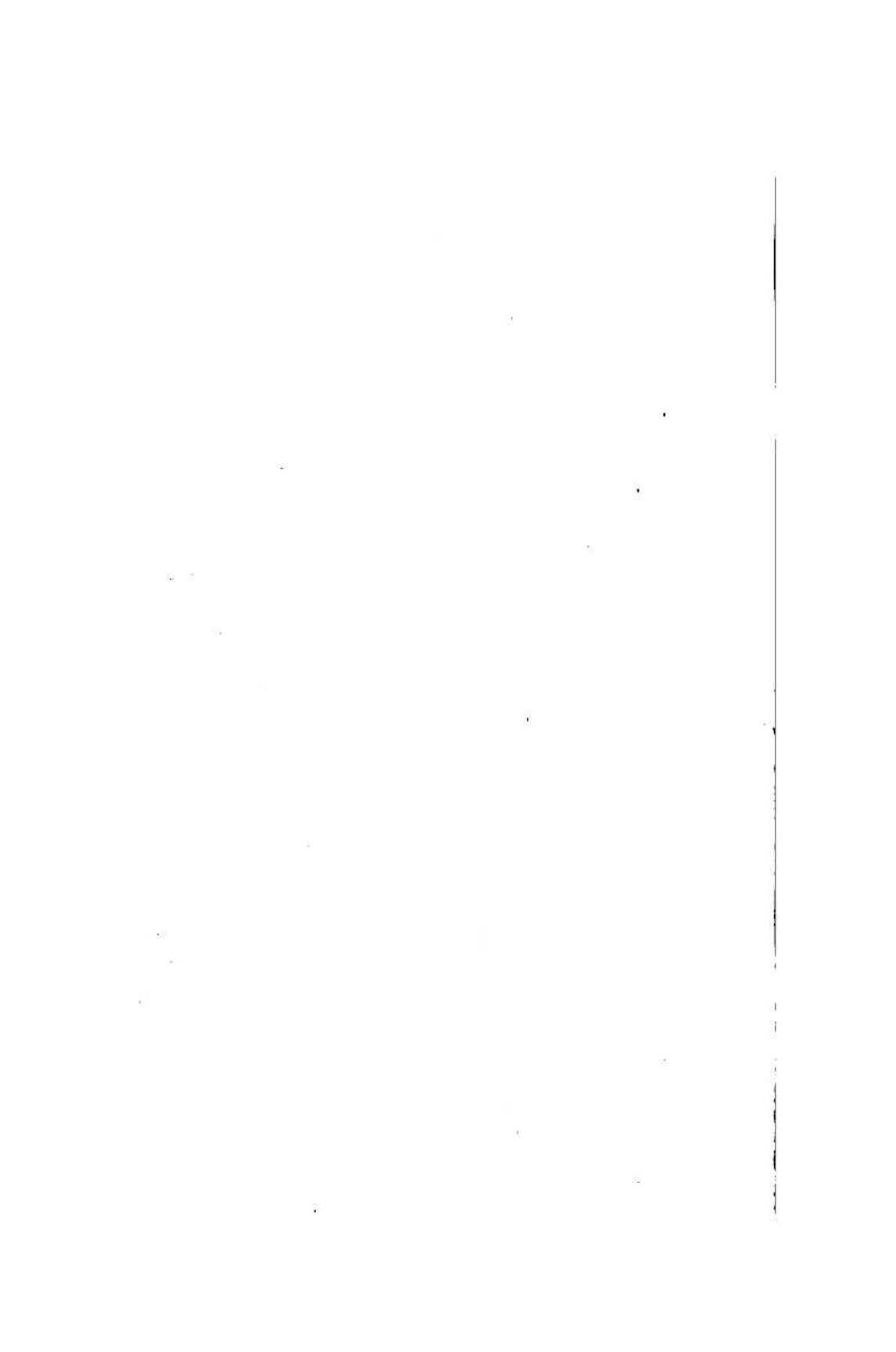
IN LOWELL,

Friday, Sept. 26, 1879.

LOWELL, MASS.:

VOX POPULI PRESS: HUSE, GOODWIN & CO., 130 CENTRAL ST.

1880.



Prefatory Note.

THE first meeting to consider the expediency of holding Unitarian services in Lowell was held at the house of Mr. Thomas Ordway, afterwards one of the first deacons of the church, Aug. 30, 1829. The Society was formally organized Sept. 26, 1829. As the Fiftieth Anniversary of this latter event drew near, it was deemed advisable by the parishioners to celebrate the event with fitting observances. Accordingly, at their annual meeting, April 21, 1879, it was voted, "That the organization of the First Unitarian Society of Lowell be appropriately commemorated on the Fiftieth Anniversary in September next; and that the following named persons constitute an Executive Committee to act with the Pastor to arrange for a commemorative observance of the organization of this Society, on the Fiftieth Anniversary, viz. Messrs. Daniel S. Richardson, Hapgood Wright, John F. Kimball, Wm. P. Brazer, G. A. Gerry, I. F. Scripture, Mrs. P. Anderson, and Mrs. G. F. Richardson." The committee were empowered to make all arrangements, and to appoint such committees as they deemed necessary to carry out the purposes of the foregoing vote.

