

READ MORE BOOKS— Use the Library More

Mr. A. P. Sandles:

Of all cultural advantages it is the printed page that best serves the farmer. Have we an especially able teacher, preacher, doctor, editor, the city seems to just naturally reach out and take him from us. Even the reels of the moving picture show that comes to our villages have been run so many times as to be blurred beyond recognition. But the printed page reaches us of the back country in undiminished excellence. As one with first-hand knowledge of the rural mails I will state that no other class has better publications. Think, fellow readers, how many tens of thousands of country families are every week brightened and instructed by the weekly visits of the Toledo Blade. What city man can read a better digest of the news or be better informed in sound American principles than we, whether we live near a big city or ten miles from the nearest town?

Thus it is that of all educational institutions none should be more used by the farmer than the library. In the winter season, the only reading time for any country people except the drones, there should be 50 times the use of library facilities which we now find. What then, is the matter? Where local libraries exist it is neither ignorance on the part of farm people nor yet unwillingness of the library to serve, but just simply the lack of convenient, inexpensive means to borrow and return the books, when they are desired. But how about the rural delivery? It passes the door every work day in the year. But, by local parcel post it costs an average of six cents each way for the book, and few of us want to pay 12 cents just to read a book and return it. What we want, what the Farm and Library association have endorsed is just to have the books go locally for a cent or two.

Then the books would go. I have tried it out and found they would move freely at this rate. The telephone helps out splendidly to connect library with farm home. The farmer's wife and children have just as good reading as the children of New York or Chicago. As to the rural delivery, my experience showed that it is perfectly adapted to this purpose, mail pouches, boxes and all. The revenue thus gotten would be net gain, as the rural delivery is running so far below capacity.

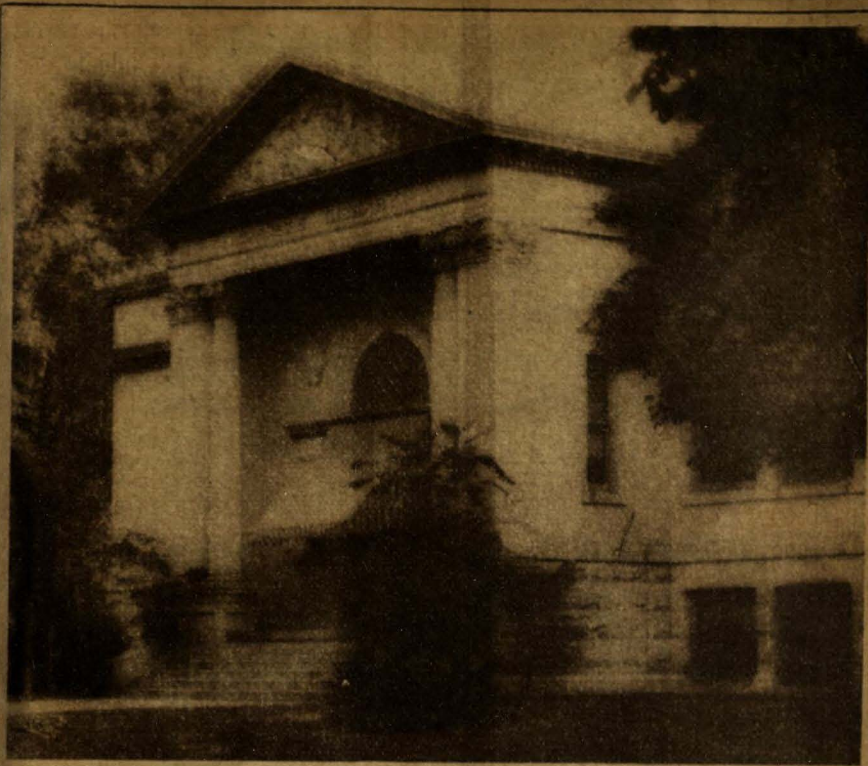
What is needed to enlist the farmers in rural library extension is just simply this daily privilege of borrowing and return as they wish.

They want what they want when they want it, and no other scheme of rural library extension will fully take the place of this privilege. My prediction is that the back country, not the city, is the prime field of future library extension, and that the farm boy and girl, who must stay on the farm, will still be given the university at their door by this means.—A. L. S.

This letter may be a good suggestion to many of our readers. It is true that thousands of books are idle in libraries. They ought to be used. The farmer's home is well up on the news of the day as given by the daily and weekly newspapers. There is no reason why the farm home should not have a chance to use the best literature that is printed.

The library is public property. It is ours to use. If we can bring about cheaper methods of having books brought to us and returned, to make the effort is worth while. The load that would be added to the rural route carrier would not hurt him. He is getting good pay these days for his services. Why not get all the good possible out of our public pay roll servants. We believe that nine out of ten of these rural carriers would be glad to help farm folks get more good books to read. Think it over.

Librarian Wheeler of the Reuben McMillan institution says too many persons look upon a library in the wrong light. "Think of it as a great many books scattered about the city, and don't consider it merely a building," he says. This is good advice, well expressed. But a small percentage of us appreciate the library or take advantage of its opportunities. A stranger in a city who has not access to clubs finds two places always open to him—the public library and the saloons. If he is the right kind of man he seeks out the former. He gets education and recreation there. To see the hundreds assembled in the reading rooms of a public library in one of the large cities of the West where there are many transients is an education in the use of the library. It can be made just as useful to a man at home. Don't look upon it as a mere place with four walls outside and furnishings inside. A person who would consider a theater only as a place where there is a stage and a collection of seats would be considered foolish. Yet that's the view often taken of the library that invites your company.—Youngstown Telegram.



