

**The Growth
of the
Library.**

CHAPTER VI.

THE GROWTH OF THE LIBRARY.

The establishment of libraries in the early years of colonial life in New England constituted a part of the feeble and vacillating efforts for the promotion of education and the diffusion of knowledge—efforts which, to a great extent, emanated from, and were instigated by, the clergy, and the institutions were in many instances dependent upon some kind of church connection or influence for their existence and growth. In later years by far the larger part of the libraries of Rhode Island, as well as of other New England States, were made an important part of the educational system, and their establishment and development received watchful attention and energetic action from the school authorities.

The first public library founded in Rhode Island was a parochial institution located in Newport, where it was established, in 1700, through the efforts of Rev. Thomas Bray, a minister of the Church of England. It contained less than one hundred books, fifty-seven of which were of a theological character for the use of preachers, and forty-two of similar character for a "layman's library"; besides these books there were about one hundred pastoral letters. The reader of those days sought in vain, if he sought at all, for literature to amuse; books were printed solely to instruct and to inculcate religious truths and doctrines.¹

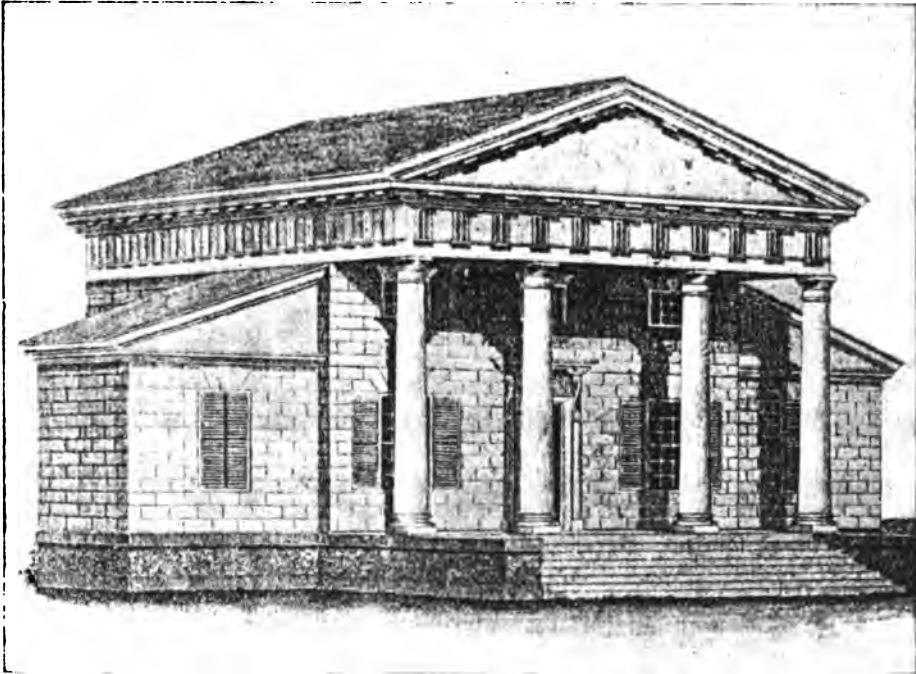
The second library in the Colony originated in the formation of a society by Bishop Berkeley, in Newport, for the purpose of discussing philosophical subjects and collecting books. Prominent in the founding of this society, and long one of its most active officers, was Edward Scott, a granduncle of Sir Walter Scott. He taught for many years a classical school in Newport and held public office. As one of the important purposes of this society was "the promotion of knowledge and virtue", the gathering of a library came to be considered by the

¹Prof. J. F. Jameson, in the Rhode Island Historical Society's Quarterly for January, 1887, calls this library the "first public library established within this colony", and gives a catalogue of books sent November 12, 1701, "by Mr. Lockier to augment the Library at Rhode Island in America". There were only six of these and all were of a religious character. The Annals of Trinity Church, Newport, mention the existence of a parochial library there in 1709. ✓

members as one of the most influential measures they could adopt for that object. Ultimately the holding of debates ceased and the whole energies of the association were devoted to the accumulation of books. This work attracted the attention of Abraham Redwood as early as 1747, and he gave £500 with which to purchase books in London, at the same time advocating the erection of a building suitable for their preservation. In August of that year the Redwood Library Company was incorporated by the General Assembly. Plans for the beautiful Doric structure of the Redwood Library were drawn by Peter Harrison, an eminent English architect, to which additions were subsequently made to bring the building to its present form. This structure was somewhat damaged in the Revolutionary War and some of the books were carried away by the British soldiers. The General Assembly met in the building on September 11, 1780, the state house being unfit for the purpose on account of it having been occupied by the enemy, in common with all of the churches excepting Trinity. The library and the company were left in a discouraging condition, but a disposition was at once manifested to improve it; to this end a committee was appointed in September, 1785, to procure from the General Assembly a renewal of the charter, which would restore the institution to its former condition, and under which it could be permanently established. This measure was not accomplished until 1790, when the Assembly granted the petition for a charter, and an amendment was made in the following year. In order to raise necessary funds for the library, application was made to the Legislature in 1806 for the privilege of raising \$3,000 by a lottery, and for the admission of thirty new members upon their payment of \$25 each. In 1813 Solomon Southwick, then of Albany, presented the library with one hundred and twenty acres of land in New York State, one purpose of which was to perpetuate the memory of Henry Collins, one of the founders of the library. In 1834 the institution received a further donation from Abraham Redwood, of England, in honor of his distinguished grandfather, its founder; this gift consisted of the Redwood homestead estate, in Newport, which the donor had inherited from his father, Jonas L. Redwood. In 1837 Baron Hollinguer, a wealthy banker in Paris, France, gave 1,000 francs to aid in improving the library building; and in 1844 Christopher G. Champlin bequeathed to the company \$100 and some valuable books. In the same year Judah Touro, then a resident of New Orleans, but formerly of Newport, made a donation to the institution of \$1,000; in 1854, at his death, it was found that he had bequeathed the further sum of \$3,000 for the benefit of the library. In addition to all of these gifts, and others, there have been received by the library, from time to time, many valuable paintings, manuscripts, pamphlets, engravings, statues, etc.

In 1856 the charter of the company was so amended as to allow it

to elect from its members at the annual meetings a president and eleven directors, instead of five as before. In 1861 an additional act was passed authorizing the corporation to elect annually a vice-president, and not to exceed eight directors. Again, in January, 1867, an act was passed by the Legislature granting the right to issue so-called "preferred shares", and to increase the number of directors to twenty-five. After various additions and improvements had been made to the building, a new structure of stone and brick was completed in the early part of 1876, giving the library a beautiful home that is



REDWOOD LIBRARY BUILDING.

The General Assembly of Rhode Island met in this building September 11, 1780.

well adapted to its purpose. Founded in colonial times by a man whose foresight and liberality were in advance of his day, this historic institution has been upheld under all circumstances and conditions by enlightened public spirit, and has conferred inestimable benefit upon the community during more than a century of existence.

The first catalogue of Redwood Library was printed in 1764, prepared by Elnathan Hammond, showing 1,516 volumes. The appendix to the second catalogue, printed in 1829, contained 1,067 volumes, and

was prepared by the librarian, Robert Rogers. The third catalogue was issued in 1843, and was prepared by Christopher G. Perry, David King, Mr. Prioleau (of South Carolina), and Nathan H. Gould; it contained then 4,047 volumes. A fourth catalogue was printed in 1858 by Benjamin E. Thurston, under direction of the library board, and was finished in 1859 by Benjamin H. Rhoades, librarian, and included 9,504 volumes. Additions have been made since that date, from year to year, until now the library contains nearly 50,000 volumes.

Among the other very early libraries in the State was one which was established in Gloucester in 1794, for the incorporation of which sixty-four persons petitioned the Assembly. It was named The Union Library Company, and was authorized to hold property to the value of \$5,000. Books were purchased and kept in a private school house at Chepachet. The library continued in existence about thirty years, when it declined and the remaining books were divided among the owners.

Other early libraries of which little can now be learned was one established by the Johnston Library Company and incorporated in 1794, which was in existence later than 1815; the West Greenwich Library Society was incorporated in June, 1804, and the Foster Social Library Company was chartered in February, 1806; the Scituate United Library was incorporated in 1808 and continued many years; the Foster West Library Society received a charter in 1830, and in June, 1847, the Foster Manton Library Society was organized and united its interests with the old Social Library; the Burrillville Library Company was chartered in January, 1822, and the Lime Rock Library, Smithfield, was incorporated in 1838.

The Act of the General Assembly of January, 1840, provided that the school committee in each town might apportion out of the school money distributed to each district the sum of \$10 for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a district school library, "for the use of the children therein". Following this, and as part of his labor in the interest of the schools of the State, Henry Barnard, who was appointed by the governor, in 1843, as an agent to investigate the condition of the schools and afterwards served as school commissioner, devoted much effort to the establishment and encouragement of school and other libraries.

Among the many libraries established directly after the appointment of Mr. Barnard, before mentioned, and largely through his influence, were one in Portsmouth, towards which Miss Sarah Gibbs donated \$100, and others in Burrillville, Gloucester, Cranston, Hopkinton, Richmond, Charlestown, Exeter, Little Compton, New Shoreham, and perhaps others. In 1848 there were in North Providence four small libraries in four school districts, two of them in the then village of

Pawtucket. In Smithfield was founded, in 1847, the Lonsdale Athenæum, with 900 volumes, and the Slatersville Lyceum, with 750 volumes. Between 1840 and 1850 there were small libraries at Globe Village, Woonsocket: at Hamlet, and at Bernon. The late Amasa Manton contributed money to many libraries in various towns, and they were given his name. Many of these, after conferring more or less benefit on the communities where they were established, either passed out of existence or became absorbed in later institutions.

In the town of Charlestown there was formed in the year 1849 a library association called The Charlestown Library Association, and a meeting of the subscribers was held on the 17th of January of that year. A committee was appointed to prepare a constitution, who duly reported. There were seventeen members at the beginning. The organization was perfected and placed on a substantial basis in the next year, largely through the generosity of Amasa Manton, who gave \$150, and twice that amount was otherwise raised. About 500 good books were purchased. Contrary to the constitution, the library was made itinerant for a time.

The first library in the town of Warren was established by the Warren Library Society, which was organized in 1798 by John Croade, Sylvester Child, Nathan M. Burr, John Child, John Fessenden, and others. This was known, also, as the Fessenden Library, perhaps because John Fessenden was librarian.

The town of Warwick has been prolific in libraries, most of which were early and small in influence. The Warwick Library Society was incorporated in 1804, and probably was directly connected with the Warwick West School Society. While it was in existence many years, it never assumed large proportions. It was probably founded mainly through the influence and effort of Col. Job Greene.¹

A second library was established probably near Apponaug, which was incorporated in 1806 under the title of the Warwick Central Library Society; it was doubtless connected with the Warwick Central School Society, incorporated, like the one before mentioned, in 1804.

The Old Warwick Library Association was organized December 4, 1847. The first names appearing on its record are those of William Warner, Nathaniel Durfee, Alfred Colburn, Rebecca Perkins, Nancy Lockwood, Samuel Low, and Amos Lockwood. The last meeting of this association, of which there is record, was held November 9, 1881. About the year 1851 the late Gov. John Francis Brown gave \$100 to this library for the purchase of books on condition that a like sum should be raised; this was accomplished mainly through the efforts of Rev. Alfred Colburn, of the Old Warwick Baptist church.

¹Col. Job Greene lived at Greenville (now called Centreville), and his is the only name appearing in the petition to the Legislature for a charter for this society.

The first library in the town of Bristol was established in 1798. A number subscribed for shares at \$5 each and a charter was granted at the May session of the Legislature. Of the 500 shares originally subscribed 300 were given by Col. Simeon Potter and 121 by Capt. Charles De Wolf. In honor of the principal donor the name of "The Potter Library Company" was adopted. Nearly all of the money subscribed was invested in books and a large and excellent collection was secured. Yearly dues of twenty-five cents from each member were collected. Thomas Richmond was the first librarian. The library was open only on Saturday afternoons. This company dissolved in 1837 and the property was divided among the shareholders.

At a later date a library was owned by the King Philip Fire Engine Company, in Bristol, to which the public had access. This was ultimately transferred to the library of the Young Men's Christian Association, and both were finally merged in the Rogers Free Library.

The Rogers Free Library was founded in Bristol in 1877, and the handsome stone library building was erected and completed in the same year and dedicated January 12, 1878. Robert Rogers was born in Newport in 1792 and there passed his youth and young manhood, serving a part of the period as clerk in the commission business. He settled in Bristol in 1815 and engaged in mercantile trade, in which he achieved success. During the later years of his life he frequently spoke of founding a library, and after his death this purpose was manifest in various papers left by him. His wife was formerly Maria De Wolf, daughter of William De Wolf, who was in entire sympathy with her husband's expressed intention in the matter. After becoming fully assured of her husband's plans, which had been thwarted by ill health and business cares, she undertook to carry them out as he intended. To this end she purchased a site on Hope street, Bristol, and supplied the means for erecting a building at an expense of \$20,000; she also donated to the library the private collection of books of Mr. Rogers, which had a value of \$3,000. Since its establishment the library has been liberally maintained as a free institution and has greatly increased its sphere of usefulness. The will of William Sanford Rogers, son of Robert, bequeathed \$4,000 to the library, the income of which was to be devoted to the purchase of books. Through this and other gifts the number of volumes has greatly increased.

It is proper, perhaps, in this connection to state that William Sanford Rogers also bequeathed \$50,000 to Brown University, in memory of his father and his uncle, Rev. Dr. William Rogers, both of whom were graduates of the institution. He gave, also, a large sum for the endowment of the Rogers High School, in Newport, as described on a preceding page of this work.

The Newport Historical Society possesses an excellent and valuable library and many relics of great historical importance. The society

was organized March 8, 1853. At a public meeting, held in the office of George C. Mason on the 14th of that month, the constitution was adopted and Dr. David King was chosen president; William Littlefield, vice-president; Robert J. Taylor, recording secretary; George C. Mason, corresponding secretary; Nathan H. Gould, treasurer; Benjamin B. Howland, librarian. The society was incorporated in 1854. Results of its work were not important until 1884, and were limited to the collection of a few books and some valuable manuscripts. In the year just named the society purchased the old Sabbatarian church building, erected in 1779, restored it to its early condition, and began very active work to carry out the purposes of the organization. A limited income is provided by an annual charge of \$2 to members, with a fee of \$50 for life memberships. The Charles H. Russell and the Mechanics' Association funds provide further income, which together have enabled the society to make excellent progress. In 1886 the Mechanics' Association voted to dissolve and transfer its funds to the historical society, in consideration of which the surviving members were made life members of the latter society. State Record Commissioner R. Hammett Tilley is the librarian, and to him is due a large share of the prosperity of the society in recent years.

The People's Library in Newport was incorporated in January, 1867. The inception of this valuable library was due to Christopher Townsend, a philanthropic native of Newport, who founded a small library at an earlier date. About the same date the citizens of Newport adopted measures to establish a library which should be wholly free to the public; about 3,000 volumes were procured and a charter incorporating the institution. Mr. Townsend determined to retain control and direction of the library founded by himself, and to that end purchased about 7,000 additional volumes of carefully selected works. This action led the authorities of the free library to turn over to him their collection, thus creating the People's Library, which was dedicated in 1870. At the time of Mr. Townsend's death, in 1881, the collection of books numbered 25,000 volumes, on which about \$80,000 had been expended.

One of the most valuable and useful libraries in the State is owned by the Rhode Island Historical Society, in Providence. This society had its inception at an accidental meeting held in the office of William R. Staples, on April 19, 1822. The great need of such a society had long been felt, not alone in Providence, but in surrounding cities and villages, to provide an organization under the authority of which a large quantity of most valuable historical material and relics could be permanently preserved. At the meeting named a committee was appointed to prepare a charter, and a numerous signed petition was presented to the General Assembly, which, at the June session of 1822, was granted. The first meeting of members and officers was held at

the old Manufacturers' Hotel on June 29, and a number of new members were admitted. Soon after the organization was perfected, the valuable Foster, the Brown, and the Hopkins manuscripts were presented to the society, with many files of newspapers and other historical material. All of these were kept at first in apartments in the old state house; from there they were removed to the business place of Brown & Ives, next to the Arcade. In 1824 a stone building was erected on Waterman street, which has served the purposes of the society many years. To accommodate the increasing stores of books, relics, etc., additions to the building were made to bring it to its existing form and dimensions. The most important enlargement was completed and dedicated in 1891. There are now accommodations for 100,000 volumes. The library has increased from 400 volumes and several manuscripts in 1839 to 20,000 volumes, 45,000 pamphlets, 15,000 manuscripts, and 2,000 curios in 1900. In 1826 there were 65 resident members; in 1839 there were 94; in 1876, there were 175, and in 1900, there were 331. The society has published many important works, including nine volumes of Collections, and its Quarterly since 1893. It is a noticeable fact that nearly all of the important books credited to Rhode Island authors have been written by members of this society. The presidents of the society have been: James Fenner, 1822-33; John Howland, 1833 to his death at 98 years of age; Albert G. Greene, 1855-68; Samuel G. Arnold, 1868-80; Zachariah Allen, incumbency closed by his death in 1882; Prof. William Gammell, incumbency closed by death in 1889; Horatio Rogers to 1896, and succeeded by John H. Stiness. The librarians have been: W. R. Staples, 1822-23; Walter R. Danforth, Joseph Howard, John G. Anthony, Albert G. Greene, 1826-36; W. R. Staples, George Baker, Thomas C. Hartshorn, George W. Greene (1849-51), Edwin M. Stone, 1851-80; Amos Perry, 1880 to 1899, when he was succeeded by Clarence S. Brigham.

