

PROCEEDINGS

AND

REPORT

AT

THE OPENING

OF

O L I N T O N H A L L,

ON

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1830.

New York:

PRINTED BY ELLIOTT AND PALMER,

20 William-street.

1830.

TRUSTEES OF CLINTON HALL ASSOCIATION.

WILLIAM W. WOOLSEY, *President.*

PHILLIP HONE, *Treasurer.*

ARTHUR TAPPAN.

JOHN HAGGERTY.

JNO. R. LEAVITT.

FRANCIS B. OLMSTED.

JNO. A. STEVENS.

R. B. BROWN. *Secretary.*

PROCEEDINGS
OF
CLINTON HALL ASSOCIATION,
AND
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES.

The Trustees of Clinton Hall Association having determined to open the building which they had erected, appointed a Committee to make arrangements for that purpose.

The Committee requested the President to report the proceedings of the Association; and also requested Isaac S. Hone, Esq. to deliver an address to the meeting.

On Tuesday, the 2d November, the Trustees and Members of the Clinton Hall and Mercantile Library Associations, the Members of the Corporation of the City, and of the Chamber of Commerce, and many other citizens who had been invited, together with the Rev. Drs. Matthews and Wainwright, attended at the Lecture Hall.

After prayer by the Rev. Dr. Wainwright, the President read a report from the Trustees, and presented to the President of the Mercantile Library Association, an instrument in the form of a mutual agreement, vesting the use of certain parts of the building in that Association. A counter part of the agreement was returned, with acknowledgments. An address was then delivered by Isaac S. Hone, Esq. and the meeting adjourned.

At a subsequent meeting of the Trustees, a Committee was directed to wait on Mr. Hone, with the thanks of the Board, for his excellent Address, and to request a copy for publication. The Committee accordingly applied to Mr. Hone, who assured the Committee he was highly gratified by the application, but regretted that he could not conveniently find time for such a revision as should precede the publication of his address.

REPORT OF THE

COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE

FOR THE YEAR 1887

The following is a summary of the work done by the Commission during the year 1887. The Commission was organized on the 1st of July, 1886, and since that time has been engaged in a study of the land laws of the State and in the preparation of a report thereon. The Commission has held several public hearings and has received many suggestions from the public. It has also conducted extensive research into the various questions connected with the land office, and has prepared a report thereon which is now being printed. The report contains a full and complete statement of the facts and circumstances connected with the land office, and also contains many valuable suggestions for its improvement. The Commission believes that this report will be of great interest and value to the public, and it is therefore published for their information.

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REPORT.

THE Trustees of this Association have much cause for gratitude to Almighty God, that he has permitted them to meet their friends and fellow-citizens in this spacious building, and to witness with them its dedication to the useful and benevolent objects for which it was founded. Clinton Hall, they fondly believe, will reflect honour on the liberal subscribers with whose funds it has been erected, will be eminently useful to the mercantile young men for whose benefit it was more especially intended, and will not disgrace the memory of that illustrious statesman whose name it bears. The Trustees feel that it is a high privilege to be engaged in so good a work; and now, when it is nearly completed, it will be a source of heartfelt pleasure, should they find that their labours are approved by their constituents and the public.

The Trustees, when they were first appointed, did not contemplate the erection of a building so extensive as this in which we are now assembled: their views did not then extend further than to furnish accommodations for the Mercantile Library Association; but having procured lots very advantageously situated, they believed that increasing the size of the building would benefit the Association, whose concerns had been entrusted to their care. New subscriptions were accordingly procured, and the plan of the building was enlarged so as to include six stores in the basement story, a capacious lecture hall, three large rooms in the attic story for school and exhibition rooms for the National Academy of Design, besides ample accommodations for the library and

reading rooms of the Mercantile Library Association, and for the library, cabinets, and scientific apparatus which the Clinton Hall Association may be able to collect. These apartments are all warmed and lighted in the most secure and convenient manner, and those which are not wanted for the two associations can be rented on advantageous terms, and will, with the occasional occupation of the Lecture Hall, produce an income more than equivalent to the additional expense of the building.

