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HON. JOHN ALFRED POOR, OF PORTLAND, ME.

Communicated by CHARLES W. TUTTLE, A.M.

JOHN ALFRED POOR was born in the town of Andover, in the western part of the state of Maine, January 8, 1808. His ancestors were sterling New-England people, and lived, for more than two hundred years, on the southern borders of the Merrimac river in Massachusetts. The names of Poor and Merrill are distinguished in the annals of Essex county. His maternal grandfather, Ezekiel Merrill, of Newbury, was the first white settler in the valley of the Androscoggin, where the new town of Andover was afterward seated. Merrill was soon followed to his home in the wilderness by a number of persons from Andover, Massachusetts, among whom was Dr. Silvanus Poor, the father of the subject of this memoir. For intelligence, character and energy, the first settlers were far above the average in such places. In a dozen years they wrought out, in those wilds, the elements of a town. The new settlement had grown large enough in 1804, to receive municipal privileges; and the residents applied for and received the corporate name of Andover, being the name of the town where the Poor family originated.

Dr. Poor united in his calling the functions of physician and farmer, not an uncommon occurrence in remote towns in New-England. He was a man of considerable mental power, an original and independent thinker, and well versed in the current topics of the day. He was a member of the convention which formed the first constitution of Maine; and he filled several other public positions. His home was the centre of an intelligent circle, and was visited by strangers of education and distinction. The books of the social library were kept at his house, bringing his family in contact with authors as well as readers. His brother, Dr. Ebenezer Poor, an intelligent and much respected physician, was a near neighbor.

In this place, with these surroundings, John Alfred Poor, the second son and third child of Dr. Silvanus Poor and his wife Mary, daughter of Ezekiel Merrill, the pioneer settler, passed the first twelve years of his life. During this period he attended the short terms of the public schools, in summer and winter, the current of his life being much the same as that of all boys living in country towns. Nearly fifty years
later, in the presence of a scene that revived recollections of his youthful
days, he made this touching allusion to this period of his life: "Reared
among the hills of Oxford, where the hoary summits of White-Cap and
Bald-Pate rear their lofty heads high above the surrounding mountains, my
imagination was stimulated by familiarity with the most beautiful valleys
and the grandest mountain scenery of New-England; but my heart panted
for a sight of the ocean, whose sublimer aspects and mysterious revels had
been pictured to my youthful mind by stories of travellers and descriptions
in the impassioned language of poetry; and when, a boy of twelve, I first
beheld in the clear sunlight of a winter's morning the outstretched waters
of Belfast Bay,—embosomed by its surrounding hills and distant islands,—
I experienced all those sublime emotions of delight that Wordsworth has
recorded in the finest of all his poems. * * * My desires were then as
wild and fathomless as the great deep, and the recollections of a not inactive
life have already taught the lesson, that experience alone can teach, that
the achievements of a man's life are of trifling account compared with the
boundlessness of youthful hope and aspiration. This first visit to the
seaside influenced no doubt my whole life,—made me fond of adventure on
the ocean, eager for geographical knowledge, and studious of those agencies
that stimulate commercial progress. I love the ocean with almost filial
devotion, and without a daily sight of it I am never fully satisfied and
contented." 1

His longing for other scenes and other pursuits was soon gratified. In
January, 1820, a year memorable in the history of Maine, he was sent to
Bangor for the purpose of receiving an academical education preparatory to
entering college. He lived there in the family of the Hon. Jacob McGaw,
an eminent lawyer, whose wife was a younger sister of Dr. Poor. 2 Bangor
was then fast becoming the leading commercial city in eastern Maine. The
spirit of industrial enterprise, prevailing there, must have made a deep
impression on the mind of the young student, coming from the quiet town
of Andover, and possibly quickened in him a fondness for public enterprises.
He pursued his studies in the Bangor Academy two years, during which
time he made good progress in the classics, and in other branches of learning.
It was now ascertained that his father's means were insufficient to defray
the expense of a college education, as designed; and he returned immediately
to his home in Andover. For a period of five years he labored, with little
intermission, on his father's farm. During this time he received private
instruction from his brother-in-law, the Rev. Thomas T. Stone, pastor of the
Congregational church in Andover. In the winter of 1826, he taught
successfully a public school in the town of Bethel. His life was varied by
occasional visits to Portland, the theatre of his future active life, on business
connected with the farm. This employment failed to satisfy his desires. He
longed for a wider field of action, and for more congenial pursuits. He now
resolved to study law. A good opportunity offered in the office of his uncle
McGaw, who was in full practice at Bangor and president of the Penobscot
Bar. On the fifth of September, 1827, he entered this office, as a law

1 Remarks at Belfast, Me., July 4, 1827, pp. 3, 4.
2 Mr. McGaw, a graduate of Dartmouth College, was a life-long friend and correspondent
of Daniel Webster. His wife, Nhebe V. Poor, was often a visitor in the family of Senator
Thompson in Salisbury before her marriage, and was well acquainted with Mr. Webster.
She is often mentioned in his correspondence. "I am now ready for my departure, and
only wait to give myself the pleasure of a ride to the upper part of Maine to accompany
thither Miss Poor, who has been a while in Mr. Thompson's family, and whom you have
heard mentioned." (Webster to Merrill, May 28, 1824; Correspondence, vol. i. p. 172.)
student, and remained four years and four months. During this time he lived with Mr. McGaw's family, a circumstance that contributed much to his advancement and personal comfort. Having finished his law studies he was admitted to the bar on his twenty-fourth birthday. Mr. McGaw immediately proposed to him a law partnership with himself, on equal terms, which Mr. Poor declined, preferring to begin professional life alone and in another place. Two days after his admission, he established himself in the historic village of Oldtown, twelve miles above Bangor. He secured a fair law business; but he soon discovered that this was too small a field for his ambition. The commercial enterprise of Bangor, a town about to receive civic honors, had a magnetic influence over him; and, after eight months residence at Oldtown, he returned to Bangor and formed a law partnership with his uncle McGaw, which continued till the autumn of 1838, when that gentleman retired from practice. Mr. Poor immediately formed a partnership with his younger brother, Henry Varnum Poor, Esq., a graduate of Bowdoin College, who had just completed his law studies in the office of McGaw & Poor. The brothers continued in the practice of law till April, 1846, when Mr. Poor, senior, removed to Portland, to enable him to carry out his great railway enterprises more effectually.

