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A

SHORT ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIBRARY.

1731 THE foundation of the present institution was laid in the year 1731, when but few resources for literary research were accessible in America. A small number of gentlemen having subscribed the sum of one hundred pounds, a collection was commenced upon principles well calculated to disseminate knowledge, the books being allowed to be carried to the dwellings of the members of the company for perusal during their hours of leisure.

42 By slow degrees new members were added to the company, and the stock of books was annually increased by purchases, and by donations; among the donors the then proprietaries of Pennsylvania are to be numbered, and from them a charter of perpetual incorporation was obtained in 1742.*

38 * On the eighteenth of June, 1738, Dr. Walter Sydsferfe, of the island of Antigua, presented to the company, for the purchase of books, the sum of thirty-four pounds, six shillings, three pence, sterling.

46 Samuel Norris, Esq. a respectable member of the company, bequeathed to the institution, in the year 1746, the sum of twenty pounds. This was the first legacy left to the company.

1 Abraham Claypoole, by his will, dated July 4, 1750, bequeathed to the company, at the death of his mother, one hundred pounds, Pennsylvania currency, which was paid to the treasurer, with three years' interest due thereon, in August, 1789. It was by mere accident that the directors of the institution obtained a knowledge of this bequest, three years after it became payable. This circumstance gave rise to that useful provision made by the legislature of this state, which enjoins as a duty on the registers of wills, to give notice to the society or incorporated body to whom a legacy shall hereafter be left.

The late William Logan, son of the Hon. James Logan, the founder of the Loganian Library, presented to the institution a number of very scarce and valuable works.

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