

## REPORT OF THE COUNCIL.

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Since the semi-annual meeting, the Society's affairs have proceeded smoothly and with little to note beyond the constant and satisfactory growth of its two most important specialties. By purchase, exchange and gift the newspaper collection has received large and important accessions, so that, though it is but three years since the new building was occupied, the newspaper stack already shows signs that in a short time additional shelving must be secured, though it was supposed that ample room for at least twenty years growth had been provided. Such increased shelving can only be obtained by an extension of the building, for which at present no money is available, but this the Council has faith to believe will be forthcoming when the necessity for it becomes imperative. This collection of newspapers has already become too important and valuable to be allowed to suffer long for lack of proper housing. The bibliography of American newspapers, so well begun by Mr. Brigham in the Society's Proceedings in connection with a check-list of the newspapers issued before 1820 in the Society's library, cannot fail to impress everyone with the importance and value of this feature of the Society's work. The Council regrets that lack of space prevented the continuation of this bibliography in the April Proceedings, but is assured that a large installment will appear in the next number, and that, thereafter, there will be no interruption until the work is completed. Of American imprints, other than newspapers, previous to 1820, over one thousand specimens have been secured during the year and it is

safe to say that in this department the Society's library is second to none.

The interest and friendship shown by kindred societies and libraries in these two collections, as evinced by their generous response to requests for exchange, is very gratifying. In one case the deposit of duplicate material, under conditions which make it almost equivalent to a gift, has greatly enriched the collection of newspapers. It can do no harm to repeat the suggestion made a year ago, that members endeavor to secure for the Society any early files of newspapers which may come to their knowledge, or at least notify the Librarian of such files, that an attempt may be made to purchase them if they cannot be acquired by gift. Members, especially those who dwell at a distance from the Library, can be of great assistance if they contribute important issues, even of current numbers, though, of course, files of an earlier date, particularly those previous to 1870, are most desired. In this connection the Council makes honorable mention of Señor León of Mexico for his gift of a file of Mexican newspapers covering the important period of the end of the Huerta presidency, of Señor Pezet of Peru for his contribution of valuable files of Peruvian newspapers, and of Charles H. Taylor, Jr., of Boston for a vast number of clippings relating to newspapers in all parts of this country. Their example, followed by other members, cannot fail to be of vast benefit to the Library.

In accordance with the suggestion made in the last report of the Council, it was the intention of the finance committee to make a renewed appeal for an increase of the Society's endowment. Owing to the European war and the consequent demoralization of financial matters it has been deemed wise to postpone such an appeal to a more favorable time. That the necessity for such an increase exists has become only more apparent during the past year. The Society's income, already far short of what is desired, has been

further reduced by the unfortunate condition of some of the railroad corporations whose securities are in the Society's treasury, through which the Society faces a considerable reduction in its income during the coming fiscal year. As there is but one way in which such reduction can be met, it will be necessary to reduce the book purchases very materially, and the Society must indefinitely postpone several matters which would add to the usefulness of the Library, the most important of which is the arrangement and cataloguing of its collection of manuscripts, a work well begun by Mr. Charles Henry Lincoln, and which would require about two years for its completion.

There has been no change in the library staff during the past year and none is contemplated. It is with considerable satisfaction that the Council reports that visitors of all classes, and especially students, have given frequent testimony to the courtesy with which all requests for attention and assistance have been met. It is no uncommon thing for a visitor to volunteer the statement that there is no library where greater attention is paid to the wants of the student or facilities for study more freely and willingly supplied. Such a result can only be attained at the cost of much valuable time on the part of a small and overworked staff, by which other work of the Society suffers, but the Council believes that it is the desire of the Society to offer to the earnest student every facility for investigation in its power, and to make its collections useful to the historian as well as interesting to the collector. This has always been the policy of the Society and it is pleasant to assure the members that the library staff is not only willing but eager to carry it out.

