

ADDRESS

AT

DEDICATION OF THE TOWN-HOUSE

AT JAMAICA PLAIN,

WEST ROXBURY,

BY

ARTHUR W. AUSTIN.

BOSTON:

ALFRED MUDGE & SON, PRINTERS, 34 SCHOOL STREET,

1868.

JAMAICA PLAIN, August 3, 1868.

ARTHUR W. AUSTIN, Esq.

DEAR SIR,—At a meeting of the Board of Selectmen, held this day, the following vote passed:

Voted, That Hon. Arthur W. Austin be invited to deliver the Dedicatory Address to his fellow-townsmen, at the dedication of the new Town-House, at such time as shall be named hereafter.

Please accept this as notice, and oblige

Yours with respect,

WM. MACCARTY,

Clerk of Selectmen.

A D D R E S S .

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS :

I am happy to congratulate you upon the prosperity of the Town of West Roxbury. I join with pleasure in welcoming you to this hall, so capacious that if ever the better part of creation are admitted to suffrage, the accommodation will be ample; for deliberation and female eloquence, and they can discuss in Senate without interruption, and confine the hitherto termed lords of creation, in the hall below.

We know not what further folly the future may produce, there is no evil so great in public affairs as the incapacity of those who administer. A portion of intelligence is requisite in the management of a municipality; and a large portion of ability, intelligence and sagacity combined is necessary to those whose business it is to conduct great public affairs, to guide the destinies of States, to keep the peace of nations, to preserve empire. It is to be hoped that neither men nor women will go beyond their sphere. If they do, mischief is the result. But whatever comes, let us trust the dignity of woman will never be lost in the arena of degrading and demoralizing political conflict.

Let all such contests to mankind belong —
Over the household woman should preside;
The fireside altars — the domestic throng —
Alike her pleasure and alike her pride.

The town as a separate municipality has not been long in existence. It was severed from the City of Roxbury by an act of

incorporation on the 24th of May, 1851. Previous to that time it made a part of Roxbury Town, or Roxbury City. Of matters connected with the division it will be more proper to speak hereafter.

The town of Roxbury was described in 1654, as "situated between Boston and Dorchester, being well watered with cool and pleasant Springs issuing forth the Rocky hills, and with small Freshets, watering the vallies of this fertill Towne, whose forme is somewhat like a wedge double pointed, entering between the two foure named Townes, filled with a laborious people, whose labours the Lord hath so blest, that, in the room of dismall swamps' and tearing bushes, they have very goodly Fruit trees, fruitfull fields and gardens, their Heard of Cows, Oxen and other young Cattell of that kind about 350 and dwelling houses near upon 120. Their Streets, are large, and some fayre howses, yet have they built their Howse for Church-assembly destitute and unbeautified with other buildings."

It is difficult to give much distinctive information about the portion now making our goodly town. Judging from the records, it seems however that the upper part, for many years, even up to 1800, was considered subject of the lower, which always having numerical superiority, refused what it pleased and considered what it granted as a boon and not as a right. The general plan seems to have been to do as little as possible for the advancement of this particular territory. The roads were, in many instances, merely cart-paths, and the schools were aided but little. Owing to the dependent condition of this territory, and the loose, meagre and generally confused records kept during the first hundred years after the settlement of the ancient town, it is a matter demanding much discretion, to know what to present that would be acceptable. It is only by selection at distant periods that we can furnish types of the modes and manners of those who had an early part in the settlement of the region called Roxbury.

The first settlement of Roxbury appears to have been in 1630. By the Colony Records, the following grant was made in 1636:

“Ordered
that all the rest of the ground lying betwixt Dorchester Bounds and Boston Bounds shall belong to the Towne of Roxbury easterly of Charles River except the property of the aforesaid townes which they have purchased of particular persons — Roxbury not to extend above eight miles in length from their meeting house.”

The boundary of Roxbury and Dedham was not finally settled till 1697, and then the whole territory of Roxbury was defined. Spring Street was known by that name as early as 1690, and Jamaica Plain by that name in 1667. The town had but one church for a long time. The church was the town and the town the church for many years; and, at one time, all persons were ordered to live within half a mile of the meeting-house. The lower part, having revenue from the upper, was long reluctant in allowing another parish or in aiding it. A curious document, which I will read, will serve to exhibit a savor of the times, and appears to give the best account of the formation of the Second Parish. The document is as follows:

The 3rd of April 1711 The Town mett according to the Adjournment above mentioned, and the Petition of the western part of the Town was read, which was as followeth;

The Humble Address of the neighboring inhabitants belonging to the Congregation at jamaica or the western part of this Town. To their Fathers and Elder Brethren assembled at this General Town meeting in Roxbury.

The Petition of the Western part of the Town. Honoured and Beloved! We whose names are here unto subscribed, the inhabitants of the South west part of this Town of Roxbury, Do hereby humbly address our Christian Fathers, Brethren and Neighbour (inhabiting the more ancient body of this our above named Town,

with a sincere design to give Christian satisfaction unto all or any of you, to whom just occasion of offence was given by any wrong disorderly steps, in our late proceedings, to build a Meeting House and form a distinct assembly for the publick worship of God; for we humbly acknowledge it to be offensive for us first to ask the leave and consent both of the Generall Court and of this Town Assembly and yet before it was fully granted unto us, for us to presume so precipitantly and rashly to enterprize and prosecute such an important affair without the consent of the Honourable Representatives in the General Court, the approbation of our Rev^d and Dear Pastour and the concurrence of our ancient and honourable Mother the Church and Town Assembly, for which just Occasion of Offence to the God of Order, to our Political Fathers to our Rev^d Pastour and to our beloved elder Brethren of this ancient Church, and Christian neighbours now assembled in this Town. We therefore humbly and earnestly implore the pardon of God, in and through the blood and merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, and crave your forgiveness for this our Trespass hoping you will please to compassionate us in our late hour of temptation, to pass by this our offence, and pray to the Lord for us. Whereupon we thus turning again and saying we repent, we cannot but hope to find such a Christian spirit in our Fathers and Brethren as to forgive us, according to the direction and command of our compassionate Redeemer in Luke 17: 3, 4.

Wherefore we are now encouraged to make our humble request to you to grant unto us a dismission to be a distinct Precinct, whereby we may be capable (if the Lord will) to embody into a Church State, to call a minister, and to support him honourably according to the rules of the Gospel. And to this end we are constrained to entreat you to grant us a Precinct Line on the Western side of the River to run close by the School house near the Dwelling of our neighbour John Polley from the South East to the North west to include all those of our Christian neighbours that voluntarily desire it, and have therefore been at charges hitherto with us, who from the s^d line towards Dedham are dwellers amongst us. And in order to prevaile upon you to grant these our requests we humbly crave your leave to propound to your Christian consideration these following arguments.

I. We understand by credible information that about forty years ago when this ancient Meeting-House was about to be built, where it now stands, our neighbouring inhabitants upon the Plain, objecting against it on the account of the foreseen future necessity of another Meeting-House nearer Dedham, as our Town should probably increase thereupon by a Committee of this our Town, an instrument of agreement was made with them (which was seen and read in Capt. Johnson's house after his decease, tho' since unaccountably lost) wherein the ancient inhabitants of the body of this our Town promised in like manner to assist them when they should go about the same worke for themselves, nearer home.

