

embellishment, but for the sole object of subserving the purposes of history.

### Sets of Signers of the Constitution

Besides the thirty-nine signers of the constitution, there were twenty-six others chosen, some of whom failed to attend the convention, and others of them who did attend, failed to affix their names to that instrument. Autographs of several of the signers proper are difficult to obtain. A distinguished collector states, that his personal experience leads him to say, that the relative rarity of the autographs of the delegates who did not sign the constitution, would be fairly expressed, at this time, by the following classification:

1. Those most readily obtained: E. Gerry, Caleb Strong, Robert Yates, John Lansing, Luther Martin, Edmund Randolph, and Nathaniel Pendleton.

2. John Pickering, Oliver Ellsworth, John Neilson, John F. Mercer, and Patrick Henry.

3. Benjamin West, Wm. Churchill Houston, Abraham Clark, James McClung, Alexander Martin, Wm. R. Davie, Richard Caswell, Wm. Pierce, and George Walton.

4. Francis Dana, George Mason, George Wythe, and William Houston.

5. Willie Jones, the rarest of all.

In briefly describing the sixteen full collections of the constitutional signers, and the incomplete sets as well, any mode of discrimination is not without its difficulties. In following the rule laid down in classifying the sets of the declaration signers, giving those precedence having the largest number of A. L. S., there is no certainty that really the best collections, if judged by their condition or historical value, are properly recognized. At present, however, we see no better way to get at the matter; and if not deemed the best, each one must readjust the list to suit his own judgment, with the facts as they are reported and presented. If a committee of experts, as at a fair, were personally and carefully to examine the several collections in detail, they might reach very different results.