

Report of the Librarian

THE past year has been one of progress and prosperity for the Library. We have kept abreast of new work and have made satisfying progress on several long-term projects, notably the recataloging of early imprints. The response of the members to the Council's appeal for funds has enabled us to keep up the current serial publications, to complete broken files, to buy the most useful new books, and to fill many small gaps in our collections. No year could have begun more auspiciously than this just past, for before the ink was dry on my last report Mr. Stephen W. Phillips had presented us with the beautiful Brinley copy of John Norton's *Heart of N-England* (Cambridge, 1659). This was the most valuable of many single items which came to the Library from its former benefactors during the year. Mr. Frederic G. Melcher has, as in former years, given us many new books. Our collection of American Literature, which has grown very rapidly this year, has benefited especially from the gift by Mrs. Roswell Skeel, Jr., of her fine collection of Henry James; this was accompanied by a sizable check as a further offering on that particular altar. A very useful accession was a set of photostats of the Mather items, mostly unique, not in our collection; they came by the kindness of our associate, Mr. Thomas J. Holmes. Among the more important groups of books received was the collection of Isaac Watts' *Divine and Moral Songs for Children* built up by our late associate Wilbur Macey Stone and left to us in his will. This gift includes 240 different editions of the *Divine Songs* and related works and presumably makes ours the largest collection of this most popular of the early juve-

niles. Chronologically this collection begins with a copy of the London edition of 1727 autographed by the author and comes down to the beautifully illustrated editions of the 1860's. As both juveniles and hymnals, these quaintly charming songs fall within two of our fields of collection and will do not a little to improve our showing in Mr. Frank J. Metcalf's bibliography of sacred music which Mr. Valmore X. Gaucher, thanks to the financial support of Mrs. Homer Gage, has brought nearer to press during the past year.

It is far cry from these childish songs to the small lot of rare Revolutionary War tracts which came to us from the library of the late R. T. H. Halsey. These included Dickinson's *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania* (New York, 1768) and *The Farmer's and Monitor's Letters to the Inhabitants of the British Colonies* (Williamsburg, 1769). By purchase we acquired other rare items of that period including the *Rules and Articles for the Better Government of the Troops . . . of the Twelve United English Colonies* (Philadelphia, 1775) and the *Extracts from the Votes and Proceedings of Congress* (Philadelphia, 1774) and (Norwich, 1774).

Mr. Alfred L. Aiken, who recently gave us title to the collection of Worcester prints and views which have long been deposited here, last December gave to the Library the collection of Alexander Hamilton material which he had been twenty-five years in making. Among the treasures included were the first three items in Ford's *Bibliotheca Hamiltoniana*. Number one is Hamilton's anonymous *Full Vindication of the Measures of the Congress*, which first indicated his genius. With it are fine copies of Samuel Seabury's reply, *A View of the Controversy*, and Hamilton's counterblast, *The Farmer Refuted*. The Aiken collection includes fourteen of the twenty rarest Hamilton items. The pieces which it lacks are mostly government documents of only tenuous Hamilton interest. All of the Phocion controversy

pamphlets are present, as is every edition of the *Federalist* but two, one a reissue. The controversial pamphlets of the later period of Hamilton's life are well represented, and most of those missing were already in our collections. The combination of the Aiken collection with the titles already on our shelves gives us almost every historically important Hamilton item. At the suggestion of the donor we have sold the duplicates and set aside the proceeds for the purpose of completing the collection. A special bookplate has been made to identify the items given by Mr. Aiken or purchased from this fund.

Through the kindness of the William G. A. Turner estate, represented by Mr. Richard G. Turner and Mr. Paul D. Turner, the Library has received a collection of early New England material, primarily by Malden authors. The most interesting single item is the Norwich, 1774, edition of Michael Wigglesworth's *Day of Doom*, one of the few editions of this famous work which we lacked. But the most valuable material received from the Turner estate was a collection of 250 letters written by Abigail Adams, wife of the President, to her sister Mary, wife of Richard Cranch. This collection, inherited from Mary Greenleaf Dawes, great-great-granddaughter of Mary Cranch, throws much light on the political and social history of the period from 1784 to 1800. We hope some time to edit and print the letters in the *Proceedings*. William G. A. Turner was for many years deeply interested in this Library, so it is fitting that his treasures should rest here. Another fortunate acquisition relating to the same historical period was Philip Freneau's *Journey from Philadelphia to New York* (Philadelphia, 1787), one of the few Freneau items we lacked.

