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LOUISIANA. PROCEEDINGS AND
REPORTS, 1916, VOLUME IX**

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LOUISIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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New Orleans, Louisiana

Proceedings and Reports, 1916

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The Louisiana Historical Society
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INTRODUCTION.

THE YEAR'S WORK.

The past year in retrospection presents an even record of faithful work and steady growth. The monthly meetings have been held regularly; the papers have been of uniform interest, many of them drawn from personal memory or from family archives, showing that the Society has at last touched those vital authoritative sources in making connection with past history, a consummation for which it has been patiently hoping and waiting many years. Outstanding among the events to be recorded with thanksgiving is the publication by the Society of a quarterly, an undertaking that has been made possible by the gracious act of the Legislature, placing the official records of the Society in the Department of State Public Printing. This relieves the Society of a noticeable expense, while it insures the regular publication of an accumulation of documents of rare historical value that have been lying dead, as it were, in the Society's archives without hope of resurrection. A Committee of Publication, of which the Hon. John Dymond is chairman, has prepared the first number of the Quarterly, which will be placed in the hands of the members before these pages are printed. Of the present Annual, while no other introduction or recommendation other than a cursory glance over its contents is necessary, the Secretary cannot forbear calling particular attention to the hitherto unpublished notes on "General Wilkinson's Memorial," and "Miro's and Navarro's Dispatch, No. 13." Also, to the interesting paper, "Some Forgotten Treks," by Mr. Milner, a member of the Society, whose comprehensive study of the old highways of the country is a valuable contribution to the existing historical and geographical data, concerning the development of the Southern half of the North American continent.

The long and able report of the Corresponding Secretary, at the end of the volume, giving the facts and figures that serve as the skeleton upon which the Society's activities are moulded makes any further comment unnecessary.

GRACE KING, Secretary.

February, 1917.

MEETING OF FEBRUARY, 1916.

The Louisiana Historical Society held its regular meeting on Wednesday evening, February 6, at the Cabildo. All the officers were present. The minutes of the previous meeting were read by Miss King and approved by the Society.

Miss King then begged the attention of the Society for a few minutes while she read the report of Mr. William Price, the archivist, as to the work he had accomplished in the card indexing of the historical documents contained in the "black boxes," as they are familiarly designated, confided by the State to the custody of the Society.

The report, an able and comprehensive paper, was listened to with the extreme interest that its importance demanded. At its close an informal discussion took place among the officers of the Society, in which the discontinuance of this splendid work for want of funds was deplored, and the hope was expressed by all that the Society would not supinely submit to circumstances in so grave a matter, but make an effort to overcome them and pursue this interrupted task, which seemed almost a sacred one and is, beyond doubt, an imperative duty.

Mr. T. P. Thompson registered himself as unequivocally in favor of devoting the funds of the Society to such historical work, rather than expending them on banquets, celebrations and monumental schemes that appealed, it is true, to popular taste, but did not further the object for which the Society was founded. His words were impressive and produced a marked effect on the members.

Mr. Dymond proposed that the matter be put into the hands of the Archives Committee, and that the report read by Miss King should be printed in the forthcoming volume of the Society. The proposition was embodied in a resolution which was voted upon and unanimously carried.†

Mr. Cusachs in a few happy words presented the essayist of the evening, the Rev. Father O'Brien, as a member of the Order of Jesuits, which had contributed so nobly and heroically to the history of his country, particularly that of Louisiana.

† *Note.*—Published in the Annual for 1916.

Father O'Brien's paper covered the history of the founding of the Jesuit College in the Parish of St. Landry. It was replete with interesting local details and character color, and will serve as a valued reference to the future students of the early history and educational progress of the State.

The Society testified its appreciation by a vote of thanks.

Mr. Cusachs then presented to the Society an old silk flag of a Louisiana regiment. It had come into the possession of and was presented to the Society by Mr. Ed. Curtis, the once well-known auctioneer of this city, who was now living and doing business in San Francisco. The flag was gratefully accepted as a precious relic.

Mr. W. O. Hart, an indefatigable collector of historical documents and souvenirs, presented to the Museum, in the name of Mr. H. Duvalle, a quaint reminder of a well-remembered episode in the city's past. This was a printed cotton handkerchief fabricated as a souvenir of the famous Sullivan-Fitzsimmons prize fight, whose prevention in New Orleans almost caused a revolution in judicial and political circles. It was eventually held on the lake shore in Mississippi.

