

penned them, the date of receipt and presentation to the Council of State was conjectural. Consequently interpolating the in-letters at the proper place was a continuing problem. Moreover, the editors kept discovering hitherto unknown letters to the Council after the text of a volume had gone to press or had actually been published. In 1922 several bundles of new letters turned up, many of them pertaining to proceedings published as far back as 1897 (*Archives*, Volume XVI). The editors suggested printing these in a supplementary volume at some future time. Although this proposal to "catch up" these unpublished letters to the Council was never effected, the editors recognized the patent impossibility of fusing all three types of archival materials—proceedings, out-letters, and in-letters—into a single combination. In the next two volumes of this series (*Archives* XLV and XLVIII) they segregated the in-letters and printed them as a single block in a separate part of the volume. Finally in 1931 they omitted them altogether from the last volume of the series (*Archives* XLVIII, No. 8 of the series) and reproduced only the journal with the out-letters interpolated.

Now the series is to be resumed, the Publications Committee proposes to go one step further toward disentangling the hitherto interwoven archival materials. Our plan is to publish the Journal of the State Council only in this and succeeding volumes up to the date 1821. When these have appeared we propose to pick up the Letter Books and issue them in a parallel series for the same period. Finally still another, and parallel, set is projected for the in-letters, which must be brought together from the Rainbow Series, the "Letters received by the Governor and Council" (at the Hall of Records, Annapolis), and from miscellaneous depositories. Thus, in effect, the older format will become an A, B, and C series under the same title, keeping separate the several types of archival materials that once were scrambled together.

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The years covered by that portion of the Journal reproduced in this volume correspond exactly with John Fiske's "critical period" of American history. The State Council met to organize and set about its prescribed tasks on Saturday, November 27, 1784. Its last meeting recorded here fell on Monday, February 23, 1789, just nine days before that March 4 when the new federal government was scheduled to begin operations. While the crisis was mainly in Fiske's mind, these were undeniably lively years, filled with such important concerns as the constitutional convention, ratification of the constitution, recurrent agitation of the debt question, and argument—sometimes bitter exchanges—over paper money. On all these matters the record before us is, with a single exception, stonily silent. It is not strange that problems above the state level—national questions such as the framing of the constitution—find no reflection in the journal of the State Council. But, at first sight, the absence of any mention of such state matters as tender laws, debt legislation, and paper money may appear surprising. These were, after all, overarching concerns and must have exercised the governor and his colleagues at the Coun-