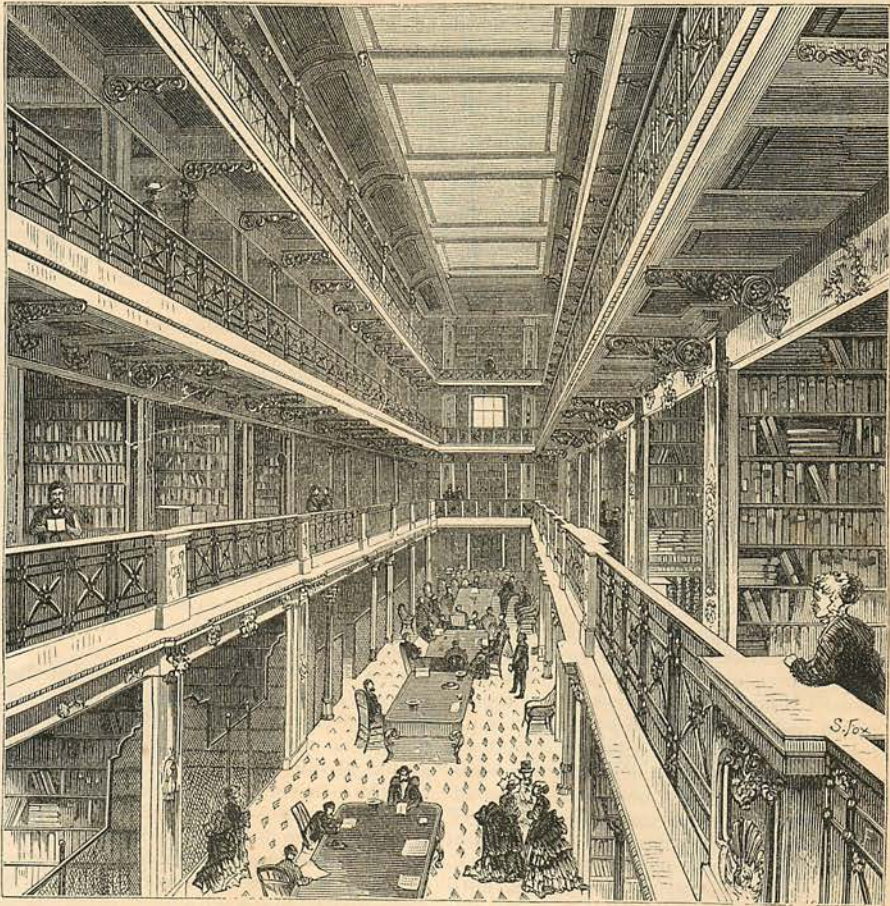


THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.



INTERIOR OF THE CONGRESSIONAL LIBRARY.

“A GOOD library is a statesman’s workshop,” said John Randolph of Roanoke, and every civilized government which has existed since books were first written upon papyrus has had its national collection, illustrating its taste, its intelligence, and its liberality. In the infancy of our republic its Congressmen profited in turn by the New York Society Library, then located in the City Hall (where the Treasury building now stands), in which they held their sessions, and by the Philadelphia Library, which had been established at the instance of Benjamin Franklin. And in 1791 the Philadelphians, then anxious to have their city made the permanent metropolis of the Federal Union, formally tendered to the President and to Congress the free use of the books in their library, for which act of courtesy President Washington, through his secretary, Tobias Lear, returned thanks.

When, in 1800, Congress made final provision for the removal and accommodation of the government of the United States at Conococheague (as the site of the District of Columbia had been called by the Indians), or Roaring Brook, the more intelligent members took care to provide for the commencement of a library. On the motion of Samuel Livermore, a graduate of Princeton College, then a Senator from New Hampshire, \$5000 were appropriated for the purchase of books and for fitting up a suitable apartment in the new Capitol as a library, by the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House, under the direction of a joint committee of both Houses. The chairman of this joint committee, and the only member thereof who has left behind him any trace of a fondness for or an acquaintance with books, was Senator Dexter, of Massachusetts, a graduate of Harvard College, and a lawyer

of some eminence. Under his direction the nucleus of the Library of Congress was ordered from London by Samuel A. Otis, who was for twenty-five years the honored Secretary of the Senate. The books reached this country packed in trunks, and were forwarded to the new metropolis, where they were assigned a room in the "Palace in the Wilderness," as the unfinished Capitol was then derisively styled by those who preferred New York or Philadelphia as the seat of government.