During the fourteen years he was at the bar in Bangor, he earned the reputation of being a sound lawyer and a public spirited citizen. His practice was large, and extended to all branches of the law. Among the notable causes in which he was retained, was the suit of Venzie vs. Walden, involving title to valuable lands, and water power, on the Penobscot. This suit attracted a good deal of public attention at the time, not only on account of the parties interested, and the matter in issue, but of the great eminence of the counsel engaged. Daniel Webster was opposed by Jeremiah Mason, and they were the acknowledged heads of the bar in New-England. Mr. Poor, who was associated with Mr. Webster as junior counsel, prepared the history of the legal title to the disputed territory, with so much completeness, that Mr. Webster personally complimented him for the work. This was in 1835, only three years after his admission to practice.

While residing in Bangor he took an active part in the literary and municipal affairs of that city. He was instrumental in establishing the Social Library, afterwards merged in the Mercantile Library Association; and, also, the Bangor Lyceum. For several years he was a member of the city government, and active in promoting the various interests of Bangor. He early predicted the future growth and prosperity of that city. In 1869, he attended the centennial celebration there, and made a characteristic address, which is printed in the proceedings on that occasion. Speaking of his relations with that place, he said: "In Bangor I spent my youth and early manhood. Here I formed my earliest and strongest attachments, and within her enclosures lie the remains of the departed. And while I can look with pride at the growth of Portland as the result of measures to which the best of my days were devoted, I can never look upon Bangor with any other emotions than those of the deepest regard and affection, and under the inspiration of a Centennial Celebration, I may be permitted, while reviewing the history of Bangor for fifty years, to speak with the confidence of a well assured judgment, of the true pathway to still higher achievements in the future." 1

American politics come to the door of every man. It is almost impossible

1 Bangor Centennial Celebration, p. 89.
for a young man to escape being drawn into political life, especially if he
has a talent for public speaking. Mr. Poor became early interested on the
whig side of politics, and was active in the support of the measures of that
party. For many years he was a member of the state committee; and
was eminently serviceable to the whigs in the year 1837 and again in 1840,
when they carried the state election. He was among the first, in Portland,
to advocate the nomination of Taylor for president. In later years his
other, and higher interests, kept him from active politics; and only the graver
and more philosophical political questions attracted his attention. He saw,
regretfully, the wasting of the best energies in the state, in party strifes;
and he lamented that for a period of forty years "struggles for personal
success in politics had been paramount ideas, with few intermittent excep-
tions," in Maine, while the great natural resources of the state excited no
public interest and lay undeveloped. He always contended that if a state
policy favorable to railways and to manufactures had been early adopted,
Maine would have been, at this time, not inferior to Massachusetts as a
manufacturing state.

Many years before moving to Portland he became profoundly interested
in the subject, then fresh, of locomotive railways, especially as they were
likely to affect the commercial and other interests of Maine. The
introduction of railways into New-England was an event that made a deep
impression on his mind, and gave direction to his future life. He seems to
have comprehended, at once, the full magnitude and importance of this new
method of transportation, which he tersely characterized as "The great
achievement of man, the most extraordinary instrument for good the world
has yet reached." The year 1834 is memorable in the history of
locomotive railways in New-England. On the sixteenth of April, of that
year, the first locomotive engine, with passenger cars attached, ran over a
railway freshly laid between Boston and Newton, and afterwards extended
to Worcester and beyond. A large number of persons were present in
Boston to witness this novel experiment of travel by railway. Among the
spectators who waited with breathless anxiety the first movement of the
train, was Mr. Poor, then only twenty-six years of age, who had come from
Bangor to witness the introduction of this new wonder of the age. Many
years after the event, he described this scene and the impression it made on
him. "Placed," he says, "upon the track, its driver, who came with it from
England, stepped upon the platform with almost the airs of a juggler or a
professor of chemistry, placed his hand upon the lever, and with a slight
move of it the engine started at a speed worthy of the companion of the
"Rocket," amid the shouts and cheers of the multitude. It gave me such
a shock that my hair seemed to start from the roots rather than to stand on
end; and as I reflected in after years, the locomotive-engine grew into a
greatness in my mind that left all other created things far behind it as
marvels and wonders." This kindled in him an enthusiasm on the subject
of locomotive railways which continued to the end of life. He returned to
Maine to meditate and reflect on what he had seen with his own eyes, little
dreaming of the fame he was to achieve for himself in railway enterprises,
within the next forty years.

1 Remarks at Belfast, 1867, p. 38.
2 Ibid, p. 51.
3 The name of the first successful locomotive-engine built by the Stephensons in
England, in 1829; it won the prize of £500 offered by the directors of the Liverpool and
Manchester Railway.
4 Remarks at Belfast, pp. 50, 51.
In 1836 the first locomotive railway was built in Maine, singularly enough, between Bangor and Oldtown. The practical working of this road was under his own observation; and from it he probably learned his first lessons in railway economy. This new mode of travelling soon commended itself to the public. The legislature adopted measures which led to the survey of several routes, for a railroad, between the seaboard in Maine and the St. Lawrence in Canada. That which connected Belfast and Quebec was regarded the shortest and most practicable route. This enterprise died in its birth, and nothing, but the report of the engineer, ever came of it. A railroad from the seaboard to the St. Lawrence was more and more desired in Maine, as well as in Canada. In 1839 a survey was made for a railroad between Portland and Lake Champlain; but this enterprise also died. It was obvious now that a hand to execute, as well as a head to plan, was needed in such an undertaking; that vast energy, rare executive powers and great persistency were required to carry out so great an enterprise.

While Mr. Poor was busily engaged in his profession in Bangor, he was not unmindful of what had been going on. He was studying the whole subject of future railways in Maine from the highest point of view, and aiming to construct a system. Thoroughly acquainted with its physical geography, the commercial, agricultural and manufacturing capacities of the state, he had a grasp of the entire subject superior to any other person; and, in 1844, he made public his plan for two great railways, both coming from without the state, traversing it nearly its entire length, and converging on Portland. The eastern terminus of one road was Halifax, and the western terminus of the other, Montreal. This stupendous project of connecting two empires by a common interest, besides the inestimable commercial advantages designed for Maine, looked to the shortening of the time of passage between New-York and Liverpool, about two days, and to a direct railway route from Portland to Montreal, thence to the great lakes and prairies in the west. This magnificent scheme, which must have seemed impossible of execution to most persons when he projected it, in the infancy of railways in Maine, he lived to see accomplished, through his own agency and indomitable perseverance, in less than thirty years.

