

25th Anniversary of Suffolk Resolves.

Saturday afternoon the Woman's Club celebrated the 125th anniversary of the passage of the Suffolk Resolves by a meeting in the old house on Adams street, near the Milton depot.

Standing in the doorway Miss Mary Webster read a paper on the Resolves where 125 years ago Dr. Joseph Warren read them to his associates. The doorway was draped with American flags, and in the room where the convention met there was an American bronze eagle, flanked on one side by the Stars and Stripes and on the other by the Massachusetts flag.

Miss Webster spoke of the causes which led to the Suffolk Convention, described its three meetings, on August 16 at Doty's, in Stoughton, now Canton; on September 6 at Richard Woodward's in Dedham, and on September 9 at Daniel Vose's in Milton; afterwards speaking of the great effect of the Suffolk resolves, both in this country and in England.

She said that the story of the Suffolk Resolves is not so much a story of Milton as of Suffolk County, and especially of Boston, then a little town of 16,000 inhabitants. While all the colonies had felt the tyranny of George III and his parliament, Boston had made the most spirited resistance and was therefore selected by the British government as the point of attack. Troops were sent in 1768 to enforce obedience to regulations which became more and more stringent.

The only remedy lay in united action. This was brought about by Samuel Adams, who, in 1772, proposed that committees of correspondence be appointed in the different towns. The scheme was taken up by the other colonies and led to a general continental congress, which met at Philadelphia on September 5, four days before the Resolves were passed in Milton.

Among the new grievances of Massachusetts were the Boston Port bill, blockading that port after June 1st; the Regulating act, concentrating the executive power in the hands of the governor; the "Marder act," by which soldiers and officials indicted on a capital charge in Massachusetts were to be transferred to Nova Scotia or Great Britain for trial; and a bill legalizing the quartering of troops in

ment suppose that the conduct of affairs may be inquired into and spoken of with Freedom—that opposition in a loyal Regular way to measures which a person thinks wrong, cannot but be allowed in a free Government." For "it is in itself Just, and also keeps up the spirit of Liberty." Accordingly we claim a right, "especially in times of Publick Trial," freely to speak against and zealously to oppose any Measures by whomsoever which are aimed at the Destruction of our Constitutional Liberties, which alter our good and ancient Usages—and which are designed to make us Slaves, for such measures are base and wicked, and ought to be resisted. "The Destruction of a Free Constitution of Government, though men see or fancy many defects in it, and whatever they design or pretend, ought not to be thought of without Horror, for the design is in itself unjust since it is romantick to suppose it legal; it cannot be prosecuted without the most wicked means; nor accomplished but with the present ruine of Liberty, religious as well as civil—and whoever will thoroughly consider in what Degree Mankind are really influenced by reason and in what Degree by custom may be convinced that the state of human affairs does not even admit an equivalent for the mischief of setting things afloat, and the dangers of parting with those Securities of Liberty, which arise from regulations of long prescription and ancient Usage."

I. But in Defiance of the Laws of God and society, in direct Violation of Sacred Compact, the British Parliament have assumed a Power to alter and destroy our free Constitution of Civil Government, and to introduce any Species of oppression whatever. Now that such pretended Omnipotency ought to be opposed when assumed by any set of men unless they have infinite Wisdom to direct, and infinite Goodness to stimulate them to a righteous conduct, is a dictate of common sense, and whether these are predictable of the present British Parliament let God's intelligent Creation Judge!

And being clearly of opinion that to withstand such assumed Power and to oppose in a regular way, the Oppression Measures which are carrying into Execution by such Power, is a Duty we owe to God, to ourselves, and to unborn millions, we therefore RESOLVE that we will unite with our Brethren THE SONS OF FREEDOM IN AMERICA in any proper measures, that may be adopted to defeat the late cruel and oppressive Acts of the British Parliament respecting America, and this Distressed Province in particular,—to extirpate the Idea of Tyrannizing, which is so fondly fostered in the Bosoms of those in Power—and to secure to ourselves and to Posterity our invaluable Rights and Privileges.

A Non-Consumption Agreement we think the most rational as it is the most Peaceful. But as Committees from the several Colonies on this Continent are soon to meet and to deliberate and determine upon some wise and proper measures for the recovery and Establishment of American Liberties—and as we doubt not but the WISDOM OF AMERICA will fix upon such righteous measures as will Eventually prove not only the Salvation of this Extensive Continent but also the Permanent Dignity of Great Britain, we therefore RESOLVE to commit our cause under God, to them, and to adopt such Righteous measures as shall be by them recommended to the Colonies as necessary to regain and secure our free Constitution of Government.

We wish them a seasonable and joyful meeting—and a happy union of sentiment—and may God Almighty direct and protect them. We return our sincere thanks to the Town of Boston for their indefatigable and noble Exertions in the cause of Freedom—and beg them still to watch upon the walls of our Jerusalem and not to be weary in well doing.

- Milton, 25 July, 1774.
DAVID RANSON
RALPH HOUGHTON,
AMARIAH BLAKE,
OLIVER VOSE,
JOSEPH CLAP,
SAMUEL CLAP.

Below we give the inscription in the inside of the building:

In this Mansion

On the 9th of September, 1774, at a meeting of the delegates of every town and district in the county of Suffolk, the memorable

Suffolk Resolves were adopted.

The Resolves, nineteen in number, with the preamble and accompanying vote, were several times read, put paragraph by paragraph, and unanimously voted. They were drafted by Joseph Warren, and reported to the convention by a committee of which he was chairman, who, on the 14th June, 1775, was chosen Major General of Massachusetts bay and devoting his life to the liberties of his country, fell an early victim in defence of those resolves in the battle of Bunker Hill, June 17, 1775.

