

## REPORT OF LIBRARIAN

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THE growth of the Library during the past year has been both continuous and normal. Expressed in tabular form, the accessions total as follows:

Bound volumes	4,237
Pamphlets	12,727
Engravings, broadsides, maps, mss., etc.	1,132
Unbound newspapers	3,490

The number of bound volumes now in the Library is 165,849 and of pamphlets 269,955, a total of 435,804 titles.

In contrast to the early days of the Society, the largest source of accession is through purchase, rather than gift. Yet perhaps one-third of the above total has been received through donation, and in this respect the members of the Society are the chief contributors. Fifty-one members have presented to the Library books of historical value, frequently their own publications. A large and continued source of accession is the pamphlet material—the literary and statistical output of the day—contributed by President Lincoln, Chief-Justice Rugg, Mr. Charles G. Washburn, Mr. Henry W. Cunningham, Mr. Grenville H. Norcross, Rev. Herbert E. Lombard and Mr. Charles H. Taylor. As has usually been the case in recent years, Mr. Taylor's gifts have been the most numerous, comprising hundreds of rare books, pamphlets, newspapers, manuscripts, engravings and broadsides.

Mr. Matt B. Jones has sent us many early Vermont imprints and has also contributed a manuscript check-

list of Vermont local history and a list of additions to Gilman's Bibliography of Vermont, both items much used by us for reference. Mr. Charles Evans has sent us the ninth volume of his American Bibliography covering the years 1793-1794 and contributing another mile-stone in the progress of this monumental undertaking. We have also been rejoiced to receive the 117th part of Sabin's Dictionary of Books relating to America, the first appearance of this valuable work since 1892 and the result of the scholarly labors of our fellow member, Mr. Wilberforce Eames.

One of the numerous volumes presented by Rev. Herbert E. Lombard was an early Boston imprint with the following title: "A Dying Fathers last Legacy to an Only Child; or, Mr. Hugh Peter's Advice to his Daughter. Written by his own Hand, during his late Imprisonment in the Tower of London; And given her a little before his Death. Boston: Printed by B. Green, for Benjamin Eliot, at his Shop on the North Side of King-Street. 1717." This is a 24mo. volume of 92 pages and is of course a reprint of one of the many English editions. Its chief interest to the American collector is due to a wood-cut frontispiece portrait of Hugh Peter signed by "J. F. Sculp." There is no question but these are the initials of John Foster, the early Boston engraver whose works are among the rarest in the entire field of early Americana. This particular engraving is not mentioned in Dr. Green's book on "John Foster, the Earliest American Engraver," 1909, as no copy of the imprint was located at that time. Foster died in 1681, hence the wood-cut must have been made before that date and used in another American edition of Hugh Peter, no copy of which is now known. Bartholomew Green soon after 1708 reprinted a broadside, "Divine Examples of God's Severe Judgments upon Sabbath Breakers," which contained four wood-cuts by "J. F. Sculp." This broadside is reproduced in Dr. Green's volume where the engraving is ascribed to Foster, who

is credited with having first engraved the cuts for an earlier edition, previous to 1681. The Hugh Peter engraving follows the general outline of the wood-cut frontispiece made by English engravers for the London editions of Hugh Peter's "Dying Fathers last Legacy," printed in 1660, 1661 and 1664.

Among other eighteenth century imprints received during the year are the "Acts and Laws of the Colony of Rhode Island," Newport 1772; Susannah Carter's "Frugal Housewife," Boston 1772; "Tom Paine's Jest's," Philadelphia 1794, containing 118 jests and songs, instead of 89 as in the recorded 1796 edition; and the "Historical Catalogue of Peale's Collection of Paintings," Philadelphia 1795. Mr. Charles E. Goodspeed presented to the Society three Isaiah Thomas imprints which we hitherto lacked: "The Prodigal Daughter," Boston 1772; Fletcher's "Hymns and Spiritual Songs," Boston 1773; and "The Blind Child," Worcester 1796. Mr. Goodspeed has also followed his example of previous years of adding four interesting volumes to our collection of early "association" books: three owned by Nathaniel Rogers, the emigrant, of Ipswich, one of them a presentation copy from Samuel Sewall; and John Rogers's "Godly and Fruitful Exposition," London 1650, with the autographs of Thomas Shepard and Samuel Bradstreet.

Among miscellaneous items acquired are Revere's Stamp Act View of 1765, obtained through purchase, with the result that we now lack only two of Revere's important engravings—the view of the Colleges at Cambridge and the portrait of Jonathan Mayhew. Mr. John M. Woolsey has presented to the Library a rare broadside "Order of Procession, in honor of the establishment of the Constitution of the United States," Philadelphia, July 4, 1788, and containing a most interesting list of prominent citizens of Philadelphia and of the various trades and professions. From Mr. Charles H. Taylor we received a manuscript volume of architectural designs by Alexander

Parris, including his plans for the Church at Portland 1807, the Portland Bank Building 1807, Commodore Preble's house at Portland 1808, and the Governor of Virginia's house at Richmond 1812. The gift from Miss Frances S. Shedd, of Wethersfield, Conn., of a collection of letters written by Timothy Swan, the early composer of music, has provided us with a valuable series of documents relating to eighteenth century American psalmody.