The fine library of Brown University had its origin in an order sent by the corporation to Rev. Morgan Edwards, then in England, "to purchase such books as he shall think necessary at this time, not exceeding 20 pounds value". This is the only appropriation recorded previous to 1784, but doubtless books were donated during that period, for there was a library in 1776 that was removed into the country for safe-keeping during hostilities. Concerning the library in its early years, Hon. Asher Robbins wrote as follows:

"At the reorganization of the College, in the autumn of 1782, I was appointed to the office of tutor, and took charge of the Library as librarian. It was then kept in the east chamber on the second floor of the central building; the volumes it contained were quite limited in number—these mostly the primary editions of the works in folio and quarto."

Not long after this John Brown made it known to the corporation that he would subscribe an amount equal to whatever they could collect for enlargement of the library. This resulted in quite a large purchase of books in 1783. In the following year valuable donations were received, and the corporation appropriated \$350 for books. Others followed from year to year, including those from John Francis, Granville Sharp, Nicholas Brown (of a law library), Rev. Isaac Backus, of Middleborough, Mass., and many others that need not be mentioned here. In 1815 Nicholas Brown gave \$500 for purchase of books, and the will of Rev. William Richards, who died in 1818, bequeathed his library of about 1,300 volumes to the library. What is known as the subscription of 1825 was due to the efforts of Horatio Gates Bowen, who was librarian from 1824 to 1841. He collected subscriptions of \$840, which was expended for books, and from that time forward donations were reasonably frequent. What is known as the library fund was founded in 1831-2 through efforts to raise \$25,000. Subscriptions amounting to over \$19,000 were obtained, which money was placed at interest until it amounted to \$25,000, when it was invested in the stock of the Blackstone Canal Bank; the proceeds of this fund have since been devoted to the purposes proposed by the donors.

The library at the time the fund was raised was kept in an apartment in University Hall, which was wholly inadequate and unsatisfactory. To remedy this condition Nicholas Brown erected a beautiful edifice for a library and chapel, to which he gave the name Manning Hall; it was dedicated February 4, 1835. The first catalogue of the library was published in 1793, the list containing 2,173 volumes; the second, published in 1826, contained 5,818 volumes. In 1843 the collection had increased to 10,235 volumes, and twenty years later, in 1860, there were nearly 30,000 volumes. By the will of Henry B. Anthony the library, in 1884, came into possession of his collection of American poetry, consisting of about 5,000 volumes—a most complete and valuable acquisition. There are now (1900) about 110,000 volumes.

In the course of time Manning Hall became unsuited to the needs of the library, and, moreover, it was not a modern fire-proof structure. John Carter Brown came forward in February, 1860, and subscribed conditionally for the college the sum of \$25,000, \$15,000 of which was to be devoted to the erection of a new building. He had previously purchased the site at a cost of \$12,000, and when the conditions of the subscription had been met, in November, 1869, Mr. Brown deposited with the treasurer of the university, \$15,000. This founded the fund for the building, and before his death, in 1874, Mr. Brown donated the site and also provided in his will the further sum of \$50,000 to be added to what he had already given with its accumulations for the

building.¹ Steps were at once taken to begin the work of erecting the structure. The plans of Gen. William R. Walker were adopted and the work went forward under direction of a building committee of which Howland Hazard was chairman. The final report of this committee was made June 20, 1878, showing that the building was turned over to the university authorities on February 16 of that year, and the removal of the library into its spacious and handsome rooms was finished April 29. The whole value of the property is about \$120,000.

The Apponaug Free Library found its inception in the mind of Stephen T. Arnold, who, as early as 1867, suggested to Alfred A. Read, then owner of the Oriental Print Works, the need of such an institution in the community. Mr. Read encouraged Mr. Arnold to solicit aid in the village and promised to help the cause himself. Many contributions were received and a suitable room was rented and the library was opened. On February 18, 1885, a meeting of citizens was held to consider the propriety of establishing a free library, an undertaking that was urged by Mr. Arnold. It was voted upon favorably and a committee was appointed to solicit money and books. At another meeting in that month a code of by-laws and a constitution were adopted, and officers elected. The free library was opened in a room in Oriental Hall, but was subsequently given commodious quarters in the new town hall. It was chartered in 1898, and now contains 3,567 volumes.

Arlington Public Library—The first meeting of this association was held April 9, 1895, at which eleven of the incorporators were present, and the act of incorporation was accepted. By vote of the town council the use of the upper room of the district hall, in Arlington, was given to the library. Under the regulations the number of members reached fifty-six soon after the incorporation; membership is now secured by paying fifty cents annual dues. The town of Cranston gives the library \$700 annually, and its total income is about \$1,000. The number of volumes is 2,530, and a popular reading room is kept open.

Ashaway Free Library—At a meeting of the citizens of Ashaway, held October 29, 1871, a vote was taken and resulted favorably upon the organization of a library and reading room association. A

¹Through the wise generosity of the late John Nicholas Brown, son of John Carter Brown, this library is to become the owner of the valuable Brown collection of books. In American history it is one of the most complete in the whole country and has a value that has been estimated as high as \$1,000,000. This library was left by Mr. Brown in charge of his executors, with the expressed wish that it be kept open for the benefit of the public and retained together. At the same time the executors were given authority to donate the library to any institution they thought best, and a money bequest of \$150,000 was made for the erection of a library building. The announcement has been made while this work is in press that this priceless collection of books will go to Brown University library.

committee to prepare constitution and by-laws was appointed, which at a later meeting were adopted. Forty of the proposed one hundred shares were at once sold at \$5 per share, books were obtained and in the winter of 1871-2 the library was opened to the public. The association had a precarious existence until 1877, when a new constitution, in conformance with the State law, was adopted and the association was duly organized under the statutes and the constitution recorded in the office of the clerk of Hopkinton. Since that date aid has been regularly received from the State and the library has been freely used by the community. The increase of books has been steady and there are now over 5,000 volumes on the shelves.

The Auburn Public Library was organized in 1888, when about 200 books were placed before the public, having been contributed by friends of the young institution. The library was controlled by an association, the members of which had free use of books, while others paid a small fee. The institution was kept alive by a few enthusiastic workers until 1892, when it was made a free library and began receiving State aid, and now gets also \$1,000 annually from the town. The library contains 5,300 volumes and an associated reading room is of great benefit in the community.

The Barrington Library Association was formed during the ministry of Rev. Samuel Watson, in Christ's church (1798-1817), and mainly through his efforts. The books were kept in his house. The date of the beginning was in the very early years of the century, and it was chartered as The Barrington Library Society in 1806, with the right to hold property of the value of \$6,000. It finally declined and the books were scattered.

The Barrington Public Library was founded in 1880 through the personal efforts of Isaac F. Cady and David A. Waldron. Mr. Cady served as the first librarian, the library being then kept in a school house which Mr. Cady owned. In 1887 the town built a handsome structure which contains the town hall, clerk's office, council chamber, museum, and other apartments, besides ample accommodations for the library. The books were transferred to it in 1888. The number of volumes has increased to nearly 8,000; it has never received a bequest, but has been liberally maintained by private effort.

The Carolina Public Library came gradually into existence in the fall and winter of 1881, the first meeting for taking up the work being held November 28 of that year. A committee was appointed to prepare a constitution and by-laws, and another one to ascertain if the Carolina division of the old Charlestown Library Association would be transferred to the new organization; a third committee to solicit funds was also appointed. Officers were elected on December 5. The payment of one dollar secured membership in the association, and the

library and reading room were opened in apartments in the Carolina Mill Company's office, which with fuel, lights, etc., were given free by the company. The larger part of the 800 volumes with which the library opened were received from the old association just mentioned, and through many gifts and purchases the number has increased to a little more than 3,000. The towns of Richmond and Charlestown have for several years made small annual appropriations in aid of this library.

The Central Falls Free Public Library was established under the provisions of an act of the Assembly at the January session of 1882, conferring authority upon the Central Falls Fire District to raise by tax upon the district funds for the maintenance of such an institution. Previous to this time there had been feebly maintained a small library by Pacific Fire Engine Company, the books of which were given to the new organization. The library was opened in 1882 in a small room in an engine house with 867 volumes. After two years the sum of \$500 was voted annually by the town for library purposes and the institution rapidly extended its usefulness. In February, 1895, Central Falls was incorporated as a city and \$1,500 appropriated for library expenses, which sum has been annually appropriated since that time. The number of volumes is nearly 9,000. By the will of the late Stephen L. Adams a legacy of \$25,000 is left for the erection and maintenance of a public library, to be controlled by a board of three trustees. The library now receives \$200 annually from the State.

Crompton Free Library—In 1876 a free library was established at Crompton, and a building for its accommodation was erected wholly at the expense of Frank E. and Howard Richmond. When finished the building and its equipment were presented to the Crompton Company, which since that time has assumed all expenses of the library except what has been received from the State and the town of Warwick. The establishment of this library so soon after the destruction of the Phenix library, gave the people of that section access to good books, and supplied a demand which the old library unfortunately could not. The library was originally intended for the use of employees of the Crompton Company and residents of that village. It has been in continuous operation since it was opened for use and is located in a well-equipped and well-lighted building. The books now number over 5,000 and the library has an annual circulation of between 6,000 and 7,000.

East Greenwich Free Library.—With the founding of the East Greenwich Academy in 1804 the need of a local library became greater than formerly and measures were adopted to secure one. This resulted in the organization of the East Greenwich Social Library (association), which consisted of about the same persons interested

in founding the academy. Among them were Dr. Peter Turner, Stephen and Perry Arnold, David Pinniger, Jonathan Salisbury, Nathan Whiting, and other friends of education. A library was soon gathered in which were many well-chosen works; but interest in the undertaking ultimately waned and the books became scattered. The East Greenwich Free Library Association was established in March, 1869, by William Greene, George W. Greene, Daniel H. Greene, Joseph W. Congdon, Richard G. Howland, Silas R. Crane, Samuel M. Knowles, James T. Edwards, and others. The association organized March 23, 1869, with William W. Greene, president; George W. Greene, vice-president; J. T. Edwards, secretary; James H. Eldredge, treasurer; Joseph W. Congdon, librarian. In June, 1869, the Schroeder library was purchased for \$1,100, and in November of the same year a site was purchased, and at a meeting held February 7, 1870, the president advanced a proposition to erect a library building at a cost of \$5,000, of which he offered to pay one-half. This proposition was accepted and carried out, and the building was opened to the public in February, 1871. The library labored for a period in its early history under a charge of exclusiveness in the membership of the association; but after a few years the more stringent regulations were relaxed and greater prosperity followed. In 1877 Hon. William Greene declined the presidency and James H. Eldredge was chosen; he was succeeded in 1879 by Thomas W. Chace. More than 3,000 volumes were accumulated, which number has increased to nearly 6,000. In 1889 Dr. Charles J. Thurston bequeathed the library about \$13,000, which cleared up an indebtedness and placed it on a firm foundation. The funds were further increased in 1897 by a gift of \$1,000 from Mrs. John J. Fry.

East Providence Free Library.—In what is now East Providence (then in the town of Seekonk), Sept. 1, 1819, a library was founded by the Ladies' Reading and Library Society, composed largely of members of the Baptist and Congregational churches. Beginning with twenty-four books, which were kept in a small trunk and carried from house to house every two weeks, the number gradually increased until it reached 800 volumes. Meetings of the early members were held every two weeks and paid into the treasury three cents, or braided straw valued at that sum; while the members worked in these meetings, one of them read aloud. This society subsequently bore the title, the Female Benevolent Library Society, and still later, the Female Library Society. Again, upon reorganization in 1883, it took the name, the Seekonk and East Providence Library Association. In 1885 the books were divided, the Seekonk division taking its share of them, while the other section took its present name, the East Providence Free Library Association. The association was incorporated in 1886. At the time of the division there were on hand 1,014 volumes, which has

since increased to 4,000. The books and property are kept in rooms in the old town hall in East Providence, but a special building is in contemplation.

The Edgewood Free Public Library was an outgrowth of public sentiment that had long existed in the place, which finally crystallized in action in 1896. The necessary measures were adopted for organization and securing State and town aid. The institution was opened March 13, 1897, in a school house. The association promptly erected a suitable building, and in November of that year the books and property were removed thither. At the time of the opening there were on hand about 800 volumes, which number has increased to about 1,700.

Greenville Public Library (town of Smithfield) was chartered by act of the Assembly in January, 1882, and a suitable building was purchased in the center of the village and fitted up for its purpose. About 500 books were donated by the people of the town, with \$300 in money. In the following year the library was greatly benefited by receiving through William Winsor (who has been treasurer of the institution from the first) the entire library of the Lapham Institute. A reading room is connected with the library, both being wholly free; and from the situation of Greenville, near the south line of the town, its field includes parts of Johnston, Scituate, and Gloucester.

Harris Institute Library.—Library measures were adopted in Cumberland before the last century. A so-called Social Library was established in the northern part of Cumberland in 1792, and during about a quarter of a century a small library was maintained at Woonsocket, which developed into the Carrington Library. Its final establishment was due to repeated agitation in the public press, until in 1853 the late Edward Harris, George S. Wardwell and others took an active interest in the movement. Mr. Harris gave \$500 upon condition that a like amount should be contributed by other citizens; this was soon done. George S. Wardwell, then manager of the Hamlet Mills of the Carrington estate, now came forward with a proposition to donate another \$1,000, provided the library was given the name of Carrington; this proposition was accepted. With this fund was established the Carrington Library Association, of which Edward Harris was the first president. In the year 1855 the library contained 3,000 volumes, which were free to those who were members of the association upon payment of two dollars each per year. This library eventually became the property of the Harris Institute. As preliminary to his new plans for the good of the community, Edward Harris, in 1856-7, erected the Harris Institute building, and in 1863 obtained an act of Legislature incorporating Ariel Ballou, Oscar J. Rathbun, Joseph E. Cole, Samuel S. Foss, and Reuben G. Randall as The Harris Institute. In June of that year he presented these trustees with a deed of the building and property mentioned, which was valued at

\$70,000. In September, 1863, Dr. Ariel Ballou was elected president; R. J. Randall, secretary; O. J. Rathbun, treasurer. In 1865 Mr. Harris added to his original gift the sum of \$2,500 with which to purchase books, and about 4,000 volumes were added to the library. The library was formally opened in October, 1868, and was the first wholly free library in the State of Rhode Island. The absorption of the Carrington Library raised the number of volumes, and in 1878 there were 9,166, which number was increased nearly 3,000 during the next ten years. In 1873 a large reading room was opened in connection with the library, and both are well patronized. The first librarian was Miss Anna Ballou, who was succeeded by her sister. They occupied the position until 1873, when Mrs. Ellen M. Bosworth was appointed, and was succeeded in 1884 by Miss Anna Metcalf, the present librarian. The number of volumes is about 16,000.

Other libraries that were founded in the town of Cumberland many years ago were the Cumberland Library in 1812, the act of incorporation having been passed at the May session; the Cumberland Literary Society and Union Library, founded in 1820; the Burrillville Library Society, incorporated in 1822; the Woonsocket Falls Library, incorporated in 1830.

The Island Free Library, on Block Island, was established in the fall of 1875, through personal effort by several of the leading citizens. A small sum of money was obtained by solicitation, and many books were donated. In 1878 the library was placed under control of the town authorities and was made free to all town residents and to all public school teachers. Subsequently and several years ago the library was made wholly free, giving access to its shelves by many summer and transient residents. The number of volumes is about 3,000.

Jamestown Philomenian Library.—In 1849 was organized The Philomenian Library Association, funds for its purposes having been raised by subscription. The association was organized by the election of Geo. C. Carr, president; William A. Weeden, vice-president; John E. Watson, secretary; John S. Cottrell, treasurer; Robert H. Watson, librarian. This library was reorganized in 1876 under its present name, and after various removals was, in 1883, placed in the town hall, where it remained until 1898; at this time the town purchased a building for a permanent and exclusive library home. The library now contains 4,680 volumes.

