

CHAPTER XI.

Boston.—Whig Caucus.—Speech of Mr. Webster.—Politics in Massachusetts.—Election of Governor and Representatives.—Thanksgiving Day and Governor's Proclamation.—Absence of Pauperism.—Irish Repeal Meeting.—New England Sympathizer.—Visit to a Free School.—State Education.—Pay and Social Rank of Teachers.—Importance of the Profession.—Rapid Progress and Effects of Educational Movement.—Popular Lectures.—Lending Libraries.

Nov. 10, 1845.—WENT to a great meeting of about 3500 people in Faneuil Hall, where they were discussing the election of the governor and executive officers of the State. It was called a Whig caucus, being only attended by persons of one political party, or if others were present, they were there only by courtesy, and expected to be silent, and not interrupt the harmony of the proceedings. When I entered, I found Mr. Daniel Webster on his legs. Since the arrival of the last mail steamer from Liverpool fears had been entertained that the pretensions of the Cabinet of Washington to the whole, or greater part of Oregon, must end in a war between England and the United States. This topic was therefore naturally uppermost in the minds of a peace-loving and commercial community. The cautious and measured expressions of the Whig statesman when out of office, and his evident sense of the serious responsibility incurred by one who should involve two great nations in war, formed a striking contrast to the unguarded tone of the late inaugural address of the President of the Union on the same subject. I was amused to hear frequent references made to the recent debate in the British House of Commons, the exact words of Sir Robert Peel and others being quoted and commented upon, just as if the discussion had been simply adjourned from Westminster to Boston. The orator rebuked the blustering tone of defiance, in which demagogues and newspapers in some parts of the Union were indulging against England. He then condemned the new constitution