In the autumn of 1844, having matured his plans, he bravely entered upon the execution of his great design to connect Portland and Montreal by an international railway, the first ever projected on this continent. The undertaking then might well seem appalling; more than two hundred and fifty miles of railway, at an estimated cost of $10,000,000! He traversed the valley of the St. Lawrence from Lake Erie downwards, to gain information for his purpose. From Montreal he crossed over his projected route to Portland, part of the way on foot, examining the country and making known his railway project. In Canada, Vermont, New-Hampshire, and in Maine, he caused public meetings to be held, at which he appeared and advocated the building of the road, and asked assistance and cooperation in the enterprise. He wrote long communications to the Canadian and American press, calling public attention to it, and setting forth the necessity of building it immediately. Early in September he wrote a long letter from his native town, where he happened to be at the time, to the Portland Advertiser, giving an account of the various commercial and industrial interests of Canada which centred at Montreal, stating that the Canadian people desired direct communication with the seaboard, especially during the winter months when the St. Lawrence was closed with ice, and that the advantages of opening a trade with Montreal would be very great. He closed with an appeal to the citizens of Portland.
to take immediate action in favor of a railway between the two cities. His letter created a profound sensation in Portland, which he compared to "an alarm bell in the night, struck by the hand of a stranger." He went to Portland, with a deputation from the country, and urged the citizens to embark in the undertaking. The principal citizens, appreciating the force of his arguments, and seeing the advantages certainly to accrue to the city, immediately came forward, headed by Judge Preble, to assist the Bangor lawyer in his great enterprise. The favorable action of Portland was felt throughout the whole length of the proposed route, and the work of preliminary organization went rapidly forward. A provisional survey of the route was executed before December. He devoted his energies to the organizing of a company, and to the procuring of a charter for the road. Just before the charter was obtained it was discovered that the wealth and the enterprise of Boston were in Canada, urging the Canadians to unite with that city and build the road to Boston. This created great alarm among the friends of Mr. Poor's project. It was a critical moment for Portland and for Maine interests. Canada desired an outlet for her staple products and merchandise, and it mattered but little to her in which of the Atlantic ports she found it. The commercial strength of Boston was immense, and was active. The capitalists and business men of that city joined in a protest to the parliament of Canada and to the merchants of Montreal, against his project. Vermont and New-Hampshire interests were also opposed to it, for it was not designed to stretch athwart these states, but only their northern extremities. Mr. Poor hastened to Canada to prevent the board of trade of Montreal from committing itself to the Boston interests. The circumstances of his journey, and the success of his mission, are memorable incidents in his life. He set out from Portland, at midnight, on the fifth of February, five days before the legislature of Maine granted the charter for his road, in the face of the most terrific snow storm of the winter, and drove through deep snows to Montreal, reaching that city on the morning of the fifth day of his journey, where the thermometer was standing 29° below zero. Speaking of this dreadful journey, and his mission, many years later, he said: "Every fibre of my frame thrills with horror at the recollection of it. I accomplished my task. I met the Montreal Board of Trade at 10 A.M. of that day, and prevented the adoption of a resolution, previously prepared, in favor of going to Boston with their line, instead of Portland, which would have been carried unanimously, but for my sudden appearance and the assurances given by me of the superior advantages of Portland over Boston. I was justly proud of the achievement. In return, I carry in my person the renewals of suffering, which fever and sciatica, following in the train of fatigue and exposure, have entailed upon an otherwise strong physical constitution. I could not go through such another exposure again, if I would, and I would not do it for all the wealth of the world. The terrors of a Canadian winter are too fearful to encounter in this way a second time. But my heart was in the enterprise, and my health, my life, and my future sufferings, were not thought of. All the events of this early history are more fresh in my mind than those of the last session of the legislature, for I trembled at every step with the timidity of a youthful adventurer over the perilous Alps, in view of the vast importance of the enterprise to the State." But for his well directed efforts in Montreal, the road would have been built to Boston instead of Portland. This struggle for the Atlantic

1 Remarks at Rutland, Vt., 1869, p. 23.
2 Argument before Committee of Legislature, 1866, pp. 17, 18.
terminus of the road was severe and protracted. He fought, single-handed, against every argument which wealth and commercial prestige could devise, before the committee on railways of the Canadian parliament, then in session. The arrival of Judge Preble at Montreal, a week later, with the charter granted by the legislature, assisted him in giving a final blow to the opposition. The work of organizing under the charter, and of procuring subscriptions to build the road, went rapidly forward. Judge Preble was chosen president, and Mr. Poor director, of the Atlantic and St. Lawrence Railroad Company, this being the corporate name of the American part of the line. So important was the undertaking considered, that the fourth of July, 1846, was selected to begin the construction of the Portland end of the line. In the presence of the assembled senators and representatives of Maine, and a vast concourse of citizens and strangers, and with great ceremony and applause, the work of building began on this memorable day, at Fish Point, at the entrance to Portland Harbor. This must have been a proud day for him. The Canadian company having organized and formed a union with the American for the purpose of constructing the entire road, as one line, the work of construction began also at Montreal.

The gauge of this road, known as the medium broad guage, was determined on after the fullest consideration. Mr. Poor satisfied himself by extensive enquiries among railway engineers and others that the five foot six inch guage was the best theory or experience had devised for a railway where the highest working capacity was required. This guage was deliberately agreed on for this road by the two companies. In 1851, when the question of guage for the Great Western Railroad of Canada was before the Provincial Parliament, he went to Toronto and before the committee, and urged, with success, the adoption of this guage, which is now the standard for all British North America. The Maine Central, and European and North American roads are built with this guage. It was his purpose to extend the same guage road to Boston and New-York.

Mr. Poor watched over the work with the greatest anxiety, his interest in it never lessening for an instant, during the period of its construction. Its progress was marked by occasional festivals, at which he was always present. The road was completed through to Montreal, and the first train passed over it on the 18th of July, 1853. The consummation of this great work afforded him the highest satisfaction; and he lived to see his native state, and the city of Portland, derive all the great benefit from it which he had anticipated. His official connection with the Atlantic and St. Lawrence road continued till it was leased to the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada, in the summer of 1853. This disposition of the road originated with him and was carried out mainly by his personal exertions. It was a great benefit and relief to the company and to the contractors, who were born down and nearly wearied out with the vast expense of the undertaking.

As soon as he had secured the road to Montreal, and the work of construction was well under way, he turned his attention to this other railway project, connecting Portland, Bangor, St. John, and Halifax or some port east of it, in Nova Scotia. This line he regarded as an appropriate extension of the Montreal road, making but one international line of railway across the states, more than eight hundred miles long. His design was not only to shorten the time of passage between Europe and New-York, but to open the way for commercial and manufacturing enterprise, as well as for settlements, in the unoccupied lands of the state, abounding in rich soils, mineral treasures, great forests of lumber, and immense water power. His
plan was to build a single line from Portland east by way of Lewiston, Gardner, Augusta, Waterville and Bangor, using the line of the Montreal road as a common trunk as far as the Danville junction, throwing branch lines, east and west, to other parts of the state. Immediately rival lines between Portland and Bangor were not only proposed, but actually begun, which so delayed and hindered the building of this line, that it was not completed to Bangor till 1856.

