

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

SINCE the last meeting of the Society three deaths have occurred in its active membership. James Benjamin Wilbur of Manchester, Vermont, died suddenly in New York City on April 28; Hampton Lawrence Carson of Philadelphia died July 18; and John Whittemore Farwell of Boston died there October 7. The death of Mr. Wilbur, following so soon after that of Dr. Nichols and of Mr. Washburn, was a severe blow to the Council, as to the Society, and it is safe to say that no group of three members of the Society can be named whose loss would be more deplored. Charles Grenfill Washburn, whose advice, pen and purse were ever ready for any emergency; Charles Lemuel Nichols, beloved President, lifelong devotee of the Society's objects; James Benjamin Wilbur, whose princely gift makes him the most generous benefactor of the Society since Stephen Salisbury, the younger. What other institution has ever suffered such serious loss in the short period of eleven months.

At a special meeting of the Council, held on May 2, a minute prepared by Mr. Brigham, was adopted:

The Council of the American Antiquarian Society meets today to take action upon the death of James Benjamin Wilbur, for seven years a member of this body and for nine years a member of the Society. Mr. Wilbur died in New York City on April 28, less than a week after his return from a winter spent in Europe. Apparently in the best of health and looking forward to several more years of activity, he was stricken suddenly and passed away without suffering or pain.

Mr. Wilbur ever since his election to the Council has been one of its conspicuous and most valued members. Endowed with a keen and analytical mind and an unusual gift of foresight he instigated plans for the benefit of this Society and pressed vigorously to have them carried through. Once that his mind

was made up regarding the usefulness of this institution in the field of American scholarship, he gave generously of his own resources, always serving as a leader for others to follow.

With a knowledge of the value of our collections, brought about by his own historical researches, he never lost the opportunity to make the Library better known and to increase its prestige. His tenacity of purpose was remarkable, his zeal unflagging, his adherence to an ideal always uplifting and inspiring, and in all this working for our good there was never a thought of himself, never a desire for his own advancement. Unselfishness was with him a cardinal virtue.

We shall miss him sorely, not only for his advice, and his support, but chiefly for his sympathy, his understanding and his qualities of heart, which endeared him as a constant and unfailing friend.

By Mr. Wilbur's death the full income of his gift of one hundred thousand dollars, a part of which was temporarily reserved, has become available for the Society's use. This gift was acknowledged in the Council's report a year ago, but could not appear in the Treasurer's report except as regards its income. Since then the James B. Wilbur Fund has been established. Memoirs of Mr. Carson, Mr. Wilbur and Mr. Farwell will be prepared for the printed Proceedings.

There has never been close relationship between the Society and most of its foreign members, especially those living in Europe and South America. Beyond a courteous acceptance of election there has seldom been any further correspondence. To remedy this it was last year voted by the Council to send each issue of the Proceedings to the foreign members. The results of this has been the discovery of the death of five of them, that of three, whose interest in the Society must have been of the slightest, having occurred many years ago.

Dr. Johannes Ernst Conrad, of Germany, who was born at Borken, West-Prussia on February 28, 1839, died on April 25, 1915. He was a professor in the department of philosophy at the Halle University, and received his education at the Universities of Berlin and Jena. His publications include several

statistical treatises, an economic history, and a study of the university system of education in Germany. He was elected to this Society in 1893.

Sir Arthur Herbert Church, of Great Britain, died on June 1, 1915. He was Professor of Chemistry in the Royal Academy of Arts. His scientific work has included the discovery of several new minerals, and from 1898-1901 he was President of the Mineralogical Society. He was born in London on June 2, 1834 and was educated at Kings College, London, at the Royal College of Chemistry, and at Oxford. He was also an expert on Oriental and English pottery, and on precious stones, and his collections have been exhibited at the Royal Academy. He was elected to this Society in 1901.

Dr. Johann Christolph Vollgraff, of Holland, died on January 6, 1920. He was born at The Hague on January 3, 1848 and received the degree of Ph.D. from the University of Leyden in 1870. He then studied several years in Italy and Greece, collating the Codex Ravennos at Ravenna and manuscripts in the Vatican library at Rome. Dr. Vollgraff was Professor of Classical Philology at the University of Brussels and later, Professor of Greek Philology and Archæology at the University of Utrecht. He was elected to this Society in 1895 and an account of his edition of Aristotle's Musical Problems was written for the Proceedings of April 1903.

Genaro García, of Mexico, who was elected to this Society from Mexico in 1907, died November 26, 1920. He was born at Fresnillo, Zacatecas, on August 17, 1867. He was admitted to the practice of the law in 1891, but instead, interested himself in historical work for the remainder of his life. He held many important positions, among them Director of the National Museum. He was a prolific writer and publisher, and his list of printed titles includes nearly a hundred works. A short biographical sketch of him was printed in the *Hispanic American Historical Review* for November, 1921.

James Rodway, of British Guiana, was born in Trowbridge, Wilts, England in 1848 and died in Georgetown, British Guiana, on November 27, 1926. He was educated at Trowbridge and in 1870 went to British Guiana. He was Librarian of the Royal Agricultural and Commercial Society of British Guiana and Curator of the British Guiana Museum. His publications include a three volume History of British Guiana, "The West Indies and Spanish Main" in the Story of the Nation series, and many contributions to historical magazines. He was elected to this Society in 1917 and wrote for the Proceedings in October 1918 an article called "The Press in British Guiana."

Dr. Nicolas León, of Mexico, died at Oaxaca on January 23, 1929 at the age of seventy-one. He held the position of Professor of Ethnology in the Museo Nacional at Mexico City. He had formerly been Director of the Museo Michoacamo at Morelia. He has published many works of value to the ethnological knowledge of Mexico, and was a frequent contributor to the publications of the Museo Nacional. A bibliography of his writings was published in 1908. He was elected to this Society in 1890, and was a frequent contributor to the Library and its collections.