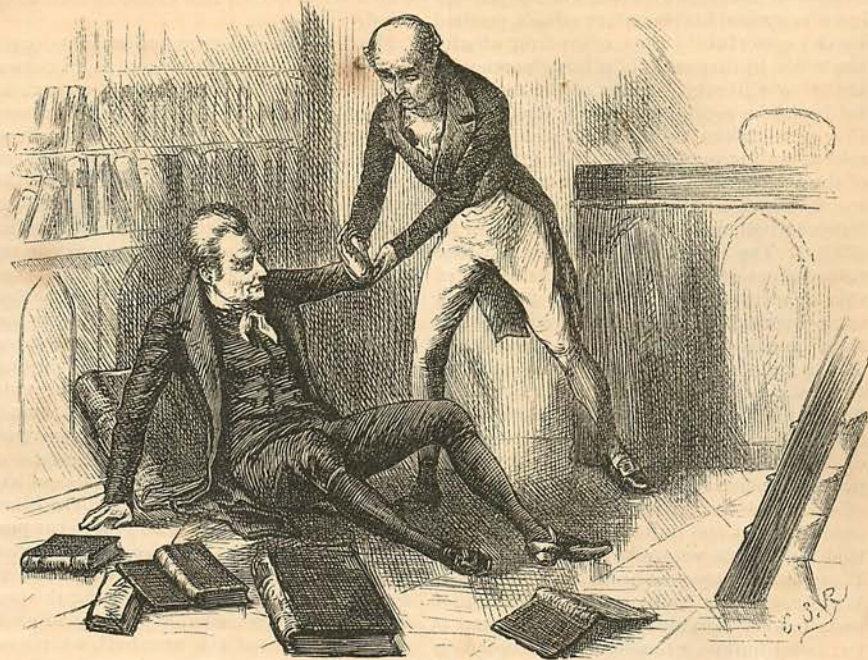
Mr. Otis, with his usual promptitude, presented a report of his action on the first day of the next session, December 7, 1801, showing that \$2200 of the \$5000 appropriated had been expended; and it was referred to a new joint committee. The chairman was Senator Nicolas, of Virginia, who had served honorably in the war of the Revolution; and associated with him were Senator Tracey, of Connecticut, a graduate of Yale College; Representative James A. Bayard, of Delaware, who had graduated at Princeton College and studied law at Philadelphia; Representative Joseph Hopper Nicholson, of Maryland, a lawyer of some distinction; and Representative John Randolph, of Virginia, who was the erratic owner of a choice and well-used library at his estate on the Roanoke River. This well-qualified committee doubtless felt the want of books to aid them in their legislative duties, as they reported to each House the next week. The report, which had been prepared by Mr. Randolph, was accompanied by a series of resolutions providing somewhat in detail for the establishment of a library, under the charge of the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Representatives, who were to attend, in person or by deputy, each weekday during the session from 11 A.M. until 3 P.M. An annual appropriation was also recommended.

This report gave rise to considerable debate in both Houses of Congress, the Democrats opposing any considerable appropriation for what would evidently become a national library, while the Federalists were more generously disposed; and one of them, the Rev. John Bacon, a Representative from Massachusetts, actually advocated an annual appropriation of \$10,000. So powerful was the opposition that it was found necessary to invoke the aid of President Jefferson, and through his influence the Democrats were induced to support a bill, drawn up by John Randolph, which placed the library under the charge of a joint committee of Congress, but provided that the librarian should be appointed by the President of the United States solely. This act of Congress was approved by President Jefferson on the 26th of January, 1802, and three days afterward he appointed as librarian his friend John Beckley, a Virginian, the Clerk of the House of

Representatives. John McDonald, a Philadelphian, was an unsuccessful applicant for the position; and the Federalists in Congress were much disappointed, although not surprised, that Mr. Otis had been ignored. The pay of the librarian, as fixed by the act, was "a sum not to exceed \$2 per diem for every day of necessary attendance."

The first catalogue of the Library of Congress was promptly issued by the newly appointed librarian in April, 1802, from the press of William Duane. It embraced the titles of 212 folios, 164 quartos, 581 octavos, 7 duodecimos, and 9 maps, which then constituted the only library of reference at the national metropolis. This was slowly increased in size by annual purchases made with the small available portion of the contingent funds of the two Houses of Congress, until 1806, when an urgent appeal for a larger appropriation was made by Senator Samuel Latham Mitchell, an accomplished physician of New York city. "Every member," said he, in the conclusion of a report which he made to the Senate, "knows that the inquiries of standing and select committees can not here be aided by large public libraries, as in New York, Baltimore, and Philadelphia. Nor has it hitherto appeared that so much benefit is to be derived from private collections at the present seat of government as in those large cities. Every week of the session causes additional regret that the volumes of literature and science within the reach of the national legislature are not more rich and ample. The want of geographical illustrations is truly distressing, and the deficiency of historical and political works is scarcely less severely felt. There is, however, no danger of realizing the story of a *parliamentum indoctum* in this country, especially if steps be seasonably taken to furnish the library with such materials as will enable statesmen to be correct in their investigations, and, by a becoming display of erudition and research, give a higher dignity and a brighter lustre to truth." The result of this appeal was the appropriation of \$1000 annually for five years for the increase of the Library of Congress.