Early in the summer of 1850 he petitioned the legislature to authorize a survey to discover the best and most practical route between Bangor and the New-Brunswick line, for this road. In this petition he took occasion to present strong reasons why the state should favor the building of this railway. Very soon after, as chairman of a committee of citizens of Portland, he issued a circular letter addressed to the governor and council and the legislature of Maine, and, also, to railroad companies, and to friends of public improvement, in the United States and in the British provinces, inviting them to attend a convention at Portland to consider the project of reducing the time of passage between London and New-York to five days. This convention met on the last day of July, and continued in session three days, presided over by the governor of Maine. There was a large attendance of distinguished persons from the British Provinces as well as from the United States. Mr. Poor was recognized by the convention as the originator of great railway enterprises, especially the projected one to extend as far east as there was land to build on. The convention appointed a committee, with Mr. Poor as chairman, to open communication with the English and American governments in relation to mail contracts on this route, and also to confer with other great companies concerning the building of this railway. This convention was recognized as the first actual reunion of the people of the provinces and the states since the revolution. It produced favorable effects, both commercially and politically, on the relations between these two countries. His favorite maxim was that political boundaries should form no restriction on commercial enterprise.

The legislature of Maine immediately granted a charter for his road and appropriated $5000 to survey the route, and instructed the governor to apply to the United States for aid to this enterprise. The Province of New-Brunswick soon granted a charter for the road in that Province. Want of means to build the road through eastern Maine seemed, for a long time, likely to defeat it. The Montreal road had absorbed all the capital that could be spared for great lines of railway; and local railways were in want of building capital. He exerted himself, in every conceivable way, to procure the means. First he applied to Massachusetts for a grant of its public lands lying in Maine in aid of this road, and came near obtaining it. He applied to congress for aid, without any favorable result. In 1853, the company organized under the charter, as the European and North American Railway Company, and he was chosen president of the company, and held the office till 1866. He immediately located the road, and for ten years labored to get funds to build it. Meantime the road in New-Brunswick and Nova Scotia, to connect with it, was got under way and partly built. In 1861 he presented to the Maine legislature a long memorial, which was printed by order of the senate, in behalf of the European and North American Railway Company. It contains an elaborate statistical review of the various resources and industries of Maine, with his views and plans of developing and improving the same. The primary design of this memorial was to procure state aid for building the road,
as well as to show the pressing need of adopting a state policy encouraging manufactures as well as settlements on the public lands of the state. In 1864 the state yielded to his solicitations, and granted eight hundred thousand acres of the public lands, subject to a claim of Massachusetts on the same for a certain amount, and all the timber in ten townships, to aid the building of the road. The state, at the same time, passed over to the company all its claim against the general government accruing prior to 1860, and, by a resolve, invited the co-operation of Massachusetts in aid of this enterprise. On application to that State for aid, it was refused on the ground of a statute of Maine, passed in 1860, forbidding the change of gauge on any railroad in Maine, which was regarded as unfriendly legislation. Without the aid of Massachusetts, the grant by Maine to aid the building of the road was not available. Mr. Poor regarded the statute of no advantage to the interests of Maine, but otherwise, and he applied at once to the legislature then sitting, for a repeal of it, and for leave to lay a third rail on the Portland, Saco and Portsmouth Railroad, with a view of extending the broad gauge line from Halifax to Boston and New-York. He appeared before the committee on railways on the fourteenth of February, 1865, and made a long argument in favor of repeal, reviewing at length, and with great ability, the railway interests of Maine, and the history of the various roads, which is printed. He claimed that there should be no restriction on railway transit. The legislature, not without much opposition from interested parties, and from those of narrow views in these matters, repealed the act, and then he prevailed on Massachusetts to release its claim on these lands granted by Maine, and also to allow the road the part of her joint claim with Maine against the general government. Upon this being done the work of construction immediately began, and in less than six years was completed. It is now in operation, and fulfils all that he predicted for it.

A considerable part of twenty years of his life was devoted to the consummation of this great enterprise. "His name," says one well acquainted with the history of the road, "will be forever associated with the European and North American Railway, as inseparably as the name of De Witt Clinton with the Erie Canal. With no funds to build the road except a small land grant and an assignment of the claims of Maine and Massachusetts upon the general government; claims which that government had repudiated for more than thirty years, he went to work alone, and by ceaseless industry and by using influences which no one else knew how to wield, by persistent and unanswerable arguments everywhere plied, by both pen and tongue, he enlisted legislators in congress and public men in the states in his favor, secured the confidence of capitalists, overcame all difficulty, bore down all opposition, wearied out delay itself, and achieved a final and complete success."

In 1851 he was chosen president of the York and Cumberland Railroad. He immediately reorganized the company and secured the building of the road from Gorham to the Saco river. Soon after his re-election in 1852, he resigned the presidency in favor of Col. Clapp, who had became chief proprietor, and the name was changed to the Portland and Rochester Railroad. This road is now built, and in full and successful operation.

He lent his aid in carrying out other railway projects, the Maine Central, the Belfast and Moosehead Lake, the Bangor and Piscataquis, and the

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1 Speech of the Hon. W. H. Mc'Crillis at a banquet given to the President of the United States and the Gov. General of the Dominion of Canada, in Noremboag Hall, at Bangor, Oct. 18, 1871.
Hon. John Alfred Poor.

[October,]

Somerset railroads. He believed in the sufficiency of railroads properly guided to develop the immense resources of Maine, the great object of all his thoughts and actions.

