

THE NEW BUILDING OF THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY—CONSTRUCTING THE MAIN BOOK-STACK, A GREAT STEEL FRAME THAT WILL HOLD THREE AND A HALF MILLION VOLUMES

branches, and only one, the British Museum, keeps a printed catalogue of all its books. Two—those of Berlin and St. Petersburg—permit the withdrawal of volumes under certain conditions and restrictions; the other two are purely reference libraries. In the sphere of general utility a vast difference will be shown to exist between the European and the American foundations.

NEW YORK'S EARLIER LIBRARIES

The oldest library in the United States is that of Harvard University, dating from 1638, but the first public institution was that established in New York by the Rev. John Sharp. This worthy, who was chaplain to the Earl of Bellamont, governor of the province, bequeathed his books to his fellow citizens in 1700. Thirty years later the collection, numbering sixteen hundred and forty-two volumes, was placed in the City Hall, where it was known as the New York Public Library. Just before the outbreak of the Revolution, however, it was rechristened as the Society Library of New York, under which title it still exists, with something

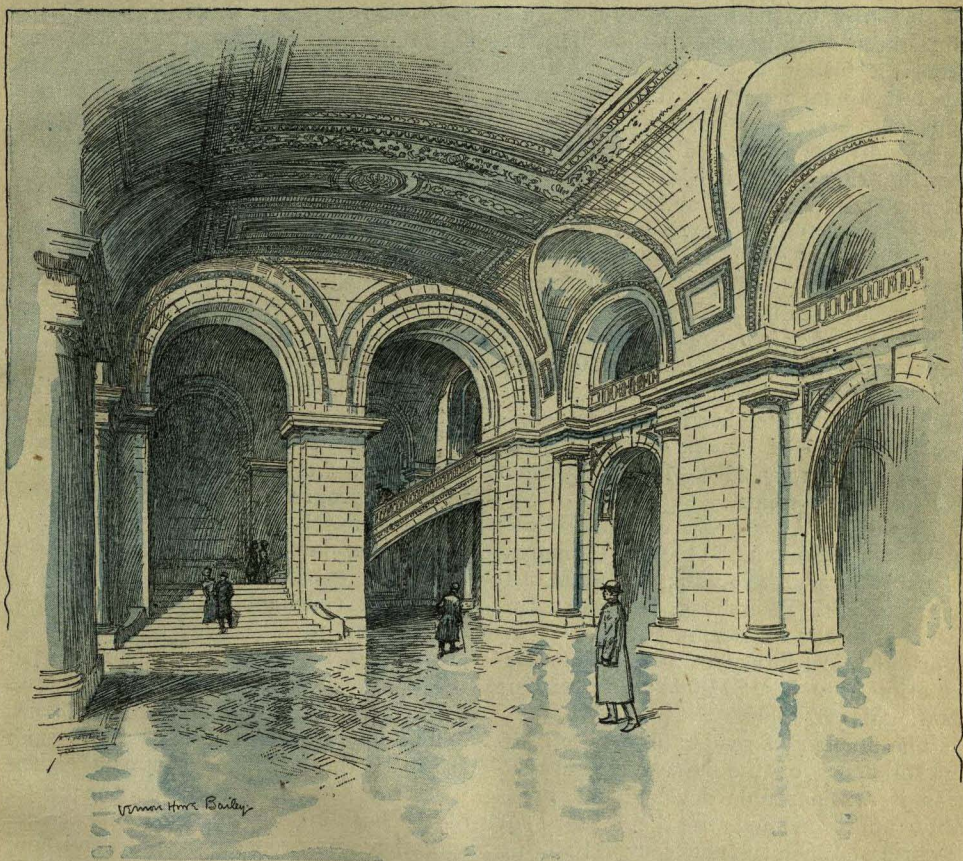
like a hundred thousand volumes on its shelves, for the benefit of private subscribers, in its own building on University Place.

The present New York Public Library is only ten years old. It was in 1895 that the Astor Library, founded in 1849, the Lenox Library, founded in 1870, and the Tilden Trust, incorporated in 1887, were consolidated under one board of trustees and took the new and comprehensive title. At that time the Astor contained two hundred and sixty-seven thousand volumes, with an endowment of nine hundred and forty thousand dollars; the Lenox had eighty-six thousand volumes, with an endowment of a little more than half a million dollars; and the Tilden Trust owned twenty thousand books and a fund of two million dollars.

