

seem as yet to have conceived the idea of the electrical resistance of carbon varying inversely with the pressure upon it, on which his later patent was based.

In June, 1877, after the date of his second patent for an instrument which is pronounced by the Court "operative but not practical," we find, after some preliminary references to the same idea, an entry headed "experiments to determine the availability of Plumbago mixed with different substances for a disc which by variable pressure shall give us variable resistance." Shortly afterward follows a long series of experiments for determining the proper binder for the carbon. 15 grm plumbago and 2 grm isinglass is tried, which is "pretty good. . . Unknown plumbago mixture simply elegant. It now becomes necessary to find out what this combination is. We believe it is Plumbago with a large proportion of Isinglass or Gelatin."

With a combination of 15 grm plumbago and 2 grm Woodbridge clay they got "whistling only by a fine adjustment, also whispering." 15 grm plumbago and 2 grm starch gave "whispering best we have had yet seems like talking. We got the sh! all perfect on this." While 15 grm plumbago and 6 grm starch was extra good on "lowest faintest whisper." "Bully good! !!" is underlined three times at the bottom of the entry.

There are more notes on the telephone, and a few on the phonograph, and quite irrelevantly, on a page with an unlabelled drawing, "if that fellow don't go away I am going to put lights out and put Induction coil on him," signed "James Adams."

After this glimpse of the Edison laboratory during the progress of one of the great inventions of the present age, the evidence proceeds with caveats and patent specifications to the end of the volume. It is yet to be discovered how many more intimate bits of history are contained in this unpromising pile of law records.

In Memoriam

THE Society has once more been unfortunate in losing a valued member, Mr. John Whittemore Farwell, of Boston. Born at Waltham, Massachusetts, in 1843, he was largely identified with the Massachusetts textile industry throughout his career. In 1872 he was a member of the Maine Legislature, and served in the Massachusetts Legislature in 1885. But for the most part his interests were con-

cerned with business. At the time of his death he was president and director of the Cabot Mill, and treasurer and director of the Farwell Mill and Farwell Bleachery. In addition, he was a director of the Boston Safe Deposit and Trust Company, the Western and Atlas National Bank, the Worcester Manufacturers Mutual Insurance Company, and president of the Boston Storage Warehouse.

With all the responsibilities of his many business connections, he still found time to take an active interest in historical matters. He was a member of the Bostonian Society, of which he had been a trustee, and also held membership in the Sons of the American Revolution, the Society of Colonial Wars, the Massachusetts Historical Society, the New England Historic Genealogical Society, and the Colonial Society, as well as this organization. The Society will feel his loss keenly.

Some of the Larger Acquisitions of the Baker Library for 1929

Backus Account Books

These old account books, the gift of Mrs. Elizabeth Allyn, of Groton, Conn., consist of ten daybooks, five ledgers, and portions of other daybooks. There is a continuous record of accounts from 1792 to 1814. During these years James Backus was the proprietor of a "country store" at Norwich, Conn., dealing in such commodities as nails, hoops, penknives, shingles, leather, beef, shoe binding, moreen, baize, cloth, buttons, silk handkerchiefs, flaxseed, raisins, rum, molasses, tea, dictionaries, and Bibles. There is a break of 20 years in the records, then follows a daybook dating from 1834 to 1838, and a ledger from 1846 to 1850, the latter dealing for the most part with farm accounts.

Chase Collection

Chase Family Books and Papers

These books and papers are the gift of Miss Florence Chase of Lyndon, Vt., granddaughter of E. B. Chase, who was General Manager and Director of the Connecticut & Passumpsic Rivers R. R. Co. and head of the Chase family. There are in this collection books of farm and general store accounts, 1833 to 1860, and educational expenses incurred at Yale University, 1848 to 1850, and at Harvard Law School, 1851.

Among the papers are old deeds, speeches by Hon. Charles Sumner in 1862 on "Maritime Rights," and by Hon. James S. Green of Missouri on "Territorial Policy," 1860; bills of Miss Martha E. Chase for tuition at Miss Aiken's Seminary at Stamford, Conn., and for gowns purchased in Paris in 1874 by Miss Chase and Mrs. E. B. Chase.