When Mr. Patrick Magruder, of Virginia, was elected Clerk of the House of Representatives in 1807, as the successor of Mr. Beckley, President Jefferson commissioned him also as Librarian of Congress. The location of the library in the Capitol was changed several times—once because the books were damaged by a leaky roof; and but few new books could be purchased with the annual appropriation of \$1000, which was continued in 1811 for five years more. In the absence of places of fashionable resort found in larger cities, the Library of Congress was a favorite place of rendezvous, where students, politicians, diplomats, claimants, and correspondents met on friendly terms; while



"I AM COMPLETELY FLOORED!"

the ladies, with their accustomed good taste, made it the head-quarters of fashionable society.

Chief Justice Marshall acknowledged in 1812, with many thanks, the privilege of taking out books from the library, which Congress had then granted to the justices of the Supreme Court, and which he prized very highly. He liked to wait upon himself, rather than to be served by the librarian; and one day, in taking a law-book from the upper shelf of an alcove, he pulled down a dozen ponderous tomes, one of which struck him on the forehead with such force that he fell prostrate. An assistant librarian, who hastened to the old gentleman's assistance, found him slightly stunned by the fall; but he soon recovered, and declined to be aided to his feet, saying, with a merry twinkle in his eye, "I've laid down the law out of the books many a time in my long life, but this is the first time they have laid me down. I am completely floored!" And he remained seated upon the floor, surrounded by the books which he had pulled down, until he had found what he sought, and "made a note thereof."

When the British army entered the metropolis of the United States in triumph, after the skirmish known as the "Bladensburg Races," on the 24th of August, 1814, they first occupied the Capitol, the two wings of which only were finished, and connected by a wooden passage-way erected where the rotunda now stands. The lead-

ing officers entered the House of Representatives, where Admiral Cockburn of the Royal Navy (who was co-operating with General Ross), seating himself in the Speaker's chair, called the assemblage to order. "Gentlemen," shouted he, "the question is, Shall this harbor of Yankee democracy be burned? All in favor of burning it will say Aye!" There was a general affirmative response. And when he added, "Those opposed will say Nay," silence reigned for a moment. "Light up!" cried the bold Briton; and the order was soon repeated in all parts of the building, while soldiers and sailors vied with each other in collecting combustible materials for their incendiary fires. The books on the shelves of the Library of Congress were used as kindling for the north wing; and the much-admired full-length portraits of Louis XVI. and his queen, Marie Antoinette, which had been presented by that unfortunate monarch to Congress, were torn from their frames and trampled under foot. Patrick Magruder, then Clerk of the House of Representatives and Librarian of Congress, subsequently endeavored to excuse himself for not having even attempted to save the books in his custody; but it was shown that the books and papers of the departments were saved, and that the library might have been removed to a place of safety before the arrival of the British Vandals.

Ex-President Jefferson, who was then living in retirement at Monticello, where theoretical agricultural operations and other un-

successful business experiments had seriously embarrassed his pecuniary affairs, profited by the opportunity thus offered for obtaining relief by disposing of a large portion of his private library. Many of the most useful books he retained until his death, when they were taken to Washington and there sold at public auction; but the great bulk of the collection which he had made abroad and at home, numbering six thousand seven hundred volumes, he offered to Congress for \$23,950. The Democratic Senators and Representatives gladly availed themselves of this opportunity for indirectly pensioning their political leader, and thus relieving him from pressing pecuniary embarrassments. The Senate promptly passed the bill, but there was a decided opposition to it manifested in the House of Representatives by Daniel Webster and others. Mr. Cyrus King, of Massachusetts, vainly endeavored to have provision made for the rejection of all books of an atheistical, irreligious, and immoral tendency, but the purchase was ordered by that body by a vote of 81 ayes to 71 nays. When the library was brought in wagons to Washington the books were deposited in a room hastily provided for their reception in the hotel building temporarily occupied by Congress, which stood where the present Post-office Department was subsequently built. The collection was found to be especially rich in Bibles and theological and philosophical works, but the most valuable portion was a series of volumes of pamphlets

which Mr. Jefferson had collected and annotated.

Mr. Jefferson had arranged and catalogued his books on a plan borrowed from Bacon's classification of science, which was, at his request, adopted by Mr. George Watterson, who was then appointed librarian by President Madison. There were in the catalogue made in accordance with this classification one hundred and seventy-five alphabets, arranged in arbitrary sequence, and it required an intimate knowledge of the library to use it without great waste of time. Mr. Watterson was a native of Scotland, who had been brought to the metropolis when a lad, and who remembered having seen President Washington lay the corner-stone of the Capitol with Masonic honors. When a young man he became a journalist, and a complimentary poem which he wrote and published having attracted the attention of Mrs. Madison, she became his patroness, and eventually secured his appointment as Librarian of Congress. While he graced the position, from 1815 to 1829, he wrote several pleasant local books, and he did much toward making the library a resort for the best-informed Congressmen, especially after he took possession of the new hall, which was where the library is now located. It was finished, in accordance with the Jeffersonian classification, with a row of alcoves on either side, over which two galleries were divided into corresponding sections, each alcove and section being devoted to books on a partic-



