

## REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS AT SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION.

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The attendance upon the seventh annual meeting of the American Historical Association was the largest yet recorded. One hundred and eight members were present; last year there were eight-seven. There was a large and sympathetic Washington audience at each of the six sessions of the Association. An afternoon reception was given to members and the ladies accompanying them by Mr. and Mrs. William D. Cabell.

During the last days of the old year there were five scientific conventions in the Federal city, four of them upon the same premises, at the Columbian University or in the National Museum. These five conventions were: (1) the American Historical Association, (2) the American Society of Church History; (3) the American Economic Association; (4) the American Forestry Association, and (5) the Geological Society of America. All of these various societies were in session upon the same days, and yet there was no conflict of interest. Each society had its own constituency, and each its own peculiar attractions. There was a certain comity of arrangements as regards time and place, so that it was quite possible for members of the Society of Church History or of the Economic Association to attend some of the meetings of the Historical Association. By special invitation from the Washington Society for the Extension of University Teaching members of various associations met together to listen to a remarkable lecture upon "University Extension" by Mr. Richard G. Moulton, of Cambridge, England. One evening, when American historians and politicians were discussing the subject of cabinet government just over their heads in another lecture hall of the Columbian University, the American geologists were discussing the antiquity of man.

After every evening session gentlemen members of all five associations met socially in the pleasant rooms of the Cosmos Club, corner of H street and Madison Place. These friendly reunions at the Cosmos are the most attractive features of scientific meetings in Washington. It is doubtful whether any other city in the United States could (if it would) furnish quite so agreeable opportunities for the social success of a scientific convention. Washington is rapidly becoming a scientific as well as a social and political center. The fact of five distinct societies meeting there in one week shows that the nation's capital is already recognized as a proper and convenient rallying-point for national associations of science.

The American Historical Association has met in Washington for now three years in succession, and each year with an increasing attendance. The advantages of this place of meeting, as compared with any other great city or with a summer resort like Saratoga, become each year more apparent. University men from the old Northwest and from far-away Nebraska pronounce in favor of Washington, even against Chicago, the prospective center of the Western world. Members of the American Historical Association once thought it advisable to pursue an itinerant or missionary policy westward and southward; to swing around academic circles; to indulge in pleasant picnics like those which are now so popular with American "educators" and with the American Association for the Advancement of Science. But other and larger ideas of public usefulness began to dawn upon "the common sense of most" when the Historical Association was chartered by Congress in 1888. The society then became "a body corporate and politic" in the District of Columbia, with its principal office in Washington. The society now enjoys organic relations with the Smithsonian Institution and, through the same, reports its proceedings and progress annually to Congress. Manifestly the American Historical Association can accomplish more through its present connections with Washington and with the United States Government than through any local patronage or any return to the waters of Saratoga.

Among the first fruits of this larger and more national policy is the "Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the year 1889," issued from the Government Printing Office at Washington just before the seventh annual meeting. This report contains the act of incorporation, a summary of

the proceedings of the sixth annual meeting, certain selections of public interest from those proceedings, and a partial bibliography of the published writings of members of the association, prepared by Mr. Paul Leicester Ford, the accomplished bibliographer, of Brooklyn, New York, printed and indexed under the careful supervision of Mr. A. Howard Clark, curator of the historical collections of the National Museum and assistant secretary and curator of the association, who is now in charge of its Washington office, established on the ground floor of the Museum itself. Under Mr. Clark's efficient direction will soon be instituted a system of national and international exchange on behalf of the American Historical Association. Its first report to Congress will be mailed, under the Smithsonian frank, to all members, and to all State and local historical societies that now send their publications either to the assistant secretary of the association or to the Smithsonian Institution.

A bibliography of the publications of all the prominent historical societies in this country has long been in preparation, and will soon be published. Such a document would be of great service not only to State and local historical societies, but to all students and teachers of American history. By instituting through the Smithsonian a system of domestic and foreign exchange, the association can rapidly build up a good historical library in Washington. Indeed, such a library already exists in the accumulated books and documents now stored in the Congressional Library and subject to recall by the Smithsonian Institution. By collecting or depositing rare books, historical manuscripts, portraits, etc., in the National Museum the association can soon have a permanent national exhibition that will strongly appeal to American patriotism and public interest and promote historical studies. Indeed, such an exhibition has already begun. In the alcoves of the large hall in which the association met at the National Museum there were showcases full of interesting old books and manuscripts that once belonged to the Washington family in Virginia. Many of them were but recently discovered by Mr. A. Howard Clark, and through him obtained on deposit for the historical section of the Museum. The association held its morning sessions in a most attractive environment, illustrating the development of human inventions and the evolution of man from savagery to civilization.