One of his favorite plans for developing the material resources of the state, and adding to the public wealth, was legislative encouragement of settlements on the unoccupied public lands. His grand idea of the capacities of the state and his plans of improvement, looked to an almost indefinite enlargement of the wealth and population of the state in this direction. "The State of Maine," he says, "from the extent of its territory, — its geographical position, — its physical geography, and its geological structure, has all the elements essential to an independent empire. By a development of its resources, it can sustain a population, at a rate per square mile, equal to that of the most densely populated countries in Europe."¹ In several memorials written by him and presented to the legislature, between 1849 and 1862, he fully set forth his views on this subject, and urged the legislature to adopt a state policy favorable to settlements on these lands. As early as June, 1850, he wrote: "We have failed so far to attract to the state the most valuable class of emigrants that seek for a climate and soil similar to that of Germany and Switzerland, which resemble our own. If proper encouragement were held out to them we might expect the emigrants from the north of Europe to prefer the soil and climate of Maine to that of the Mississippi valley."²

He aimed at arresting emigration from the state, as well as inviting immigration to it. A comparative view of the population at various epochs showed that emigration from the state was constantly going on. "This," he says, "is a great draw-back to her prosperity. No finer people are born on the face of the globe, and those who leave her distinguish themselves all over the country. Our duty is to keep these men at home, to develop our own state; to rear villages at all the waterfalls; to cultivate the rich soils of the Penobscot, the Kennebec, the Aroostook and St. John Valleys; to own as well as build and sail our own commercial marine. "³ Persuaded that some immediate legislative action favorable to immigration and settlement in the great forests of the state was required, he delivered a public address, in 1864, in the hall of the house of representatives, giving his views on the subject and urging public action in the matter. Gradually the importance of his suggestions began to be appreciated; and, in 1867, his project of inviting emigrants from the north of Europe to settle on the public lands began to be favorably received. In 1870 the legislature of Maine established a board of immigration to carry out this plan of settling a Scandinavian population in the north-easterly part of the state; and in July of this year the first colony from Sweden arrived and settled in the valley of the Aroostook. This colony has since been much increased, and is in a flourishing condition, promising to be as great a public benefit as he anticipated, twenty years before.

Always aiming to achieve great commercial results, and to make great public improvements, regardless of political boundaries and prejudices, he directed the whole force of his energies, early in 1868, to the carrying out of his long meditated plan of making an eastern outlet, for the great staple commodities of the west, superior to any in existence or hitherto projected.

¹ Memorial of European and North American Railroad Company, p. 3.
² Petition to the Legislature of Maine for a Survey of the European and North American Railway.
³ Argument before Legislative Committee, p. 47.
His plan was to connect, by railway, Chicago and other great commercial centres in that direction, with the capacious harbor of Portland, the ocean terminus of his other great railways. But this did not embrace his ultimate design; for he grasped the commercial relations of the whole continent, leaving no room for another railroad projector between the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean in these latitudes. He looked upon this line, designed mainly to afford ready and cheap transportation of bread stuffs to the Atlantic States, and to Europe, as "a chief link in that golden belt which is to span the continent of North America at its widest part, under the name of The Trans-Continental Railway." 1 This stupendous design had for its object the connecting, so far as possible by railway, of the great commercial centres of Europe, North America and Asia.

He began by procuring a charter for a railroad from Portland direct to Rutland, Vermont. Soon after he conceived the idea of advancing the interests of his projected road, by an international commercial convention to be held at Portland, for the purpose of concentrating public attention upon the splendid harbor there, as the cheapest port of exportation of western produce, as well as upon his great plan of a direct railway across the continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific shore. He prepared a call for the convention, in which he set forth, with a masterly hand, his railway plans and designs. The convention met in Portland on the fourth of August, 1868, and was presided over by Gov. Merrill, of Iowa. More than three hundred persons responded, and were present, many of them distinguished in public life, from all parts of the United States and the British Provinces. Mr. Poor was active in the convention and served on its committees. His plans of railway extension were heartily approved.

On the 24th of June, 1869, he delivered before a railroad convention, at Rutland, an address on the subject of his plan for a continental railway, but more especially in favor of building, at once, the road from Portland to Rutland and Oswego. This address fills seventy-five octavo pages, and bears the marks of a mature judgment, profound and various knowledge on the subject of the economy of railroads, and of their relations to the commerce of the country.

In March, 1870, the charter for this road was amended and it took the name of the Portland, Rutland, Oswego and Chicago Railway Company. In December following, the company organized under it with Mr. Poor as president. In January, 1871, he drew up and presented to congress, on behalf of the company, a memorial setting forth the merits of the proposed road as a public enterprise, and asked congress to constitute it a national highway. He also prepared a bill, which was laid before congress by Senator Hamlin, authorizing the postmaster general to contract with this company to carry the mails between Chicago and Portland, and also authorizing government assistance for building the road. As president of the company he prepared the first annual report of the directors, which he presented at the annual meeting on the 26th of July, 1871. His elaborate report shows that he had succeeded in devising a plan for building the road. Six railway companies, along the projected route, had agreed to unite and act as one, and aid in building the road. Owing to the delay of one company the joint agreement could not be carried into effect at that meeting, and it was adjourned to the twenty-ninth day of September. Two weeks before

1 Remarks at Rutland, 1869, p. 3.
the day of the adjourned meeting the great head of the enterprise was no more, having died suddenly on the fifth of September.

Mr. Poor's interest in the development and utilization of the natural powers of his native State is well illustrated in the history of the hydrographic survey of Maine, an undertaking suggested by him, and mainly carried out under his direction. "Maine," he says, "with her extended and deeply indented seacoast, on the line of favoring winds; her mountainous regions that distil in profusion the clear waters that swell its rivers, descending from high elevations, by circuitous courses, in a succession of cascades to the ocean,—and rich forests, and through a productive soil, may in time rival any region of the globe, in the extent of her manufactures and commerce. Its great and distinguishing natural feature is its water power, surpassing that of any section of the globe of equal extent." In a memorial to the legislature, prepared by him for the Agricultural Society of Maine, in 1858, he strongly urged a public survey of the water power of the State. This appeal was renewed, and supported with a great variety of illustrations, in a memorial to the legislature in 1861, prepared by him in behalf of the European and North American Railway Company. The necessity and expediency of such a survey were at length recognized by the legislature; and, in the spring of 1867, it authorized the survey to be made under the direction of three commissioners to be appointed by the governor and council. He was appointed one of the commissioners and chairman of the board. In December, 1867, the commissioners made their report to the governor. This report, filling thirty closely printed octavo pages, was written by Mr. Poor; and it bears all the marks of his vast knowledge and full appreciation of the geographical and physical characteristics of Maine. The result of the survey is, two printed volumes, making over eight hundred pages, containing a full description of the water power of the State, prepared by Walter Wells, Esq., secretary of the commissioners.

Mr. Poor never was an aspirant for public office. His capacity, energy, address, and knowledge of public affairs, admirably fitted him for public employment. In several instances he accepted responsible positions tendered him by the governor of Maine. In 1852 he was appointed by Gov. Hubbard a joint agent, with Hon. Anson P. Morrill, to conduct the negotiation which ultimately led to the purchase, of Massachusetts, by Maine, of the public lands of the former state lying in Maine. In 1861 and 1862, he was joint commissioner, with Hon. Reuel Williams, in behalf of Maine, on the subject of the coast defences of that state, and was active in this service. President Lincoln tendered him the office of commissioner in charge of the public defences of the north-eastern coast, a position of great responsibility, which he declined. He also declined an honorable position tendered to him in the treasury department in Washington. In 1861, the office of consul general to Canada was open to him, but he did not desire it.