The newspaper accessions have not been so numerous, merely because less of this material has come upon the market. As is usual in the Librarian's Report, the most graphic way of showing these accessions is in tabular form:

VERGENNES, VERMONT AURORA, 1824-1825  
 AMHERST, FARMER'S CABINET, 1810-1882  
 CONCORD, HERALD OF FREEDOM, 1843-1846  
 DOVER, DEMOCRATIC PRESS, 1874-1876  
 DOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE REPUBLICAN, 1826  
 EXETER, CHRISTIAN HERALD, 1847  
 CHELSEA BULLETIN, 1865-1867  
 CHELSEA, TELEGRAPH, 1864-1867  
 NORTHAMPTON, DEMOCRAT, 1812-1813  
 NORTHAMPTON, HAMPSHIRE GAZETTE, 1818  
 OAKHAM HERALD, 1890-1902  
 SPRINGFIELD, HAMPSHIRE HERALD, 1784-1785  
 WORCESTER, LIBERTY OF THE PRESS, 1846-1847  
 PROVIDENCE PATRIOT, 1829  
 ALBANY, REGISTER, 1804-1805  
 CHERRY VALLEY GAZETTE, 1818-1819  
 HUDSON, BALANCE, 1805  
 NEW YORK, ATLAS, 1828-1832  
 NEW YORK, JOURNAL OF COMMERCE, 1852-1854  
 POUGHKEEPSIE, POLITICAL BAROMETER, 1806-1807  
 TROY GAZETTE, 1807-1808  
 LANCASTER, INTELLIGENCER, 1801-1803  
 PHILADELPHIA, ALEXANDER'S MESSENGER, 1840-1841  
 PHILADELPHIA, AURORA, 1800  
 PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY BULLETIN, 1831-1832  
 PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY COURIER, 1846  
 PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY EVENING MAIL, 1854  
 PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY EVENING POST, 1842-1843  
 PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY GLEANER, 1847-1848

PHILADELPHIA, SUN, 1844-1845  
AUSTIN, TEXAS SIFTINGS, 1882, 1886  
COSTA RICA, BOLETIN JUDICIAL, 1897-1912  
COSTA RICA, LA GACETA, 1897-1912  
MEXICO, DIARIO DEL GOBIERNO, 1837-1844

Not in recent years have so many scarce almanacs come up for sale. It is seldom that we find an eighteenth century almanac that we lack, yet no less than twenty have been acquired during the past year, and all obtained through the continued kindness and generosity of our fellow member, Mr. Samuel L. Munson. Many of them are the only located copies and some have not hitherto been known. The titles follow:

Daniel Travis, Almanack for 1709, Boston  
Almanack for 1713, by a Lover of Mathematicks, Boston  
Daniel Travis, Almanack for 1716, New London  
Thomas Paine, Almanack, for 1719, Boston  
Rhode Island Almanack for 1729, Newport  
Joseph Stafford, Rhode Island Almanack for 1738, Newport  
Poor Robin's Spare Hours, Almanack for 1751, Philadelphia  
Franklin's Pocket Almanac for 1757, 1759, 1765, 1767, 1768, Phila.  
Pennsylvania Pocket Almanack for 1770, Philadelphia  
Father Abraham's Pocket Almanack for 1771, Philadelphia  
Tobler's Georgia and South Carolina Almanack for 1775, Charleston  
Lancaster Pocket Almanack for 1778, Lancaster  
Stearns, Universal Calendar for 1788 and 1789, Bennington  
Lyon's Vermont Calendar for 1795, Rutland.

Perhaps the most interesting, and certainly the most unexpected, accession of the year was made in a field in which we were already strong—the children's books, or "juveniles," printed at Worcester by Isaiah Thomas. In a remarkable collection obtained through purchase were included twelve titles not owned by the Library, one of them the first perfect copy discovered of the 1794 edition of "Mother Goose's Melody." The "find" interested Dr. Charles L. Nichols, himself an ardent collector in this very subject, so much that he generously decided to turn over to the Society every Thomas "juvenile" in his own collection that we

lacked, which meant nineteen additional titles. As a result we now have 59 of the 62 titles of children's books printed by Isaiah Thomas or Isaiah Thomas, Jr., from 1785 to 1806, and 91 of the 104 known varying editions.

Isaiah Thomas was the most noted printer of children's books of his time, as well as the first successfully to occupy this field. In the earlier part of the century, the few books issued were nearly always either religious or instructive, with such titles as "The Prodigal Daughter," "Spiritual Milk for Babes," "Legacy for Children," or "The School of Good Manners." The purpose was to better the morals of the children rather than to entertain them. Thomas realized what a vogue the children's books published in England by John Newbery enjoyed, and in 1785 he obtained a large collection of Newbery's titles and started in to publish them himself. His books were for the most part exact reprints of the English originals, but with his usual love of good printing and care in details, he improved if anything upon them and issued his little volumes with excellent print, illustrations and embossed paper covers.

