

General regret will be felt at the loss which has just been sustained by the mercantile community of Birmingham through the death of Mr. Samuel Aspinwall Goddard, who died on Saturday last, at his residence, The Cottage, Little Aston, in the ninetieth year of his age. Mr. Goddard, who had entirely withdrawn from the cares of business for some years past, had lately fallen into a very infirm state of health, and it was evident to his friends and family that his end was fast approaching. For some days past he was obviously sinking, and on Saturday he passed tranquilly away as though falling asleep, after his long and industrious life, like a wearied child. Mr. Goddard was the oldest of our Birmingham merchants—the *doyen* of the local mercantile body—and the story of his life is an interesting and instructive one.

Looking back more than sixty years we shall find Birmingham in one sense to have been more intimately connected with America than at the present time, notwithstanding the increased facilities for trade, and the more rapid and constant communication between the Old and New countries. This must be attributed to the fact that in those days the new country had not begun to manufacture for itself, and Birmingham, as the "hardware village" and "toyshop of the world," had a more complete monopoly of the American trade. Consequently, in those days, when Edgbaston was a rural district, abounding in fields and shady lanes—when there were even fields between Bingley Hall and the Five Ways, and Edgbaston Church seemed buried in the country—there were more Americans of standing inhabiting the old town than there are at present. After the peace of 1814 they flocked to the capital of the Midland Counties, and, moreover, played a not unimportant part in the more limited and exclusive society of that period. These Americans were, for the most part, men who did not come to the mother country as raw, uncultivated specimens of a New World's training; but were men whose home influences and surroundings, together with a lingering trace of the old courtliness of colonial days, gave them the right to the title their manners had won for them—that of gentlemen.

Foremost among these was the late Mr. Van Wart, brother-in-law of Mr. Washington Irving. He came to the town several years before his countryman, and was even at that time a married man. Then there were Mr. Gill, who with his family resided for many years in Calthorpe Road, Edgbaston; Mr. Thomas Morton Jones, educated at Harvard College, and who prior to his coming to Birmingham had been private secretary to John Quincy Adams when the latter was Ambassador at the Russian Court; Mr. Edward C. Delavan of Albany, afterwards the apostle of temperance in his own country, and whose pleasant and persuasive tongue gained him a personal hearing upon the cause he had taken up from some of the crowned heads of Europe; Mr. George Eliot and Mr. George Wright, of good old Boston families; Mr. Joseph Goddard, and afterwards his brother, Mr. Samuel Aspinwall Goddard, the subject of our memoirs. Prior to this gathering in Birmingham there had been two Americans of a still earlier date who had passed their latter days near the town—Governor Hutchinson (governor of Massachusetts under George III.), who lived for some years in a house in the Hagley Road; and Thomas Oliver, the last Chief Justice under the Crown, of Massachusetts Bay, and who removed to England on the breaking out of the American Revolution. The mansion which he built at Cambridge (Mass.) was afterwards the birthplace, as it is now the residence, of the American poet James Russell Lowell. Tablets to the memory of Governor Hutchinson and Chief Justice Oliver are to be seen in St. Philip's Church.

Returning from this digression to the later group of Americans, the name of Dr. Church may be added to the list. He was a man of high mechanical genius, and though educated for a physician turned aside from this profession to follow out the inventions of his fertile brain. These inventions, though they brought no profit to himself, have since been turned to gold in the hands of less talented but more practical men. A man of universal information and much social ability, but whose restless genius gave him no time for money-making. We may here mention that Dr. Church predicted the time would come when steam should be applied to ordinary traffic on ordinary roads, and that he constructed several steam-carriages for this purpose, one of which made several successful journeys, one of them being along Newhall Street, Great Charles Street, Broad Street, to Edgbaston, and back. And now to speak more especially of the one of this group of Americans who survived by many years his friends and fellow-countrymen—Mr. Samuel Aspinwall Goddard.

