

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS,
EXHIBITING
THE PROGRESS OF THE LIBRARY
DURING THE
CALENDAR YEAR 1885.

Resolved, That the Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress be printed, and that 500 additional copies, with covers, be printed for distribution by the Librarian.

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1886.

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS,
Washington, March 15, 1886.

The Librarian presents herewith his annual report, embracing a summary of the recent increase of the collections of this Library, and of the business of the copyright department for the last calendar year, closing December 31 1885.

The annual count of the books and pamphlets in the Library has again been a matter of much difficulty, because of the greatly increased overcrowding of the collections in every part. The following exhibits the result of the enumeration as made January 1, 1886 :

| | |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Volumes of books..... | 565,134 |
| Pamphlets..... | 191,000 |

Of this aggregate, the law department of the Library contains 66,284 volumes, of which 3,019 volumes have been added during the year.

The total increase during the year 1885 has been 20,447 volumes, from the following sources, respectively :

| | Volumes. |
|--|----------|
| From purchase..... | 4,364 |
| From copyright deposits..... | 7,214 |
| From deposit by the Smithsonian Institution..... | 2,323 |
| From exchanges..... | 4,599 |
| From donations..... | 1,744 |
| From increase of the Toner collection (presented)..... | 183 |
| Total..... | 20,447 |

The copyright office continues to exhibit an increased business in all departments of publications entered for copyright. The aggregate entries during the calendar year 1885 numbered 28,411, as against 26,893 entries in 1884, being an increase of 1,518 entries. The fees received for copyright amounted to \$23,293.60, being an increase of \$1,520.60 over the preceding year.

The following summary exhibits the different classes and numbers of publications entered by their titles for copyright during 1885:

Number and designation of articles entered in 1885.

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| Books..... | 9,986 |
| Periodicals..... | 6,060 |
| Dramatic compositions..... | 625 |
| Musical compositions..... | 6,808 |
| Photographs..... | 963 |
| Engravings and chromos..... | 1,396 |
| Maps and charts..... | 1,897 |
| Prints..... | 80 |
| Designs..... | 486 |
| Paintings..... | 94 |
| Drawings..... | 15 |
| Total..... | 28,410 |

The following is a statement of the aggregate number of each class of publications deposited in the Library, and the additions thus made to the collections by the copyright law:

Number of copyright publications received in 1885.

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| Books..... | 14,428 |
| Periodicals..... | 12,938 |
| Dramatic compositions..... | 310 |
| Musical compositions..... | 12,883 |
| Photographs..... | 1,859 |
| Engravings and chromos..... | 2,638 |
| Maps and charts..... | 3,581 |
| Prints..... | 139 |
| Designs and drawings..... | 84 |
| Total..... | 48,860 |

The deposit of copies required by law to perfect the copyright being two of each publication, the net additions to the collections during the year numbered 24,430 distinct publications, of which 7,214 were books, and 6,469 were periodicals.

The following is a list of unexpended balances in the various funds appropriated for the Library on January 1, 1886:

| | |
|---|------------|
| Fund for increase of the Library..... | \$8,904 02 |
| Fund for works of art..... | 10,234 22 |
| Fund for contingent expenses of Library..... | 1,304 07 |
| Fund for printing and binding..... | 4,118 15 |
| Fund for purchase and printing of unpublished historical manuscripts relating to early French discoveries in America..... | 3,160 04 |
| Fund for preparing for publication the continuation of the American Archives..... | 4,000 00 |

There have been added to the Library during the year continued files of many newspapers and periodicals, contributed by the Department of State and by the Bureau of Statistics and the Mint Bureau of the

Treasury Department. These and other contributions of books and pamphlets not needed by the special libraries of the Departments, while they conduce to the completeness and consequent value of the Library of the Government, add more and more to the urgent necessity for a new Library building.

THE TONER COLLECTION.

The liberal gift of his entire private library to the United States by Dr. J. M. Toner, of Washington, accepted by Congress in 1882, has been supplemented during the year 1885 by the presentation of 183 volumes of books and of 615 pamphlets, in addition to the accessions of previous years, noted in former annual reports. This is also in addition to the extensive and constantly-growing collection of manuscript material collected by the researches of the donor, devoted specially to the biography of Americans, and gathered from the widest available sources in books, newspapers, and periodicals and private correspondence.

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES.

Under various acts of Congress, beginning in 1867 and amended at later dates, there was set on foot a system of exchanges of the documents and other publications of the United States for those of foreign Governments. These acts make the Smithsonian Institution the agency of the Joint Committee on the Library for effecting these exchanges, and require that 50 copies of all documents of Congress and of every publication issued by any Department or Bureau of the Government shall be exchanged for such works published by foreign Governments as may be deemed by the Library Committee an equivalent, the fruits of such exchanges to be placed in the Library of Congress.

Under the authority of these acts the publications of the United States have been sent regularly each year to thirty-eight foreign Governments, whose officers responded favorably to overtures for regular exchanges. Very inadequate returns, however, have been received from some countries, while from others very rich and important stores of documents, including legal, political, historical, and scientific publications, have come to hand. A small appropriation of \$1,000 has been annually made by Congress to defray the necessary expenses of these exchanges of Government publications. This has been quite inadequate to do more than to pay for clerical labor. Repeated efforts have been made by correspondence conducted with foreign Governments, through the Smithsonian Institution and the Department of State, to secure more adequate returns from the Governments to which the publications of the United States (an extensive and costly series) have been so liberally supplied through a long series of years. Very slight results, however, have attended these endeavors. A few desultory returns were occasionally received, followed by an entire stoppage

of the transmission of documents. The result of the exchanges thus far has been to supply the Library with many publications of permanent value and with many more fragmentary sets of laws, journals, reports, and miscellaneous publications, the principal value of which to the collection depends upon the completeness of the series. The deficiencies in all these series are very extensive, thus depriving Congress of that full access to the current legislation and condition of foreign countries which is so important to those seeking official information thereon.