Besides the pecuniary benefit which would accrue from the enlargement of the building, the Trustees were induced to adopt that measure by a desire to improve its appearance, and especially to give to the front a more striking and imposing aspect. The two lots next to the site of Clinton Hall had been purchased by one of the Board of Trustees on his own account. This gentleman, with his characteristic liberality and correctness of taste, agreed, without hesitation, to the wish of his colleagues to carry up both buildings so as to present a front having the unity and regularity of one building. The advantage of this is plainly discernible in the architectural beauty of the elevation: and the Trustees feel that they would not do justice to the architect and to the building committee if they did not express their satisfaction with the plan and execution of Clinton Hall.

The ground and the building will cost.....\$50,000

The subscriptions amount to..... 32,000

There will therefore be a deficiency of eighteen thousand dollars. To provide for the interest and the gradual extinguishment of this debt, the Trustees will apply so much of the income of the building as will be consistent with the other objects of the institution. The annual income is estimated at \$3500. Should this sum be applied to pay the interest and reduce the principal, the whole would be discharged in about six years: but there is so great an inducement offered to those who can realize the value of an *extensive library*, and who feel interested in the prosperity and reputation of this city, that further subscriptions may be ex-

pected to supply the deficiency which has been mentioned. As this is connected with most interesting considerations, the Trustees embrace the present occasion to present them to the meeting.

When the Clinton Hall Association was formed, two prominent objects were contemplated; one was to furnish gratuitously to the Mercantile Library Association a *Lecture Hall*, and convenient apartments for its *library* and *reading* rooms; the other was to lay a foundation for a large and continually increasing *library*, to belong to the Association about to be formed, and which would, in some measure, remove the reproach so often cast upon New-York, that in comparison with a neighbouring city, its means of instruction in literature and science are but scanty. To accomplish the proposed object, which all will admit to be important, it was stipulated that the surplus funds should be invested in books, cabinets, and scientific apparatus, to be deposited in Clinton Hall for the use of its subscribers and the members of the Mercantile Association; and that the subscribers to the former should have *free access* to the library of the latter institution. If the deficiency already stated should be supplied by new subscriptions, and the whole income applied to the purchase of books and other auxiliaries to learning and science, (even if the sum so applied should not exceed three thousand dollars a year,) a library greatly exceeding any now in this city, and perhaps any in the United States, would be collected in a few years.

The *stock* of the Association consists of *five hundred shares of one hundred dollars each*, which are transferable on the books of the company, and may be devised and inherited. *Three hundred and twenty shares* are already subscribed, and when *one hundred and eighty shares* more are taken, the subscription will be closed. Should this number be subscribed, the object of the Trustees, as to funds, will be accomplished, and the owner of each share will receive, as a compensation for the use of his *one hundred dollars*, the immediate benefit of a great and rapidly increasing collection of books and scientific apparatus, the use

of which will exceed the interest of the money he has advanced. Should there, however, be no further subscriptions, the collection of a library will be retarded only, but not abandoned. The present stockholders, besides having free access to the library of the Mercantile Association, and admission to its *lectures* on the same terms with the members, will soon begin to enjoy the benefit of those books which will be procured by their own institution with such proportion of its income as can be used consistently with an early extinguishment of the debt.

The Trustees, when they solicit their fellow-citizens to subscribe for the remaining shares, can truly say they do not ask them to make a sacrifice of property: the Association will derive a revenue from those parts of the building not occupied by the Mercantile Library of thirty-five hundred dollars, or *seven per cent.* on the capital. Surely the payment of a dividend in the use of a large library cannot be less desirable to liberal and public-spirited stockholders than if the same was paid in money, especially if they consider that applying the revenue to the purchase of books accumulates property which is not diminished by being used—that they enjoy the profits, and at the same time add them to the capital.