Mr. Goddard was the son of Mr. Joseph Goddard, J.P., of Brookline (Mass.) and Mary Aspinwall, daughter of Samuel Aspinwall, and niece of the Hon. William Aspinwall, whose son, Colonel Thomas Aspinwall, was for thirty years American Consul in London. Mr. Goddard was born on the 4th of October, 1796, on the old family place, which had seen six generations born upon it since it was purchased from Dorman Mearns, the first white settler who owned it, by Joseph, son of William Goddard, the English ancestor of the American branch of the family. This William Goddard belonged to the Wiltshire family, still holding its place among the English county families. He was the son of Edward Goddard, of Engletham (Wilts), and Priscilla D'Oyley. He went to America in the year 1666 with his wife and several children, and one of the first notices we have of him is in the year 1680, when the town of Watertown (near Boston, Mass.) had covenanted with him to teach Latin to the children; for, says John Sherman (pastor), "he hath those accomplishments which render him capable to discharge the trust committed to him." In giving an account of a man it is always well to know something of his antecedents and belongings, in order to understand the influences that have had effect upon his character; and in the following passage, quoted from "Historical Sketches of Brookline," relative to Mr. Goddard's grandfather, we may trace the spirit that animated Mr. Goddard to the defence of his country during the struggle of North and South, which led to his "Letters on the American Rebellion." His grandfather, "Mr. John Goddard," says the writer, "was a distinguished citizen of Brookline" during the revolutionary war. He was commissary-general for the American army in the vicinity of that city. During the siege of Boston Mr. Goddard was entrusted with the command of three hundred teams, which worked in darkness and by stealth in constructing the fortifications on Dorchester Heights, now South Boston. The absolute silence of the men, the promptness and efficiency with which they laboured, and the success which crowned their efforts, were no doubt largely owing to the firmness, courage, and tact of the sturdy patriot. His son, Captain Joseph Goddard (as he was always called), who at that time was a boy of fourteen, was a driver of one of these teams under his father's direction, and often described the event to his children and friends, now living. Not a whip was allowed among the men on that moonlight March night when the heights were the scene of such busy excitement, lest some incautious crack might betray them; but the oxen were urged on with goads. The saplings for the fascines were cut in the woods between Dorchester and Milton, and, combined with fresh hay, made a light, though bulky material when piled up. No wonder that General Howe, looking over from Boston the next morning, thought that the 'Americans had done more in one night than his whole army could do in weeks.' He did not know what had been going on in the woods within six miles of his army. Four or five pieces of cannon, which had been concealed under the hay in Mr. Goddard's barns for weeks, were on this night stealthily removed to their destination, and placed in position on Dorchester Heights. In a shed or out-building near the house were several hundred pounds of gunpowder stored in the loft. A garrison of several soldiers occupied this building, living in the lower storey, while they and the patriotic heroes of the house knew that one unfortunate spark might at any moment blow them all into eternity. All this time a sentinel was kept on the Goddard place to guard the premises. When the American army removed from Boston to New York, General Washington was urgent that Mr. Goddard should accompany them; but his large family was a sufficiently strong reason why he should decline such service. When the Federal Government was established, Mr. Goddard was chosen as representative of this town (Brookline) in the State Legislature, from 1785 to 1792."