The Report of the Council has mentioned the John W. Farwell gift which is now in the process of being accessioned. It will be some time before the transfer is completed, but it

is already apparent that this is a gift of great importance.

The task of filling out incomplete files of historical publications upon our shelves has been proceeding as fast as we could handle the correspondence involved. This unspectacular routine was enlivened by the unexpected completion of our file of a very rare periodical, the *American Musical Magazine*, which consists of four number printed in 1800-01 at Northampton, Massachusetts, by Andrew Wright. The periodical is of particular interest because of the secular and patriotic songs which it contains. We had the first two numbers and were considering ourselves very fortunate to have acquired number four when Mr. Elliott Shapiro of New York, hearing of our luck, completed our file by presenting us with the third number.

During the past twelve months we have acquired an unusually large number of newspaper files of which the more important are the following:

- Washington Republican*, 1822
- Honolulu, Hawaiian Gazette*, 1867-69
- Ke Kumu Hawaii*, 1834-35
- Baltimore Evening Post*, 1792
- Baltimore, *Federal Gazette*, 1800
- Baltimore, *Maryland Journal*, 1779-80
- Boston, *Flag of Our Union*, 1853
- Dedham, *Village Register*, 1822
- Nantucket Inquirer*, 1828-30
- Roxbury Gazette*, 1848-50
- Roxbury, *Norfolk County American*, 1847-48
- Paper-Mill Village (Alstead, New Hampshire), *American Citizen*, 1845-46
- Newark, *New Jersey Telescope*, 1808-09
- Trenton, *State Gazette*, 1853
- Albany, *Weekly Argus and Rough-Hewer*, 1841-44
- Goshen Repository*, 1792-97
- Kingston Democratic Journal*, 1852-54
- New York American*, 1823

New York, *American Citizen*, 1805
New York, *Columbian*, 1810, 1812
New York, *Daily Graphic*, 1877-78, 1882
New York Evening Post, 1804, 1806
New York Gazette, 1805-06
New York Mercury, 1831
New York Morning News, 1846
New York, *New Nation*, 1864
New York, *Sun*, 1838-40
New York, *True Sun*, 1846
Lancaster, *Intelligencer*, 1799-1800
Lancaster, *Zeitung*, 1787-90
Philadelphia, *Aurora*, 1808
Alexander's Philadelphia Messenger, 1846-47
Philadelphia Gazette, 1800-01
Philadelphia, *Scott's Weekly Paper*, 1848-49
Newport, *Rhode Island Republican*, 1802-03
Woonsocket Patriot, 1863
Charleston, *City Gazette*, 1797
Salt Lake City, *Deseret News*, 1858, 1860-63

The last on the above list, a very rare item, was the gift of Mr. Everett D. Graff. Mr. Thomas W. Streeter gave us the file of the *Ke Kumu Hawaii*, the first Hawaiian newspaper. Our holdings of material relating to those islands was further strengthened by Mr. Lathrop C. Harper, who gave us a copy of the first Hawaiian almanac. An important factor in the growth of our newspaper collection this year has been the generosity of our sister libraries. Some of these, recognizing the advantage which accrues from having the best early files collected in one place, have given us outright, or exchanged on the most liberal terms, the items in their collections which we lacked. Frequently we have been able to repay them by supplying their wants from among our duplicates and by rebinding their files, a task for which we are well equipped. We are particularly indebted to the generosity of Brown University, the Maryland Historical

Society, the Massachusetts Historical Society, and the New England Historic Genealogical Society.

A while ago we were able to render some small assistance to Mr. Charles R. Hale, Connecticut Military Necrologist, as a result of which we unexpectedly received twenty-two typescript volumes of marriage and death records extracted from the Hartford *American Mercury*, *Christian Secretary*, and *Columbian Register* for the period 1784-1865. These make the vital records of the state practically available for the first time.

