

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

SINCE the date of the Annual Meeting, the Society has lost through death five members. James Ford Rhodes of Boston, elected in 1900, died January 22, 1927. John Adams Aiken of Greenfield, Mass., elected in 1920, died January 28, 1927. Simeon Eben Baldwin of New Haven, elected in 1893, died January 31, 1927. William Beer of New Orleans, elected in 1908, died February 1, 1927. Joseph Florimond Loubat, who for many years past resided in Paris, elected in 1897, died March 1, 1927. Appropriate notices of these members will appear in the printed Proceedings for this meeting.

Quite the most important activity during the past winter has been the attempt, fortunately successful, to obtain additional income for the present financial year sufficient to take care of our increased expenses and to obviate the necessity of soliciting special gifts from certain members who have invariably rallied to our support when called upon. On December 18 last the following letter was sent to the entire membership:

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY:

Under the date of May 10, 1926, a description of the collections of the Society was sent to each member. There was also included a statement of immediate needs and the urgent importance of increasing the endowment by the amount of \$500,000. There has already been subscribed by Worcester members \$45,000 on condition that \$100,000 shall be raised in Worcester.

Until this endowment is obtained, our income is not increased and the needs are very pressing. An indication of the urgency of the situation is given in the closing paragraph of the Librarian's annual report in October 1926, as follows:

"We have practically no income for the purchase of any but the most necessary books, relying for the acquisition of valuable material upon the special solicitation of gifts, which takes time and energy; our binding is so much in arrears that we have literally thousands of volumes on the shelves waiting to be put in proper condition; our printing is restricted to the two issues of Proceedings each year, without consideration of the great amount of valuable historical and bibliographical material that we might furnish to the scholar; and the inability to pay properly our present staff, and engage additional assistance, makes the problem of service always acute and pressing."

The Committee on Endowment strongly recommends that pending the receipt of a larger income from increased endowment, such members as desire to assist the Society shall be given an opportunity to subscribe for the calendar year 1927 such amounts as they care to, to be regarded as current income. At least \$10,000 is needed to meet immediate pressing demands. Already seven subscriptions of \$500 each and three of \$250 each have been secured, from voluntary contributions made at the annual meeting. The Committee cannot make it too clear that no member should feel under the slightest obligation to make any contribution.

It is not proposed to invite these subscriptions for a period beyond the calendar year 1927 because it is hoped that within that time the increased endowment will be secured.

WALDO LINCOLN

Chairman of the Committee on Endowment

The result of this appeal was singularly successful and a pleasing commentary upon the confidence of the members in the conduct of the Society and their pride in our growth. Forty-two members replied with contributions or subscriptions to the amount of \$10,235, comprising the following names: George S. Barton, Henry W. Belknap, Frank B. Bemis, Albert J. Beveridge, George F. Booth, Clarence W. Bowen, Hampton L. Carson, Clarence S. Brigham, Henry L. Bullen, Henry W. Cunningham, Francis H. Dewey, George S. Eddy, Charles Evans, William E. Foster, Homer Gage, T. Hovey Gage, Charles E. Goodspeed, Albert B. Hart, Francis R. Hart, Aldus C. Higgins, Matt B. Jones, William V. Kellen, Thomas B. Lawler, Waldo Lincoln,

William S. Mason, William G. Mather, John M. Merriam, Paul B. Morgan, Charles L. Nichols, Grenville H. Norcross, Russell S. Paine, George A. Plimpton, George I. Rockwood, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Wilbur H. Siebert, Justin H. Smith, Henry R. Wagner, Clarence M. Warner, Charles G. Washburn, Henry B. Washburn, James B. Wilbur, John Woodbury.

In addition, other members wrote encouraging letters or promised future support. These contributions have satisfactorily relieved the situation for the present year and augur well for the success of the permanent endowment fund which we hope to raise.

As was shown in the above quoted letter to members, a fund of \$500,000 is necessary if the Society wishes to function as an important reference library for the aid of students in American history. Believing that the raising of such a fund depends largely upon the support given to it in the city in which the Library is located, we have centered our effort in getting the sum of \$100,000 in Worcester. To that end we have so far secured subscriptions of \$73,000, dependent upon the raising of \$100,000 before October 1, 1927. When this amount is obtained plans will then be announced for the further development of the fund.

Some notable accessions have been made to the Library in the past six months, but a description of such volumes properly belongs to the Librarian's Report at the Annual Meeting. For some reason, perhaps because of the widening prestige of the Society, the correspondence has greatly increased over previous years. It seems to take almost the entire time of the Librarian and a portion of the staff to answer the serious inquiries which come to us from historical students all over the country, some of the queries being problems that require considerable research. This is partly due to the work being done on the great Dictionary of American Biography, in which we are so much interested, and to which because of our biographical and bibliographical check-lists, we are able to

contribute considerable assistance. The new Union List of Serials, now in process of compilation, is another monumental enterprise of the highest value, and has caused us to examine and list our collection of seventeen thousand volumes of American periodicals.

The gathering of material and filling in the gaps in our various collections constitute our most important work, but the exploiting of these collections for the benefit of the writers of history is the chief purpose of acquisition. To collect is the means, but to serve is the end.

Respectfully submitted,
CLARENCE S. BRIGHAM,
For the Council

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