THE LAW SOCIETIES.

The Associations of Philadelphia Lawvers in the Past-The Names of Those Who were Connected with Them - The Present Law Academy-Its Condition and Prespects.

In the olden time, when Philadelphia was the seat of government for the whole United States, the courts of this city were looked upon, from all quarters, as models, and as the head of all legal proceeding. Action in any of our courts, whether Federal, State, or county, was a precedent for proceedings in any court throughout the land. The very best legal talent of the whole land was then here gathered together, nor has the good legal name which was then earned entirely forsaken us as yet. A Philadelphia lawyer is yet a synonymous term for all that is talented, learned, and successful, as well as sharp, in the profession.

At this time, or immediately preceding it, just after the Constitution of the United States had been adopted, a party of young disciples of the law met together for the purpose of forming a society that should have for its aim the improvement of its members in all things appertaining to the law. This society they formed, and the end they sought was afterwards well accomplished. Its members all became well known to fame, and helped to obtain the good legal name which the city had while a Federal capital. This association embraced among its members the names of Bushrod Washington, Richard Stockton, Samuel Sitgreaves, William Rawle, Edward Tilgman, and others who afterwards took an active part in political and national life, and became greatly distinguished. Many of their descendants are still practising in this city the profession of their fathers.

This society continued for some time with various changes and modifications, with a rotation in membership, as the older members got into extended business, with no need for outside improvement, new and younger members taking their places, until the year 1800, when its existence came to an end, there being at that time but a very small membership and but little interest from those who still held to the organization. The principal upholding members had before that time been called away from its mimic duties by others more real in political and professional life.

For five years from this time there was no organization of Philadelphia lawyers of any kind, but in 1805, on a Saturday evening, the 20th of December, the old association was revived under a new name. It was then called the Law Society, and the reorganizers were Bayse Newcomb, Clement C. Biddle, Joseph R. Ingersoll, Samuel H. Jacobs, John Lowber, Magnus M. Murry, Philip Nicklan, Edward Tilghman, and Samuel Wilcox. These, after being regularly organized, adopted a new consritution and by-laws, elected officers, and appointed committees. The minutes of this first meeting state that the association was for the purpose of improvement in legal knowledge and in public speaking. The evening of meeting was fixed for Thursday. Bayse Newcomb was elected President, John Drinker, Vice-President. Samuel H. Jacobs, Secretary, and Magnus M. Murry, Treasurer. When the new constitution was prepared the following persons signed it, in addition to those already mentioned:-G. R. Hopkins, Jr., William Grinell, William Milner, P. H. Nicklan, B. Newcomb, Jr., John Edwards, Jr., Thomas Darrach, John C. Lowber, E. Spencer Sergeant, William Delaney, Thomas Kittera, and Thomas F. Gordon.

This society continued until 1812. Those who founded it are now all dead. Many of them died young, though several lived long enough to attain great eminence. The oldest member of all lived the longest, with one exception. This was Bayes Newcomb, who died in 1850, at the age of eighty. J. R. Ingersoll, who was at one time our Minister to the Court of St. James, was the one exception, and he died lately. Of those who were added to the society up to the year 1812, in number about one hundred, less than a dozen survive. Many names were included in this hundred of high honor in our midst.

This society, as well as all the others of the same kind, both before and after, was for the improvement of the younger members of the bar, the older members withdrawing as their business grew upon them. By the former class the want of such an organization was greatly felt after it had been disbanded, and several efforts were made to re-establish it. But it was not until September, 1817, that another institution of a similar description was founded, and this was done by members of the bar newly admitted, and by law students in the offices of the members of the profession. It has been said with truth that many of the men who won honors at the bar during the ensuing twentyfive years, some of whom are still heads of the profession, were the direct fruits of this organi-

