

REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF FOURTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION.

By HERBERT B. ADAMS, Secretary.

The New Haven meeting of this national historical society was the most successful in its history. During the three days' convention, December 28-30, the morning and evening sessions were attended by large and enthusiastic audiences. An attractive series of interesting historical papers and reports was provided by the programme committee, of which Prof. E. G. Bourne, of Yale University, was the chairman. The local committee of arrangements did all that was possible for the entertainment and pleasure of the visiting members of the American Historical and American Economic associations. As occasionally in former years, so now these two kindred societies met at the same time, in the same city.

The opening meeting of the Economic Association was held Tuesday evening, December 27, in the beautiful and spacious hall of the New Haven Colony Historical Society. After a cordial welcome from President Dwight, on behalf of the society, the city, and the university, and after the inaugural address by Prof. Arthur T. Hadley, the visiting members of both associations were pleasantly received by Professor and Mrs. Henry W. Farnam at their house on Hillhouse avenue. After Professor Fisher's inaugural address Wednesday evening, at the opening of the Historical convention in Colonial Hall, both associations were received by the Historical Society in their lower rooms, which are nobly furnished with historical memorials of New Haven Colony and with portraits of its famous men. Not even Pilgrim Hall in old Plymouth could afford a richer or more suggestive environment for historical meetings, social and literary, than does the Colonial Hall in New Haven.

¹ Report of the New Haven meeting, by Dr. J. F. Jameson, was published in the American Historical Review, April, 1899. Prof. A. B. Hart contributed to Book Reviews (Macmillan & Co.) for February, 1899, an account of the growth and purposes of the American Historical Association.

The literary feature of the fourteenth annual meeting of the American Historical Association was President Fisher's address. He avoided burning questions of the day, and spoke of the historian, not as a politician, an economist, or a sociologist, but as a judge of the personal characteristics and merits of men and women who have participated in the world's great drama. This chosen field afforded a rare opportunity for a wide and fascinating review of human character as illustrated in human deeds which form the substance, the very life of history. Professor Fisher quoted the late Professor Gurney, of Harvard University, who, when offered at Cambridge one of two college departments, history or philosophy, chose the first because, as he said, he preferred intercourse with persons to a life spent amid abstractions. Even for the sake of divine philosophy, of which he was extremely fond, he could not part company with the men and women whom history calls back to life.

The educational feature of the programme was, beyond all question, the report of Prof. A. C. McLaughlin, chairman of the committee of seven on the study of history in secondary schools. This committee was appointed two years ago by the association and has labored hard to solve the vexed problem of college entrance requirements in history, and to promote historical study in all secondary schools, a far more comprehensive and important matter. After careful inquiries in this country and in the schools of England, France, and Germany, the committee has practically completed its report, and it will probably be published in the spring. Professor McLaughlin discussed the educational value of history and its place in the curriculum, the proposed division of history into four blocks, each requiring one year of school work: (1) Ancient, including (very briefly) Oriental history and the early medieval period down to 800 A. D.; (2) later medieval and modern European history; (3) English history, including its continental and imperial relations; (4) American history, supplemented by civil government. The report discusses in detail the methods of treating these four great divisions of human history, the best methods of instruction, and the training of teachers. It was shown that the primary aim of secondary schools is not preparation for college, but preparation for life. Public schools are already outrunning college requirements in history, and the time is soon coming when a knowledge of man's experience in

civil society will need to be recognized at least on terms of equality with the classics and mathematics. If colleges do not discern the signs of the times and the requirements of American citizens and civic leaders, so much the worse will it be for the colleges and their graduates.

A pleasant feature of Thursday morning's session was the extempore address of the Rev. Dr. William Cunningham, of Trinity College, Cambridge, England, an eminent authority on English social and economic history. He said it would be impossible anywhere in England to gather such an assemblage of historians and economists, specialists and teachers, as he had seen in New Haven. And yet, he said, it ought to be easier in England than in America to awaken public interest in historical and economic matters. English teachers and students are surrounded by reminders of the past, and yet it is very difficult in England to quicken historical interest even in secondary schools. Questions regarding the present and the future seem to absorb English attention. Englishmen meet each difficulty as it arises. Dr. Cunningham commended the American spirit, which is manifestly becoming truly historical in its methods of dealing with great public questions. America is a country most congenial to historians and very encouraging to historico-economic pursuits.

The treasurer's report was especially gratifying to the association from an historico-economic point of view. It was shown that the present assets of the association are \$11,539, an increase of about \$1,500 during the past year. In fact, the good financial condition of the association has enabled it to undertake some very important functions. For example, the historical manuscript commission is now receiving an annual subsidy for the purpose of securing and copying for publication original historical materials. Two special reports by this commission have already been published in connection with the annual report of the association. Prof. J. F. Jameson, chairman of the commission, outlined its future projects, especially the plan of printing the letters of John C. Calhoun.

The most important financial step taken at the New Haven meeting was the formal adoption of the American Historical Review, already for some years edited by Dr. Jameson and other members of the association. This step means an annual subsidy to the editors and publishers and the regular supply to every one of the twelve hundred members of the association

of this handsome quarterly magazine, the best organ of American history and of history in America.

There were various interesting papers and discussions on historical subjects: European, American, diplomatic, ecclesiastical, colonial, institutional, and constitutional. Some of them are printed in this report. By general consensus, the New Haven meeting was the best on record. In fact, it was the pronounced success of an historical convention under the auspices of Yale University that decided the Executive Council to vote for Boston and Harvard University as the rallying points for the Association's numerous historical clans from Maine to California, in Christmas week, 1899. With this intent the association elected for its next president the eminent historian, James F. Rhodes, LL.D., of Boston, and appointed as chairman of the programme committee Prof. A. B. Hart, of Cambridge. Prof. M. C. Tyler, of Cornell University, was chosen second vice-president. Prof. George B. Adams, of Yale, and Prof. A. C. McLaughlin, of Ann Arbor, were added to the Executive Council. This body also elected this worthy representative of the University of Michigan to the vacancy on the board of editors of *The American Historical Review*. Dr. Herbert Friedenwald, superintendent of the department of manuscripts in the Library of Congress, was added to the Manuscripts Commission of the Historical Association.

By formal vote the Executive Council declared for the manifest policy of another meeting of the Association in the East, then in the West, at Detroit and Ann Arbor, in 1900, with a return in 1901 to Washington, where this national society was incorporated by act of Congress and made a Government institution in organic relations with the Smithsonian, to which it annually reports.