Mr. Duvalle also donated an old flag of the Continental Guards, a more pleasing souvenir of the city's past, which was gratefully accepted by the Society.

Mr. Hart read an excerpt from the Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, describing the banquet given in Ghent by the civic notabilities in honor of the termination of the Treaty of Ghent, on February 7, 1716, by the English and American Commission, the treaty that has insured peace between the two great English-speaking nations until this day. Mr. Hart brought also for the consideration of the Society a copy of the Times-Picayune reprinting the account of the opening of the St. Charles Hotel in New Orleans sixty-three years ago. As the hour was late, he waived the reading of it.

After the election of new members the meeting was adjourned.

SKETCH OF THE EXPULSION OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS FROM COLONIAL LOUISIANA

Paper read before the Louisiana Historical Society, July 21, 1915
By J. J. O'Brien, S. J.

Before coming to the subject of this paper it will be necessary to make a brief survey of the work of the Jesuits in the ancient colony of Louisiana. Some historians take for granted that the Jesuits came to the southern portion of the colony only in 1726. This is far from correct, as it is an incontrovertible fact that in 1700 the Jesuit priest, Father Paul du Rhu, accompanied Iberville on the latter's second voyage to the colony and that this same priest labored first at Biloxi (Ocean Springs), and afterward at Mobile. In 1702 Father Peter Donge, S. J., was sent to Mobile to assist Father du Rhu; and Father Joseph de Limoges, S. J., was at this period doing missionary work among the Houmas Indians, who dwelt on the east bank of the Mississippi about seven leagues above the Red River. At the end of the year 1703 the work of these three Jesuit fathers in lower Louisiana came to an abrupt close. This was brought about by the injudicious desire of the priests of the Seminary of Quebec to have an establishment at the small settlement of Mobile. In order to prevent any friction arising from the presence of two sets of missionaries in the same district, the Jesuit superiors decided to vacate the lower Louisiana field and, accordingly, recalled their subjects to France.

Three years after the founding of New Orleans (1718), the Jesuit Father, Pierre François X. Charlevoix was sent by royal authority to investigate and report on the general condition, temporal and spiritual, of the Colony of Louisiana. On his return to France and, apparently because of his report, the civil government of Louisiana was cut off from that of Canada, with which it had hitherto been united. The Company of the West, by an ordinance of May 16, 1722 (professedly approved by Bishop St. Vallier of Quebec, under whose spiritual jurisdiction Louisiana was), divided the Colony of Louisiana into three districts. New Orleans and west of the Mississippi went to the Capuchians; the Illinois country, or upper Louisiana, to the Jesuits, and the Mobile district to the Carmelites. Each religious

order was given parish rights only within its own district; nor could the priests of one order perform any ecclesiastical functions within the territory allotted to the others without their sanction. The headquarters of the Capuchin territory were to be at New Orleans, those of the Carmelites at Mobile, and the Jesuits at Kaskaskia, where Father Joseph Kereben, S. J., was superior.

This arrangement of districts did not last long, for the Carmelites were unable to supply subjects for the Mobile territory, which was accordingly handed over to the Capuchins, while the care of all the Indian missions in Louisiana was given over to the Jesuits. On the 20th of February, 1726, a new agreement, by which that of 1722 was annulled, was made between the Society of Jesus and the Company of the West, and received the King's approbation on the 17th of August of that year.

In 1725 Father Kereben, S. J., was succeeded as Superior of the Jesuits of Louisiana Territory by Father Nicolas Ignatius de Beaubois, S. J., who very soon after his appointment to office visited New Orleans and, toward the close of the year 1725, sailed for France. Before leaving for Europe he selected a temporary residence in New Orleans, for he was already made aware that the Company of the West wished the Jesuits to take up a permanent abode in New Orleans. The site of the temporary residence was on the southeast corner of Bienville and Chartres streets and is so marked in a reliable map dated 1728.

The new agreement between the Company of the West and the Society of Jesus, to which Father de Beaubois was a party, had many features, of which the following, according to Martin, are the chief.

The Company of the West agreed to bring Jesuit priests and lay brothers on the following conditions: Each priest was to receive a salary of 600 livres (\$133.35), with an additional 200 livres for each of the first five years, and 450 livres for his outfit. A chapel or church was to be erected at the expense of the Company for the Jesuits at each mission station attended to by them in the colony. Lay brothers were to have their passage paid, receive a bounty of 150 livres (\$33.35), but no salary. By another clause it was agreed that the Jesuits on their arrival at