Report of The Clements Library Associates

The Clements Library has never lacked friends. Indeed, so many men and women (alumni of the University, rare book dealers and collectors, historians and scholars) have proved their friendliness by appreciative acts that the Library has never felt neglected. In the past the Library's impression was that it was doing too little directly for its friends in return for their support.

Therefore, when certain friends of the Library proposed the establishment of The Clements Library Associates, we could not object.

Active discussions about the proposed organization were started in May, 1947. In June, the Library’s Committee of Management approved the plan for an Associates organization. The first group of invitations to found the Associates was sent out in August and the response was most gratifying to both the organizers and the Library.

The Regents of the University approved the plan to establish The Associates in September and at their following meeting they approved the regulations under which The Associates operates. In November, the Regents appointed the following Executive Committee of the Clements Library Associates:

Dr. Lawrence Reynolds and John W. Watling as members from the Library's Committee of Management. Henry L. Newman, Mrs. Benjamin S. Warren and Renvile Wheat as members from The Associates. The Executive Committee elected John W. Watling chairman.

MEETINGS

In the meantime, the first of a series of invitations to Clements Library Associates was issued. The Library held an open house on Homecoming Day (October 25) to which all Associates were invited.

1947 was celebrated in Michigan as the centennial of the arrival of the Dutch in the city of Holland. The Library took part in the celebration with an exhibition of early Dutch-American books. The exhibition was opened December 19 with a talk by Dr. Marten ten Hoor followed by a reception in his honor. All Associates were invited.

The Modern Language Association meetings for 1947 were held in Detroit on the last days of the year. The final day's meeting was a visit to Ann Arbor where the Library entertained a large number of members with an exhibition of early American drama. All Associates were invited to attend the exhibition. They also received invitations to the tea and reception in honor of the British Consul General at Detroit on January 24. The Library had been selected as recipient of one of the original copperplates from which were printed the great eighteenth century sea charts known as The Atlantic Neptune. The Consul presented the plate and the President of the University accepted it for the Library.

The annual Founder's Day Tea was held as usual on April 1. Dr. Frank E. Robbins, assistant to the President of the University, was the speaker. Normally, the speaker on this occasion talks about something intimately connected with Mr. Clements or his interests. Dr. Robbins chose to speak about Mr. Clements as a Regent of the University.

In May, the National Society of Autograph Collectors held their first annual meetings in Ann Arbor with the Library and the University as hosts. The Associates were invited to all of the meetings and especially to the tea and reception on May 18 at which was shown a joint exhibit of autographs owned by members of the Society.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening of the Library was celebrated with a tea and reception on June 10. Dr. Lawrence C. Wroth, on whom the University conferred an honorary degree two days later, was the speaker. In the evening, dinner was served in the Library to guests from out-of-town representatives of the University administration, the Committee of Management of the Library, the Executive Committee of the Associates, and the staff of the Library.

PUBLICATIONS

As soon as The Clements Library Associates was founded, the Library decided that there should be a limited edition of each of its publications for The Associates. Therefore, starting with Bulletin 49, there has been a special edition limited to the number of Associates enrolled at the time of printing. The first such bulletin, carrying the title The Presbyterian Church in America, was prepared for the annual meeting of the Synod of Michigan of the Presbyterian Church, October 7-9. The bulletin was compiled by our Consultant, Francis L. D. Goodrich. The Netherlands and America, prepared by Robert B. Brown, was issued on the occasion of the centennial celebration of the establishment of Holland, Michigan. Bulletin 51 is a checklist of books in American drama from the Herbert C. Ely Memorial Collection exhibited in honor of the visit of the Modern Language Association, December 31, 1947. A Portrait of Anthony Wayne, from a unique print and with an essay by Dr. F. Clever Bald, was published in March for the school children of Detroit, through the courtesy of our Associate Dr. Otto O. Fisher. Bulletin 52A, A Royal
Visitor to Ann Arbor, was issued as a trifle for the amusement of the Library's friends and Associates. Bulletin 53, About the Clements Library, a series of five essays by distinguished bookmen, was distributed at the twenty-fifth anniversary celebration in June. During the year, two issues of The Quarto, a leaflet printed occasionally for the Associates, were published.

