The North Adams Transcript.

VOLUME I. | NORTH ADAMS, MASS., MONDAY AFTERNOON, JANUARY 6, 1896. | NUMBER 191

INAUGURATION

THE WHEELS OF CITY GOVERNMENT SET IN MOTION.

Oaths of Office Taken!

Col. Bracewell Elected President of the Council and Brooker is City Clerk.

THE OLD TOWN GOVERNMENT CEASED TO BE WHEN SELECTMAN WALKER GAVE INTO MAYOR HOUGHTON'S HANDS A COPY OF THE NEW CITY'S CHARTER.

The Mayor's Inaugural Address in Full. Mr. Wilkinson's Remarks in Nominating Col. Bracewell. The Council's First Action. The Appointments.

The impressive and after all somewhat elaborate exercises of inaugurating the city government were held this morning at the city hall. It was announced that they would take place in the council chamber, but it was decided to hold them in the district court room so that a much larger number of spectators could be present. The court room was filled to overflowing, the halls and town office being filled with people eager to catch a word of what was said. The extreme cold did not have much effect in keeping people at home. Every class was represented in the audience. Almost all the officers-elect of the city were present scattered through the house. Chief Charles A. Kendall was among the audience.

Council Sworn In.

The members elect of the council, after looking over the council chamber up stairs and expressing themselves loudly in its praise, gathered within the rail, where members of the bar sit, and City Clerk Charles S. Brooker occupied the desk of the clerk of the court. When the hour for the exercises had arrived Charles S. Brooker called the meeting to order and said that in accordance with the charter the organization of the city government would take place. He then called the roll of the councilmen and asked them to come forward before him. This they did as follows as he called them: William Armstrong, E. Bissaillon, John Bracewell, W. M. Brown, Thomas Bracewell, W. M Brown, Thomas Butterworth, H. W. Clark, Alexander Craswell, C. H. Cutting, Joseph M. Darby, Perry M. Farley, James H. Flagg, John A. Rice, E. A. Stroud, F. E. Swift, T. W. Sykes, F. L. Tilton, Horace A. Tower, E. Vadner, V. A. Whitaker, E. S. Wilkinson. Mr. Brooker then called the names of the council with reference to the terms each one will serve. The councilmen assembled in a semi-circle around the clerk's desk and while so standing the oath of office was administered to them. The oath is a lengthy pledge. It requires allegiance to the United States and to the commonwealth and their constitutions; to the city and its interests. The council took the oath, following Clerk Brooker in his reading it with much firmness of voice.

The oath administered, Clerk Brooker said that the next business was the choice of its president by the council. E. S. Wilkinson then stepped forward and spoke ably as follows:

Wilkinson's Speech.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN OF THE COUNCIL:—We organize today a business men's government, not for business men only, but for all of our people, and I am confident a government that will be administered along true business lines. If the citizens of any city in this land have reason to feel a pride and admiration for their leading business men, certainly the citizens of North Adams have. The prominent and conspicuous figures among our business men are those at the head of our large manufacturing establishments, giving employment to thousands of our people. During the last few years when a great business depression has rested like a pall over our entire country, and industries on every hand have languished and died, and others sustained almost irreparable loss, and the wage earners so generally thrown out of employment and forced into conditions of almost destitution, our large manufacturers have the greater part of the time kept the wheels of their establishments running, giving almost continuous employment to our people, so that we as a community have felt the great depression far less than those of almost any other city in the land. What is the explanation of this? To me it is evident that our leaders have ability, courage, wisdom and other admirable qualities superior to those generally found. You may find their equals but not their superiors I desire to place in nomination for the important and honorable office of president of this council one of those men, a gentleman whose ability along the lines of his chosen profession is recognized throughout the country as among the highest, and whose integrity and honesty is as broad and high as his recognized ability; an unusually busy man, carrying on his shoulders the interests of a large corporation and hundreds of employes, yet never too busy to give freely of his valuable time and generously of his ample means to forward every movement promising the improvement of our city and people. I have the honor and the pleasure of nominating the Hon. John Bracewell.

