THE Historical Society of Montgomery County was host to more than a hundred members of the Pennsylvania Historical Association who gathered at Norristown, October 24 and 25, to attend the sixteenth annual convention of the Association. Excellent radio and newspaper publicity before the meeting assured splendid local support for the event. At convention headquarters in the Valley Forge Hotel several interesting exhibits were on display. The Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College provided showcases of documents relating to eminent Quakers of four centuries, including William Penn, Anthony Benezet, Lucretia Mott, and the American Friends' Service Committee. Fletcher Hodges, Jr., Curator of the Foster Hall Collection of the University of Pittsburgh, placed on exhibit a variety of materials illustrative of the life and work of Stephen Collins Foster—letters, broadsides, music, manuscripts, original editions of Foster songs, and biographical works. In addition to the major exhibits an excellent collection of pamphlet material descriptive of the Montgomery County area was provided for distribution by the State Historical and Museum Commission, the Valley Forge Park Commission, the Montgomery County Commissioners, and the Historical Society of Montgomery County.

The main session of the convention, on Friday afternoon, was opened by addresses of welcome from President Robert Fortenbaugh of the Association, and by President Kirke Bryan, of the Historical Society of Montgomery County. Dr. Frank Freidel, of the history department of the Pennsylvania State College, presented the first paper on the subject: "Francis Lieber, Propagandist for Prison Reform." Dr. Freidel, whose full length biography of Lieber is now in press, described the vigorous manner in which Lieber defended the Pennsylvania system of prison reform from attacks by proponents of the rival Auburn system. The Pennsylvania prison reformers, placing their emphasis upon rehabilitation
of the criminal, kept him in solitary confinement and allowed him to talk only with prison officials and visitors. Auburnites, who favored communal work with silence imposed by the whip, denounced the Pennsylvania system as unnecessarily costly and cruel. Lieber, in pamphlets and letters to the press, stanchly met all attacks. Dr. Negley Teeters of Temple University, who is writing a book on the Eastern Pennsylvania Penitentiary, volunteered a detailed discussion of Dr. Freidel’s paper from the floor in which he gave an even more spirited defence of the Pennsylvania system.

Dr. Fletcher Hodges, Jr., of the University of Pittsburgh, then presented an illustrated talk on “The Research Work of the Foster Hall Collection.” His slides emphasized the intimate aspects of the life of Stephen Collins Foster, the manner in which some of his most famous songs came to be written, his relations with his publishers, and with the musical organizations which presented his works to the public.

A panel discussion of the problem of teaching local history highlighted the second session of Friday afternoon. Under the capable leadership of Dr. Allan C. Harman, Assistant Superintendent of Schools of Montgomery County, seven representatives of the secondary schools informally analyzed the problem and the methods which have been used to meet it. Two of the many opinions which were expressed during the discussion were: that there is a serious lack of material on local history suitable for pre-collegiate scholars, and that the value of much of the existing material is seriously curtailed by poor indexing or none at all. Among the constructive suggestions were that parents should be kept better informed of the purpose and nature of the work being carried on by the schools in local history, that the use of magazines like the Junior Historian can provide a stimulus to good work, and that local historical societies could help themselves, the schools, and the local communities by publishing brief pamphlets, on the high school level, dealing with men and events prominent in county history.

Considerable stress was laid upon the necessity of closer relations between the schools and the local historical societies. The teachers expressed a desire to secure speakers from the societies, to get aid in staging dramatic sketches of historical episodes (radio and stage), to arrange guided pilgrimages, to obtain photostats of interesting documents, and in general to work closely with the personnel and facilities of county historical societies. Mr. Kirke
Bryan pointed out in this connection that one of the important factors was that teachers should become active members of the local societies, lending their intellectual, moral, and financial support to the efforts of the societies to serve the community. The discussion was straightforward and purposeful throughout. Among the interested contributors to it were a number of high school students who asked some highly pertinent questions. When will there be moving pictures which present a reliable history of past events? Why do teachers “evade” student questions about certain local events? How can more human interest be brought into the teaching of local history?

The general discussion was concluded by the remarks of Dr. S. K. Stevens, State Historian, who spoke of the many radio dramatizations of Pennsylvania history which have been produced by the Historical Commission and are available to the schools. Dr. Stevens admitted the need for more and better visual aid materials in the field of Pennsylvania history, but explained also the difficulties which any state-wide agency encounters in attempting to administer directly to the individual needs of each county. The county historical societies, he said, were in a peculiarly effective position to lend immediate assistance to the schools, and pointed out as a special example of success in this respect the program of the Historical Society of Berks County.

At the conclusion of the formal meetings the membership adjourned to Historical Hall, the quarters of the Historical Society of Montgomery County, for an informal tea.

