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OF

JAMES HAMMOND TRUMBULL

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BY

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Very truly Yours,
J. Hammond Sewall

"Kah wehquium áhhtáusukwhos.
imuk, kah wussukhum, nawau,
awesuonk" (Luke 1.63)

J. N. Trumbull

Hartford, Conn.

March 15, 1840

Written by Dr. Trumbull in response to a request for something from
the Indian Bible.

JAMES HAMMOND TRUMBULL.

James Hammond Trumbull was born in Stonington, Connecticut, December 20, 1821, the son of Hon. Gurdon and Sarah A. (Swan) Trumbull. His grandfather was John Trumbull, a kinsman of the first Governor Jonathan Trumbull, on whose invitation he removed from Massachusetts to Norwich, in the summer of 1773, to establish a weekly newspaper which should be the organ of the Sons of Liberty in the eastern part of the State. He edited and published the *Norwich Packet* from 1773 until the close of his life, in 1802. After his death his son Gurdon, with an elder brother, Henry, removed to Stonington, whither another brother, Samuel, had preceded him in 1798. The latter soon after began the issue of a newspaper with the title *The Journal of the Times*, which was changed later to *The Impartial Journal*. Henry was the author of a small volume giving an account of the settlement of the country and the conflicts with the Indians, and of some biographical narratives.

Gurdon Trumbull was a man of marked ability and force of character. The following estimate of him is from the pen of his son, the subject of this memoir:*

He was one of the band of volunteers who, in August, 1814, defended Stonington against a British squadron commanded by Sir Thomas Hardy. At the end of the war of 1812-14, he was established in business as a merchant, and began to take an active part in the development of the two branches of industry—the seal and whale fisheries—for which Stonington became distinguished, and from which her citizens for many years received large returns. He became a leader in town affairs and an efficient promoter of every enterprise that promised local or public benefit. He represented Stonington in the general assembly in 1840, 1848, and 1851; was a bank commissioner, 1839-40; and commissioner of the school fund, 1849-51. In 1852 he removed with his family to Hartford. He was an alderman of that city, 1854-55, in which years he served as one of the judges of the city court.

From early life Mr. Trumbull manifested an interest in historical and antiquarian studies. He read much, and until near the close of his

* *New England Hist. Geneal. Reg.*, Vol. 39, 1885, pp. 288-289.

life, his memory was remarkably tenacious. Of the history of his native county (New London), particularly, his knowledge was thorough, ready, and exact.

The latter words are felicitously applicable to his distinguished son, who, reared in an atmosphere of antiquarian and historical learning, developed most naturally that spirit of zealous and painstaking research and precision of statement which he manifested so conspicuously throughout his life.

Gurdon Trumbull married, in 1816, Miss Sarah A. Swan, the only daughter of Capt. Thomas and Mrs. Fanny (Palmer) Swan. The latter was a descendant of Walter Palmer, one of the earliest settlers in Stonington, who had come there near the close of his life. His daughter, Grace, born in England about 1608, was the wife of Thomas Miner, another and prominent early settler of Stonington, whose grand-daughter, Grace Miner, became the wife of Samuel Grant, from whom was descended Gen. Ulysses S. Grant. Other notable families were related through the Swan and Palmer connection, among which were those of Hon. Nathan F. Dixon, an eminent member of the bar and a very prominent and influential citizen of Rhode Island, from which State he was elected a member of Congress for several terms, and his son of the same name, and equally distinguished, who served a full term as United States Senator from the same State.*

Of his childhood and early education the following passage from Dr. F. B. Dexter's admirable sketch furnishes interesting information.† He

was of frail health in childhood, and was much indoors in early life. He was prepared for college at Tracy's Academy, in Norwich, Conn., and entered Yale in 1838, in his seventeenth year, but with mental attainments and capacities superior to those of most of his class. By the unusual range of his early reading also, and his exceptionally retentive memory, he was marked out from the first as a unique figure. Equally striking with his quickness and brilliancy, which won universal admiration, were the lively sense of humor and love of fun and practical waggyery which some of his classmates now recall as his most salient characteristic and which diverted him in part from the sober

* Wheeler, History of Stonington.

