

## NOTES FROM THE LIBRARY

### *PHI BETA KAPPA LITERATURE IN THE LIBRARY*

When the movement was begun in the late sixties of the last century to obtain a charter for an Alpha of New Jersey of Phi Beta Kappa, little if any literature respecting the Society was to be found in the Rutgers Library. Of Phi Beta Kappa, members knew only what they had been told at their initiations, and what they could gather at the few meetings they were privileged to attend.

One of those who joined in the application was President William H. Campbell who had become an honorary member of the Union College Chapter on July 23, 1844. The second applicant, David Murray, Union 1852, was a member of the same chapter. Jacob Cooper, Yale 1852, the third petitioner, was the moving spirit in the effort to get a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa at Rutgers. He had come to regard with deep interest the Society which, the year before his initiation, had celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary. Cooper came to Rutgers in 1866 as Professor of Greek and remained in that position until his death in 1904.<sup>1</sup>

According to Cooper's diary, letters went out from Rutgers to the six leading Alphas, whose consent was then necessary for admission to

<sup>1</sup>A memorable incident in the career of Cooper at Rutgers was a visit which he made in 1902 at the home of Mr. Ralph Voorhees in Clinton, after which announcement was made that the latter had contributed \$50,000 for a library (the first unit of the present Rutgers library building).

the Society, on May 26, 1868, and on February 22, 1869, the Alpha of New Jersey was instituted as the twentieth in the succession of chapters granted up to that time. At the time about two hundred and twenty-five Phi Beta Kappa pamphlets—one hundred and twenty orations, forty-four poems, and sixty-one catalogues—had been printed, but not one of these items had found its way into the Rutgers Library. The fact was, however, that no college library had at the time begun such accumulations.

The present collection in the Rutgers library may be attributed to the interest of Dr. Henry Rutgers Baldwin, Class of 1849, who in 1889, as president of the Alpha of New Jersey, asked two of the younger members to prepare papers on the history of the Society. The writer of this paper took that invitation seriously and set about to learn something of the Society's beginnings, which up to that time had remained in some obscurity, the records of the original Alpha at William and Mary then being generally supposed to be lost, though actually they had in 1848 come into the possession of the Virginia Historical Society. When the Rutgers Library was consulted it was found to contain only two Phi Beta Kappa items. One was an article in *The Atlantic Monthly* of July, 1879, by Dr. Edward Everett Hale entitled "A Fossil from the Tertiary," telling something of the early growth of the Society, and particularly of the activities of Elisha

Parmeles who had carried the charters from Virginia to New England. An article even more rewarding to the historian was "The First Greek Letter Society," which appeared in the *Delta Kappa Epsilon Quarterly* of October, 1886. The author, the Hon. John DeWitt Warner, had copied the original records, and quoted from them in support of his contention that Phi Beta Kappa was in fact the earliest college fraternity.

The next step was to visit Mr. Warner and to make a copy of his copy of the original records. That transcript now rests in the Rutgers Library together with the manuscript of the paper on the Society's history read before the Alpha of New Jersey on January 16, 1890. This same paper, rewritten, was a year later published in the first Catalogue of the Rutgers chapter, and the Phi Beta Kappa world was thus given the first authentic knowledge of the Society's beginnings in a Rutgers publication.

From that time on the Rutgers Library was in a peculiarly fortunate position for receiving the Society's publications, for not long after, the author of that historical paper (and of this brief account) was elected secretary of the United Chapters, a post which he held for thirty years. In addition, beginning with the volume of 1910, he edited *The Phi Beta Kappa Key* for a period of twenty-one years. He also cooperated with the librarian in accumulating earlier publications of the Society. Among them are four of the six Phi Beta Kappa items published before the end of the eighteenth century: an oration by Charles Chauncey, Jr., delivered before the Alpha of Connecticut in 1797; another by Timo-

thy Bigelow before the Alpha of Massachusetts in 1796; a third, delivered in 1798 by John Thornton Kirkland, then a professor but later president of Harvard; and a poem by Thomas Paine (who later took the name of Robert Treat Paine to avoid confusion with the author of *The Rights of Man*). This poem, which bore the title "The Ruling Passion" was a thirty-two page effusion which excited such unusual attention on its publication that it was said by Edward Everett Hale to have yielded its author \$1500.