THE CARNEGIE LIBRARY at Greenville.

—Miller.



THE SHELTON LIBRARY,
Georgetown, Ohio, dedicated
recently. In a will left by
the late Mary A. Cochran
she provided funds for the
erection of the structure.

FRANKLIN'S BOOKSHOP

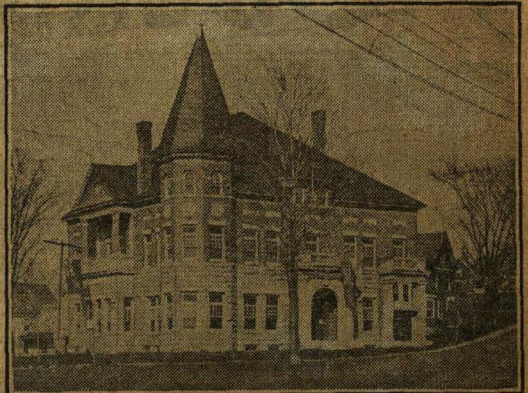
—Thrift Week is signalized on our cover by an anecdotal picture involving Benjamin Franklin in one of his humbler occupations of a most varied life. The anecdote, however, can hardly be recommended for emulation to present-day vendors of second-hand books, for it is not likely that customers will be found so complacent. As a matter of fact, however, the anecdote does not proceed to the point of saying that the inquiring purchaser was in this particular case acquiescent. For a further elucidation of the picture we turn to Mr. Ferris's notes and remind our readers that this is another of the series of historical scenes that we have been running from time to time:

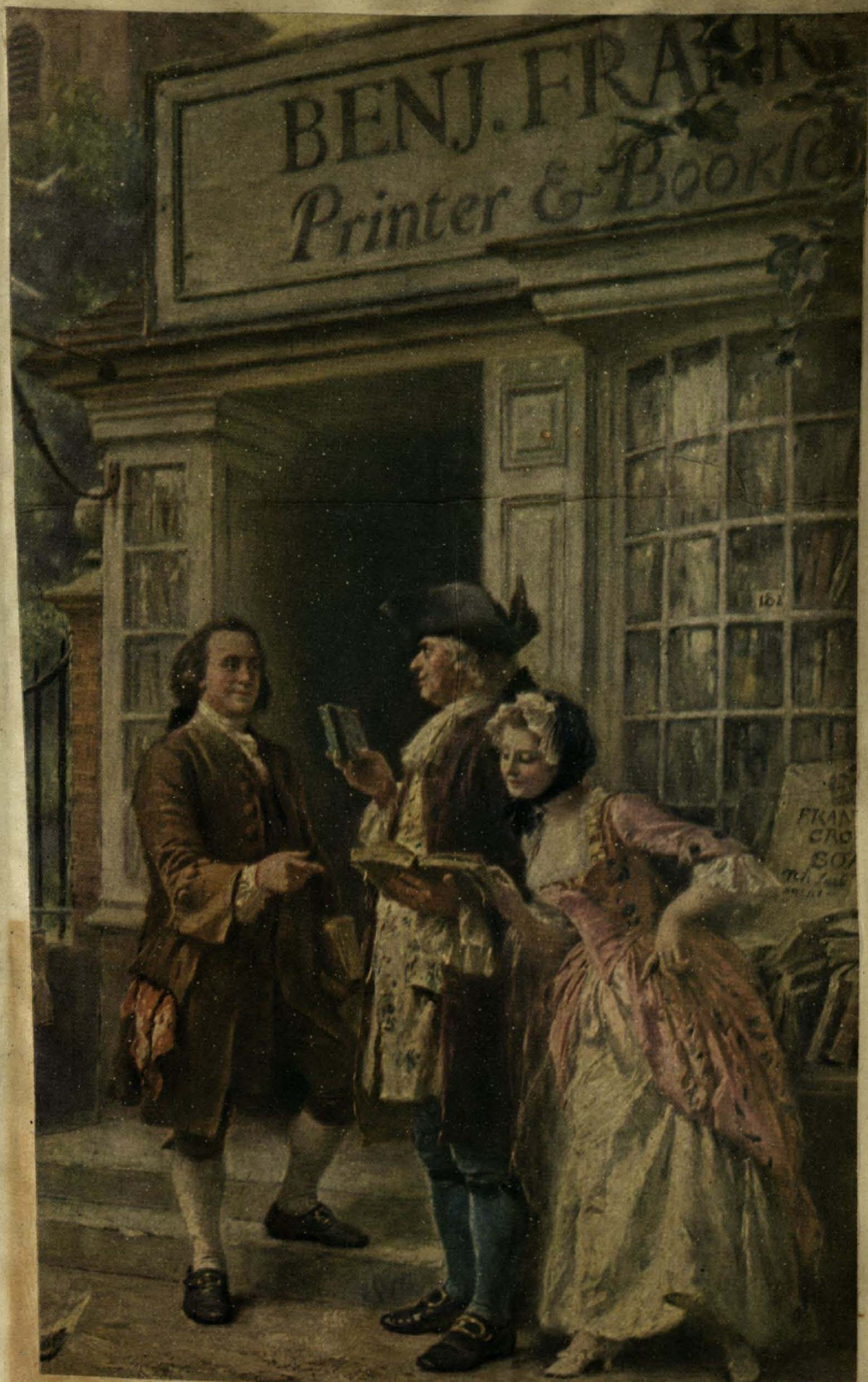
"An anecdote of Franklin and his homely philosophy relates that an old gentleman passing the bookshop picked up a book and inquired the price; he was told by Franklin, 'Two shillings.' The would-be purchaser demurred, and after some discussion offered one shilling and sixpence. Said Franklin, 'The price is three shillings!' 'But,' said the buyer, 'you had but now told me two!' 'The price now is three,' quoth the sage, 'you have cost me in argument another shilling's worth of my time!' Franklin, with Meredith, commenced to publish *The Pennsylvania Gazette* in 1729, and the following year when Meredith married, his wife helped to attend the shop. In 1732 he published 'Poor Richard's Almanack'; Franklin, in addition, wrote philosophical essays and some strange verse, sold soap, books, and, in fact, anything which would bring in an honest penny. About 1750 increasing occupations forced him to leave the bookshop in his partner's hands, and he never returned to it. Franklin modernized Pennsylvania as he found it, and made it by the time of the Revolution the foremost American colony. The location of Franklin's bookshop is not known, but certain indications point to Second Street, north of Christ Church. In the painting I have reconstructed the shop from an old picture by Birch, and as such it is probably as nearly correct as may be made, lacking an exact record."