The roll at first consisted of Richard Biddle, James C. Biddle, H. J. Williams, William M. Meredith, Thomas Dunlap, David Paul Brown, Bloomfield McElvain, John N. Conyngham, John M. Read, John K. Kane, Francis Hopkinson, Duncan S. Walker, Joseph Tate, Thomas M. Pettit, George M. Stroud, Persifor F. Smith, George Selden, M. R. Sayers, John Musgrave, John Wurts, R. Dillon, Drake Travanian, B. Dallas, Arthur Middleton, Henry Middleton, D. J. Desmond, Jonathan Fowle, T. A. Budd, and Robert Bethell. Of these, Richard Biddle, the brother of Nicholas Biddle, became the most successful lawyer of Pittsburg, where he died in 1850. Sheldon, Dallas, and Walker also removed to the same place, where they became eminent men. Pettit became a member of the Legislature-which, by-the-way, is no such great honor nowadays-also Attorney-General of the State, United States District Attorney, and President of the District Court. Stroud was also a Legislature-man, and, except for two years, has been Judge of the District Court for a quarter of a century and over. This position he yet holds. Conyngham was another Legislatureman, and also a member of Congress, and is now President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne county. Like Judge Stroud. he has held the position for a term of years. Tate went to Virginia, his native place, and became Mayor of Richmond. Dunlap left his practice to become President of the United States Bank, but returned to it on the failure of that concern. Arthur Middleton became Secretary of Legation to Russia, and Henry Middleton held the similar office in Spain. James C. Biddle was well known in public life. Meredith was United States District Attorney and Secretary of the National Treasury. Kane was a member of the Legislature, Attorney-General of Pennsylvania, and Judge of the United States District Court. John M. Read was sent to the Legislature, was Attorney-General of the State, and District Attorney of the United States. John Wurts was a member of Congress, but abandoned a public career for the Presidency of the Union Canal Company of New York. Persifor F. Smith went to New Orleans, and afterwards became a General with Taylor in the

1 1825 this society, after running successfully

during the intervening time, was merged into the Law Academy of Philadelphia, of which Peter J. Duponceau was then elected Provost. This still exists under most favorable auspices. It has turned out many good lawyers. It holds its meetings weekly, and its exercises consist of mock arguments, and sometimes of an essay, read by one of the judges of the courts. While nearly all the present members of the bar have passed through the academy in some way or other, and still retain their connection by paying the yearly dues, the organization is kept up by the younger men who have just been admitted to the bar or who are about to enter. The officers are elected annually. The place of meeting is the new room of the Court of Quarter Sessions. The legal profession generally take a great interest in its welfare, and do everything in their power to promote its interests. It has now been kept running with unabated interest for forty-five years, and its prospects are good for the future. Its influence on the standard of our Philadelphia bar is certainly appreciable, and with the right care could be made much more so. To the young candidate for legal honors it is of the greatest importance, giving him a chance to practice in everything appertaining to legal business, before making his appearance in the public courtroom. An institution on this plan is of benefit in every department of business or professional Such associations have, or should have, for their end and aim the attainment of the highest excellence, and the attainment of such excellence in any department is to the best interests of all.

AMERICAN BOOKS IN ENGLAND .- A London letter to the Boston Advertiser says:-The Westminster Review in the new number vouchsafes us a paper on American literature, in which panegyries and patronizing conde-ecension are oddly mixed. "There is not a score of names in American literature," says the writer, "that may be placed in the front ranks among poets, historians, and novelists, and there is not one to vie with the leading names in the Old World." One expects these things at regular intervals, but somehow they produce no effect. Reviewers may pronounce as they will, American books compete vigorously with English ones on this side of the Atlantic. Every bookstall at a railway station; every circulating library at a watering-place, every one of those dear old book-tents at a country fair—has a strong detachment of volumes which are above all things American. This popularity of American literature unquestionably increases, and extends in fiction from "The Last of the Mohicans" to "The Gates Ajar." In English boardingschools Cooper is more read than Scott, and Longfellow, throughout the land, is nearly as much seen as the Bible. If provision could be made for keeping a constant supply at a reasonable price, the Atlantic Monthly and the North American Review would meet with numerous purchasers. At a large shop on Ludgate Hill-a famous thoroughfarethe stock consists of little else than cheap editions of American books in paper covers. You may there buy "The House with Seven Gables" for ninepence and "The Spy" for sixpence. The place is not kept by Americans, nor do the people appear to have any special American connection. They seem to rely upon the amazing fondness of the present appears to prove the present appears to t sent generation for books that deal with American life or possess the characteristics of American thought. If there were only an international copyright, what "damages" some folks on your side would get from this!