It has long been apparent that no permanent improvement in the very defective operations of these international exchanges can be expected until some special agency is organized in Europe to give personal attention to the practical business of securing full returns of all Government publications. The distribution of documents is scattered in most Governments among different bureaus, with no common head. Moreover, most Government publications are issued by arrangement with private publishing houses, instead of by Government presses, thus rendering the books to a partial extent publications to which a commercial value is attached, and complicating the question of exchange with that of a pecuniary valuation of publications given and received. In very few countries is there any general law regulating this matter, while the various international conferences held at Paris and at Brussels with a view to the adoption of a uniform system of exchanges have failed to enlist the co-operation of several of the most important European Governments. Moreover, there are issued many special publications which can be obtained only by special efforts. An agent of the United States either constantly upon the ground, or visiting periodically at regular intervals the bureaus of the Government in the various countries, supplied with full lists both of our wants and of the publications, regular and special, of the Government presses, would furnish a permanent and, it may be added, the only efficient guarantee of realizing from the system of international exchanges what we have a right to expect.

An initiatory step was taken during the last Congress, when an agent in the employ of the Smithsonian Institution, in charge of its exchange system, was sent to Europe, one-half of his expenses being paid by the Institution and one-half out of the Library funds. The results of the experiment, although a first attempt in a new field, were most gratifying. In the few months devoted to the labor, there were secured by diligent effort, backed by the requisite official authority from the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, the Department of State, and the Librarian of Congress, very extensive returns of public documents and miscellaneous publications. These returns comprised forty-four cases and one hundred and sixty packages of books, numbering about 7,000 volumes, received in 1884-85, and were collected from the Governments of Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Hungary, Saxony, Wurtemberg, Bavaria, and Switzerland, fourteen Governments in all. Vienna was also visited, but affairs

were not in a state favorable to the success of negotiations, and no result was reached as to the publications of the Austrian Government. Several other Governments from which returns were thus secured, have also failed to continue sending the series of their parliamentary and other documents, the value of which is largely dependent upon their continuity.

The experience of years has amply proved the impossibility of securing any complete or adequate return from foreign Governments for the full and costly series of American Government publications so long furnished them, without direct and persistent effort, through an agency upon the ground, furnished with adequate credentials, to attend personally to the whole business. One of the chief benefits of the initial effort already made has been the discovery of the practical obstacles in the way of a thoroughly successful system of exchanges. These, it is believed, could be removed by following up the work with each Government, while, if neglected, or left to the very uncertain medium of correspondence, the United States will continue to reap very inadequate returns for our publications sent abroad. It is recommended that the Joint Committee on the Library consider the expediency of providing an appropriation to defray the necessary expenses of an agent of international exchanges, to be sent abroad for a term of at least six months during the present year.

It is also recommended that the act directing the printing of 50 copies of each publication ordered by any Department or Bureau, to be devoted to international exchanges, be so amended as to render its provisions more effective.

THE NEEDS OF THE LIBRARY.

It is a matter of much regret that the continuation of the printing of the new general catalogue of the Library has been long interrupted because of the engrossing and rapidly increasing business of the copyright department. This has so far developed as actually to involve the clerical labor of what might fairly be termed a bureau, absorbing more and more the time of my assistants, while the cataloguing and arrangement for prompt supply of all new additions to the Library, with the growing demands of Congress, of the various Departments and Bureaus, and of the public for books and information, leave no time for the preparation and printing of catalogues. An increase of the existing small Library force is earnestly recommended as necessary to prevent the current work of the Library and the copyright department from falling into arrears. The very numerous calls upon the Librarian for certified copies of records of copyright made in former years, often involving protracted searches into the earlier books of record of the United States district courts, consume much time, and often necessitate delay, that the pressing daily record of new copyrights may not be interrupted.

The past year has added greatly to the urgency of the long-felt necessity for some relief to the overcrowded condition of the Library. Its extensive collections are continually growing more extensive, while no increase of space, except by utilizing under great disadvantages the crypts of the Capitol, has been provided. Even the latter temporary resource has now been exhausted, and the number of books which must be piled upon the floors is constantly increased. The labor of the Librarian and his assistants, and the time necessarily consumed in producing from widely separated divisions of the Library books which would be carefully classified upon shelves were any shelves available for that purpose, are made far greater by the long delay to provide additional accommodations for the Library. A bill providing for a Library building, with ample space for present necessities and future growth, has been twice passed by the Senate, but has failed to receive final consideration in the House of Representatives. Without here repeating any of the numerous considerations urged in former reports in favor of this measure as demanded alike by the necessities of Congress and the public service, and required for the security and preservation of the Government property, the undersigned here renews his expression of the hope that the building will be provided for at the present session of Congress.

AINSWORTH R. SPOFFORD,
Librarian of Congress.

Hon. WILLIAM J. SEWELL,
Chairman of the Joint Committee on the Library.