II. As for the season and opportunity we took for our above s^d mismanaged enterprize whether this was the time agreeable to the approving will of God, we dare not assert; but the event proves it to be his permissive and determinate will, else it had not been so far effected. And blessed be God in Christ altho we have morally erred as to our hasty time and manner thereof; yet having obtained his help, notwithstanding our unworthyness, we have been carried through & continue to this day.

III. If it is objected, that we have set up our New too near to the Old meeting House; we humbly Answer the distance between them is something more than 3 miles and 3 quarters. And there are diverse instances of Meeting Houses nearer together by more than a mile and an half in other country Towns not a dozen miles off.

IV. The North Church and Town Assembly in Brantree lovingly forgave the proecipitant and far more encroaching trespass of the South Congregation upon their acknowledgement and freely voted for them a dividing præcinct as exactly halfe way between both Meeting Houses as possible so as to comprehend three or four families more as to number in the South Precinct than they reserved for themselves in the North, but our requested dividing line above specified we shall be gratefully contented with.

V. The above requested dividing line is considerably more than two miles from the old meeting house.

VI. If the dividing line be yet nearer to our Meeting House; it will unavoidably crush our capacity to support a minister

amongst us. And our distance from the antient place of publick worship herebefore hath been a great burthen and oppression to us. Moreover our remoteness from home at the old meeting House for the most part hath forced our people in mercy to their tired natures necessarily to expend that money at the Taverns which otherwise they should have offered in Contribution; wherewith now we can comfortably maintain preaching amongst us.

VII. Now to conclude we cannot but confide in your charity and compassion to us, that you will not triumph over our Expence vexation and ruine; but that you will follow the golden rule of Christ in Mat. 7: 12: to do by us as (if yee were in our case) we would have done to you, and to find you such well wishers to the spiritual and temporal prosperity of us and ours as to be concerned for our now distressed congregation: as the Church of the jews was for that of the Gentiles saying of us as in Cant. 8: 8: we have a little sister and she hath no breasts, what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for? Thus referring it wholly unto the Lord to dispose your hearts as seemeth good in his sight,

We subscribe

At the Western end of Roxbury

Feb 7th 1719

Eliphalet Lyon
john Weld
john Curtiss
John Parry
joseph Parry

Samuel Lyon jun
jsaac Bowen
Ebenezer Lyon
john Fuller
Thomas Mayo
Samuel Lyon
Nath Draper
Timothy Whitney
Ephraim Lyon
Thomas Parry
Daniel Whitney
Samuel Holdridge
john Case

Nath Holmes
Thomas Mory
joseph Weld
john Whitney
Thomas Lyon
Péter Hanchett
William Lyon
john Griggs
joseph Lyon
jonathan Curtice
Thomas Bugbee
james Griggs
jehabod Davis
Ephraim Beacon

The answer to the Petition of the Western inhabitants, entered the 12th May. The same day the Town proceeded to consider of an answer to the Petition of the Western part of the Town. And or-

dered the clerk to enter the following vote as theirs. Answer thereunto, viz: In answer to the Petition it was clearly Voted, that their Precinct line should begin at the line between Dorchester and Roxbury, where the Head-line between the first and second Division strikes upon the afores^d line, so running down to the River, and then the River to be the bounds until it comes to the place where the Road crosseth it by jsaac Bowens from P. Bowens, running as the way goes to the school house, and so to the line between the school land and the land of josiah Holland, and so cross the South end of the great Pond to Brookline. And that the Petitioners, together with all such as dwell on the South side of the afores^d line who are willing to joyn with them, and do embody so as to maintain an able, learned, orthodox minister amongst them, shall be freed from any charge to the minister of the East end of the Town, as also from charge to the repairing and sweeping the meeting house so long as they do maintain a Minister among them, and no longer.

The second parish was formed at Spring Street, and probably included originally all the territory down to about what is now Walkhill Street — perhaps the line would bring it to include all of the Bussey estate. The phraseology used is Jamaica End and Spring Street; this was intended to form for many years the second parish. But in the document just cited the line is carried down to Pond Street.

There is no second parish record extant before 1733-34. But there was a meeting-house in the upper part somewhere about 1712. The original government of the town was called the five men, — afterwards designated as selectmen. And for many years it was the custom to choose them one at a time, the first chosen to be chairman.

In August 1772, a committee of the third or middle parish agreed with the committee of west parish on their boundaries, agreeably to the act of April 1772, under the government of George III.

The second parish on the 11th of December preceding agreed

that a new church might be formed. Jamaica Plain was the third or middle parish, and 1772 was the commencement of its official existence. A house for public worship had been raised in 1769, but William Gordon, the first pastor, was not installed till July 1772. We find curious entries interspersed both in the town and parish records. These give insight into modes existing in former years.

In 1686, the town clerk was directed to transcribe in another book all that is in the old town book, "Unless such things as either are ridiculous or inconvenient." And there are many things in the book, as it stands, that might come under either description. It appears that the selectmen sometimes came to grief; the regulation, by which they were paid yearly ten shillings for their services, being repealed. In the second parish votes were proposed "To have Committee of Great & General Court to pitch upon *spott* for meeting-house." *Scollers* were not allowed to keep *scoole* in the meeting-house without consent. At one time corn is declared a currency. It appears that instead of destroying caterpillars, much prayer was made and fasting at divers places, and the Lord heard them and on a sudden took them away. Turkeys at a very early period were considered as trespassers "as well as other cattle." Strangers were not allowed to stay in any house more than a week without leave of selectmen. Gentlemen were fined for not accepting office. Rewards of one penny were paid for every blackbird presented to the selectmen. And one busy man is paid for killing blackbirds, warning persons out of town, and keeping goodwife Bogle.

It appears that the disposition to interfere with everybody's affairs was prevalent with everybody. Joanna Boyce is recorded as a maide, and goodwife Patchen as a poore old woman, and Mrs. Barker is recorded to have come from Barbadoes, for the gospel's sake. Most of the settlers it was asserted came "not for worldly ends but for spiritual," and it was complacently alleged that the Roxbury people were the best that came over.

And in 1687 our brethren at Jamaco have liberty to provide a *berring* place. At this period the term Jamaco probably intended to cover all above Pond Street.

The first born child in the settlement was John, son of Griffin Crafts, — one of the five men in the early government of the town.

We find the blacksmith is paid 4s 6d for iron work about the cage and meeting-house, — the cage being used probably to confine drunken and disorderly persons or stray Indians; then 2s 6d is paid for physic for Eleazar May's wife; and Nathaniel Davis, constable, is directed to warn Abiel Wood to depart the town of Roxbury in fourteen days or give security. It is marvellous how in so short a time there should be found in a newly settled country so many rated as vagabonds that it would not be safe to entertain. A law was passed forbidding the taking boarders from other towns, and five royal folio pages are required to contain the names of persons warned out of Roxbury.

In 1696, it was voted that the whole town should assist in building a watch-house at Jamaica if necessary. At a late period, within a century, representatives and senators were directed to use their utmost influence to increase travel through Roxbury to Hartford.

We find also that galleries were established in the meeting-house for women and boys, and constables appointed to take charge of both on the Sabbath. At the first parish the constables are all relieved from rates, if one of them will sit in the gallery and keep the boys in order.