Stage in Auditorium of This Library in Canada, Audience Sits in United States

ON THE Vermont-Canadian border line stand three towns—Derby Line, Vt., Rock Island and Stanstead, Quebec. Were it not for legal considerations, they might as well have no border line. In the street at the lower left of the picture there is a small, dark post, back of which is a longer wooden post, on which is a placard stating that the smaller one is the line post between the two countries.

The chambers of commerce and committees for joint celebrations are chosen from both sides of the boundary line. In Haskell Free Library, shown here, the stage in its auditorium is in Canada while the audience must sit in the United States. It will be seen that the Union Jack floats over one of the doors and the Stars and Stripes over the other. Since the birthdays of these three towns are only a few days from each other, they are celebrated together July 1 one year and July 4 the next year.





"FRANKLIN'S BOOKSHOP—1745"—By J. L. G. Ferris

SOME time this fall the Granville Public library will be open for business, and the dream of the pioneers who settled on the site of the present village in 1805 will have reached its highest realization. For those pioneers who came out from Massachusetts in the first decade of the last century had much the same vision as had the Pilgrims, who landed on Plymouth rock in 1620 and nineteen years later helped in the establishment of the school that later became Harvard university. Before the Granville pioneers left Massachusetts they appointed a committee "to receive subscriptions for the encouragement of a library, and to draw up and form a constitution for said library." A charter was obtained in 1807 from the legislature then sitting at Chillicothe, and some time in the fall of that year, books purchased in the East were circulated among the pioneer families and "were a source of improvement to their many readers for succeeding years."

When the college, now Denison university, came to Granville in the 30's, its library served and was the only one in the limits of the village till 1910, when the Bible class of Mrs. Bunyan Spencer, wife of the dean of Granville college, one of the units of Denison, sponsored a movement for the creation of a village library. In the following year the Granville Public Library association was incorporated, and has since conducted a library which today, in its limited quarters in the discarded building of the Baptist church, contains 6725 catalogued volumes and loans approximately 1500 books a month—some to Denison students, but the large majority to residents of Granville, which now has a population of about 1600.

THE LIBRARY CAMPAIGN.

It was a recognition of this unusual demand for reading matter and the resemblance of the pioneer project of 1805 that spurred the citizens of the village, under the leadership of Mrs. Charles B. White (Clara Bennett) to enter upon a campaign for the raising of \$100,000 to equip and maintain a library. That was in the summer of 1923. A hundred solicitors were organized in divisions and teams for a week's intensive solicitation by personal appeal and by letter. As the building now stands complete and ready for the reception of books, it is interesting to recall who the leaders were. Mrs. White was general chairman, and the division chairmen were: Miss Lillie B. Jones, Mrs. John Geach, H. W. Deming and C. D. Coons. The team captains were: Mrs. A. K. Follett, Mrs.

Flora Howe, Mrs. H. G. Scheidt, Mrs. C. B. Slack, Mrs. C. J. Loveless, Miss Daisie Howe, M. M. Shoemaker, E. J. Shumaker, Wilson A. Holmes, Harold Lampson, Mrs. J. W. Rohrer and Keith W. Lowery. These teams vied with one another and with the executive committee in the solicitation of funds, meeting each day for luncheon to bring in their reports and to gain enthusiasm for future work.

The site, a beautiful lot on Broadway, where long stood the home of Dr. Sinnett, was given by Mrs. White, who has since given a considerable acreage between Granville and Newark, the income from which will be devoted to library maintenance. In fact her gifts in time and money, and land make by far the largest offering to the project. Granville people are a unit in saying that without her interest, enthusiasm and leadership, the library would never have been built. Yet Mrs. White claims for herself no glory and gives her praise to the people of Granville, past and present, for the achievement. Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Jones, who have done so much for the beautification and progress of Granville, gave \$10,000. Miss Virginia Thorn gave from her quarry all the stone for the walls, which were originally designed to be built of brick. The gift was in memory of her mother. Mrs. J. B. Smith of Granville gave a house and lot, valued at \$7500, in which the pioneer library and bank were located. This one-story structure, 50 years ago, was used as a residence, more recently as the depot of the interurban railway, and now as a barbershop. Mrs. Levi Rose Smith of Columbus gave as a memorial to her grandfather, one of the pioneers, \$2000 as an endowment for a history alcove. Mrs. James Kilbourne of Columbus gave the library of her late husband. Professor Frank Carney, formerly of the Denison department of geology, gave \$500.