The other prominent object in forming the *Clinton Hall Association* was to aid the members of the *Mercantile Library Association*, by providing *lecture, reading, and library* rooms for their use.

In the winter of 1820, the destitution of instruction, and the temptations to vicious practices to which merchants' clerks were exposed in this large city, produced a powerful impression on the minds of many reflecting members of that class, and of other persons more advanced in life. They not only saw the dangers which beset these inexperienced youth, but were anxiously desirous to provide means to secure them from the surrounding evils; and they wisely determined those means should be adapted also to the cultivation and improvement of their minds. They

knew that there were in New-York six thousand young men connected with mercantile pursuits ; that a great number, perhaps a majority of them, were from the country, separated from their parents ; that they were residing in boarding houses, where they lived without control or restraint, and were in many instances destitute even of friends, whose advice might check the impulses of their passions, or turn them from the haunts of wickedness ; that their evenings, during a considerable portion of the year, were lost for want of employment, or spent in those pursuits which too often destroy both the body and the mind. Perceiving these alarming evils, and feeling the necessity of guarding against them, they formed, as it were, *a new assurance company for mutual security and protection from vice*, and named it The Mercantile Library Association. This admirable institution, which, at its first anniversary meeting in October, 1821, consisted of only one hundred and thirty members, has now increased to nine hundred ; and its library, which, at that time, was about one thousand volumes, is now between six and seven thousand, and the quality and value of the books have increased in a greater proportion than the numbers. The main principle of the Association was to provide a place for inexperienced youth, where they could find instruction for their minds, and security for their morals. Some of the virtuous band who originated this institution are now successful merchants of our city ; others have been called from hence, and their benevolent efforts are recorded in a better world. The Association was fostered by many individual merchants, and by the Chamber of Commerce of New-York, which aided it in its infancy with a handsome donation, and has from year to year appointed a committee to exercise over it a kind and parental supervision : this committee, in the performance of its duty, frequently visited the library of the Association, and conferred with its officers, and frequently reported its condition and prospects to the Chamber of Com-

merce. In this way, and through the anniversary meetings of the Association, the merchants have been informed of its successful progress, and have been satisfied that it has produced a happy influence on the character and conduct of their clerks. The committee early saw that the confined size and inconvenient location of the library and reading room would limit the usefulness of the Society, and prevent the acquisition of new members: efforts were accordingly made by the committee, by the numerous friends of the Association, and by its members, to procure a more eligible place for its meetings. These efforts resulted in a determination on the part of a great number of our merchants and other citizens to form a new institution, with a large capital, and to erect a building sufficiently capacious to accommodate the Mercantile Association, and, at the same time, to afford room for other important purposes.

This institution, which seemed to arise from the ashes of Clinton, was called by the name of that eminent man, whose death, just then announced, has been so deeply deplored by his country. Large subscriptions were made; a liberal charter was granted by the legislature, and this building, a monument of the liberality of our citizens, and destined, as we hope, to preserve many young minds from pollution, and imbue them with valuable knowledge, is now completed, and ready to be occupied.

Gentlemen of the Mercantile Library Association—

These efforts have been made in a considerable degree for your benefit; and the Trustees fully rely that you will so use the advantages placed in your hands, that they may, with the blessing of providence, prove to you and your successors a mine of intellectual and moral wealth. The Trustees will leave to a gentleman who has always been your kind and active friend, the pleasing task of addressing you on the topics connected with this interesting occasion, and will conclude, by offering you, through

your President, an instrument which gives you legal possession of those parts of this building, which, by mutual arrangement, are appropriated to your use. The privileges which this agreement entitles you to enjoy, are more ample than those contained in the stipulations formerly made ; and as they can only be forfeited by misuse on your part, the Trustees have full confidence that they will prove the means of great good to you and your successors for many years to come.

AN ACT

To Incorporate the Clinton Hall Association,

IN THE CITY OF NEW-YORK.