Mr. Goddard's uncle, the Hon. John Goddard, was also a remarkable man, "of delicate, sensitive organisation" says the same writer, "but great powers of mind. When less than nine years of age he had committed to memory and had recited to the pastor of the church to which his father belonged the whole book of Proverbs and the 119th Psalm. He attended the Brookline Schools, and entered Harvard College just before the Revolutionary War. He graduated in 1777 as a physician, and obtained the post of surgeon on board an American armed vessel. Twice he was captured by the British, and twice escaped—once by crawling through a porthole of the prison ship and swimming to a vessel that put him on his way to the United States. His talents every way fitted him for eminent public life, and he was, contrary to his wishes, elected governor of New Hampshire, which office he, however, positively declined to accept. He was also chosen senator to Congress; but being as decided in this as in the former case, the country was deprived of the services of an excellent man." We may trace some of the ability of these men in Mr. Goddard, whose political tastes seem to have showed themselves early, as the master who educated him strongly urged his being brought up to a diplomatic career. But such excellent mercantile openings occurred for young Americans after the peace of 1814 that what seemed likely to be the more profitable line of life was adopted, and Mr. Goddard came to England to carry on the business of an American merchant. Nevertheless, his political bias did not fade away, and from the earliest years of his sojourn in England politics engaged his attention, and probably interfered with business duties, since he devoted much time to political writings. Mr. Goddard, though a strong Liberal of the early Radical school, had no desire to see England converted to a republic. Though that was the best form of government for his own country, he has

always held that England needed no better and no freer Constitution than that which she already possesses.

Mr. Goddard was naturalised by Act of Parliament, and whilst true to his own country and her interests, has at the same time been a loyal subject to the Queen. Like many of his countrymen, he entertained a great admiration and respect for the Sovereign, and has often admitted that, being at a semi-public dinner, where it was proposed that "God Save the Queen" should be sung, he was found to be the only person present who knew the words correctly, and was consequently called upon to lead. But to return. In due time came the political era of Birmingham, and by this time the circle of Americans had much narrowed down, and of these only two, Mr. Van Wart and Mr. Goddard, took any part in town interests or affairs. Of these, Mr. Goddard, the younger man, was the more ardent politician, and he zealously assiated in the agitation that brought about the passing of the Reform Bill. He had no fears that lawful agitation would lead to riot and lawlessness, having firm faith that it was not incompatible for "peace, law, and order" to be combined with a steadfast determination to win the rights of the people. This the Tories of that day could not understand, yet so it was; and Mr. Goddard added his share to the efforts of Mr. Thomas Attwood, Mr. Thomas Clutton Salt, Mr. George Edmonds, and others, in the carrying out of the "Political Union"; and, finally, Birmingham, through a great peaceful and moral power and principle, had the honour of being mainly instrumental in the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832. Mr. Goddard was present at the great meeting on Newhall Hill, when the "Political Unions" from the neighbouring towns marched into Birmingham, with their banners and badges; when the mighty multitude, taking their places in order, uncovered at the opening prayer that ushered in their proceedings—which proceedings were carried out quietly and peacefully, the multitude at the termination dispersing in good order, having given proof of their strength and steadfastness, that had its due weight with Government. Such was the great "Gathering of the Unions" on Newhall Hill, long remembered by the inhabitants of Birmingham and the political world at large, but whose memory is fading away in the whirl and hurry of the present. Monster meetings may take place now, but we doubt whether a more solemn, impressive, and earnest meeting of earnest men will ever take place in Birmingham. All through those exciting times Mr. Goddard's ardour was not abated. In those days open canvassing was in vogue, party colours were donned, and all influence was brought to bear upon the constituents, inasmuch that Mr. Van Wart and Mr. Goddard, as the two American merchants of influence, were often asked to canvass the manufacturers of the Black Country and its neighbourhood; and the carriage, with its white horses and blue ribbons, would start amidst the cheers and the cry of "Goddard and Van for ever!"

Mr. Goddard's enthusiasm at the time of the election of the first members of Parliament for Birmingham—Mr. Thomas Attwood and Mr. Joshua Scholefield—led him to plan the whole of the triumphal procession, he himself being one of the four gentlemen who rode as escort beside the blue-and-silver car; Mr. de Bosco Attwood being another. Then came the Anti-Corn Law League; and here again Mr. Goddard's energies were called into action, and his writings upon the subject brought him into notice with the English politicians of the day. The currency question also claimed his attention, and his writings were much read and well thought of by the currency-writers of the day—the late Sir Robert Peel and Lord George Bentinck among others—and were of sufficient authority for him to be applied to in 1857 to answer Lord Overstone's Questions on the Decimal Coinage. Ten pages of his opinions in reference to the subject are recorded in one of the Parliamentary Blue Books of that year, in which may also be found the names of Airy, de Morgan, Herschell, Arbutnot, &c., &c., showing that Mr. Goddard was in no mean company.