Col. Bracewell President.

At the close of Mr. Wilkinson's remarks the council proceeded to ballot for a president. When all the ballots were cast John A. Rice was asked by Clerk Brooker to assist in sorting and counting them. The result of the balloting was nineteen ballots, all of which were for Bracewell for president and he was declared chosen. The oath of office was then administered to Mr. Bracewell and a gavel presented to him by Mr. Brooker as the insignia of his office. Mr. Bracewell took the chair and said in substance that he had no speech for the occasion. He had in mind a man that was greater than all of them, but Councilman Wilkinson said so much he almost wished he had been a member of the Baptist church so that he could have received Mr. Wilkinson's training. Some of what Mr. Wilkinson said is true, but not all of it. As I look over the city council I see men that are just as good as the councils president. We are here without pay, but at the same time we handle the dollars we say what shall be expended. No matter what has been said about one man having the whole thing in his hands we have important work. We have the finances and the regulation of the police and other departments. Our duty is a difficult but a pleasant one and we are bound to do it. I will do my duty to the very best of my ability to the council and as a citizen of North Adams. Cheers endorsed Mr. Bracewell's remarks.

Choose a City Clerk.

The president of the council then directed that body to prepare ballots for the choice of a city clerk. The ballots were were prepared and deposited and Councilmen Rice and Sykes were chosen to sort and count them. It was found that there had been nineteen ballots cast and Charles S. Brooker received them all.

Mr. Bracewell thanked the council for their choice, saying Mr. Brooker is the right man in the right place and we all know it. Mr. Brooker thanked the council for choosing him the first city clerk of North Adams, which he considered an honor. He would serve the city to the best of his ability.

Wait on the Mayor.

V. A. Whitaker then moved that a committee of three be appointed to wait on the mayor and inform him the council had organized and awaited his pleasure The committee chosen was V. A. Whitaker, F. E. Swift and J. M. Darby. The committee retired and shortly returned, the mayor resting on the arm of Mr. Whitaker, the assembly rising to receive them. Mr. Whitaker informed the council that the duty assigned to the committee had been performed. He said that the mayor had expressed himself as well pleased with the choice the council had made in respect to president and clerk and now stood ready to take the oath. Rev. Dr. George W. Brown then offered prayer.

The Mayor Sworn.

The oath of office was then administered to Mr. Houghton and when he took his place beside the president of the council Chairman F. A. Walker of the retiring board of selectmen presented him with an illuminated copy of the charter on parchment, saying he took pleasure in doing so. He remarked that it was felt that the people had done wisely in their choice of mayor. Under the charter an improved form of government over the town method was hoped for. Referring to the city as the thirty-second in number and twenty-fourth in population of the cities of the state, he said we hoped it would not take a back seat among the municipalities of the commonwealth. The mayor then proceeded to deliver his inaugural address and was received with loud applause.

MR. HOUGHTON'S INAUGURAL.

What North Adams Has Been and What It May Be in the Future.

GENTLEMEN OF THE CITY COUNCIL:—This is an auspicious occasion. From the height of civic organization which we now occupy our eyes turn toward an inviting future and command a promising and pleasing prospect of municipal prosperity. We today enter upon a new and important stage of municipal development, animated and inspired by a feeling of hopefulness, which, reckoning upon resources already tried and not found wanting, bases its expectancy for the future upon the experiences of the past.

It is, therefore, proper that upon such an eventful occasion I should present to you a brief statement of the reasons which, in my opinion, justify this hopeful feeling, and which should stimulate us to a united effort to make expectancy a certainty and hope an accomplished fact.

What We Owe Our Manufactories.