"LIGHT UP!"

ular subject. In these alcoves the belles of the capital used, on pleasant afternoons during the sessions of Congress, to hold their receptions and to receive the homage of their admirers. On one occasion, so it was said, a wealthy Southern Representative, who was glean- ing materials for a speech in an upper section, heard through the opening for the window, which extended into the alcove beneath, the well-known voice of his daughter, who was being persuaded by a penniless adventurer to elope. The angry parent lost no time in going down stairs, calling the previous question, and postponing the proposed action *sine die*.

In December, 1825, soon after the Library of Congress had been removed into its new hall, it narrowly escaped destruction a second time by fire.

A candle which had been left burning in one of the galleries by a gentleman who was reading there at a late hour the previous night was the probable origin of the fire, which ascended to the ceiling, consuming the books on several shelves. These, however, were duplicate copies of public documents, which had been used for filling up the vacant new shelves, and no works of any value were destroyed.

When General Jackson was elected President, in 1829, and there was a general "rotation in office," it was alleged that Mr. Waterson had given circulation to scandalous stories concerning the late Mrs. Jackson, and he was promptly removed. His successor, Mr. John S. Meehan, was also an editor by profession, and his services in bringing about the previous political revolution were thus rewarded. He was a good politician and a courteous gentleman, qualified for the position in those days, when the librarian neither asserted any prerogative nor exercised any judgment in the selection of books,



AN ACTION POSTPONED SINE DIE.

which was made by the joint committee of the two Houses of Congress. Governor Dickenson, of New Jersey, Edward Everett, and John Quincy Adams distinguished themselves when members of the Library Committee by their careful attention to this duty; but they could not make many valuable acquisitions with the limited appropriations at their disposal, which varied from \$500 to \$1000 per annum, and out of which bills for book-binding had to be paid.

A Law Library was established by an act of Congress, approved on the 14th of July, 1832, by President Jackson, as a part of the Library of Congress. There were at that time 2011 law-books in the library, of which 639 had belonged to Mr. Jefferson. A special appropriation of \$5000 was made, with a further annual sum of \$1000, to be expended in the purchase of law-books, and a room adjoining the Library of Congress was fitted up for this new department, which was placed under the supervision of the justices of the Supreme Court.

The Library of Congress, at the expiration

of fifty years from its original organization, contained only about 50,000 volumes, and it was a matter of regret, publicly expressed in Congress, that there was not one branch of liberal study, even among those of greatest interest to our legislators, in which it was not miserably deficient. In international and civil law, home politics, natural history, and a few other departments the collection was tolerably good; but there was a great lack of French and German literature, although these are the vernacular tongues of a large portion of our citizens. There were none of the numerous writers of the vast empire of Russia; nothing of the curious literatures of Poland, of Hungary, or of Bohemia; only the commonest books in Italian and in Spanish; and not a volume in the language of Portugal, rich as it is in various literature, and especially in the wild yet true romance of discovery and conquest that comes down to us through the pages of learned De Barros and quaint old Castanheda, ringing upon the ear and stirring the blood like the sound of a far-off trumpet. So, too, with our own literature, especially the history of the North American Continent. The studious traveler from abroad, who had hoped to inspect at the seat of government correct sources of information respecting the early history of this republic of yesterday, found to his disappointment that he must go to New York city, or to Providence, Rhode Island, and there knock at private doors.

