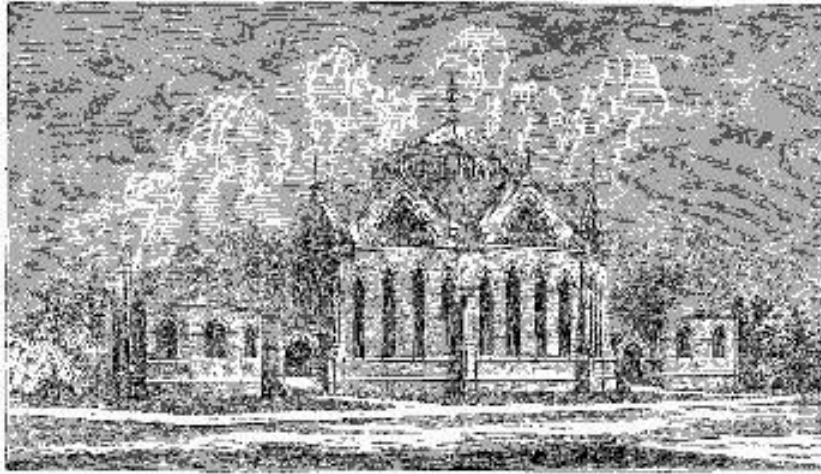


# 1876 Libraries at Princeton described in the Centennial survey of US Libraries

United States. Office of Education. *Public libraries in the United States of America; their history, condition, and management.* [Washington, DC, 1876]



LIBRARY OF THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

[illustration on page 101]

page 99

## COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY, PRINCETON, N. J.

The library of the College of New Jersey is probably of nearly equal age with the college itself, and that dates from 1746. In a notice of it, written probably by President Davies in 1760, it is said to have been "formed almost entirely of the donations of several public spirited gentlemen on both sides of the Atlantic." Among these might have been mentioned Jonathan Belcher, whose name the college would have borne had he permitted it; and who, dying as governor of New Jersey in 1757, left to the library 474 volumes. Classics and folios abounded in the mansions of those days, and the intellectual character of the collection,

relatively to its whole mass, may have stood higher then than since. The first printed catalogue, printed at Woodbridge, N.J., in 1760, consists of 36 pages, small quarto, and gives the titles of nearly 1,300 volumes, 231 being folios.

March 6, 1802, the interior of Nassau Hall, where the books were then lodged, was burned, and it was for some years supposed that the entire library was destroyed. A few books are now known to have escaped, viz, certain folios of Calasio, and an edition of Calvin in eleven folios, Amsterdam, 1671, still in the library, with their titles in the catalogue of 1760.

Public generosity was appealed to for the means to replace the building; and records still in existence show that \$32,000 in money were subscribed in the colonies. To restore the library, also, many noble volumes, still bearing the names of their donors, came from literary celebrities in this country and in Great Britain. Among these were John Lowell, Dugald Stewart, and Andrew Dalzel. To insure the safety of these new treasures, the library was placed in the building in which are the geological museum and Philadelphian Hall, and, remaining there for half a century, escaped the flames which, in March, 1855, again destroyed Nassau Hall. Its increasing bulk finally crowded it out of the museum building, and it was removed to its original lodging, where it stood from 1865 to 1873.

For nearly seventy years of this century the sole revenue of the library was derived from a tax of \$1 a term on the students. Its increase was therefore extremely slow. In 1812 the librarian reported 4,000 volumes in the collection. In the same year the library of President Smith, containing also the books of President Witherspoon, was bought for the college. In 1823 the number of volumes was estimated at 7,000, and that number is given in the catalogue of 1831. In 1836, James Madison, an alumnus of 1771, left the library a legacy of \$1,000. This was the only considerable gift of money made to the library previous to 1868. Several noteworthy donations of books were, however, received. James Lenox, of New York, has presented many valuable books, among them the first three polyglots of the Holy Scriptures. Mr. Obadiah Rich, while resident in London in 1834, procured the bestowment by the Record Commission of the British government of its publications, 86 volumes, folio, and 24 volumes, octavo. The legislative documents of the United States, continued in an almost unbroken series from the beginning of the Twentieth Congress to the end of the Forty-second, make about 1,000 volumes. Matthew Newkirk, of Philadelphia, gave the great *Description de l'Égypte*. The family of W. D. Beattie presented 200 volumes of classical and other valuable works; and the libraries of Professors Hope and Giger, numbering several hundred volumes each, were given to the college in 1859 and 1865.

In 1868, the late John C. Green, of New York, presented to the college \$100,000 under the name of the Elizabeth fund, in honor of his

mother. From the income of this fund the library was to receive \$3,000 a year. Among other large additions thus made is the library of Trendelenburg, of Berlin, consisting of nearly 10,000 volumes and pamphlets, purchased by the faculty for \$5,000. It contains a collection of 185 volumes of old editions of Aristotle and his commentators, with a large number of modern essays on his philosophy; and also several hundred volumes of comparatively rare classics.

By recent gifts from John S. Pierson, of New York, the library possesses 1,000 volumes on the late civil war. The entire library now numbers 29,500 volumes.

The two society libraries contain together 12,000 volumes.

The library is open five days in the week for the exchange of books, and at almost all hours of the day for purposes of study.

The necessity of a separate and safer building for the library having been for some time apparent, Mr. John C. Green, of New York, in 1872-'73, erected an elegant stone building, at a cost of \$120,000, and presented it to the college for library purposes. It is an octagonal building, with wings to the east and west, 140 feet in its entire length, with a central elevation of about 50 feet. The centre of the hall is occupied by a platform 12 feet in diameter, upon which is a circular desk for the librarian. Between this and the alcoves, which are ranged against the walls, is a passage way, 9 feet in width. The capacity of the two floors of alcoves is 108,000 volumes.