OTHER NOTABLE GIFTS.

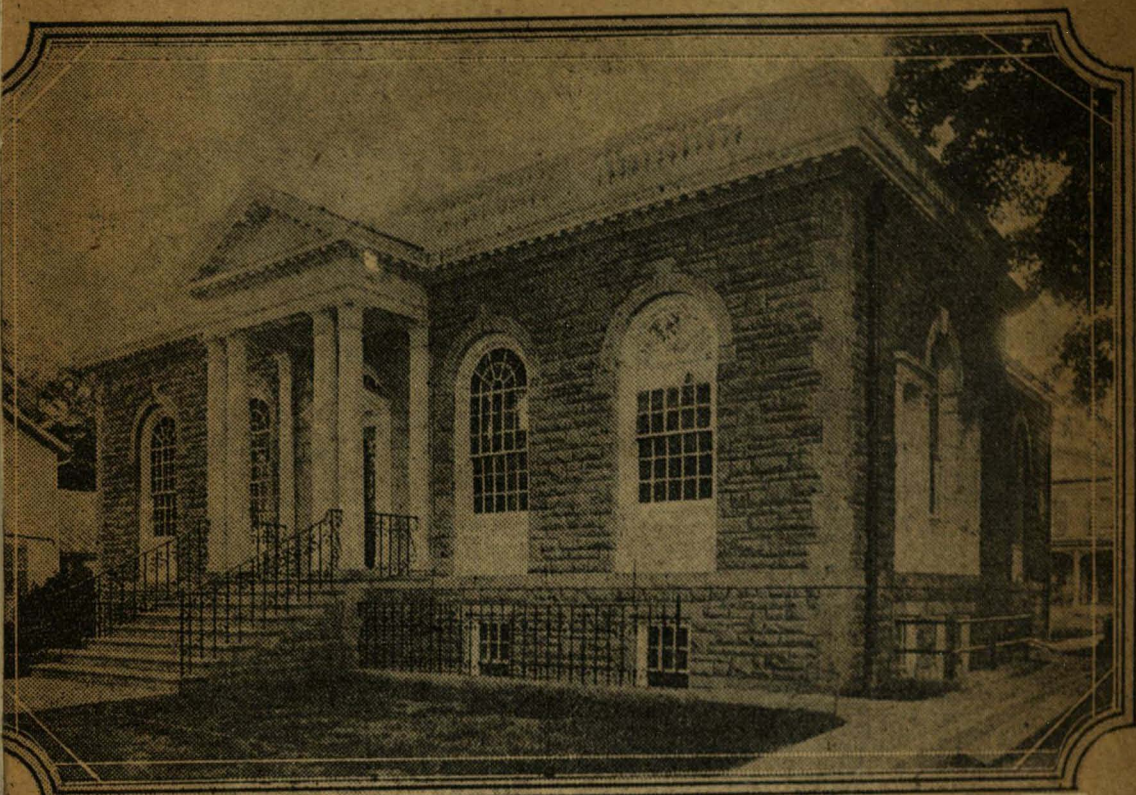
Former Governor Judson Harmon sent a substantial check, accompanied by a letter in which he said:

"It is gratifying in these times for unassimilated population, to know that in thousands of our smaller towns and villages, as well as on the farms, the true American blood and character persist, and furnish the vital element of the nation. It was my great privilege to spend four

years of my youth in Granville, which is one of the finest specimens I know of the kind of community I have mentioned."

Another gift of \$100 was made by Edna (Auntie) Jackson, colored, for years housekeeper and chef for one of the college fraternities. She has never read a word in her life, and on account of her age never will, but she had in large degree the spirit of helpfulness that has pervaded the

GRANVILLE'S NEW PUBLIC LIBRARY



entire village. The total number of subscriptions approximates 2000. Of \$8000 given by persons not living in Granville \$5000 was given by former students of the three educational institutions—Granville Female college, now extinct; the Young Ladies' Institute, now Shepardson college, and Denison university. The remainder has been given by fraternities, sororities and residents of Granville, some of whom have made sacrifices to bring the project to success. The goal has not yet quite been reached, and, besides, in an institution of this kind there are continuing needs, so that anybody who is disposed may still give to the fund and secure a place in the "Roll of the Builders," which is soon to be issued.

THE BUILDING.

The building, which was designed by the late Frank Packard of Columbus and built by W. S. Thomas, contractor, is of classic-colonial architecture. There is a central colonial doorway, approached by a broad stairway with balustrade. On the ground floor is an assembly hall with a capacity of 200, where lectures will be given, and a children's hour conducted; a workroom, storage room and room for the heating plant.

On the first, or main floor, there is a large reading room devoted, on one side of the librarian's desk to children, and on the other side to adults; back of that are the librarian's room, the stack room and the reference room. On the wall directly opposite the main entrance will be installed this week an electrically-operated clock, connected with a master clock in the reference room. This clock, which has arrived, is the gift of the Cook Book committee of the Granville centennial of 1905. This committee published at that time a book containing recipes of the Granville housewives, and sold copies at 50 cents each. A resulting surplus was put at interest, and has now more than doubled itself. By the unanimous vote of the committee, the entire sum was used in the purchase of this clock. Following are the members of the committee, all of whom have lived to participate in this notable gift: Mrs. L. E. Davis, Mrs. Edward Reed, Mrs. S. E. Morrow, Mrs. C. B. Slack, Miss Martha Geach, Mrs. B. I. Jones and Mrs. W. H. Kussmaul.