Mr. Goddard was a man of no ambition: he was a politician because he was interested in current politics, and not from any ulterior views for his own aggrandisement; otherwise, with the ability that he possessed he might in his earlier days have made a political position for himself, especially as in those days politicians did not grow on blackberry bushes, as they appear to do now. There were fewer of them, and more notice was accorded to those who were in any way prominent; added to which these old reformers believed honestly in what they fought for, and did not fight simply to uphold a party measure, but in all earnestness, having strong faith in the right being on their side. Last of all came the troublous time in Mr. Goddard's own country—the struggle that was to make it greater or break it up—a struggle important even as the War of Independence, since it was to cement the Union more firmly and to destroy slavery, or make it a by-word among the nations. Once again the political pen of Mr. Goddard was called into action, and with a zeal and enthusiasm that the Birmingham people could scarcely understand, though in the end they appreciated it. He wrote day after day, as events or the comments of the press or of English writers called them forth, the letters which have since been collected and published as "Letters on the American Rebellion."

From the slight sketch of Mr. Goddard's political tendencies we may judge that he was not suited to the regular routine of business; and so it proved. He was of too inventive and speculative a nature to make, or perhaps rather to keep, money. Extremely sanguine and ready to trust anyone who came to him with a patent, and ready to embark in any new scheme, his losses were great; and though a man of great financial ability, he was not of a sufficiently plodding practical nature to achieve fortune. Nevertheless, what resulted in ill to himself brought good to others. He did much to encourage the inventive genius of Dr. Church, assisting him financially to carry on his patents; and when, like great geniuses, Dr. Church found himself in straits, Mr. Goddard was ever ready to aid him. Mr. Snider's inventions also had a fascination for Mr. Goddard, and to him he also furnished money. Mr. Goddard was also personally interested in guns himself, and a breechloading cannon of his invention met with a grant from Government, but not by any means adequate to the losses he had sustained in the prosecution of his invention.

Of late years Mr. Goddard has been living at Little Aston, very rarely coming to the town which has increased so wonderfully and changed so much since the days in which he first knew it. Most of those who knew him in his earlier days are dead, and the younger generation have no associations with the once well-known name in the political circles of the town. Mr. Goddard married a Liverpool lady of Irish family. Mrs. Goddard died in 1875. They had a large family, consisting of six daughters and four sons, of whom two daughters and four sons are living.

WEST BROMWICH FLOWER SHOW.

The sixth annual exhibition of plants, flowers, fruits, and vegetables, held in connection with the West Bromwich Floral and Horticultural Society, was opened yesterday, in Dartmouth Park, by the Mayor (Councillor T. Rollason). The weather in the early part of the afternoon was very unfavourable, and no doubt militated against the attendance. Three large marquees were erected, the centre one being reserved for the open exhibits, whilst the others were devoted to the amateur and cottagers' classes respectively. The Staffordshire Bee Keepers' Association took up their customary position, and during the day were visited by a number of persons interested in the keeping of apiaries. At intervals the band of the Universe Works, under the conductorship of Mr. J. S. Wright, discoursed selections of music. The prizes offered for competition amounted to £130, but notwithstanding that the sum was larger than last year the number of entries was less in the amateur and open classes. The quality of the plants sent in for open competition was but moderate, but the amateurs showed to better advantage. In the open classes Mr. T. B. Salter was the most successful competitor. The groups of miscellaneous plants in and out of flower, which were arranged to compete for a prize given for staging, were very effective. The competition was limited to gardeners residing in the parish, and Mr. T. B. Salter was adjudged the winner of the first prize; Mr. John Field coming second with a group tastefully and effectively placed. Mr. Weiss exhibited some really good specimens of coleus and caladiums, the latter being the most attractive collection in the show. Mr. R. H. Vertegan sent some herbaceous plants, and two or three boxes of cut roses, which were much admired; and Mr. T. B. Salter, Mr. J. H. Pearson, and Dr. Underhill also contributed flowers and plants, not for competition. A fine group, containing ferns, geraniums, coleus, and gloxinias, was shown by Mr. Cooksey, of Wednesbury; and Messrs. Hewitt and Sons, of Solihull, also exhibited several plants. The number of entries in the cottagers' classes exceeded those of any previous year.