Other rare and curious specimens of Phi Beta Kappa literature in the Rutgers Library include eleven orations and one poem published at Yale before the organization of the United Chapters in 1883 (thirty-four orations and twelve poems in all are known to have been published at Yale up to that time); eighteen of the thirty-five orations and four of the twenty-eight poems published at Harvard in the same period; and seven orations from Dartmouth, ten from Union, three each from Bowdoin and Brown, and one delivered at Alabama but published in New York. No effort has been made to hunt out Phi Beta Kappa orations and poems in general periodicals in the Library, but the number in pamphlet form, including the notable historical publication of the Alpha of New Jersey already mentioned, has reached a total of fifty-two.

In addition the Library has seventeen catalogues of early Alphas, including the first ever to be issued—that of the Alpha of Massachusetts, published in 1806. These are of less importance, perhaps, since a General Catalogue of 1500 pages, compiled by the writer of this paper, was pub-

lished in 1922, and a new Phi Beta Kappa Directory was published in 1941. The Rutgers Library has these and also the valuable *Bibliography of Phi Beta Kappa*, edited by Dr. Clark S. Northup (1928), in which all available information respecting the Society's publications is set forth. The Library also has all current publications, including the seven volumes of *The Phi Beta Kappa Key*, and a complete set of the *American Scholar*, begun in 1932.

Though not all the orations of the Society have the quality of Emerson's famous "American Scholar," yet there is much wisdom and more of curious history in these publications.

OSCAR M. VOORHEES

#### NEWSPAPERS ACQUIRED

During recent months the Rutgers Library has acquired several notable additions to its collection of newspaper files.

Students of the penny press in America will be interested in two bound volumes: The New York *Sun* from January 1 to June 30, 1835, and the New York *Transcript* from March 23 to August 22, 1835. Both volumes afford excellent material for a study of the journalism which seeks mass circulation.

The *Sun*, founded by Benjamin Day on September 3, 1833, as a 4-page, 4-column paper, was the first paper to break away from the six-penny price. Day was not impressed with the importance of printing political news; he featured police court items, crime, and the other "human interest" stories. He eschewed all ties with political parties, relying on circulation and adver-

tising to pay expenses. Day was the first to sell papers to newsboys and require them to collect from subscribers.

The full flowering of Day's theories can be studied in the 1835 issues. The record of the police court, written, incidentally, by George W. Wisner at a salary of \$4 a week, is complete, humorous, often salacious. Here is an example:

James Fisk, shipmaster, had some domestic difficulties, got drunk to cure it [sic], and got down in the street. Fined \$2 and costs.

Day published occasional serious articles, and poems were a regular page-one feature. "The Prairies," by William Cullen Bryant, was reprinted June 2, 1835, from the *Knickerbocker* magazine. Foreign news was brief. Advertisements consisted of highly questionable medical claims and a few classified announcements.

The *Transcript*, which first appeared March 10, 1834, as a rival of the then very prosperous *Sun*, was published by three printers, who openly patterned the *Transcript* after the *Sun*. The paper sold for one penny, was similar to the *Sun* in format, adopted the same news values plus added emphasis on sex stories, and printed the same astounding medical cures and claims.

Dr. Asa Greene, first editor, named William Atree to write the daily police court journal. Atree was allowed unlimited space. The volume now owned by the library shows the work of these two men at its zenith. Atree's police items were spicy and would be shunned by any decent paper today. Here is a sample selected at random:

John Laird got drunk as a laird, and raised a row in Rutger's street. Mackenzie, a watchman, warned him to be wary of his ways, and chary of his conduct, and Laird fell foul of him and slit his coat in several places. Committed.

Dr. Greene aided and abetted Atree in his efforts to amuse the reader. His editorial paragraphs represented a curious mixture of serious preaching and tongue-in-cheek tom-foolery. The following appeared August 18, 1835, immediately after a rather serious article:

Mrs. Mary Put has put forth an advertisement against the absconding Mr. Put, who, though put together with her in the holy bands of wedlock, will not stay put.

During the period from April 17 to 20, 1835, the *Transcript* devoted almost all its space to the "Trial of the Prophet Matthias for the Murder of Elijah Pierson." The acquittal of Matthias was bitterly protested in an editorial.

