

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

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**D**URING the last six months the Library has functioned as usual, acquiring many valuable additions to its collections, the details of which will await the annual report of the Librarian at the meeting in October.

An important phase of the Society's work has been the aid which it has been rendering to national projects of a bibliographical nature. The completing of Sabin's Dictionary, a vast undertaking which was commenced by Joseph Sabin in 1868, is now nearing its end under the supervision of the Society's Librarian, and should be finished in June of this year. Already the alphabet has progressed half-way through the letter W, with the troublesome sections of Washington and the West Indies completed. In this work the Society's collections have been drawn upon to a large extent.

Another project of commanding importance is the Union List of Newspapers from 1820 to date, the purpose of which is to list everywhere in the country the tens of thousands of newspaper files published for a century past, and which is particularly valuable to this Society, because of its comprehensive newspaper collection. This work has been performed here entirely through the aid of WPA funds. Although there has been an exasperating series of delays in the allocation of funds, always apparently inevitable with the red-tape of government supervision, there is a possibility that the Society's important newspaper collections will all be included before the funds expire in June of this year.

In 1931, Mr. William G. Mather, a member of

this Society, sponsored and published a two-volume Bibliography of the Works of Increase Mather. Mr. Mather, who began buying Mathers at the fourth Brinley sale in 1886, finally acquired a Mather collection which ranked with this Society's collection as the largest in the country. Last year his collection was sold to Tracy W. McGregor of Washington. Mr. McGregor, today one of the most able and enthusiastic collectors of Americana, and incidentally a member of this Society, is desirous of having a Cotton Mather Bibliography brought out somewhat on the scale of the Increase Mather work of five years ago. He wishes the Society to supervise and sponsor this project, and through his financial assistance, Mr. Thomas J. Holmes of Cleveland, the author of the Increase Mather bibliography, is now installed in the Society's library, and is starting upon his long task. Through the gift from Mr. Mather of the zinc plates of all known Cotton Mather title-pages, a good share of the mechanical work is already accomplished. Within a year it is expected that Mr. Holmes will have ready for the printer most of his bibliographical notes and then will come the formulation of plans for publication.

There have been four deaths of members of the Society during the last six months. Clarence W. Bowen, vice-president of the Society, died November 2, 1935. A member since 1904 and an officer in the Council for twenty-three years, he was one of our most active and generous supporters. He bequeathed to the Society several important portraits and the sum of \$20,000 for the purpose of completing his invaluable *History of Woodstock*, which was nearly half finished at the time of his death. William Harden of Savannah, Georgia, died January 4, 1936, at the advanced age of ninety-two. He was the Senior member of the Society, having been elected in 1884. He was librarian of the Georgia Historical Society from 1866 to the time of his death, a period of seventy years. Perhaps no man in this country's history has

held one position for so long a time. Reuben Colton, elected in 1885, died February 26, 1936, and at the time of his death was the Society's Senior member. For over half a century he has almost constantly attended the meetings and his familiar face and cheerful presence will be missed. Clarence Bloomfield Moore, well-known archæologist of Philadelphia, elected in 1895, died March 24, 1936. Extended biographical notices of these members will appear in the printed Proceedings of this meeting.

As usual, the Director cannot close his Report without referring to our depleted income, to the many opportunities to increase our collections which we are forced to disregard, and to the great amount of aid which we are rendering to historians and scholars, in spite of inadequate funds. It is probable that a greater knowledge of the Society could be spread throughout the country if we had a satisfactory Handbook which would be generally distributed and which would describe in detail the strength of our various collections. Through the gift of a generous friend of the Society, this want is now to be remedied and the Librarian has already begun upon the preparation of such a volume, which we hope will not only serve as an adequate description of the Library and its services, but will aid in attracting financial support.

Respectfully submitted,

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*For the Council*

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