

REPORT OF THE LIBRARIAN.

THE recent Centennial Celebration of the formation of the Constitution of the United States reminds us that on the 24th instant it will be three-quarters of a century since the incorporation of our Society. This in turn suggests the inquiry what our founders proposed to do; what excuse they offered for putting a new society into the field. The most exact answer to this we shall find in the petition of Isaiah Thomas, Nathaniel Paine, William Paine, Levi Lincoln, Aaron Bancroft and Edward Bangs to the Legislature of Massachusetts, the opening portion of which is as follows: "*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled.* The subscribers, influenced by a desire to contribute to the advancement of the arts and sciences, and to aid by their individual and united efforts in collecting and preserving such materials as may be useful in marking their progress not only in the United States but in other parts of the Globe: and wishing also to assist the researches of the future historians of our country, respectfully represent to the Legislature, that in their opinion the establishment of an antiquarian society within this Commonwealth would conduce essentially to the attainment of these objects." The act of incorporation bears the following endorsement: "In the House of Representatives, Oct. 23, 1812, passed to be enacted, Timothy Bigelow, Speaker. In the Senate, passed to be enacted, Oct. 24, 1812, Samuel Dana, President. Approved, Caleb Strong. Alden Bradford, Secretary of the Commonwealth." While "The notification and warning to the members incorporated" to attend the first meeting was headed, "American Society of

Antiquaries," doubtless having then in mind the Society of Antiquaries of London, there immediately follows: "Whereas, by an act of the Legislature of Massachusetts passed Oct. 24, 1812, Isaiah Thomas and others were formed into and constituted a society and Body Politick and corporate by the name of the American Antiquarian Society" etc. What has been done or what left undone during these seventy-five years we need not stop to consider. But we, their successors, shall do well if with our greater opportunities we equal the founders in their wisdom and zeal.

A curious side-light is thrown upon the society's early and limited library work as well as upon its old-time care and hospitality by the following vote of the sub-council—a body composed of those officers living in Worcester, who appear to have held their first meeting February 15, 1815—at a meeting held July 17, 1823; namely: "That the library of the society be opened to none but literary characters, that the key be kept at the house of the President, and that he be authorized to call on the members of the council and the secretaries in town, to wait on gentlemen who may wish to visit the library, whenever he may think it proper." Dr. Thomas's gifts both of books and money for the founding of this library prove that he believed with Addison, that "Books are the legacies that genius leaves to mankind, to be delivered down from generation to generation, as presents, to the posterity of those who are yet unborn." For these gifts we shall ever remain under deep obligation. We also recall his "History of the Art of Printing," which has enabled us to fill this storehouse with so much historical information, and his invaluable services as patriot printer during the War of the Revolution. But even his boyhood should not be forgotten. In our copy of "The New Book of Knowledge," a duodecimo of one hundred and seventy-two pages and twenty-nine illustrations, printed and sold by Z. Fowle, at his printing-office in Back Street,

near the Mill Bridge, Boston, in 1764, Mr. Thomas has written as follows: "Printed and cuts engraved wholly by I. Thomas, then 13 years of age, for Z. Fowle, when I. T. was his apprentice. Bad as the cuts are executed, there was not at that time an artist in Boston who could have done them much better. Some time before and soon after there were better engravers in Boston." Neither would we forget his fearless loyalty to the patriot cause, not only during the War of the Revolution, but in the trying times of his young manhood, which preceded it. When in Halifax, a few years since, I looked in vain for evidence of the rebellious acts of the lad of seventeen, while printing and virtually editing the Halifax Gazette, for Anthony Henry, the Government printer. Within these walls, however, there is an abundance of it. On the blank leaf attached to our file of the Gazette, Mr. Thomas has written, "Printed on stamped paper during the time of the Stamp Act. The Halifax Gazette, from October 2d, 1765, to April 1st, 1766, was printed by Isaiah Thomas, for Anthony Henry." The issues of December 5 and 19, have the heavy black lines suggestive of mourning, while the latter has in addition, a square jet black stamp, about the size of the Government stamp, representing the skull and crossed-bones, surmounted by the word "America." There are two copies of the number for December 26, one bearing the red stamp of the Government, the other only the death's-head printed the same size and color. One of the last and most dramatic acts of the Boston boy printer, was in connection with the Gazette of February 13, 1766. After stating incidentally that "Advertisements are taken in and inserted as cheap as the Stamp Act will allow," he proceeds to show his indignation by printing the issue upon stamped paper, carefully placed bottom side up, so that the crown as well as the other insignia and the motto are reversed. Not satisfied with this he prints directly over the stamp, "Scorn and contempt of America pitching down to destruction,"