In 1878 the town of North Adams began its independent existence. At that time the population was about ten thousand and it is now about twenty thousand. This increase of about one hundred per cent. is due almost entirely to our industrial prosperity, attended as it has been by a corresponding increase in manufacturing plant and production. Many of the establishments now in operation have been built since 1878. All have been enlarged, some several times. Although the variety of our main industries have not especially increased there has been a constant improvement in the style and quality of the product. The goods that were saleable in 1878 could not now be disposed of, nor could the economies of manufacture then practiced now save a concern from loss. It is therefore natural that we should regard our manufactures as the first resource of our prosperity and that, considering what has been accomplished in that direction in the past fifteen years, we should look to the future with hopeful confidence.

A Healthy Growth.

A striking peculiarity of our manufacturing development is that it has been a growth and not a boom and has come naturally and gradually, without any forcing process of special inducements. One manufactory has sprung from another by a process as healthy and natural as a tree puts forth branches. Perhaps the clearest illustration of this fact, although it applies generally to all our manufactures, is shown in the shoe industry. When the late George Millard, the pioneer in that industry, started business he little realized how fruitful was the seed he planted. But it was from this beginning, and through the connections with it of the late Calvin T. Sampson, that our shoe manufacturing industry has grown into what it is today. From Mr. Sampson's establishment, or through his encouragement, every shoe factory now operating had its origin.

Character of Our Manufacturers.

Another peculiarity of our manufactures is that the capital invested in it and the employers administering that capital are chiefly of home production. In the main, the captains of our industries have been raised from the ranks and recruited from among ourselves. The two names most prominent in North Adams past manufacturing history are Sanford Blackinton and Harvey Arnold. Both were born on farms in this town and within gun shot of each other, and both secured their training and developed their unusual abilities strictly within our home opportunities. In general this is true of all our manufacturers—that they are of home growth. Because of this, they, as a class, have had a very thorough and practical training and experience. It is a well known fact that the principals of some of our most important establishments have worked as journeymen in all departments of the business, can operate any machine in use, and can show any of their workmen how to do their special work. These instances serve to illustrate the general fact that there has been no kid-glove management of industry here. Employers have laid their very bones to the work, and have set an example of energy and application. A connecting fact with this is that our capitalists and employers have been residents and citizens, animated by local pride, responsible to their degree for local good or ill, and have been in all ways part and parcel of the community, sharing in full its public spirit, and being concerned for its prosperity and good name.

Benefits to Labor.

Because of these two things,—the stability and naturalness of our manufacturing growth, and the local character and interests of our employers, another peculiarity of our manufacturing has resulted. Not only have the wages paid here been as good as have been paid for the same grade of work anywhere else in the world, but the employment offered here, taking good times and bad, has been almost uninterrupted ever since our manufacturing prosperity began. During the last panic, while multitudes of idle workingmen and women filled the streets of many towns and cities in this country, and some of these not remote from us, the stoppage of industry here was, in contrast, brief, and not a cause of suffering. The same is substantially true of the panic preceding the last, known as the panic of '73, which did not reach us, however, until 1876. Now, the soundness of our manufacturing foundation was a prime cause of this desirable result, but working with it to an effective degree was the desire of employers to consider the needs of labor, and out of a fellow feeling and knowledge acquired by their practical experience came the willingness to take business chances by running plants without a market.

Labor's Rewards.

A fourth and pleasing fact is the substantial absence of labor difficulties here. Sharing the common lot, we are not altogether free from the unrest which is a growing feature of modern industry, but the differences that have arisen have as a rule been adjusted without alienation or ill will coming to hazard the success of what is *for* the mutual interest of labor and capital. And in this connection it is interesting to note that although wages throughout the country have fallen since 1878, the average of wages here has risen, because of the higher skill in the direction and workmanship now required to meet increased competiton and a continually improving quality of product.

North Adams' Prosperity.

Upon those deep and strong foundations there has been builded, substantially since 1860, and largely since 1878, a very gratifying degree of general prosperity. Not only is the result calculated to afford encouragement, but the ratio of accomplishment is even more so.

