

1907.

SOCIETY FOR THE HISTORY OF THE
GERMANS IN MARYLAND.

Twenty-first Annual Report of the Secretary of the "Society
for the History of the Germans in Maryland."

Baltimore, February 19, 1907.

Mr. President and Gentlemen:

I have the honor herewith to submit the Twenty-first Annual Report of this Society.

The report, though brief, aims to present a clear and comprehensive review of the Society's activities during the year 1906-1907.

MEETINGS.

There were nine (9) monthly meetings—the full limit—held by the Society in the year past; meetings in the months of July, August and September being omitted per section 5 of the By-Laws.

The attendance, in the main, has been most gratifying; thereby giving proof of the unabated interest of the members in the prosecution of the praiseworthy aims and signal achievements of the Society.

The meetings, apart from the current interest incident to the reading and discussion of original papers and the publications of sister historical societies, together with fugitive contributions, original and otherwise, on all manner of subjects, have invariably been enhanced by an all-pervading spirit of good-fellowship and cordiality among the members, being oftentimes interspersed with

highly interesting historical reminiscences and personal experiences of the older members, covering important historic occurrences and personages of the eventful past; of distinguished men and families whose lives and deeds are interwoven with the history of the pioneer Germans of our State, together with their history, traditions and achievements in the intellectual, moral and material development of the city, State and nation.

OFFICERS.

The grim reaper, Father Time, with the swing of his remorseless scythe, has cut a wide swath in the ranks of this Society during the twelve-month past, especially among the officers.

First Vice-President, Prof. Otto Fuchs, Principal Schools of Art and Design of the Maryland Institute, Baltimore, and one of the oldest and most active members of this Society, died March 13, 1906.

The election of a successor to the vacancy thus created was deferred until the annual meeting, Prof. Henry Wood, Second Vice-President, officiating *ad interim*.

Rev. Eduard Huber, Chairman of the Executive Committee of this Society, the duties of which he discharged with singular ability and fidelity for many years; pre-eminent as a theologian, bi-lingual pulpit orator (German and English) educator, scientist, humanitarian; the pioneer who blazed the way for the successful establishment of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Atlantic States; recognized and honored as the foremost figure in the Councils of his denomination; pastor at the time of his demise and for twenty-three years preceding of St. Matthew's Evangelical Church, Baltimore, died July 9, 1906, in the zenith of his rare intellectual, scientific and religious achievements that crowned his life's labors in the vineyard of humanity.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course,
I have kept the faith: Henceforth ----- !"

11Tim. IV, 7

An irreparable loss.

MEMBERSHIP.

At the close of this the Twenty-first Anniversary, there are thirty-six active and six corresponding members on the roster of the Society.

As compared with the report of one year ago there is a net loss of three active members, notwithstanding a gain of one (1) during the year.

The total loss (all by death) being four, and the gain by new membership being one, leaves a net membership of thirty-six active members as compared to thirty-nine contained in last report.

Mr. Eberhard Niemann, merchant, retired, for many years prominent in the commercial life of the City of Baltimore, and one of the oldest members and first treasurer of the Society, died at Wiesbaden, Germany, September 9, 1906.

His remains were interred in the land of his birth, Germany.

Mr. Henry Arens, one of the oldest and most highly esteemed members of the Society, and one of the foremost merchants of the City of Baltimore, with whose commercial interests as importer and exporter, he was prominently identified for more than half a century, died September 13, 1906.

The roster of Corresponding members has also suffered a serious loss in the death of Hon. Carl Schurz.

The extraordinary losses by death in the active membership, especially among the officers, has been unprecedented.

The significant object lesson contained in this mortality list, admonishes more forcibly than words the importance of bringing to the front the young and virile members, if the proud achievements and envious standing of the Society's past is to be maintained in the future.

LIBRARY.

The present condition of the library is, to say the least, highly encouraging, presaging a most promising future.

During the year, covered by this report, there were received, from all sources, the following: Twenty-eight bound volumes; thirty-seven periodical publications, pamphlets, etc., making a total of seventy-eight publications.