Kingston Free Library.—In the year 1825 a Rev. Mr. Brown, of Kingston (town of South Kingstown), gathered among his interested friends about 300 volumes, which were kept in dwellings of the different librarians and given out after the custom of book clubs. In 1836 Elisha R. Potter established a circulating library with what then remained of these books, with additions made by him. This library was kept in the Congregational Church. In 1873 this church held a meet-

ing "to take into consideration the proposition to establish a reading room and library". This appears to have been consummated, and in 1877 its management was transferred to the church corporation, and the late Judge Potter made a trust deed to the society of such books as he had previously loaned the library. The library and reading room were incorporated in 1891 as the Kingston Free Library, and in 1893 Judge Potter's books were transferred to it. In 1895, the State having built a new court house near Kingston Station, a petition was presented to the General Assembly for the use of the old court house for the library. A perpetual lease was granted to the association and the people of the village expended \$1,400 in putting the historic structure erected in 1776 in repair. The current expenses of the library are now provided for by a tax of one dollar and the proceeds of an annual fair.

Lakewood Free Library—In 1834 Dr. Rowland Green, a Quaker preacher, induced a number of women of Old Warwick to form a society with the title of Old Warwick Female Temperance Society. He then presented the organization with a number of books which became the nucleus of a library. A year later the name of the society was changed to the Old Warwick Ladies' Library. Funds were raised by the Ladies' Circle of Industry, whose members met and knit hosiery, which was sold at a profit by local merchants. During this immediate period there was also a Gentlemen's Library in existence, and in 1857 an effort was made to consolidate the two; but it failed, the women insisting that as their library was free it would not be fair to give their books, acquired at the cost of so much labor, to a taxed library. This dissension led to a dissolution of the society and the books were distributed among the members.

The late Richard Greene was chiefly instrumental in gathering and preserving these volumes, enlarging the library, and in obtaining aid from the State under the law of 1875, and later from the town of Warwick, liberal appropriations for this and the other libraries of the town.¹

In 1890 about thirty residents of Lakewood were elected to membership in the old Library Association, and half of the library was removed thither and opened to the public in a small room of the chapel. About two years later, the town hall having meanwhile been erected, the upper story was secured as permanent home for the library, and J. A. Whitman contributed \$100 for its furnishing. Since that time the number of books has more than doubled.

Langworthy Free Library—After much consideration, prominent residents of the town of Hopkinton, particularly in the vicinity of Hope Valley, determined to found a free public library and took up

¹Address delivered by Henry L. Greene before the Providence Veterans' Historical Association, May 11, 1900.

the matter in earnest in 1887. Articles incorporating an association were adopted and organization was effected on February 18, 1888, under the title, the Langworthy Public Library, in honor of Joseph Langworthy, who contributed substantial aid to the institution. The library was opened and in its early years its privileges were extended to residents of the adjacent part of the town of Richmond. Rooms were fitted up in Odd Fellows' block and the opening took place on July 7, 1888, with 794 volumes on the shelves; to this number 510 were added during the first year, and since that date the number has increased to 5,041 volumes. In January, 1901, a juvenile department was added, allowing children of from nine to fourteen years to take books. The library is maintained by an annual appropriation of \$100 from the town and by voluntary contributions, with the State aid of about \$150 a year.

The League Library, in the town of Warwick, was founded in 1886, under the auspices of the Old Warwick League, an association of benevolent men formed for social and intellectual improvement in 1882. What is known as League Hall was erected in 1885. Books were purchased at the expense of \$368.68, and many others were received from friends of the association, with donations from various individuals. O. Perry Sarle, jr., was appointed librarian and the rooms were opened to the public February 25, 1886. At the close of the first year there were reported on hand 1,117 volumes, all catalogued. On March 11, 1889, Mr. Sarle resigned as librarian and Miss Mary A. Sarle was appointed. There are now in the library 3,480 volumes.

Little Compton Free Public Library Association was organized about 1845 by a number of shareholders who supplied the needed funds. Upon receiving \$100 from Amasa Manton the institution took the name of the Manton Social Library. At the time of the passage of the act granting State aid to libraries, this one had about 500 volumes, which were in storage and without benefit to the community. Frederick Brownell then called a meeting of stockholders, who were readily induced to give it to the town to aid in establishing a free public library. The gift was accepted and a committee appointed to purchase additional books. The town clerk acts as librarian and the books are kept in apartments adjoining his office. There are now 1,000 volumes on hand.

The Manton Library Association (Exeter)—One of the first towns to avail themselves of the generosity of the late Amasa Manton to establish libraries throughout the State was Exeter, where the Manton Library Association was established soon after his offer of aid was made. The collection of books was selected by Henry Barnard and Judge Elisha R. Potter, and with additions reached about 700 volumes. In course of time interest in the work declined, many books were lost and the

institution was neglected. On May 3, 1881, a few of the old members of the association met and voted to give the books to the town, under the law granting State aid. In annual town meeting, June 7, 1881, the gift was accepted and the library was placed in charge of the school committee. A librarian was appointed and the books removed to the town clerk's office on Pine Hill; only about 500 volumes could be found, but additions were made and now the number is a little more than 3,000. When the clerk's office was removed to its present location the library was taken with it. The library is rich in history, biography and has an abundance of fiction.

The Manville Library was incorporated in March, 1873, as a result of efforts made by Samuel Austin, of Providence, who had urged the subject upon the people of the village, while visiting there in 1872, and offered to donate about one hundred valuable books as a nucleus of a library. Soon afterward the association purchased a quantity of books from the Harris Institute Library, at Woonsocket, incurring considerable debt. The purchased books numbered 1,000 volumes. The debt was finally liquidated by the public-spirited citizens, and by their energy and State aid the institution now has about 2,500 volumes. The library is largely patronized by the English-speaking people, and to some extent by others.

Middletown Free Library was founded in January, 1848, as one of the many due to the labors of Henry Barnard. Associated with him in this town were Richard K. Randolph, Rev. Dr. Wayland, Rev. Charles T. Brooks, Rev. J. O. Chowles, and others. A number of donations of books were received and in 1851 the organization was changed into a stock company. In 1856 it was incorporated as The Miantonomi Circulating Library. The library was maintained until 1875, when the corporation transferred its property to Middletown Free Library Association. Donations and purchases of books were made from time to time until there are now 1,600 volumes in the library. The institution is about to benefit through the generosity of William E. Bailey and his sister, who have offered \$2,500 for the erection of a building for its permanent home.

The Narragansett Library Association—The first actual movement towards establishing a library at Peacedale, South Kingstown, was made by the Sons of Temperance in 1853. At Rocky Brook, February 11, a resolution was adopted by them that "whenever the inhabitants of this village and vicinity shall raise the sum of \$1,000 for the purpose of building a lecture hall or room, and establishing a public library for the use of the said inhabitants, that this division will and do hereby appropriate all funds which it has now, or may have invested up to the time of building said room or hall, and establishing said library, to be applied conjointly with said sum raised by the inhabitants for the purpose aforesaid". It was also resolved "that

the building or hall, and said Library shall be within one-half mile of the Peacedale post-office". A committee headed by the late Gen. Isaac P. Rodman was appointed to act under these resolutions. The Sons of Temperance then disbanded. A meeting was held May 25, 1855, in the Baptist church, which was addressed by Rowland G. Hazard, and a committee was appointed to ascertain how much money could be raised for building purposes. On June 9 the committee reported unfavorably on the building project, but recommended the establishment of a library. On October 25 a society was organized, a constitution adopted, and books ordered purchased. In 1856 there were in the library 900 volumes; this number was increased by 1875 to 1,569 volumes, when it became a free public library under the State law. In the winter of 1856-7 a hall was completed by the Peacedale Manufacturing Company for a lyceum, lectures, etc., in which library apartments were also provided. Here the books have since remained. The number of volumes is now more than 6,000. The title of the corporation is The Narragansett Library Association, and it receives, besides the income from the gift of the Sons of Temperance, the income from a bequest of \$3,000 made by Isaac Peace Hazard in 1879. In 1890, upon retirement of Rowland Hazard from the presidency, he made a like trust gift to the institution of \$3,000. It was always the wish of Rowland G. Hazard that this library should have an appropriate and permanent home. He died June 24, 1888, and in 1890 his sons, Rowland and John N., proceeded to carry the wish of their late father to consummation, by erecting the handsome Hazard Memorial Building, which was dedicated October 9, 1891. In 1892 the library received a gift of \$5,000 from Miss Anna Hazard, of Newport, and in 1898, by the will of the late Rowland Hazard, the institution received a bequest of \$20,000. There are about 8,000 volumes on the shelves.

The Natick Free Library was organized May 6, 1887, in accordance with its articles, and officers were elected. A suitable building was fitted up and given free of rent by the Natick Mills Company. A fund of money was raised by subscription and entertainments, and a first purchase of 500 volumes was made. In July, 1887, the library was opened to the public, with Stephen W. Thornton librarian. The number of volumes has since increased to 2,500. During recent years the library was kept open several evenings each week as a reading room.

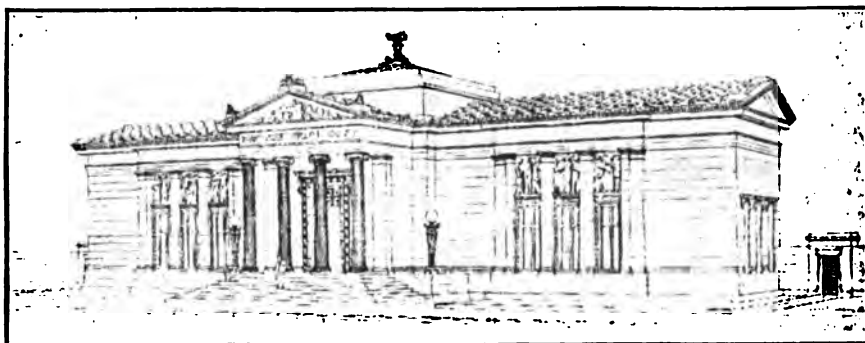
North Kingstown Free Library—For some time prior to 1890 the guild connected with St. Paul's Church at Wickford had maintained a small library. In the early part of that year a number of the members determined upon an effort to enlarge its scope and obtain aid from the State. To this end a series of resolutions was adopted making it a free library, and soon afterward it was named the Wickford Free Library. Its management was placed in charge of a com-

mittee of eight members. At that time there were 1,145 volumes, which had increased in 1898 to about 2,000. Upon the death of C. Allen Chadsey, of the village of Wickford, it was found that he had bequeathed to the town \$10,000 for the purpose of erecting a free library building and aiding in maintaining the institution. In 1898-9 the trustees elected by the Council under the provisions of chapter 43 of the general laws caused a building to be erected, arranged for the transfer to it of the books of the guild library, and the North Kingstown Free Library was opened to the public in the early part of 1899. The building is in the colonial style, and contains all the usual library accommodations, with two halls on the upper floor, one of which is devoted to the use of the North Kingstown Historical Society. The library now has 2,673 volumes.

Oaklawn Free Public Library—For the purpose of organizing a free library, a meeting was held Jan. 23, 1889, and on Feb. 27 following fourteen charter members signed the constitution of the Oaklawn Free Public Library Association. A small money contribution was made at the preliminary meeting, and a little later the first donation of books was received from Rev. W. A. Briggs. By January, 1896, there had been collected about 250 volumes and there was a small fund in the treasury; in the month named a book social was held, which resulted in gifts of 150 volumes. Other donations followed and the library was opened to the public May 20, 1896, with 850 volumes. The old school house is used as a library building.

Pawtucket Free Library—In Pawtucket was a library early in the last century. An act of incorporation was granted to the Pawtucket Library Society in 1809, but little further is known of it. The inception of the present Pawtucket Library was a suggestion made informally at a meeting of a debating club, which led to an application for a charter, which was granted by the Legislature in January, 1852. The first meeting of the incorporators and subscribers for stock was held on February 3, 1852, and Thomas K. King was elected the first president. A little more than \$1,000 were raised by the sale of about 200 shares, and the library of the Masonic Society was purchased as a foundation. The Central Falls library was then bought and added, the two associations thus becoming amalgamated. More than 200 volumes were donated from the library of Rev. George Taft, and about 200 more were donated by various persons. All this gave the library at the date of the first annual meeting (April 6, 1852) about 1,200 volumes. Suitable rooms were leased in the John B. Read block, which were occupied until 1876, when Gideon L. Spencer offered the association a five year lease of a large room in the Spencer block, then just erected, and the library was removed to it in April. This library was the first public library to inaugurate the open shelf system, and was introduced under the administra-

tion of Mrs. Minerva A. Sanders, its librarian. Meanwhile the association voted to transfer the library to the town for a public institution; the offer was accepted, the lease was also transferred and the present Pawtucket Free Public Library was established by charter. William F. Sayles was elected president, remaining in the office until his death, May 7, 1894. In January, 1888, the library was again removed, taking apartments in the Sheldon building, where it will remain until it occupies the handsome structure in course of erection for it. On June 1, 1898, Frederick Clark Sayles offered to the city a library building, to be called the Deborah Cook Sayles Library, as a memorial to his wife, with land sufficient for a site; the gift was without conditions and was accepted. The building is a beautiful example of pure Greek Ionic architecture and the material white granite. It contains the book room, reference room, periodical room, children's room, and newspaper room, all of which are large and well adapted to



PAWTUCKET PUBLIC LIBRARY.

their several purposes. There is also room for the public school teachers in which they can follow special lines of study, a large hall for lectures, and an antiquarian room.

Pawtucket Valley Free Library (The Howard Lyceum)—About 1850 some young men organized a debating club called the Howard Lyceum. Among them were many who became prominent citizens—George F. Wilson, Calvert B. Cottrell, David S. Harris, William S. Harris, Thomas P. Lamphear, Dr. John McGregor, Horace Clarke, Rev. George Uhler, Rev. E. H. Hatfield, and Henry L. and William R. Greene. There was then no public library in the vicinity of Phenix and the need of one was frequently discussed in the lyceum. Finally a meeting was called for September 7, 1851, where a committee was appointed to solicit subscriptions for the purchase of books. The Union Library Association was then formed and its library made a proprietary one, 270 shares being sold at one dollar each; from other

sources about \$125 were raised. One hundred books were donated by Benjamin C. Harris and Simon Henry Greene. A large number of lecturers were employed at different times down as late as 1859, and the library was largely maintained from their proceeds. The policy of keeping the library in a business block, without expense, proved an unfortunate one, for the building was three times burned, the last time March 3, 1873, when all of the library property was destroyed, and closing career of the institution for a period of eleven years.

In April, 1884, the association was re-organized and with the aid of town and State appropriations it entered again upon a career of usefulness. A year after its doors were opened fire destroyed a portion of its collection, but steps were at once taken to equip and start it again. The library was removed from the half burned building, and suitable quarters obtained in Lawton's block, Phenix, where it is now located. There are at present 5,437 volumes in the library.

Pontiac Free Library Association—An informal meeting was held in the village of Pontiac on August 6, 1884, to consider the expediency and ways and means of establishing a public library. A committee was there appointed, consisting of Rev. I. B. Thomas, David Alexander (superintendent of the Pontiac Mill), and Dr. D. O. King, with power to draw a constitution and, if sufficient interest was manifested, to report at another meeting. A verbal and favorable report was made at the next meeting and a soliciting committee was appointed, after which a constitution and by-laws were adopted. The organization was perfected on September 18, under the name of the Pontiac Free Library Association. Funds were raised by solicitation, entertainments, etc., books were purchased and received as gifts until the number of volumes is now more than 3,000, which are kept in commodious rooms in a building owned by the company and given rent free to the library.

The Riverside Free Public Library was founded largely through the efforts of Rev. William M. Chapin, of Barrington, who had laid the foundation of a church in that village. A few hundred volumes were collected and the library was opened in July, 1881. In 1883 the association was incorporated under the title, the Riverside Free Public Library Association. It was kept in limited apartments until 1892, when the association took steps to erect a suitable library building, which was finished and occupied in 1894. There are now about 4,000 volumes on the shelves.

Summit Free Library—The town of Coventry had two very early libraries, the history of which is not now accessible. One of these was established by the Coventry Library Society, which was incorporated in February, 1806, by Joseph Rice, Joseph Bowen, Enoch King, and others. Bowen's Hill had an early library to which the late Tully P. Bowen, of Providence, was a liberal contributor. Also, what

was called the Anthony Lyceum Library was chartered in January, 1868. The existing Summit Free Library was the result of a meeting held May 27, 1891, at which a soliciting committee was appointed, and another to prepare a constitution and by-laws; these latter were adopted at a meeting held June 27 and received forty-two signatures; officers were elected on July 6. The annual membership fee is fifty cents, and over 2,000 volumes have been gathered.

