

LIBRARY
OF
FOREIGN LITERATURE AND SCIENCE.

At a meeting of the subscribers to the proposals for the formation of a Public Library of Foreign Literature and Science, held at the Hall of the Philosophical Society, on Monday, Nov. 21, 1831,

DR. DELANCEY, Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, was called to the chair, and FREDERICK FRALEY appointed Secretary.

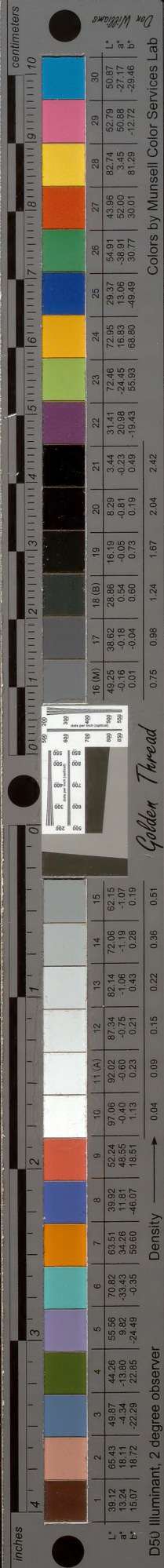
The object of the meeting having been stated by the chairman, the committee which had been appointed at one of the primary meetings, and to which had been referred the subject of the organization of a Foreign Library Company, submitted the annexed Report and Constitution, as explanatory of the views of the gentlemen who had called this meeting, when, on motion, it was Resolved, That the Report of the committee, together with the Constitution, and the proceedings of this meeting, be published in all the newspapers of this city.

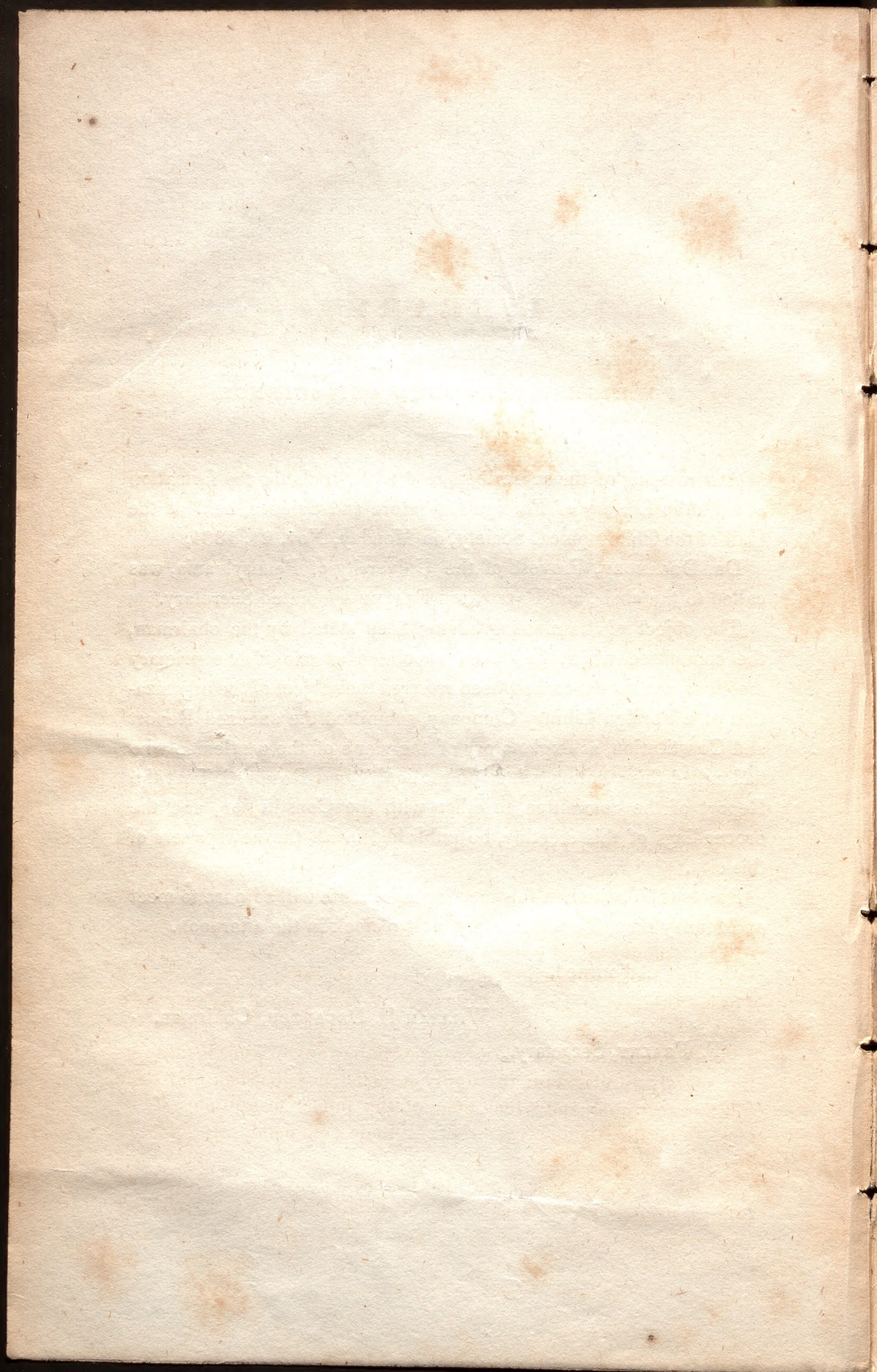
Resolved, That when this meeting adjourns it will adjourn to meet on Monday next, the 28th instant, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

