

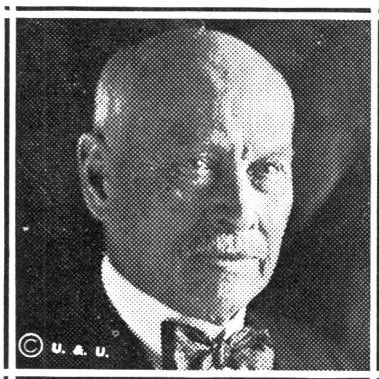
Another time, after reaching the town in question, I spent half a day in getting into the building that held the documents. If these had been kept in a county library or similar institution open to the public, much time would have been saved and inconvenience avoided both for the investigator and for the officials. In larger towns, this difficulty is at a minimum. Here the main advantage in housing the old documents in a library would be that the guardians would doubtless be more interested and moreover would not be affected by local politics. Of the twenty-one towns that I visited, one city did have its oldest original records in the public library. The case was so exceptional that it was discovered only by chance. There was no mention of the books in the catalogue, as the library was acting merely as a safe deposit vault. These, then, are a few suggestions toward the best stewardship of these records of former days. All seem to me of great importance, but if one should be stressed more than another, the emphasis should be laid on proper indexing or cataloguing. The material exists; it needs only to be made so available that "he who runs may read."

In Memoriam

On the fifteenth of August the Society had the misfortune to lose one of its most distinguished members, Mr. Elbert H. Gary, Chairman of the United States Steel Corporation, and leader of the iron and steel industry in this country. He died at his home on Fifth Avenue, after an illness of a month. At eighty, his age at the time of his death, Judge Gary (as he was familiarly known), had behind him one of the most notable careers in American industry.

Born of New England stock on a farm near Wheaton, Illinois, and educated in the public schools, Wheaton College and the University of Chicago, he was admitted to the bar of Illinois in 1867 and the bar of the United States Supreme Court in 1882. After practising law for twenty-five years, during which time he served two terms as county judge of Dupage County, Illinois, whence he derived his title of "Judge Gary," he became general counsel and director of the Illinois Steel Company. This was later merged into the Federal Steel Company which was one of the constituent companies of the United States Steel Corporation. The vision of a great steel corporation to place America in a position to compete with the steel manufacturers of the world appealed to him. With the

assistance of the late J. Pierpont Morgan and the successful acquisition of the Carnegie interests a corporation was created of such magnitude as to startle the financial world of that period. Mr. Gary's wise management and foresight enabled this huge organization to weather two severe storms, the government's suit for dissolution and the steel strike. In the former the Steel Corporation was acquitted by the United States Supreme Court of the



charge of being a combination in restraint of trade, and in the latter Mr. Gary defeated completely an attempt to unionize the employees of the corporation. Neither victory would have been possible if it had not been for his insistence that the widest public knowledge of the affairs of the corporation should at all times be available. This policy of publicity was somewhat at variance with the accepted ideas of that time, but has since been almost universally adopted.

Mr. Gary was one of the earliest members of The Business Historical Society. He joined it on December 24, 1925, before the articles of incorporation had actually been issued. His interest in the Society, and particularly in those aspects of it having to do with the history of the iron and steel industry, was shown by his sending, a few weeks before his death, for fifty copies of *Bulletin* No. 8, containing the article on the first iron works in America, for distribution among his friends. By his death, the Society shares with the rest of the community the loss of a great man and a great influence in the industrial world.