Catalogue of the Library of the Massachusetts Historical Society

... Deane Charles
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CATALOGUE

OF THE

LIBRARY

OF THE

Massachusetts Historical Society.

Francis P. Morse

Vol. I. A-L.

BOSTON:
PRINTED FOR THE SOCIETY.

M.DCCCLIX.
Boston:
Printed by John Wilson and Son.
22, School Street.
THE want of a complete Catalogue of the Books and Manuscripts contained in the Library of the Massachusetts Historical Society has long been felt by the Members and others who have had occasion to consult these works. To supply this deficiency, the following Catalogue — the third published since the institution of the Society — has been prepared by the Assistant Librarian, John Appleton, M.D., under the supervision and direction of the Standing Committee.

It appears from the Records of the Society, that on the 29th of October, 1793, a Catalogue of the Library being reported, the Librarian, Hon. George Richards Minot, was authorized to procure a manuscript copy to be made; but no immediate action was taken with regard to its publication. It was, however, printed by Samuel Hall, in 1796, in the form of a pamphlet of forty pages octavo; the titles, which are generally very brief, being arranged in single columns, and numbering rather more than one thousand. This Catalogue, as we are informed in a note, "does not include unbound books and pamphlets; nor European publications, except they have some connection with American history; nor a large collection of newspapers."
Though the accessions to the Library from the date of this first Catalogue were numerous and valuable, no other was printed for a period of fifteen years.

The Rev. Timothy Alden, Jun., who had been since 1807 the efficient Librarian of the Society, resigned his office on the 26th of October, 1809, when the thanks of the Society were voted him "for his extraordinary services and eminent labors" in that capacity. His successor, the Rev. Joseph McKean, D.D., announced, on the 25th of April, 1811, the reception of a Manuscript Catalogue from Mr. Alden, which had been compiled by the latter during his connection with the Library.

The thanks of the Society were voted to Mr. Alden for the gift of this acceptable work; and immediate measures were taken to secure its publication, under the supervision of the Librarian and Rev. Dr. John Eliot. It was accordingly issued, in October, 1811, from the press of John Eliot, Jun., in octavo form, printed in double columns, and comprising ninety-six pages; including appendices of manuscripts, tracts, and maps; with lists of the preachers of election, convention, ordination, installation, and funeral sermons; and of orators, and authors of addresses, before the most important associations in the Commonwealth. There are probably upwards of four thousand titles and references included in Mr. Alden's Catalogue, which may be supposed to comprise all the books, pamphlets, newspapers, maps, charts, and manuscripts in the Library at the period of publication; the titles of many works which were published after the removal of the compiler from the State, being incorporated, probably, by the Committee of Supervision.
The present Catalogue has been arranged, substantially, in accordance with the plan now generally approved; though it differs from some which have preceded it, in the greatly increased number of cross-references, both to subjects and titles, and from others in the arrangement of these references in the same alphabet with the principal titles, and not in a separate index. On account of the prolixity of a large number of the older titles, it has been, in many cases, inconvenient to print them at length; and in order to give, in the space allotted to a single work, their general form and language, it has been necessary, in some instances, to make slight changes of phraseology.

Books published under the authors' names, and those published anonymously, the writers of which are ascertained, may be found under the names of such authors, arranged in alphabetical order, without reference to the date of publication, except in regard to serial works. Other anonymous publications are placed under the head of the subject, or under the first word of the title; articles and prepositions being rejected. It has not been deemed necessary to indicate omissions by dotted lines or in any other particular manner; the general rule having been adopted of inserting only the first part of titles which would occupy too much space if printed in full. The number of pages, when less than one hundred, is invariably given. When several copies of the same edition of any work are in the possession of the Society, the number of such copies is indicated; but different editions are described in separate titles.

This Catalogue includes all the books, pamphlets, manuscripts, and maps in the general Library of the Society on
the first of January, 1859; together with such of the more recent accessions as could be registered in their proper place during the course of the printing. The books belonging to the Dowse Library, numbering about five thousand volumes, are comprised in a separate Catalogue, which was printed by direction of Mr. Dowse, and presented by him to the Society in 1856.

The undersigned — a Special Committee appointed by the Standing Committee to superintend the publication of the Catalogue — have reason to acknowledge the valuable services and bibliographical attainments of the Assistant Librarian; and they believe it will be found that he has faithfully executed the work assigned to him.

CHANDLER ROBBINS.
CHARLES DEANE.

LIBRARY OF THE MASS. HISTORICAL SOCIETY,
Boston, Sept. 17, 1859.