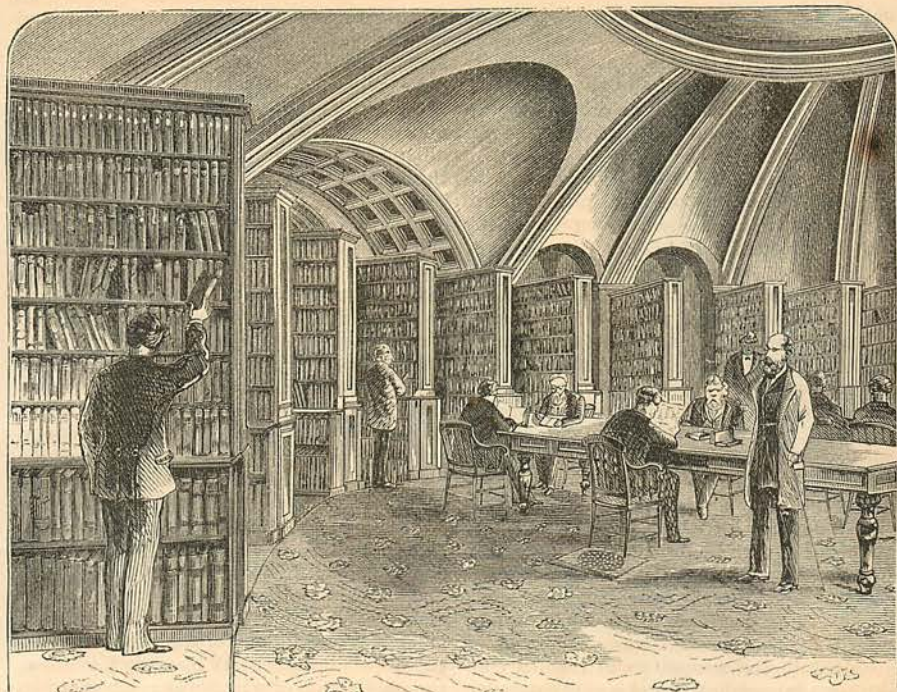
Rufus Choate (then a Senator from Massachusetts), George P. Marsh (then a Representative from Vermont), and other prominent members of the Twenty-ninth Congress, aware of the barrenness of the Congressional Library, endeavored to secure the annual expenditure of not less than \$20,000 of the income of the Smithsonian bequest for the formation of a library, which, for extent, completeness, and value, "should be worthy of the donor of the fund, and of the nation, and of this age." A law was enacted authorizing the Regents of the Smithsonian Institution to thus form a library, and Professor C. C. Jewett, who had paid great attention to the subject, was engaged as the librarian; but a majority of the regents subsequently decided to abandon the project, and to expend their entire income in scientific researches. This was a great disappointment to those who had advocated the creation of a national library, especially to Mr. Choate, who at once resigned his position as regent. The Smithsonian Institution, he said, "owes a great library to the capital of the New World; something to be seen, preserved, and to grow, into which shall be slowly, but surely and judiciously, gathered the best thoughts of all the civilizations."

The Library of Congress was forced upon the attention of the public by a third fire on the morning of December 25, 1851, which

destroyed 35,000 volumes, about three-fifths of the entire collection. Nearly all the works of art which had graced the library were also destroyed, among them Stuart's portraits of the first five Presidents; original portraits of Columbus, Cortéz, Bolivar, Stenben, and Peyton Randolph; busts of Jefferson, Lafayette, and Taylor; and upward of eleven hundred bronze medals which had been received from Europe through Vattmare's system of international exchanges.

Congress, which was in session, at once made liberal appropriations for reconstructing the library, which was erected entirely of cast iron, and consequently fire-proof. This is now the main room of the library, and it is ninety-one feet long, thirty-four feet wide, and thirty-four feet high, with three stories of iron book-cases on either side. On the lower story are alcoves nine feet wide, nine feet six inches high, and eight feet six inches deep, with seven shelves on each side and at the back. On the second story are similar alcoves, excepting that their projection is but five feet, which leaves a gallery resting on the fronts of the alcoves beneath three feet six inches in width. A similar platform is constructed on the alcoves of the second story, forming a gallery to approach the upper book-cases, thus making three stories, receding as they ascend. These galleries, which are continued across the ends of the hall, are protected by pedestals and railings, and are approached by semicircular staircases, also of cast iron, recessed in the end walls. The ceiling is wholly composed of iron and glass, and is embellished with ornate panels and foliated pendants. The pilasters which divide the alcoves are tastefully ornamented, and the whole is painted a delicate cream-color, relieved by gilding. The main entrance is from a passage-way opening from the western door of the rotunda, on the same level.

Before this magnificent hall had been completed Congress appropriated \$75,000, with the continuance of an annual sum of \$5000, for the purchase of books, so that the library was superior to what it had been before the last fire, when it rose, phoenix-like, from its ashes. But the purchases were made on the old plan, under the direction of the joint committee on the library, the chairman of which then, and for several previous and subsequent sessions, was Senator Pearce, of Maryland, a graduate of Princeton College. There was not in the Library of Congress a modern encyclopedia, or a file of a New York daily newspaper, or of any newspaper except the venerable daily *National Intelligencer*; while *De Bow's Review* was the only American magazine taken, although the *London Court Journal* was regularly received, and bound at the close of each successive year. All literature not in accordance with the conservative construc-



THE LAW LIBRARY.

tion of the Constitution was excluded, and the library was only useful to those eminently respectable Congressmen who sat in the stern of the ship of state complacently watching the track which it had left in the political waters as it passed along, and apparently never dreaming of the breakers ahead!

The new library hall was ready for occupation on the 1st of July, 1853, and the books were again arranged in accordance with the ponderous Jeffersonian classification. The Law Library had meanwhile been removed to a suit of rooms in the basement story of the north wing, and a liberal annual appropriation of \$10,000 was rapidly making it the most complete collection of legal lore in the world. Its special custodian, Mr. C. H. W. Meehan, a son of the then librarian, had been in charge of the law department since 1835, and was intrusted with the choice of books purchased—a well-merited recognition of his ability and thorough acquaintance with this department of literature, indorsed by his retention in office.