Union Public Library—Its predecessor of Tiverton was a so-called social library, established in March, 1820, by the United Society. A somewhat remarkable constitution, consisting of twenty-four articles, was drawn and adopted, which established rather exclusive conditions as to the kinds of books to be admitted, methods of admitting members. etc., which hampered the usefulness of the institution, and the last meeting of the society was held January 11, 1845. In March, 1860, the society reorganized, the stockholders voting to sell shares at one dollar each and to circulate books for five cents a week. A fair degree of prosperity followed until 1876, after which the library and its welfare were neglected. In 1889, through efforts of Elmer A. Wilcox, of Providence, and Mary C. Gray, of Tiverton Four Corners, the present Union Public Library was established, to which was given the books of the old library. It opened in April, 1889, and now has 2,239 volumes.

The Valley Falls Free Library Association was formed in 1880, and during a number of years successfully maintained a library and reading room. Finally interest declined and the institution was abandoned for a time, after which it was taken in charge and maintained a few years by the branch of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. In 1899 renewed interest was manifested in having a good library, and an organization with the same title as above given took the affairs of the institution in hand and has since maintained it successfully.

Watchemoket Free Public Library—In February, 1871, a number of women met in Lyceum Hall, on Watchemoket Square, East Providence, chiefly by request of Mrs. Rhoda R. Bassett, wife of Dr. Ahaz Bassett, and there a society was formed called the Ladies' Library Association, with Mrs. Bassett, president. The purpose formed was to make a collection of books for a circulating library, for which small fees would be charged, and ultimately to establish a free public library. Many books were gathered and the library began business in 1872, but was entirely burned in 1876; with money received for insurance another collection of books was purchased, and now the effort began to carry out the original free library project. In May, 1885, the Watchemoket Free Public Library was incorporated, the town of East Providence appropriating \$200, and the opening took place in January, 1886. In 1890 the library was removed to more

commodious apartments in the new town building. The institution now receives from the town \$500 annually and has on hand 5,870 volumes.

The Westerly Public Library Association—In connection with his great work upon the educational system of Rhode Island, Henry Barnard devoted much energy and effort to advancing library interests throughout the State. It was in 1847, while he was thus engaged, that some of the prominent citizens of the town of Westerly adopted measures for establishing a public library. Rev. Frederick Denison was chosen treasurer and \$1,100 were expended for books; these were selected by Mr. Barnard. Among those who took the



WESTERLY PUBLIC LIBRARY AND PARK.

requisite number of shares to insure the establishment of the library were Rowse Babcock, John Hobart Cross, Nathan F. Dixon, Thomas Perry, and O. M. Stillman. The name, Pawcatuck Library,¹ was adopted and the library began its successful career of half a century. At a meeting of the association on June 12, 1893, it was voted to give a bill of sale of all the books and other library property to the Westerly Memorial and Library Association upon receipt of a sum of money just sufficient to pay all claims against the old association. This transfer included 5,000 volumes and various pamphlets, etc.

¹It should be stated that the Pawcatuck Library Company was incorporated in October, 1797, but what it accomplished or how long it existed is not now known.

Through the generosity of the late Stephen Wilcox and an appropriation by the town of \$25,000, a commodious and handsome brick memorial building was erected, which was opened on August 15, 1894. It contains, besides the usual library accommodations, an assembly hall, two small halls for the use of the G. A. R. Posts, with a gymnasium, bowling alley and baths. All this is free to residents of the town and of Connecticut within the Pawcatuck voting district, excepting the bowling alley and baths, for which an annual charge is made. The original cost of the building was about \$85,000 and an important enlargement has since been made to it. The number of volumes has increased to 14,000, besides several thousand pamphlets and rare historical documents. In the year 1899 Mrs. Wilcox purchased the Rowse Babcock property in the village, comprising about eight acres of land and several buildings, and presented it to the Library Association for a public park; the library building occupies a site on this land.

Whitridge Hall Library, of Tiverton, was founded in 1875, and occupies a part of the building owned by the Whitridge Hall and Bowen Memorial Chapel Association; it is under charge of a committee of members of that association. The books of the Unitarian Sunday School and various contributions were opened to the public, and in 1881 the institution began receiving small annual appropriations from the State, which has enabled the directors to increase the number of volumes to over 4,000.

Willetteville Free Library—The plan of forming a free public library in Saunderstown, North Kingstown, originated in 1885 at a meeting of the so-called Circle for Mutual Improvement, a literary organization of young people. The undertaking was started and money raised by entertainments and solicitations, and on May 8, 1885, a good library was opened to the public, with one hundred standard bound books. The name, Willetteville Free Library was adopted and the institution was kept alive by energy and public spirit. In 1893 it was found that the library still lacked forty volumes of enough to obtain State aid, in which emergency George T. Baker, of Barrington, sent forty volumes of unbound Harper's Magazines from the library in that town, and the State appropriation of \$50 was received. The neat building occupied by the library was erected in 1891. There are now 1,429 volumes on the shelves.

H. P. Smith

PROVIDENCE PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

THE PROVIDENCE ATHENÆUM AND ITS PREDECESSORS.

(1) *The Providence Library, 1753 to 1836*—The beginning of the lending library as a permanent institution was due to the same causes in Providence as in Philadelphia, Newport and other towns in the American Colonies. A desire on the part of the more active spirits to read more widely than their individual resources would warrant, led them to send across the water for books. Benjamin Franklin was the moving spirit in the Philadelphia library enterprise of 1731, and he has left on record the causes and motives which led to the formation of the Philadelphia library. Stephen Hopkins was one of the leading spirits in the formation of the Providence Library, his name heading the list in the petition to the General Assembly in 1754, not long after the founding of the library association in 1753.

Like Franklin, Hopkins and his associates found no good bookseller's shop¹ in their own town at first, and, in consequence, "raised and sent to England a sum of money sufficient to purchase books to furnish a small library, and, before long, advanced to the point of making it a public subscription library". Like Franklin, also, they looked about for "a proper place to keep the books in". A promising depository which offered was the council chamber in the Providence Town House of that day (known and used also as a "Court House" and a "State House"), which stood on the site of the Meeting street school-house (so called) on Meeting street, next above the Friends' meeting-house. This proved, however, a delusive place of deposit, for the building was burned, with the books in it, on Christmas eve, in 1758. When the successor to this building was erected (the old "State House", so called, or, in legal writs, the "Sixth Judicial District Court House"), still standing on the lot stretching from Benefit street to North Main street), the library at once made its home there.² This was in 1764, and it so continued until 1816.

The early record-books of this library are still preserved in the archives of the Providence Athenæum (the "Register" and "Minute book", respectively). The earlier of these, the "Register", extends from 1753 to 1835,³ and opens with a copy of the subscription list, which had been circulated March 22, 1753, the names of the subscribers here being entered alphabetically. The first meeting of the subscribers was held December 15, 1753, at the "house of Joseph Angel". At a meeting held August 2, 1754, a committee headed by Stephen Hopkins

¹The first bookseller in Providence appears to have opened a shop about ten years later than this, in 1763, namely, Daniel Jenckes. His bookshop, according to the late Henry C. Dorr, was near the Great Bridge, at the sign of Shakespeare's Head. (Dorr's "Planting and growth of Providence", p. 197.)

²Sketch of the "Providence Library", at p. 27 of the "Appendix" to the 1st annual report of the "Athenæum", 1837.

³The other volume, (the "Minute book"), extends from 1774 to 1835.

was appointed, on "rules and orders". Nicholas Brown was appointed the first librarian. An absolutely complete roll of the successive librarians is perhaps not accessible, but the names of at least twenty are found between 1753 and 1835, comprising, among others, Silas Downer (the orator of the Sons of Liberty in 1768), David Rowland, Theodore Foster, George R. Burrill, Walter R. Danforth, Charles F. Tillinghast, and Horatio Gates Bowen.¹

The total number of volumes belonging to the library at the time of the fire, in 1758, is not known. About seventy of the treasures of the library, however, were at that time in the hands of readers, and were thus preserved.² An asterisk has been used to indicate these interesting survivors of a primitive period, not only in the manuscript "Catalogue" of the books belonging to the library in 1762 (entered at pages 40 to 56 of the manuscript "Register" mentioned above), but in the printed catalogue of 1768, which reprints the manuscript list. An earlier list is copied at pages 15 to 34 of the same volume. Some of these books also are still preserved on the shelves of the Providence Athenæum of to-day, as well as a copy of this printed catalogue of 1768.

The valuable library thus founded was apparently well cared for in its early years, but, like many other American institutions of the eighteenth century, it did not survive the American Revolution without serious detriment. It had, however, performed a useful service on the removal of Rhode Island College to Providence from Warren, in 1770. "On this occasion", to quote from the historical sketch prefixed to the "Charter" of 1818, by John Howland, "the Library Company offered the use of the books to the officers and students of that institution", until a library could be procured sufficient for it.³ (Page iv.) Some light is thrown on the conditions of the library's decline by Mr. Howland's remark that, "the doors being left open to accommodate the members of the Legislature, other persons, in the absence of the librarian, had access to the books", and many, he adds, "were lost".

This catalogue of 1768⁴ is a publication of uncommon significance, as showing the subjects and authors that interested the men of that day. It is entitled a "Catalogue of all the books belonging to the Providence Library". Providence: Waterman & Russell, 1768.

¹Mr. Bowen was also librarian of Brown University, 1824-40.

²Sketch of the "Providence Library" at p. 27 of the 1st annual report of the Athenæum.

³It appears, however, that the college possessed at least a small collection of books, at the time of removal. (Gould's "History of Brown University", p. 66-67.) The first librarian, John Dorrance, was appointed in 1773. (Koopman's "Historical catalogue of Brown University, 1764-1894", p. 19, 29.)

⁴This catalogue, which is a rare publication, is found in the Providence Athenæum and the John Carter Brown Library.

The library in 1768 contained full sets of Pope, Swift and Addison, the *Spectator*, the *Tatler*, and the *Guardian*. It contained Homer, Plato, Shakspeare, Milton and Bacon. History was represented by Thucydides, Xenophon, Plutarch, Sallust, Tacitus, Clarendon, Hume, and Burnet. Prince's "New England Chronology" appears to be the only work of American history comprised, except Herrera and La Hontan, which last entries would seem to show that there were critical scholars in the membership of this society. Other lines of reading are represented by Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Gay's "Beggar's Opera"; others by Coke, Vattel, Puffendorff, and Grotius, and Thurloe's "State papers"; others by Baker on the "Microscope", Woodward on "Fossils", Boerhave on "Chemistry", Sir Isaac Newton's "Principia", and Benjamin Franklin's "Experiments and observations on electricity", then of very recent publication. There was also a work, now very rare, entitled "Lex mercatoria rediviva".

On several occasions the Providence Library seemed likely to obtain a new lease of life. In 1798, for instance, a new act of incorporation was considered desirable, and it was also thought necessary, says Mr. Howland, "to adopt such other measures as might render the Institution more useful and respectable, and to bear some proportion to the progressive increase of the town". (Page iv.)

It appears from the act of incorporation in 1798 that the "Standing Committee" of the Providence Library Company consisted of Jabez Bowen, Moses Brown, William Richmond, John Smith, Nicholas Brown, Joseph Jenckes, and Paris Jenckes Tillinghast. The board of "Directors" comprised the above-named members, together with Joseph Tillinghast and Theodore Foster. (Charter of 1818, p. 7, 10.)

The new charter was granted at the October session, 1798, and soon afterwards "subscriptions were opened for new shares, for the purpose of increasing the library; and a considerable number of books" were obtained; but, it is added, experience proved that "the valuable objects contemplated by the liberal spirit of the Proprietors could not be realized while the Library remained in a place so inconvenient", to which the proprietors had access only a few hours in each week.

Accordingly, in 1816, measures were taken "to add to the Providence Library" a very respectable literary establishment which had been purchased by a number of gentlemen in this town, "and these gentlemen were admitted as Proprietors, on their transferring the same to the Corporation". It was at this time that the books were finally removed from the state house and transferred to the new library quarters. The charter was amended in 1817, and again in 1818, at which time the pamphlet, above quoted from, entitled "Charter and by-laws", was published¹ (including also a "Catalogue" of 28 pages).

From time to time a proposition looking to the erection of a separate
 "Voted that Mr. John Howland be requested to" . . . "cause a cata-

building was brought up. In 1809 an offer of a lot of land, "North of Angell Street", was made by Moses Brown. Later, a deed, dated Oct. 14, 1830, from the heirs of Nathan Waterman to the Providence Library Company, conveyed to the proprietors the Waterman homestead (now occupied by the University Club), at the corner of Benefit and Waterman streets, providing that if a library building should not be erected on the lot within the next five years, the deed should lapse.¹ On March 31, 1831, H. G. Bowen, Moses B. Ives and Charles F. Tillinghast were appointed a committee "to procure drafts and estimates of a building". On September 5, 1831, Zachariah Allen,² Moses B. Ives, and Richard J. Arnold were appointed a committee "to erect a building for a library". On October 13 of the same year this committee reported plans for a stone building, to cost about \$6,000, and their report was "approved," with the hope that the funds might be raised.

The conditions, however, were unfavorable for the continued prosperity of the Providence Library, especially in view of the fact that in this same year, 1831, a rival institution had been incorporated under the name of the "Providence Athenæum", its object being to provide a library more nearly up to date. The records of the next five years comprise repeated entries in regard to "treating with" the Athenæum Library; and the final entry on the minutebook is dated May 14, 1836, at which date the "meeting adjourned sine die". The officers of the Providence Library Company in this final year of its existence were as follows: Directors, Joseph Mauran, Joseph L. Tillinghast, Joseph K. Angell, Welcome A. Greene, William Giles Goddard, Richard J. Arnold, Zachariah Allen, Moses B. Ives, and Thomas B. Fenner. Treasurer, Allen O. Peck; secretary and librarian, Horatio Gates Bowen.

(2) *The "Providence Athenæum"*—(1831 to 1836.)

The existence of this institution was apparently due to the inadequacy of the efforts of the Providence Library to serve the public. Four names are mentioned in its act of incorporation, in 1831, as representing the organization,—Cyrus Butler,⁴ John Mackie, Charles Dyer, and Richard W. Greene. The officers elected at the first organ-

logue of the Books together with the Charter and amendments thereto to be published". "Minute book", Nov. 3, 1817.

¹It did lapse—no building having been erected by the year 1835.

²Mr. Allen's name appears in connection with library matters in Providence more than forty years later, as an organizer of the Providence Public Library, in 1871.

³The name borne by this early institution was not immediately duplicated by the new organization, which was known as "The Athensum". In 1850, however, this name was changed to "The Providence Athenæum."

⁴Founder of the Butler Hospital.

ization under the charter, June 18, 1831, were as follows: Tristram Burges,¹ president; John Mackie, first vice-president; Rev. Frederick A. Farley,² second vice-president; Thomas H. Webb, secretary; and John R. Bartlett,³ treasurer. This library was short-lived, as a separate organization, since steps were almost immediately taken looking to the consolidation of the two rival libraries.

(3) *The Movement for Uniting the Two Libraries.*

It is fortunate that such an enlightened view of the matter was taken by the representatives of the two libraries. "These institutions", to quote from one of the early accounts, "which had, for several years, divided the patronage and the sympathies of the community, generously relinquished their separate organization, that no obstacle might exist to a union". After several successive conferences the books of both libraries were purchased, and the sum total thus secured for the new library was about 4,080 volumes. Of these about 1,680 were purchased of the Providence Library Company (for the sum of \$1,000.00); and about 2,400 were purchased of the Providence Athenæum (for about \$4,000.00).

The signers of the call for the first of these conferences (fifty-nine in all) included Moses Brown, Charles F. Tillinghast, Benjamin Hoppin, Thomas H. Webb, Philip Allen, John Whipple, Moses B. Ives, Robert H. Ives, Nicholas Brown, John Carter Brown, and other well-known names. At this meeting, held January 25, 1836, Zachariah Allen was chosen chairman, and William S. Patten,⁴ secretary. A draught of an act of incorporation was laid before the meeting by William R. Staples,⁵ and was adopted in an amended form. The petition to the General Assembly for the passage of the charter is still preserved in print, and contains the signatures of 283 persons, many of them very well known in the life of the city of that day. The charter was granted by the General Assembly at the January session, in 1836, and the library was incorporated under the name of "The Athenæum". An amendment to the charter, in 1850, changed this name to "The Providence Athenæum".

¹Mr. Burges was a graduate from Rhode Island College, in the class of 1796, and served in the National House of Representatives, from Rhode Island, 1825-35.