In the second parish the boys appear to be what would now be called a hard set, and the girls no better. Four men were at first chosen "to take care of disorderly boys and girls and others at the meeting-house on the Lord's Day; afterwards six were appointed. Mr. Bradford's salary, about the year 1798, was \$333.33 and 3 mills. The pastors of the second parish had, originally, a small salary, — twenty cords of firewood, and all

onmarked money in the contribution box, and, in some cases, were entitled to two annual contributions, and sometimes the pastor is to have the *esial* contributions.

It was voted that there should be but one ordinary in town, and there were the same disputes about licenses and liquor laws that we have in our day. Upon the whole, the impression made is, that the morals, manners and habits were not of any higher grade than in our day, though it was then a strictly church government.

In 1767 we find the views of those on the stage given on political economy. They recommend to lessen the use of superfluities and to prevent importations; they proscribe loaf-sugar; men's and women's *hatts*, and apparel of all sorts; shoes and gold and silver and thread lace; snuff; mustard; clocks and watches; broadcloths, costing more than ten shillings a yard; muffs, furs, tippets and all sorts of *millenary* ware; starch; women's and children's stays; silk velvet and gauze lawns; cambricks and silks of all kinds for garments; lemons and teas of all sorts. Church and State affairs are constantly intermingled, and at town meetings, committees are directed to report after lecture.

There seems to have been a constant struggle from 1727 upwards, on the part of Spring Street and Jamaica to obtain their supposed share of assistance for schools, and, before the division into parishes, for their church.

In 1727, the lower part refused to allow any money for support of school at Spring Street.

In 1769, refused money towards building a school-house at Jamaica, so called, to accommodate the schooling of their children there.

In 1771, there was a long dispute about help to maintain a school at Spring Street.

In 1733, refused anything to maintain a minister or repair meeting-house in the upper or westerly part, or even to repair

two pews that were damaged and destroyed. A curious regulation was at this time made, that those who *set* by the windows should mend all the broken glass. Pew was, in the early records, generally spelt *pue*, and they vote that certain parts of the meeting-house shall be *pued*. In short, Lower Roxbury, by its numbers, had uncontrolled power, and in all human governments where there is uncontrolled power, — power uncontrolled by constitution or law, — there will be tyranny.

There is no evidence that the general mode of spelling at the time was widely different from our own, for in the Spring Street, or second parish, pew is spelt correctly, and I have known of a graduate of Harvard College, who, after graduating was elected a Town Clerk, who always spelt cow with a k. But it is singular that persons who could so grossly misspell should be made clerks.

In 1770, the lower part refused to give the west end any of the interest of school money.

In December 1787, the town generously voted ten pounds out of the town treasury, in addition to ten pounds granted in 1771, to support two schools in that part of the town called Canterbury, to be drawn when the school-houses are built.

One of these school-houses was at the confluence of Bourne and Canterbury streets, and has recently been removed; the other was on Poplar Street, and was condemned the first year of our town government, and taken down in a wretchedly dilapidated condition.

In 1822, the town opposed road from Spring Street to Dedham, and constantly opposed road from Jamaica Plain to Dorchester.

In 1790, there were at school on Jamaica Plain . . . . .	. 80
Upper school at Jamaica Plain, so called . . . . .	. 20
At Spring Street . . . . .	. 37

We find, also, in the records, votes indicating the sentiments of the town on the political questions of the day.

May 22, 1776, it is recorded: "If the Honorable Congress should declare independence, they vote that they solemnly engage with their lives and fortunes to support them in their measures."

On Sunday after the Declaration of Independence was received we find it was read, and recorded at length in the records of the second parish.

May 27, 1777, Samuel Williams as a person firmly attached to the American cause, was chosen in town meeting to procure evidence of the inimical dispositions of any person in the town.

In 1779, it was voted, "If any inhabitants of the Town shall presume to sell any article at any higher rate than established by the Town Committee, he shall receive that severest of all temporal punishments, the displeasure and contempt of the people, and upon conviction of a 2d offence before the Committee, shall have his name published in the several Boston Newspapers at the expense of the town, as a pest of society and unworthy the confidence and esteem of mankind." The above was recorded as voted by a very large majority.

There is a still more curious record in the shape of instructions to Mr. Thomas Clarke, the representative in the Great and General Court from Roxbury, in which he is instructed in 1786, after Independence and after peace, as follows:

To Mr. Thomas Clark, Representative of the Town of Roxbury:

SIR: Although your constituents repose the fullest confidence in your Integrity and Abilities, yet it may not be inexpedient on some momentous occasions that they express to you their sentiments and expectations. Many complaints have of late prevailed from the pernicious practice of the law in this Commonwealth, and that the modern practice of the profession is such as tends rather to the embarrassment, perplexity, and expence of the People, than any real advantage or furtherance of their prosperity and happiness. We conceive that an easy and equitable administration of Justice is highly essential to the Peace and happiness of the People, but we by no means apprehend that such an administration

depends on a numerous order of Practitioners, voluminous Laws or great art and address, which are perhaps often displayed to screen and serve a bad cause, as to defend a good one; and as all Constitutions, Laws and Establishments have, or ought to have, the good of the People for their ultimate object, and all practice should be conformable thereto. We think proper to Instruct you, and we do hereby instruct you to use your utmost endeavors in the next Session of the General Court, to have a full investigation of the subject, and to place the administration of Civil Justice in this Commonwealth, on that safe, easy, and equitable basis, which the preservation of Peace and good order, connected with the prosperity and happiness of the People, mark as the model of wisdom in a Free Republick, observing that you keep within the bounds of the Constitution. If this can be effected by proper checks and restraints on the Practitioners of the Law, we do not insist on your exertions to endeavor an annihilation of the order, but if upon investigation, it should appear more conducive to the happiness of the People, that the order be annihilated, you will act conformably; for it is much better that a few suffer than that the whole sink beneath oppression.

You will also endeavor in this Event that such arrangements are adopted, as will effectually secure all proceedings already had since the Settlement of the Country, as well as afford an easy and safe mode of procedure in future, nor do we conceive this a very difficult task, under the Smiles of Heaven, which we implore in your aid:

In the name and behalf and by order of the Inhabitants of the Town of Roxbury in Town meeting legally warned and assembled on Monday, May, 1, 1786.

(Signed)

JOHN READ, *Moderator.*

In September, 1814, by vote the town unanimously engage, "That the Inhabitants of the Town of Roxbury, will by manual labor, pecuniary contributions, & military services, do whatever the Executive of the Commonwealth shall require to put the State of Massachusetts in a proper posture of defence."

These are some of the doings of the town of Roxbury, of which we once formed a part, in the days that have passed. The men of those days, doubtless, performed their parts after their fashion,—some well, some ill, some indifferently,—as we are now performing our parts in the great, the incomprehensible drama we call life.

Mr. Ellis, in the History of Roxbury, has given elaborate and well-drawn characters of several men distinguished in the times that are gone. Thomas Dudley was among those who filled a large space as a politician, and who was Governor and Deputy-Governor at an early period in our colonial existence, and the name of John Eliot, a pure-hearted philanthropist, called the Apostle, should be familiar to all. The former seems to have possessed all the attributes of a sturdy puritan,—a class of people who seem never to be happy except they have somebody to quarrel with, or some one to oppress. Dudley was active, enterprising, and always looking sharply after his own immediate personal interests, demanding toleration for his own insensible and frequently absurd religious opinions, and strangely exhibiting fierce intolerance of the opinions of others; one of those who boasted that they had risked life for their religion, yet when in power could refuse toleration to others.