Adjourned.

WILLIAM H. DELANCEY, Chairman.

F. FRALEY, Secretary.





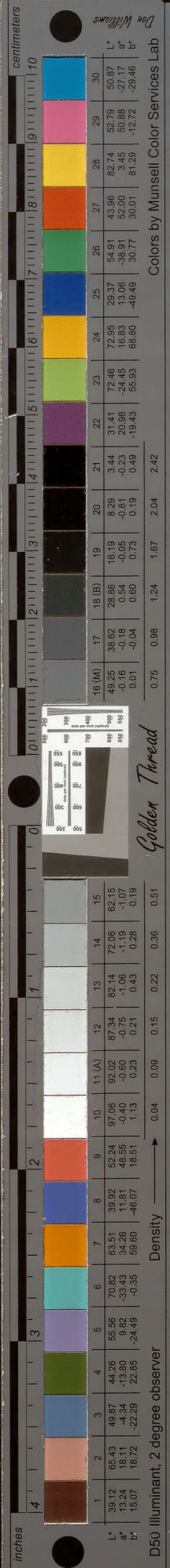
REPORT.

The Committee to whom was referred the subject of the organization of the Foreign Library Company, respectfully report :

That after examining the constitutions and laws of other institutions of a similar character, they have prepared and now submit the sketch of such a plan, as, in their opinion, will meet the views of the gentlemen by whom they were appointed, and which they hope will receive the approbation of the subscribers generally. They have avoided detail as far as possible, believing it to be the appropriate duty of directors hereafter to be chosen, to make such special regulations and arrangements as may be necessary. The title of the company, the number, the mode of election, and generally the duties of its officers, the price of the shares of stock, and the amount of the annual contribution, together with the terms of forfeiture, are particularly regulated by the constitution which the committee have prepared. In relation to these matters, they have endeavoured to be sufficiently explicit, to enable the directors to know on what terms it is desirable for them to obtain from the proper authorities, a charter for the company ; but have not thought it expedient, or within the scope of their appointment, to go further. They therefore submit the accompanying Constitution for adoption, and recommend that the stockholders proceed to the election of a board of directors, whose duty it shall be, as soon as convenient, to obtain an act of incorporation.

The committee take this opportunity to state, what they suppose to be the object of the individuals who have promoted the plan of a Public Library of Foreign Literature, and to correct misapprehensions which they are led to believe exist. The plan of a Foreign Library originated in no spirit of opposition to any existing institution, but merely in the wish to supply a deficiency that had long been felt and regretted, and which none of the public institutions of the city, from the limited resources at their command, are able to remove.

So far was the idea of opposition, in the opinion of the committee, from the minds of those with whom this design originated, that the wish was, if possible, to attach the new library to some one or other of the public collections in this city, in such a way as to save expense, and promote mutual benefit. This idea of a connection is now



mentioned by the committee, not as part of a matured project, but simply as an indication of the feelings and wishes of those by whom they were appointed. It is a matter about which the committee give no other opinion, than to recommend it to the consideration of the future board of Directors, who will be better qualified to judge of its expediency.