Of the reading and discussion of papers there seemed to be no limit at one of the morning sessions of the association. Perhaps some attendants upon this convention had resigned themselves to that state

Where congregations ne'er break up  
And Sabbaths have no end.

But others differed from this melancholy view and found agreeable variations to the monotony of regular proceedings by strolling about the museum and talking with old friends, visiting the Library of Congress or the State Department, looking at historical collections and manuscripts, listening to the debates of Congress or inspecting the Corcoran Art Gallery. Historical conventions in Washington serve many profitable purposes, social, educational, and scientific. It is perhaps safe to say that some good and useful work was done at luncheons and dinner parties and at the Cosmos Club.

In this connection it is possible to give only a brief review of the more noteworthy literary features of the convention. First came the Hon. John Jay's inaugural address, read by the Hon. William Wirt Henry, first vice president of the association. Mr. Jay emphasized the importance of historical studies for the development of the national spirit and the proper education of the youth of this Republic. Then followed a group of papers representing Canadian history. Dr. Rand, of Cambridge, gave an original and scholarly account of the New England settlements in Acadia. Mr. William Houston, legislative librarian at Toronto, entered by title and abstract a sketch of the work of the first parliament of Upper Canada, 1792 to 1796, which exempted British royalists from French law and forbade the extension of slavery. The most striking feature of the first session was Dr. Bourinot's abstract of an historical paper entitled "Canada and the United States." The time-limit of 20 minutes inspired the author to a spirited résumé of his elaborate and comprehensive work, which covered the relations of Canada and the United States down to the present time. Dr. Bourinot vindicated the right of Canada to an independent national development and emphatically protested against any idea of annexation by the United States. An interesting discussion ensued, in which Senator Hoar paid a generous and eloquent tribute to the people of Canada, and in a quiet but impressive manner stated his American conviction that Can-

ada would come, not by constraint, but by her own free will, into the American Union, if she should ever come at all.

In a later session Dr. Bourinot compared the methods of cabinet government in Canada with the system in practice in the United States. The fact that the best features of British political development are incorporated with the institutional life of Canada, Mr. Bourinot said, was proof of the flexibility of the constitution of the Dominion. He maintained that where the American system is strong it followed English lines; where it is weak, it is because of its inherent rigidity. In opposition to the view of Dr. Freeman Snow, Mr. Bourinot urged that responsible government was compatible with a federal system and a written constitution. Senator Hoar rose to the defense of the American Constitution, which he said was designed in part to protect the people against itself. Ours is a truly popular government. The Canadian system with its threefold veto and its appointed and limited senate holding for life can hardly be called popular. Professor Cohn, of Harvard, who at one session presented a rapid and brilliant sketch of the formation of the French constitution, also exchanged historical and political compliments with the gentlemen from Canada. Edward Eggleston, the historian of American colonial life, participated in the debate and said that American institutions of government were all historical developments from colonial germs.

Mr. Eggleston's remarks upon various papers read in the convention were, by general consent, one of the most interesting and valuable features of the entire meeting. He discussed, in a highly suggestive manner, Dr. Andrews's able contribution to the theory of the village community; also Mr. Morgan's original paper on slavery in New York, and Dr. Weeks's picturesque but doubtful theory of the survival among the Croatan Indians of Raleigh's colonists from Roanoke Island. Indeed this year there was more discussion than usual. Douglas Campbell's theory of the Dutch origin of the written ballot called out historic objections from Profs. Williston Walker, Jameson, and Howard. Mr. Weeden, author of the *Economic and Social History of New England*, took part with Mr. Eggleston in the discussion of Northern towns and Southern plantations. Dr. William A. Dunning, of Columbia College, tried the Socratic method upon his Virginia friend, Professor Dabney, who maintained that history is a science. It may be here suggested that history is the science of man's progress in soci-

ety, politics, and civilization. Thought and action must be organic to be historic.