THE MOABITE STONE. -At the British Association, in the department of Ethnology and Anthropology, a paper on "The relation of the Ancient Moabites to neighboring nations, as disclosed in the newly discovered Moabite Stone," was lately read by Rev. C. D. Guis-burg, LL. D. He said that the inscription on the stone read almost like a chapter in the Bible, and when it was borne in mind that this curious relic dated back nine hundred years before Christ, it would be seen that the inscription was older than two-thirds of the Old Testament. Out of twelve or fifteen Moabite cities mentioned in the Old Testament eleven were enumerated in the inscrip-Respecting the relation of the ancient Moabites to the neighboring nations, he had come to the conclusion that at the period indicated an organized temple-service existed among Jews out of Palestine, and that the service must have been very much akin to the service of the Moabites; that nine hundred years before Christ the word "Jehovah," which was afterwards so much avoided by the Jews, was so much upon the lips of every Jew that it passed over to a neighboring nation; that the language of the inscription, which was infinitely more simple than two thirds of the Old Testament, showed that the Moabites had attained to a high state of cultivation; that in military prowess they were superior to the Jews; and that from them the ancient Greeks and Romans and we ourselves had derived what had become our alphabet. In the course of the discussion which followed, Professor Rawlinson objected to some of the conclusions of Dr. Guisburg. He claimed for the Phoenicians the merit of discoveries attributed to the Moabites.

A PUBLIC DINNER IN FLU. - A public dinner in Fiji is a very great affair, and you must take care how you behave at it. All the guests bear a hand in feeding the oven or stirring the pot. A floor of clean leaves is covered with cocoa-pots, on which are heaped baked taro and yams "to the amount of several tons." The next tier is formed of vakalolo, or puddings in green leaves, well oiled. Surmounting this pedestal are the baked turtles, or two or three hogs baked whole. On one occasion there were fifty tons of yams, fifteen tons of sweet pudding, seventy turtles, five cart-loads of yaqona, and two hundred tons of uncooked yams. One of the puddings measured twentyone feet in circumference. A Lord Mayor's feast in Guildhall is mere fooling to this. And the turtle, too! But if you have the honor to be invited to a feast in Fiji, you must be cautious. A chief, having eaten a cocoanut without offering a bit to one of his followers, the latter went over to the enemy, and in the next battle singled out his former master. He asked to be spared. "Do you not," was the stern reply, "remember the nut? For that you must die." And then came the fatal blow. Another chief sat down with his father-in-law; but on passing a dish, a cooked guana, he broke off part of its tail. "A dark scowl covered his relative's face," and at the earliest opportunity he slew his son-in-law, having first told him that he could not put up with broken tail .- Leisure Hours.

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502,489-32

\$1,456,709-85

PREMIUMS MARKED OFF as earned from November 1, 1869, to October 31, 1870:— On Marine and Inland Risks. \$880,746-79 On Fire Risks...... 151,548 6

\$1,032,295.46 Interest during the same period—Salvages, etc..... 152,500 98

LOSSES, EXPENSES, etc., during the year as

Expenses

\$875,126 97

\$309,669-4T ASSETS OF THE COMPANY
November 1, 1870.
\$300,090 United States Six Per Cent. Loan (lawful money)

200,000 State of Pennsylvania Six Per
Cent. Loan.

200,000 City of Philadelphia Six Per
Cent. Loan (exempt from \$333,375 90 214,000 00 204,162:50

Cent. Loan (exempt from Tax).

164,000 State of New Jersey Six Per Cent. Loan.

20,000 Pennsylvania Railroad First Mortgage Six Per Cent. Bonds..

25,000 Pennsylvania Railroad Second Mortgage Six Per Cent. Bonds..

25,000 Western Penn. Railroad Mortgage Six Per Cent. Bonds. 188,920.00 20,700.00 25,250.00 gage Six Per Cent. Bonds (Penn. R. R. guarantee)..... 30,000 State of Tennessee Five Per 20,000-00 18,000 00 4,200-00

30,000 State of Tennessee Five Per Cent. Loan.

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Market Value .. \$1,293,557-50 Cost, \$1,264,447-34. \$1,260,150 Par. 93,375.47

Cash..... \$1 820,727 TT PHILADELPHIA, Nov. 9, 1870. The Board of Directors have this day declared a CASH DIVIDEND OF TEN PER CENT. on the CAPITAL STOCK, and SIX PER CENT. interest on the SCRIP of the Company, payable on and after the 1st of December proximo, free of National and

They have also declared a SCRIP DIVIDEND of TWENTY-FIVE PER CENT. on the EARNED PREMIUMS for the year ending October 31, 1870 certificates of which will be issued to the parties entitled to the same, on and after the lat o ber proximo, free of National and State Taxes. They have ordered, also, that the SCRIP CRR-TIFICATES OF PROFITS of the Company, for the

year ending October 31, 1866, be redeemed in CASH.

at the Office of the Company, on and after 1st of December proximo, all interest thereon to cease on that day. By a provision of the Charter, all Certificates of Scrip not presented for redemption within five years after public notice that they will be redeemed. shall be forfeited and cancelled on the books of the

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