In the year following this first consolidation, the trustees appealed to the city authorities for a library building to be erected on the site of the old reservoir in Bryant Park, in which all their collections could be brought together for the use of the public. Up to that time the Astor and Lenox had

been exclusively reference libraries. In their proposition to the city, however, a plan for opening a free circulation department in the new building was broached. The appeal met with immediate approval. The authorities asked several leading architects to compete for plans for the proposed building, with

a total to-day of thirty-one such branches. This remarkable extension of the undertaking was made possible by an offer from Andrew Carnegie, in March, 1901, of the sum of five million, two hundred thousand dollars, for the construction and equipment of free circulating libraries, on condition that the city should provide



THE NEW BUILDING OF THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY—THE ENTRANCE HALL AND STAIRWAY LEADING TO THE READING-ROOM FLOOR

the result that the designs of Messrs. Carrère and Hastings were accepted, and in 1899 the work of removing the reservoir was commenced.

Five years ago (February 25, 1901) the library took the next important step in the work of consolidation by absorbing into its system the New York Free Circulating Library, with eleven branches and about a hundred and sixty thousand volumes. Since that time twenty other circulating libraries in different parts of the city have united with the rest, making

the land and bear the cost of maintenance. The completion of the entire Carnegie plan will add nineteen more branches to the New York Public Library, which will thus, by the time it opens its new quarters in Bryant Park, own and control fifty of these working stations.

FOR THE SERVICE OF THE PUBLIC

It is this elaboration of its system along the lines of practical utility that makes the New York Public Library unique among the great libraries of the world.

The great institutions of Paris, London, and St. Petersburg have a larger number of volumes on their shelves; all the national libraries, with the exception of the French, have a greater annual income for the purchase of new books and periodicals; but the readers enjoying the privileges of the New York foundation are at present nearly three times as many as those shown by the most widely used of the European libraries, as may be seen from the following table compiled from the last annual reports of the six libraries that have been considered.

Number of volumes—Bibliothèque Nationale, 2,600,000; British Museum, 2,500,000; Imperial Library of St. Petersburg, 1,445,000; New York Public Library, 1,390,000; Congressional Library, Washington, 1,275,667; Imperial Library of Berlin, 1,228,000.

Number of volumes taken by readers—New York Public Library, 4,306,954; British Museum, 1,590,000; Imperial Library of St. Petersburg, 622,243; Imperial Library of Berlin, 483,821; Congressional Library, 323,861; Bibliothèque Nationale, no report.

Expenditure for books and periodicals—British Museum, \$110,000; Congressional Library, \$99,226; Imperial Library of St. Petersburg, \$41,580; Imperial Library of Berlin, \$35,136; New York Public Library, exclusive of its circulating branches, \$25,000; Bibliothèque Nationale, \$20,000.

The number of readers using the present branches of the New York institution is a remarkable development, probably unprecedented in the history of libraries. When the new central building is opened, and the full quota of stations in working order, the figure will no doubt be greatly increased. There will also be a large addition to the annual income, derived from the sale of the Astor and Lenox buildings, the value of which is estimated at four million dollars. Even then, however, the fund available for purchases will fall short of that enjoyed by either the British Museum or the Congressional Library, and it must be left to the munificence of some future patron to add to the present endowment a sum that will adequately meet the needs of a great working library. It should be remembered that while the govern-

mental libraries receive large numbers of books under the copyright laws, the New York institution has no such resource.