A portrait of Senator Hoar, painted in 1905 by Charles Ackerman Jackson, has been presented to the Society by Mr. Paul Revere O'Connell of Worcester. It was formerly owned by Theodore T. Ellis. It is particularly welcome because, although Senator Hoar was a president of this Society, it had no portrait of him.

Our collection of engravings has been strengthened by the addition of two Amos Doolittle items. The first is the more or less well known "Bonaparte in Trouble," published by Shelton & Kensett. The other, a gift of Mr. Morgan B. Brainard, has the title, "Brother Jonathan Administering a Salutory Cordial to John Bull." The engraving measures $8\frac{5}{8}$ " x $14\frac{1}{2}$ ". On the face of the print are the words "Copy Right Secured" and "Yankee-Doodle Scratch't." This cartoon is part of a double sheet and on the last leaf is a printed letter, dated New Haven, 1813, and signed by Amos Doolittle, announcing the print and its price to dealers. This print is not entered in Stauffer or Fielding and apparently is known by but two other examples, both privately owned. As a political caricature it is interesting because it shows Brother Jonathan pouring Perry down the throat of John Bull, who says, "O! don't force me to take it, Brother Jonathan. Give me Holland Gin, French Brandy—anything but this D—d Yankee Perry—it has already fuddled me."

Another political engraving of the period which came into our hands was "Let the Weapons of War Perish," designed by Kensett and published by Shelton & Kensett on March 1, 1815. We were likewise fortunate in obtaining one of the earliest of American engraved billheads, that of "Samuel Grant at the Crown and Cushion in Union Street near the Town Dock, Boston." It is dated 1735 and is probably the work of Thomas Johnson who made a very similar trade card for Thomas Hancock in 1727.

This year we acquired a small number of manuscripts, among them a lot of Philadelphia shipping papers of the Federalist period; these were the gift of Mr. John H. Scheide. Our total accessions for the year were as follows:

Bound volumes	3718
Pamphlets	2667
Engravings, maps, mss., etc.	972
Unbound newspapers	353

This increases our total of bound volumes to 253,993 and our total of pamphlets to 390,511, or a grand total of 644,504 titles.

The progress and prosperity which have prevailed within these walls during the last year have not blinded us to the fact that we should give serious thought to the place of this Library in the new order which will result from the reorganization of American society which is now under way. Some of you have told me that you saw no place in the future for private, endowed, institutions such as ours, depending for income as they do upon a capitalistic system which appears doomed, and competing with government-supported institutions. Certainly we must take stock of our position.

This Library enters its encounter with the new order with two handicaps: a lack of space and too small a staff. Last year I told you that we had been obliged to construct sky-

scraper wooden stacks in the old coal bin for the housing of newspapers. This year we were driven to shifting those closer together so as to allow the building of another stack in the same room. We have also placed two small cases in the east central alcove on this floor which we formerly used as a work room. But however much of an annoyance lack of space may be, it is not a menace to the institution. Sooner or later we shall have a new stack, and sooner or later we shall have a regional interlibrary agreement under which a division of fields of collection will permit the culling of our shelves. The possibilities of the microfilm are particularly significant to us, for few libraries have such a large portion of their space taken up by newspapers.

The solution of our other existing problem, too small a staff, is not so clear. A new library manual, which is hailed by the profession as the best description of standard practice, assumes that a library of 75,000 volumes needs a staff of fifteen people. By this standard our Library has one-tenth of the staff, or ten times as many books, as it commensurately should have. True, we have fewer readers than public or college libraries with staffs of similar size, but a large percentage of our visitors are engaged in research which compels them to use as many books as a score of casual readers or undergraduates. Besides getting the books for them we must discuss and consider their problems so as to be able to produce other relevant material which may be on our shelves. Our staff is further occupied by a phenomenally large mail business which keeps us as busy as would a large group of visitors.

The most distressing part of our inadequacy of staff is the fact that it limits the service we can perform. It is embarrassing to find it necessary to tell our friends who teach at neighboring colleges that we cannot make our facilities available for the practice research of undergraduates. Such com-

plaints as have drifted back to use from former visitors involve almost entirely the difficulties arising from our being shorthanded. There are two possible solutions, a larger staff and greater efficiency. The latter is being achieved by the steady progress we are making in recataloging.