etc. ; and, just below it, "D[evi]ls clear the way for B[ernard]s and STAMPS." Then he illustrates, in order that his meaning may be perfectly clear, by conveniently placing a square black stamp representing his Satanic Majesty surrounded by flames, with his familiar fork thrust into the government stamp, that emblem of authority which reminded our printer of "taxation without representation." Six weeks later, after seven months of Nova Scotia life, he took ship for Portsmouth, New Hampshire, but not until he had been called to account by the authorities for boldly stating in the official organ that the people of the province were disgusted with the Stamp Act.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Thomas was literally the first in many things touching his craft. He was the first to extend his influence by the opening of printing offices in various sections of New England, having in each case a resident partner. For instance, at Boston the concern was Thomas and Andrews, at Brookfield Thomas and Waldo, at Newburyport Thomas and Mycall, at Walpole, N. H., Thomas and Carlisle, while at Worcester his great work was done under his own name. He printed as the first thing ever printed in Worcester, the Massachusetts Spy of May 3, 1775, and in 1776, upon the same press and for the first time in Massachusetts, the Declaration of Independence. In 1786 he here issued from his press the first music ever printed typographically, and in 1791 the first pulpit Bible printed in America. The extent of his publishing is indicated by his Worcester editions of the State laws of Massachusetts, and other works of three, five or ten volumes each. While it may also be true that he catered somewhat to the popular taste of the day, it is clear that a list of his Worcester imprints alone would astonish us, both by their number and importance.

It may be well also to call to grateful remembrance at this time an important step in our history as a Society, taken half a century ago, and which is recorded as follows :

“At a meeting of the Council of the American Antiquarian Society, held at the office of the Manufacturers Mutual Fire Insurance Company in Worcester, Sept. 23, 1837, at 9 o'clock A. M., Doct. John Park in the chair * * * chose Samuel F. Haven Librarian and Cabinet Keeper.” Is it too much to say that the day which secured to this Society forty-three years of such faithful and distinguished service as Dr. Haven rendered, should stand second only to the day of its incorporation?

It has been a pleasant incident of recent library life to have aided Miss Hewins, somewhat, in the gathering of material for her history of children's books. Our founder was one of the first, if not the first, to issue little books for children, reprints of English and other publications, which he carefully adapted to American home life, and, what is now more to our purpose, thoughtfully preserved for our shelves. To these we have added some early juveniles from the Brinley Sale, making our present collection a very attractive as well as historically useful one.

The Card Cataloguing of our books and bound pamphlets is nearly completed, and the equally, and perhaps more important work upon our great mass of unbound pamphlet literature, can—thanks to Mr. Salisbury—soon be entered upon. We are often reminded of the truth of the following paragraph in Mr. Winsor's Harvard College Library Report of 1878: “There are no considerations except economy for treating pamphlets other than as books; and the users of a library are never thoroughly equipped for investigation so long as any distinction is made between them.”

Attention is called to the forth-coming circular letter to members lately ordered by the Council. It will include the usual call for biographical memoranda, lists of individual works, photographs, etc., and it is to be hoped will meet with an unusually full and prompt response. Even in cases where we already have earlier photographic presentations we shall expect to be favored with the later.

