

REPORT

OF THE

LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS

FOR THE

YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 1, 1868.

WASHINGTON:
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.
1868.

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SIR: In accordance with the standing instructions of the Joint Committee on the Library, the undersigned has the honor to present his annual report, setting forth the condition of the library for the year ending December 1, 1868.

The annual enumeration of the books, just completed, presents an aggregate of 173,965 volumes, exclusive of unbound pamphlets, periodicals, manuscript materials, and maps. Of this amount 24,668 volumes are in the law department of the library. The accessions of books during the year ending December 1 have amounted to 8,498 volumes, which have been added to the library from the various sources indicated below:

	Volumes.
By purchase	3,208
By the operation of the copyright laws.....	1,682
By deposit of the Smithsonian Institution	1,921
By presentation, (chiefly official documents).....	903
By exchanges.....	784
Total.....	8,498

This aggregate is exclusive of about 2,500 pamphlets.

The receipts of books and other publications under the copyright laws of the United States have been as follows during the past year:

Number of volumes of books.....	1,682
Number of pamphlets and periodicals	1,421
Number of pieces of music.....	1,561
Number of engravings and photographs.....	347
Number of maps	80
Total number of articles.....	5,091

The provision of law requiring a copy of each publication for which a copyright is granted under the laws of the United States to be deposited in the national library, is of great importance. Under the amendment

of the law which went into effect February 18, 1867, imposing a penalty for neglect to comply with the requisition, there has been received a largely increased proportion of American publications. No instance of a necessity for the enforcement of the penalty against delinquent publishers has yet occurred. Yet the statute referred to is so far from being a self-acting one, that multitudes of publications in all parts of the country are never furnished to the library until after the official demand provided for in the law has been made. This requires incessant vigilance, not only to obtain authentic evidence of all copyrights issued in the numerous judicial districts of the United States, but to transmit the requisite notice to all delinquent proprietors of copyrights, and to record the results. With the utmost diligence it is found impracticable to secure for the library all copyright publications that are issued. A large proportion of American publications are copyrighted by persons other than the publishers, and the residence of such persons it is frequently impossible to ascertain. Other works are issued in places remote from the great cities, and it is found that access to the copyright records of several States (especially of such as make no returns to the Patent Office in Washington) is difficult and expensive. Still, the undersigned has reason to believe that nearly all important publications, and a proportion exceeding three-fourths of all publications copyrighted under the law, are received at this library. When it is considered that the books thus deposited are catalogued and opened to the use and reference of all visitors to the library, and that the government of the United States renders more than an equivalent in the guarantee of an exclusive right of publication, it is remarkable that there should be any dereliction on the part of authors and publishers in complying with the terms of the law. Had such a provision been enforced since the foundation of the government, and the publications thus received treasured up, as they now are, in a fire-proof repository, we should possess a library of the United States representing the complete product of the American mind in every department of science and literature. That no such provision of law has ever been actually enforced, until within the past three or four years, must remain a source of permanent regret to all who are aware of the perishable character of the mass of books, and the value of completeness of materials to any research.

The annual catalogue of the library for the year 1868 is now passing through the press. Its publication was necessarily withheld until the books of the year, including all new publications up to December 1st, were received and incorporated in it. It will also include the most important portions remaining unprinted of the titles of the Smithsonian library and the Force collection. The labor of cataloguing the great body of pamphlets added to the library by these recent acquisitions is now more than half completed, but it is proposed to defer the printing of them, for economical reasons, until the issue of the next general catalogue of the library. This work should be entered upon during the

coming year, in order to insure its publication within a reasonable period. Since the issue of the last general catalogue, in 1864, the numerical contents of the library have been much more than doubled. Four annual supplementary catalogues (not including the one now in press) have been printed. A copy of all these, together with the law supplements, and forming nine alphabets in all, has been combined with the general catalogue in a single alphabet for use and reference in the library, and it is found to be of great and indispensable value. But it does not include the many thousands of pamphlets lately acquired, and as but one copy of it exists, it must be placed in print before it can become largely useful to Congress or to the public consulting the library. The issue of a complete general catalogue, as frequently as once in every five or six years, is deemed necessary in order to respond to the just demands of readers upon a great and rapidly growing library.

Since the last annual report of the undersigned, the printing of the alphabetical catalogue of subjects has been commenced, and is finished up to the letter G, making 512 pages already printed. The press-work upon this new catalogue, although much retarded by the necessity of careful and accurate arrangement of material, is steadily proceeding, and a few months more will witness its completion. The portion already in print renders it largely useful in developing the resources of the library in many important departments, and its final value to all who would consult the collection upon any subject can hardly be over-estimated.

The unexpended balances of the several funds in charge of the Committee at this date are the following:

Fund for purchase of books.....	\$3,447 81
Fund for purchase of law books.....	907 68
Fund for purchase of periodicals.....	1,103 65
Fund for contingent expenses of the library.....	2,315 79
Catalogue fund.....	28 59
Fund for the expenses of exchanging public documents.....	1,472 89
Fund for ornamenting the Capitol with works of art.....	11,805 00
Fund for portraits of ex-presidents of the United States....	3,450 00
Fund for Powell's painting of a naval victory, for the Capitol	18,000 00
Fund for completing the publication 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.....	1,542 27
Greenhouse fund (pay of horticulturist, &c.).....	7,336 72
Fund for the construction of a new greenhouse.....	7,614 75

The exchanges of public documents of the United States for the publications of foreign governments, designed for the increase of the library, have made but little progress as yet, owing to the recent period of the passage of the joint resolution upon the subject, and the fact that no documents have yet been printed and placed at the disposal of the Committee on the Library. Considerable contributions to the library have, however, been received from several foreign governments, especially from those of Russia, Sweden and Norway, Spain, Chili, and the free city of Hamburg.

A. R. SPOFFORD,
Librarian.

Hon. E. D. MORGAN,
Chairman of the Joint Committee on the Library.