In December, 1860, the Law Library was removed into the basement room formerly occupied by the Supreme Court, semicircular in form, with a massive groined arched ceiling, resting upon short Doric columns. A sculptured group on the wall, representing Fame crowned with the rising sun and pointing to the Constitution, while Justice holds her scales, recalls the previous occu-

pany of the room, where Webster, Clay, Wirt, and others "learned in the law" used to argue great constitutional questions before the highest tribunal in the land. The librarian's mahogany desk, of semicircular form, with faded green brocade hangings, formerly graced the Senate-chamber, and behind it presided the successive Vice-Presidents, and Presidents of the Senate *pro tem.*, from 1825 to 1860.

On the shelves of the book-cases which project from the semicircular wall, converging toward an opposite centre, and forming alcoves, is now the most complete law library in the world. Lincoln's Inn library contains a larger number of books, but two-thirds of them are works on miscellaneous subjects, and although the library of Halle, in Germany, and the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh are rich in ancient law, neither of them has been kept up: indeed, the latter was recently offered for sale. In the Law Library of Congress are every volume of English, Irish, and Scotch reports, as well as the American; a copious collection of case law; and a complete collection of the statutes of all civilized governments, including those of Russia since 1649, which fill about one hundred quarto volumes. There are also many curious law-books, including the first edition of Blackstone's Commentaries, and an original edition of the report of the trial of Cagliostro, Rohan, and La Motte for the theft of Marie Antoinette's diamond

necklace. All the books are bound in calf or sheep, of that "underdone pie-crust color" in which Charles Dickens described a lawyer's library as dressed, and they are much used by the eminent legal gentlemen who come to Washington to practice in the Supreme Court.

When, in 1861, Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated President of the United States, Mr. Meehan, Sen., was in his turn "rotated," and the place of Librarian of Congress was given to Dr. John G. Stephenson, of Indiana, who had no especial qualification except that he belonged to the winning side. Fortunately for the interests of the library, Dr. Stephenson appointed as his first assistant Ainsworth R. Spofford, Esq., who had been connected with the press of Cincinnati, and who was practically acquainted with books and the book trade. In December, 1864, Dr. Stephenson resigned, and President Lincoln appointed Mr. Spofford librarian, a position for which he was eminently qualified, and the Library of Congress has since borne testimony to his varied knowledge, to his untiring industry, and to his never-failing courtesy. The Jeffersonian system of classification was abandoned as unsuited to the necessities of readers consulting a large library, and a new catalogue of the books, arranged alphabetically under the head of authors, was issued, followed by another catalogue, arranged according to subjects. Congressmen now, finding that the library was of practical use to them, voted liberal appropriations for its enlargement, and the books which had been collected by the Smithsonian Institution—numbering some 40,000 volumes in all—found a resting-place on its shelves, relieving the regents of the expense of caring for them. The library of Peter Force, purchased of him for \$100,000, was a more valuable acquisition, embracing some 45,000 separate titles, among which were many valuable works on early American history, with maps, newspapers, pamphlets, and manuscripts illustrating the colonial and revolutionary epochs.

To accommodate these large additions to the library two new halls were added, extending eastward from the north and south ends of the main hall (already described), and forming three sides of a square. These additional halls, which are also constructed entirely of iron, are each ninety-five feet in length, twenty-nine feet six inches in width, and thirty-eight feet high, which are so nearly the dimensions of the main hall that the difference is not noticed, although they have each an additional tier of galleries.

In the south wing are the treasures of the Force collection, now being catalogued and classified, and partly piled up in stacks. There are nearly 1000 volumes of American newspapers, including 245 printed prior to

1800; a large collection of the journals and laws of the colonial Assemblies, showing the legislative policy which culminated in their independence; the highly prized publications of the presses of the Bradfords, Benjamin Franklin, and Isaiah Thomas; forty-one different works of Increase and Cotton Mather, printed at Cambridge and Boston, from 1671 to 1735; a perfect copy of that rarest of American books, Eliot's Indian Bible; and a large and valuable collection of "incunabula," illustrating the progress of the art of printing from its infancy. The manuscripts are even more valuable than the printed books, including two autograph journals of George Washington—one dated 1775, during Braddock's expedition, and one in 1787, at Mount Vernon; two volumes of an original military journal of Major-General Greene, 1781-82; twelve folio volumes of the papers of Paul Jones while commanding American cruisers in 1776-78; a private journal left by Arthur Lee while minister to France in 1776-77; thirty or forty orderly books of the Revolution; forty-eight volumes of historical autographs of great rarity and interest; and an immense mass of manuscript materials for the "American Archives"—a documentary history of America, the publication of which was commenced by order of Congress. The only cause for regret connected with this wing of the library, where the literary treasures collected by Peter Force are enshrined, is that his life could not have been spared long enough to have seen his beloved collection so well cared for by the republic.