The size of each edition was about 10,000 copies, and they were evidently quickly disposed of. In his 1796 account of stock, he had on hand 33,000 copies of his various titles. The retail price of these books was from four to twenty cents each, depending upon the number of pages. With the exception of his school-books, and possibly his Bibles, none of his ventures brought him more profit. And yet he apparently did not deem them worthy of preservation in his library. Except for eight titles, not a copy did he present or bequeath to the American Antiquarian Society. Practically our entire collection has been subsequently acquired, and most of the titles in the last twenty years, largely through the interest and generosity of Dr. Charles L. Nichols. In spite of the large editions, very few have survived to the present day. In the

several collections of children's books in the country, few owners possess more than a dozen Thomas issues and fully half of our copies are the only ones known.

"Mother Goose's Melody" is a good example of this statement as to scarcity. Supposed to have been printed first in this country at Boston in 1719, probably from an English original, no copy of such an edition has survived. It remained for John Newbery about 1765 to give to the world this collection of nursery poems in practically the same form as they are accepted today. Who wrote them is not known, except that Oliver Goldsmith is credited with the writing of several, and Smollett, Dr. Johnson and of course Newbery himself are supposed to have had some part in the authorship. Yet no copy of a John Newbery edition can be located, and when William H. Whitmore wrote his volume on the history of Mother Goose's Melody in 1892, the earliest edition that he could use for his text was a copy, without title-page, of Thomas's second edition of 1794 and an imperfect copy, although with title-page, of the third edition of 1799. Now, within the past few months we have obtained an immaculately perfect copy of the 1794 edition, and also a copy of the 1799 edition. The 1786 edition we have only in a fragmentary copy. It cannot but make a deep impression upon the beholder when he looks at this little paper covered volume printed in 1794 and realizes that it is the earliest known printing of the most famous of all English children's books—a work which has been committed to memory by more people than any other rhymes in the English language.

Because of our own recent success in adding to our collections and because of the increased interest in the subject among collectors, we have placed on exhibition a selection of children's books, including only those printed in this country before 1800, the single exceptions being a showing of the early nineteenth century editions of "Mother Goose," and two of the publica-

tions of Isaiah Thomas, Jr. A complete list of the books in the exhibition is appended to this Report.

The new Dictionary of American Biography, edited by Allen Johnson and made possible through the generosity of Adolph S. Ochs, has been of much concern to us during the year. In each letter sent out to contributors is enclosed the following printed slip: "The American Antiquarian Society at Worcester, Mass., has compiled special indexes to American biographical material and is willing to answer specific queries as to dates and facts for any American biography." This has resulted in the sending to this Library of over two hundred letters of inquiry and with very few exceptions the queries have been answered, with reference to authorities, or clues have been furnished leading to the solving of disputed problems. Our own manuscript indexes to American biography have generally supplied the needed facts, but in some cases correspondence with descendants or custodians of records or superintendents of cemeteries have been resorted to in the effort to settle doubtful dates.

The trouble with most biographical dictionaries is that the writers have followed previous printed biographical dictionaries without attempting to prove their facts. In the case of one early New England divine, six different dates of birth and death were recorded by six different authorities, although the entry of birth in the town records and the gravestone inscription were both obtainable after a little search. In another case—that of the father of one of the Presidents of the United States—no biographical dictionary was able to provide the place and date of his birth, although the facts were correctly entered in the family Bible still in the possession of his descendants.

These queries take considerable time to answer, but they are interesting and decidedly worth the trouble taken. What is the good of having gathered this great collection of American biography, with all its



special indexes and alphabetical records of thousands of names, unless it can be made of use to American writers. Furthermore, this Society, as one of the fifteen organizations constituting the American Council of Learned Societies, is part of the body which is sponsoring and controlling the publication of this monumental work. Although self-imposed, it is a task that we gladly seek.

This Report cannot be closed without reference to the generosity of the members and friends of the Society who have made it possible for the Library to function during the past year as an institution contributing real aid to American scholarship. When we sent out an appeal early in the winter for gifts to enlarge our annual income, we placed \$10,000 as the lowest possible sum that we must have to continue operations even on the modest scale to which we have become accustomed. I know that some did not believe that this amount could be raised in the membership. Yet exactly \$10,235 was paid in to the Special Gifts Fund during the year, in response to this appeal, which enabled us to make necessary book purchases, keep our binding from falling too greatly into arrears, pay proper salaries to our few assistants and keep up with the constantly increasing overhead. It is such encouragement from our own members that gives us faith in the work we are doing and leads us to believe with implicit confidence that the real endowment fund which we have so long sought is at last in sight.

As an appendix to this Report there is printed a list of the children's books now on exhibition in the cases in the upper hall.

Respectfully submitted,  
CLARENCE S. BRIGHAM,  
*Librarian.*

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