

## REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

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**S**INCE the last meeting in April 1932, the Society has lost four resident members through death.

Frederic Winthrop, of Boston, died May 6, 1932. A direct descendant of Governor John Winthrop, he was interested in New England colonial history and was especially active in the affairs of the Massachusetts Historical Society. He was elected to this Society in 1924 and attended many of its meetings.

John Bach McMaster, of Philadelphia, died May 24, 1932. Professor of American history at the University of Pennsylvania since 1883, he achieved fame as one of America's leading historians through the publication of his eight volume "History of the People of the United States." He was elected to this Society in April 1884 and at the time of his death was its senior member. Much of his History was written with the aid of our newspaper files.

Carl Russell Fish, of Madison, Wisconsin, died July 10, 1932. Professor of American history at the University of Wisconsin since 1900, he was an able teacher and was especially recognized for his writings on the history of American diplomacy. He was elected to this Society in 1911.

Darwin Pearl Kingsley, of New York City, died October 6, 1932. President since 1907 of the New York Life Insurance Company, he was at the same time interested in education and in history. He was elected to this Society in April 1930. Obituary notices of these members will appear in the printed Proceedings.

Also there is recorded the death, on July 18, 1932, of one foreign member, Jean Jules Jusserand, ambassador

from France to the United States from 1902 to 1924. He was born at Lyons, France, February 18, 1855 and was in the French diplomatic service since attaining his majority. With a thorough understanding of American character and an extraordinary tact in dealing with international relations, he did more than any other statesman in recent years to strengthen the friendship between France and the United States. Coming to this country with a complete mastery of the English language, both spoken and written, and married in 1895 to an American, Elise Richards, he knew America better than any foreign visitor, with the possible exception of James Bryce. Jusserand was distinguished for his achievements in literature as well as in diplomacy. He wrote equally well on English and French literary history, and it was his volume "With Americans of Past and Present Days" that won in 1916 the Pulitzer award for the best work on American history brought out during that year. His ability was readily recognized in this country. He received the degree of LL.D. from twelve American colleges and in 1921 was elected president of the American Historical Association. He was elected a foreign member of this Society in 1917, and in occasional letters always expressed his keen interest in the Society's usefulness.

The work of the Society has progressed well during the year, in spite of financial handicaps. The growth of the Library, the most important of the Society's functions, will be told in the Report of the Librarian. The most important physical change in the Library Building was the installation, during the summer, of two industrial oil-burners, to replace the coal burning equipment that has been in use since the library was built in 1910. It is to be hoped that the saving in the cost of oil over coal will pay for this installation in three years, which would seem possible since our heating construction and other reasons made it impossible for us to burn the cheaper soft coal. Other beneficial results of the oil burning installation will be

the considerable saving in expense of removal of ashes and the improvement in the cleanliness of the basement and especially the boiler-room.

Another result of installation was the construction of book-cases in what was formerly the coal-cellar. This large room, capable of holding one hundred and fifty tons of coal, has been completely white-washed and painted, and has been lined with wide shelving for bound newspapers. The book-case is ten feet high, has a total front length of eighty feet, and will accommodate 1200 volumes of newspapers. All currently received bound newspapers from 1928 will be kept in this room and since we bind about 130 volumes a year, the space should be sufficient for the growth of nine years, or until 1937. It was fortunate that this basement room became available, for the need of more space in the book-stack was becoming urgent. The Library now contains well over half a million books and pamphlets and in many sections is overcrowded. Reshifting of various collections will take care of growth for the next two or three years, but after that we shall have to take up the question of constructing an addition to the book-stack. An addition capable of holding a quarter of a million books, which would suffice for the normal growth of twenty years, would cost about ninety thousand dollars.

Among its many activities during the year, not the least notable was the aid extended to two highly important bibliographical undertakings, Evans' "American Bibliography," and Sabin's "Dictionary of Books Relating to America." Mr. Evans is progressing with his monumental list of books printed in the United States previous to 1800, and is now working on his twelfth volume covering the years 1798-1799. This Society has supplied nearly half of the titles and in addition has applied for and received a grant of \$3000 from the American Council of Learned Societies for aid to Mr. Evans in finishing his work. Sabin's Dictionary is being largely compiled in this building,

as Mr. Vail is its chief editor and supervises the collation of titles and the preparation for printing. This invaluable work, begun in 1868 and temporarily discontinued in 1892, is now well on the way to completion, having progressed alphabetically as far as the letter T.

The most important problem during the past year has been our loss of income due to general financial conditions. Although, because of conservative investments, the decrease in income was less than \$2500, our financial hopes were partly frustrated because of the considerable reduction in the amount of the Cunningham bequest. Because of the shrinkage of values, the amount which finally came to the Society was \$100,000 instead of the \$200,000 which Mr. Cunningham had intended as the Society's share. Although a restoration to the normal value of securities will eventually increase, if not double, this particular bequest, it is true that in the meanwhile the Society will have to prepare its budget accordingly and economize in every way. Already salaries have been reduced and book purchases cut to a minimum. It is particularly unfortunate that the latter condition should be imposed upon us at the present time, as never in recent years has the opportunity to secure rare books been so evident or the chances to fill in gaps in our collection so frequent. Through the aid furnished by several members of the Society, we have secured many rare volumes which could not otherwise have been acquired, but also many other desirable acquisitions have been lost. The immediate problem in this respect is a serious one.

An increase in the invested funds of this Society is inevitable, and sometimes comes when least expected. I remember that Mr. Wilbur and Mr. Cunningham, both large contributors to our needs, frequently told me that no organization that was continuously and unselfishly aiding scholars as was this Society could help but obtain financial recognition eventually. Although we receive many gifts of varying amount, it

is chiefly through bequests that the Society's funds have been increased. And some of these bequests have come to us from distant members who only knew of the Society through reading our reports or from the recommendation of those who were closely familiar with our work. Of organizations in the country similar to ours, I submit that few are aiding American scholarship more continuously or are seeking to serve the needs of American historians more comprehensively than the American Antiquarian Society.

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*For the Council*

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