

Topsfield, Mass, June 16, 1902

The President of the Topsfield Historical Society of 1902  
to the President of the Topsfield Historical Society of 2002;

Greeting: -

It is impossible to forecast with any degree of certainty the improvements, much less the discoveries, of the coming century, in science, in the arts of civilized life, in the progress to be made in the solution of the great social questions that confront the people of today.

The history of the century just ended suggests to us thoughts for our successor of a hundred years in the future. The generation of men that is now passing away, and this that now occupies the stage of action, have witnessed most wonderful events in their day.

The most important ends to be accomplished in the next hundred years are the means to be adopted to improve the material prosperity, and for the elevation of the intellectual, moral, and spiritual interests of the whole human race.

We hope and trust that the year 2002 will find the Topsfield Historical Society in a condition to commemorate the accomplishment on a satisfactory basis of the great questions involving the relations of capital and labor; - the improvement of the indigent classes; - the more successful treatment of the criminal class that will be conducive to their improvement and reform; - and the most important question of Temperance.

I am hopeful that you will see war give place to arbitration in the settlement of national disputes, for which reform the initiatory steps were taken by the late International Congress at The Hague; - the amelioration of the laws by all civilized governments, marked progress of moral reform in society; - and the elevation of the standard of moral principle in the life of individuals, of communities, and of nations.

As to what can be added in the next century to the marvellous inventions of the last fifty years, I leave for you to review and enumerate.

With high hopes for the future prosperity of our society, and with best wishes for yourself personally,

I am yours,

Very sincerely,

Justin Allen, President Topsfield Historical Society