The Apostle, on the other hand, seems to have passed a life of persevering virtue, without indication of the illiberality of the age,—striving with means not abundant, to encourage all by his earnest, active benevolence, and at the end of his life he endowed Roxbury, and especially this portion with lands, that have been valuable, and we are to this day enjoying the benefit of his bounty. His life was eminently useful—not a failure, though Mr. Ellis very justly intimates that one of his gracious and kind efforts was. He translated the Bible into the Indian language, and with a heart full of kindness towards the Aborigines, devoted his energies, which were great, to their civilization. In this he failed, as the good Las Casas, under Spanish

rule, had failed before him. Both are to be commended for making the experiment; if it had never been tried, the result never could have been known, and we should not have had evidence of its futility. Ages ago, according to Æsop, an attempt was made to wash the Blackamoor white, but the Blackamoor died under the operation. Experiments of a similar kind are now on trial, to fail, as all others have failed heretofore. The determinations of the first great cause cannot be overturned — set aside, by man or devil. Satan tried the first experiment. That failed; as all experiments must, when attempts are made to counteract the intentions, resist the ordinances, or reverse the decrees of the Almighty.

It may not be inopportune to speak of one who bore an important part in the municipal history of Roxbury at a much later period. The Hon. Ebenezer Seaver at one time represented the district in which Roxbury was, in the Congress of the United States, and for thirty years was one of the Selectmen of Roxbury, and the Chairman of the Board for many years, until he declined its duties on account of advancing age. He was educated at Harvard College, but preferred agriculture to any profession, and devoted his life to that and to the service of his fellow-citizens, in the management of their municipal affairs. He was a man of sense, firmness and integrity, just in his action, never faltering in what he esteemed right, nor hesitating to denounce what he considered wrong, careful of the public interest, which he cherished more than his own. The public gave him unlimited confidence, in spite of grave difference in opinions; his own opinions he avowed and maintained, however much they might differ from others, but standing by them, unlike Dudley, was tolerant of the opinions of others, not obtrusive of his own; but asking that for himself which he conceded to others, granting to all competent to form an opinion the same privilege he claimed for himself. He enjoyed the luxury of personal independence to its fullest extent; his actions he held

were of consequence to others only so far as they were affected by them. His belief was his own: that no one could dictate, and, whatever it might be, into it no one had a right to inquire. He who holds opinions different from his neighbors, if his opinions are widely wrong, should be compassionated, not persecuted. Belief is a thing beyond the mind's control; the same evidence that satisfies one, brings no conviction to the mind of another. But, Mr. Seaver lost nothing with the men of his day by the openness of his character, or by the fearlessness which he always presented; all recognized his integrity, and the majority seldom failed to acknowledge his value as a public servant. The want of courage in avowing opinions is a vice of our times; too many conceal their opinions when not in harmony with the mass, and thereby not unfrequently aid the mass in perpetuating abuses. He who is capable of forming an opinion, but forsaking manhood and renegade from principle, falters from fear or interest, either in politics or religion, acting contrary to his own deliberate judgment, in opposition to his own well-considered convictions, is a traitor to himself, his country and his God.

Our venerable friend, Michael Whittemore, now present at the age of eighty-five, rich in the respect of his fellow-citizens, was the colleague of Mr. Seaver. Mr. Whittemore and Mr. Judson Chapin were the only ones living who had represented this part of the town in the Board of Selectmen under old Roxbury, at the time of the division. Mr. Chapin served on the Board for six years after the division, and it is with great pleasure I bear cordial testimony to his carefulness, prudence and good judgment as a servant of the public.

Why the part of the town now called Jamaica Plain was designated as Jamaica, it is impossible to tell. I venture the conjecture that the Indian name of the place had a similar sound. The spelling it *Jamaco* at times, seems to warrant this suggestion.

On the records it is sometimes called *Jamaco*, sometimes *Jameica*, sometimes Jamaica, and sometimes Jamaica End; not often till after 1700, as we now write it. Various suppositions have been made heretofore, but there is no foundation for the suppositions, not even respectable tradition. The pond was called the Great Pond in the early records, and undoubtedly at comparatively late period drew its present name from Jamaica Plain. The origin of names to places, or streets, is often obscure. The region of Canterbury Street bore the name of Canterbury District for a great length of time, but though I have examined many elderly persons, I cannot find the shade of a tradition as to its origin.

In a part of the record, Mr. Williams and Mr. Seaver, by vote of the town, are asked to put in writing what they would fence Long Crouch for.

It would much puzzle the present fathers of the town, and indeed would require considerable research to discover that Seaver Street was Long Crouch. It was known fifty years ago by the name of Long Crotch, and was so designated till called after the Hon. Ebenezer Seaver.

Forest Hills Street was called Jubes Lane within the memory of many, and the tradition is that it was called after an old negro that lived thereon many years ago. This is correct. An obscure record informs us that the negro's name was Jupiter; on the town books it was called Jupiter's Lane, and in the abbreviated and common language it was corrupted into Jube's Lane, and poor Jupiter was deprived of his compliment. Perkins Street, as early as 1700, was known as Connecticut Lane, laid out in 1727, and extended in 1762; why called Connecticut Lane, it is impossible to ascertain.

On the 6th May, 1795, there was an article in the town warrant to see if town would call town meeting in the middle precinct, that was Jamaica Plain, the house was polled and decided in negative.

Since the incorporation, in 1636, many attempts were made to separate what is now West Roxbury from the original town of Roxbury.

The first attempt was as early as 1706, — then Joseph Weld and forty-four others — there being about fifty families at that time, (prayed) petitioned that the West part, commonly called Jamaica End and Spring Street, might be made into a separate precinct.

The second attempt was made in 1778, and then it was contemplated taking the second and third parishes, which then comprised, with some exception, what is now West Roxbury.

The record shows that June 9th, 1777, at a meeting of the second precinct in Roxbury, lawfully assembled, it was voted, That the inhabitants of this precinct join with the inhabitants of the third precinct in this town to present a petition to the Great and General Court, *setting fourth* the situation of said Town, and the difficulty in attending Town meetings, and pray the Honorable Court to set *of* and incorporate said two precincts or parishes into one district and separate district by the name of Washington, and it past in the affirmative unanimously.

Deacon David Weld appointed a Committee to carry above vote into effect.

The next attempt, of which I can find any record, was in May, 1817, fifty years after. A Committee, consisting of David S. Greenough, Jr., Joseph Curtis, John Prince and Ward N. Boylston was appointed on Jamaica Plain. Mr. Boylston was understood to be the principal mover.

Their report presents a curious contrast to the expenditures of the present day. The whole amount of tax (paid) assessed upon the then whole territory of Roxbury was \$7708.88, of which the second parish paid \$714.85, and the third or Jamaica Plain parish, paid \$1785.63, amounting to \$2500.48, for what is now West Roxbury.

The Committee go into calculation to show that an annual

saving of \$352.48 would be made by a separation. It does not appear that the attempt at separation led to anything more than reports in the year 1817. A fuller report was made in 1818 by the same Committee, with the exception of Mr. Greenough; no favorable result was produced by the exertions at this period, though I am told the matter caused much excitement.