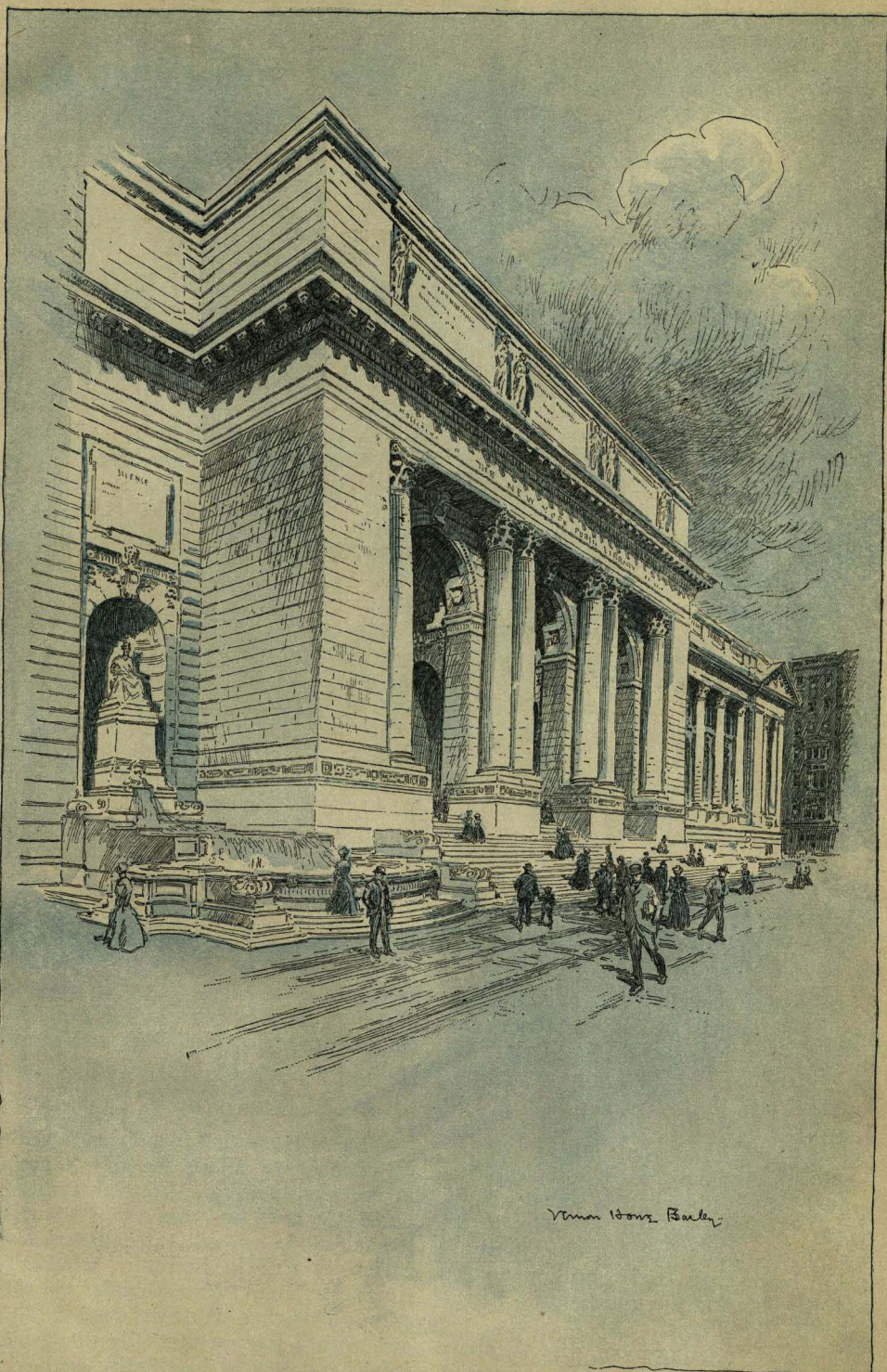
Had the full amount contemplated by Tilden in his bequest—between six and eight million dollars—been given to the purpose originally intended, the New York Public Library would be the best endowed in the world, as it undoubtedly is the most efficient in creating and supplying a public demand for literature. For its present marvelous degree of success, praise is due to the masterly manner in which the consolidation of its various collections and interests has been planned and carried out—a work in which the venerable president of the board of trustees, John Bigelow, formerly United States minister to France, and the director, Dr. John S. Billings, are conspicuous.

THE GREAT NEW LIBRARY BUILDING

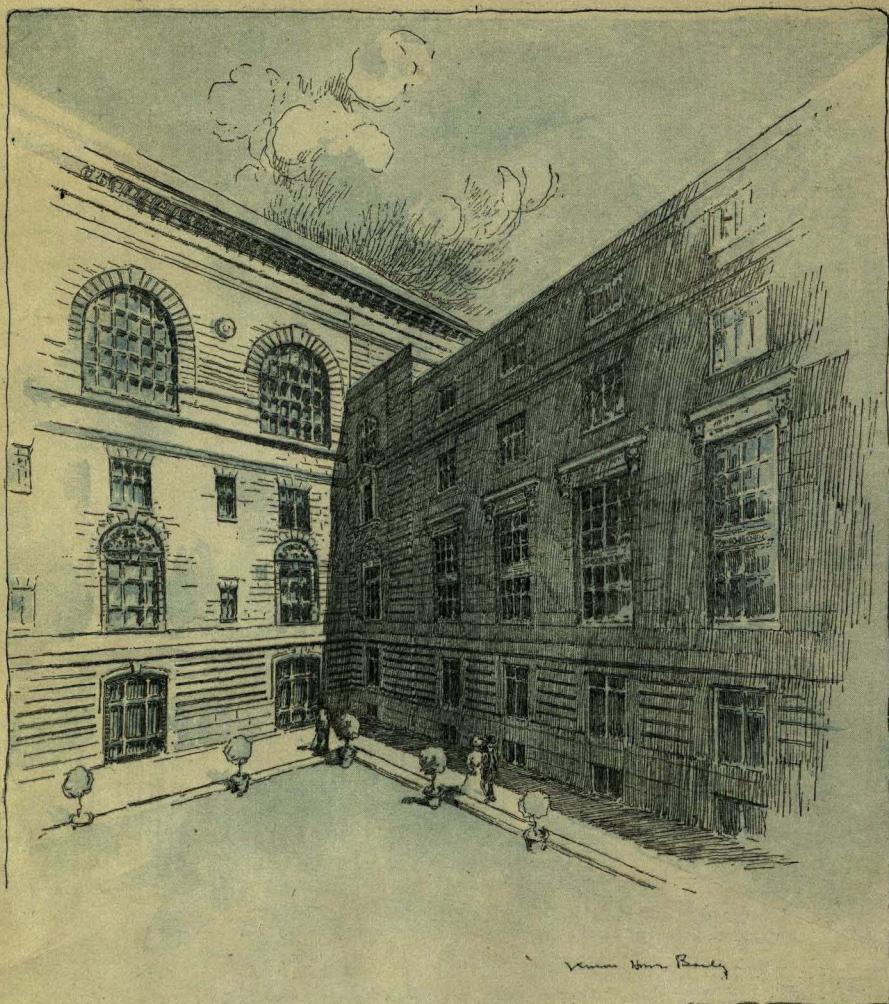
The exterior of the stately edifice that is to be the keystone, the visible symbol, of this gigantic system is now practically completed, work on the interior being still in progress. Architecturally, the building may be characterized as belonging to the classical renaissance, more or less in the special style of the Louis XVI period, with such modifications as the conditions and needs of the age have suggested, it being the expressed purpose of the architects to make it representative, as far as possible, of modern New York.