This, in outline only, is our manufacturing resource. Through it we have, in continually increasing volume, received from the world's market the means to build our homes, to support our expanding retail trade, to maintain our schools, to carry on public works, to meet our public charges, and to do all these things easily, hopefully, and, in the main, substantially and well.

The Benefits of Harmony and Combined Action.

But, while the growth of our industries must be regarded as a main cause of the prosperity of our city, it is not the sole cause. In fact, this very prosperity might have been the cause of our undoing had we used it in dissension, and turned our strength against ourselves, as communities have sometimes done. Second only to manufacturing as a cause of our prosperity is to be reckonad the harmony that has prevailed here, and our common effort for public ends, so that with the increase of our resources has come a corresponding increase of our ability and influence.

This peculiarity of our community life, widely recognized abroad, and keenly felt and valued at home, has been helped by various circumstances. One contributory fact has already been mentioned in the statement that our capital and capitalists have been developed here from humble beginnings and through assiduous labor, As a result we have had little class distinction and no idle wealth. Differences of race and religion, elsewhere hindrances to concert of action with us only increased the variety and strength of our commingled and combined ability.

But these two causes, are not to be regarded as the sole reasons for a singularity so unusual in communities as to call for a special inquiry into its origin. That origin for North Adams was the procurement of the Hoosac tunnel. In the incentive to common effort it supplied, and in the reward it furnished, was found the stimulus that, for many shaping years, drew us together, gave us an influence throughout the state out of proportion to our population or means and caused us to realize our strength when unitedly exerted. The recent getting of our Normal school is another testimony to the advantagh of unity of action. Let us profit by the lessons of experience and cherish this union, so that while our material prosperity increases with the growth of our industries the neighborly good will and liberal public spirit which has hitherto characterized us, may increase in like proportion.

Increase of Mercantile Trade.

Before leaving this matter of resources there should be mentioned the growing volume of our wholesale trade. Quietly, and unknown to most of us, there has been developed here within comparatively few years a wholesale trade that contributes largely to the wealth of our community.

It disposes of a large and varied quantity of merchandise, covers quite an extent of territory with some fifty salesmen, and has already established a business the value of which to us can be judged by the fact that one concern only, does a yearly business of $800,000.

Our retail trade also is rapidly increasing in participants, if not as rapidly in volume. A striking fact of recent years is the pushing out from the town's centre, along every diverging way to its outskirts, of retail shops, tapping the stream of traffic nearer its source, but nevertheless not apparently lessening its current to the older established stands. Every such establishment becomes a new centre of enterprise, and their combined energy and means a stimulus to the prosperity and growth out of which they have arisen.

The City's Water Supply.

The above imperfectly describes what may be considered the upbuilding, lifegiving force of our body politic. But, as all live and growing things need fit conditions under which to grow, so does our community require certain things for a full and free development. The first and most important is an ample supply of pure water. We need this water in abundant quantity both for domestic purposes, and for use in our industries. There was a time, not many years ago, when this matter was the occasion of grave concern to us. All the available water within our boundaries was already in public or private use, nearly to its full capacity. Any great increase in population, and any further development of certain important industries were not possible unless the supply could be increased.

Through the neighborly good will of leading citizens of Williamstown, supplementing our own efforts, we obtained the Broad brook water; and now, when storage capacity is developed in the Notch and the Broad brook basin, and the full capacity of their water sheds is secured, we have provision for a distant future. And all our water is pure beyond the average, as shown by repeated and most careful chemical tests. The expense of the work, though considerable, need not be a matter of foreboding. In the first place, it is absolutely neccessary that we have an abundant supply of water and, if its cost were very much greater than it has been, or is likely to be, this would have to be incurred unless we are ready to stop our growth. But the income received from water rents is already more than paying the interest on the investment. This income now pays about four per cent on one million dollars, and with every increase in the use of the water the income increases in profitable proportions to the cost incurred.

