

more meritorious communications on other subjects, equally within the strict or general view (as the case may be) of the Magellanic Donation.

6. Your committee are further of opinion that the Surplus Premium ought not to be exclusively applied to actual inventions or improvements, but may also extend to such valuable communications within the general view of the donation, as may lead to useful discoveries, inventions or improvements, and that they therefore recommend that the resolution of the 19th October be altered accordingly.

This recommendation was acceded to.

Philadelphia, 5th Dec. 1814.

Report of the Historical and Literary Committee to the American Philosophical Society.—Read, 9th Jan. 1818.

IN obedience to the orders of the Society, the Committee of History, Moral Science, and General Literature, have the honour to report the progress that they have made towards the attainment of the objects of their Institution.

It is now upwards of two years since this Committee or Class was added to the six* of which the Society was originally composed. Until that time, the Physical and Mathematical Sciences had been the almost exclusive subjects of our labours. It was then thought that the sphere of our exertions might be usefully enlarged by turning our attention to those sciences which may be called “moral,” in contradistinction to those which have the material world for their object.

Among the various branches of knowledge which this circle embraces, the History of America in general, and of Pennsylvania in particular, was pointed out to your committee by a special resolution of the Society, as an object claiming their immediate regard. The humble, but useful task, was committed to us, of collecting as many as possible of the public and private documents scattered in various hands through the union, with leave to publish, from time to time, such selections from them as might, in our opinion, be interesting to the public, and of use to the future historian. Your committee, considering these intimations of the Society in the light of express directions, lost no time in taking measures to comply with their wishes. They were no sooner organised,† than they published an appeal to their

* Those Committees or Classes are :

- 1st. Of Geography, Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, and Astronomy.
- 2d. Of Medicine and Anatomy.
- 3d. Of Natural History and Chemistry.
- 4th. Of Trade and Commerce.
- 5th. Of Mechanics and Architecture.
- 6th. Of Husbandry and American Improvements.

† The organization of this committee is simple. Their only officers at present are a Chairman, a Corresponding Secretary, and a Recording Secretary. Sub-committees are appointed only on special occasions as they arise.

fellow citizens, a copy of which is subjoined,* soliciting the communication of papers of the above description, and offering the archives of the Society as a safe repository where they might be deposited for the public benefit and the advantage of posterity. Your committee, however, soon found that they had little to expect from this general call, and were satisfied that they must relinquish their object, unless they had recourse to more efficient means.

* *LITERARY NOTICE*, published by the HISTORICAL AND LITERARY COMMITTEE of the American Philosophical Society, on the 15th of August, 1815, and referred to in the preceding report.

The American Philosophical Society, being desirous of extending the sphere of its usefulness, and calling into action the talents of those of its members, whose pursuits have been more particularly directed to the moral branches of science, has lately added to the number of its standing committees, a committee for history, moral science, and general literature. The number of persons composing this committee is indefinite; every member of the Society has a right to enrol himself within it. Many of our associates having evinced a desire to participate in its labours, the committee has organised itself, appointed its officers, and is now sedulously engaged in promoting the objects of its institution. Among those, the means of obtaining a correct historical and statistical knowledge of our country have appeared to them not the least deserving of their immediate attention. Sensible of the eminent usefulness of the exertions of the societies established in some of the states, for a similar purpose, and particularly in Massachusetts and New York, they are anxious to concur in their patriotic pursuits, and, with that view, have already collected and rescued from oblivion several interesting documents illustrative of the history of the United States and of Pennsylvania.

These will be given to the public in due time, either at large, or by extracts, in the transactions which the committee is authorised by the society to publish under its own responsibility. Meanwhile, they think it their duty to solicit the aid of men of information throughout the Union; but more particularly in Pennsylvania, and those of the other states where no analogous establishments have been formed. The historical memoirs of individuals, public documents, scarce pamphlets, manuscript notes, public and private letters from eminent men, and from men of knowledge and observation; in short, every thing which may be considered as interesting to this country, in an historical, statistical, geographical, or topographical point of view, will be thankfully received, either as a gift to be deposited among the archives of the Philosophical Society, or as a loan, to be returned, after a certain time, to the owner. Communications of interesting facts, known to individuals by their own observation, tradition, or otherwise, are also respectfully solicited.