In 1868 the commissioner of the general land office in Washington applied to Gov. Chamberlain for an account of the progress, in population, manufactures, agriculture and commerce, in Maine, since the last national census. The governor immediately requested Mr. Poor to furnish this important information, recognizing in him the best qualified person in the state for this undertaking. He accepted the commission, and executed it with his usual ability and to the entire satisfaction of the government.

1 Memorial of European and North American Railway Company, p. 20.
His elaborate statistical report fills fourteen closely printed pages of the published documents of Maine.

Mr. Poor's historical investigations, which form no inconsiderable part of his title to public consideration and remembrance, occupied much of his attention during the best years of his life. However widely different this interest may seem from the leading pursuit of his life, it is embraced in his early design to place his native state, in all respects, where the motto on its official seal assigns her. "If there is anything," he says "which I desire above all things else, it is to do what in me lies for the honor, the welfare, and the glory and renown of Maine. It is my native State, and I inherit, perhaps to a fault of weakness, a love for her, as my native land and home. I have seen something of other states and other lands, and until I had gone abroad, I never knew the true beauty, the inherent greatness, the wonderful resources of Maine; so rich in its natural scenery, so full of all the elements of wealth and power, and so capable of the highest results of the most refined civilization." All the acts of his life were in harmony with this declaration. His steady devotion to the public interests of Maine, and his firm loyalty to that state, have few if any parallels in its history.

His interest in local history must have begun early; for he furnished Williamson, for the history of Maine, a sketch of his native town, while a student of law. Some acquaintance with the provincial and ante-provincial history of Maine he must have made while tracing the title to lands in the Veazie suit. His interest in the history of Maine was much stimulated by his experience in Canada, in 1845, when the commercial position of Maine was matched with Massachusetts in the contest for the Atlantic terminus of his projected railway. His opponents did not spare his native state, nor forget how recently she was substantially a province of Massachusetts. Neither commercially, politically, nor historically was she allowed the standing he claimed for her, by those opposed to Portland as the terminus of the railway. His indignation was thoroughly aroused, and he resolved to examine more thoroughly, not only the merits of his own state, but the foundation of the pretences of her assailants.

The next year, 1846, he was chosen a member of the Maine Historical Society, and was a most useful and active member to the end of his days. It was at this time that Gorges's Briefe Narration appeared in the second volume of the Collections of the Maine Historical Society, and fixed his attention upon this great author whom he never after ceased to praise and to honor. He devoted his leisure time to the study of the early history of New-England, seeking for the facts in documents and publications of that period, rather than in later writers. His interest in the subject grew stronger as he advanced; and, when he traced English navigators and English settlers, to the shores of Maine prior to 1620, the assumed beginning of New-England history, the subject became a passion with him, and never abated while he lived.

Among the memorable historical occurrences, connected with early English colonization in America, those which transpired within the limits of Maine prior to any consecrated in our popular history, made a deep impression on his mind. Not less impressive was the fact, that, prominent among the noble men concerned in that great achievement which secured for England a portion of the vast domain of the New World, was Sir Ferdinando Gorges, the illustrious founder of Maine. As soon as he had mastered the

1 Argument before the Committee of Legislation, 1865, p. 65.
history of English colonization on this continent, he resolved to give Maine, and to her great founder, their true historic position in New-England history.

The first fruit of his historical studies and investigation, was an elaborate paper on *English Colonization in America*, which he read before the Maine Historical Society, in June, 1859, and also before the New-York Historical Society, in October following, receiving the thanks of both societies. In this paper, which attracted a good deal of attention among historical students, he declared his intention to be "to trace the earliest practical efforts to plant the English race in America, and to vindicate the claims of Sir Ferdinando Gorges, the proprietor of my native State, to the proud title of Father of English Colonization in America." ¹

The title by which England held possessions in North America, and the services of those actively concerned in securing this title, and maintaining it by acts of jurisdiction and possession, to the exclusion of other European nations, were the points which he aimed to make conspicuous, and to invite public attention. He fixed upon the royal charter granted by King James of England to a company of his subjects, April 10, 1606, authorizing the "planting of colonies or plantations in North America," between the thirty-fourth and forty-fifth degrees of latitude, as the initial step in the establishment of English title to New-England. The taking of formal possession, under this charter, at the mouth of the Sagadahoc, now Kennebec, river, Aug. 19, 1607, by a company of English Colonists, he regarded as the consummation of the English title, and as the great event in American history.

Of those concerned in this great undertaking, and in the events which led to it, and followed it, he claimed the leadership for Sir Ferdinando Gorges and his associates. After reviewing the efforts of Gorges, and his associates, to plant English Colonies in New-England, and also the movements of the Puritans at home and abroad, he concludes, that "The history of the times disproves the popular theory, that 'religious impulse accomplished the early settlement of New-England,' by which is meant the settlement within of the Puritans. But the plan of colonizing America did not originate with them, nor were they in any sense the leaders of the movement. They resorted hither from necessity, and while they profited by the labors and enterprise of others, achieved nothing beyond those in a subordinate position. The settlement of New-England was the work of many years, and was achieved by the same influences as those still at work to extend the Saxo-Norman race. It was the legitimate result of commercial ideas and adventurous spirit of the times." ² This position, sustained by all the facts of history, he fearlessly maintained. In his zeal to defend it, and to make prominent the merits of Gorges and his associates, he was led to speak of some of the Plymouth colonists with rather too much severity, which occasioned some resentment. Puritan intolerance was shocking to him, made him feel indignant towards those who practised it, and he never let an occasion pass to speak of its persecutions, as he thought.

To the enterprising Sir Ferdinando Gorges, whom he so much resembled in energy of character, persistency, and public spirit, he awards the merit of saving the territory of New-England from the grasp of the French, and of introducing and settling it with English colonists. "But for Gorges," he

¹ *English Colonization in America*, p. 6.
² Ibid, p. 58.
says, "the western continent must have fallen under the dominion of Roman Catholic France, and Celtic civilization would have changed its destiny; for all New-England was in possession of the French prior to 1606."

He expresses his indignation in strong terms, at the treatment which Gorges, and his associates, received at the hands of their puritan contemporaries, and of our historians, on account of their religious and political attachments in that age, and rejoices that the time has come when a more liberal spirit prevails, and when the merits of these men can be recognized. "But Gorges's fame," he adds, "shall yet eclipse that of any other name in our American annals. My native state has been remiss in the discharge of this duty, and supinely allowed the history of New-England to cluster around the Rock of Plymouth instead of standing clearly out in the earlier deeds of the great minds that saved New-England and the continent from the grasp of the French."