²Mr. Farley was a graduate from Harvard College in the class of 1818, and was an eminent clergyman in Providence from 1828 to 1841.

³Mr. Bartlett was later connected with the John Carter Brown Library, as librarian, and served as Secretary of State of Rhode Island, from 1855 to 1872.

⁴Mr. Patten was a graduate from Brown University in the class of 1818, and served as Chancellor, from 1867 to 1873.

⁵Mr. Staples was a graduate from Brown University in the class of 1817, and served as chief justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court, 1854-56.

(4) *The Present Library (The Providence Athenæum)*
—1836 to 1901.

Shortly after the granting of the charter, the association was organized by the election of the following officers: President, John Pitman;¹ vice-president, Professor William Giles Goddard;² treasurer, William R. Staples; and secretary, Thomas White. Later in the same year Stephen Tripp was elected treasurer, in the place of William R. Staples; and Samuel W. Peckham in the place of Thomas White; and Mr. Peckham's connection with the institution continued unbroken until his death in 1895. The library was thrown open for use, October 10, 1836, in the second story of the Arcade, and in these quarters the library remained until July, 1838. The new institution was fortunate in its infancy in securing valuable gifts for its better accommodation. The Board of Directors received a communication from the heirs of the late Thomas Poynton Ives, on the 9th of March, 1836, offering "to furnish a lot of land opposite the Town House³ at the junction of Benefit and College streets, for the site of an edifice to be erected of stone or brick for the suitable accommodation of the Athenæum, Historical⁴ and Franklin⁵ societies—the lot and building to be owned by the Athenæum, and the other societies to be accommodated therein, upon terms to be agreed on". They also offered, the lot being valued by them at \$4,000, to pay \$6,000 towards the erection of such a building, and \$4,000 towards the purchase of books for the Athenæum, making a total of \$14,000, "upon condition that the sum of ten thousand dollars more be made up, to be applied to the same building, and four thousand dollars more towards the purchase of books, by the subscriptions of responsible persons (and exclusive of moneys received for shares to be sold in the Athenæum, prior to 1st of June next)".

When the building thus planned was completed and occupied, it was found that its cost was "about \$15,000", a sum which seems small at the present day. Yet it was sufficient at that time to erect a building which was not only creditable, but which has stood as a cherished architectural monument on two of the principal streets of the city from that day to this. The two other societies, which were named in connection with the Athenæum, were at that time in search of permanent quarters for their belongings. For many years, however, the Rhode Island Historical Society has occupied a building of its own, on Water-

¹Mr. Pitman was a graduate from Brown University in the class of 1799, and served as judge of the United States District Court, 1824-64.

²William Giles Goddard was a graduate from Brown University in the class of 1812, and was a member of the faculty of Brown University from 1825 to 1842.

³The second "Town House", (occupied from 1795 to 1832).

⁴The Rhode Island Historical Society was incorporated in 1822.

⁵The Providence Franklin Society, founded in 1821, under the name of "Philosophical Association", received its present name in 1823.

man street, next east of the Brown University Library, erected in 1844. The Providence Franklin Society, though still in hired quarters, has for many years had its museum, specimens, and other exhibits in its own hall, first at 27 North Main street (1849-79) and later at 54 North Main street (since 1879). This institution was founded in 1821, under the name of "The Philosophical Association"; and in 1823 it was incorporated under its present name. A lease of a part of its premises to the Providence Franklin Society, by the Providence Athenæum, was executed July 16, 1838; Owen Mason and George Baker signing in behalf of the latter, and John Pitman and Stephen Tripp in behalf of the Athenæum. The joint tenancy thus planned for did not prove



PROVIDENCE ATHENÆUM, ERECTED 1837.

permanent, and by 1849 the entire building was left in the possession of the Athenæum.

Ground was broken for this elegant structure April 4, 1837, and it was occupied July 16, 1838. The plans were drawn by William Strickland, of Philadelphia, assisted by Russell Warren. The building committee consisted of Zachariah Allen, John J. Stimson and William S. Patten, and the contractors were Samuel B. Durfee and Ebenezer Carpenter. "The building", to quote the description supplied by the building committee, "is of the Grecian Doric order of architecture, constructed of granite. It is forty-eight feet in width and seventy-eight feet in depth. The front

is fine hammered granite, from Quincy, Massachusetts, from the quarry owned by Nathaniel F. Potter, of Providence". . . . "The side-walls of the building are of granite, from Johnston, in this State, from a quarry of Amasa Sweet" (rough ashler). The cost of the entire work, including grounds, fences, etc., was \$18,897.18. The building was completed in 1838, and dedicatory exercises were held in the First Baptist meeting-house, on the afternoon of July 11. The principal address was by Dr. Francis Wayland, at that time the president of Brown University, and this address was subsequently published as a pamphlet.¹ The building was opened for the use of the proprietors July 16, 1838, the books having been removed from their temporary quarters in the Arcade.

While the general outline of the building has remained unchanged to the present day, various changes in detail have been rendered necessary. In 1841 the east room, then separated from the main room by a masonry partition, was finished, and occupied with books. In 1849 the Providence Franklin Society, by removing to other quarters, left the library free to occupy the basement rooms. In February, 1869, extensive changes were completed, which had occupied about five months. At this time the masonry partition on the principal story was entirely removed, making nearly the whole story one large room, as at present; and the gallery was added, increasing the shelving capacity very largely. In 1897 better accommodations were obtained by fitting up additional shelving in the basement, and especially by the addition of the attractive art room, at the west end, nearly on a level with the gallery, the latter being made possible by a generous gift of more than \$2,000 from Mrs. Thomas P. Shepard. In honor of the donor's father this room will henceforth be known as the "William Giles Goddard memorial room". Two reference rooms near the main entrance were fitted up respectively in 1894 and 1897, and an entrance to the building was for the first time provided at the eastern end in 1897. About this time also (in 1898) a "Children's Alcove" was established, electricity was introduced, the heating improved, the grounds put in better condition, and the very convenient room for bound volumes of periodicals finished for use, in the basement. Space was provided for more adequate bulletins of new books in 1895, and the card-catalogue cases were enlarged in 1901.

The policy of the library, as a shareholders' library, was clearly outlined from the beginning; and, while it has not attracted to itself gifts of so great magnitude as in the case of the Boston Athenæum, the service which it has rendered to the community is of much the same character and scope. When, in the middle of the century, the present

¹A discourse delivered at the opening of the Providence Athenæum, July 11, 1838, by Francis Wayland. Providence: Knowles, Vose & Company, 1838. 37 pages.

“public library” movement made its appearance in this country, the question of transforming the existing library into a free public library was several times seriously agitated in the case of the Boston Athenæum, but it does not appear that the suggestion was made in Providence with equal seriousness. But when, in 1878, the Providence Public Library opened its doors to the public, from no source did it receive a more hearty welcome than from the Providence Athenæum.

The first president of the library, in the reorganized form, in 1836, was John Pitman. His term of service extended over twenty years, to 1856, during which the amendment to the charter brought about the change, by which the library has since been known as “The Providence Athenæum”. His successors have been William S. Patten, 1856 to 1870; William Gammell,¹ 1870 to 1882; Alexander Farnum,² 1882 to 1883; Augustus Woodbury,³ 1883 to 1888; Samuel L. Caldwell,⁴ 1888 to 1890; Samuel W. Peckham,⁵ 1890 to 1895; Joseph C. Ely,⁶ 1895 to 1897; Royal C. Taft,⁷ 1897; and Alfred Stone,⁸ since 1897. The directors have comprised nearly one hundred and fifty of the most respected citizens of Providence.

The finances of a library like this are intimately connected with the number of shareholders, which for many years increased but slowly. In 1837 there were 292; in 1846, 429; in 1850, 516; in 1861, 584; in 1886, 696; in 1901, 771. There was expended in 1840 \$2,545.19; in 1850, \$5,009.22; in 1870, \$6,072.25; and in 1900, \$7,280.77.

The number of volumes was 4,162 in 1837; 10,485 in 1843; 20,267 in 1856; 40,734 in 1882; and 63,354 in 1901.

Among the earlier gifts to the library, in money, was one of \$10,000 from Alexander Duncan, for Cyrus Butler, in 1849. A gift of \$10,000 was received in 1866 from the executors of the late Captain Thomas

¹Professor Gammell was a graduate from Brown University in the class of 1831, and was a member of the faculty of Brown University from 1832 to 1864.

²Mr. Farnum was a graduate from Brown University in the class of 1852, and was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Providence Public Library from 1875 until his death, in 1884, serving as treasurer from 1876 to 1884.

³Rev. Dr. Woodbury was a graduate from the Harvard Divinity School in 1849, and was settled over the Westminster Church (Unitarian) in Providence from 1857 to 1892.

⁴Rev. Dr. Caldwell was a graduate from Waterville College (now Colby College), in the class of 1839, and was settled over the First Baptist Church, Providence, from 1858 to 1873. From 1873 to 1885 he was president of Vassar College.

⁵Mr. Peckham died in office in 1895, having witnessed nearly sixty years of the history of the library. He served as the first librarian, from 1836 to 1838, and held nearly every other position connected with the institution.

⁶Mr. Ely was a graduate from Brown University in the class of 1870, and was a lawyer of high standing and accomplishments.

⁷Mr. Taft served as governor of Rhode Island, 1888-1889.

⁸Mr. Stone served as secretary of the American Institute of Architects from 1893 to 1898; and was the architect of the Providence Public Library building, completed in 1900.

Poynton Ives (grandson of the Thomas Poynton Ives, mentioned above). In 1867 a considerable number of subscriptions were made for the increase of the permanent fund, amounting to \$3,285.

In 1880 the library received from the executors of the late Carrington Hoppin a book fund amounting to \$3,000, to be used for works on Italy and Italian art, and to be known as the "Carrington Hoppin fund". In 1889 it received from Thomas Poynton Ives Goddard a book fund of \$10,000, the income to be used for purchasing "standard works of permanent value".

From individual friends of the library also have been received a large number of special collections of books of exceptional value, from their illustrations or their rarity.

Besides the gradual increase in the collection of books, there was for many years a gratifying development of works of art. No art museum was to be found in Providence until a comparatively recent period in the history of the Providence Athenæum, and the gift of a copy of Stuart's portrait of Washington, in 1838, by Mr. Samuel Larned, was hailed with pleasure, and proved to be the first of a long line of gifts of paintings, busts and other works of art. One of the most noteworthy of these was the celebrated painting by Edward G. Malbone ("The hours"), secured by subscriptions from various friends of the library, and presented in 1854. The generous gift of Mrs. Thomas P. Shepard, in 1896, of more than \$2,000, already mentioned, for the "William Giles Goddard Memorial Room", has most fortunately provided an appropriate and attractive place for nearly all the library's art treasures, whether in the form of books, paintings, or other valuable objects.

The use of the books has represented a steady, though not rapid increase, comparing very favorably with the circulation of similar libraries elsewhere. There was a circulation of only 3,684 in 1837; but 12,506 in 1840; 19,707 in 1850; 22,902 in 1870; 40,800 in 1886; 53,327 in 1899; and 50,832 in 1900.

Catalogues have been published as follows: The first catalogue in 1837; the second (supplementary), in 1839; a consolidated catalogue in 1853, and a supplement to this last in 1862. Beginning in September, 1860, the annual additions to the library formed an appendix to the annual reports of the library until 1895, when the publication of a monthly "Bulletin" was begun. Reports have been published regularly since 1836.

The first librarian, who was also one of the latest presidents, was the late Samuel W. Peckham, elected in 1836, a man of uncommon gifts, whose whole active career may be said to have been intimately connected with the history of the Providence Athenæum, and who prepared the first catalogue. On the opening of the present building, in 1838, Stephen R. Weeden was chosen librarian, serving until 1845.

Mr. Weeden was succeeded by Thomas Hale Williams, who served until 1854. In this year Mr. Josiah Dunham Hedge was elected, whose term of service of twenty-five years is thus far the longest in the history of the library—from 1854 to 1879. Mr. Hedge was a graduate from Harvard College in the class of 1828, and a brother of Rev. Dr. Fred-eric Henry Hedge, for some time (1850-56) a distinguished clergyman in this city. Mr. Hedge was about forty-five years of age on assuming the duties of librarian, and was a man of uncommonly wide reading and profound learning. His administration was a period of notable development in the history of the library. His careful report, made April 6, 1868, on the condition of the library, is a valuable contribution to our knowledge of its chief departments. The present excellent development of such departments as the French and German literature received a notable impulse during Mr. Hedge's term of service through the efforts of Mr. Stephen H. Arnold, then a member of the Board of Trustees, and now vice-president. On Mr. Hedge's lamented death, in 1879, Mr. Daniel Beckwith succeeded, serving until 1894. Mr. Beckwith was a graduate from Brown University in the class of 1870, and, besides a wide acquaintance with literature, had had repeated opportunities of European travel and study. His administration was coincident with some of the most noteworthy stages of development in the American library movement, and was marked by the strengthening of several important departments. On Mr. Beckwith's resignation in 1894, due to long-continued ill health, Mr. Joseph Leroy Harrison, of Albany, N. Y., was elected his successor and is still in service. He was a member of the class of 1886, at Cornell University, and a graduate from the New York State Library School at Albany in 1893. The present librarian is pre-eminently a man with a genius for organization, and for the more helpful forms of library work; and his accession marks the application of distinctly modern methods to this ancient institution. Every department of the work has felt the impress of his vigorous policy, but chiefly the methods of the delivery desk and the administrative measures which have been undertaken. The library has been re-classified by the Dewey system, and the card-catalogue has been well advanced towards completion. The measure which is perhaps the most noteworthy one of his administration thus far, is the adoption of the constitution and new by-laws, in 1895. This admirable instrument, drawn up by the president, Mr. Joseph C. Ely, but also emphatically embodying the ideas and beliefs of the librarian, was immediately put into operation. It may almost be regarded as embodying the application of the most intelligent treatment thus far given, not merely to the problem of this particular library, but to American proprietary libraries in general. In the light of the principles here embodied, the modern proprietary library may be said to have "oriented" itself, and to have placed itself

in proper relations, not to the colonial community of two hundred and fifty years ago, but to the community of to-day, with its public library and other provisions for the public on a general scale. One of its most important results has been to assist in unifying the resources for serious study, accessible to the community, in the three largest libraries of the city. In all other co-operative measures, including those connected with the Providence Public Library, Mr. Harrison, the librarian of this library, has been intimately interested; and when in 1900 the "Co-operative Bulletin of the Providence Libraries" was established, he was appointed to the position of managing editor, a place which he still continues to fill. Mr. Harrison received a leave of absence in 1900, to accept an important appointment as the director in charge of the American Library Exhibit at the Paris Exposition, being absent at Paris for several months.

The present force comprises the following, in addition to the librarian: Grace F. Leonard, cataloguer; Mary H. Balch, delivery desk; Abbie C. Harkness, delivery desk; Everett T. Whitford, delivery desk (evenings); Catharine P. Whitaker, assistant.

The library is open daily, except Sundays and holidays, from 9 A. M. to 10 P. M. (except from about June 15 to September 20, when the library closes at 7 P. M.).

The present list of officers (Sept., 1901) comprises the following: Alfred Stone, president; Stephen H. Arnold, vice-president; Charles R. Stark, treasurer; Pardon S. Jastram, secretary; and the following directors: Augustus M. Lord, Theodore F. Green, Augustine Jones, Albert G. Harkness, Lorin M. Cook, Henry B. Gardner, W. Whitman Bailey, Frederick H. Jackson, Fletcher S. Mason, John C. Pegram, Howard M. Rice, Robert W. Burbank, and Horatio N. Campbell.

THE PROVIDENCE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

Introductory Sketch, 1871 to 1878.—The history of the Providence Public Library, as an institution in actual operation, dates only from February 4, 1878, on which day its doors were first opened to the public. The roots, however, of the movement leading to this event are to be looked for much earlier than 1878.

The manuscript records of the library, now in its archives, date from June 15, 1871, on which date the meeting of an informally chosen committee is recorded. Yet even before this there were occasional meetings of citizens informally held, at the Brown University Library and elsewhere, during the years 1870 and 1871. Of this preliminary movement the late Dr. Welcome O. Brown appears to have been one of the most determined promoters, and his relation to it is thus stated by Judge Stiness:

"About 1870, as the interest and membership in the Providence Franklin Society had been gradually decreasing, Welcome O. Brown,

M. D., its president, with other members, felt that it would be better to disband and put the society's library and valuable museum of natural history where they would be open to all. Dr. Brown conceived the idea of making these the nucleus of a public institution, and he worked zealously to create interest in the project. Zachariah Allen,¹ always large hearted and alive to the welfare of the community, gave his earnest help and strong influence; Reuben A. Guild, LL. D., librarian of Brown University, acted as a committee on publicity, and wrote many articles for the newspapers; while others, too many to name, cordially approved and aided the movement. Under this inspiration the Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers offered to contribute its library, and thus the beginning of a Free Library and Museum was at hand".²

It has sometimes been remarked as a striking fact that the outcome of this library movement in Providence, in its final form, was widely different from the aim at first proposed; and the successive changes in the charter certainly confirm the statement. Yet it should perhaps be noted also that there was at first much indefiniteness as to the question of what precise form was most desirable for the institution, and it would appear that, in Dr. Brown's mind, an institution of the type of the Cooper Institute³ in New York seemed the ideal one, while in Dr. Guild's mind the ideal type was that of the Boston Public Library.⁴ The former type was indeed embodied in the charter as first drawn, but the latter was recognized in the charter as amended.