† Proc. American Antiq. Soc., new ser., Vol. 12, 1897-1898, pp. 16-22.

routine of the place. His brain already outgrew his strength, and in the earlier part of the Junior year he was obliged to withdraw from college.

For some time it seemed most improbable that he could ever resume study, but his own strength of will and his father's watchful devotion finally triumphed in his recovery.

While thus debarred from the continuation of his collegiate studies, his active mind found employment in natural history studies, in which he became greatly interested. His residence in Stonington was favorable for these pursuits, as it was the port for many vessels sailing to various parts of the world, whose captains brought home rare and curious objects, and he was thus enabled to add to his collections of specimens, particularly of shells, in which he took a special interest. His collection of these, thus gradually increased, as well as by his own researches along the shores of the region, eventually became one of the most complete in the country, and brought him an extensive correspondence, by which his name was becoming widely known as that of an authority upon the subject.

Among those with whom he was in frequent communication was Rev. James H. Linsley, of Milford, Conn., who, compelled by failing health to retire from the ministry, had devoted himself to the study of natural history, acquiring an extended knowledge of the fauna of Connecticut. Mr. Linsley was a member of the Yale Natural History Society, which had been formed not long before Trumbull entered college, and read several papers before it embodying the results of his investigations.

At the time of Trumbull's entrance to college, Benjamin Siliman, Jr., was the secretary and treasurer of the society, and the relationship to him would naturally have brought them into familiar acquaintance. It seems very probable that Trumbull must have been present at some of the meetings of the society while in college and have had access to its collections and library. However this may have been, he became known to it, and was nominated a corresponding member in April, 1842. It is a significant fact that among the most valuable series in the library of the society was a set of Kiener's

Coquilles, of which the greater part was acquired during the year 1839, the remainder early in the following year. This had been obtained at an expense that appears very considerable, having in view the limited resources of the society. Very probably we may here discover an important influence in determining his taste for the study of conchology, which for a time had such a predominant attraction for him, and which he pursued so successfully. Mr. Linsley had been a member of the society since 1837, and, in April, 1842, he read before it a paper which was a catalogue of the Mammalia of Connecticut. This was published in the *American Journal of Science* the same year, and was followed by similar catalogues of the birds, 1843; the fishes, 1844; the reptiles, 1844, and of the shells. The latter was published in 1845, after the death of Mr. Linsley, which occurred in December of the preceding year. The catalogues were copiously annotated, with curious and interesting observations, many of the notes having been furnished by Trumbull, with whom the author was in constant correspondence. The catalogue of the shells was especially enriched by his contributions, nearly one-third of the entries being attributed to him, and among them two new species which were named for him by Mr. Linsley.

Although thus apparently entered upon a career in which he gave promise of attaining prominence and distinction, he was destined to find congenial occupation in a widely different field. In 1847 he removed to Hartford, and entered the office of the secretary of state, where he remained as assistant to the secretary until 1852. Here his taste for historical studies, the result of his inheritance and home training, naturally led him to investigate the early history of the State and to utilize the original documents to which he had access. He soon formed the plan of reproducing the more important and interesting of these in a permanent form in print, and in 1850 he edited and published at his own expense the first volume of the *Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut, prior to 1665*, the full title of which is given in the list of his publications. This was followed, two years later, by a second volume, covering the period from 1665 to 1678, and, in 1859, by a third, which brought the series down to the year 1689, with an appendix of

documents illustrating the administration of Sir Edmund Andros. The contents of these volumes were not mere transcripts, but were accompanied with luminous notes which showed remarkable knowledge of the personalities and the social conditions of the period. They are not only explanatory, but are important for the light they throw upon the documents themselves and the circumstances under which they came into existence. They form a contribution of permanent value to the early history of the State, the importance of which is attested by the frequency with which they have been utilized by subsequent writers as a source of information. The series thus so successfully begun was continued under the editorship of Dr. Charles J. Hoadley, and numbers many volumes.

Mr. Trumbull had been appointed State librarian and registrar in 1854, the first to occupy this position, and was a member of the committee to compile the statute laws of the State. He had been nominated for secretary of state in 1852, but failed of election. In 1853 and 1854 the nomination was offered to him, but declined, and in 1858 he was again appointed assistant to the secretary of state, which position he held until 1861. In this year he was elected secretary of state, and, being annually re-elected, continued in this office for five years.

