

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS,

EXHIBITING

THE PROGRESS OF THE LIBRARY

DURING THE

CALENDAR YEAR 1896.



WASHINGTON:
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.
1897.

ANNUAL REPORT
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LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS
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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS,
Washington, May 28, 1897.

The Librarian respectfully submits herewith his annual report, which embraces a summary of the increase of the Library and the business transacted in the copyright office during the calendar year closing December 31, 1896.

The estimated aggregate number of volumes in the Library at the date named is 748,115, in addition to which are to be reckoned about 245,000 pamphlets, exhibiting an increase over the year 1895 of 16,674 volumes.

A substantial increase in the large and engrossing copyright business of the Library is reported, notwithstanding the prolongation of the commercial and industrial depression in the country. This increase is due in part to extension of the international copyright business with foreign countries, especially in the class of publications coming under the head of musical compositions. There are now embraced in the privilege of copyright in the United States the citizens or subjects of eleven foreign Governments, namely, Great Britain and her dependencies, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Switzerland, Denmark, Chile, and Mexico.

The total new entries of copyright during the year 1896 were 72,470, embracing all varieties of publications coming under the protection of the law. This was an increase of 4,898 entries over those of the year 1895. The aggregate fees received and paid into the Treasury on account of copyright amounted to \$54,870, as against \$52,282.55 the year preceding, being an increase of \$2,587.45.

The following table exhibits the number and designation of the various classes of publications entered during the year under the law of copyright:

Number of copyrights entered in 1896.

Books (including all publications entered as such).....	20, 825
Periodicals	12, 892
Musical compositions.....	20, 851

4 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS.

Dramatic compositions.....	907
Photographs.....	6,123
Engravings.....	1,604
Lithographs.....	763
Chromos.....	136
Prints.....	2,388
Cuts.....	553
Designs.....	1,558
Drawings.....	324
Paintings.....	1,105
Statuary.....	73
Maps.....	1,198
Charts.....	1,070
Total.....	72,470

As the designation "books" necessarily embraces many miscellaneous printed publications not issued in book form (including, for example, syndicate articles, circulars, stories in periodicals, and many other forms of printed matter) entered as books, from the want of any more accurate designation in the copyright law, it follows that the large apparent return of books entered does not represent so many actual volumes. The deposits in the office of the different classes of publications were approximately the following:

Books (including all publications entered as such).....	15,628
Periodicals.....	12,806
Musical compositions.....	17,109
Dramatic compositions.....	289
Photographs.....	5,447
Engravings.....	1,327
Lithographs.....	634
Chromos.....	67
Prints.....	366
Cuts.....	377
Designs and drawings.....	486
Maps.....	1,130
Charts.....	240
Total.....	55,906

The above exceeds the deposited publications of the preceding year (1895) by 4,840. As a deposit of two copies of each publication protected by copyright is required, the aggregate of publications of all kinds actually received at the Library during the year under review was about 112,000 different articles. By reason of noncompliance with the law, in many cases, and because of the fact that multitudes of entries of copyright do not involve actual publication of what is entered, the registered books and other articles deposited always fall much behind the actual recorded entries of title.

The issue of the weekly catalogue of publications received at the Library, under the provisions of the copyright law of 1891, furnished to the Treasury Department by the Librarian, has been regularly continued throughout the year. The customs collectors at all ports of

entry are furnished with these lists, in aid of arresting unlawful importations of copyright publications, printed abroad without permission of the proprietors. Considerable numbers of the edition of this catalogue are also taken by subscribers, at the cost price of \$5 a year, paid at any United States custom-house.

The subject of urgently needed additions to the clerical force in the constantly growing copyright department was commended to the attention of Congress in my last report. Since that time detailed and carefully prepared estimates of the additional force of copyright clerks and Library assistants required for efficient service and administration in the new building were submitted by me in October, 1896, through the Treasury Department, and they have been substantially approved by the action of Congress in the act of February 19, 1897. The same act makes provision for the removal of the books and other collections of the Library.

While a due regard for the convenience and necessary use of the Library by Congress would not permit a complete removal of the collections during the present special session of Congress, a large portion of the duplicates and the copyright collections have already been transferred. On the termination of the session the entire Library will be removed, preserving in the distribution of its various departments as near a systematic order as possible, and to this end the closing of the Library for a brief term will become necessary.

With the provision for assistants to be employed upon the catalogue of the Library, it is designed to enter immediately upon the preparation and printing of a complete catalogue of the collections, arranged in an alphabet of subjects, the card catalogue by authors being already substantially up to date.

The completion, since the last annual report of the undersigned, of the commodious and beautiful new Library building is a proper subject of congratulation to Congress and to the American people. Planned throughout with a view to the accommodation and prompt service of a great library collection in all its departments, its utility may be said to have realized the chief end of library architecture, while the beauty of the edifice, both in its exterior walls and interior decorations (all by American artists) appeals eminently to the public taste.

Now that the large expenditure upon construction of the building has ceased, it is earnestly hoped that this invaluable collection will be sedulously increased by liberal appropriations to fill all important deficiencies. To this end the undersigned is preparing a carefully digested list of desiderata, to be submitted to the Joint Committee on the Library at an early day.

Very respectfully,

AINSWORTH R. SPOFFORD,
Librarian of Congress.

Hon. GEORGE PEABODY WETMORE,
Chairman of the Joint Committee on the Library.