That the Cooper Institute type should have been that first recognized would appear to have been inevitable from the nature of the various societies represented on the Joint Committee. These public-spirited organizations, each one of which had not merely an honored name, but much vigorous life behind it for at least a part of its history, included the following: The "Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers", founded in 1789, and organized for the purpose of promot-

¹Zachariah Allen, who died March 17, 1882, at the age of eighty-seven, was a graduate from Brown University in the class of 1813, and formed a most interesting link between the past and the present, having been active on committees of the Providence Library Company, which came to an end in 1836, and also one of the joint committee which organized the Providence Athenæum in the same year. Mr. Allen was a director of the Providence Athenæum in 1836-49 and 1865-69.

²Chief Justice Stiness's "Historical Sketch", at p. 39-40 of the pamphlet entitled "The new building of the Providence Public Library", (1901).

³The Cooper Institute is cited with emphatic approval at p. 17-18 of the pamphlet (prepared by a committee consisting of Zachariah Allen, Rev. Edwin M. Stone, and Dr. Welcome O. Brown), entitled "Free public library, art-gallery, and museum, in the City of Providence, R. I.", (1871).

⁴See the articles by Dr. Guild, in the Providence Journal, especially those of Sept. 10, 1874, and Oct. 30, 1875, emphasizing this point. Other articles by Dr. Guild, on the general subject of the proposed enterprise are found in the Providence Journal, June 17, 1871; June 13, 1872; Feb. 4, 1873, and Nov. 25, 1874; and in the Providence Press of Nov. 20, 1871. Dr. Guild died May 18, 1899.

ing manufacturing industries in Providence; the "Rhode Island Society for the Encouragement of Domestic Industry", organized in 1820, for similar purposes to those of the society just named, yet with an aim to include a wider local field; the "Rhode Island Horticultural Society", organized in 1845, for the development of local interest in fruits and flowers, and landscape gardening; the "Providence Franklin Society", organized in 1821, under the name of the "Philosophical Association", and under its present name in 1823, for the promotion of researches in natural science; and the "Franklin Lyceum", organized in 1831, for the purpose of debating questions of the day. Each one of these five societies¹ possessed "a local habitation", as a place for meeting, and possessed a library. One of them, the Providence Franklin Society, possessed a museum of natural history. There was, as yet, in Providence no art museum² to be represented on this joint committee, and this factor also was not lacking, in the general scheme proposed, since one public-spirited individual, the late Henry J. Steere, a member of one of these "society committees",³ expressed his willingness to contribute towards an art gallery as one of the features of the proposed institution. It will readily be seen, as stated by Judge Stiness, that, if the societies had joined under this charter as first proposed, "the combination would have been a sort of polytechnic institute. Agriculture and art, natural science and rhetoric, mechanical industries and horticulture would have been represented".⁴

The report adopted at the meeting of the above named Joint Committee early in 1871 is printed in full in one of the pamphlets already cited.⁵ Four resolutions were presented, one of which advocated applying for an act of incorporation; and accordingly there was presented and passed, at the January session of the Rhode Island General Assembly, in 1871, a charter, organizing the new institution under the corporate name of "The Board of Trustees of the Free Library, Art Gallery, and Museum, in the City of Providence"; and thus the shape which the movement should take was committed to the "polytechnic" type of institution.

The draft of this charter was prepared by a committee of unusual ability and efficiency, their names being entered in the following

¹Later, one other organization, the Providence Board of Trade, was represented in the membership of the Joint Committee (Dec. 8, 1871); and one of its representatives, Mr. William Binney, became one of the permanent members of the Board of Trustees. The Providence School Committee also took action on the subject, but without choosing a representative. "Free public library", p. 15.

²The Rhode Island School of Design was incorporated in 1877, and opened in 1878. The Providence Art Club also was founded in 1878, and incorporated in 1880.

³That of the Providence Franklin Society.

⁴"The new building of the Providence Public Library", p. 46.

⁵"Free public library", etc., p. 4-6; also at p. 40-42, of "The new building."

order, in the printed record: John R. Bartlett,¹ John H. Stiness,² William T. Nicholson,³ Henry Staples,⁴ and William F. Channing.⁵

As has been noted by all who have written on the subject, one of the names deserving to be borne in highest honor on the roll of the library's benefactors is that of Dr. W. O. Brown, without whose effective services as promoter the original impulse would have been wanting, but there is another name entitled to high honor in these early stages of the enterprise, in supplying the needed financial impulse. This is the name of Joseph A. Barker,⁶ who, as well as Dr. Brown, represented the Providence Franklin Society on the Joint Committee. Mr. Barker—to quote from Judge Durfee's account of the matter—"a man of moderate means, strongly emphasized some hopeful words which he uttered, with a pledge of \$10,000 for the enterprise; and" at a later meeting, "having come to the conclusion", as he informed his associates, "that he could not better dispose of his little property than by giving it for a free library", he promised \$15,000 more, on condition that \$75,000 should be contributed by others, and that the city should give a lot for the building".⁷

Mr. Barker's definite and carefully considered proposition had the effect of clarifying the ideas of those who were interested in the movement. It was clearly seen that their proposed enterprise, with its exceptionally comprehensive scope, was of so great magnitude that nothing short of a fund of \$100,000, exclusive of the land for the building, would be of any avail. With determination and courage the committees appointed to obtain subscriptions at once entered on their work. Some progress was made towards the desired end, but it was made slowly. A subscription of \$10,000 from the late Alexander Duncan and his wife was announced at a meeting held January 1,

¹John Russell Bartlett, secretary of the state of Rhode Island, from 1855 to 1872, was, for several years before his death, the librarian of the John Carter Library. Thirty-five years before thus assisting at the foundation of the Providence Public Library, he had performed a similar service as a member of a committee formed to organize the Providence Athenæum. Mr. Bartlett died May 28, 1886.

²Judge Stiness has served as a member of the Board of Trustees of this library since 1882; and has served as justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court since 1875, and chief justice since May, 1900.

³Mr. Nicholson served as a member of the Board of Trustees of this library from 1877 to his death, Oct. 17, 1893. He served as treasurer from 1884 to 1891.

⁴Mr. Staples was the son of Hon. William R. Staples, one of the founders of the Providence Athenæum.

⁵William Francis Channing, M. D., a son of Rev. Dr. William Ellery Channing, was a resident of Providence from 1861 to 1884. He died in Boston, March 19, 1901.

⁶Mr. Barker served as a member of the Board of Trustees of this library, from 1874 until his death, Oct. 14, 1892.

⁷Judge Durfee's address; p. 6 of "The new building".

1873; and on February 26 of the same year \$10,000 more, from the late William S. Slater,¹ was announced. At about the same time \$10,000 was subscribed by the late Mrs. Anna Richmond. Yet, up to the date of the meeting held November 13, 1874, more than three years after the passage of the act of incorporation, at which date the charter was formally adopted, and reports of progress were made, the sum total thus far secured was only \$44,500.

The next stage in the movement represents the enlightened action of men who were unwilling to see the results of so much effort come to nothing, through persistence in a policy which was now plainly hopeless. If the "polytechnic institute" type of organization must be admitted to be beyond our reach, with our limited funds—they apparently reasoned—surely the "public library" type is not an unattainable one. Largely through the conscientious efforts of Mr. Frank E. Richmond² (representing one of the three largest gifts already made) it was decided to apply for an amendment to the charter of 1871, providing chiefly³ for a public library; and this amendment was passed by the General Assembly at the January session, 1875. The significance of this amendment is thus characterized by Judge Durfee:

"The amendment was unquestionably wise, since it enabled the trustees to concentrate their efforts, and the contributors to contribute only to their favorite object. Nevertheless it also had an effect of a more dubious character. It took from the five societies, originally named in the act, their special interest in the undertaking, and consequently, as societies, they ceased to co-operate in it. Their earlier efforts, however, had been exceedingly valuable and merit our grateful recognition and remembrance".⁴

To this judgment a hearty assent must be given by all who have carefully studied the steps leading to the final establishment of the library. The action of those who saw the necessity for the amendment of 1875 was precisely the action needed at a critical moment in the history of the movement, but the action of the men who had directed the co-operation of the five societies up to this stage was of scarcely less vital importance to the existence of the institution. Enduring honor and gratitude are due to both.

With the change from one form of institution to another, involved

¹Mr. Slater's public-spirited beneficence was strikingly shown in the manufacturing villages in which he was chiefly interested. He served as the first president of this library, from 1874 until his death, May 28, 1882.

²Mr. Richmond served as a member of the Board of Trustees of this library from 1875 to 1892. He was the secretary of the board from 1874 to 1884, and the president from 1884 to 1892.

³Section 4 of the charter provides that the trustees "*may, if they shall see fit*" establish also the other features of the institution originally contemplated. ⁴Judge Durfee's address, at p. 8 of "The new building".

in the amended charter of 1875, came also the change in corporate name. The institution was no longer to be known as "The Board of Trustees of the Free Library, Art Gallery, and Museum in the City of Providence", but as the "Providence Public Library".¹ It is significant that, while, in respect to use, the institution was thus placed within the category of the ordinary American public library (of the type of the Boston Public Library), in respect to control it was left where it was before, outside of the city government—an incorporated institution, with only the mayor, *ex-officio*, representing the city officials in its membership, and filling its own vacancies, instead of having them filled by the City Council.

The granting of the amended charter of 1875 found the institution already in possession of an organization, the necessary officers having been elected under the original charter. At a "meeting of the contributors", held November 13, 1874,² for the purpose of accepting the charter of 1871, the four trustees entitled to hold office under the terms of that charter were duly chosen; and at a meeting of these trustees immediately afterwards, the following officers were elected: President, William S. Slater; and secretary, Frank E. Richmond. The trustees then chosen were the following: Alexander Duncan, William S. Slater, Mrs. Anna Richmond, and Joseph A. Barker. To these should be added the Mayor (chosen in accordance with the terms of the charter), the late Thomas A. Doyle, whose connection with the early stages of the library movement was an important one. Mayor Doyle gave much time and interest to the matter, presiding repeatedly at the preliminary meetings.

While it is true that, as societies, the five societies heretofore represented on the Joint Committee ceased to hold official connection with the institution after the charter amendment of 1875, yet individual members of these society committees still remained among the most cordial supporters of the library. The names of eight of them are found among the members of the Board of Trustees of the library.³

The object of the change in the charter was entirely a practical one, being intended as an effective measure to bring about a result which

¹The phraseology is that of "public library"; rather than "free Public library", as in some instances, but the library is none the less a free one. Beginning with the 8th annual report, in 1885, the "Form of bequest" has been printed on the outside of the rear cover of the annual reports, stating the exact phraseology of the library's name, "Providence Public Library."

²This date, therefore (1874), is appropriately taken as that of the founding of the library, and is the date inscribed on the library seal, designed for the library by Mr. Bertram G. Goodhue, of Boston, in 1895. See Judge Stiness's historical note on the "date of organization", at p. 7 of the 18th annual report.

³Namely, Joseph A. Barker, 1874-92; Thomas A. Doyle (Mayor), 1874-81, 1884-86; George A. Leete, 1875-84; Zachariah Allen, 1875-82; William Binney, 1875-83; Amos C. Barstow, 1875-77; William T. Nicholson, 1877-93; and John H. Stiness, since 1882.

had long been "hanging fire"; and there is perhaps no evidence to show whether in retaining the feature of independence of municipal control there was a full appreciation of its significance. It at once differentiated this "public library" from all the others in New England, with the possible exception of that at Waterbury, in Connecticut. The results have, however, been far-reaching. The funds at the disposal of the library have doubtless been more limited than might otherwise have been the case, but, on the other hand, there are few libraries in which questions of administration have been decided on a basis so unbiased and so absolutely free from political consideration as in this instance.

The next two or three years were in part devoted to securing the necessary funds for ensuring the opening of a library to the public, and partly to measures for actually carrying that design into execution. In order to attain this result there were needed books, a place for the books, and a librarian. An encouraging step in this direction was taken February 17, 1875, in accepting the offer of the Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers, one of the five societies which had been acting in co-operation. The proposition made by this society included the offer of "ten thousand dollars in money and books"; and, as it proved, the books comprised 6,222 volumes. When the library opened, these books formed about sixty per cent. of the total; and they were thus much more than a respectable nucleus. A vigorous step in advance was also taken, in the appointment, February 8, 1877, of a committee "to devise a plan for establishing a Public Library as soon as possible". The membership of this committee was worthy of the vigorous purpose embodied in the resolution, namely, Alexander Farnum, Joseph A. Barker, and Frank E. Richmond. Their report was made May 5, 1877. It embodied a careful canvass of all the funds in hand, \$73,750, and the suggestion of two possible locations in which to open the library. Following its adoption, a series of supplementary resolutions was adopted, creating an Executive Committee, a Finance Committee, and a Library Committee, and also providing for the election of a treasurer. A few days afterwards, May 7, 1877, the members of these committees were appointed by the president, and their work was at once vigorously prosecuted. Mr. Alexander Farnum had also been elected treasurer, Sept. 29, 1876. At the next meeting, May 19, 1877, Mr. Farnum, for the Library Committee, reported a nomination for the position of librarian; in accordance with which Mr. William E. Foster, a graduate of Brown University in the class of 1873, who had been engaged in library work in Massachusetts for four years, was elected. The librarian entered on his duties June 1, 1877, establishing himself for the present in rooms hitherto occupied by the Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers, in

the third story of the building at the south corner of Weybosset and Orange streets. The volumes owned by that association were carefully compared with lists of supplementary purchases to be made. These purchases were received and catalogued, with the volumes already in hand; and a system of classification was also adopted for the whole. One of the two locations which had been suggested was selected by a vote passed May 19, 1877, and this room, at the Exchange Place end of the second story of the Butler Exchange, was supplied with the necessary book-cases and other fittings. Lastly, two assistants and one messenger were engaged, the books transferred from the Weybosset street quarters to the new library quarters, and a date announced for opening the library to the public. On the evening of February 4, 1878, accordingly, the new quarters were thrown open to the public, with no formal exercises, but for inspection and for the issue of library cards; and on the following morning, February 5, 1878, the library was opened for circulation.

The library in operation, 1878 to 1901.—The library was thus placed at the disposal of the public; its development has depended on the efforts of those who have served it as officers. The first two presidents died in office, Mr. Slater in 1882, at the end of the library's fourth year, and Mr. Leete,¹ who succeeded him, two years later, in 1884. Mr. Leete was succeeded as president by Mr. Frank E. Richmond, who had for ten years discharged the duties of secretary. From this time on, by the new by-laws adopted at this time, the president has been the *ex-officio* chairman of all the standing committees. When Mr. Richmond, on account of confining business cares, withdrew from the Board of Trustees in 1892, he left behind an enviable record of unremitting service to the institution, as secretary and president, extending over nearly seventeen years. Mr. Richmond was succeeded as president, in 1892, by Hon. Thomas Durfee,² for many years chief justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court, who had been elected to membership in the board in 1888. His term of service as president at the time of his death, in 1901, was longer than any that had preceded it. The library has had but two secretaries in a period of nearly twenty-seven years. Mr. Frank E. Richmond's difficult and extraordinarily useful service as secretary extended from 1874 until his election as president in 1884, when he was succeeded by Mr. Edward I. Nickerson,³ who had been chosen a member of the Board of Trustees in 1878.

¹Mr. Leete, who at first represented Mr. Duncan's interests on the Board, was elected a member in 1875, serving until his death, April 12, 1884.

²Judge Durfee was a graduate from Brown University in the class of 1846; and served as chief justice from 1875 to 1891. He died June 6, 1901.

³Mr. Nickerson's membership in the board represented the bequest of \$10,000 from the late Joseph R. Brown, of the firm of Brown & Sharpe, who died July 23, 1876.

His secretaryship has already passed the seventeenth year, which is longer than the position of either president, secretary, or treasurer has been held by anyone else. The position is noteworthy in that respect, among libraries in general, and also for the increasing and absorbing demands on the time of the holder. The records of the board and also of the Executive Committee are a striking testimony to the exceptional interest and industry of this member of the board.