In 1850 he had received from Yale the degree of master of arts, and was enrolled with his own class of 1842, and in 1871 the college conferred upon him the honorary degree of doctor of laws. He received the same degree from Harvard in 1887, and the degree of doctor of letters (L. H. D.) from Columbia in the same year. In 1873 he was appointed lecturer on the Indian languages of North America in Yale College, and his name appears thus in the list of instructors in the college catalogue until 1883, the appointment being virtually a complimentary one, as no duties were required of him in connection with it.

In April, 1855, Mr. Trumbull was married to Sarah A. Robinson, of Hartford, a sister of Hon. Henry C. Robinson, who was also connected with him by another bond of relationship, having married his cousin, Eliza Niles Trumbull. The year after his marriage was spent in a visit to Europe, Egypt, and the East.

Mr. Trumbull was a life member of the Connecticut Historical Society, having been elected to membership in 1847. He was its corresponding secretary from 1848 to 1863, and president from 1863 to 1889. Among the enterprises of the society was the publication of important papers connected with the early history of the State, in a series of volumes entitled "Collections of the Connecticut Historical Society." The first and second volumes of the series were edited by Trumbull, and were published in 1860 and 1870, respectively. To the second of these he contributed an elaborate article on the composition of Indian geographical names, and in the third volume, issued in 1895, under the editorship of Dr. Hoadley, was reprinted the Rev. Abraham Pierson's tract, "Some Helps for the Indians," with an introduction and notes by Trumbull. This had previously been published by him in a separate edition in 1873. It had been originally prepared for the Collections, but the edition of the third volume, when nearly ready for publication, having been destroyed by fire, its issue in that series was consequently delayed.

By a codicil to the will of Mr. David Watkinson, a generous and philanthropic citizen of Hartford, who died in 1857, a liberal bequest was made "for the purpose of establishing in connection with the Connecticut Historical Society a Library of Reference, to be accessible at all reasonable hours and times to all citizens and other residents and visitors in the State of Connecticut," and in a later codicil provision was further made for "the purchase of books for a Library of Reference (and not of circulation), to be kept in the rooms of, or in convenient connection with, the Connecticut Historical Society for consultation, but not to be removed therefrom." By the terms of the will the president of the society became *ex officio* a member of the board of trustees, but Dr. Trumbull had been named as a member of the board before he became president, and he was appointed librarian in 1863. He had been active in its foundation and in shaping its policy, and upon him fell the responsibility for the selection and purchase of its books. He prepared the first catalogue and discharged the duties of librarian until 1891, when on account of failing health he offered his resignation, which was accepted, but he was made librarian

emeritus, an honorary position which he held during the remainder of his life. His labors for the library, inspired by his learning and enthusiasm, had resulted in making its collection of books one of the most valuable and important of its kind.

In 1864 he became an officer of the Wadsworth Athenæum of Hartford. In 1866 he edited a reprint of Roger Williams's "Key into the Language of America," with introduction and many notes, and in 1867 published an edition of Thomas Lechford's "Plain Dealing: or Newes from New England," with an introduction and very voluminous annotations. His work on early manuscripts had given him great skill in deciphering difficult handwriting, and he had become an expert, and had found recreation, in the study and interpretation of cipher writing. He had translated a large part of the shorthand of Lechford's manuscript Note-Book, for a projected edition, and had made many notes for it, which were incorporated in the edition which was published in 1885 by E. E. Hale, Jr. He also translated portions of the diary of Henry Wolcott, which had been kept in shorthand, and published some selections from it. A volume published in 1876, in which he showed up the false Blue-Laws invented by the Rev. Samuel Peters and exposed the "unadulterated mendacity" of their author, resulted in some attacks upon his conclusions which were rather acrimonious, without, however, affecting their validity, and his critics were met with caustic refutation and complete discomfiture.

Dr. Trumbull was the editor of the Memorial History of Hartford County, published in two bulky quarto volumes in 1886. Although, in the preface, he did not claim for himself any great part in its preparation, the amount of labor he bestowed upon it was very considerable. The statement of the publisher, in a preface to the first volume, is to the effect that he

has read, annotated, and corrected every page of the great work except the article in Vol. I * * * on the Original Proprietors, which is made up largely from his own notes and memoranda. And it should be added here that Dr. Trumbull's many and very valuable notes upon the early history of Hartford have been put by him at the disposal of the various contributors.