In the north wing are the illustrated works and collections of engravings, which always attract visitors, who can sit at the tables there provided for their accommodation and enjoy the reproductions of the choicest art treasures of the Old World. In the upper gallery of this wing are bound copies of the periodicals of all nations, embracing complete series of the leading magazines of Great Britain and of the United States. An adjacent attic hall is devoted to the collection of newspapers—those repositories of general information which had been ignored prior to the administration of Mr. Spofford, but to which he has paid especial attention. Among the unbroken files are those of the *New York Evening Post* from the issue of its first number in 1801, the *London Gazette* from 1665, the French *Moniteur* (royal, imperial, and republican) from 1789, the *London Times*, and the *London Illustrated News*. The prominent daily journals of New York are now regularly filed, and bound at the close of each year, and there is a complete set of all the newspapers which have been published in the District of Columbia, including over one hundred which no longer live.

A rigid enforcement of that provision of the

copyright law which makes it obligatory to deposit in the library a copy of every work "entered according to act of Congress," secures a complete collection of American publications, which could not be otherwise obtained. These copyright books are of increasing importance, extent, and value, and will constitute a curious record of the growth and style of our national literature. There is, of course, a complete collection of all the varied publications of the Federal government, and by law fifty additional copies of each work are printed for the Library of Congress, to be used in a well-regulated system of international exchanges, which brings in return the valuable public documents of other nations. Liberal appropriations are annually made by Congress for the purchase of books and newspapers, while the large amount of binding required is executed at the government printing-office without taxing the funds of the library. The annual appropriations—after provision has been made for the foreign and domestic serials, and for the most important issues of the press abroad in jurisprudence, political economy, history, and allied topics—are distributed in the purchase of books in all departments of literature and science, no general topic being neglected, although as yet none can be assumed as being complete. To that end auction lists and trade catalogues are assiduously read and profited by, and especial attention is paid to the collections of dealers in second-hand books—those purveyors for good libraries.

The Library of Congress is thus beginning to assume national proportions, and is rapidly gaining on the government libraries at Paris and at London, while it is made more practically useful than any other great library in the world by the annual issue of a printed catalogue of its accessions. With this catalogue—arranged alphabetically by authors and again by subjects—it is an easy task for the frequenters of the library to obtain books on any subject desired, especially when they can obtain the further aid of the accomplished librarian and his willing assistants. The practical result is shown by the register of books taken from the library by those enjoying that privilege. Fifteen years ago not more than three out of five Congressmen used the library; now nine out of ten take out books, some having over a hundred volumes during a session. Nor can any one visit the library at any time when its doors are open without finding from ten to fifty citizens seated at the reading-tables, where all can peruse such books as they may request to have brought to them from the shelves. The library is thus thrown open to any one and every one, without any formality of admission or any restriction, except that slight barriers exclude the visitors from the bookshelves, and prevent them from taking down

the books without the knowledge of the attendants.

Bibliophilists find on the shelves of the Library of Congress much that they regard as precious, although the profane call it trash, in the shape of formidable folios exquisitely printed by the Elzevirs, or the small Aldus editions of classical authors, easily carried in the capacious pockets of students of the old school. Many of these antique books, like the dowagers and the spinsters who grace the wall-seats of a ball-room, will gratefully repay a little attention from the student, and will convince him that in literature, as in agriculture, "the new grain cometh up from the old fields." The ashes of Wycliffe were scattered to the winds, but despotic bigotry could not destroy Wycliffe's Bible. Homer's birth-place and his burial-place are unknown, but numerous editions of his Iliad delight and interest our heroes and our lovers. Our legislators ponder over the patriotic sentiments of Sidney, our poets read Tasso and Dante, our scholars revel in the writings of Molière and Cervantes, and our statesmen, in studying the noble diction of Bacon, draw "from the well of pure English undefiled." Indeed, the Library of Congress, with its two hundred thousand volumes, may well be compared to the island of Delos, where the ancient Greeks and their neighbors used to meet in peace, forget foreign and domestic strife, and harmoniously join in festivities—for it is the neutral ground of the national metropolis, where learning is domesticated, and where studious men and women can meet, undisturbed by the noisy clamor of mercenary politicians.