The Mrs. Emma DeF. Morse collection of Staffordshire pottery has been permanently arranged by the kindness of Miss Frances C. Morse, whose acquaintance both with the collection and the subject made her assistance of great value. Each piece is to be

numbered and a catalogue prepared for the use of visitors, which will also serve as a check list through which may be acquired eventually the few pieces now missing in the collection.

The exhibition of school books, prepared for the last annual meeting, has remained in the cases until lately, with the addition of a set of Indian implements, mounted and presented by the Peabody Archæological Museum of Cambridge, in partial acknowledgment of the receipt of the remainder of the Society's cabinet, which was given to the Museum several years ago. It presents in a condensed and attractive form, interesting for young students, the characteristic tools of the American Indian. The other cases are now filled with Harvard College broadsides, illustrative of Mr. Lane's paper on that subject, a selection of early American bookplates, and a collection of broadside ballads of the war of 1812. A third number of the Bulletin was issued in May last and the fourth number will appear soon after the present annual meeting.

Since the April meeting the Society has lost four active members by death. Alexander Francis Chamberlain of Worcester, a member since October 1902, died at Worcester, April 8; Robert A. Brock of Richmond, Va., elected in October 1877, died July 12; Ralph Charles Henry Catterall of Ithaca, N. Y., elected in October 1908, died at Huron, Mich., August 2; William Nelson of Paterson, N. J., elected in April 1909, died August 10. Brief notices of these members have been prepared by the biographer for publication in the next number of the Proceedings.

Antiquarian Hall offers to all a safe place of deposit for valuable papers and manuscripts, a fact which, perhaps, is not widely appreciated but of which advantage might well be taken by those having charge of historical material, now subject to injury or destruction by fire and dampness. The Council would impress upon the members and through them

upon the public that the Society, always grateful for *gifts* of historical material, is equally ready to accept *loans* of such material, for which it will give a suitable receipt, agreeing to allow the owners free access to it and to return it immediately upon demand. One of the most recently elected members has set an example which, if followed by others, will greatly redound to the advantage of the Library. Rev. Herbert Edwin Lombard, having barely saved his library from destruction by fire, has deposited in the Hall for safe keeping his collection of American bookplates, consisting of nearly three thousand examples, mostly engraved in the last sixty years but with many of an earlier date. If, through any member, this should be supplemented by an equally important loan of *early* American bookplates, of which the Society would gladly undertake the care and display, students might then find in this Library a collection which would illustrate the entire history of this branch of American engraving.

Not historical and bibliographical matters alone require the attention of the Council. The allied arts of architecture and horticulture must also be its study, if the beauty of Antiquarian Hall is to be preserved. In May 1833, after the addition of the two wings to the original Hall, and in its second report to the Society, the Council said:—"the grounds have been surrounded with belts and groves of forest trees planted by the Librarian. The good taste of arrangement will render them objects of beauty and, at maturity, the green enclosure will afford no inconsiderable protection from the fires of the dense population fast closing around, in near vicinity." In succeeding reports the shrubs and trees surrounding the first Antiquarian Hall are often mentioned. Members attending the present meeting may have noticed the unprosperous condition of the dwarf box, (*buxus sempervirens*), bordering the front walk. Notwithstanding what was thought to be sufficient protection,

or perhaps owing to a too early uncovering in an inclement spring, nearly one-quarter of the plants were killed or badly injured during the past winter, requiring serious consideration as to future treatment of the approach to the building. By advice of the architects and Mr. Ben M. Watson, a botanical authority, who agree that architecturally and botanically nothing will be more satisfactory or economical than box, if it can be made to thrive, an attempt will be made to protect the remaining plants through the coming winter and, in the spring, to replace those destroyed with new plants in combination with the Japanese barberry (*berberis thunbergii*) and the *pachysandra terminalis*. Several shrubs killed in other beds will be replaced and, if funds permit, ornamental trees will be planted in the southern end of the lot, not as a "protection from the fires" but as a screen from the unattractive buildings of a "dense population fast closing around, in near vicinity."

WALDO LINCOLN,

*For the Council.*

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