A glance through the volumes shows that this statement is not exaggerated, and that many of the writers of the different chapters had drawn upon his stores of information. He also himself contributed a chapter upon the Indians of the Connecticut Valley containing much that was new and of interest.

His work in the early history of New England had necessarily involved consideration of the aboriginal inhabitants, their language and history. From an early period he had made a study of their language, and had gradually been acquiring a knowledge of its vocabulary and grammatical structure that enabled him to undertake with confidence, and with the authority of a master, the editions of the works already mentioned, in which the language had been preserved. This was a task requiring unwearied patience, skill, and sagacity, for as the early records had not been made under the shaping influence of scientific philological principles, and were dependent upon a crude and unsystematic phonetic method, the attempt to find anything like a well-developed structure of grammatical forms and syntax would have seemed almost hopeless. But his persistent labors were abundantly fruitful of important results. Among other things they brought into clearer light the surprising fact that these languages possessed a grammatical structure of remarkable completeness, comparable with that of the Latin or Greek in wealth of structural forms, and excelling them in the power to express minute differences of meaning. Again, his study of the languages of different Indian tribes, as shown in his "Notes on forty versions of the Lord's Prayer in Algonkin languages," showed they had much in common and were to be regarded, not as independent tongues, but rather as dialectic variations from one parent stock.

In pursuing these investigations he had necessarily made a minute and prolonged study of Eliot's Indian Bible, which was the great treasure-house for the vocabulary of the Algonkin tongue, though popularly regarded as a sealed mystery, a monument of a vanished race, as well as of wasted energy and industry. His labors proved how erroneous were such views, and when his versions of the Lord's Prayer were brought to the notice of members of distant Indian tribes, though at first

they were not understood, when at length a familiar word was recognized the dialectic difficulties vanished, and the whole became intelligible. On this point the testimony of Rev. Edward Everett Hale, who was greatly interested in the Indian languages and in Eliot's work, is very pertinent:*

There was a fashion perhaps, among ignorant people, of saying that his great translation of the Bible was a book of no use to mankind. But everybody who knew anything about it, was obliged to say that in his study of the tongue of our poor Natick Indians he had unlocked the secrets of that extraordinary system of grammar which extends from the Arctic Ocean to Cape Horn. * * * The Algonquian language ranged so far to the southward that, as the society will remember, our associate Judge Forbes reminded us that Manteo, one of Raleigh's Indians from Roanoke Island, could have talked with Capt. Smith's Powhatan and Edward Winslow's Massasoit, and probably did.

And again: †

When, therefore, it is carelessly said sometimes that Eliot's Bible is a wretched monument of waste of uniting industry and learning, the remark simply implies that the speaker does not know what he is talking about. Eliot's Bible is the most important book in the literature of a great race, now almost extinct, and, if you please to think so, to be extinct in another century. But it is a perfect example of a system of grammar which proves to be more complete in detail than any of the grammars of any language known in Europe. Its study indeed involves considerations in philological science, the value of which is not yet comprehended. As a vehicle only for the study of language, therefore, Eliot's Bible is a central book of the first importance.

Eliot accomplished wonders in his study of the Indian tongue, and of him, more truly than of any one else up to his time, could it be said that he had "unlocked the secrets" of its complex structure. Of the efforts of the early translators, Trumbull says: ‡

The greater number were first essays at translation into languages which the translators did not yet well understand. That they did not always succeed in giving the precise meaning at which they aimed, or that the rules of Indian grammar were often violated, is not to be wondered at. On the contrary, it is surprising, the difficulties of the task considered, that so much has, on the whole, been so well done.

* Proc. American Antiq. Soc., new ser., Vol. 16, 1903, p. 178.

† Idem, p. 311.

‡ Trans. American Philol. Assoc., Vol. 3, 1872, p. 117.

Absolute mastery of an Indian tongue is, for one to whom it is not vernacular, the work of a lifetime. "Neither have I yet fully beat it out," John Eliot confessed, after twenty-five years' study of the mystery of Algonkin verbs.

