

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL.

Since the annual meeting of the Society last October, the following deaths have been reported.

JOHN CHANDLER BANCROFT DAVIS died December 27, 1907. A notice of Judge Davis has been prepared by our associate, Mr. Henry H. Edes.

ANDREW JACKSON GEORGE died December 27, 1907. A notice of Professor George has been prepared by the biographer of the Society, Judge Utley.

EDWARD GAYLORD BOURNE died February 24, 1908. A notice of Professor Bourne has been prepared by Prof. George B. Adams of New Haven.

Last month, a collection of duplicates of books and pamphlets from our library was sold by auction in Boston. While the offerings included a considerable number of early American imprints, they were defective copies, and, as they can only be used to complete other imperfect copies, prices for these ruled low. There was a good attendance of buyers, however, largely representing libraries, and the result, while not large in amount, owing to the great expenses attending such sales, particularly in the matter of cataloguing, was on the whole satisfactory.

The matter of arranging and indexing the manuscripts of the Society, has advanced steadily. This work was undertaken by Dr. Charles H. Lincoln in 1907, and the measure of the importance of our collections is being realized, as various pieces of manuscript are assorted, catalogued and summarized, for the benefit of historical workers, within and without our own membership. An illustration of the finished product of this work was given by the publication in the Proceedings of the Society for October, 1907, of a Calendar of the Manuscripts of Sir William Johnson.

To-day, there is presented for your approval a similar calendar of a kindred collection: The Manuscripts of Col. John Bradstreet. This collection is larger than its predecessor, and the Society has gone further, in the publication in full of interesting historical texts.

In this manner, the sources of history are made not only to render their most convenient service, but manuscript collections are invited to a library, where they will not be lost in a mass of other material. The same methods adopted for calendars, which are to be printed, have been employed for other indexing. Scattered manuscripts have been added to, and listed, with existing collections, or, when relating to a single person or period, have been gathered into a new group. This work of necessity is slow, involving in many cases, minute comparisons of handwriting, where signatures are lacking, or of historical settings, where dates have been omitted, or have been torn from the manuscript. Once done, however, this does not need constant revision, and is of manifest advantage, in that it simplifies problems of reference, and greatly enhances the value of our collections.

At a meeting of the Council, September 10, 1907, Mr. Waldo Lincoln was appointed a committee of one, to take action in securing the removal of the present limitations on the use of the Lincoln Legacy Fund,—established by his grandfather, Governor Levi Lincoln,—so as to make the fund available for the current purposes of the Society.

The decree handed down by the Judge of Probate Court, is given here in full, not only on account of its own importance, but also as a suggestion or guide to any one intending to make a gift or bequest to the Society, to secure to the Society the benefit of the fund, should conditions arise making it unnecessary or impracticable to carry out the original intent of the donor.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

WORCESTER, SS.

At a Probate Court holden at Worcester, in and for the said County of Worcester, on the ninth day of November in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and seven.

On the petition in equity of the American Antiquarian Society of said Worcester Petitioner, against the Attorney General of said Commonwealth, Respondent, praying that the terms and conditions imposed by the provisions of the will of Levi Lincoln, late of said Worcester, deceased, upon the use and disposition of a certain bequest of One Thousand Dollars given by said will to said petitioner, may be modified.

It appearing that said respondent has appeared and answered, and after hearing and consideration, it further appearing that said bequest was made to said Antiquarian Society for a general purpose of charity, that said Society accepted the same upon the terms stated, and for the purposes contemplated in said bequest, and is now under obligation to carry the general intent of the testator into effect, so far as it is possible to do so, and it further appearing that it is impracticable to carry the general charitable intent of the testator into effect, in the precise and exact mode specified by him, but that it is practicable to accomplish and carry into effect the general charitable intent and purpose,

Now therefore, the Court doth order and decree that the plaintiff be and it is hereby authorized and empowered to use and dispose of the income of said fund, and the accumulations thereof, in the manner following, to wit,—

If the Council of said Society, in any year, shall deem it expedient to offer a premium for an original essay or address on some subject connected with, or explanatory of the objects of the Society, to be proposed by the Council and to be read or delivered before the Society, at its annual or other meeting, the said Council may appropriate and devote for such premium or compensation, so much of the interest or income arising from said fund, in any year, as said Council shall think expedient or needful. A competition in the production of the essay or address shall not be required, but with the selection of the subject, the Council shall determine the manner in which, and the persons by whom, from time to time, the essay or address shall be given.

The balance of the income, in any year left after making such premium or compensation, or if in any year the Council

shall deem it inexpedient to offer such premium or compensation, then the whole income for such year, may, under the direction of the said Council, be devoted to the publications of said Society, or to the increase or maintenance of the Society's library and collections;

And if in any year all or any of the interest or income of said funds, shall not be appropriated or disposed of as above provided, then so much of the said interest or income as shall not have been disposed of shall be added to the principal to augment the fund, the interest of which shall be applied in the manner herein appointed in subsequent years.

FRED'K H. CHAMBERLAIN,

Judge of Probate Court.

The subject uppermost in the mind of the Council, during the past six months, has been the selection of a new site for our library building.