In the evening almost two hundred persons attended the Annual Dinner of the Association. After brief remarks by President Fortenbaugh on the “State of Pennsylvania History,” Dr. Roy F. Nichols introduced the main speaker of the evening, Dr. Amos E. Taylor, Director of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, United States Department of Commerce, who addressed the meeting on the subject: “Pennsylvania’s Role in our National Progress—What of the Future?” Dr. Taylor prefaced his address by emphasizing that the continuing economic development of the Commonwealth depended not alone upon Pennsylvania, but as well upon many factors in operation outside the limits of the state. Pennsylvania’s prosperity for many years had run “more or less parallel with the national trend, although on a somewhat higher level.” But a crumbling industrial Europe, he assured the meeting, would have
serious adverse effects upon industrial Pennsylvania. He pointed out further that in certain important respects Pennsylvania had lost its primacy since the beginning of the recent World War. More important to the sound economic life of the Commonwealth than natural resources, he concluded were "the initiative, the energy, and the traditions of its people."

Saturday's meetings were opened by the Phi Alpha Theta breakfast, followed immediately by the annual business meeting of the Association. The Publications Committee announced plans for distribution of the first volume of the Pennsylvania Historical Association Studies, Dr. Gilbert's *A Picture of the Pennsylvania Germans*. It was decided that as soon as the first pamphlet has been sold in sufficient quantity to defray printing costs the publication of the second and third pamphlets should be undertaken. Dr. Lawrence H. Gipson announced to the Association that the committee of historians which had been investigating the authenticity of the Horne papers had concluded that these papers constituted one of the greatest frauds ever perpetrated in the annals of American history. The following officers were elected at the meeting: Richard H. Shryock, 3rd Vice President, 1947-1950; William A. Russ, Editorial Board, 1947-1949; and James A. Barnes, J. Orin Oliphant, William A. Russ, Jr., and Mulford Stough, members of Council, 1947-1950.

After the business meeting two historical sessions were held. In the ballroom of the hotel, Dr. Arthur D. Graeff presented a fascinating story in his paper "Transplants of Pennsylvania Indian Nations in Ontario." Dr. Graeff spoke of his experiences in the province of Ontario, Canada, a few years ago when he happened upon a rustic signpost bearing the legend: "Moraviantown." Led on by curiosity, he discovered a Delaware Indian village the history of which was the theme of his paper. The inhabitants of this present-day Canadian hamlet were the direct descendants of the Christianized Delaware Indians of Gnaddenhutten who, under the leadership of Zeisberger, the Moravian missionary, had been forced to leave Pennsylvania in the days of the French and Indian War. The migration proceeded from Gnaddenhutten to Philadelphia, to New Jersey, to the Wyalusing area, to Western Pennsylvania, to the Muskingum valley, to Detroit, and finally to the province of Ontario. This trek, covering a period of half a century, from 1755 to 1812, was marked by the establishment of half a dozen wilder-
ness towns which served as temporary homes for the itinerant refugees. In conclusion Dr. Graeff spoke of plans now underway for a celebration by these remaining Delaware Indians of the long and important history of their people.

Donald H. Kent, Associate State Historian, then presented a paper on "Erie's War with the Railroads, 1853-1854." The paper was a detailed account of the rivalry of New York and Pennsylvania for western trade. It was a personal story of high dramatic interest, literally peppered with riots, fisticuffs and bloodshed. As a picture of local resistance to a much feared commercial enterprise, the paper was both valuable and exciting.

Meanwhile, in the ABC Room of the hotel, Dr. J. Orin Oliphant presented his paper on "The Lewisburg and Mifflinburg Turnpike Company," in which he traced the history of a typical chartered road company of Pennsylvania, from its beginning in 1828 to its liquidation in 1906. Dr. Oliphant discussed particularly the financial management of the organization and the legal questions arising during the course of its existence.

Dr. Mary P. Clarke of Beaver College gave an interesting analysis of "Some Legislative Peculiarities of Colonial Pennsylvania." Her main discussion centered about the demands of the legislative assembly to exercise the rights of initiating legislation and of sitting upon its own adjournments. In the latter case the Pennsylvania Assembly succeeded in securing legal right to a privilege which even the British Parliament could not exercise. In short, the power of calling and dissolving the assembly, which was commonly vested in the governors of English provinces, was in Pennsylvania assumed by the assembly itself.

The Saturday luncheon meeting of the Association was concluded by a delightful illustrated talk by Charles M. Stotz, architect for the restoration of the Economy community, on the subject, "Restoration of Economy, Third Colony of the Harmony Society." Mr. Stotz, with a beautiful collection of colored slides, explained the nature of life at Economy in terms of the buildings which provided the physical environment for the experiment. He also showed the changes through which the structures had passed between the time of their first construction and the present period of restoration to their original form.

Shortly after the luncheon a cavalcade of fifty-three cars left the quarters of the Historical Society of Montgomery County for
a historical pilgrimage with stops at Millgrove, first American home of John James Audubon, and Fatland, the impressive colonnaded mansion of the Vaux family. Herbert J. Wetherill of Germantown, present owner of Millgrove, spoke briefly of the history and points of interest at Millgrove, and G. Edwin Brumbaugh, well-known authority on Pennsylvania colonial architecture, addressed the party at Fatland.

On Sunday afternoon, October 26, radio station WFIL of Philadelphia broadcast parts of the address which Dr. Amos Taylor had delivered at the dinner meeting of the Association.