

Report of the Council

DURING the last six months fewer researchers have visited the Library than in the years before the War, which is unquestionably the result of the various travel restrictions. But several historical writers have stayed for longer periods. Gaylord P. Albaugh, of Hamilton, Ontario, for instance, spent over eight weeks in Worcester studying our early American religious periodicals for a history and bibliography of the subject to the year 1830. Other researchers have spent from two to three weeks examining political caricatures, early American arithmetics, American song-books, and Southern newspapers. Again, as last year, it is true that some of the larger research libraries have sequestered much of their important material for the duration, with the result that many additional scholars have conducted their research in Worcester. During this past summer, for the first time within memory, the Library was closed during August to simplify the vacation problem and to allow a general cleaning of the building. Visitors who came here from a distance, however, were admitted and a few availed themselves of the privilege. From some points of view the idea was successful, but the closing prevented local research and visits. Whether the plan should be a permanent feature is in question.

Every year the crowded condition of the Library becomes more apparent. Practically all of the alcoves are full, and only a shifting of collections permits the addition of many of the accessions. This is a serious problem that must be solved within a very few years.

The *Proceedings* are somewhat in arrears, which seems to

be common to most publishing Societies. The *Proceedings* for October, 1943, ordinarily issued in the following summer, are still in the press, but will be sent to members and libraries within a month. The unexpected length of Dr. Jantz's paper on Early New England Verse, as well as the necessity of obtaining certain material to be included in the paper, caused the delay; but the exceptional value of this article, one of the most valuable we have published in recent years, will be sufficient compensation for the lateness of issue.

The circular announcing the *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690-1820*, was sent to about 5200 libraries and collectors early in September. Already, although it is scarcely a month since the circular was mailed, over 900 subscriptions have been received, an unusual number for a reference book of limited appeal. Undoubtedly one of the chief reasons for the numerous orders was the fact that the work, in two large quarto volumes, was priced at \$8.00 for the set, a price much less than the cost of printing. As the circular stated, the Society desired in this way to record its indebtedness to the hundreds of libraries which helped in the compilation, and to give them the opportunity of acquiring the work at a nominal price. But it was only through a generous gift on the part of two of our own members, George F. Booth and Harry G. Stoddard, that such a price was made possible. Acting as publishers of the *Worcester Telegram* and the *Evening Gazette*, they donated to the Society the sum of \$5000 as a Newspaper Bibliography Fund. We were thus enabled immediately to obtain an estimate from a printer and to proceed to publication. Proof is now being read for Delaware in the alphabetical order of the States, and it is to be hoped that the printing will be completed late this coming winter. The two volumes will contain over 700 pages each, the paper will be all rag, and the books will be substantially bound. Comprehensive indexes

of titles and printers, numbering over six thousand names, will follow the text of the Bibliography. Little did the compiler think, when he started on this Bibliography in 1913, that it would be over thirty years before it saw the light of final printing.

There have been four deaths in the membership since the April meeting. Dr. Gardner Weld Allen, of Boston, historian of naval affairs, elected in 1923, died July 12, 1944. Edward L. Stevenson, of Yonkers, New York, authority on early maps of America, elected in 1908, died July 16, 1944. Otis G. Hammond, of Concord, New Hampshire, Director of the New Hampshire Historical Society, elected in 1914, died October 2, 1944. John Stewart Bryan, of Richmond, Virginia, newspaper publisher and ex-president of William and Mary, elected in 1925, died October 16, 1944. Obituary notices of these members will appear in the printed *Proceedings* of this meeting.

The deaths of the following foreign members should also be announced: Vere L. Oliver, of Weymouth, England, author of many books on the British West Indies, elected in 1913, died January 9, 1942. Seymour de Ricci, of Paris, noted European bibliographer, elected in 1919, died December 26, 1942. Alfred W. Pollard, of Wimbledon, England, leading authority in English bibliography and literature, elected in 1925, died March 8, 1944. Bernardino Machado, of Lisbon, Portuguese scholar and diplomat, elected in 1906, died April 29, 1944. Hubert Hall, of London, for many years in the British Public Record Office, elected in 1894, died August 1, 1944. Obituaries of foreign members are not printed in the *Proceedings*, but only noticed in the Council Reports, and then frequently a year or more after the date of death, when the information has been late in reaching us.

The appeal for funds to enable the Society to buy needed books was not sent out this year until May last. Since the

regular annual income of the Society allows us to purchase books only to the extent of \$1300, it is necessary to call upon outside help if we wish to uphold the standard and prestige of the Library. The appeal this year resulted in the gift of \$5620, and the names of donors are listed in the Treasurer's Report presented at this meeting. One gift especially worth noting, the sum of \$1000, came to the Society from Esther Forbes Hoskins, sent in recognition of the frequent aid which the Library had given her. It is such evidence of interest in the Society, and faith in its usefulness, that encourages the Library officers in their endeavor to maintain the importance of the collections.

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