In 1838, another attempt at division was made, in which the late General William H. Sumner and Mr. Bussey were prominent, and Messrs. Jos. Curtis, Francis C. Head and David S. Greenough were the Committee of the third parish.

The principal point made was, that the third parish paid the preceding year, in taxes, the sum of \$4810.94, \$2219.94 of which (they say) was expended exclusively for the benefit of others. It is alleged this last amount is expended for things in the first parish, or Roxbury proper, as it is sometimes called, with which they have no concern, paving and lighting streets, supporting a Town watch, so called, though their services are confined to Lower Roxbury exclusively. The report is elaborate, and the Committee say "no one can avoid being struck with the enormous proportion of the town expenses for purposes, the benefits of which are exclusively confined to the first parish.

The positions taken were generally correct, and there is little doubt but that the third parish was a source of revenue to the first for at least thirty years before the final division.

In February 1843, another attempt at separation was made which brought forth strong opposition, from Lower Roxbury, which had become by that time deeply interested in retaining so profitable a source of revenue as the third parish.

A large and able committee selected from all parts of the town, for neither second or third parish were then united, were arranged in opposition to separation. The Committee were authorized to employ counsel and summon witnesses to resist the division.

In the report of the Jamaica Plain Committee of 1843, signed

by Messrs. S. G. Goodrich and Stephen M. Weld, they say "There is one other consideration that doubtless lies at the heart of the petitioners, and may as well be avowed. They feel that they are controlled by a majority, thickly settled at one extremity of the Town. Imputing no evil design, no ungenerous feeling to any one, they still think that they are in a state of practical servitude. They wish to enjoy that quickening impulse which belongs to independence; that efficiency which springs from unity; and, under these influences, they hope, nay, expect, if they succeed in their prayer, to see a vigor, life and adaption brought to bear on their interests, which cannot exist while they are but a remote fragment of a large town."

The petition preferred at this time was not granted.

In 1844, another new petition was presented which had at its head that honored patriarch, Ebenezer Seaver. A Committee of the lower part in a report, assume to decide what is for the benefit of the upper part.

Though Jamaica Plain at this time appears to be a unit, the promises to the western part produced there some division of sentiment. At the western part the voters stood fifty-seven in favor, to thirty-one against separation.

In February, 1844, an able Committee, principally from the first parish or lower Roxbury, were appointed to appear before the Legislature and oppose division, and were successful in their opposition.

In 1845, the inhabitants of Jamaica Plain, intending to prefer fresh petition, their opponents resorted to a step which it was supposed would forever prevent separation, and petitioned for a city charter, and Roxbury voted in November, 1845, that it would not oppose division, but in the month of December, following, reversed the decision by a very large majority.

I find a report without date, but which probably was made in 1845 or 1846, signed by Messrs. D. S. Greenough, Moses Williams and Joshua Seaver, in which the propriety of a city char-

ter is discussed, concluding with recommending the following vote:

Voted, That it is not expedient at present to petition for a city charter.

This appears to be a minority report, the majority report being in favor of a city charter, which was obtained in 1846. It is somewhat remarkable, but Mr. Austin was not aware of the existence of the documents and reports from which he has quoted in 1851. They were given to him in 1862 by Colonel Greenough. They would have been of value in carrying the division in 1851, but no one of the gentlemen informed him of the existence of them; so he derived no benefit therefrom.

The obtaining a city charter was supposed to be an effectual bar to the wishes of those who desired separation, and the charter was obtained with that view, but it greatly increased the desire for a division.

At the close of the year 1850 earnest expressions of the desire of separation from the city proper of Roxbury arose in the second and third parishes. By some it was considered impossible to effect a separation, as the annexation to a city was not uncommon but division from a city had never been known.

In all matters relating to my own connection with the division, or management of town affairs after division, I shall use all plainness of speech, and what I state as matters of fact in the connection it will not be fair to consider as said in a spirit of egotism. And I shall speak the more plainly as there are many new comers who have been prejudiced, and have not been rightly apprised of the past.

Mr. Austin lived at a remote part of Roxbury, and had but recently become a citizen in 1850. Earnest appeals were made to him to assist in dividing what is now West Roxbury from Roxbury city by interested gentlemen of Jamaica Plain, and large pecuniary reward was held out. He declined to act for compensation; but tendered his personal and professional servi-

ces without wishing or expecting any remuneration, except the satisfaction of gratifying his fellow-citizens in what appeared to be so much for their advantage. At the first consultation, at a house within view of this building, he assured those assembled that success should follow if the matter were left to his guidance. One of those most interested said that he could not sell his land whilst remaining under city government, that people would not emigrate from Boston to a city, and that as he had large unproductive estates that without the division he would be ruined. Mr. Austin told those assembled that the petition could not be carried on the ground of unequal taxation, as taxation always had its inequalities, but on principles of far higher importance. He told them they had the right to administer their own affairs in their own way whenever they could shew that the majority of the petitioners owned the territory, and were desirous of exercising authority over what was their own; the true ground to put division on was that they had sufficient territory, sufficient population for a town, and that owning the soil they had an inherent right to manage their own affairs in their own way; and that the great point was to establish unity. This unity was carried under his direction; and about five, certainly not ten, in the whole territory that sought the boon of self-government but what became petitioners for a division. He declined to put forward any argument as to the difference of taxation. It was quite possible, he said, that the taxes might be of equally high rate after a division; but the real point was, if a town by themselves, they who paid the tax could have the benefit of directing the expenditure, and not be in the hands of those who had numerical advantage, and might or might not do them justice.

The opponents of division, in 1851, in Roxbury proper were able, persevering to obstinacy, and threatened to leave no stone unturned to kill the petition, and in their warmth promised themselves the Governor's veto. They succeeded in postponing the hearing till a late day in the session, and, after persevering

efforts against the bill generally, offered to assent to the Charter, if the petitioners would make Green Street the line, leaving all below that line in the City.

Mr. Austin replied he would not sacrifice friends in that quarter, and that he intended to carry off all of the second and third parish. The next proposition was to take a large portion at the East up to Walkhill Street, with a plausible argument that Forest Hills Cemetery should be under Roxbury's jurisdiction. All the amendments of the opponents were defeated, and after five months' labor the bill passed May 24, 1851, the last day of the session. The contest being the hardest ever known in the Legislature, excepting that of Warren Bridge, which was prolonged several years.

Mr. Choate and Mr. Austin were the counsel of the petitioners. Mr. D. A. Simmons and Mr. J. J. Clarke for the opponents of Division.

The whole of Mr. Choate's argument was taken down in short-hand, and published in a pamphlet. I give the following extracts therefrom:

"I am sure you will hardly suspect me, at this time of night, of a desire to declaim; but it is hardly extravagant to say that this bill which you are asked to pass will be received like another Declaration of Independence. The ringing of bells and the firing of bonfires will exhibit the feeling that exists. This strength and unanimity of feeling I regard as very high evidence that the interests of these persons will be promoted by this act: it is evidence that there are evils which they feel, and that the separation will be the remedy.

