

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS

FOR

THE YEAR 1878.

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1879.

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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS,  
 Washington, January 2, 1878.

The undersigned has the honor to submit herewith his annual report, exhibiting the progress of the Library of Congress and the business of the copyright department during the year closing December 31, 1878.

The annual enumeration of the books just completed exhibits a gratifying growth in all the collections which go to make up the Library. The additions to the law department have been 3,881 volumes, and to the miscellaneous library 17,656 volumes, besides 11,689 pamphlets, and 2,344 maps and charts. At the date of my last report, January 1, 1878, the whole library numbered 331,118 volumes, and about 110,000 pamphlets. The aggregate increase during the year has been 21,537 volumes, and swells the aggregate contents of the Library to 352,655 volumes of books, besides about 120,000 pamphlets. The accessions of the year have come from the following sources:

|  | Books. | Pamphlets. |
|--|--------|------------|
| By purchase .....  | 7,864  | 940        |
| By copyright .....   | 9,350  | 6,740      |
| By deposit of the Smithsonian Institution .....            | 2,396  | 2,416      |
| By donation (including State and municipal documents)..... | 947    | 348        |
| By exchange .....  | 980    | 1,245      |
| Total.....   | 21,537 | 11,689     |

The business of copyright entries and deposits, placed by law in charge of the Librarian of Congress, has slightly increased during the year now closed. There were entered in the office during the calendar year 1878, 15,798 publications of all kinds against 15,758 entries for the calendar year 1877. The copyright fees received and paid into the Treasury amounted to \$13,134.50. The year preceding, the aggregate fees received

were \$13,076; showing an increase of \$53.50. The copyrights of the year exhibit the following division as to classes of publications entered at the office:

|                             |        |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| Books.....                  | 5,632  |
| Periodicals.....            | 3,424  |
| Musical compositions.....   | 3,772  |
| Dramatic compositions.....  | 372    |
| Photographs.....            | 269    |
| Engravings and chromos..... | 1,053  |
| Maps and charts.....        | 1,081  |
| Prints.....                 | 51     |
| Designs and drawings.....   | 131    |
| Paintings.....              | 13     |
| Total.....                  | 15,798 |

The deposits of publications to perfect copyright exhibit the following accessions to the collections, under each designation of copyright publications deposited under the law:

|                             |        |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| Books.....                  | 9,350  |
| Periodicals.....            | 7,860  |
| Musical compositions.....   | 7,585  |
| Dramatic compositions.....  | 120    |
| Photographs.....            | 501    |
| Engravings and chromos..... | 2,222  |
| Maps and charts.....        | 2,270  |
| Prints and cuts.....        | 66     |
| Designs.....                | 52     |
| Total.....                  | 30,026 |

As two copies of each publication are required to be deposited, the net additions to the collections of copyright material are 15,013 articles, of which 4,675 are books, besides periodicals numbering 3,930.

The funds under charge of the Joint Committee on the Library exhibit the following unexpended balances on the 1st of January, 1879:

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| Fund for the increase of Library.....   | \$6,647 77 |
| Fund for ornamenting the Capitol with works of art.....   | 4,750 00   |
| Fund for portraits of Presidents of the United States.....  | 2,840 00   |
| Fund for purchase and printing of unpublished historical documents relating to early French discoveries in the Northwest and on the Mississippi.. | 5,964 04   |
| Fund for salaries in Botanic garden and greenhouses.....  | 4,811 07   |
| Fund for improving Botanic garden.....  | 1,367 45   |

The printing of the new general catalogue of the Library, which promises to make about six royal octavo volumes, has advanced to the close of the letter B, and is now being prosecuted with as much rapidity as is consistent with accurate editing and printing. Its value will become increasingly apparent as the volumes appear, embracing, as they do, in one alphabet, the entire contents of the Library, whether books or pamphlets, up to the year 1878.

It will be apparent from the statistics of the annual growth already given that the problem of administering so extensive a collection within such narrow and unsuitable quarters has become increasingly intricate, and, it may be added, distressing. The most casual observer who visits the Library sees the extreme inconvenience in carrying on the current business of the institution, and a closer investigation will convince any candid observer of the positive necessity for immediate provision being made for the accumulating collections which now crowd the alcoves and overflow upon the floors of that part of the Capitol devoted to the Library. Through the active good-will of the Architect of the Capitol, the Librarian has secured temporary storage in some of the dark and unused apartments beneath the central building for a few thousand foreign documents and copyright deposits less frequently used. But this resource is at last exhausted; nor are there now twenty feet of space remaining in the Library where extra shelving could be introduced for the reception of additional volumes. The inconvenience to those resorting to the Library, whether members of Congress and their families, or students and the general public, is growing daily. At times there are absolutely no seats for the throng of readers who resort to the collection for serious purposes. There is not a library in the world approximating the size of this which has not at least twice as much room for its accommodation; and to this must be added the fact that the extensive and steadily-growing bureau of copyrights for the United States imposes upon the Librarian and his assistants the handling and custody of a great collection of thirty thousand publications annually added, all of which must be catalogued, numbered, and stored away for use or reference.

The failure of Congress at the last session to agree upon any provision for increased accommodation for the Library was coupled with an instruction to the Secretary of the Interior to ascertain and report to Congress at the beginning of the present session the appraised value of the squares adjacent to the Capitol, on three sides, together with the price at which the proprietors would sell their respective interests. This report has been printed and is now before Congress in House Mis. Doc. No. 8, third session Forty-fifth Congress. Whatever plan for locating a library-building may be agreed upon by Congress, whether by purchase of land in the vicinity of the Capitol, or by location upon Judiciary Square or other grounds owned by the United States, two considerations should not be lost sight of: first, the necessity of providing at the outset grounds adequate for the construction of a building sufficient to contain the present Library multiplied fourfold; and secondly, the securing of space sufficient not only to afford proper approaches to a public building of such dimensions, but to admit of enlargement in more than one direction in the future. Any provision for a library-building which should overlook these necessities would result in burdening the country with the cost of two library constructions instead of one. The whole subject is

again commended to the careful consideration of the committee, in the hope that another session of Congress will not be suffered to pass without suitable provision being made for beginning a work so indispensable and so long deferred.

AINSWORTH R. SPOFFORD,  
*Librarian of Congress.*

Hon. T. O. HOWE,  
*Chairman of the Joint Committee on the Library.*