Largest Library

What is the largest library in the world?
The Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris,
France.

You and Your Public Library

THE average home-making woman is not aware of the help and interest waiting for her in the Public Library—provided, of course, the library is at all a live affair. She should find the library an auxiliary of the home, a department of it, where aid may be obtained in any difficulty, and new ideas are always waiting to be gathered.

Generally speaking, the most important processes carried on in the home are those connected with the care and preparation of food. On the library shelves are the standard general "cook books," supplemented by a delightful row of volumes on casserole cookery, fireless cookery, preserving, vegetarian meals, and so on. If you have in your family an invalid whose dainty appetite and special needs form one of your problems, you will find material here which will enable you to prepare more attractive trays than ever before. Diet for children is taken up in detail, as are also special catering, salads and sandwiches, and light refreshments.

On a nearby shelf you will find suggestions and detailed instructions for every variety of entertainment, from a Hallowe'en party to a church fair.

The Department of Agriculture of the United States Government gives us in its bulletins the results of the work and experience of hundreds of experts. These pamphlets are on file both for reference and for circulation. They include such subjects as Home Drying Manual for Vegetables and Fruits, Home Canning Manual, Fats and Their Use in the Home, Preserving of Eggs, Corn Meal as a Food, Principles of Nutrition and Nutritive Values of Food, Food for Young Children, School Lunches, Keeping of Household Accounts, and many others equally helpful and practical.

If you are interested in Crafts, the library has for your use the newest and most artistic designs, and clearest instructions for every kind of needlework, as well as pottery, basketry, and other handicrafts.

Perhaps you have for years been planning a house of dreams, a home after your own heart, and find delight in long evenings over house plans and schemes of decoration. The library offers a wealth of material along this line. You will find volumes of plans by the foremost architects of the country, beautifully illustrated with plates of great value. And as for decoration, the books on this subject form an endless fascination to the home-maker.

In these days the mother of a family does not consider her duty done when she has properly housed and clothed and fed her family. She knows that her most important work is in understanding the growing minds and hearts of her children. Many thoughtful men and women—teachers, mothers, social workers—are here to help you with their breadth of view, their wide tolerance, and their scientific knowledge. Every mother should use to the full the resources of her library.

In all these ways, then, your Public Library can aid you, and in many others which have not been touched upon here. As you use it, from day to day, and grow to know and to depend upon it, it will open up new avenues of inspiration to you, becoming more fully every day—*your* Public Library.



THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF DAYTON is a beautiful structure located in Cooper Park on Third street.

The Treasure Ship

*"For books are more than books,
They are the very life and soul of ages past,
The reason why men worked and lived and died
The essence and quintessence of their lives:"*

—Amy Lowe

Libraries Are Old

ALTHOUGH books are more common to-day than ever before in the history of the world, libraries are not so recent as one might suppose. Historians tell us of the existence of great collections of books in Europe during the Middle Ages, and even before that, we learn from archeologists that great libraries were known to the ancients in Asia and Africa. Indeed, true libraries existed for thousands of years before the birth of Christ, and they have always as now commanded the interest of rulers, churchmen, educators, and laymen.

A bulletin issued by the National Geographic Society contains the information that in Nippur, Assyria, four thousand years ago, there was a firm of bankers and brokers, Murashu Sons, comparable to the house of Morgan in New York, which kept all its business transactions recorded on clay tablets. These tablets were stored in archives and formed what was probably one of the earliest business libraries.

"At Nineveh," continues the bulletin, "Ashurbanipal, who died in 626 B.C., had a library which was classified and arranged according to the subject matter of the tablets, each series being given a number and a title, composed, as a rule, of the first words of the first tablet. The king sent out his scribes to all the temples and schools of Babylonia and Assyria and had them make copies of tablets in the then modern Assyrian language. The story of the Deluge now in the J. Pierpont Morgan library in New York City, which is dated about 2000 B.C., is clearly a copy of an older version.

"The Egyptians, too, had their libraries. Behind the hall of columns of the Rameseion at Thebes, was the Sacred Library called the 'Dispensary of the Mind.' It had an astronomical ceiling on which the twelve Egyptian months were represented and its walls showed a procession of priests carrying the sacred arks. Its circle of three hundred sixty-five cubits each representing a day of the year, was carried off by the Persians and is therefore lost to us except through the description of Diodorus.

"**T**HE Greeks probably had a few private libraries during the fifth and fourth centuries B. C., but we now know practically nothing of their character. To the later history of the Greeks, however, are accredited two of the greatest of the ancient libraries of the world. The first of the Ptolemies collected the twin libraries at Alexandria containing 700,000 volumes carefully arranged and catalogued, which were burned when Julius Cæsar set fire to the shipping in the harbor. The great library of Pergamum in Asia Minor, which Plutarch says contained 200,000 volumes,

was ultimately sent to Alexandria as a gift to Cleopatra from Antony, with the view to making good in some measure the loss which had been caused by Cæsar.

"The Athenians had become book-lovers by the time of the invasion of the Goths, for it is related that one of the Gothic chiefs, on finding some of his soldiers on the point of burning the libraries of Athens, told them to leave the books to the effeminate Greeks, as the hands accustomed to the smooth papyrus would feebly grasp the arms of the warrior.