But the progress of investigation has only served to make more evident the immense difficulties which the student of these languages must encounter in his attempts to unravel their complexities and comprehend their subtle refinements in the expression of ideas. The very number of the grammatical forms systematically employed, and the almost unlimited variety in the shades of meaning conveyed by the mode of forming compound words, have perplexed many a student, or have led him into erroneous methods of interpretation. In his article on "The Algonkin verb," Mr. Trumbull remarks that "Professor H. Steinthal, in his psychological classification, regards the American languages as 'formless,' " and that "Professor Fr. Müller, in his memoir on the grammatical structure of the Algonkin languages (1867), and more recently in his *Allgemeine Ethnographie* (1873), concedes true verb-forms to the Mexican and Dakota languages, but denies them to the Algonkin and Iroquois." His own minute and prolonged analysis had led him to a different conclusion from that reached by these distinguished scholars, and he presented in elaborate detail the evidence in support of it. With characteristic modesty and caution he says, before giving the summary of his results:

The facts of language are seemingly opposed to the conclusion at which Professors Steinthal and Fr. Müller have arrived *a priori*. *Seemingly* opposed, I say, because I am not unmindful of Professor Steinthal's warning—that "some languages know how to supply the want of true form by devices so artful as *completely to attain the appearance* of real grammatical forms."

It is a part of Trumbull's great merit that he was able to establish the reality and definite purpose of some of these forms, and by long, patient, and persistent study was able to show their true place in the grammatical system. Another result of his labors was to emphasize the possibilities afforded by the American languages of discovering in their linguistic peculiarities interesting evidence relating to the early history and migrations of the aboriginal races.

As an aid to his work upon the Indian languages, Mr. Trumbull had formed a vocabulary of Indian words, and for many years was gradually improving and perfecting it. The character of this work is best described in his own words in a memorandum in the latest manuscript:*

In this first essay or rough draft of a dictionary of the Massachusetts language *as it was written by Eliot*, I followed Cotton in entering the verbs under the form that Eliot regarded as their infinitive mood. I discovered my error when it was too late to amend it in this draft. Ten years later I began a revision of my work, entering the verbs under the third person singular of their indicative present (aorist) in their primary or simple forms. That revised copy I have been obliged to leave, at present, incomplete. The materials for supplying its deficiency may be gathered from this volume.

The work as he left it comprised four manuscript volumes—one an English-Natick vocabulary, two others the first draft mentioned in his note, the fourth being the revised edition of the same, completed with the exception of a few letters, as above described. They had been written with his own hand in the beautifully clear and legible script so characteristic of his careful methods of work. The manuscripts, in accordance with his wishes, were after his death deposited by Mrs. Trumbull with the American Antiquarian Society, through whose agency the revised dictionary was published by the Government, in connection with the Bureau of Ethnology, under the supervision of Dr. Albert S. Gatschet, who was himself an accomplished scholar of the Algonkin tongue.

Great as were the services of Mr. Trumbull in the fields of historical and linguistic study already considered, his work as a bibliographer was perhaps even more conspicuous. His familiarity, even to minute details, with the life in the early New England communities was something marvelous. Hon. George F. Hoar, when president of the American Antiquarian Society, said of him:† He “knows the history, the life, the manners, even the gossip, of every New England generation from the beginning, as if he had been a contemporary.”

Not less complete than his acquaintance with the moving

* Proc. American Antiq. Soc., new ser., Vol. 12, 1898, p. 320.

† Proc. American Antiq. Soc., new ser., Vol. 5, 1887-1888, p. 3.

spirits of that early time was his knowledge of their printed works, which was, indeed, unrivaled. He was thus equipped, as few or none others have ever been, to render unerring judgment upon the significance and value of the early imprints. He was able, almost by instinct, to find in some date, some chance expression or peculiarity of style, the clue to the authorship of an anonymous writing or the solution of some historical puzzle. A characteristic example of this is afforded in his article, "First essays at banking in New England." The information contained in it was derived from three anonymous pamphlets, the authors of which he was enabled to identify: One, Rev. John Woodbridge, by allusions to his personal history; a second, Cotton Mather, from the analogy of the contents of the pamphlet with certain passages in the *Magnalia*, as well as by characteristic peculiarities of style; the third, Rev. John Wise, from references of contemporary writers, and from the mention by them of incidents in his career which were readily verified.