Since the last report there have been presented to the Society five hundred and seventeen books, seventy-seven hundred and sixty-three pamphlets, ninety-one volumes of newspapers, fourteen photographs, eight maps, three manuscripts, one engraving, and various articles for the Cabinet. We have received by exchange three hundred and nineteen books, six hundred and seventeen pamphlets, and four volumes of newspapers, and from the binders forty-two volumes, making a total library increase for six months to the 15th instant of eight hundred and seventy-eight books, eighty-three hundred and eighty pamphlets, ninety-five volumes of newspapers, seventeen photographs and the other articles above stated. For these gifts we are indebted to two hundred and eight sources, namely, to thirty-eight members, ninety-six persons not members, and seventy-five societies and institutions. Attention need hardly be called to the valuable and unique gift of Messrs. Salisbury and Thompson which so fittingly adorns the Salisbury Annex, for it is a leading feature of this occasion. Mr. Thompson has shown the same industrious and painstaking enthusiasm in completing his great work—aided to be sure here by our skilled mechanics—as was shown by him in the beginning in the wilds of Yucatan. The fortunate presence of the young consul and explorer will prevent further allusion to him at this time.

The amateur photographers of the Society who have thus far reported progress in their labors in historical and archæological lines, are Messrs. Paine of Worcester, Thompson of Merida, and Harden of Savannah; and specimens of their good work are laid upon the table for your careful inspection. Your librarian's desire that this important department should at once take its place as a working force was expressed in a previous report. There are others of our members who are skilled in this specialty, whom we hope to enlist in our cause. Mr. Alfred S. Roe, principal of the Worcester High School,

has been thoughtful of our needs in this direction. His latest gift is his excellent photograph of Redempton Rock in Princeton, Mass.—the property of our President—which bears the following inscription: “Upon this rock May 2, 1676, was made the agreement for the ransom of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson of Lancaster, between the Indians and John Hoar of Concord. King Philip was present, but refused his consent.” By persistent and long-continued effort Mr. Roe has nearly completed our set of the Methodist Quarterly Review. Thanks are due to Dr. Samuel A. Green for an important addition to our school book literature; and to Hon. William W. Rice for a very large gift of government publications. Dr. Justin Winsor has sent his recent publications, and Hon. Isaac Smucker, and Dr. William F. Poole western periodicals, containing contributions from them. Dr. John Beddoe presents with his acceptance of membership in the Society his well-known “Races of Great Britain,” and William A. Smith, Esq., a rarity for the alcove of Slavery and Rebellion. Hon. J. Carson Brevoort has added eight more volumes to his Japanese collection, five volumes to the Davis Spanish-American alcove, and others to the general library. Hon. Edward L. Davis has furnished a mass of pamphlet and periodical publications relating to the Protestant Episcopal Church, and American Railroads, and our Secretary, Hon. John D. Washburn, has done the same kind office for the department of Insurance. The value of such examples of continued interest in specialties is apparent.

We have received the annual address of our associate Col. Charles C. Jones, Jr. before the Confederate Survivors Association in Augusta, Georgia, and a word of commendation may here be dropped in view of the biographical, historical and statistical material which he weaves into these addresses. They are in this respect unlike the ordinary Memorial Day or Fourth of July orations. Mrs. Samuel F. Haven has placed another instalment of books in the Haven