The Council regrets to announce that by reason of a prolonged and somewhat indefinite stay in Europe, Mr. Worthington C. Ford has resigned the office of Secretary of Domestic Correspondence, which he has held since October, 1915, and by reason of which he has been a member of the Council. The office itself is a sinecure as, of necessity, the burden of all correspondence, both domestic and foreign, must fall upon the Librarian, but by education and temperament and through his wide acquaintance with literary men Mr. Ford is peculiarly fitted to advise in the policies of a Society like this. He has been one of the most valued members of the Council and his advice, criticism and encouragement will be greatly missed.

The physical condition of the grounds and buildings is good. The prolonged drought of the past summer was not beneficial to the lawns and shrubs but no serious injury has been done. Some damage to the marble corners of the building owing to leaks in the roof due to previous faulty workmanship having been discovered, repairs to the roof have been economically made during the summer by our own men. The repairs to the marble slabs, however, will be a more serious matter, requiring expert workmanship and the expenditure of a considerable sum. The work is being done by the J. W. Bishop Co., the original contractors for the building. Necessary repairs have been made to the boilers and the whole plant is in satisfactory condition.

The shelves in the reading room and alcoves are entirely devoted to local history and genealogy. Both have received so many accessions of late years that the alcoves, which contain the local history, are more than filled. To obtain additional shelving it is proposed to install two lines of cases on the central alcove on the west, uniform with the existing cases, at a cost of about \$475. This will provide three hundred feet of shelving, enough for nearly twenty-five hundred books, which will be sufficient for several years. The only alternative is to remove a portion of the local history to the new stack, an inconvenient location for a collection which is so frequently consulted.

The children of the late President Nichols have presented his portrait by Hildebrandt to the Society. It is hung in the Council room. The Society now owns the oil portraits of all its past presidents except Mr. Hoar, 1884-1887; Mr. Hale, 1906-1907; and Mr. Lincoln, 1907-1927. It is hoped that these may be acquired ere long.

The several departments of the library have had their usual annual growth and nothing of note needs to be mentioned beyond what is covered by the Librarian's report. The three lower floors of the

stack still appear to be sufficient to furnish ample shelving for the growth of ten to fifteen years, but the newspaper shelves are filling rapidly. This is not strange since the issues of one newspaper alone fill twenty-four thick volumes each year. It has already become necessary to reduce the number of newspapers preserved in the Library and it is becoming questionable, if the value of newspapers to future historians, as sources of information, will not be largely reduced, if not wholly destroyed by their very bulk. The *New York Times*, whose index makes it more valuable for preservation than any of its contemporaries, taxes the resources of any library severely. It is but a question of time when the further preservation of newspapers by this Society will demand serious consideration.

In addition to Mr. Wilbur's gift, which now first appears in the Treasurer's report, the Society has received five thousand dollars from Mrs. Frances Crocker Sloane of New York in memory of her ancestor, Isaiah Thomas, by which has been established the Isaiah Thomas Fund; also five thousand dollars from the estate of Charles G. Washburn, which has been added to the Charles F. Washburn Fund. The income of the Andrew McFarland Davis Fund will hereafter be available for general purposes, that fund having reached ten thousand dollars through accumulated income as required by the terms of Mr. Davis's bequest. Other smaller gifts to the endowment and for annual expenses are mentioned in the Treasurer's report and are hereby gratefully acknowledged. Especial mention should be made of a gift of seven thousand dollars from Mr. William E. Benjamin, two thousand of which was for the purchase of a file of a rare Pennsylvania newspaper and five thousand for use by the Librarian. A part of this has been used for speeding up the publication of the Proceedings.

The Proceedings for October 1928 have been distributed to the members and the number for April, 1929, is now in the printer's hands and should be ready

for delivery before January. It is sixteen years since the Society published its last volume other than Proceedings. Lack of funds rather than want of material has caused this unfortunate hiatus. The Committee on Publications in 1910 suggested several manuscript collections in the Library as worthy of publication, but the Society has now a pressing call for the re-publication in book form of the Bibliography of American Newspapers by Mr. Brigham, the first installment of which appeared in the Proceedings for October, 1913, and the last in the Proceedings for April, 1927. On account of the many additions to the Society's files and to those of other libraries since the beginning of this publication, the work will require a complete revision, the time for which Mr. Brigham cannot find under the present regime at the library. It is hoped that other arrangements can be made, which will enable Mr. Brigham to finish this important work, the call for which is insistent from many libraries. Even in those libraries which possess a set of our Proceedings, a reference to this important bibliography, scattered as it is throughout thirteen volumes, is almost out of the question. It is estimated that by a simplified presentation of the text the work can be issued in two volumes and that the cost of publication of a sufficient edition will not exceed five thousand dollars. The greater part of this cost, if not the whole, should eventually be returned by sales, for every important library in the country may be counted on as a purchaser. When Mr. Brigham is ready to complete the work the Society must be ready to finance the publication, either through its own treasury or through the generosity of one or more of its members.

It has been the policy of the Society ever since its establishment to welcome students to its library and to show them every facility for work which its means permit. As evidence that this policy is that of the present administration, it is a pleasure to quote from a

recent letter to the Librarian from our associate, Mr. Charles Evans, the following tribute:

Without the aid of the Society I could not attain that accuracy of statement which every work of reference should strive to attain. The open-handed way in which you place the riches of the Society at the service of literary workers has never been equalled—never surpassed by any other institution of learning in any land.

Many expressions of gratitude have been received for courtesies given by the Society, but none more complimentary than the foregoing.

WALDO LINCOLN,
For the Council

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