Designing to procure some honorable recognition in Maine for the name of Gorges, he drew up, in 1860, a petition addressed to the secretary of war, and procured signers to it, asking that the new fort in Portland harbor may be named FORT GORGES, and it was ordered to take this name. He had a design to form an association for the purpose of erecting a monument to the memory of Gorges, within the limits of the ancient "Province of Mayne."

The position he had taken with regard to the historical and political significance of the royal charter of 1606, and the settlement at Sagadahoc the following year, awakened a new interest, especially in Maine, in the subject of English colonization in New-England. The transfer of the point of the initial movement of English colonization from the shores of Massachusetts to the shores of Maine, and the placing of Gorges at the head of it, created a new era in historical investigation.

Believing the settlement at Sagadahoc to have all the significance which he claimed for it, he aimed to direct public attention to the event, and to revive the memory of the actors in the great enterprise. In the autumn of 1861, he persuaded Mr. Williams, his associate commissioner on the coast defences of Maine, to join with him in an application to the secretary of war, requesting that the new fort about to be erected at the mouth of the Kennebec river, on the site of the first settlement, may be named FORT POPHAM, in honor of the venerable George Popham who led the first British colony into New-England in 1607. This name was approved by the national government, and the work of construction begun.

His associates of the Maine Historical Society, approving his design of attaching these historic names of Popham and Gorges to great national works of defence within the state, joined readily with him in a design to place a memorial stone, with appropriate inscriptions, in the walls of fort Popham. Leave to do this being obtained of the government, it was agreed by all interested to make the act of placing the stone in position, one of solemn commemoration; and August 29, 1862, being the anniversary of the settlement, was selected for the commemoration service. A large executive committee, of which Mr. Poor was one, consisting of leading citizens in all parts of the state, carried out the design on a scale commensurate with the magnitude and importance of the occasion. He was selected to deliver the historical address, while several of his distinguished associates

1 *English Colonization in America*, p. 84.
2 Ibid, p. 90.
of the Historical Society performed conspicuous parts in the commemoration services. He delivered the address at Fort Popham on the two hundred and fifty-fifth anniversary of the event, in the presence of the principal officers of state, and of many distinguished persons from other New-England States. It is estimated that six thousand persons were present on the occasion. It was a day never forgotten by him; for this act and this ceremonial was the result of his own efforts to secure for Maine her true place in history. His address was appropriate, full of historical research, and contained a complete narrative of English colonization on these shores. He enforced his views of the importance of the event with vigorous reasoning and with full historical illustration. This address, and the one on English Colonization, with many historical papers procured by him from European archives, are printed in the Memorial volume of the Popham Celebration.

About this time he drew up a memorial asking for an appropriation to defray the expense of procuring copies of documents bearing on the early history of Maine, from the British State Paper office, and was joined in this, by the Rev. Dr. Woods and the Rev. Dr. Ballard, both eminent historical scholars, and deeply interested in Mr. Poor's historical investigations. This memorial was presented to the legislature and an appropriation made.

Commemorative services have been held annually ever since at Fort Popham. On nearly every occasion he has been present and taken part in the proceedings. In 1868 he prepared and read there an elaborate address, in which he restated his position on the “Popham question,” as it is called, added some freshly discovered evidence in support of his views, chiefly from De Carayon, and reviewed the various attacks made on the position he had taken with regard to the historical and political importance of the settlement under Popham. He was present there, for the last time, on the two hundred and sixty-second anniversary of the event, and made a brief speech.

At the field meeting of the historical society held in the ancient town of York on the twenty-ninth of August, 1870, he was present and read a carefully prepared paper, reviewing the events leading to colonization on these shores, and introducing important documentary evidence, recently obtained from European archives through the agency of the Rev. Dr. Woods, bearing on the title which England asserted to the territory of New-England in 1613, when Argall destroyed the French settlement at Mt. Desert. It appears that the English government justified the act of Argall on the ground that the French were then within the limits of territory granted to English subjects, in 1606, who were in possession of the same, and that France acquiesced in the claim. A few days later, at a joint meeting of the Maine and New-Hampshire Historical Societies, held at Portsmouth, he was present and made a brief characteristic speech, reviewing the early history of the two States, which closed his public historical addresses.

It is quite impossible to give an adequate idea, in this brief sketch, of Mr. Poor's historical labors, covering a period of more than fifteen years. The results are known and appreciated by historical students. Besides awakening a general interest in our early history, he gave an immense impulse to the work of the Maine Historical Society, resulting in sending the Rev. Dr. Woods to Europe to make historical researches, bearing on the early discovery and settlement of Maine, and in the publication of a valuable volume on discovery, soon to be followed by others on colonization. It was always his design to go to Europe and there study the history of the period of discovery and colonization of New-England, in the light of original records.
preserved in the archives of the maritime nations. Long before his death
he had no superior in knowledge, and in appreciation of our early history
he was member of the New-England Historic, Genealogical Society, and
corresponding member of the historical societies of New-Hampshire, Ver-

In 1848 he, and his brother, purchased the American Railway Journal,
and it was edited by his brother till 1861, when they sold their interest in
it. He was occasionally a contributor to its columns; and always on the
subject of railways, to the public press in the United States and Canada.

Finding that he was unable to reach the public mind and to give full
exposition of his plans of railway extension through the medium of a press
guided and controlled by others, he resolved on finding means to give his
views to the public, and to advocate his measures, in his own way. To this
end he projected and established a newspaper in Portland, and was the
editor from the time of its first issue in 1853, to 1859, when it became
merged in the Daily Advertiser, a paper in which he had purchased an
interest. It was called The State of Maine, a name purposely and felicitously
chosen, since it was specially devoted to the advocacy of the development of
the great interests of the state, and was issued daily, tri-weekly and weekly.
His foremost purpose in this enterprise was that of educating the public to a
full comprehension of the importance, to the interests of Maine, of building
the European and North American Railway, and to secure for it favorable
legislative action. To the carrying out of this great railway enterprise,
projected by him many years before, he labored with his pen without
ceasing. He made the columns of his paper a vehicle to carry far and
near every argument which could be devised favorable to the execution of
this great undertaking.

While steadily devoted to the various purposes for which it was originally
established, it was a medium for making public his views on the few political
questions in which he took an active interest. Originally a whig, he was
found, when that party melted away, acting with the republicans; but he
reserved for himself a freedom of political action and opinion. He took the
lead in opposition to the prohibitory liquor law to which the republican party
committed itself in 1855, and devoted the strength of the columns of his
paper to defeat that measure. At his suggestion, the Hon. Hannibal Hamlin,
an avowed opponent of prohibition, was brought forward as candidate for
governor in 1856, and elected by a large majority. He was strongly
opposed to the repeal of the Missouri compromise, and he directed the
whole force of his paper against that measure. In the arena of politics he
was much the same, as in other things, bold, fearless and uncompromising.
Seeking no political preferment himself, he could act independently and
with greater effect.