MEMBERSHIP
Before the end of the first fiscal year, the membership of the Associates stood at 325. The dues had been set at $5 per year, but several Associates expressed their generosity with much larger sums. Therefore, in June, the funds of the Associates stood at about $2,000. At that time, the Executive Committee chose eight manuscripts and books for purchase by The Associates. The pieces selected are described in this issue of The Quarto.

The Clements Library is deeply indebted to each of its friends who has joined The Associates. It is especially grateful to the members of the Executive Committee for their success in establishing The Clements Library Associates.

The Financial Report
for the first year of The Associates is a matter of simplicity. No operating expenses were charged against the organization; they were carried by the Library. The Associates contributed $2,145 between August 29, 1947, and June 30, 1948 (the end of our fiscal year). The Executive Committee purchased eight manuscripts and books for the Library at a cost of $1065. At the end of the fiscal year, there was a balance to The Associates account of $1080.

Flora Mexicana
Last winter, we were offered important papers of Lewis Cass. (They were picked up from an unheated barn on Long Island during a blizzard—but that story is not germane to this tale.) On the way back from New York, we stopped off in Pittsburgh to visit the library of one of our Associates, Mrs Roy A. Hunt. That library, housing an extraordinary collection of herbals and botanical books, is one of the most beautiful libraries we have ever seen. The beauty of the room is enhanced by Mrs Hunt's charm as a hostess and by her ability to transmit enthusiasm for her special kind of book. We left Pittsburgh sure in our knowledge that our next opportunity to acquire an important American botanical piece would not be neglected.

We have not been guilty of neglect. We can now thank Mrs Hunt and our other Associates for their purchase of a series of unpublished manuscripts relating to the founding of the first public botanical garden in the New World.

The eighteenth century was a great one for classification of knowledge, especially the sciences. Chemists and ornithologists and botanists were madly collecting and classifying the objects of their affections and rushing into print to prove that their theories and their collections were better than those of their competitors. In Europe, state-sponsored and privately supported botanical gardens, aviaries, and mineral cabinets were fairly common. There was such intense rivalry that the "Mine is better than yours" fights became international affairs. In the New World, there were few collections of any sort—and all of them were privately owned and supported. For instance, John Bartram's famous gardens (now a part of Philadelphia's park system) were private, although almost any interested person had access to them.

The third Charles of Spain was one of the more liberal eighteenth century monarchs—at least as far as governmental support of scientific and learned enterprises was concerned. He recognized quite clearly the prestige value of such expenditures. He is said to have spent "nearly three millions of francs" on botanical expeditions to Peru, New Granada, and New Spain. His son, Charles IV, followed the practices established earlier and set up botanical gardens in both Manila and the Canary Islands.

The series of manuscripts purchased by The Clements Library Associates relates to Charles III's support of botanical collections in the New World. One of the principal American botanists of the time was Martin de Sesse who, in association with José Moncifio, projected the idea of a botanical garden for Mexico City which would draw together all of the plants they had collected in Mexico and Central and South America. (Sesse and Moncifio, incidentally, later undertook a scientific expedition to California and Nootka Sound.) The present manuscripts comprise the record, mostly in original letters and reports, of Sesse's attempt to secure from the fiscales of the Audiencia enough money to establish and maintain the garden. Of course, as we know, he was successful and our collection winds up with two sets of regulations and a letter about running the garden by Vicente Cervantes who, according to Humboldt, "gives annual courses there, which are very well attended."

Publlick Occurrences
A bibliographical tour de force of 1947 was Frank ("Freedom Train") Monaghan's sportive leaflet entitled Publlick Occurrences Number 2. The first number of the newspaper had been issued in 1690—it was the first newspaper published in America, promptly suppressed. The publisher and printer of that first number was Benjamin Harris, a troublesome man who had fought the Quakers and the Papists for many years. After a set-to with the British courts, as a result of which he was fined and pilloried, Harris continued his libellous publishing until he decided that Boston might be safer for his hide than London. In his new home, he became one of the principal publishers and booksellers, calling his establishment the London Coffee House and selling, besides books and sta-
tionery, “Coffee, Tee, and Chucalneto.”