alcove, and has added the Unitarian Review, in continuation, to our Periodical Alcoves. Mr. Clarence W. Bowen has given the results of some of his historical studies, while Dr. Eben N. Horsford has placed us under obligations by the gift of Zeisberger's Indian Dictionary, of which he is the editor. Gen. William S. Lincoln continues his habit of laying aside for us "The Orient" and other Bowdoin college literature, making us desire such a representative for every college in the land. Mr. Robert C. Winthrop, Jr., has kindly placed in our alcove of Genealogy his two brochures on the Winthrop family in Ireland and in America. Capt. Eugene H. Newton has wisely added to our war files of confederate newspapers the Montgomery (Ala.) Weekly Advertiser of January 8, 1862 to September 21, 1864, brought by him from the South during the late war of the Rebellion. Being well aware of the value of such testimony he is unwilling longer to risk it in a private house. Mr. William H. Whitmore, chairman of the Record Commission of Boston, forwards a copy of their photo-electrotyped reproduction of the laws of Massachusetts of the Edition of 1672, with all the additions obtainable. It has been compared with our own which is a perfect copy but with fewer of the supplementary pages than in the Athenæum copy from which this is made, and will be of peculiar value in our fine collection of Massachusetts Laws, Journals and Resolves. Mr. J. W. A. Wright of Livingston, Alabama, for whom we have had photographed "the Alabama Stone" which has been so long in our possession, has given us copies for service rendered. He is to use the illustrations in his work upon some of the early explorers of the South. The receipt from the Connecticut State Library of two regimental histories along with the annual contribution of state documents, indicates "State Aid" in a direction which is highly commendable. Every State may well order extra copies of such works, when they are reliable, and thus secure their publication. They would be useful to any State library in the way of exchange.

Our thanks are due to the society's printer, Mr. Charles Hamilton, and to its binders, the sons of the late Mr. Joseph S. Wesby, for the large gifts of their pamphlet accumulations, of many years. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin sends a copy of its catalogue of 1617 titles of books, pamphlets and manuscripts relating to rebellion and slavery. It would be interesting to compare such a list with one of what has been secured by Cornell, Princeton, the Massachusetts Historical Society, or by our own society. It is a most attractive field, and the State of Wisconsin has been far-sighted in providing so liberally for its cultivation.

The foregoing acknowledgments will suggest that it is not thought wise wholly to give up the custom of calling attention to some of the gifts of peculiar interest or value. The question has been asked, why separate the list of donors and donations, which is hereto appended, into three classes instead of using one alphabetical arrangement for the whole. The latter plan would certainly be more simple, but it may be that it would not so readily call attention to the contributions of our members and thus incidentally to the wants of the society.

Our exchanges, which we endeavor to conduct in a broad and liberal spirit, have seldom brought us better returns than during the past six months. For instance, from Columbia College we have received in addition to seventy volumes relating to biography, slavery and rebellion, forty-three volumes of the publications of the Hakluyt Society; from the Detroit Public Library seventy-seven volumes chiefly biographical, and from the State Historical Society of Wisconsin one hundred and sixty-nine carefully selected titles. We have lately made special efforts to serve in this direction the American Baptist Historical Society, the American Catholic Historical Association, the Kansas Historical Society and the Registrar of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts. We have also tried to aid one of our honored members in collecting the imprints of his own

town with a view to their preservation in the future town library. It may be added that a small trial invoice of duplicate bound newspapers has been sent to the auction room, and that such a fair return has been received therefor that a second invoice has been forwarded.

With the approval of the Library Committee, the very imperfect files of our duplicate English and American illustrated newspapers have been sent to the Worcester City Hospital. Our binders have considerably reduced the accumulations of unbound magazines and newspapers, greatly to our present relief. While we may never be able to have a bindery of our own, the convenience of a repair shop for books and pamphlets under our own roof, where there would be the minimum risk from fire, is often suggested by the presence of broken backs, loose leaves, and torn plates. In the case of books of special value, such as the unbound Massachusetts folio journals and resolves, a library bindery would relieve your librarian of not a little anxiety.

The roof upon the main hall has been re-tinned, after thirty-three years of service, and the skylight thoroughly repaired, thus securing us from damage by water. Perhaps the next most important service to be rendered by the Salisbury Building Fund is the placing of shelves in the lower hall for special lines of books, as well as for our large collection of duplicates now in part piled upon the floor. These shelves can be of an inexpensive character, and should stand back to back, opposite the centres of the wall shelving, between the windows on the north and south sides, giving the effect of alcoves.