In his fellow-citizen, Mr. George Brinley, Dr. Trumbull had for many years found a warm friend and one in full sympathy with his pursuits. If at times their desire for the acquisition of some rarity brought them into the position of competitors, this in no wise interfered with their friendship. On the contrary, Trumbull ably seconded Mr. Brinley in the labor of many years which resulted in the formation of his rich and valuable collection of rare Americana. On the death of Mr. Brinley, in accordance with the terms of his will, the sale of the library was ordered, and Mr. Trumbull was made one of his executors. He prepared the catalogue of the library, a monumental work in five volumes, published in the years from 1878 to 1893, and embracing 9,501 titles. The amount of information which it contains in regard to the various entries gives it a high value as a permanent contribution to bibliography, and makes it an indispensable aid to those interested in the history of early American printed works. It became so necessary a part of the working apparatus of the library that it was much sought for, and copies of it commanded a high price.

Among other works of similar character should be men-

tioned the list of books and tracts in the Indian language, or designed for Indians, published in 1873 as a part of an article on the "Origin and early progress of Indian missions in New England," and the important volume, published in 1904, embodying the labors of many years in forming a list of books published in Connecticut before 1800. The nature of this work is indicated in the following statement from the Introduction, p. vii:

Among the many literary and bibliographical treasures left by the late James Hammond Trumbull is a series of manuscript slips to which he had prefixed the title, "List of Books Printed in Connecticut, 1709-1800." Some of these slips bear evidence of having been written more than forty years ago, from which time their number has been added to down to the time of Dr. Trumbull's death in 1897, although during his later years the additions were few, most of the work having probably been done before 1878. Each title is in the delicate and beautiful handwriting of Dr. Trumbull, and each is written with the care and neatness so characteristic of his work.

By the courtesy of Miss Annie Eliot Trumbull this list, prepared by her father, has been placed at the disposal of the Acorn Club for printing, and Miss Trumbull has still further increased the club's indebtedness to her by comparing the slips with other manuscript notes left by her father, a comparison which resulted in a few corrections and in the addition of a number of titles that had been noted but not previously incorporated in the list.

The work was edited by Miss Trumbull, who also prepared the lists at the end and the index.

These works by no means complete the tale of his bibliographical work. Hardly less important must be reckoned the vast amount of valuable material embodied in the notes with which he enriched the many works edited or published by him, and the aid he so generously gave to many workers by his correspondence, involving often much labor and research.

Mr. Trumbull's activities were not limited to the works hitherto enumerated. He was a member of many societies, and his communications were frequent and of great value. His connection with the Connecticut Historical Society has already been mentioned. In 1855 he was elected a member of the American Antiquarian Society. He furthered the efforts of the society to collect the public documents of the States by forwarding ten volumes of Connecticut documents, dating from

1851 to 1854, and thereafter made many donations to it. He was appointed in 1870 a member of the committee to report on papers relating to Indian remains and graphic symbols, and made a report of which a brief notice is given in the proceedings of the society. He was made a member of the council in 1872 and secretary of foreign correspondence in 1874. These positions he continued to fill until the close of his life, thus serving twenty-five years in the former and twenty-three years in the latter. He was a frequent attendant of its meetings and an active participant in its proceedings. Some of his most valuable contributions to American history were contained in the reports of the council prepared by him, or in papers read before the society.

He was a member of the American Oriental Society from 1862, and read several papers before it. Of the American Philological Association he was one of the founders. He was present at the first meeting of the association, held at Poughkeepsie, in July, 1869, when he was made a member of the committee to nominate permanent officers, also a member of a business committee, and was elected treasurer of the association. In 1873 he was made vice-president and in 1874 elected president of the association for the following year. He was a member of the executive committee from 1875 until 1883; also, in 1875, of the committee on the reform of English spelling. The annual address of the president, in 1875, was given by him, treating of some general characteristics of Indian languages and upon spelling reform. His papers read before the association were very numerous. They were largely devoted to linguistic questions relating to the languages of the American Indians, but some were of more general philological interest. Most of these were afterwards published in the volumes of the proceedings and transactions, a few, more or less modified or extended, elsewhere.