The career of the late Mr Harris is part of the long and exciting story of the fight for a free press. Anything by or about him, whether it concerns his involvement with the Titus Oates plot, the publication of his Publick Occurrences, or his possible connection with the authorship of the first New England Primer, fascinates us. Therefore, we were delighted to receive from The Associates A Short but Just Account of the Tryal of Benjamin Harris... [London] 1679. In the year of publication, Harris was tried for selling a seditious book; he was found guilty, fined £500, and sent to prison for two years. On his release, he published another offensive book and then fled to New England to escape further punishment. We still prosecute publishers and booksellers occasionally, but nowadays they don’t flee to Boston to escape the consequences.

Deism Defied

Charles Leslie’s book, A Short and Easie Method with the Deists, was something of a best seller, back in the days when abstruse theology held the place in the affections of the reading public that cross word puzzles have today. It was published first in 1698. For more than a hundred years it was popular propaganda against the deists, being reprinted over and over again in many places. The Library has had several early editions for some time, but The Associates added the Lexington, Kentucky, edition of 1797. The existence of this edition had been suspected by bibliographers because it was advertised in contemporary newspapers, but no copy had been found bearing the John Bradford imprint. Recently, an apparently unique copy was offered to the Library; The Associates bought it.

The influence of Leslie’s book can hardly be questioned (he even had to write a Vindication of it, after a fellow clergyman had attacked it). Yet on occasion it was a troublesome piece to publish. For instance, the Boston controversial writer and cleric John Checkley published it (1729) along with a squib of his own and was promptly hauled off to court. His troubles are reminiscent of the case of Benjamin Harris, described elsewhere in this issue of The Quarto. For what troublemaking reason Leslie’s piece was printed in Lexington, we do not yet know.

Detroit at War

Not as unique (if unicity can have a relative) as some of the other items from The Associates, but certainly of equal importance, is a rare broadside printed in Detroit in 1899. It is known, according to the Preliminary Check List of Michigan Imprints, (No. 6), in one other copy only. The broadside is a petition requesting, urging and demanding the recall of General William Hull as governor of the territory. The broadside was probably from the press of the pioneer printer James M. Miller.

The inhabitants of Detroit had developed a violent aversion to the General, and they expressed in no uncertain terms their opinion of the gentleman in their petition. In this instance, they addressed themselves directly to James Madison, President of the United States. Considering the later conduct of the said general, in the War of 1812, and his ignominious surrender to the British, there is strong reason to conclude that here, again, the electorate as a whole was indicating a desire that might have been profitably heeded by the political experts of that period.

Elegant Pocket Books, Too

The current issue of The New Colophon carries a charming article by Michael Sadlier about the appearance of certain titles in a publisher’s catalogue in the mid-nineteenth century. The titles he listed made us wish that we had lived at the time and had been wise before our years. We would have possessed immaculate copies of books which are now excessively rare in even good condition.

The Associates’ gift of Charles Peirce’s Catalogue of Books for Sale and Circulation... Portsmouth, New Hampshire, 1806, set up a similar watering of the mouth, for its 109 pages list a good many titles which we would like to see on our shelves. Mr Peirce carried an excellent stock of books and was enterprising enough to offer to secure “such scarce Books as are not to be had in the United States...if they are to be had in England.” His prices are reasonable, too; he asks only $2.50 for Thaddeus M. Harris’ Journal of a Tour into the... Northwest... Boston, 1809 (which he describes as “a good work for social libraries”), and $7.50 for Charlotte Temple. We wish also that we could take advantage of the offering “Gentlemens’ elegant pocket books with instruments” for $5.50 and “Lady’s elegant silver bound and silver clasped Morocco pocket books, with thread cases and instruments (complete) first size” at the same price.

Inflation Before

It seemed a good idea in 1933 to acquire the papers of George Wray, when they were offered to the Library. It was a good idea and we have not regretted having them since. George Wray was commissary of the Royal Regiment of Artillery throughout the Revolutionary War. In 1772, he was clerk of stores stationed at New York. He was married sometime before he followed the army to Boston in 1774. The following year, he was made commissary and, on the evacuation of Boston, went first to Halifax and then to Rhode Island. At the end of 1779, he was sent to Charleston and he remained there, keeping his records assiduously, until the British evacuated the city three years later. He was one of those few British army men who stayed in America after the war, settling on the Artillery Patent at Westfield, Washington County, New York.