It is admitted that we cannot remain in our present quarters any length of time, and carry on our work either with enthusiasm or efficiency, for the obvious reason that we have practically outgrown our space and conveniences. The County Commissioners need, and in the immediate future must have, our present site, for the proposed extension of the court house, and they have frankly told the Committee of the Council that they should condemn our property, rather than allow us to spend money for anything more than ordinary repairs.

This decision on their part precludes the possibility of fireproofing or enlarging our present building.

An understanding, therefore, has been reached between the County Commissioners, and the Committee of the Council, by which the County Commissioners will take a deed of our property, at a certain price, within two or three years, at our convenience, and will apply to the legislature at its present session, for authority to issue bonds to provide means for the payment of the same.

A vote to carry this into effect has already been prepared, and will be submitted to the Society to-day, for its consideration and action.

At a meeting of the Council the original Committee of three, President Lincoln, Edward L. Davis and Judge Utley, appointed to consider the question of a site for a new library building, was enlarged to five, by the addition of Dr. Edmund A. Engler and E. Harlow Russell.

They have viewed various sites in different parts of the city, and have taken into careful consideration whatever advantages or objections have been presented.

From the fact, however, that the home of the American Antiquarian Society has remained in its present hall for the past fifty-five years, and for thirty-three years previous to that time, was only a few hundred feet away; and also recognizing that since the day of Isaiah Thomas, the founder of this Society, our late president and his father have been our greatest benefactors, a feeling naturally prevailed that, except for unusual and most advantageous considerations, we should not move entirely away from familiar associations and surroundings, or even try to acquire a site elsewhere than on land forming a part of the large Salisbury Estate.

It will be remembered that our late president bequeathed to us the sum of two hundred thousand dollars, and the old Salisbury mansion estate at Lincoln Square, diagonally opposite the Society's hall, leaving the bulk of his property to the Worcester Art Museum which he himself had founded.

At one time, it was thought possible that the present Art Museum building might, partly by exchange, and partly by purchase, become the property and the new home of our Society, but after repeated conferences, the authorities of the Art Museum withdrew the proposition from further consideration.

The directors of the Art Museum were, however, desirous to coöperate with us, and to aid, so far as they were able, in the acquisition of an eligible site for our new building.

It is therefore with a peculiar feeling of satisfaction that we are able to report that an arrangement has been made, by which the Art Museum agrees to take the old Salisbury mansion estate, and to give us, in part payment, a lot of land bounded by Park Avenue, Salisbury and Regent Streets, about half a mile in a westerly direction from our present site.

The mansion estate has for us only a commercial value. The house built by the first Stephen Salisbury, probably in the year 1772, is an interesting and beautiful specimen of colonial architecture and construction. In the possession of the Art Museum, however, by reason of its situation, and relation to other property of the Museum, it obviously has added values, so that the agreement entered into, is regarded on all sides as a happy solution of a difficult problem.

The lot bounded by Park Avenue, Salisbury and Regent Streets, is the one unanimously recommended by the Committee to the Council, and by the Council to the Society, as the most promising site for our new library building. It contains approximately forty thousand square feet, nearly four times the area of our present site.

Electric cars from Main Street pass every fifteen minutes, and it is not unreasonable to expect increased service in the near future.

The site carries with it all the associations of the Salisbury environment, presents an opportunity for a building of dignified presence, abounding with air and light, and offers an attractive outlook over Institute Park.

An adequate fire-proof library can be built here, for a sum including land and building that should leave the Society with a working capital, not as large as we wish, or hope to have, but sufficient we think to justify the course recommended to the Society for its adoption.

Undoubtedly to some, and particularly to members from out of town, the site may seem to be far away from the centre of the city, and perhaps too far away from our present home, but those who know Worcester well, who are familiar with the conditions which contribute to its growth, and who have faith in its future, feel that it is well chosen.

In this connection it may be interesting to note that, our associate, Dr. Mendenhall, a few years since, when President of the Worcester Polytechnic Institute, devoted considerable time to determine, by a mathematical curve, the law for the growth of population as applied to the

City of Worcester, using for the purpose the well-known method, based upon the doctrine of probability. A formula was deduced, from which the population of the city for a certain year was predicted.

A general interest in the subject, at a later day, impelled Dr. Levi L. Conant of the same Institute to investigate the whole subject anew, and to deduce, independently, the law of the growth of Worcester, for the purpose of predicting the population for 1905, and also for any year in the near future.

Without detail or explanation, your attention is invited to the result, which is that a computation worked out by Dr. Conant according to the law, gives Worcester for the year 1915, a probable population of 179,149, and for the year 1925, 231,560. The population to-day, estimated by the Water Department of the City of Worcester, is about 147,000.

A blue print is herewith submitted of a chart drawn by Clellan Waldo Fisher of Worcester, Architect, showing the theoretical and actual curves of population.

This forecast of the future, based on a law which has operated without any material deviation for a century or more, helps to strengthen the impression that the Committee is not in error in selecting the proposed site for our new library building.

EDWARD L. DAVIS,

For the Council.

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