These handicaps under which the Library labors are neither permanent nor crippling; beside its one great permanent advantage, they are unimportant. That advantage is a clear superiority in the field of American printing before 1821, and a concentration of our remaining strength in a few narrow fields. Some idea of our position may be had from the fact that we lacked only 17 out of 400 items of early Americana recently listed in a Goodspeed catalogue. Thanks to the response of the members to our appeal for funds, we obtained most of the seventeen missing titles.

An inventory of the Massachusetts imprints of 1800-02, recently completed by the W. P. A., shows in another way the strength of our holdings. Of the imprints of those years they record that we have 434, of which 58 are unique. Our nearest rival is Harvard College Library, which has 228, 8 of which are unique. The Boston Public Library has 224 with 11 unique; the Library of Congress, 209 with 4 unique; and the Massachusetts Historical Society has 163 with 18 unique. Actually our margin of superiority is even greater than this would indicate, for a casual glance at the bibliography shows that the people who recorded our holdings failed to find several classes of imprints which have not as yet been reached by our recataloging; in the other libraries I have mentioned these same items appear in the card catalogues where they were found and recorded in the inventory. This strength in Massachusetts items does not arise from any particular specialization in local printing. In fact, we rarely take the trouble to check Massachusetts items in dealers' catalogues because we have such a large percentage of them

that more waste effort is involved than would be warranted. On the other hand, we assiduously gather imprints of the presses in other states, with results which appear in various inventories. For example, the Utica Public Library is the only institution with more early Utica printing than we.

Such is the strength of our collection in our chosen fields that we have always welcomed the growth of public and state university libraries because as they enter parts of our collecting field, armed with purchasing funds which look astronomical to us, we find ourselves able to assist them as never before. As their collections grow they write to us to inquire about bibliographical points of the items they have been unable to acquire. Scholars who begin work in these newer collections come on to us to complete their research. The more these rival libraries collect and the more they thrive, the more useful our collections become. In our special fields we have become a clearing house of information for other libraries. My election this year to the post of Vice-president of the Conference of Historical Societies in the United States and Canada was a recognition of the central position of our Library. It has become so common to see thanks to Mr. Brigham in the prefaces of books that this year a scholar who had neither corresponded nor consulted with us thanked Mr. Brigham in his preface for services which were entirely imaginary. His book would have been more complete, at least, had he consulted Mr. Brigham and utilized our holdings as have most of the leading scholars working in the early American field.

Assume the worst—that inflation halves our income, puts an end to our general growth, and wrecks our staff. Still our Library will be a mecca for those who have reason to study America's past.

But there is no reason for assuming that we shall have to exist in bibliographically genteel poverty. The experience

of Germany after the last war shows that the best pilots in times of economic revolution are business men like those who keep watch over the worldly affairs of this Society. Moreover, income from investment wisely made in business enterprises is surer than income which flows from taxes through the hands of legislatures. The public libraries which are now enjoying such relative prosperity will find their income diminished when the taxpayer's burdens become too heavy. Nor do we believe that institutions which depend upon gifts from private individuals for growth need resign themselves to their present scope. True, they can no longer fatten like bacteria in the undisturbed cream which came to the top under the old system of free business competition. There will be less cream in the future, but there will always be individuals who enjoy the opportunities for cooperative collecting which such institutions as this afford. Some of our good friends who have charge of institutions supported by public funds believe that endowed or "private" libraries like this are survivals of a primitive level of society, doomed because they are "undemocratic." Actually it would seem to be more in accord with democratic ideals that a man should give of his time, his wisdom, his collections, and his money to an institution of his choice, than that he should be compelled, by means of taxation, to support institutions with which he might not be in sympathy. All libraries draw their sustenance from the same social body whether it comes by way of savings and gifts or by way of taxation.

Unless there is some large error in this summary of the position and prospects of our Library, we are justified in our plans for new ways and means of serving the public, and for the conquest of new provinces of American History.

Respectfully submitted,

CLIFFORD K. SHIPTON,
Librarian

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