In the original purchase of Wray
Papers, there were journals of stores disbursed by the commissary, but there were (and still are) some gaps. One of the missing volumes was purchased by The Associates this year and it adds very materially in keeping the record straight of what the Royal Artillery used in the way of stores and ammunition. Most of the entries are very business-like lists of materials, but here and there we find glimpses of unusual events. For instance, under date of February 28, 1777, there is a record of cartridges, powder and tubbs issued for "Saluting His Excellency General Clinton on his Embarking for England &c."

Laid in the journal is a charming letter by James Fraser, acting paymaster of artillery, in which most gently and with the most elaborate circumlocutions a demand is made that Wray settle his accounts. The letter contains an amusing passage about Mrs Wray's visit to New York from Albany and her demand for "ONE HUNDRED GUINEAS which," Fraser writes, "I readily paid her on your Account taking her receipt, for the Same." Apparently, even in Albany then, as in Ann Arbor now, inflation was a pesky thing.

Time of Change

Early almanac-makers were often wont to fill space by announcing solemnly that the year "portends great changes." We haven't looked the point up, but we'd be willing to accept a small wager that some almanac for 1794 carries that phrase but does not forecast the most important change of the year—the removal from office of the Conde de Revilla Gigedo, viceroy of New Spain (Mexico, etc.). The matter of removal from office is, perhaps, a delicate topic just after a presidential election. Yet it is pertinent to one of the exciting purchases of The Associates, so we cannot forbear to mention it.

The Count de Revilla Gigedo was the best of the eighteenth century viceroys. He governed Mexico with high efficiency and was at the same time responsible for many reforms in his office and for extensive internal improvements throughout the country. He held office for the five years 1789 to 1794. Unfortunately for Spain and Mexico, the Spanish throne fell into the hands of Charles IV who, unlike some other Bourbon monarchs of the eighteenth century, was weak and incompetent. He removed Revilla Gigedo from office substituting the Marquis de Branciforte, a fitting representative of the dissolute court at Madrid.

Before he left Mexico City, Revilla Gigedo wrote for his successor one of the more remarkable documents of colonial American history, his Instruccion*. The Clements Library Associates have purchased the manuscript. In it Revillo Gigedo gave complete directions for the execution of the affairs of the viceroyalty, showing extraordinary insight into problems of government, and great familiarity with the smallest concerns of every section of the vast country he had to rule—right down to the proper method of toasting tobacco (Lucky Strike, please note!). The Instruccion includes many references to California, Texas, New Mexico, and other parts of the southern United States then controlled by Spain, and to Spain's activities in the American Revolution.

If Spain had been served by more men possessing the ability and foresight of Revilla Gigedo she might have retained her hold in the New World somewhat longer, but even men like that great statesman could not have held off the eventual conflict forever. The time was close when it was no longer possible for the power of an absolute monarchy to be tolerated in America. The significance of the Instruccion is that it portrays in great detail the virtues and vices of the colonial government of Spain at its peak—and thereby throws considerable light on the reasons for the revolutions that produced modern Mexico.

Holland and Pella, &c.

A whole host of unrecorded source materials for American history, and particularly for the history of Michigan and Iowa, came from The Associates in the form of two bound volumes of pamphlets published in the Netherlands during the early part of the nineteenth century. Unpretentiously bound and certainly issued in small quantities from local presses in the villages where the later emigrants were then living, the several pamphlets cover the entire background of the great reform movement which sent boatloads of pious Dutchmen into the bleak forests of Western Michigan and out across the plains of Iowa.

Among the authors of these works are found many names familiar today to Western Michigan citizens and to our Hawkeye neighbors. Several are by Albertus C. van Raalte and Henry Peter Scholte, the founders of Holland, Michigan, and Pella, Iowa, respectively. These fit in particularly well with the holdings of the Clements Library recently described in a bulletin, The Netherlands and America, issued on the hundredth anniversary of the arrival of these sturdy Hollanders in Michigan.

The friends of the leaders are represented, too, and there are pamphlets by Anthony Brummelkamp, J. W. Ten Bokkel, J. E. Feiss, Huydecoper, Kemps, Zeller, Maatjes, Engels, van Lottum, van Hall, and Adriaan van Apelliere. Covering the period from 1820, when the idea of the great migration was barely born, to 1845, when plans were already under way, the whole picture of the movement, beginning in a conflict with the Dutch government, is made available for scholars. Professor Albert Hyma, of our history department, assures us that most of the pamphlets are relatively as unknown to Dutch savants as they have been to American bibliographers and historians.