The Society of Antiquaries of London, whose favors to this Society have been long continued, has recently, in answer to a request made to our foreign corresponding societies, notified us of the gaps in its set of our publications. It is our desire to receive such information, and to act upon it promptly so far as it is in our power. It would seem wise to print editions sufficiently large to en-

able us to make a fair return by exchange to all bodies with which we are in correspondence. Until our Publishing Fund is large enough to provide for the reprinting of the second volume of our transactions—perhaps the most valuable in the series—we shall be very glad to secure copies of it by purchase, gift, or exchange, either from members, friends, or dealers. We are often asked if there is an index to the proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society, and it may help our treasury to be able to respond to such inquiries. We have a Partial Index to the Proceedings, first series, 1812–1881, by Mr. Salisbury, with a Bibliography of the Society by Mr. Paine, which may be had, post paid, in boards or sheets, for one dollar. The New Series of Proceedings is printed in numbers, continuously paged, so that when a volume is ready the title page and index are added, and the book is complete. For seventy-five cents and the numbers, an exchange can be made for a bound volume, uncut, top gilt, and with gilt lettering upon the back. The title-page and index to volume four, new series, will be sent out with the proceedings of this meeting.

The pupils of Worcester Academy have recently made a pilgrimage to our library, under the guidance of their instructor in history. We trust that not only this visit will be repeated, but that we may become more and more closely associated with all the institutions of learning about us, both of the higher order, like the Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and the College of the Holy Cross, of the present, and the Clark University of the near future; and of the academies and schools, which are, or are to be their feeders.

The fourth meeting of the American Historical Association, whose chief officers are members of this society, was held at Boston and Cambridge, May 21–24, 1887, and was a pronounced success. It was thought best that your librarian should, in the interest of historical pursuits, attend its sessions, and extend to his fellow-members the privileges

and hospitality of Antiquarian Hall, which have so often been offered in the Society's publications, and by its members.

We shall not fulfil our mission of encouraging the preservation and use of American history until by the establishment of a fund for the especial purpose, or otherwise, we are able to subscribe for important archaeological and historical works upon their inception, and thus help to insure their careful preparation and publication. We have not yet known those "piping times of peace" referred to by Dibdin when the Society's "Surplusage of wealth finds a vent in the channel of book purchasing," and therefore cannot always do as we wish. However, as ours is a national society, shall we not try to make its library what Henry Stevens twenty-five years ago called "An index of a nation's wealth, taste and character?"

It being important that we should make the best possible use of our limited book purchasing funds special attention has been given to the careful examination of foreign and domestic catalogues. It has sometimes happened that distance from the place of publication has lessened the price asked for an uncommon book which an active market nearer home had caused to become rare. The finding in these catalogues from time to time at reasonable rates, of rare books of which we are sadly in need, coupled with the knowledge that we have practically no general fund with which to buy them, recalls the forceful words of Colonel Washburn in his Council report of April, 1883. He said, you will remember, "That the importance of making one at least of our departments as nearly complete as the lot of humanity will admit cannot be overestimated," adding that "What we need is a gift of money devoted to no specified purpose * * * saving only the general condition that it shall be devoted to the purchase of books."

We would extend our hearty congratulations to those kindred societies, which have been made happy by the

increase of library funds or by the prospect of better accommodations, as well as to the nation and its cities and towns for the bright library outlook. Whether undertaken by the national or municipal governments or by individuals in their places of birth or adoption, it matters little so the good work goes forward. The roll of honor is a long one, but need not here be given. It is so evident that the spirit of library helpfulness is abroad that we await our turn with confidence. Your librarian desires from time to time to state special as well as general wants and then to leave them hopefully in your hands.

Respectfully submitted.

EDMUND M. BARTON,

Librarian.

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