At the time of the erection of the building, a fund was provided for the support of the librarian.

*Library of the Cleiosophie Society.*

This society dates from the year 1765, the nineteenth from the foundation of the college. It began with seven members, of whom the most distinguished in after life were Oliver Ellsworth, second Chief-Justice of the United States, and Luther Martin, attorney-general of Maryland. The library now contains about 4,000 volumes. Perhaps the department which is best supplied is that of essays, including literary, miscellaneous, and periodical criticism; but the historical collection leaves little to be desired. The reading room of the society is well supplied with magazines, reviews, and newspapers.

*Library of the American Whig Society.*

This society was organized in 1769, and three years afterwards included among its members, James Madison, fourth President of the United States. In connection with Clio, its rival, it has furnished many public men to the country. These two societies own buildings precisely alike, situated on the eastern verge of the college campus. Each building is two stories high; the library and reading room being on the ground floor, and the halls for literary exercises above. The gift of \$4,000 by Commodore Stockton has enabled the Whig Society to

collect a larger and better library than its elder sister, and it numbers at present 8,000 volumes. The catalogue shows that at every period of its history the society has bought good books. The collections in the departments of poetry and art are especially good. There is also a valuable collection of law books, and the best histories of every country. Fourteen reviews and literary periodicals are regularly taken.

### Seminary library described

#### THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, PRINCETON, N. J.

Prior to 1821 the seminary possessed no regular library. In that year a union took place between the Associate Reformed Church and the Presbyterian Church in the United States, one of the terms of which specified that the theological library then belonging to the former, mainly consisting of books left by Rev. Jobu M. Mason, D. D., "shall be transferred and belong to the seminary at Princeton." In accordance with this more than 2,400 volumes, forming that collection, were received at Princeton in 1822. Subsequently, however, a small party of dissenters from that action of the Associate Reformed Church advanced a claim to the ownership of these books. Amicable litigation followed; and at last, in 1838—the chancellor of the State of New Jersey having allowed the claim—they were removed to Newburgh, N. Y. The friends of the seminary at once came to its relief, and by liberal donations laid the foundation of the present library. Prominent among these benefactors was James Lenox, of New York City, who has not only enriched the library by a long succession of gifts in books, but, observing

the need of more secure protection for them, built the beautiful Gothic building known as Lenox Hall, completed in 1844, and since occupied by the theological library.

Dr. Archibald Alexander acted as librarian till his death in 1851; Dr. William Henry Green assumed the trust when he became professor of Oriental literature in that year; and Dr. Charles Aiken, when he was elected professor of Christian ethics and apologetics in 1872.

From the report of the trustees in 1851, it appears that the library then contained only 9,000 volumes. In 1852 the trustees represented to the general assembly of the church the need of regular grants for the increase of the library; but the yearly reports still exhibited a slow rate of growth. In 1853, the Rev. W. B. Sprague, of Albany, N. Y., gave to the library a remarkable collection of pamphlets, mainly theological. The 1,200 volumes of this collection probably include 20,000 titles, and consist of long series of sermons preached at the elections in several States, on fast, thanksgiving, ordination, funeral, and other occasions; orations and addresses before literary societies and at college commencements; reports of benevolent associations in this country and in England; discussions of social questions; arguments elicited by theological controversies in both countries; and literature of the civil war.

In 1855 Mr. Samuel Agnew presented 730 volumes, mainly theological.

In 1861 R. L. and A. Stuart, of New York City, purchased and presented to the library the rare collection, consisting of 3,400 volumes, left by Professor Joseph Addison Alexander; and in 1862, gave \$10,000 in United States bonds, yielding \$600 a year. They have also made valuable gifts of books in every subsequent year; in 1868, the family of the late Rev. John M. Krebs gave his library, consisting of 1,147 volumes; in 1871, 824 volumes of miscellaneous books came to the library from the collection of the late Stephen Collins, M. D., of Baltimore.

Many other benefactors have at various times enriched the library with their gifts.

The number of volumes reported in the library in 1875 was 26,779. Among them are the four great polyglots of the Holy Scriptures, the Complutensian, 5 volumes, folio, printed at Alcalá in 1509-17; the Antwerp, 8 volumes, folio, 1569-72; the Paris, 10 volumes, folio, 1628-45; and the London, 6 volumes, folio, 1657; the *Annales Ecclesiastici* of Baronius and others, 42 volumes, folio; the works of Luther, Calvin, and Melancthon in many editions; the Benedictine and other editions of many of the Fathers, and the ancient impressions or modern reprints of worthies, confessors, and martyrs; the *Codex Vaticanus Novi Testamenti*, folio, Rome, 1857-71; the *Codex Vaticanus Veteris Testamenti*, published at Rome by Vercellone and Cozza, in 4 volumes, quarto, 1872; the *Codex Alexandrinus Veteris Testamenti*, by Woide and Baber, 4 volumes, folio, London, 1786 and 1816-28; the *Codex Bezae Cantabrigien-*

sis, by Kipling, 2 volumes, folio, London, 1793; and the Codex Sinaiticus, by Tischendorf, 4 volumes, quarto, St. Petersburg, 1862. In addition to these is the splendid succession of twelve fac similes of palimpsests and other ancient manuscripts of the Scriptures, published also by Tischendorf, in quarto, between 1845 and 1870. These are the gifts of the Messrs. Stuart, and to these they have lately added the splendid fac simile of the Utrecht Psalter.