The resolves were approved by the members of the Continental Congress at Carpenter's Hall, Philadelphia, on the 17th Sept. 1774.

The action recommended in the resolves was the boldest and most thorough of the time. They concerted an armed resistance.

The members of the convention declared that, "Whereas the power but not the justice, the vengeance but not the wisdom of Great Britain, are acting with unrelenting severity," "it is an indispensable duty which we owe to God, our country, ourselves and posterity by all lawful ways and means in our power to maintain, defend and preserve those civil and religious rights and liberties for which many of our fathers fought, bled and died, and to hand them down entire to future generations."

To act upon the defensive so long as such conduct may be vindicated by reason and the principles of self-preservation, but no longer.

Their words also are, "On the fortitude, on the wisdom and on the exertions of this important day is suspended the fate of this New World and of unborn millions."

"In a contest so important, in a cause so solemn, our conduct shall be such as to merit the approbation of the wise, and the admiration of the brave and free of every age and of every country."

"Posterity will acknowledge that virtue which preserved them free and happy."

Thus early within these time worn walls, inspired with a noble zeal in behalf of American nationality as it rose to grasp "Liberty and Union," the revolutionary sires took counsel together. Armed by those words of lofty patriotism to which the illustrious Warren here gave utterance and by the example of his life so early offered on that eminence of historic renown, the patriot fathers united in a common cause, with a valor and wisdom which in after time nerved the arm of Washington and guided the pen of Jefferson to the consummation of American Independence.

the Regulating act, which gave executive power in the hands of the governor; the "Murder act," by which soldiers and officials indicted on a capital charge in Massachusetts were to be transferred to Nova Scotia or Great Britain for trial; and a bill legalizing the quartering of troops in Boston.

The people of Boston immediately sent out letters to the other towns and colonies, and soon had the support of the entire country in their suffering. But it was one thing for the other colonies to send letters of sympathy and supplies of provisions to the persecuted town; it was a far more serious matter to persuade them to uphold Massachusetts in her resistance to the Regulating act, which practically annulled her charter. This was the difficult task of the four delegates to the Continental Congress, and they depended much on the Resolves which should be passed at the Suffolk convention to help them in presenting their case. The other counties of Massachusetts, too, were not idle. Many of them held meetings in July, August and September and passed resolutions affirming their allegiance to the king and also their steadfast determination to resist the obnoxious acts.

Miss Webster went on to describe the Suffolk Convention in detail, giving by the way a glimpse of the state of Milton at that period. Although containing only about a thousand inhabitants, it was then much more important, relatively speaking, than it is now. Then, as now, it was a social centre, and within three months it had been the residence of the royal governor, Oxenbridge Thacher, grandson of Milton's first minister, had been one of the most noted of the early patriots. The intellectual status of the town was shown by some resolves, passed the preceding July in answer to a circular sent out by the Boston Committee of Correspondence. We give these resolves in full, as we are sure that our readers will be interested in this extract from the records of our town. They are as follows:

We, the inhabitants of Milton, acknowledge George the third to be our rightful Monarch—we feelingly Declare ourselves to be his true and loyal Subjects—and next to the Horrors of Slavery we detest the thought of being separated from our Parent State. We have been wont to glory in our connexion with our Mother Country—our Hearts have been ever warm with filial affection—and we are ready and willing on all proper Occasions to spend our Blood and Treasure in defence of his Majesty's Crown and Dignity—and we are equally ready and willing to spend our ALL in defending our own religion and civil Liberties when invaded by any human Power. We have been taught from our Mother's Breasts that our Freedom is a Jewel of Inestimable Value, that "one day, one hour, of Virtuous Liberty is worth a whole Eternity of Bondage," that "Free Govern-

ment is Freedom—and beset upon the walls of our Jerusalem and not to be weary in well doing.

Milton, 25 July, 1774.

DAVID RANSON,
RALPH HOUGHTON,
AMARIAH BLAKE,
OLIVER VOSE,
JOSEPH CLAP,
SAMUEL HENSHAW, JUN.,
SAMUEL GARDNER,
Committee.

(Milton town records).

Among the leading business men of Milton was Daniel Vose, at whose house the convention met. It then stood further up the street, near the passage to the wharf. The list of delegates, which appears never to have found its way into print, was a most interesting one, including leading men from the towns of the old Suffolk County. The moderator was Deacon (afterwards General) Joseph Palmer of Germantown; the clerk, one William Thompson of Brookline. Every vote of the convention was a unanimous one. The Resolves were sent immediately to Philadelphia by Paul Revere, were read before Congress with great applause, and did much to turn the scale in favor of Massachusetts and in securing the support of country. They produced consternation in England, for George III and his ministers perceived to their dismay that the colonies were now for the first time united.

In closing her address Miss Webster said:

"We have told the story of the Resolves—we have yet to ask what their message is for us today. And shall we not find it clearly written in the mottoes of the state and of the nation? As we read 'Ense petit placidam sub libertate quietem' on the Massachusetts coat-of-arms, let us remember that these are not mere high-sounding words, but the record of deeds; that to the men of that time they were a living reality; that from that day to this Massachusetts has been ready to draw her sword in the defence of that peace which is gained only under true liberty—a liberty founded on love to God and to our neighbor; and as we read the words of our national emblem, 'E Pluribus Unum,' let us also remember that from that day to this the great statesmen of Massachusetts, by their fearlessness in opposing wrong and oppression and by their spirit of mutual toleration, have nobly done their part in preserving the unity of the state and of the nation; and then let us repeat to ourselves a third motto—the motto of the city of Boston, 'Sicut patribus, sit deus nobis.'"

We understand that the address, which occupied about three-quarters of an hour, is to be printed, together with some additional data.

nerved, the arm of Washington guided the pen of Jefferson to the consummation of American Independence.