The Sewer System.

Another matter, second only in importance to that of water supply, is the system of sewerage. Equally with pure water the health of the community depends upon the sanitary perfection of this system. Fortunately, as far as now developed, it has been thoroughly constructed, with grades established with reference to widest additions.

Streets and Roads.

Our roads are another important interest. A community is judged by the quality and condition of its public ways. And rightly so, for these, like the public buildings of a community, are its public standard of excellence. Well built and well kept roads tend to increase the care given to abutting buildings and premises, while slovenly roads are apt to lessen this. Besides, the care of poor roads is expensive and their usefulness for traffic is impaired. All considerations of use and taste and reputation urge us to the most instant care and most rapid improvement of our roads that our means will justify, looking to the state road built here last year as the standard, and introducing permanent work on a system that in the end will make the public ways of North Adams correspond with its other excellences.

The Public Schools.

All these matters look toward the future and have the future in their keeping. But more than these does the future of North Adams depend upon its schools, whose training so largely determines the quality of the citizenship which at no very distant day must take up the work we now are doing and improve the larger opportunities we are endeavoring to provide.

For these schools this community has always made liberal provision, and has had an interested concern. They have ranked well among the schools of the state, and have been a subject for local pride. And, if recent solicitude for them should have been justified, and, if in some respects and to the needed degree they have failed to serve their fullest purpose, the gain of our normal school is the best corrective we could have. As the tasteful grounds and imposing building of that institution will enrich our landscape, so the addition to our population of this cultivated and studious element will quicken and elevate our educational as well as our social life, and will connect us more closely than before with the intellectual leadership of Williams college.

Homes and Home Life.

As we would have for our children the best schools, so we must have for them the best homes, and the best home is one that is owned by its occupants and is the center of a worthy and aspiring family life. We have many such homes already and every year sees an increase in the number and an improvement in architectual appearance, and, if our hillsides have had to be ascended to find location for them, yet these hillside dwellings enjoy the compensating advantages of fresher air, command a larger prospect and have better drainage. And, now, with the street railroad to Adams and Williamstown, the lower levels are also accessible for homes.

The Hospital.

Should contagious sickness invade any of these homes, or injury come to any member of the community, or to any stranger within our borders, calling for more than ordinary care and attention we are equipped for such emergencies in our hospital, whose commanding site is no more noticeable than the broad and devoted ministry of its honored board of control, its able medical staff, and its trained attendants.

This, in rude and imperfect outline, is our present situation. It offers every justification for hope, and every stimulus to endeavor.

The Charter.

Under the provisions of the city charter, all the advantages of the past are secured and given a wider opportunity. Whatever experience and [illegible] knowledge could furnish for the wise and just construction of this charter has been availed of to the full ability of all its framers, and the widespread interest taken in its practical working places responsibility upon us all.

The Right Spirit of Home Government.

The problem of municipal government is as yet unsolved. Even in the oldest cities the experiments in that direction are by students of the subject regarded as merely tentative. Every year sees old methods discarded and new ones adopted in the hope of improvement, and the ideal has not yet been reached. Many, if not most of the evils camplained of are due to maladministration; and no charter, however wisely framed, will protect a community from this. The remedy lies with the people. A healthy public spirit that shall lead to the selection of the fittest men for public office, regardless of other considerations, and which shall exercise a watchful oversight of their official acts, will do more for good government than any legislative enactment that can be devised. Then, too, the introduction of politics into municipal affairs is an evil which should not be tolerated. It is right and proper that on questions of national or state affairs men should divide on party lines, but when it comes to matters which concern only our homes, our business or ourselves the only consideration should be, what is for the best good of the community. It is in this spirit and with these views that I approach the task my fellow citizens have assigned me, and in assuming the duties of office, I invoke your aid and co-operation, to the end that we may prove to those who have entrusted to us the government of the city that their confidence has not been misplaced.