"But the presumption is, that a wide spread discontent is well grounded. And I think it ought to serve — instead of entering into a history of the city government — that it ought to serve for proof that these gentlemen who have lived under this action, who have summered it and wintered it, who represent a community that concurs that they have felt it practically to work

unfavorably to them,— I trust you will receive that as proof that they will derive inestimable benefits from this proposed separation.”

“ Mr. Choate continues: Of course, gentlemen, as I was just having the honor to say, the petitioners do not rely upon the strength or unanimity of their own wishes in their behalf as evidence of the evils they feel and the relief they crave. They undertake to point those evils out. And they find, to begin with, the source of them all just where the citizens of just and free governments find the source of all social and political evil, in this: that they are deprived of the great gift of self government in its best form. The grand and comprehensive remedy they seek, then, gentlemen, is to make a more complete approach, by your aid, to self government; and not only a more complete self government, but a species of self government in which the will of the people shall be more certainly, more directly and more influentially applied to the management of their own affairs. That is the grand comprehensive evil of which we complain.

“ The evil which we labor under is two-fold. This locality (I mean upper Roxbury) is governed, this day, not by itself, but by lower Roxbury, and not only that, by a city government, an objectionable form of government to agricultural communities. In the first place, we are governed, this day, by other men. I mean to say, gentlemen, if lower Roxbury chooses to elect this man or that man, defeat this man or that man, carry this measure or that measure, etc., it can do it, and we are powerless in their hands. The numbers are there.”

The only portion of Mr. Austin's opening argument preserved is, what was written out at the request of some citizens who desired to call attention to the town. It was published in the *Morning Post*, and is as follows:

“ Mr. Chairman — Attached as our agricultural territory is to Roxbury city, we are as Somerville was before its separation from Charles-

town,—like a stagnant lake, its waters unruffled and unrefreshed by the purifying influence of the western breeze.

“Sir, if your committee could see our territory, as I see it now, revived in the recollections of a happy boyhood — if they could see it as I have daily seen it for the last five years, I would not argue this question one minute — argument would be superfluous. Nature itself has entered its protestation against that act of legislation that made it a city. It is a territory full of rural beauty — from my door-stone in midwinter have I seen hundreds of robins, happy in the branches of my cedars. Are these the denizens of a city? Is it necessary to have a police from Lower Roxbury, to protect or restrain them? From my chamber this morning I cast my eye over hills covered with pines that have been undisturbed for ages, and which may remain for ages yet to come,— over a broad meadow, at which, in its periodical emigrations, the webfooted wayfarer of the upper deep seeks a temporary resting place, in which the bittern sounds its cry — from which the lark soars to heaven — beyond dark forests are seen, apparently boundless, where the birds of the air career undisturbed — undisturbed? intrepid as when they flew at Eden!

“Within our borders are ravines as wild as any among the recesses of New Hampshire — as romantic as any that can be found among the hills of our own Berkshire: a region full of living beauty — that might awake, in the breast of a politician, if that were possible, something of poetic ardor. A territory full of memorable beauty, replete with scenes that might afford to another Pope new sources of mellifluous inspiration — here are retreats where the directing mind of another Chatham might in tranquillity form plans for the salvation of a land — solitudes sublime, where some future historian, in repose, may record, in magnificent periods, the rise and fall of magnificent empire.

“And is it such a territory as this, that you would condemn to the vices and miseries—the miseries and vices of a city government? We trust not, sir. We confidently hope — we courageously believe that the wrong originally practised, you will generously redress.

“I ask this boon then of you in the name of five hundred voters, within this territory, of all political parties — united and combined — perhaps united and combined in nothing else, but unanimous in this; I ask it in the name of over three thousand inhabitants living within our borders — at all periods of life, from lisping infancy to declining age.”

Mr. Austin, in his general argument, showed that division would be beneficial to West Roxbury and not injurious to the

city; and that there was no instance on record where either party was injured, and no instance where the new town did not increase and the old one enjoy greater prosperity by division, besides strongly urging the positions which he originally suggested.

It was necessary to present to the Legislature itself, in a brief pamphlet, the general grounds assumed in the opening argument, as but few were present when it was delivered.

I quote a portion of the pamphlet as follows: "The petitioners claiming generally to be owners and occupiers of this agricultural territory allege, and they think with manifest truth, that there is no necessity that the city form of government should be extended over them. They claim that they possess sufficient capacity to manage their own affairs, with economy, and more to their satisfaction than it is possible to have them managed by those who now control them.

"The petitioners claim, that owning and occupying the territory which they pray to have set off, that the custody, guardianship and advancement thereof, of right belongs to them, and they are disposed to think this position impregnable. Having the capacity of self government, being respectable in territory and in numbers, there would seem to be little reason why they should not be permitted to enjoy their own, in the way and manner most satisfactory to themselves."

And it will be perceived by the concluding clause of the report of the majority of the Legislative Committee that the position was therein maintained by the Committees, and afterwards by the Legislature of 1851. The Committee say: "But here is an abundant territory for a large town, of a rural description, beautiful sites for country residences, and farming, containing three thousand inhabitants, who nearly all desire a separation, who are entirely competent, and wish to govern themselves; and your committee, believing that this division can be made without injury to either party, ask leave to report the subjoined Bill and recommend its passage."

Roxbury, in 1851, had six Representatives in the Legislature: four were from the city proper, who were fiercely opposed to the division,—two representing this portion; Messrs. Theodore Dunn and Stephen M. Allen gave their earnest support, and were untiring in their efforts to produce the result desired.

The first town meeting was held at Taft's Tavern, June 3, 1851, under a warrant issued by Dr. Luther M. Harris. Our respected and venerable citizen, Moses Williams, Esq., was unanimously chosen Moderator; our present excellent Mr. Maccarty, Town Clerk; and Mr. E. M. Dudley, Collector and Treasurer, which offices the two last-mentioned gentlemen have held respectively to the present time, with great acceptance.

Messrs. Cornelius Cowing, George Brown, Stephen M. Allen, Theodore Dunn, and Arthur W. Austin, were chosen Selectmen; and the first official act of the Selectmen was to grant permission to Mr. Pratt and others to furnish fire-works.

On the evening of organization, June 3, West Roxbury was a Town, and the people met in congratulation; there was the roar of cannon, fire-works on the plain, and bonfires on the hills.

By effecting the incorporation, Mr. Austin considered he had conferred benefit on every landholder, and probably on every citizen. A committee of those who had been most active, and who possessed the best knowledge of his exertions, addressed a letter, July 26, 1851, to Mr. Austin, which I give, with his reply.

WEST ROXBURY, July 23d, 1851.

ARTHUR W. AUSTIN, Esq.,

Dear Sir,—Your fellow-townsmen are impressed with the belief, that their separation from the City of Roxbury, and their incorporation as an independent town, will greatly promote both their interest and their happiness. Efforts to bring about the same result have been made at different times, in former years, but without success.

For the consummation of their wishes, at the last session of the Legislature, they feel mainly indebted to you, for your wise, energetic, and untiring efforts; and they feel the more obliged, because they know, that all these efforts were made to establish our common rights, and without the expectation, or desire, of any pecuniary reward.

Your labors, however, were intense, long continued, and successful; and your fellow-townsmen, grateful for the favors you have been mainly instrumental in conferring on them, and fully sensible of your arduous efforts in their behalf, have deposited the sum of \$800 to your credit in the Boston Bank.