Dr. Trumbull was elected a member of the National Academy of Sciences in 1872. He often attended the meetings of the academy, where his presence was most welcome, and although he did not present any papers before it, his wit and brilliant conversational powers did much to enliven and brighten the social intercourse among the members. He had been ap-

pointed in 1882 to prepare for the academy the biographical memoir of Hon. George P. Marsh, deceased not long before, but the decline of his health did not permit him to accomplish the work, and in the later years of his life he was no longer able to be present at the meetings.

The societies already mentioned are those with which Dr. Trumbull was most closely identified, but his prominence had brought him membership in many others. He was a corresponding member of the Massachusetts Historical Society from 1850; also member of the historical societies of Maine, Rhode Island, New York, and Wisconsin, and of the American Ethnological Society. He was from a very early date a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and was associate fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Boston. He was one of the founders of the Monday Evening Club of Hartford, and retained his association with it as long as he lived.

Although he was so fully absorbed in other interests, Dr. Trumbull had not lost the taste for scientific pursuits which had been so active in his early life. The knowledge he had gained in Stonington was made available later when he aided Prof. S. F. Baird in his work in reference to the history of the whale and seal fisheries on the northwest coast of America. He aided Dr. Asa Gray in the preparation of a paper upon the characteristics of North American Flora for the meeting of the British Association at Montreal in 1884, and he had previously co-operated with him in 1877 in the production of an article in the American Journal of Science on the history of the so-called Jerusalem artichoke, the greater part of which, filled with curious historical learning, was contributed by him, with an introductory note by Gray; and again, in 1883, the two were associated in the pages of the same journal in a long and elaborate review of De Candolle's "Origin of Cultivated Plants," which appeared in three parts, running through several numbers of the journal.

The following, from a notice which appeared in the Hartford Courant of August 6, 1897, gives an insight into his atti-

tude toward historical writing and the high estimation in which he was held by those who knew him well :

Dr. Trumbull might have given us a history of Connecticut that would have stood first among American histories. He was often urged to do so, but he would never undertake the work; and his friends, some of them certainly, attributed this shrinking from something so much to his taste to his fear that it might contain some statement that some other authority would controvert, perhaps disprove. The same caution spread throughout all literature would result in the abolition of histories; but Dr. Trumbull was not going to commit himself to the possibility of blundering, and so never wrote the history that would have been for himself a worthy monument, and for the rest of us a perpetual source of pride and satisfaction. It is a curious freak of fate that the very trait which made what he did write so valuable prevented this crowning work.

Dr. Trumbull was consulted by a multitude of people, and not always with the most satisfactory results. Those who thought he had nothing to do but answer letters sometimes found he had not time for that. People who questioned him foolishly or in annoying ways sometimes got curt replies. Among such he was very likely reckoned somewhat crusty. But he was exceedingly helpful to those whom he saw to be in earnest, and was full of live sympathy with those whose inquiries impressed him as leading to right results. With such he would spend much time, show them authorities, and freely contribute the great assistance that his large abilities made possible.

Dr. Trumbull did not, it is true, complete any works of great extent, and the multiplicity and exacting nature of his occupations would be a sufficient reason for that, apart from the hesitation due to his critical fastidiousness. But although much of his writing was upon detached topics, which gave it, in appearance, something of a fragmentary character, the amount he accomplished was very great, and from its substantial character it will have a permanent value. If his writings upon the Indian languages were to be collected they would form a large volume and constitute probably the most important single contribution to this difficult subject.

During the later years of his life Dr. Trumbull rarely left Hartford, and his activities were greatly lessened by his declining health and failing strength. He continued to grow gradually weaker physically, though hardly consciously to himself, and apparently suffering little or no abatement of his

mental powers. In the summer of 1897 he suffered an attack of grip, and from that failed rapidly. After a period of unconsciousness he passed away on the fifth day of August, 1897, in the seventy-sixth year of his age. He was survived by Mrs. Trumbull and an only daughter, Annie Eliot Trumbull, who had been his devoted assistant, and herself a well-known and successful writer.

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