It has long been matter of general regret, as well on account of residents as of strangers, that no extensive collection of foreign books is to be found in our city, and it is with a view to remove this source of self-reproach that the present plan has been suggested. In French literature the deficiency has been most sensibly felt, the fact being undeniable that there is not a complete collection of the French Classics at this time accessible to the public. This remark is not intended, only, or even principally, to apply to the familiar works of French Belles Lettres, which the committee are aware can generally be procured with comparative facility, but to such as may be called the secondary classics, with the merits of which every student is acquainted, and which certainly are not in this country the objects of easy acquisition.

The contemporary publications, forming in themselves a valuable body of historical and polite literature, are scarcely to be found, and when imported always command prices that place them beyond the reach of the generality of readers. The valuable scientific works which the French press is daily furnishing are equally difficult of access. By means of an association like the present, with funds exclusively appropriated to a specific object, purchases may be made to an extent far exceeding that to which individuals can go, and a number of volumes soon procured which will give the institution permanent reputation. Not only may those of the French classics be obtained which are not now in other public institutions, but with the assistance of such an agent as it is presumed can easily be commanded in Europe, a supply of the best contemporary works can always be secured.

The demand for Spanish books is, the committee have every reason to believe, daily increasing in direct proportion to the difficulty of meeting it. The standard productions of Spanish literature, especially the poets and dramatists, are to be rarely met with, and always from their rarity command a high price. In Europe it is believed they can be obtained on much more reasonable terms. As there is comparatively little contemporary literature in the Spanish language, the attention of the company will of course be principally directed to the acquisition of such of the classical works as they can obtain.

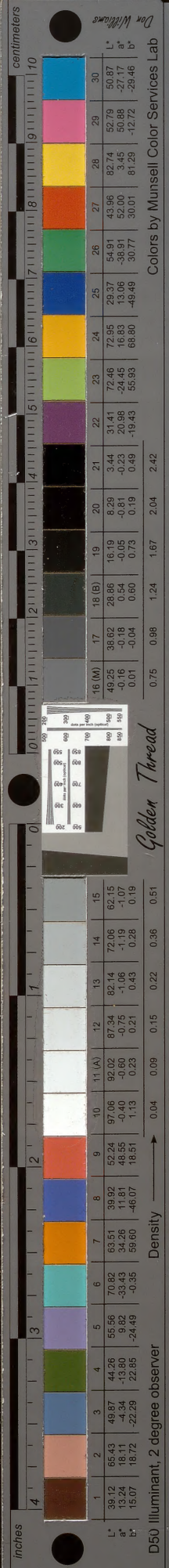
There is however one description of contemporary works in the

Spanish language which constitute an important exception to this remark. The committee refer to the official and other publications, illustrative of the condition and resources of the Spanish American republics, which are valuable in every point of view, and which can only be securely preserved by the care of an institution like the one now recommended. The official press of Havanna, under the beneficial patronage of the present colonial authorities, has recently given to the world a series of political and historical publications, a few copies of which have reached this country, and are of peculiar value, particularly as books of reference. With some qualification the same remarks apply to Italian literature.

The committee have no means of ascertaining what is the demand for works in German, nor how far the want of them is supplied by libraries already in existence. It is believed, however, that there are many of our fellow-citizens who have either acquired, or are now engaged in the study of that language, who have no authorised access to the only extensive collection of German works in this city; and the committee see with pleasure, among the subscribers to the present plan, the names of several individuals known to be proficient in this department of literature, whose interest will necessarily be represented.

Were no object to be attained, but to enable students to become familiar with the German works of criticism, particularly on the ancient classics, a project directed to that end would deserve the favour of the literary public. In this particular, the labours of the critics and historians of Germany have gained for them unrivalled reputation. When, in addition, it is borne in mind, that besides the peculiar and magnificent productions of the last century, men of genius, both in literature and science from the same portion of mankind, are daily contributing to the stock of intellectual improvement, it forms, in the opinion of the committee, no unimportant recommendation of any design calculated to afford facilities of which the student is at present destitute.