This sum they hope you may invest in some manner agreeable to yourself, and in such a way that it may occasionally remind you of the kind and grateful feelings entertained towards you by all the citizens of the new town of West Roxbury, in whose behalf, we subscribe ourselves,

Respectfully and truly, your friends,

MOSES WILLIAMS,
STEPHEN M. WELD,
D. S. GREENOUGH,
J. H. CURTIS.

(Copy)

(Copy answer, 1851.)

WEST ROXBURY, July 26, 1851.

MESSRS. MOSES WILLIAMS, STEPHEN M. WELD, DAVID S. GREENOUGH, and J. H. CURTIS, Esquires.

GENTLEMEN,—Your obliging favor of the 23d inst. was received this morning. For the kind expressions and for the liberal token of my townsmen's kindness communicated therein, please receive my warmest acknowledgments.

The spirit in which their generous testimonial is conferred is fully appreciated by me; though the satisfaction, at having in some degree contributed to gratify the long cherished but long

delayed wishes of my fellow-townsmen was complete without the substantial memorial prompted by their kindness.

I have seen their gratification in their happy faces, and have felt it in their gratulating hands. There are few moments in life more satisfactory than when we feel that we have been instrumental in promoting the interest and happiness of our friends and neighbors; and the assurance of the satisfaction of an entire township, like ours, ought to satisfy any reasonable ambition.

The reminiscences connected with our late efforts, and the friendships formed in consequence, must always be cherished as amongst the most valuable of my life; and at the earliest convenient opportunity, such disposition of the munificence of my fellow-townsmen shall be made that I shall not be occasionally but always reminded of their regardful and generous spirit.

To you, personally, gentlemen, I am under the deepest obligations for confidence reposed and encouragement given during our late contest, and that by you and all of our townsmen,—the 24th of May—the day of the independence of our newly created republic—may be forever marked with a white stone is the constant wish and prayer of your faithful and obliged friend,

ARTHUR W. AUSTIN,
of West Roxbury.

As reports have been made by those who know better that the division was carried by money, I take pleasure in stating that we bought not our way; it was carried by its own merits, aided by the force of a determined will. In the course of the summer, General Dearborn died; he had been Mayor a part of the year over us, while we were part of the city; though opposed to division, he had always treated the matter fairly. Mr. Austin will repeat a brief eulogy from the Town record as it exhibits the respect of Mr. Austin to a life-long political opponent and has not had much publicity.

GENTLEMEN OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN,—I should have called you together earlier, had I not been aware that some of you were necessarily absent. Since our last regular meeting, Providence has removed from this earthly scene one whose relations have been intimate with our territory, and who has held situations therein which have claimed for him, and entitled him to our respect. The manly form—the dignified presence—the agreeable address—the pleasant colloquial powers of General Dearborn have passed away.

“Under the circumstances of our late connection, it seems to me fitting that our Board should take some public notice of one whose life has been so valuable, and inscribe to him some tribute in our records.

“General Dearborn was a true patriot, from patriotic stock; with him ‘Our country, however bounded,’ was not an artificial sentiment, but a reality. As a statesman, his views were never sectional and never narrow. Called early to situations of responsibility and trust, he met the requisitions with signal faithfulness and ability. In his characteristics there was nothing selfish, interested, or mercenary; having a value in himself, that which was outward did not seem to affect him. I have said he was a true patriot—he was a true man; preserving his equanimity amid the propitious or adverse. His generous hospitality, his liberal courtesies, when the ability was perfect, were only surpassed by the cheerfulness and dignity with which he so conformed, as almost to seem to welcome the circumstances of a lessened fortune.

“As a politician, he was frank, open and decided; capable of forming, he acted up to the courage of his opinions.

“Non-committalism—the offspring of craft, but the scorn of manliness—made no part of his natural or acquired constitution. And if openness and frankness did not always acquire for him the currency he deserved, it was the fault of others, and not of himself. His hours of leisure were not hours of idle-

ness, but his time was always devoted to that which might be valuable and useful to others.

"Of a mind imaginative and reflective, at all times of his life he was rather before than behind his age; and was possessed of many qualities that claim respect, and of some that challenge admiration.

"It has been my fortune, through almost the whole of my life, to be ranked amongst the political antagonists of General Dearborn; but I have never heard his integrity in any quarter questioned or impeached, or anything advanced in derogation of his claim to entire personal respect.

"With regard to our particular territory, he was always liberally disposed, and, in his official character, ever ready to do us justice.

"We have been indebted to General Dearborn, in common with the world, for much of advancement in the valuable and pleasing sciences of agriculture and horticulture; both of which have been improved by his skill, and adorned by his pen. He has thus passed a life useful, valuable and honorable, leaving around us many grateful memorials of his services and his virtues."

At the argument before the legislative committee in 1851, it was maintained that West Roxbury, if incorporated, would advance in all particulars; but the result has far exceeded the predictions.

It is proper to present some statistical facts to warrant the above assertion.

By the census of 1850, what is now West Roxbury had 3,304 inhabitants; by the census of 1855, 4,812,—an increase of more than 45 per cent in five years. The United States census of 1860 cannot be depended on; but, by the census of 1865, the number of inhabitants was 6,912, and there were 647 dwelling-houses in 1855, and 1,044 in 1865. The increase

of inhabitants from 1855 to 1865 was over 42 per cent, and in fifteen years from 1850 the population more than doubled.

The ordinary calculation is from 22 to 25 per cent in ten years; and the large percentage above exhibited is unexampled in a place long settled.

For the sixteen years that Roxbury existed a city, and West Roxbury a town, the annual rate of taxation in the city averaged \$11.03; in West Roxbury, \$7.80. The debt of West Roxbury is now \$35,000, and the city debt amounted in the same time to \$991,456, nearly a million of dollars; and it may further be observed that our rate was on a low or moderate valuation, and the city at a high valuation.

... Indeed, I have heretofore made calculations that, owing to the difference in valuation, the tax at the city was really twice that of our town. The value of our act of incorporation is exhibited by the remarkable increase in population within the first few years of our existence as a town. And as the town never has been stinted, and the taxes, generally speaking, not burdensome, the benefit of managing our own affairs in our own way is manifest.

The first year, 1852, the amount raised was	.	.	.	.	\$18,250
in 1853	"	"	"	.	22,200
" 1854	"	"	"	.	24,100
" 1855	"	"	"	.	28,600

The amount appropriated in some measure keeping pace with the growth of the town.

The town grant this year is	.	.	.	.	\$87,875 00
State tax	.	.	.	.	19,580 00
County	.	.	.	.	8,282 57
					<u>\$115,737 57</u>

Over the two last items, the town has not control. The County tax is more than twice as much as in 1852, and the State more than ten times as much.

In 1852, the rate in West Roxbury was \$4.15 in the thousand, and the rate was never higher than \$6.40 till after 1860.

This year the rate is \$9.40, and perhaps the valuation higher than in former years.

Mr Austin was Chairman of the Board of Selectmen for the first eight years of the town government. He was elected Selectman twice, after publicly declining,—twice unanimously, and there was no serious contest, except the year 1855, against the Know-Nothing party, when he was chosen by a vote of nearly three to one: and Mr. Austin, the last time he suffered himself to be a candidate for national office, had a majority over both the Republican and Know-Nothing parties. These facts are mentioned in justice to the people of West Roxbury, who, as a body, have always cordially sustained him.