The following are the prize-winners in the open classes:—Stove or greenhouse plants, collection of twelve, not less than six in flower: 1, T. B. Salter. Collection of six stove or greenhouse plants, not less than three in flower: 1, T. B. Salter; 2, H. Weiss; 3, J. Underhill. Fuchsias, collection of six: 1, T. B. Salter. Liliams, collection of three: 1, J. H. Pearson. Single specimen fern: 2, J. H. Pearson. Caladiums, best collection of six dissimilar: 1, T. B. Salter; 2, H. Weiss. Group of miscellaneous plants, in or out of flower, staged for effect, 100 square feet, orchids excluded (limited to gardeners residing in the parish): 1, T. B. Salter; 2, J. Field. Orchids, best collection of six: 1, T. B. Salter. Palms, three varieties: 1, J. Field. Coleus, six varieties: 1, H. Weiss; 2, J. H. Pearson; 3, A. Asbury. Foliage plants, collection of six varieties: 1, T. B. Salter; 2, T. Underhill; 3, H. Weiss. Ferns, collection of six: 1, T. Underhill; 2, J. H. Pearson; 3, T. B. Salter. Cut roses, in bunches of three, collection of twenty-four dissimilar sorts, with leaves and buds as cut: 1, Perkins and Sons. Hand bouquet: 1, Perkins and Sons; 2, Charles Showell. Epergne of flowers for table: 1, W. Jackson; 2, C. Showell. Cut roses, collection of twelve dissimilar sorts: 1, Perkins and Sons; 2, C. Showell. Carnations, six cut blooms, dissimilar: 1, W. Jackson; 2, G. Wilkinson. Picotees, six cut blooms, dissimilar: 1, W. Jackson. Dahlias, twelve dissimilar, double: 1, C. Showell. Ditto, single: 1, J. Field; 2, W. Jackson. Pansies, twelve varieties: 2, William Jackson. Geraniums, twelve trusses, cut, zonal: 2, H. Weiss. Begonias, collection of six: 1, T. B. Salter; 2, C. Showell; 3, T. Underhill. Gloxinias, collection of six: 1, T. B. Salter; 2, C. Showell; 3, T. Underhill. Petunias, three varieties: 1, C. Showell; 2, T. B. Salter. Gloxinias, collection of six: 1, T. B. Salter. Six cockscombs: 1, H. Weiss; 2, C. Showell. Geraniums, collection of six zonal: 1, T. B. Salter; 2, C. Showell; 3, A. Asbury. Verbenas, in pots, collection of six: 1, J. H. Pearson; 2, T. B. Salter. Stocks, twelve dissimilar, single spikes: 1, H. Weiss; 2, J. H. Pearson.

The show remains open to-day.

Shaving a Comfort.—Everyone who shaves should use the Albion Milk and Sulphur Soap, which makes a firm, creamy lather that thoroughly softens the beard. This soap prevents that skin irritation so common to many who shave. It never irritates the most sensitive skin. It is the purest and most emollient of all soaps, making the skin soft and white. Delicately perfumed. Sold by all Chemists and Perfumers.