BOSTON'S BIRD CLUB

Claims to Have Been the Founder of the Republican Party.

Interesting Facts from Its Early History and Names of Some of Its More Prominent Members of the Past.

How few there are in this city who know and realize that within the four walls of a little room in School street, opposite city hall, the republican party of the United States was founded; and how few there are who know that to one of the oldest dining clubs in the country, the Boston club, which celebrated its forty-eighth anniversary on Saturday, December 27, belongs this great distinction. Such is the fact, reports the Boston Transcript. That afternoon, the one thousand nine hundred and [illegible] regular meeting [illegible] of the club took place, [illegible] large company of members [illegible] welcomed and greeted [illegible] ex-president, the Hon. [illegible] ex-lawyer of [illegible] also was mentioned [illegible] the presidency [illegible]

Some time prior to 1854 a few of the prominent men of Boston were [illegible] informally or semi-officially, as the case might be, to talk over and consider the grave questions then agitating the American people, a Nell-[illegible] era. In April of 1854, Hon. Frank W. Bird, a prominent leader in the "Free Soil" party, organized the little coterie into the Bird club, and on the last Saturday of December of that year the first annual meeting was held. At these meetings the father of the free soil party gave expression to his views and found sympathetic listeners, although all present were not wholly in accord with the sentiments expressed. While not in any sense a political club, yet the organization, in claiming the honor of being the father of the great republican party, refers with special gratification to the fact that men of other political affiliations have been and are members, or have been frequently entertained by it. It also enjoys the distinction of having had around its mahogany the most prominent men in national, state and municipal affairs. Under the influence of its able president it is again renewing its youth, and is destined to retain its prestige of being the "kingmaker" of the commonwealth of Massachusetts, a distinction that it has enjoyed for very many years.

Since its organization as the Bird club it has been known as the Banks club, and later took its present name. Among the prominent members of the club who may be mentioned Henry Wilson, United States senator and vice president of the United States; Charles Sumner, one of the original members, who retained his affiliation until 1874; William Lloyd Garrison, secretary of the [illegible] free soil party; Wendell Phillips, also a free soiler; Thomas W. Slack, [illegible] editor of The Commonwealth; [illegible] John A. Andrew, governor of the commonwealth; Benjamin Poore, of the Boston Journal, also the first republican nominee for the mayor of Boston; John G. Whittier, Benjamin Franklin Butler, E. Rockwood Hoar, former president of the Boston bar, and an ardent abolitionist; Albert Mackey, author of the masonic ritual; Alber[illegible] Hamlin, vice president with Abraham Lincoln; Arthur Brimmer, a prominent philanthropist; [illegible] Alexander Agassiz, Rev. William Ellery Channing, Rev. [illegible] Lord, Rev. Rufus Ellis, Rev. Dr. Bellows, Rev. Octavius Brooks Frothingham, Rev. [illegible] Hale, Rev. Samuel Longfellow, Rev. [illegible] Clarke, Rev. Samuel Johnson, Rev. [illegible] Ware, Rev. [illegible] Hedge, Rev. [illegible] Frothingham, Rev. [illegible] Bellows, Rev. [illegible] Ellis, Rev. [illegible] Channing, Rev. [illegible] Clarke, Rev. [illegible] Hale