

REPORT

OF THE

Librarian of Congress

FOR THE

YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 1, 1867.

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REPORT
OF
THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS,

SHOWING

The condition of the library during the year ending December 1, 1867.

Sir: In compliance with the standing instructions of the Joint Committee on the Library, the undersigned has the honor to submit the following report of the condition of the Library of Congress for the year ending December 1, 1867:

The past year has been marked by a degree of progress in all the interests of the library unexampled in its past history. The extension of the library rooms authorized by act of Congress of March 4, 1865, has been fully completed, and the new fire-proof wings, each capable of containing over 70,000 volumes, are opened, and to a large extent filled with books. The space now at command in all departments of the library is adequate to the accommodation of about 210,000 volumes. An enumeration of the books on hand, including the heavy acquisitions of the present year, shows an aggregate of 165,467 volumes, exclusive of unbound pamphlets, periodicals, manuscripts, and maps. Of this aggregate, 23,915 volumes are in the law department of the library. The numerical strength of the library has thus been doubled within the past two years, and the value of the collection has been incalculably increased.

The removal to the Capitol of the library belonging to the Smithsonian Institution has been completed, and the books, with the single exception of the pamphlets and periodicals, have been catalogued and placed upon the shelves. A catalogue of the transactions of learned societies in that library has also been printed, under the auspices of the Institution, and is complete up to the last year. The accessions to the library through the medium of exchanges made by the Smithsonian Institution during the current year, number 1,432 volumes, and 4,417 pamphlets or parts of volumes, besides 187 maps.

The valuable historical library of Peter Force, of this city, purchased by act of Congress approved March 2, 1867, was removed to the Capitol during the same month, and the larger portion of the books have been catalogued and placed upon the shelves. For a summary of the various departments of this collection, so rich in the political and historical literature of America, reference is made to the special report of the undersigned upon the Force library, made by direction of the committee, under date of January 25, 1867. The immense mass of newspapers and other periodicals, pamphlets, bound and unbound, maps,

and other materials acquired with this library, and the very large collection of pamphlets belonging to the Smithsonian Institution, will be prepared for the catalogue as soon as the titles of the bound books, now nearly completed, are disposed of. An enumeration of these, similar to that already effected with regard to books, will then be made and reported to Congress.

The accessions to the library during the year ending December 1, 1867, aside from the special collections already alluded to, number 9,474 volumes, derived from the following named sources :

	Volumes.
By purchase.....	5,783
By the operation of the copyright law.....	1,493
By the exchanges of the Smithsonian Institution.....	1,432
By presentation, (chiefly official documents).....	766
Total.....	9,474

This aggregate is exclusive of about 2,000 pamphlets, and exceeds the additions of the preceding year (1866) by 2,223 volumes.

By the copyright laws of the United States, as amended March 4, 1865, and February 18, 1867, one copy of each publication for which the government grants a copyright is required to be deposited in the library of Congress. The operation of this act during the past year has been attended with greatly increased efficiency, as is shown in the following comparative statement of articles received at the library for the year ending December 1, 1866, and December 1, 1867, respectively :

	1866.	1867.
Number of volumes of books.....	836	1,493
Number of pamphlets and periodicals.....	572	1,340
Number of pieces of music.....	386	1,256
Number of engravings and photographs.....	170	319
Number of maps.....	32	91
Total number of articles.....	1,996	4,499

The material increase of additions to the library from this source is attributable chiefly to the amendment of the law, recommended in the last report of the undersigned, by which a penalty is imposed for noncompliance, and the transmission through the mails of all copyright matter for this library is made free.

The amendment to the by-laws regulating the use of the library, sanctioned by the committee at the last session, by which persons under sixteen years of age are excluded from the privileges of readers, has proved in practice to be a salutary reform. The annoyance to the officers of the library, and to all readers with a serious purpose in view, from having the seats constantly filled with restless youths engaged in no other pursuit than sending for and turning over the

pictorial publications in the library, has been wholly abated since the adoption of the rule.

Occasional dissatisfaction has arisen from the enforcement of another rule adopted by the Committee on the Library, namely, the following :

“The accesses to the alcoves and galleries shall be kept closed, and no one except members of Congress permitted to enter them unaccompanied by an officer of the library, with the exception of the alcoves devoted to light reading.”

A brief reflection, it is believed, will show the absolute necessity of such a rule in every large and well-regulated library. The facility of finding any book when called for is dependent wholly upon having a designated place for every volume, to which it is always returned when not in use. Such an orderly arrangement is wholly incompatible with the system of opening the alcoves and shelves to the free range of readers. Continual misplacement of books is the necessary result of this, besides the constant liability to loss arising from the depredations of dishonest persons, to which all libraries are subject. Experience has shown that any discrimination which shall distinguish the careful from the careless, the conscientious from the unscrupulous readers, is wholly impracticable. The only rule which is alike safe and satisfactory is that of uniform and impartial exclusion from the shelves. When it is considered that there remains to every reader in the library the unrestricted use of any number of volumes called for at the tables, through the complete catalogues of the library that are furnished, the unreasonableness of any complaint becomes apparent.