The most important and most scientific feature of the programme was its classification or grouping of subjects. One evening, as we have said, was chiefly devoted to Canadian history. The next morning session was given up entirely to European history. In this field, besides those papers already mentioned, there were Professor Burr's graphic sketch of the fate of Dietrich Flade, one of Mr. Burr's valuable studies in the history of witchcraft; Dr. Gross's strong plea for reform in the study of English municipal history; Dr. Fling's historic account of Mirabeau's speech of May 20, 1790; Professor Francke's new contribution to the history of the liberal student movement from 1815 to 1819, with special reference to Karl Follen, who became an American citizen and an educator of American youth; and Mr. William G. Taylor's interesting review of Bismarck's career.

A second evening session was devoted to American constitutional history. Professor Trent's study of the Phillips case, a Virginia bill of attainder, called forth critical comments from Senator Hoar and the presiding officer, Hon. William Wirt Henry. Mr. Ames's historical survey of the many proposed amendments to the Constitution of the United States was favorably received, and so was Mr. E. C. Mason's justification of the Executive in refusing Congressional demands for information, under certain circumstances. General Mussey outlined his proposed study of bills of rights in State constitutions.

The last morning session was occupied with papers on American economic history. Dr. E. D. Adams, a brother of Dr. Henry Carter Adams, both of whom are now connected with the Interstate Commerce Commission, treated historically the development of the budget in the United States. Dr. Charles H. Haskins presented an original paper of the Yazoo Land Companies, for a study of which the Hon. William Wirt Henry had lent Mr. Haskins manuscript materials. W. F. Willoughby, of the United States Department of Labor, gave a striking account of the rapid increase of governmental activities in this country. The subject of slavery in the District of Columbia could hardly be presented in 20 minutes, but Professor Howard read enough to show the scientific character of his pupil's work. General Birney, of Washington, presented some written remarks upon Miss Tremain's elaborate monograph. At the close of

the morning session President Gilman, of the Johns Hopkins University, exhibited a large and beautiful map showing the orographical features of the historic countries about the Mediterranean and made a plea for better representations of physical geography as a basis for historical study.

There was but one afternoon session and that was devoted to American history and historical science. Besides Dr. Weeks's paper and Dr. Dabney's already noted, there was an appreciative review of the political ideas of the Puritans in a literary outline at once sharp and clear, by Dr. Herbert L. Osgood, of Columbia College. General Darling reviewed the historical work of some of the State societies, and Professor Mace presented valuable suggestions regarding the organization and grouping of materials for American history.

At the closing session Dr. William T. Harris, the Commissioner of Education, described some of the philosophical aspects of history. He reviewed the characteristic ideas of historic peoples and reminded his audience that the great contributions of Rome and the Germanic race are ideas of unity and self-government. Perhaps the greatest literary success in the entire programme was Mr. James Schouler's dramatic description of Webster's Seventh of March speech. A pleasing survey of the border-land between the archaeologist and the historian was presented by Prof. Otis T. Mason, of the National Museum.

The last and most practical paper of all was that of Prof. J. F. Jameson, of Brown University, on the expenditure of foreign governments on behalf of history. The speaker urged that European countries having had a longer history and having carried the development of historical science further than the United States, we may well learn from them as to governmental policy respecting history, if, as is to be hoped, our Government is to do more for it hereafter. The speaker's inquiries had been directed to the expenditures of European governments for the printing and publication of historical materials, for payments to editors and other workers, in support of archives, and in subventions for historical purposes to learned bodies. The answers were obtained largely from official sources. The speaker described in detail the expenditures of England and other nations, and the mode of administration through which these expenditures are carried on. The speaker then suggested criticisms of the historical expenditures

of the Government of the United States, derived from a consideration of European practices. Since 1889 it has no longer been true that our Government spends, in proportion, less for history than almost any other civilized government. But the distribution to different objects gives much cause for criticism. We spend this year \$268,000 for the Official Records of the War, about \$7,000 for the historical activities of the archives office of the Department of State, and virtually nothing else. We ought to spend much more money on our archives. Even Bavaria, Württemberg, and Baden spend more for this than we. We ought, in the matter of publications, to have some permanent institution through which the opinion of experts can all the time be brought to bear; and its scope ought to include manuscripts not only in the possession of the nation, but in the possession of private persons. Such an historical commission could easily be devised. In devising it the experience of European governments should afford valuable assistance.

Professor Jameson made another valuable suggestion, which was approved by the executive council, that original materials for American political history be presented, with a descriptive statement, at the annual meetings of the American Historical Association, and that, if approved by the council and duly edited by an appointed committee, such materials be incorporated in reports to Congress.