The Mayor's Appointments.

At the conclusion of his address the mayor communicated to the council the appointments, which were read, and the mayor retired to his office.

The following administrative officers were appointed:

Board of public works, James G. Hunter, W. G. Cady and George W. Chase.

City treasurer and tax collector, James W. Hardenburg.

City solicitor, Col. A. Potter.

Chief of police, Charles A. Kendall.

Chief of fire department, William W. Byars.

Board of health, Dr. George F. Simpson, P. J. Ashe and Edward A. Richardson.

City engineer, John H. Emigh.

City bookkeeper, Peter Keefe.

The following appointments were made subject to the approval of the council:

Agent to furnish relief to soldiers and sailors, under chapter 298 of acts 1889, Henry A. Tower.

Agent to provide for burial of deceased indigent or friendless soldiers, under chapter 395 of acts of 1889, Henry A. Tower.

Inspector of milk and vinegar, Albert G. Nichols.

Measurers of grain, William M. Hodge, F. A. Walker, R. Gosselin, Billings R. Millard and Charles F. Briggs.

Weighers of coal, Thomas W. Richmond, Robert H. Sykes, R. Gosselin, Herbert E. Wetherbee, Willis G. Snyder and John W. Hayden.

Council at Business.

The council immediately proceeded to business. On the motion of Councilman Sykes it was voted to print the mayor's inaugural as a public document. On motion of Councilman Wilkinson John Bracewell, E. S. Wilkinson, John A. Rice, H. W. Clark, E. Bissaillon and Alex. Craswell were appointed a committee on rules and ordinances. Then on motion of J. M. Darby the council adjourned up stairs to the council chamber and the members drew their seats by lot.

Council Vacancy Filled.

The filling of the vacancy in the council's membership was then done. Councilman Butterworth nominated Wallace Kearn and Councilman Brown nominated C. E. Whitney. Mr. Kearn was chosen by a vote of 14 to 5. Councilman Wilkinson then moved that when the council adjourn it adjourn until January 20 at 7.30 o'clock in the evening, which was voted

Auditor Chosen.

John A. Rice inquired at this point if it were not proper to choose a city auditor. E. S. Wilkinson explained that the city auditor would be city almoner and showed how important the office is and how important it was that it should be properly filled. V. A. Whitaker spoke also in the same strain and said he did not believe that there is the peer of H. Clay Bliss as an almoner but was not speaking for his election. President Bracewell spoke of the importance of properly filling the office. Councilman Rice moved that the council proceed to elect an auditor, but afterwards withdrew his motion and moved that the council consider names for the office of auditor. This was voted and Councilman Rice nominated Austin Bond in a very neat speech. Councilman Tilton seconded the motion and Councilman Sykes spoke on the fitness of Mr. Bond for the office. Councilman Cutting moved to choose an auditor and the motion was seconded by Councilman Darby. It was carried and then the election of auditor was proceeded with, the clerk calling the names of the councilmen and they responding as they desired to vote. There was but one name before the council for the office, Austin Bond, and it received every vote, twenty in all. The president congratulated the council in its choice. On motion of Councilman Wilkinson the council adjourned until two weeks from today.

A Compliment to the New Chief.

The Fitchburg Mail, discussing the rumor of Captain Kendall's advancement says:

"Should Captain Kendall receive the appointment he will be in for a life term according to the articles of the charter of the city. His many friends in this city would deeply regret his departure but they realize that his appointment to such a position is but the the reward of faithful and efficient work since he has been a member of the local police force. Strict attention to duty was of paramount importance with the conscientious captain and he knew that he could not let anything interfere with that plan if he intended to rise in his chosen occupation This appointment will mark his arrival at the top of the ladder. What is Fitchburg's loss will be North Adams' gain, and Mayor Houghton nor the citizens of the Berkshire city will ever regret his appointment. *During his entire career his conduct* has been manly and his actions court investigation."

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