On the western side of the main library hall is a lofty colonnade, from the balcony of which the weary student or the curious visitor can enjoy a panorama which has all the elements of grandeur and loveliness. Below the spectator are the Capitol grounds, with their trees, parterres of flowers, and fountains; while beyond them, directly in front, stretches the public reservation, reaching a mile and a half to the placid Potomac, and adorned with the government conservatories, the picturesque Smithsonian Institution, the Agricultural Department with its terraced gardens, and the unfinished Washington Monument. Broad avenues radiate in different directions—Virginia Avenue going to the left until it joins the Long Bridge, leading into the Old Dominion, while inclining to the right at a similar angle is Pennsylvania Avenue, the main artery of the metropolis, leading to the Executive Mansion, with its surrounding departments. Shade trees mark the lines of streets, which cross each other at right angles, and through which the avenues pass at all sorts of angles, while the monotony of house-roofs is varied by imposing public buildings, churches, and

school-houses, with here and there a park. The broad Potomac, generally studded with sails, winds its way from antique Georgetown on the distant right, down past Washington, to sombre Alexandria, far off on the left; while on the distant Virginia bank rise the verdant slopes of Arlington Heights, with a background of wooded hills reaching to the horizon. After enjoying this scene, which possesses all the elements of picturesque beauty as well as of metropolitan grandeur, one can turn back into the library with a fresh zest for its treasures, and feel that in fostering so well-managed and so useful an institution, "beautiful for situation," our national legislators are obeying the constitutional injunction "to promote the general welfare."

A MADRIGAL.

To the Rev. Mr. FLEMING, M.A., this SOUTHEAST VIEW of his SCHOOL in ASHWOOD, near MILDON, erected A.D. 1770, in Gloriam Dei Opt. Max. in Ufium Ecclesiæ & Reipublicæ, is Respectfully Inscribed by his Dutiful Servant. GEO. MARWOOD.

THIS is the inscription under a quaint old print which, keeping its dingy frame of black wood, hangs above the book-case in my bedroom. It is the ugliest picture possible: the house, drawn in careful perspective, stands grimly forward without a projection about roof or window, except a little attempt at a porch over the door on the east side; there are six windows on the ground-floor of the south front, six windows on the first floor, and above these twelve smaller ones in a row, evidently dormitories, cold, hot, staring, unbeautiful, unsuggestive. A large walled inclosure, half garden and half paddock, runs down the eastern side; the garden has a round bed in its centre and seven or eight square beds on either side, pointed at intervals with Irish yews, and set in gravel instead of turf. There is a man in a three-cornered hat vaguely walking in the garden, and a serving-man holding a horse in the paddock beyond; while on the south side is a kind of pleached alley with a double row of sycamore-trees, odd little groups of boys with long hair and long coats and long waistcoats, frilled collars and knee-breeches, strolling about beneath them, and two grave divines walking sedately toward you on the extreme left. That is my picture. And for all its grayness and its ugliness and its stiff lines, I sit and look at it sometimes until a change creeps over all. I hear happy summer sounds, chirping of birds, the hum of tiny insects, the sweep of the scythe, boys' voices. I see sweet flowers in the ugly stiff beds, tender shadows under the flickering sycamores, and, above all, I see Dorothy Fleming, with her bright, flashing, sunny face, with her soft dress of dainty muslin, with her little delicious old-fashioned great-

grandmotherly air, flying out of the garden door to meet her father.

Young Sir Jasper Harrington always would have it that she was like a robin, and perhaps he could not have found an apter similitude, there was something so pretty, so confiding, and yet so spirited about the little thing. Every one was fond of her. Every thing that was weak, or frightened, or hurt seemed to take refuge with her and expect her to do battle for them. It was not a little ridiculous to imagine her your champion, and yet you might have had a worse one. There was something in her daring which, from such a mite, was irresistible. Once when a great roistering fellow was ill-treating a horse, Dorothy ran up to him with her face all ablaze and fairly shamed him by her passionate indignation; he went away mumbling out something like an excuse, at all events in a different tone from the oaths and curses he had been letting fly. Dorothy remained triumphant, and then suddenly began to tremble, and went home looking pale and scared.

"How wicked those men are!" she said, with a sort of sob in her voice, laying her little brown head upon Mrs. Harriot's shoulder.

"What has happened, niece?" said the old lady, a wistful look of trouble creeping into her faded eyes. "Is it any thing more that they want to do to poor Austin? Because then we had better go away, he and I."

Dorothy put up her little hands and drew the tender, troubled old face down to her own, kissing it.

"Now you are fancying things," she said, half chidingly, half protectingly; "and, to be sure, I had no business to make you sad. Has Molly told you that the roses are ready for the pot-pourri? Come and see whether she has put cloves enough."

And so the two went up the narrow staircase together, a tall stooping elderly woman, and this little alert eager creature, with hair and eyes of bright warm russet-brown, who could defend dumb animals, and support poor Mrs. Harriot's failing age, and keep the house, and teach the little boys, and be altogether brave and dauntless, and yet would color crimson and look beseechingly if Sir Jasper Harrington did but stop them in the road, and jump off his horse to wish good-day. It was a strange little household this school of Mr. Fleming's, which might rather have been called Dorothy's kingdom, since here, as in other instances one could name, they were not the nominal heads that ruled. Brother and sister were alike, tall, gentle, listless people—unready would perhaps be the best word to use—yet with a certain sweet dignity, a transparent simplicity, a trustfulness as beautiful as a child's, and the shadow of a great trouble which