To their fellow citizens of Pennsylvania, the committee particularly address themselves. Many interesting points of the history of our own state remain to be elucidated. Many important details are yet to be collected respecting the aboriginal Indians, the emigrations from various countries which have so largely contributed to the increase of our population, the history and peculiar tenets and rules of discipline of the different religious sects that are established among us. Information respecting these and other matters connected with the history of this state, and particularly every thing relating to our venerable patriarch and founder, William Penn, and his first associates; their history in Europe and in this country; their political opinions and views of civil government and policy, and the foundations which were laid by them for the prosperity and happiness which we enjoy, will be received with peculiar gratitude.

Our views, however, are not limited by the bounds of any particular state, this appeal is made to the citizens of the United States at large, and we confidently expect, that those members of the American Philosophical Society, who reside in different parts of the Union, remote from the city of Philadelphia, will zealously co-operate in promoting the objects of the committee, who will be happy to see their names inscribed on their roll, and will inscribe them whenever requested.

All communications are to be addressed to the Chairman, or either of the Secretaries.

WM. TILGHMAN, *Chairman.*

PETER S. DUPONCEAU, *Corresponding Secretary.*

JOHN VAUGHAN, *Recording Secretary.*

Philadelphia, 14th August, 1815.

Your committee, therefore, after mature deliberation, determined on taking a more direct method to obtain the desired aid. They opened an extensive correspondence with individuals, not only in Pennsylvania, but in other parts of the United States, selecting those in preference whom they thought the most likely to second their views. Although a great number of their applications produced no result, yet they are happy to state that, upon the whole, they have been more successful than they had anticipated, and that they have reason to expect that this system will be productive of still greater advantages in future.

The genuine friends of literature and science, those in whom the love of knowledge is a predominant passion, and who have sufficient leisure to devote a considerable part of their time to its acquisition and advancement, are not very common in any country. It cannot, therefore, be a matter of astonishment, that they should not yet be very numerous in these states, where society has so many calls for the exertions of its members in the more indispensable employments of human life. Your committee, however, have great pleasure in being able to assure the society, that they have found a considerable number of their fellow citizens, able and willing to aid in the promotion of their objects, and from whom they have, in fact, derived very important assistance.

Among those enlightened and truly patriotic citizens, they beg leave, in the first place, to name the late President of this Society, THOMAS JEFFERSON. From the first establishment of this committee, he was pleased to honour us with his valuable correspondence, and has spared no exertions to forward the objects of our institution. To him we are indebted for many important MSS. documents, calculated to throw light on the history of our country, on the customs, manners, and languages of the Indian nations, and various other interesting national subjects. He has lately directed to be placed in our hands several as yet unedited MSS. volumes of scientific notes and observations by Messrs. Lewis and Clarke, made in the course of their journey to the Pacific Ocean. The names of the authors of these volumes sufficiently vouch for the interest of the matter which they contain.

Next to this venerable patron of science, your committee find themselves in duty bound to mention as one of their most zealous as well as useful friends and supporters, Doctor GEORGE LOGAN, of Stenton. He has opened to them the treasures of his family archives, which contain a great number of interesting documents relating to the early periods of the colony of Pennsylvania. Among these, not the least valuable, is the familiar correspondence which was carried on for many years between our illustrious founder, William Penn, Hannah Penn, his interesting wife, and James Logan, the Doctor's grandfather, who, it is well known, was the proprietor's confidential friend and secretary. A lady of the Doctor's family, eminently qualified for the task, has undertaken to arrange those letters in a regular order, and has already communicated to your committee the first MS. volume of the collection, which she has enriched with notes and with introductory matter of much interest. The remainder is in a course of preparation, and when the whole collection is thus completed, it will (if your committee can obtain her permission to publish it) exhibit in a more satisfactory manner than has yet been done, the private character, manners, and habits of the

legislator of Pennsylvania, as well as the political line of conduct which he pursued in his government. It will also make us more intimately acquainted with his faithful friend and counsellor, James Logan, of whose classical turn of mind and literary attainments, the library which bears his name, and which he generously gave to the city of Philadelphia, affords sufficient testimony.