It was decided to hold an historical, memorial, service, in the church, at 2 P. M., Friday, Sept. 26, 1879, to be followed by a social reunion of present and past parishioners and friends, from 4 to 6 P. M., in the vestry, and to arrange for a dinner, at Jackson Hall, from 6 to 9.30 P. M.

The day was pleasant, and a large number of persons were present at all the exercises. Of the seven pastors, one is deceased; the others were all present, excepting the first, Rev. Wm. Barry, who was too feeble to make the effort. Many of the past parishioners, who were the most widely known and distinguished, are not now living. A long roll of worthy men and women have

made this church their religious home, at different times. A large number have passed to their spiritual home. Of those still living, a large proportion were with us the day of the celebration. It was an event long to be remembered. The reunion, in the vestry, of friends of former days, was as happy as it was sad: happy, in the fact that it brought together, once more, many dear and pleasant acquaintances; sad, in that so many could be with us only in the spirit. That social hour passed only too quickly. The vestry was crowded, and the uninterrupted hum of voices was a sure indication of the enjoyment which all felt.

The dinner was fully attended, every available seat being taken. The greatest interest was manifested in all the services of the day, and a strong desire was evinced that the proceedings be published. To meet that desire, the following pages, containing the exercises in the church, and the substance of the remarks made at the dinner, have been published.

Complying with the evidently very unanimous wish of the society, the committee have likewise included the interesting sermon of Dr. Miles, delivered on the Sunday following the celebration.

At the suggestion of many parishioners, the lists of deaths, marriages, baptisms, and admissions to the church have been published. The multiplication of these valuable records will be of great value should the church records ever be lost or destroyed.

The Historical Address is intended to be a careful narration of facts, without any attempt at rhetorical style. It was prepared for historical purposes, and to smooth the way for any who may in future desire to know or write of the history of this Society.

Order of Exercises.

1. ORGAN PRELUDE. Offertoire in E♭ *Batiste.*
MR. GEORGE B. ALLEN.
2. PSALM CXXVII.
3. CARMINA ALTERNA, for Day 26, P. M. Service, in O. B.
Brown and Rev. E. E. Hale's "Carmina Alterna."
4. ADDRESS OF WELCOME *Hon. Daniel S. Richardson.*
5. CHOIR VOLUNTARY. "I will be glad" *Southard.*
MRS. GEO. B. ALLEN *Soprano.*
MISS JENNIE F. WOODWARD *Alto.*
CHAS. H. SARGENT (of Lawrence) *Tenor.*
FRANKLIN NICKERSON, M. D. *Bass.*
6. READING OF THE SCRIPTURES. (Ps. lxxv, 1, 2, 4, 5, 11; Ps.
xxiii, entire; Eph. iv, 4-7, 11-13; Eph. iii, 20, 21.)
Rev. F. Hinckley, Fourth Pastor.
7. CHOIR VOLUNTARY. "Hear us, O Father" *B. Owen.*
8. PRAYER *Rev. Henry Blanchard, Sixth Pastor.*
9. CHOIR RESPONSE. "Trisagion and Sanctus" *Havens.*
10. HISTORICAL SERMON *Rev. J. L. Seward, Pastor.*
11. CHOIR VOLUNTARY. "O God, the Protector" *Buck.*
12. ADDRESS. "The Founders of this Society, and the Out-
come of their Work" *Rev. H. A. Miles, D. D., Second Pastor.*
13. CHOIR VOLUNTARY. "Praise God in His Holiness" *Tours.*
14. CLOSING PRAYER *Rev. J. L. Seward, Pastor.*
15. HYMN Hymn 472, A. U. A. Hymn and Tunc Book, 1st ed.
16. DOXOLOGY. "From all that dwell below the skies."
17. BENEDICTION.
18. ORGAN POSTLUDE. "Marche Triomphale" *Lemaens.*

Address of Welcome.

BY HON. DANIEL S. RICHARDSON.

MY FELLOW-PARISHIONERS OF THE SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF LOWELL, AND OUR GUESTS AND FRIENDS:

We of this Society have stepped to-day from the first into the second half-century of our parochial existence, and this large assembly of our parishioners and friends has been gathered here to commemorate the event. The occasion will be a memorable one; and such another, with like advantages for arresting from the destructive flight of time, and recording the history of our origin and progress, will never occur again.

Our career for fifty years is closed, and we can now only describe that career from memory, tradition, and the written records. We meet to review those records, and with each others' aid to unroll and put in substantial form those memories and traditions. Happily for us, they extend back with living freshness, at least in the minds of many here present, to the day of our parochial birth. We are fortunate in having with us at this pleasant gathering, among our present parishioners, and among our invited guests, men and women who formed part of the little earnest band which, with fitting ceremonies and solemnities, established this prosperous society, even while our municipal corporation, embracing now more than fifty thousand inhabitants, was in its infancy, and ranked only as a town of moderate size and growth.

Unusual as it may be, in an organization of this kind, after such a lapse of time, all the pastors who have been settled over our society, except one, are living, and all those survivors have been invited to join us as our guests. And with them we have invited to be here many of our parishioners of former years, and other friends of our society. It is gratifying to us that our invitations have been so generally accepted. This large assembly testifies that our