

## The Chairman's Annual Report for the Year 1968-1969

In the course of the past year, the Society has maintained steady progress, both in its membership and in its work. Two new members — Mr Noel Picarda and Mr Arthur Fenlon — joined the Society bringing the total number of subscribing members to twenty-one. Of the present membership, fourteen are of British origin and seven are of Byelorussian extraction. It is hoped that the number of members will be still further increased during the coming year, and I would appeal to you to make every personal effort to increase our membership by inviting your friends who may be interested in supporting the objects of this Society to join.

During the latter half of the session, the *Journal of Byelorussian Studies*, Vol. I, No. 3 went to press, and it should be appearing some time in July or August of this year. The following number of the *Journal*, dated 1968 is well advanced, and will be ready for the printers before the end of the year. Members will be interested to learn that the *Journal* already has a circulation of over 500 copies, with 120 university, public and other subscribing libraries in all parts of the world, including the Soviet Union. Sales of the *Journal* during the current year amounted to £129.12.4d. which is a satisfactory result. I should like on your behalf to express our warmest thanks to the Editor, Mr Arnold McMillin and to the Distributor, Mr Jan Michaluk, for the excellent work they are doing in the diffusion of this publication.

A certain number of books and periodicals have been donated to the Society for purposes other than review. In accordance with a previous resolution of the Council, these have been deposited with the Byelorussian Library in North Finchley. Gifts of books have been received from a number of institutions and individuals, including the Byelorussian State Library in Minsk and the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. We propose in future to publish in the *Journal* a list of books received in the course of the current year.

Six ordinary meetings of the Society were held at the British Academy, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W. 1. at which members and their friends attended a series of lectures organised by the Council. On 5 December 1968 Mr Guy Picarda, the Hon. Secretary of this Society, read a paper on 'Anglo-Byelorussian Relations from 1918-1921'. On 12 December 1968 Miss Vera Rich, Editor of the poetry journal *Manifold*, who is well-known for her numerous translations of Byelorussian verse into the English language, spoke on 'Jakub Kołas (1882-1956) and the Evolution of the National Epic Style in Byelorussian Literature'. The lecture on 23 January 1969 was given by Dr Richard A. French, Lecturer in Geography at University College, London, and dealt with 'The Geography of Byelorussia in the XVIIth century'. On 13 February 1969, the Revd. Alexander Nadson, Rector of St Cyril's House School in North Finchley, spoke on 'The Chronicle of Barkułabaū (1563-1603)'. On 6 March 1969 Mr Arnold B. McMillin, Assistant Lecturer in Russian Language and Literature at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies at London

University, and Editor of the Journal of Byelorussian Studies, gave a lecture on 'Alexander Jelski (1834-1916)'. The final lecture was given on 15 May 1969 by Professor Robert Auty, Professor of Comparative Slavonic Philology in the University of Oxford, who addressed the Society on 'The Position of the Byelorussian Language in the Study of Comparative Slavonic Philology'. The lecture course was relatively well-attended, the number of members and visitors present fluctuating between fifteen and thirty-five. The Council has asked me to record its appreciation to Mr John Jolliffe and myself for presiding over a certain number of the lectures during the course, and to this request I gladly accede, adding that I am delighted the session proved to be such a success.

The Council of this Society held meetings on 10 July 1968, on 5 December 1968 and on 26 June 1969, to deal with the ordinary business of the administration of the Society and its activities. The Editorial board of the Journal of Byelorussian Studies has also met on several occasions during the current session to discuss various questions arising out of present and future publications.

In October 1968, your Vice-President the Hon. Mrs Maurice Macmillan signed a letter on behalf of the Society calling on the British Broadcasting Corporation to provide broadcasts in the Byelorussian language over the foreign language service of that body. Copies of the letter were addressed to all members of both Houses of Parliament, and evoked a number of sympathetic responses. We are all most grateful to Mrs Macmillan for her valuable assistance and support in this action.

On 25 March 1968, at a reception given by the Chairman of the Association of Byelorussians in Great Britain and Madame Paul Nawaro, the Society was represented by your President, Lord Harlech, by the Vice-President, Mrs Macmillan, and by several officers of the Society, including your Chairman who gave a brief reply to a toast proposed by Mr Nawaro on behalf of the guests.

During the coming year, it is proposed to hold our Fourth Annual Lecture Course at the Society of Antiquaries in Burlington House, Piccadilly, where the lecture-room is better adapted to our purposes than the rather spacious hall of the British Academy. The Hon. Secretary has already inspected the premises, and has reported that the facilities and the ambiance are precisely what the Society requires.

Further to previous recommendations made by the Society, the Council has applied to the Charity Commission for the Anglo-Byelorussian Society to be registered as a Charity. It is also hoped that the Society will be included in the next edition of *The World of Learning* as a learned society.

In concluding, I should like to add my personal word of thanks to all the officers of the Society, and of the Editorial board of the Journal for their work on behalf of the Society, and for their unceasing help and cooperation.

23 July 1969

AUBERON HERBERT  
Chairman