Hard luck dogged the *Transcript*. The volume under discussion contains an account of a disastrous fire which leveled its plant at 34 Ann Street on August 12. The paper moved to City Hall Place, and proudly announced the purchase of a new \$3,000 double cylinder press. It claimed a circulation then of 17,000. The *Transcript* went out of existence in 1839.

A third volume presents an entirely different type of publication. It contains the *Anti-Masonick Rhode-Islander*, published at Newport, R.I., Vol. I, from April 29 to November 25, 1829, and the *Moral Envoy*, issued at Fall River, Massachusetts, Vol. I, March 17 to December 8, 1830. Both

were published by George Wheaton Allen.

These two newspapers, both short-lived, were direct products of their time. They flourished in the excitement over Free Masonry which was aggravated when William Morgan, a brewer of Batavia, New York, disappeared in 1826 after threatening to expose the secrets of the order. Out of the furore caused by his murder sprang an Anti-Masonic party, which held its first national convention in 1831, with all states represented. The party was strongest in New England and for a time dominated Vermont politics. The *Rhode Islander* and the *Moral Envoy* made their appearance during the peak of the controversy.

The first issue of the *Rhode Islander* warned the reader:

Our columns will be uniformly devoted to Anti-Masonick, Moral, Scientifick, Literary, and Political Subjects, either original or selected; and to the encouragement of Industry, Economy, Temperance, and the diffusion of truth and useful knowledge.

The *Moral Envoy* also attacked Free Masonry as dangerous to liberty and equal rights. The Morgan case received constant attention. The *Envoy* appeared in black columns September 15, 1830, on the anniversary of Morgan's death. All news concerning the case was given extensive space.

Other recent acquisitions include:

*National Gazette and Literary Register*, published at Philadelphia by William Fry, Vol. 12, January 2 to December 31, 1836. The first half of this paper's name was the same as that of the journal published by Philip Freneau, from 1791 to 1793.

The *New Hampshire Gazette*, published by Peirce and Garner, "printers to the state and the Laws of the United States," at Portsmouth, December 20, 1808, to December 26, 1809. A reprint of the first issue, October 7, 1765, appears on the fly-leaf. The *Gazette* contains the official records of Congress, letters from prominent individuals, and a political commentary by one "Aristides."

The New York *Herald*, the weekly edition of the New York *Post*, January 4 to December 29, 1804. The *Herald* was a famous Federalist weekly, edited by William Coleman, "field-marshal of the Federalist editors." It was made up from type used in the *Post* and circulated outside New York City.

The *Time-Piece and Literary Companion*, a tri-weekly published in New York by "Phip Freneau and A. Menut." Vol. 1, May 1, 1797, Vol. 2, 15 or 20 issues.

Taken together these acquisitions constitute a valuable addition to the Library's resources for research.

FRED E. MERWIN

#### BOOKS BY LANE COOPER

Now on exhibition in the rotunda of the Rutgers Library are the books and articles of the distinguished scholar-alumnus, Lane Cooper, Class of 1896, head of the department of comparative literature at Cornell University. Professor Cooper has given the following definition of the place of research and publication in the life of the teacher in a university:

The best scholar, serving his country to the utmost, may be defined as the best man studying the best things in the best way. . . . No one who is not a scholar can be a teacher,

and, other things being equal, the better scholar he is, the better teacher he will be; and the more productive he is in the normal way of published studies, the more refreshing will his personality become to his thirsty students. It is better to drink of a flowing brook than from a stagnant pool; and the doctrine of faith without works has no lasting appeal to a healthy mind.

The mere range and variety of Dr. Cooper's writings are evidence that he has not attempted to justify himself by "faith without works."

His publications may roughly be divided into two parts: the earlier ones having to do with education, and the later, with his own scholarly interests. Most of the articles on education have been collected into the volume *Two Views of Education*. Here also are found the earlier essays on what has become Dr. Cooper's chief scholarly interest, the study of the classics. A similar collection of essays, *Aristotelian Papers*, supplements other longer studies, as well as translations, of Plato and Aristotle. In *Evolution and Repentance*, in addition to the essays bearing directly on the title, appear earlier published articles on English literature and the classics. And in this same volume we find an essay on concordance-making which explains the technique employed in the construction of the impressive concordances to Wordsworth, Horace, Boethius, and Milton.

Professor Cooper's publications are the fruit of his conviction that scholarly publication is the "sign of a deep abiding interest in one's subject and of a desire for the welfare of humanity."

DONALD J. MCGINN