"Under the Greeks, the parchment used in making the scrolls was so greatly improved that by Roman times many varieties were to be found on the market, and the Egyptian ink in use then has much of its ancient gloss and freshness to-day. In fact, inkstands for two colors of writing fluid much like those we use to-day have been excavated from the

ruins of both Pompeii and Herculaneum, and one from the latter city contained ink, which, though somewhat thick, could still be used for writing.

"Though Rome was slow to develop an interest in literature and her first libraries were those which she took as spoils of war, by Imperial times the library facilities of the city were far ahead of those of modern Europe before the middle of the eighteenth century.

"**C**ONSTANTINE the Great, in 336 B. C., founded a library at Constantinople which grew under his successors until it contained one or two hundred thousand volumes, among the more valuable manuscripts being the only authentic account of the proceedings of the Council of Nice and a manuscript of Homer written in letters of gold on serpents' skin which measured 120 feet in length. Although several fires played havoc with the collection, from this library have come some of the choicest treasures now to be found in the libraries of Europe.

"Another library which lost some of its treasures to thirty of the great libraries of Europe and others in oblivion was the famed Corvina, collected by the witty, attractive, and scholarly Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary, in 1460. This collection of more than 50,000 manuscripts, probably the largest and finest of its kind ever made in Europe, was the hobby of a monarch of taste and discrimination. But the Turks in 1527 rifled the rich halls it occupied in the castle of Buda, and scattered its precious contents over the continent.

"Among present-day libraries the Bibliothèque Nationale, at Paris, with its more than 5,000,000 printed books, 500,000 maps, 110,000 manuscripts, and over 1,000,000 prints, easily outranks all others.

"The British Museum Library claims second honors for size and an even score with its rival on the value of its contents.

"The Library of Congress, at Washington, with its more than 3,000,000 volumes, stands third upon the list of the world's great libraries.

"BUT there are almost as many libraries of peculiar kinds as there are races of men. The Arab libraries, consisting for the most part of works on theology, jurisprudence, and philology, are attached to their mosques, are seldom read and rapidly fall into decay. The leaves of the books are not often bound together, but usually are placed loose in a leather or pasteboard cover, so that several persons can use the same book at the same time, each taking out a handful of leaves. The Buddhist writings in the temples of eastern Tibet are printed from blocks such as were first used in China, or are written by hand. The Buddhist scriptures of Siam were written by some devotee with brass or iron stiles upon the leaves of the Talipot palm, and each leaf wrapped in yellow cloth or silk. They are read only on special occasions.

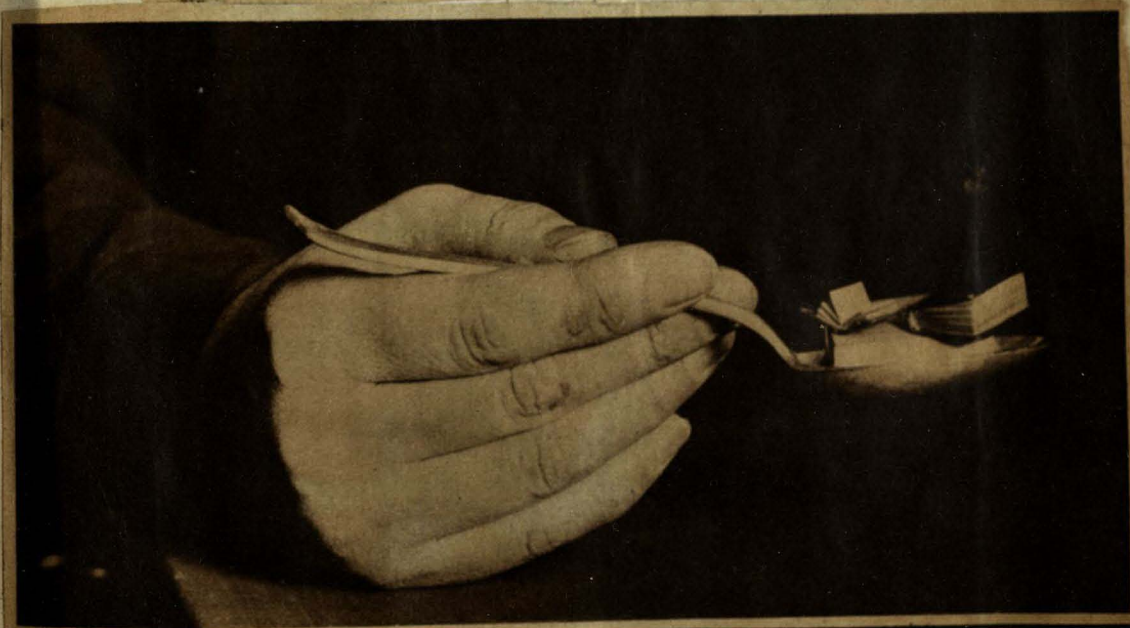
"At Merton, the oldest of the colleges of Oxford University, some of the books are chained to the shelves, and among the rich medieval manuscripts of the library at Vatopethi on Mount Athos, Greece, there is

a curious old geography of the eleventh century after Strabo and Ptolemy, containing some extraordinary maps."

