

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

ANOTHER six months have been added to the one hundred and twenty-three years of this time-honored Society and, in spite of the financial stringency of the times, we are able to record progress and growth. The Library has received several notable gifts and has managed to acquire many rare volumes needed to fill in its collections. But the description of such acquisitions is part of the Librarian's Report and hence will be deferred until the annual meeting in October.

Quite the most encouraging feature of the year has been the support given by members to our request for funds. Partly due to a slightly depleted income account, but chiefly to the expiration of a three-year annual gift of \$5000 from one of our members, the Society found itself for the present fiscal year unable to continue its accustomed activities. Salaries were cut and expenses reduced, but the only way to save further expense was to discontinue book purchase. Soon after the annual meeting last October a letter was sent out to members, explaining the situation and suggesting the need of funds, but carefully refraining from urging members to contribute. In a Society like this, existing solely for the public good and to aid scholarship, members ought not to be importuned to give financial support to our undertakings. At any rate, the appeal was decidedly successful. Many letters were received, some of the most encouraging coming from those who could not afford to give at all. The result so far is that sixty-seven members have sent in gifts or subscriptions of from \$10 to \$500, to a total of nearly \$7,000. This amount included seven gifts of \$500, one of \$300, four of \$250, one of \$200, and five of

\$100. Therefore we have been enabled to take advantage of many sales of volumes at auction and from booksellers' catalogues. In a library such as ours, with its several special collections, the gaps are comparatively few, and opportunities do not generally knock at our door twice. Moreover, all our bills are paid or arranged for.

A few extraordinary expenses have had to be incurred. The power lawn-mower which had been in use for eleven years, finally became beyond repair and a new one had to be secured at an expense of \$340. On the lawn in front of the library building one of the six large elm trees bordering the front walk died and was replaced by a tree almost as large, transplanted at a cost of \$150. Fortunately we had no expense for the tree itself, as Mr. Aldus Higgins donated from his nearby estate a tree that was nearly a foot in diameter. Also the last of the boxwood hedge, planted in 1910 as a border around the front walk, died as a result of recent severe winters and was removed.

Another expense was the installation of a burglar alarm system by the American District Telegraph Company. For the first time in twenty-five years the library building was broken into in February and four typewriting machines and a few personal belongings were stolen. They were all recovered and the thief was finally apprehended and is now awaiting trial. But a building with so many rare possessions ought not to be unprotected at night. We already have an adequate system for protection from fire, and now have added to it protection against burglary.

Last summer the Society joined with the Worcester Art Museum in holding at the Museum an exhibition of seventeenth century New England portraits. A total of thirty-six pictures was shown, borrowed from public and private collections, and including three portraits loaned by the Society. A committee was formed to sponsor the exhibition, consisting of Clarence S. Brigham, chairman, Charles K. Bolton,

Alan Burroughs, Theron J. Damon, William C. Endicott, Henry Wilder Foote, John Hill Morgan, and Francis H. Taylor. Miss Louisa Dresser of the Art Museum staff has been working at this Library for several weeks, compiling the descriptive catalogue of the exhibit, and is producing a work which will serve as an authoritative account of the beginnings of American art.

There has been an unusually long record of deaths of members during the last six months—seven members, four of whom had been members for over a quarter of a century. Herman V. Ames, elected to this Society in 1909, professor of American constitutional history at the University of Pennsylvania and author on the institutional and political history of the colonial period, died February 7, 1935. Roland B. Dixon, elected in 1909, professor of anthropology at Harvard and authority on the history of the North American Indians, died December 19, 1934. Albert H. Whitin, of Whitinsville, Mass., elected in 1910, patron of the fine arts and a steadfast friend of this Society, died March 6, 1935. Charles Evans, elected in 1910, compiler of the monumental "American Bibliography" and one of the Society's staunchest supporters, died February 8, 1935. William L. Clements, elected in 1916, founder of the great Clements library at the University of Michigan, died November 6, 1934. Frank B. Bemis of Beverly Farms, Mass., elected in 1925, owner of a notable library of English and American literature, died March 10, 1935. Adolph S. Ochs, elected in 1927, owner and publisher of the "New York Times" and patron of the Dictionary of American Biography, died April 8, 1935.

Obituary notices will appear as part of the printed record of this meeting. Two of these members in their wills contributed to our funds. Mr. Bemis bequeathed \$5000, and Mr. Whitin, in a will remarkable for its length and its numerous charities, left \$10,000 to the Society.

The Proceedings of the Society are nearly a year in arrears. Ordinarily the Proceedings of a meeting appear about six months later, after the reports and papers have been gathered for printing. But due to a slight difficulty with illustrations, the Proceedings of last April have been delayed, although they will be mailed within a fortnight. At the same time preprints of the Proceedings of the annual meeting in October, to include the Council and Librarian's Reports, will be forwarded to members.

Respectfully submitted,

CLARENCE S. BRIGHAM,

For the Council

Copyright of Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society is the property of American Antiquarian Society and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.