[Passed February 23, 1830.]

The people of the state of New-York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows :

SECT. I. The Members of Clinton Hall Association of New-York, and all persons who shall hereafter be associated with them, are hereby constituted a body corporate, by the name of "The Clinton Hall Association in the city of New-York," for the cultivation and promotion of Literature, Science, and the Arts, with power to take, hold, and convey, real and personal estate, to the amount of one hundred thousand dollars ; and in addition thereto, all such cabinets, literary, philosophical, and other apparatus, as may be necessary for attaining the objects, and carrying into effect the purposes of the said incorporation, which said real and personal estate, however invested, together with the property in said Library, Cabinets, Philosophical, and other apparatus, shall be divided into shares of one hundred dollars each, be deemed personal property, and be transferable as such.

SECT. II. The control and disposal of the funds, property, and estate of the said Corporation, and the management of its concerns, shall be vested in a board of seven Trustees, five at least of whom shall be, or shall have been merchants ; who shall be elected annually by the stockholders of the said Corporation by ballot, each share being entitled to one vote in the manner and form provided by the by-laws of the said Corporation ; but a failure to make an annual election shall not dissolve the said Corporation, and the Trustees last chosen, shall hold their offices till others are chosen in their places ; which election the said Trustees shall cause to be duly made. The said Board of Trustees shall have power to fill all vacancies which may occur therein ; to appoint one of their number to be President of the said Corporation : and also to appoint such other officers, agents, and servants, as the business and interest of the said Corporation may require ; and the same to remove at pleasure.

SECT. III. William W. Woolsey, Philip Hone, Arthur Tappan, John Haggerty, Francis Olmsted, John W. Leavitt, and John A. Stevens, shall be the first Trustees of the said Corporation, and shall continue in office

until others shall have been chosen in their places: and all real and personal estate now held by the said Trustees, or any of them, or any other person or persons, in trust for said Clinton Hall Association, or for the use and benefit of the same, including choses in action, which by the terms thereof are payable to the said Trustees, or to any other person or persons in trust for the said Association, shall, by virtue and operation of this act, vest in, become the property of, and may be sued for and recovered in the name of the said Corporation hereby created.

SECT. IV. The annual meeting of the said Corporation for the choice of Trustees, shall be held on the second Monday of January, or such other days as the said Corporation shall, in its by-laws, prescribe for that purpose; and special meetings thereof shall be called on the requisition of ten shareholders made in writing to the Board of Trustees, which requisition shall express the objects for which such meeting is called.

SECT. V. The estate, property, and funds of the said Corporation shall be held for, and solely to the purposes and objects of literature, science, and the arts; and while so held and devoted, fifty thousand dollars thereof, and no more, shall be free from all taxation by the laws of this state.

SECT. VI. The said Corporation shall possess the general powers, and be subject to the liabilities and provisions contained in title III. of chapter XVII. of the first part of the Revised Statutes.

SECT. VIII. This act is hereby declared to be a public act, and shall in all courts and places be construed benignly and favourably for every beneficial purpose therein intended, and no misnomer or misdescription of the said Corporation, in any will, deed, gift, grant, demise, or other instrument of contract or conveyance, shall vitiate or defeat the same; but every such will, deed, gift, grant, demise, or other instrument of contract or conveyance, shall take effect in like manner as if the said Corporation were rightly named therein, provided it be sufficiently described to ascertain the intent of the parties.

SECT. VIII. This act shall commence and take effect from and immediately after the passage thereof.

State of New-York, }
 Secretary's Office. }

I certify the preceding to be a true copy of an original act of the Legislature of this State, deposited in this office.

(Signed)

ARCH'D CAMPBELL, *Dep. Secretary.*

Albany, March 18, 1830.

