

Washington never bought or sold goods and was never engaged in the shipping trade. He was in a losing business, that of raising crops out of land diminishing in productivity. His chief fortune was made out of western lands. His estate amounted to \$500,000, probably the largest property owned by any one in the United States in his time.

George Washington's practical business sagacity, his keen knowledge of the needs of a body of men, contributed greatly to the success of the Revolution. Business men were few at that time, and Washington's expert knowledge of business stood him in good stead. I contend that these qualities which would have made him great and wealthy in any system of society from that day to the present, these powers shown so early and developed to such a high degree, place him in the category of successful business men. He was a man who could look ahead, who could work with other people, a straightforward, fearless, upright man. Mr. President, I nominate for honorary membership in this Society George Washington of Virginia.

## The Collection of Business Manuscripts in the South

A BEGINNING has been made to preserve business manuscripts in the South. The following are some of the facts discovered by Howard Corning, Head of the Manuscript Division of the Baker Library, as a result of a three weeks' motor trip through the southern states in November.

There is a strong feeling that some coöperative organization will result from the attempt to save these manuscripts, which is being made vigorously in one or two places, and is everywhere acknowledged as a necessary adjunct to the study of the economy of the South, past and present. With the help of leading industrialists and the coöperation of the universities in the various states, it is hoped that some organization similar to the Business Historical Society may be formed.

The University of Virginia, at Charlottesville, is already gathering in material from western Virginia, where it is situated. Unfortunately, a good many years ago several hundred thousand items from this section were taken to Chicago, but there is still material worth going after, as their results show.

Mr. Corning visited the College of William and Mary, at Williamsburg, last spring, and found them vigorously collecting Virginia manuscripts in their part of the state.

At Duke University, at Durham, North Carolina, and also at the University of North Carolina, at Chapel Hill, money and time are being spent more energetically than at any other place in the South, and a notable collection of material is being brought together. At the University of North Carolina particularly, Dr. Hamilton has collected much that, but for his foresight, would have been destroyed.

The University of South Carolina, at Columbia, is equally interested in preserving records and has recently added to its collections a very interesting file of papers of the DeSarrure Plantation, with important data relative to raising cotton from 1834 to 1877, containing other figures as to the cost of maintaining slaves, capital invested, etc.

It is perfectly natural that these states should look back to the ante-bellum days for a good many of the records which they are trying to preserve, but it is equally important that they should preserve records of the advance of the South since that period, and it is to be hoped that in this matter they will receive the coöperation of prominent business men.

The University of Georgia, at Athens, has too little space and too little funds to be able to do much active collection of manuscripts. There is, however, at this university, a notable collection of about five thousand plantation documents in the hands of Professor E. Merton Coulter, who has written instructively on the matter.

At Savannah Mr. Corning was able to secure the business records of the firm of Gordon and Company, wholesale dealers in raw cotton in that city since 1856. The collection constitutes over a thousand account books, market reports and letter books covering the period from 1856 to 1916. The foreign correspondence is particularly valuable, as it discloses the adjustment of the southern cotton merchants to the loss of the English market during the Civil War.

There are still many localities which have not been looked into and which, no doubt, contain valuable material. It is to be hoped that before this is destroyed it may be classified and securely housed in some permanent depository for future study.