The Finances of the Library.—The Finance Committee.—The choice of the Board of Trustees for its first treasurer fell upon Mr. Alexander Farnum,¹ who had been elected a member of the board, at large, in 1875, at the first meeting held after the amendment of the charter. The choice was a most fortunate one, owing to Mr. Farnum's long experience with investments and the conducting of financial institutions on a large scale. Mr. Farnum's service as treasurer was of extraordinary value, and lasted until his death, in 1884, when he was succeeded by Mr. William T. Nicholson. Mr. Nicholson's service, which continued until 1891, was also of great value to the library, owing to his minute familiarity with all the details of organizing industry. The blank forms used in all the financial operations of the library, as well as the auditor's records, kept at the library, were devised by Mr. Nicholson, and bear witness to his intelligence and skill. Mr. Nicholson was succeeded in 1891 by Mr. Samuel H. Tingley,² at that time cashier of the Mechanics' National Bank, whose term of service has continued to the present time. Mr. H. E. Thurston was appointed assistant treasurer in 1897, and he still holds the position.

The library has also been most fortunate in the membership of its Finance Committee,³ one of the three "standing committees". Not until 1889 was any appropriation received from the city of Providence. The sum of \$125 was received from the State of Rhode Island at the end of the library's first year, in 1879, in virtue of the State law respecting public libraries, a sum which was increased to \$150 in 1880, as the number of volumes in the library increased, and in 1882 to \$200, beyond which, as a "maximum", the State could not go. All the resources of the library consequently during its first eleven years,

¹Mr. Farnum was a graduate from Brown University in the class of 1852, and served as speaker of the house, in the Rhode Island General Assembly, in 1865. He was a director of the Providence Athenæum, 1860-65, 1866-70, and was president in 1882. He died May 11, 1884.

²Mr. Tingley had been active as a member of the Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers.

³The members of the Finance Committee have comprised the following: William S. Slater, William Binney, George A. Leete, William T. Nicholson, John H. Stiness, Benjamin F. Thurston, Frank E. Richmond, Nicholas Sheldon, George F. Leete, Cornelius S. Sweetland, and Thomas Durfee.

From 1879 to 1885, there was also an Audit Committee, comprising the following: Joseph A. Barker, William T. Nicholson, George A. Leete, Edward I. Nickerson and Nicholas Sheldon.

with the exception of this small sum from the State, were drawn from the income of gifts and bequests,¹ as they accumulated, none too rapidly, it is true, but in a steady and almost continuous stream. It is therefore fortunate that the Finance Committee has from the start comprised men who were not only familiar with the most intelligent methods of investment, but who were also able to deal in an enlightened manner with the far more difficult problem of deciding when an institution is justified in encroaching on its capital. There has hardly been a time, from the financial report of March 12, 1878, until that of March 15, 1900, when this practical and ever-present question has not been seriously and anxiously debated. That the question has been decided so many times in the affirmative has, however, been due not only to the fact that the expenditure has been so urgently demanded at the time, but also to the strikingly significant fact that the library has never yet been without a promising financial future opening before it, even in its most seriously straitened years. From the generous bequest of Moses B. Lockwood,² antedating even the opening of the library, and paid over in 1882, to that of Henry L. Kendall,³ whose death occurred in 1883, and whose estate was settled in 1889, and still further to that of John Wilson Smith,⁴ who died in 1891, and whose bequest became partly available in 1893, and is expected to yield still more in future (as is also true of other estates still unsettled), the library has never been without a more or less definite assurance of funds to be provided in future. The Lockwood bequest comprised \$32,021.92; the Kendall bequest upwards of \$275,000 (the largest thus far), the Smith estate,⁵ thus far, \$101,856.45. With these generous gifts received from men no longer living should be mentioned that of the late John Nicholas Brown, for the purpose of completing the library building, a munificent gift footing up to \$268,595.75.

¹Mr. Joseph A. Barker's generous bequest, in 1877, was followed, five years later, by an offer, dated Aug. 5, 1882, to contribute \$10,000, if an equal sum is contributed by any other person or persons by the 1st of January following. A printed appeal to the public (a copy of which is annexed to the "Records", under March 14, 1883), was thereupon prepared and circulated. A few generous sums were subscribed, but the amount fell far short, and it was only through Mr. Barker's liberal construction of the offer that the Kendall bequest, announced in July, 1883, was regarded as complying with the conditions. Mr. Barker's subscription of \$10,000 was promptly paid over, on the payment of the first installment of the Kendall gift, in December, 1883.

²Mr. Lockwood, who was not only a public-spirited manufacturer of Providence, but an active member of the Providence Franklin Society, died May 13, 1872.

³Mr. Kendall was a distinguished citizen of Providence, actively engaged in manufacturing and financial enterprises, and died July 10, 1883, at the age of 78.

⁴Mr. Smith was a lawyer of much ability, averse to prominence, but of much keenness of discernment. He died Aug. 6, 1891, at the age of 78.

⁵From a bequest of Mr. Smith's sister, Miss Mary A. Smith, has also been received \$500.

Besides these larger amounts, there has been from year to year a succession of most generous and heartily appreciated gifts. In 1877, the year before the library was opened, there was received a gift of \$10,500 from Miss Julia Bullock; in 1878, a bequest of \$1,852.86 from Miss Fanny Mason; in 1879, \$1,000 from the late Henry J. Steere; in 1889, \$5,000 from the late Samuel M. Noyes; in 1891, \$2,000 from the late Albert J. Jones, as "book-funds"; in 1893, \$1,000 from Mrs. Benjamin F. Thurston (for industrial books); in 1895, \$1,000 from Misses Clara A. and Elizabeth A. Hoppin (for a "book-fund"); in 1896, \$1,000 from Mrs. Thomas P. Shepard (for the library building); in 1898, \$10,000 from the late B. B. Knight; and in the same year \$1,000 from Hon. Thomas Durfee, the president of the board,¹ and also in 1900 a bequest of \$10,000 from Mrs. Adah Steere. To these should be added also the other sums, varying in size, which represent a lively interest in the library on the part of the public, bringing up the entire amount paid in, from private generosity, to \$819,895.70.² It is true that a sum as large as this, received at one time, would have yielded a larger income than has ever yet been at the disposal of the library. It seems equally certain that these gifts would not have been received through these successive years if the library had not expended what it received in service to the public. It was the spectacle of a library, in actual operation, which appealed to the generosity of these donors.

As regards the question of municipal support, the library has passed through two successive stages. The first of these extended from the foundation of the library to the year 1889, and was characterized not only by entire independence of the municipal organization on the part of the library, but by the absence of any municipal appropriations for the library. In other words, the library had been in operation for eleven years, for the benefit of the citizens of Providence, before receiving a dollar of money from the city.

The second stage extends from 1889 to the present time, during which the library has remained on an equally independent basis, but has received each year an appropriation from the city, varying in amount, not "for the support of the library", but "in aid of" it.

¹There is not included in the above the amount left for the purposes of a public library by the will of the late Seth Padelford, dated Nov. 24, 1877, the conditions of which are not yet fulfilled, and are perhaps unlikely to be. The donor, who served as governor of Rhode Island, 1869-73, was a member of one of the "joint committees", in 1871, mentioned on p. 652, above.

²"Report of the Finance Committee", at p. 14-17 of the pamphlet, "The new building". Mrs. Steere's bequest was received later.

Steps have been taken for supplying the library with portraits of several of these generous donors. That of Henry L. Kendall was painted, in 1895, by John N. Arnold; that of John Wilson Smith in 1897, by Mr. Arnold; that of Alfred M. Williams in 1899, by Hugo Breul; and that of Joseph A. Barker, in 1900, by Miss Cornelia Green.

The steps leading to the action taken by the city government in 1889 represent a movement very natural in its development, and originating largely outside of the library. In November, 1888, the needs and claims of the library had been made the subject of discussion, at a gathering of some of the most influential citizens, at a dinner of the Providence Commercial Club. In the inaugural address of the incoming mayor, the late Hon. Henry R. Barker, January 7, 1889, attention was called to the needs of the library, and the Mayor asked the Council to consider whether the advantages conferred does not "warrant the giving of pecuniary aid thereto".¹ Meanwhile, a bill, prepared with the approval of the president and other members of the Board of Trustees of the library, had been introduced into the Rhode Island General Assembly, relating to appropriations for public libraries. In place of this bill, however, a later bill was substituted, the conditions of which were to apply only to this library, and which authorized the city of Providence, through its City Council, "to appropriate in any year a sum not exceeding twenty cents on each one thousand dollars of the ratable property of said city." This act was passed by the General Assembly, April 24, 1889. At a meeting of the Board of Trustees, April 27, 1889, a committee was appointed to present a petition to the City Council, requesting it to act in accordance with the provisions of the act of the General Assembly. This committee consisted of two members of the board, Messrs. Richmond and Nicholson, together with the librarian, Mr. Foster. The petition came before the City Council in the usual manner, and was referred to a "Joint Committee on the Public Library", which had been appointed January 11, 1889. This committee comprised the following members: Edward G. Burrows and Henry T. Root, of the Board of Aldermen, and Messrs. Samuel T. Douglas (chairman), John W. Angell, and Mortimer H. Hartwell, of the Common Council. The report of this committee was presented June 10, 1889.

In consequence of this recommendation, the City Council appropriated to this library \$3,500, July 8, 1889, and \$7,500, December 7, 1889. The sum of \$7,500 was appropriated the next year, 1890, and thereafter for the next four years, including 1894. In 1895 this annual sum was increased to \$10,000, a sum which was appropriated in each successive year until 1899. In 1900, after the occupation of the new building, the sum was again increased, making it \$20,000.

The sums received from the city of Providence have, from the start, been regarded as "for the general purposes of the library", and not for the erection of a library building. The question of receiving city aid for the latter purpose was not unnaturally several times under consideration, and the proposition at one time was urged with the

¹Mayor Barker's "Inaugural address", 1889, p. 14-15. Mayor Barker's service lasted from 1889 to 1891. He died March 17, 1901.

strong recommendation of the city officials; yet, as a matter of fact, the building was finally completed and occupied by the library without the expenditure of a dollar by the city for that purpose.

Growth of the Library.—The number of volumes in the library after two years, in 1880 (the year in which the removal was made from the Butler Exchange to the Snow street quarters), was 18,029, of which only about one-third had been purchased. In subsequent years this large percentage of gifts has been maintained, forming, in the report for the year 1900, two-thirds of the total.

Not only has this phase of the library's increase stood for a share of the whole which is proportionally large, but the nature of the accessions made to the library, either in the form of gifts, absolutely, or in some analogous manner, has been most noteworthy, from the very beginning. Of the various separate libraries in Providence several have been absorbed in the public library's collections,¹ including that of the Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers,² and that of the Franklin Lyceum,³ while that of the Rhode Island Soldiers' and Sailors' Historical Society,⁴ though preserved as a distinct "collection", has also become the property of the Providence Public Library, by gift from the society. Four others have been deposited within the walls of the Providence Public Library, thus adding to its resources for reference, while still remaining the property of the societies which deposited them, including those of the Rhode Island Medical Society,⁵ the Rhode Island Chapter of the American Institute of Architects,⁶ the Rhode Island Horticultural Society,⁷ and the Barnard Club,⁸ (an educational collection).⁹ Equally noteworthy have been the "collections" developed by private ownership, or in some

¹Beside those below mentioned, the larger part of the Woonasquatucket Library, one of the free libraries of the city, on being discontinued in 1889, was transferred to this library, (more than 600 volumes), as a gift from the Richmond Manufacturing Company.

²Six thousand, two hundred and twenty-two volumes, received in 1877.

³Three thousand and eighteen purchased in 1890. ("Records", June 6, 1890.)

⁴Six hundred and nine volumes, transferred to the custody of this library in June, 1900.

⁵More than fourteen thousand volumes, transferred to the library building in July, 1900. The first negotiations in regard to this transfer date from May 9, 1890; and the final papers were signed June 2, 1900.

⁶About seventy-five volumes, transferred to the library building in March, 1901.

⁷One hundred and forty-eight volumes, transferred to the library building in July, 1900.

⁸Sixty-eight volumes, transferred to the library building in November, 1900. With them is placed the library's own collection of works on education, bringing the total up to considerably more than one thousand volumes.

⁹Three other collections which are placed "on deposit" in the library building are "The George H. Smith collection of scrap-books relating to the American Civil War" (29 vols.) received in June, 1900, and still remaining the prop-

way representing private collecting, which have become the property of this library.

One of the earliest additions to the library, on any very large scale, was from the Cooke library. In 1883, this library, with several others, availed itself of the provisions of the will of the late Mr. Joseph J. Cooke,¹ in bidding, at auction sales, on the books from his private library, to the amount of \$5,000, thus securing an accession of 2,596 volumes. In 1884 another of the choice private libraries described in Judge Rogers's volume was sold at auction, namely, that of Mr. Alexander Farnum, an eminent member of the Board of Trustees of this library from 1875 until his death in 1884. From this sale 244 volumes were secured, representing, with scarcely an exception, the choicest editions² of the works purchased. In 1884, also, another of the choice libraries described by Judge Rogers was broken up, namely, that of Mr. Caleb Fiske Harris. Mr. Harris's collecting propensity led him in two different directions, each of them noteworthy. Within the limits of Providence is still preserved his unique collection of "American poetry", on the shelves of the Brown University Library. Within the same city is also preserved his invaluable collection on "Slavery and the Civil War", on the shelves of the Providence Public Library. This accession to the library, in 1884, is properly spoken of as a purchase, and yet when it is considered that out of the entire sum paid for it (\$2,000) the sum of \$1,909 was offered to the trustees as a gift³ for the express purpose of securing this collection, thus leaving only \$91 to be directly appropriated for it from the funds of the library, it almost requires to be classed as a gift. Of the various "collections" secured by the library during its first twenty-three years, this "Harris collection" still stands as, on the whole, the most noteworthy and most valuable. It is numbered among the eight libraries in the country which are richest in this department of history, the others being the Boston Public Library, the Boston Athenæum Library, the Massachu-

erty of Mr. Smith's heirs; the duplicate set of the Providence Journal (in part), comprising 139 volumes (the property of the Providence Journal Company), and the duplicate set of "Records of the North Burial Ground" (5 vols.), the property of the City of Providence.

¹Mr. Cooke, who died July 8, 1881, at the age of 68, was a book-collector of wide experience, as well as a man of prominence in public life.

²Notable instances are cited in the 7th annual report of the library, p. 4, foot-note b. Some of these sets are now on the shelves of the "Standard Library."

³As actually paid over, it amounted to \$2,221.47.

The circumstances of this gift are explained at p. 5 of the 7th annual report of the library, the money having accumulated from the "Hospital Library" fund at Portsmouth Grove, undertaken during the American Civil War, in 1862. As early as 1871, the proposition to transfer this fund to the public library had been discussed ("Records", Nov. 14, 1871), but no decisive action was taken until 1884. The papers relating to the fund are deposited in the archives of the library.

setts Historical Society Library, the Harvard College Library at Cambridge, the Cornell University Library at Ithaca, N. Y., the Oberlin College Library at Oberlin, O., and the Howard University Library at Washington, D. C. On the principle that "to him that hath shall be given", important additions have been made to this invaluable nucleus, including several hundred rare volumes and pamphlets on the subject from the heirs of the late Sullivan Dorr, in 1884; newspapers and periodicals from Mr. Henry G. Russell, in 1886, and the 609 volumes already mentioned, from the library of the Rhode Island Soldiers' and Sailors' Historical Society, in 1900, and still others from the heirs of Alphonso R. Janes in 1900. When, as has at least once been the case, all of the library's volumes (so far as practicable) on the same subjects have been brought in from the stack and placed with these collections, there is found to be a total of more than 11,500 volumes on this particular department of history. The departments of statistics and governmental administration were strengthened, in 1884, by a bequest of 1,323 volumes from Hon. Henry B. Anthony, United States senator from Rhode Island from 1859 to 1884; by 35 volumes from Miss M. J. Blackwood in 1887, and by about 1,800 volumes from the library of Dr. Edwin Miller Snow,¹ received from his widow in 1889; also by many volumes from Hon. Oscar Lapham in 1896. Another noteworthy gift is that of 670 volumes from Mr. Albert J. Jones,² a former citizen of Providence, who died at Florence, in Italy, in 1887, having, however, previously announced his intention of making this gift. The Jones library may be characterized as an Italian collection, all but about twenty-five of the books being in the Italian language, and most of the standard Italian authors being represented. In 1887 also were received from the Perkins Institution for the Blind, in South Boston, twenty-four volumes, printed in raised letters, for the blind, as the nucleus for the library's collection of these works, now numbering 138, which have carried pleasure to the minds of so many readers to whom the gift of sight is denied.³ In 1888 were received nine volumes, all of exceptional value, in the field of architectural study, presented to the library as a memorial of Paul D. Allen. In 1891 were received

¹Twelfth annual report, p. 8. Dr. Snow, who died Dec. 22, 1888, was a graduate from Brown University in the class of 1845, and served as Superintendent of Health, of Providence, from 1856 to 1884.