It has never been doubted that if a plan similar to that which is now proposed, were to be submitted to the public, it would be successful, and the committee avail themselves of this opportunity to express the pleasure with which they have perceived the generous patronage that has already been extended to it. A sufficiently large number of subscribers to put the work into operation has been obtained without any extraordinary exertion. It is believed that many more will connect themselves with the institution as soon as it is organized, and that the support which is expected will not be confined to mere subscriptions to the stock, but will extend to donations and



voluntary contributions from those who may be induced to feel an interest in the scheme.

In fixing the price of the shares at Thirty Dollars, the committee have been guided by a wish to meet the wishes and convenience of the subscribers so far as it has been in their power to consult them. A smaller sum than that which they have recommended, would, in their opinion, be insufficient.

They would, in conclusion, suggest to the directors the expediency of making the price of the shares payable in three equal instalments, one on the first of December, one on the first of February, and the third on the first of April next.

W. B. REED,
ALEXR. DALLAS BACHE, } Committee.
R. LA ROCHE,

CONSTITUTION
OF THE
PENNSYLVANIA LIBRARY OF FOREIGN LITERATURE AND SCIENCE.

Article First.

This Association shall be known by the name and title of the Pennsylvania Library of Foreign Literature and Science.

Article Second.

The price of a share of stock in the Library, shall be thirty dollars, and every person paying the same, in the manner to be hereafter regulated by the Executive Board, shall be entitled to the privileges of membership.

Article Third.

The Officers of this Association shall be, a President, two Vice Presidents, a Secretary, who shall also act as Treasurer, and twelve Directors; all of whom shall constitute an Executive Board, for the management of the affairs of the institution.

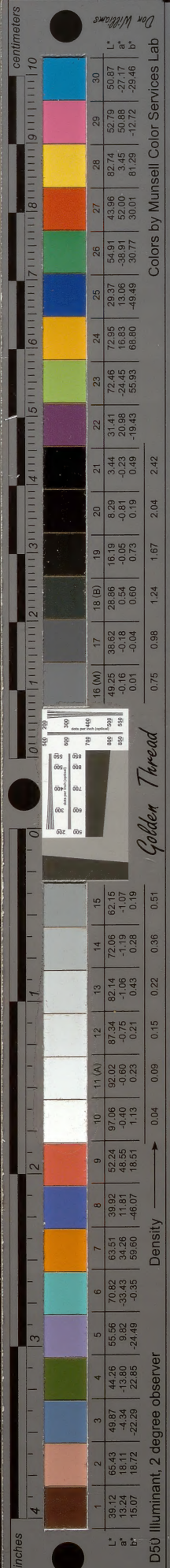
Article Fourth.

The Executive Board shall have power to create and sell new shares of the stock of the Library, on such terms and conditions as they may from time to time deem expedient; shall establish regulations for the purchase, safe-keeping, and use of the books, appoint and remove the Librarian and other agents of the company.

They shall hold stated meetings once a month, at such times and places as they may think proper, and have power to fill any vacancies that may occur among the officers of the institution.

They shall have power to give the use of the Library to any person not a Stockholder, for any time they may think proper, not exceeding a year, and shall have power to regulate the terms on which the Librarian may admit strangers to the same privilege.

They shall report their proceedings at the stated annual meetings of the Stockholders, which shall be held on the third Monday in November, in every year; when the officers for the ensuing year shall be chosen.



Article Fifth.

It shall be the duty of the Secretary to call special meetings of the Stockholders, whenever the Executive Board direct, or twenty of the Stockholders request it.

Article Sixth.

The annual contribution to be paid by the Stockholders, shall be three dollars a year, payable on the third Monday in November.

Article Seventh.

The Executive Board shall have power to establish a system of fines and forfeitures for improper detention or injury of books, and for neglect to pay the annual contribution; provided, that no share of stock shall be forfeited, until the arrearages of fines and contributions, with interest, shall amount to the par value of the share.

Article Eighth.

Any Stockholder who shall, in addition to the price of his share, pay to the Treasurer, the sum of thirty dollars, besides all fines and arrearages, shall be released from all contributions during his life; and any Stockholder paying in addition to the price of his share the sum of sixty dollars, shall receive a certificate exonerating the said share from all further contributions for ever.

Article Ninth.

The stock of the Association shall be transferable; provided no person shall be considered entitled to the privileges of membership by assignment, until his name be submitted to the Executive Board, and approved by them.

Article Tenth.

The Treasurer shall give bond for the faithful performance of his duties, in such sum, and with such sureties as the Executive Board may direct.