Nor should your committee omit paying the tribute of their thanks to our worthy associate, the Rev. JOHN HECKEWELDER, of Bethlehem. The intimate knowledge which this respectable missionary is known to possess of the languages and manners of various Indian nations, among whom he resided more than forty years, pointed him out to us as a person from whom much interesting information could be obtained, nor were our hopes deceived. In answer to the enquiries of your committee, he laid open the stores of his knowledge, and his correspondence gives us a clear insight into that wonderful organization which distinguishes the languages of the aborigines of this country from all the other idioms* of the known world. Through his means your committee obtained the communication of a MS. Grammar of that of the Lenni-Lenape or Delaware Indians, written in German, by the late Rev. David Zeisberger, well known as the author of a copious vocabulary of the same language. This is the most complete Grammar that we have ever seen of any one of those languages which are called *barbarous*. It gives a full, and we believe, an accurate view of those comprehensive grammatical forms which appear to prevail with little variation among the aboriginal natives of America, from Greenland to Cape Horn, and shews how little the world has yet advanced in that science which is proudly called *Universal Grammar*. Through the same means, we are promised the communication of an excellent Dictionary, by the same author, of the Iroquois language, explained in German, which is in the library of the Moravian Brethren at Bethlehem. Your Committee have procured a translation of Mr. Zeisberger's Grammar into English,† and will endeavour to do the same with the Dictionary when received.

Mr. Heckewelder, at the request of your committee, is now engaged in committing to writing the observations which he made in the cause of a long life on the manners and customs of the Indians. To him and Mr. Jefferson we are also indebted for a considerable number of vocabularies of the languages of various Indian nations, particularly of those of the southern tribes, hitherto but little known, of which your committee intend to make a proper use in due time.

Mr. REDMOND CONYNGHAM, a member of the legislature of this state, has testified his zeal for the advancement of knowledge, by procuring for your committee with much labour and some expense, from the office of the Secretary of State at Harrisburg, copies and extracts of the most interesting records of the executive branch of the government, anterior to the period of the American revolution, which will be of great use to the future historian of this commonwealth.

Your committee would have to trespass too long on the attention of the

* Except, perhaps, the language of the Biscayans or Basques, which professor Vater conceives to be formed on the same model with those of the aborigines of America.

† See the Catalogue of Donations at the end of this book, letter D. p. 440.

Society, were they to attempt to do justice to all those who have contributed their liberal aid to the promotion of their endeavours; they cannot, however, avoid mentioning our associates, Messrs. WILLIAM RAWLE and JOSEPH P. NORRIS, from whom they have received several curious and interesting MSS. documents relative to the early history of this state. From JOHN D. COXE, JOSEPH REED, and JAMES ROBERTSON, Esqs. and the Rev. Dr. WM. ROGERS, all of this city, they have to acknowledge the receipt of a great many scarce books and pamphlets, which are indispensably necessary for a correct knowledge of the history of that period. Mr. WM. GRAHAM, of Chester, has presented us with a complete set of the Journals of the general assembly of Pennsylvania, from the first settlement of the colony down to the revolution, now become very scarce. The numerous donations of historical and statistical works which, within the last two years, have been made to the Society, attest the exertions of your committee, and the zeal and liberality of its friends.

Your committee are continuing to pursue the same course with unabated ardour. They are gradually extending their correspondence, indulging and soliciting the utmost freedom of literary intercourse, by which means as they increase their own stock of knowledge, they hope to contribute to keeping up that laudable spirit of enquiry and research, which the observing eye cannot but perceive to be increasing in our country.

Your committee are well aware that they are sowing seeds which cannot be expected to produce immediate fruits: Yet they cannot resist the pleasing hope that in consequence of their unremitting exertions, from the bosom of this Society may arise future historians, and other literary characters, who will one day do honour to the land that gave them birth.

To facilitate the labours of such men, your committee intend to avail themselves of the permission which the Society has given them, of publishing, from time to time, under their own responsibility, selections from the materials which they have on hand, and may hereafter obtain. The praise of zeal and industry is all to which they can aspire; it will be the task of genius to prove hereafter to the world that their labours have not been entirely useless. With this flattering expectation, they feel supported and encouraged to go on with the performance of the duty assigned to them.

All which is respectfully submitted.

By order of the Committee,

WM. TILGHMAN, Chairman.