THIS AGREEMENT,

Between the Clinton Hall Association of the city of New-York, of the first part, and the Mercantile Library Association of New-York, of the second part, WITNESSETH:

That the party of the first part, being the owner of a building called Clinton Hall, situate on the corner of Beekman and Nassau streets, in the city of New-York, do hereby stipulate and agree with the party of the second part as follows:

1st. That the party of the second part may occupy, free of rent, two rooms in said building, which have been appropriated for a *Library* and *Reading Room*; and may use, when not wanted by the party of the first part, the room called the *Trustees' and Directors' Room*; and may also use the *Lecture Hall* for the general meetings of the Association, and for Lectures to be delivered to its members, as often as twice in each week; which privileges shall be enjoyed under such terms and conditions as are hereinafter expressed, and for as long a time as they are fulfilled to the satisfaction of the party of the first part. Additional room for the *Library* and *Reading Room*, and additional nights for the *Lecture Hall*, shall be set apart, if necessary, on the same conditions.

2d. That when the cost of erecting and fitting up said building, and the cost of the lots, with the accruing interest, shall have been paid, either by new subscriptions, by the rents of the building, or from any other source, the surplus funds arising from rents shall be laid out in such books, cabinets, or scientific apparatus, as the party of the first part may deem proper; the said party reserving to itself the right to make earlier appropriations for those purposes. All such books, cabinets, or apparatus, shall continue to belong to the party of the first part, and shall be deposited in the building, and be used by the Members of the Clinton Hall and Mercantile Library Associations, under such regulations as may be made by the parties of the first part for that purpose.

And the party of the second part doth hereby stipulate and agree with the party of the first part as follows:

1st. That its Library shall be deposited in the room or rooms of said building appropriated to receive it; that the room or rooms set apart as reading rooms shall be used by its members for that purpose; and that the Lecture Hall shall be used for the general meetings of the Association, and for the Lectures which are delivered to its members.

2d. That during the continuance of this agreement, it will pay the taxes on said building, if any are imposed; and will, at its own cost, keep the rooms it occupies in full and complete repair, and defray such proportion of the expense of lighting and warming the house as may be fair and equitable.

3d. That the whole income of the party of the second part, after defraying the necessary charges of the establishment, (not including the expense of lectures) shall be annually invested in books, which shall be deposited in the library with its other books, and the shareholders of the Clinton Hall Association, shall have access to the library free of charge, under the same regulations as the members of the Mercantile Library Association are subjected to, without giving to such shareholders a right to vote in the elections of that Association.

4th. That in case the Trustees of the Clinton Hall Association shall be of opinion that the party of the second part shall convert the rooms it occupies in the said building to any purpose not intended by the party of the first part, or that the character of the Mercantile Library Association shall have become so changed that its usefulness shall have ceased, or that it shall have deposited immoral or irreligious books in its library, and not removed them within twenty days after being advised to do so by the *Trustees of the Clinton Hall Association*—or that they shall have wilfully neglected or violated any of the stipulations contained in this agreement—then the said Trustees may call a meeting of the shareholders of the Clinton Hall Association, and the Directors of the Mercantile Library Association, and lay before the meeting the facts, to show that either of these contingencies has occurred; and the shareholders of the Clinton Hall Association, after a full consideration, may determine to resume the use and occupation of the rooms so appropriated, and the books, cabinets and apparatus purchased by the party of the first part; and such determination shall be final and conclusive on the party of the second part, who shall thereupon surrender and give up the premises and the said books,

cabinets, and apparatus to the party of the first part, and shall remove from said building after thirty days' notice of such determination.

5th. That the shareholders of the Clinton Hall Association may attend the courses of lectures which may be delivered to the Mercantile Library Association on the same terms as are enjoyed by its members.

In witness whereof, the said parties have respectively caused their corporate seals to be hereunto affixed, and these presents to be signed by their respective Presidents, the second day of November, one thousand eight hundred and thirty.

THE CLINTON HALL ASSOCIATION,

By Wm. W. Woolsey, President.

THE MERCANTILE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION,

By R. B. Brown, President.