SMALLEST BOOKS IN WORLD

LONDON—There is much talk in London of the wonderful doll's house built for the coming British Empire exhibition, to be presented to the queen. Among other wonders of this little house are some of the smallest books in the world, which have been especially written for the queen, and poems and essays which they contain are in the author's own handwriting. There are about 170 books in the Lilliputian library, 100 of which are entirely original, and the queen is in the unprecedented position of holding a copyright of each. Some of the most delightful literary novelties ever penned are to be found in these diminutive books. They contain a whole literature about dolls. Their adventures, lives and loves are set out. Songs have been written for them and Lady Jekyll has even gone to the trouble of compiling a "Dolls' House Cookery Book!" Should any of the inmates of the dolls' house meet with an accident, there is a work on "Principles of Dolls' Surgery." On the shelves of this wonderful library is also a "Wine Cellar book" in which is recorded the name of every wine stored in the dolls' house. The wine in each tiny bottle in this cellar is real.

October 31, 1926.



A TEASPOONFUL OF LITERATURE. The smallest book is "The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam." It rests in the spoon with two other miniature books. The little volumes belong to the Public Library of Cleveland.

—Wide World.

A Public Library Two Thousand Years Ago

By Agnes M. Winter

Photos from the Author

ALL of us know, I suppose, that there were libraries in the ancient world, but it is exciting really to come across one on your travels. The one I saw was not quite two thousand years old, and I know of one at least older than that. The excavators digging in what used to be the land of Assyria discovered among the ruins of the city of Nineveh, the famous library of Assur-bani-pal. This library dates back to 650 B. C. or over 2,500 years ago. Of course when I say library we must not imagine that the books of those long past times looked anything like ours to-day. The "books" of the library at Nineveh, for in-



The main street of Timgad

stance, were made of clay and were probably most of them about six or eight inches long and four inches wide.

Rather a curious set of books, some of you will say. But then the books that must have been in the Roman library I saw on my travels were not like our library books either. Until the fourth century after Christ there were no books made in such a way as we make them to-day.

The books in Roman and Greek libraries were made of papyrus, a kind of reed found in Egypt, resembling our bulrush. This papyrus was used by the ancients for a great many things, among others to write upon. Strips cut from the inner tissue of the stalk were laid side by side and crossed by a second layer, and then pressed. The writing was usually on one side only and in columns. These long strips of papyrus were rolled up and their ends strengthened with thin pieces of bone or wood. The title of the book was written on a strip of parchment attached to the end of the roll.

Such were the "books" that must have stood on the shelves of the library in that Roman colony of Tingad, far away in North Africa, the ruins of which I came across in my visit to Algeria.

Tingad was an outpost of the Roman empire, a settlement built by the Emperor Trajan as a sort of retiring home for veterans of the Third Legion stationed at Lambessa. The town is not very large, and naturally not so luxurious as was Pompeii. Pompeii was built as a watering-place for the wealthy, but Tingad was simply to provide a modest home for the old soldiers who had served the Empire well. It was laid out like many Roman towns in the form of a camp, a square space surrounded by a wall, divided down the center by two main streets and at the end of each street a gate. Those two main streets were called as usual *Cardo* and *Decumanus*, and it was on the *Cardo* about half-way between one gate and the Forum that there stood the public library of Tingad.

OF COURSE, the town being simple and for men of simple tastes, the library was not very large, about 23,000 volumes, they say. Some private libraries in Rome and in other big cities like Rome, were much larger than this; one private library is said to have contained 60,000 books. Of course the largest, most famous library of those days was at Alexandria in Egypt, which had 400,000 volumes.

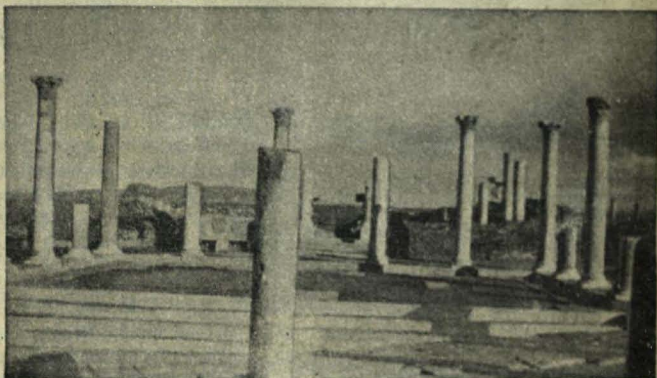
But Tingad, though small, had a good-looking library building, so I imagine the town was fairly well-off. The library, like other buildings in the town, is in ruins but one can judge somewhat from what is left. You enter by three broad marble steps a colonnaded porch which leads straight ahead into the main room where there are four recesses for books, and in the center a shrine which probably contained a bust of the Emperor. Marble benches seem to have been placed there for the use of students and readers.

On either side of this main room are to be found "stack-rooms," that is extra recesses for the rolls that made up the library. Narrow steps were evidently used to get at the higher rows of shelves.

But if you could go outside with me a moment and look just at the left of the entrance to the main reading room you would see what I think is one of the most interesting things about this library.

That is a slab of marble fastened to the wall giving the name of the man, the Carnegie of his day, who gave this public library to his town! How modern it sounds, the desire to have one's gifts recorded in this way!

As one walks the streets of this town destroyed over twelve hundred years ago by the Moslems, who swept over it in their



Broad marble steps lead to what was the colonnaded porch of the library

conquest of North Africa, untouched ever since until in the nineteenth century the spade of the excavator disturbed its long sleep, one can picture many things. One can picture the excitement of that day when the library was completed and opened to the public, the fine speeches in the Forum congratulating the giver on his public spirit.

THEN one can picture the old soldiers of the Third Legion taking down the papyrus rolls and reading the old books some of which have come down to us to-day. I can imagine what a favorite Caesar's Gallic Wars, for example, must have been to the veterans of another Caesar's wars. How they must have liked to compare former days with their own campaign experiences. Or perhaps the more literary among them thrilled to the impassioned oratory of Cicero.