The first year was one of particular importance, on account of the organization of the town government; and the Board of Selectmen were intrusted with a very delicate matter,—the adjustment of financial affairs with the City of Roxbury, which adjustment was satisfactorily made,—the Division Committee saying, in the concluding paragraph of their report: “Your committee state, as a matter of congratulation, in the negotiations, thus far an amicable and just spirit has been evinced, creditable to both city and town, and prophetic of the friendly relations of the future.” The committee was thanked by vote of the town. By this adjustment, in February 1852, after paying all our expenses of the year preceding, we had in the treasury over \$7,000 and the City of Roxbury scrip for \$11,765.95, which has since been redeemed.

It is proper to remark that nothing was charged for services, though the responsible and laborious duty of drafting and preparing all the important instruments and deeds necessary to the

settlement of affairs with Roxbury devolved on the chairman. In 1852 a portion of Dedham was annexed to West Roxbury, by an act of the legislature, and in 1852 and 1853 the road was built leading through Morton Street to Dorchester.

And in the same year, there was an excited discussion on the subject of a Town House, and the chief burden of defeating it then was thrown upon the Chairman. It was proposed to build it in the neighborhood of Taft's Tavern, but such were the reasons offered in opposition, that the citizens of the western part of the town cheerfully acquiesced in the reasons presented. Mr. Austin, in 1859, at the conclusion of the Selectmen's report, thus took leave of municipal affairs :

FELLOW-CITIZENS: The chairman now retires from the administration of your affairs, having devoted more than the leisure of the past eight years to what he has supposed your welfare. He is fully sensible that your uninterrupted confidence, testified by repeated annual election, has given coherence and effect to his efforts for your advancement.

Amid all the heats and fluctuations of party during the time he has served, he has uniformly enjoyed your confidence and been sustained by your approbation, — a fact creditable alike to the elector and the elected; and it is with justifiable and pleasurable pride that he reflects upon the unexampled prosperity of the town since its incorporation. The office he has held has not by any means been a sinecure, but the retrospect will be ever grateful, cheered as it will be with the belief that his endeavors to promote the interests of his fellow-citizens have not been altogether in vain.

At the annual meeting in 1859, the following votes were passed with only one dissenting voice, and that of a clergyman :

Resolved: That the thanks of the people of West Roxbury be presented to Arthur W. Austin, Esq., for his long and arduous services as Chairman of their Selectmen, for his fidelity and constant attention in defending their legal rights, and in what-

ever he considered would most promote the welfare and prosperity of the town.

Resolved, That the people of West Roxbury will always retain a grateful remembrance of said faithful services, and that their best wishes attend Mr. Austin in his retirement from the office he has filled during a period of eight years in so successful and satisfactory a manner.

Though taken by surprise, Mr. Austin's reply was such that it proved agreeable even to his political opponents. He said his heart was full, would have been too full, but for the momentary opposition, for which he was thankful; that in the administration of municipal affairs, he might have committed errors, as all were liable to errors, that he was not conscious of any, certainly no material errors had been committed, but if there had been, as his services had been protracted, laborious and gratuitous, it might not be unbecoming Christian charity to throw its mantle over him. He ended with hearty wishes of happiness and prosperity to all the citizens of West Roxbury.

Mr. Head succeeded as chairman, and after him came the rule of party, of which I do not now propose to speak.

In the spring of 1852, after the exciting discussion about the Town House, the Selectmen unanimously agreed to change the name of Centre to Austin Street. Centre Street was an unmeaning term — it was not the centre of the town — but was a continuation of Centre Street, Roxbury. It was difficult for a stranger to tell where Roxbury ended, and where West Roxbury began; and the town having received a new designation, all the title deeds would read as if the estates were on Centre Street, Roxbury. It is now, and has been for a long time, the custom in cities and towns, to give the name of a street, school, park or square, to a public officer, or to some person who may have rendered service of note to the public. Mr. Austin took great pride in the town; it pleased his pride to enjoy the compliment which appeared to be willingly bestowed. At the time of political ex-

citement, in 1857, certain parties desired an article in the annual warrant, to see if the town would change Austin to Centre Street; the town, when assembled, chose Mr. Austin Selectman by a generous vote, and indignantly dismissed the article, thereby confirming the name with marked unanimity.

In December 1861, certain malicious parties finding they had a political majority on the Board of Selectmen, petitioned to change the name from Austin back to Centre Street, believing it to be, as they alleged, for the interest of the town. The Selectmen changed the name. Mr. Austin's friends gathered round him, and urged that the subject should be brought before the town. He declined any such action, and told them his name should not be bandied about at a town meeting, nor be the means of disturbing the peace of the town; that he had the names of the parties concerned; when he was ready, would write the history of the town, and would embalm the petitioners as Pope had embalmed the blockheads of the Dunciad. And the record stands, showing about one hundred and fifteen persons, who, with the petty malice of petty minds, have rejoiced in depriving of a cheap compliment, one who, for eight years, by night and by day, had been untiring in the service of a town, which some of them had admitted he was the principal agent in bringing into existence.

The events of later years are painfully familiar to all on the stage. My own opinions have ever been openly avowed.

As to those, recreant to principle, who engaged in the late unhappy war, prompted by an ill-regulated, indefinite and unholy ambition, or what is worse, moved by unholy hate, or actuated by mercenary motives, or excited by the hope of plunder, living or dead, with such I have no sympathy; let the waves of oblivion hurry to roll over them!

But to those, in all parts of our common country, animated by lofty, noble sentiments, inspired with generous emotions, impelled by the warm impulses of patriotic hearts, acting from

sound or mistaken judgment, who sacrificed their lives in the maintenance of their principles, all honor and respect that humanity can offer, whether they now slumber by the banks of the rivers where they fell, unheeding the waters that will forever flow by them, or whether they lie under the field of slaughter where they perished, unconscious of the wind that roughly or gently sweeps o'er them, or whether their sleep is tranquil in the gardens of the dead, where flowers nourished by the hands of affection, bloom around them, or whether they rest beneath the turf of their native valleys, there reposing regardless of the failing shadows of the evening twilight, there calmly sleeping, "careless of the voice of the morning."

We have here what may well be called a noble edifice. We come here to dedicate it to the purposes for which it was intended. It is an evidence of the overflowing wealth and material prosperity of the Town; but I see greater, more satisfactory evidence of the value of the Town in the assembly before me.

Οὐ λίθοι, οὐδὲ ξύλα, οὐδὲ
 Τέχνη Τεκτόνων αἱ πόλεις εἶσιν,
 Ἄλλ' ὁ πού ποσ' ἂν ᾤσιν ἌΝΔΡΕΣ
 Αὐτοὺς σώζειν εἰδοσας,
 Ἐνταῦθα τείχη καὶ πόλεις.

Edifices of splendor—lofty towers—frowning battlements—tall spires, make not the real wealth of a country; frowning battlements will be of no avail unless within are courageous, manly hearts, willing hands, ready to resist oppression, defend the fireside and protect the liberties of a land; tall spires that you point in pride to heaven, will be an offence to the God of Truth if the roofs cover nought but hypocrites; the true wealth of a country is in the elevation, the dignity of its manhood—in the virtue of its women.