Prominent among the noteworthy additions is "Becker's Weltgeschichte, vierzehn Bände, gebunden," gift of Mrs. Rosa Flodt, and A Statistical Atlas of the United States from the Census Library.

The Census Library is now on the Society's exchange list.

Thirty-four volumes, bound, were catalogued and placed on the shelves of the library, this included the binding and cataloguing of two volumes (V and VI) of the Pennsylvania German ; two volumes (III and IV) of "Deutsch-Amerikanische Geschichtsblätter der Deutsch-Amerikanischen Historischen Gesellschaft von Illinois; two volumes (XI and XII) The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, published by the Virginia Historical Society, and two volumes (II and III, new series) German-American Annals, published by the German-American Historical Society.

The removal of the Society's publications, books, newspapers, etc., bound and unbound from the temporary storage in the lofts of the School-house of St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church, and their transfer to the City Library and the Hopkins Place Savings Bank was not consummated until after the demise of the lamented late Chairman of the Executive Committee, Rev. Eduard Huber.

Although arrangements for the removal and transfer of this imposing quantity of the Society's property had been underway and partly executed preceding the fatal illness of Rev. Mr. Huber, they were, for obvious reasons, necessarily suspended until after his death.

To date there has been transferred to the City Library one hundred and fifteen bound volumes of newspapers, made up as follows: Forty-three volumes of "Der Deutsche Correspondent," dating consecutively from March, 1887 to August, 1905, inclusive; thirty-nine volumes of the "Baltimore Journal," from April, 1887, to April, 1905, inclusive; twenty-seven volumes of the "Baltimore Wecker," from January, 1856 to December, 1872, and six bound volumes of "Die Biene."

Apart from the expense and effort entailed in binding and handling this formidable pile of gigantic volumes, their storage

and safe-keeping had become a serious problem, solved, fortunately, by their acceptance by the City Librarian, through the kindly offices of the Society's President, Louis P. Hennigshausen, Esq.

Consequently, in view and appreciation of these untoward conditions, together with the passing of their control and ownership into other hands, it was decided inexpedient to longer continue this unnecessary drain on the Society's resources.

As a result of this conclusion on the part of the officers of the Society, the generous publisher of "Der Deutsche Correspondent," Col Edward Raine, and the equally generous "Baltimore Journal," through its manager, Mr. August Gisin, were at once notified to discontinue the further delivery of their respective newspapers after July 1, 1906

The action of the officers of the Society was approved by the Executive Committee at the regular monthly meeting held October 16, 1906.

The removal of the following publications completed the transfer of the remainder of the Society's property to the Hopkins Place Savings Bank: One thousand and sixty-three unbound copies of Annual Reports for 1 to 14; thirty-one bound volumes containing Annual Reports 1 to 6; forty-six Catalogues of the Society's Library; seventy-five Pamphlets "German-American Day; one hundred and five Pamphlets "In Memoriam of Christian Ax," and two hundred and and ninety-two Pamphlets, reprints "German-American Turner Lyric," by Prof. M. D. Learned.

In closing this report, I would indeed be remiss in duty if I failed to revert to the all-important question covering the extraordinary losses sustained of late by the Society in its membership, without a compensating offset in gain, or a seeming effort to repair the loss.

This decline in the membership is, unquestionably, a serious menace, if not an ominous portend.

It should appeal to every member interested in promoting and actively prosecuting the object and praiseworthy aims of the Society, and safeguarding its future.

There is no valid reason whatever why this Society, like sister societies elsewhere, should not, in a community like ours,

have an active membership running up into the hundreds, and extending the scope of its activities into the counties of the State, especially Frederick, Washington and Carroll.

The fires of an enthusiastic inspiration should be re-kindled, and the old spirit awakened, thereby permitting the good work so auspiciously inaugurated twenty-one years ago to be successfully carried forward, and aligned with the demands of duty imposed by our Constitution and By-Laws.

It is obvious that the remedy is within reach. The additions to and steady growth of the library will, ere long, justify the issuing of a new Catalogue.

The demand for the publications of the Society attests more eloquently than words their appreciated value in contemporaneous historical research.

Let the good work go on.

J. LEONARD HOFFMAN,

Secretary.