²The treasures of the Jones library are described by the librarian, in the Providence Journal, July 27, 1887. See also the 10th annual report of the library, p. 4-5. Mr. Jones, who died May 25, 1887, left also to this library, by will, two book-funds, of \$1,000.00 each, the incomes of which should be used respectively for Italian books, and books on art. Mr. Jones had also been a generous donor to the Providence Athenæum.

³By the generosity of a friend of the library (Mr. Robert Grieve), a beautifully printed catalogue of these books was published and distributed in 1900 ("List of books in raised type for the blind"). See also the Monthly Bulletin, v. 4, p. 89-91.

about 150 publications designated by the donor as "The Updike pamphlets", presented by Mr. Daniel Berkeley Updike,¹ of Boston. These volumes, representing the accumulations, through five successive generations of a single Rhode Island family, possess a value of no common order, as showing what matters occupied the attention of thinking men in Rhode Island from 1640 to 1820. In 1893 this library received from Mrs. Benjamin F. Thurston,² the widow of a former member of the Board of Trustees, a gift of \$1,000 to be spent outright for "books illustrating modern applications of science."

In 1894 a beginning was made in collecting the library's present collection of trade catalogues, which has become a group of works of exceptional value and utility, all of which, however, with but few exceptions, are gifts to the library. In 1896 the library received, by bequest, the very valuable private library of Mr. Alfred M. Williams.³ Mr. Williams had been a member of the Board of Trustees from 1888 until his death, on the Island of Saint Kitt's, March 9, 1896; and his library, numbering more than 3,000 volumes, was especially rich in folk lore and in Irish, Scotch, and Celtic literature. In 1898 the very useful working library of the late Mr. Robert Bonner was received as a gift from Mr. Bonner's family. This very welcome musical collection comprises about 500 musical scores, and about 150 volumes about music, and supplements in a very desirable manner the collection of several hundred musical scores, etc., which had already been purchased by the library in 1895. This collection has been still further supplemented by the large gift of music from Mr. Walter I. French, in 1900, bringing the collection of musical scores up to more than 1,500.⁴ The above list is far from exhaustive. Welcome gifts, smaller in amounts, but emphatically appreciated, have included the valuable collection of publications, largely bibliographical, presented by Mr. George T. Paine,⁵ in 1878, and continued to date; and a bibliographical gift of great value from Mr. Frederick A. Arnold, in 1901, with many another gift of great value and serviceableness from a multitude of different readers. One of the most delightful of the library's ex-

¹Mr. Updike, the founder of the Merrymount Press, in Boston, has not only bound these "pamphlets" in a most tasteful manner, but has placed inside each volume an appropriate label descriptive of the collection. See the 14th annual report of the library, p. 5.

²Mr. Thurston was a lawyer of great eminence, and widely known outside of his city and state. He served as a member of this board, from 1883, until his death, March 13, 1890.

³Mr. Williams, who was the editor in chief of the Providence Journal, from 1884 to 1891, also made this library his residuary legatee. See the Monthly Bulletin, v. 2, p. 75; also, R. S. Howland's "Memoir" of Mr. Williams, p. 26-28.

⁴This includes valuable gifts from Mr. John H. Mason and others.

⁵Mr. Paine served as one of the members of the "Joint committee," in 1874 representing the Providence Franklin Society. In 1883, the firm of which he is a member (the Akerman Co.), began the practice of an annual gift to this library, which has now amounted to a large sum.

periences, since occupying the new building, has been the great number of small gifts made by visitors immediately after visiting the building.

Mention has been made of the two book funds from the bequest of Mr. Albert J. Jones. A third was received in 1895 from Miss Clara A. Hoppin and Miss Elizabeth A. Hoppin, who in the sale of one of the lots on which the library building stands set apart \$1,000 as a fund whose income should be used for the purchase of books on art. In 1901 a fund of \$3,000 was received from a Providence lady who prefers to remain anonymous, though already one of the library's generous benefactors, the income of which shall be used "for the purchase of books", but without specifying any classes of books.

The New Building.—A detailed account of the library building, completed in 1900, and of the steps leading to it will be found in the pamphlet published in 1901, entitled "The new building of the Providence Public Library".

The essential characteristic of the library scheme advocated in the years 1871 to 1875 by Dr. Welcome O. Brown and his associates was the grouping of widely different collections of books under one roof. When it is remembered that, of the separate libraries established in Providence at the time that this library was opened in 1878, three are now a part of this library in its new building, and three others are deposited under its roof, it would at first seem that there had been a return to the "polytechnic" idea. There is, however, this difference, that, while the public library was at first only one feature among half a dozen, it has here been recognized as indisputably the dominant feature, and these others are valuable in so far as they minister to it and facilitate its development.

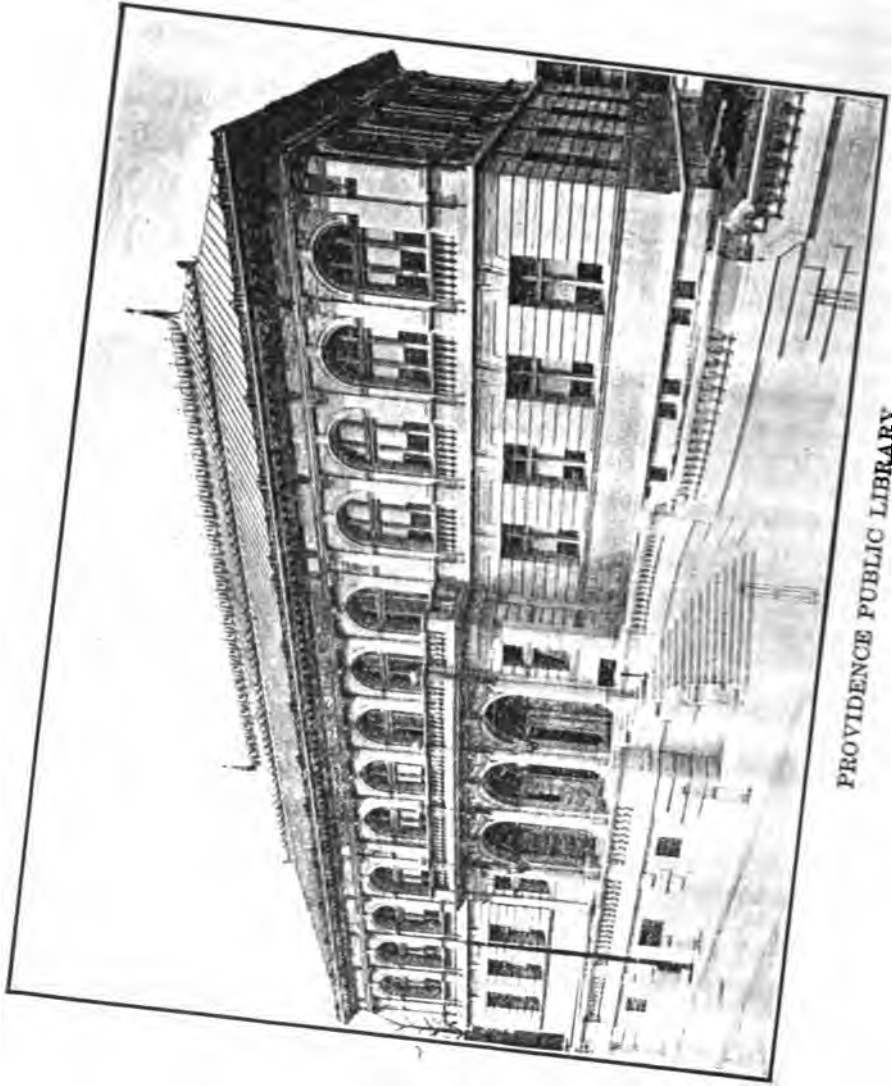
In this naturally evolved relation of the two, lies the promise of that wider development which is sure to open before a public library like this in the future.¹

THE OLNEYVILLE FREE LIBRARY.

This free library, organized in 1875, stood until 1898 within the limits of the town of Johnston, but is now one of the free public libraries of the city of Providence, this part of Johnston having been annexed to the city. It is under the control of the Olneyville Free Library Association.

The reading room and library were first opened to the public

¹Owing to need of condensation, the following items in regard to the Providence Public Library are here presented in the briefest possible form: Present officers, President (vacant by death of Judge Durfee): Secretary, Edward I. Nickerson; Treasurer, Samuel H. Tingley; Assistant Treasurer, H. E. Thurston; Librarian, William E. Foster. Present number of volumes, January 1, 1901, 98,868, of which nearly all are catalogued in print in the "Finding List" and "Author Index," (down to March, 1900). Circulation in 1900, 106,452. Cost of maintenance, 1900, \$27,982.02. Location of building, Washington street, corner



PROVIDENCE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

February 20, 1875, the nucleus of the library being fifty volumes given by the Sunday School of Grace Church in Providence. The number of volumes increased slowly. There were 600 in 1877, 1,500 in 1887, and in 1901 there are 8,044. The library was at first opened in the building at No. 12 Hartford avenue, and was afterwards for some time in the Irons Block; but in 1891 the attractive Library Building, an interesting example of mediæval Flemish architecture, was erected by the Library Association in a commanding portion of Olneyville square from plans by Stone, Carpenter & Willson, of Providence. The library has since then found a permanent home within its walls, occupying a part of the second story, the remainder of the building being rented for offices and other purposes.

The correction of boundary lines, which was effected by the annexation act of 1898, was an exchange of unnatural conditions for natural ones, the former boundary running through a thickly settled territory possessing as much community of interests as is the case with the territory through which passes the former boundary between Boston and Roxbury. In the work of the Providence Public Library the artificial nature of this barrier was recognized from the very first. From time to time suggestions were made for extending the privileges of the registration to this part of Johnston. The case is stated in the 13th annual report of the Providence Public Library (1890) as follows: "The Olneyville Free Library, situated as it is on the very edge of the city limits, though having no organic connection with this library (the Providence Public Library), performs many of the functions of a branch library. Although the building stands within the limits of the town of Johnston, the greater number of the borrowers—about sixty per cent.—are residents of Providence. The library is used constantly and largely—as this library is—by the teachers and pupils of those public schools of Providence which are situated nearest the Johnston line" (*i. e.*, the Bridgham Street, Federal Street, and Academy Avenue grammar schools, and since then the Messer Street Grammar School) "in connection with their studies. The library acts as a feeder to this library, as a branch to the Boston Public Library does to the main library, and the coming of some reader to this library who says that he has been referred here from the Olneyville Free Library for works of a more special character than are contained therein, is a matter of frequent occurrence. Repeatedly also references on special subjects posted at this library have been posted there also".¹ In this year also (1890)

Greene street. Building occupied March 15, 1900; cost. \$460,000; architects, Stone, Carpenter & Willson. The building is open every day in the year; from 10 A. M. to 9 P. M. on ordinary days, and from 2 to 9 P. M. on Sundays and holidays.

¹Thirteenth annual report of the Providence Public Library, p. 12.

about 2,200 volumes received by the Providence Public Library from the sale of the Franklin Lyceum Library, being duplicates of works already in this library, were given to the Olneyville Free Library. The community of interests was regarded as in every way very close. Accordingly, in 1891, the Board of Trustees of the Providence Public Library extended its privileges to all residents within a definitely specified territory on the Johnston side of the line. Registration slips were signed by these residents, and also signed by the librarian of the Olneyville Free Library, and, on being presented at the Providence Public Library, cards were accordingly issued to the readers.

The Olneyville Free Library was an outgrowth of the peculiar local conditions. The community that it was designed to benefit was distinctively a mill population, and the first founders of the library were philanthropic persons, including the proprietors of the mills themselves. The library has always been maintained—as the Providence Public Library has been—by private generosity for the most part, assisted in part by municipal appropriations. During the twenty-three years in which the Olneyville Free Library remained in the town of Johnston it received a municipal appropriation from that town only in the years 1879 to 1895, inclusive.

The work of the Olneyville Free Library has from the first been of a peculiarly interesting nature. The present librarian, Mrs. Harriet H. Richardson, was appointed in 1887, and brought to the library a rare endowment of sympathetic insight and devotion to the details of a confining but infinitely fascinating work. Successive classes of boys and girls, and of older readers as well, will remember such a guide and friend with affection. The use of this collection of books has always been large, proportionally, reaching 20,322 in 1894. In 1900 it was 13,242.

When the annexation was effected, in 1898, the natural and obvious step would have been to make the Olneyville Free Library a definitely recognized branch of the Providence Public Library. That this has not been done is hardly to be accounted for, except on the ground of the painful inadequacy of funds by which both institutions are embarrassed.

The Olneyville Free Library is open daily, from 2 to 9, and also on Sundays.

The librarians, from the beginning, have included the following: Miss F. Wirsch, 1875 to 1885; Albert Rider, 1885 to 1886; Nathan M. Wright, January to November, 1886; Miss Sarah Potter, 1886 to 1887; and Mrs. Harriet H. Richardson, 1887 to the present time (1901). The present trustees are as follows: W. A. H. Grant, president; Dr. A. H. Longfellow, vice-president; Dr. Frank A. Twitchell, treasurer; Frank A. Spratt, secretary. Trustees: James

A. Pirce, William S. Steere, Edward F. Sibley, John E. Bowen, Miss S. J. Eddy, John T. Collison, Thomas Cloxton, Thomas Wilkinson.

The origin of the institution is largely due to Miss Sarah J. Eddy, and Miss Rosamond R. Leavens, who have also been among the most constant supporters of the library. The selection of the books has been chiefly in the hands of Miss Leavens.

THE UNION FOR CHRISTIAN WORK LIBRARY.

The Union for Christian Work, as its name indicates, is an organization formed for other purposes than that of a library; and yet a library has from the first been one of its main features. Moreover, although the membership of the organization which supports it has always been chiefly of one form of religious belief, yet its library has always been free to the entire community. This organization (supported by those who are connected with churches of the so-called Liberal faiths) was founded in May, 1868, having evidently been modeled on the analogous institution in Boston, known as the Young Men's Christian Union, which was organized in 1851.

The library plays its part, and a most effective part, in the general scheme of an institution which has comprised a "boys' club", a "fruit and flower mission", "fresh air outings for invalids and others", and "the distribution of reading to seamen and others", in suburbs remote from libraries.

It has occupied quarters, since October, 1868, in the second story of the building at 151 Weybosset street (the west corner of Eddy street). The library now numbers 5,362 volumes (December 31, 1900), and is open daily, from 3 to 9 P. M., except in July and August, when the work is done on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 4 to 8 P. M. It began the circulation of books in 1869, and has since continued it. During the year 1900, 11,400 volumes were circulated, the number of different readers drawing them being about 1,500.

The hours of the reading room connected with the library are the same as in the case of the library, with the addition of Sundays and four of the holidays. The reading room is open on Sundays from 2 to 9 P. M., except in June, July, August, and September. It is to be gratefully remembered that this library opened its reading room on Sunday, October 5, 1884—earlier than any other in Providence.

Like other libraries, public and otherwise, the distribution of reading no longer desired by its original owners, forms a part of the work of this institution.

One of the members, as stated in the "Manual" for 1900, "distributes regularly in families, endeavoring to counteract the taste for the cheap, trashy stuff" found in so many homes. "Some of our school-teachers", also, it is stated, "in the more outlying districts have

been of assistance in indicating localities where our gifts of reading matter are proving helpful auxiliaries to right living".

The work of the "Boys' Room", opened December 3, 1870, has recently been merged in one of larger scope, established by the National Boys' Club Association. The "Boys' Club" is now installed in separate quarters, in the building directly opposite, on the south corner of Weybosset and Eddy streets; and the Board of Control includes several members of the Union.

The work of the Union for Christian Work throughout all its different channels is characterized by an enlightened sympathy which is beyond praise. The librarians, from the beginning, have included the following: Miss Juliet E. Graves, 1869-79; Mrs. Martha W. Greene, 1879-80; Mrs. Eliza J. Lee, 1880-88; Miss Mary C. Lee, 1888-92; Miss L. Sophia Tingley, 1892; and Mrs. Anna M. Arnold, from 1892 to the present time.

The other officers of the Union at present are as follows: President, Zephaniah Brown; secretary, Miss C. K. Clarke; treasurer, William T. Crandell. Miss Katharine H. Austin has rendered invaluable service from the beginning, as did also the late William M. Bailey, Jr.

William E. Foster