Mr. Poor always felt the greatest interest in whatever related to the
welfare and prosperity of Portland, his residence for the last twenty-five
years of his life. His name is memorably associated with its great com-
mercial and industrial interests. By the effect of enterprises of his own
device and execution, he lived to see it advance in wealth and population
far beyond the limits set for it by the most hopeful. Soon after removing
there he formed a law-partnership with John M. Adams, Esq., which
continued several years, the firm being chiefly engaged in railway causes.
After the dissolution of the partnership Mr. Poor soon abandoned the
practice of law, other matters absorbing his whole attention.

With a true perception of its maritime position and fitness for a great
commercial metropolis, he made it the Atlantic terminus of his first great railway enterprise. While other seaports, in the gulf of Maine, were bidding for the ocean terminus of the Atlantic and St. Lawrence Railroad, he fought stoutly and bravely for Portland, and won, placing that city in the very front rank of marine ports. Soon after he came to Portland he organized a company, and procured for it a charter, for the manufacture of locomotives and cars. This was an entirely successful enterprise, and a great public benefit to the city as well as to the state. It was known as the "Portland Locomotive Works," and the leading manufactury in the state. For many years he was president of the company. In 1857 he proposed the building of a new city hall on a scale commensurate with his anticipated growth and importance of the city, on the site of the court house and jail. His design was to fill the entire square from Chestnut to Myrtle street with the new edifice. The proposition met with much opposition at first. He zealously advocated the scheme, in his paper and otherwise, until his plan was substantially adopted. The hall was built, and was the most beautiful and elaborate public structure in Maine. It was partly destroyed by the memorable fire of July 4, 1866; but has since been rebuilt.

He is identified with the successful establishment of the Gas Light Company in Portland. He organized the company and was president till the sale to the city of half its stock, a step which put it on a good financial basis.

He is conspicuous in the history of another great city improvement, projected by him prior to 1852. This was the opening of Commercial street, making direct communication across the city from the station of the Atlantic and St. Lawrence road to the station of the Portland and Portsmouth road. While this was recognized as a desirable public improvement, still the difficulties and the expense attending it were looked upon as formidable. The measure met with great opposition, and by this means awakened the attention of all classes of citizens. He advocated, with all his force, the opening of this street, and persisted in keeping his arguments before the public till the measure was adopted, and the road opened. The benefit which resulted to the city from opening this street was immense; and he was always justly proud of being the originator of the enterprise.

At the time of the great fire in Portland he was in Washington, and active in the efforts there made to collect subscriptions for the sufferers. The mayor of that city publicly expressed his obligation to Mr. Poor for the plan which led to so generous a subscription in that city.

No other person accomplished so much for the commercial interests of Portland as Mr. Poor did while he lived there. Never, for a moment, did his zeal for its advancement abate; and never did his efforts to make it the leading commercial metropolis of New-England lessen. He was fond of contrasting its comparative magnitude, at various epochs within his memory, and of forming estimates of its future greatness. "I am proud," he said a few years ago, "of Portland; I rejoice at her prosperity. I cannot walk the streets of that beautiful city, without a feeling of conscious pride. I have watched its prosperity, step by step. I have seen it grow up from the 'deserted village' of 1843, to the commercial metropolis of 1865."

Mr. Poor was a ready and efficient writer, and his pen was never long idle. His industry is attested by more than fifty printed pamphlets, written by him, on various subjects; while his contributions to the public press, at

1 Argument before Legislative Committee, Feb. 14, 1865, p. 18.
home and abroad, are without number. He always wrote for a purpose, and all his writings are characterized for clearness and force. His principal writings were his historical memoirs, addresses at railway conventions, memorials and reports to Legislatures, and a memoir of the Hon. Reuel Williams, prepared and read before the historical society at the request of that body. The character and eminent ability of Mr. Williams procured for him the title of the "first citizen of Maine." He was always a firm friend to Mr. Poor, and had great respect for his ability as a railway projector, statistician, and historical investigator.

Having already much exceeded the limits assigned for this memoir, I must here pause, and leave to others the labor of delineating more completely the character and the deeds of this remarkable man. His achievements attest his great powers, his unwearied industry, and the biases of his mind. His name and memory are interwoven with the history of his native state during the period of his activity. Mr. Poor was distinguished for the courteousness of his manners, liberal views, and social feelings. He was bred in the Congregational church, and in that religious faith he lived and died. In domestic life he was delightful, free, easy, and contented. He died suddenly, at his residence in Portland, on Tuesday morning, September 5, 1871. The day before, he was busy and active in the matters of his projected railway to Chicago. Late in that day he wrote an article on railways, which appeared in the Argus newspaper the morning he died. His death made a profound sensation; for he had been publicly and widely known for a quarter of a century. The city government and the Board of Trade, of Portland, met and passed resolutions, expressing their sense of his merits and of the public loss. In the Superior Court appropriate notice of his decease was taken by the bar, and Judge Goddard adjourned the court, after a somewhat extended review of his life and public services. The Maine Historical Society held a special meeting and passed a series of resolutions, expressing a sense of deep obligation to Mr. Poor for his great services in the department of history, as well as in behalf of the material interests of the state, and declaring that he is entitled to be regarded as a public benefactor and to be held in grateful remembrance by his fellow citizens.

Mr. Poor married July 8, 1833, Elizabeth Adams, daughter of the Hon. Thomas Adams Hill, a lawyer, and at one time the anti-masonic candidate for governor, of Bangor. She died January 14, 1837, having had children, viz.: Laura Elizabeth, Thomas Barker and Mary Frances Appleton, the eldest of whom alone survived her and her father. His second wife was Elizabeth, eldest daughter of the Hon. Benjamin Orr, an eminent lawyer, and sometime member of congress, of Brunswick. She died at Bangor, June 2, 1844, having had one son, Thomas, who died before her. He married, July 19, 1860, his third wife, Mrs. Margaret Robinson Gwynne, daughter of the late William Barr, of Cincinnati, who survives him.1

1 The Maine Historical Society invited Mr. Tuttle to prepare and read before the society, a memoir of Mr. Poor, but being previously engaged to write one for the Register, he was obliged to decline, for want of time. The society then requested him to read this memoir, and, with leave of the editor, it was read by Mr. Tuttle, before the society in Wiscasset, Me., on Thursday evening, Sept. 12, 1872.