At any rate, to them as to us, the library of the town must have been the spot where they could learn something at least about the world beyond. I like to think that Rome at the height of her power realized the value of libraries, for in the later imperial period there were twenty-eight public libraries in Rome itself.

And I like especially to think that even on the fringes of her empire, when her rich men were anxious to crown their fame by some good gift to their town, they could think of nothing better than they could do than to build a public library.



The John Carter Brown Library.

A Treasury of Books

The John Carter Brown Library

By MAY B. WHITING

IN JOHN CARTER BROWN LIBRARY

answers are given to questions regarding anything printed before 1801 which relates to America.

When, in 1740, Nicholas Brown, aged 11, of the famous Brown family in Providence, Rhode Island, became possessor of the *Secretary's Guide or Young Man's Companion*, and wrote his name on the flyleaf, he doubtless did not dream that he was starting what would later be one of the oldest libraries in America.

But Nicholas Brown, his son, seems to have had the makings of a real collector, for he got together no small amount of the popular literature of his time, mostly sermons, and his son, a third Nicholas, began in his twenties to buy the classics and literature of the Old World, together with some few books relating to America. But the grace of the older culture fascinated him, and the young collector decided to make Italy his home. On departing, he sold the American portion of his library to his younger brother, John Carter.

When a very young man, John Carter Brown bought books of travel as they appeared in the booksellers' catalogs, and noted in their margin any reference to his native state or its founder. And then, as the study of the present leads to that of the past, he began buying books like Anne Bradstreet's *Tenth Muse, Lately Sprung up in America*, or Ward's *Simple Cobbler of Aggawam*, until before long he discovered that his chief interest lay in books relating to America.

At Valencia there was a certain Obadiah Rich, American consul and lover of books, who occasionally would collect a trunk

full of old volumes and travel to London with them. He opened in London a bookstore of his own and issued a catalog of books published on America for a hundred years, beginning 1701.

Henry Stevens, of Vermont, seized the Rich catalog as a cat pounces upon a mouse; Mr. Brown interleaved his copy, checked off the books as he procured them, and on blank pages added titles not included in the list.

For Americana was becoming popular as the world commenced to realize that the new continent was a very considerable part of it. A French scholar, Henri Terneaux, working quietly and alone in his study, had been surpassing both American and English collectors, and, when his library came up for

sale, Henry Stevens, of Vermont, was on the spot to secure for John Carter Brown some of the most important items.

This was a big gain for the Americana at Providence. All the great rival collections, except one, were dispersed at auction or became part of public libraries. James Lenox, of New York, continued to be the *bete noire*, and, at his death, the Lenox collection, now belonging to the New York Public Library, surpassed, in some important features, the Brown Americana.

Yet it was a fair and loyal rivalry, without personal animosity. Mr. Lenox was a friend of Mr. Brown, and his neighbor at Newport during the summer. Winters he enjoyed the advantages of a direct European mail from New York, and Mr. Brown was sometimes put to it to overcome this handicap.

Once, when he was at Saratoga, a catalog reached him, offering for sale the only known copy of the Dutch Vespuccius. Mr. Lenox had doubtless received that same catalog a day earlier, and quite likely his order was now on the Atlantic. Mr. Brown got in touch with a friend in New York who sent a cable to Amsterdam, and procured the book.

Henry Stevens, of Vermont, served also as European agent for Mr. Lenox and he sometimes had a difficult time of it between the two. On one occasion he purchased for Mr. Brown the only known perfect copy of the Pictorial Columbus, for which Mr. Lenox had sent in a bid. Now it happened that this was the very book that Mr. Lenox felt he could never have another happy day without, and, as a technical question arose as to which bidder it should go, Mr. Brown generously relinquished it. It was fifty years before another copy

came on the market. Then Mr. Brown's son bought it and the gap in the collection was filled.

Many of the books could tell a story of their lives as strange as the adventures recorded in their pages. There is the only known perfect copy of the *Libretto*, giving the account of Columbus' third voyage, bought by a Florentine bookseller from a peasant and offered to the library by cable. There is a book bearing the queer, symbolic signature (although there is some possibility of its being a forgery) of Columbus, and

another which belonged to his son, with his signature and record of his library. There are the books of the unhappy Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico, the confidential letters of George Washington, and, with a curious human interest, his personal cashbook with entries up to a week or so before he died.

And the library itself, with all its strange and awesome books which it would seem no one in the world could read, is a very human place.

Pictures tell their story through the centuries more simply than do words, and the section of a Ptolemaic maps is most fascinating. There is the Old World atlas of 1472 with which Columbus was doubtless familiar, the atlas prepared by Agnesis at the command of Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, for his son, Philip II, and the Waldsmüller Cosmographic Introduction with its notable suggestion that as both Europe and Asia were named for women, it was time mere man had a chance.

Champlain has left us a beautiful manuscript now in the John Carter Brown Library with plentiful illustrations drawn and colored by his own hand. In it we get some idea of how the new continent in all its pristine freshness looked to eyes fired with imagination and wonder of what the new discoveries might mean. In the same way the Bay Psalm Book, the first work of printing in the New World, shows us the religious fervor of the colonists and their starved desire for poetry.

With all its atrocious rhymes and horribly contorted phrases, it was so well loved that practically the whole edition was worn to shreds.

The copy in the John Carter Brown collection belonged to Richard Mather himself, the principal composer of the book, and, among bibliophiles, it is considered a treasure indeed.