The catalogue of additions to the library during the year now closing is a work of such magnitude that, although the printing was commenced on the 1st of November last, it will probably occupy the present month and a large portion of the month of January to complete it. This catalogue will include not only all the purchases and receipts of new books during the year, but also the larger portion of the books of the Smithsonian library, and of the Force collection. In the judgment of the undersigned the convenience of Congress will be better subserved, and the advantage of all who use the library promoted, by waiting a few weeks for a full catalogue of the most valuable stores of books recently acquired, than by the issue of the customary pamphlet list of additions at the commencement of the session. There will remain for future catalogues the titles of the multitude of pamphlets included in the Smithsonian library and the Force collection, together with the rich assemblage of maps embraced in both libraries, and the manuscripts, newspapers, and most of the incunabula of the Force collection.

In the catalogue now passing through the press the undersigned has introduced the feature, new to most catalogues, of giving in all cases the number of pages contained in each work, when not extending beyond two volumes, together with a collation of all maps and plates included in any work. The names of publishers or printers are also given, and the contents of all collections or sets of works thoroughly analyzed. These full descriptions, it is believed, will be found highly useful to all readers, as indicating the extent of the several works in the catalogue, while the collation and names of publishers will serve as a valua-

ble and often necessary aid to the identification of different editions of the same work.

The catalogue of the library by subject-matters, so long in progress, has been completely prepared for the press during the year, and includes the entire contents of the general catalogue of authors issued in 1864, together with the three annual supplements since published. It was found, however, much to the regret of the undersigned, that the Congressional Printing Office could not undertake to print simultaneously the subject-catalogue and the extensive annual catalogue now passing through the press. The printing of accurate catalogues, embracing titles of books in many languages, is a work involving much time and careful labor.

The regret experienced at this delay is tempered by the reflection that the materials for the general catalogue of subjects are all at hand, arranged in alphabetical order, and available at a moment's notice to any one desiring to find what the library contains upon any given subject. The printing will be commenced as soon as the annual catalogue is finished, and pushed forward to early completion.

In pursuance of the expressed assent of the committee at the last session, a room lying between the central library and the rotundo has been cleared and will shortly be fitted up as a reading room for periodicals for the sole use of senators and representatives. This is an improvement long needed, and will greatly facilitate the use of the numerous and valuable files of newspapers, magazines, and reviews, foreign and American, now received at the library. The same room will contain the bound sets of leading American journals, arranged for easy reference.

The balances on hand to the credit of the several funds in charge of the committee at this date are the following, including the amount of undrawn appropriations in the treasury of the United States:

Fund for purchase of books.....	\$1, 730 65
Fund for purchase of law books.....	707 35
Fund for purchase of periodicals.....	2, 389 62
Fund for contingent expenses and temporary help.....	2, 795 23
Catalogue fund.....	32 44
Fund for ornamenting the Capitol with works of art.....	15, 905 00
Fund for portraits of ex-Presidents of the United States.....	3, 450 00
Fund for Powell's painting for a naval victory for the Capitol.....	18, 000 00
Fund for completing the publication of the works of the exploring expedition.....	17 14
Fund for pay of arrears to authors and artists of the exploring expedition.....	5, 837 75
Fund for replacing the works of the exploring expedition destroyed by fire.....	1, 346 10
Fund for putting in order the plates of the exploring expedition..	457 79
Botanic garden fund.....	749 96
Greenhouse fund, (pay of horticulturist, etc.).....	3, 899 54

Fund for the construction of a new greenhouse.....	\$20, 013 95
Fund for publishing the writings of James Madison.....	100 13

In conclusion, the attention of the committee is respectfully called to the need of additional legislation to render effective the exchanges of public documents for the publications of foreign governments, provided for by a joint resolution of Congress, approved March 2, 1867. That resolution directs "that fifty copies of all documents hereafter printed by order of either house of Congress, and fifty copies additional of all documents printed in excess of the usual number, together with fifty copies of each publication issued by any department or bureau of the government, be placed at the disposal of the Joint Committee on the Library, who shall exchange the same, through the agency of the Smithsonian Institution, for such works published in foreign countries, and especially by foreign governments, as may be deemed by said committee an equivalent; said works to be deposited in the library of Congress."

The Congressional Printer having taken the ground that this resolution does not direct him to print any additional number of the congressional documents to that authorized by existing laws, and the quota of such documents, actually printed, being all distributed, the undersigned has been unable to secure the required documents with which to commence the system of exchanges proposed. A circular has, however, been transmitted to nearly all foreign governments by the officers of the Smithsonian Institution, whose fully organized system of exchanges it was proposed to employ in this agency, and a sufficient number of replies have been elicited to show that the proposed exchange meets with great favor, and will be very generally embraced. Among the governments which have responded affirmatively to the circular proposing an exchange of government publications are those of Great Britain, Russia, Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands, Greece, Switzerland, Chili, and Costa Rica. The deficiencies of the library in works published at the expense of foreign governments are very great; and as these works embody much valuable information, not elsewhere found, respecting the history, legislation, statistics, and condition of the countries they represent, the importance of securing as full a representation of them as possible for future use and reference becomes apparent. A supplementary act, together with an appropriation adequate to carry into effect the purpose of the resolution, is earnestly recommended.

A. R. SPOFFORD, *Librarian.*

Hon. E. D. MORGAN,

Chairman of the Joint Committee on the Library.