The important features of the interior are to be the lending department on the basement floor, entered from the center of the building on Forty-Second Street; special reading-rooms on the second floor for students and scholars, to which access will be by ticket; general reading-rooms, open to the public, including a children's department, and periodical and newspaper rooms, on the first floor; and the main reading-room on the third floor, immediately over the great stack for the storing of books.

This book-stack is to be one of the unique features of the library, embracing in its construction the latest appliances for the shelving of books. It is to be made of steel, filling a floor space of seventy-eight by two hundred and ninety-seven feet, and rising in seven tiers, each ninety inches high. It is by far the largest



THE NEW BUILDING OF THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY—THE MAIN ENTRANCE
ON FIFTH AVENUE



THE NEW BUILDING OF THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY—THE INTERIOR COURT

bookcase ever constructed. According to the computations of the architects, its ninety-seven thousand shelves, if laid together end to end, would measure four hundred and thirty-five thousand feet in length, or more than eighty miles, and it will hold three and a half millions of volumes—an ample provision for the future growth of the library. Its actual weight, empty, is eight million pounds. Filled with books to its full capacity, it would weigh more than twelve million pounds—approximating the tonnage of a battleship like the Texas.

The main reading-room, directly above the book-stack, is to be quite or nearly the largest in any public library, having a seating capacity for about eight hun-

dred people, almost double the space allotted to the public in the famous circular reading-room of the British Museum, built fifty years ago.

THE TREASURES OF THE LIBRARY

When the Astor, Lenox, and Tilden collections are finally brought together in the new building, their value will be decidedly enhanced for the student of special subjects. All three libraries are extremely rich in literature relating to America. James Lenox, founder of the institution bearing his name, was a millionaire with a passion for collecting Americana, and started his library by buying up everything that had been printed prior to 1700 bearing on the new world. To

his collection, greatly enlarged since passing out of his hands, there have been added the historical library of George Bancroft and the Emmet papers relating to the Revolution. All this, combined with similar material in the Astor Library, forms a priceless mass of Americana, comprising thirty-four thousand volumes, fifty thousand manuscripts, and sixty thousand public documents.

For the student in American history of the Revolutionary period and after, the newspaper files on the shelves of the library are probably of more practical use than even these rare volumes and manuscripts. The first newspaper to appear in the United States was the *Boston News Letter*, in 1706. The library files start with 1710, and the first twenty-three years are rather fragmentary in places; but the catalogue shows a thousand volumes of American newspapers published before the year 1800, with an almost complete series of New York papers from 1733 to the present day.

A huge newspaper-room in the new building, with a separate income of three thousand dollars a year, making possible the purchase and preservation of about two hundred of the important journals of the world, is one of the director's plans. It is a curious fact, however, that none of the present-day newspapers is capable of preservation for more than a brief period, the wood pulp of which they are composed being perishable. Thus there will be handed down to coming generations the newspapers of a century or more ago, but none of to-day. In view of this inevitable break in future historical records, Dr. Billings recently made the interesting suggestion to the publishers of two New York dailies that they should print fifty copies of each edition on linen rag paper and file them in the leading libraries of the country. Papers thus printed will remain sound and legible when the myriads that make up the list of modern newspaperdom have crumbled into dust—a consideration that may possibly appeal to some abnormally far-seeing advertising manager.

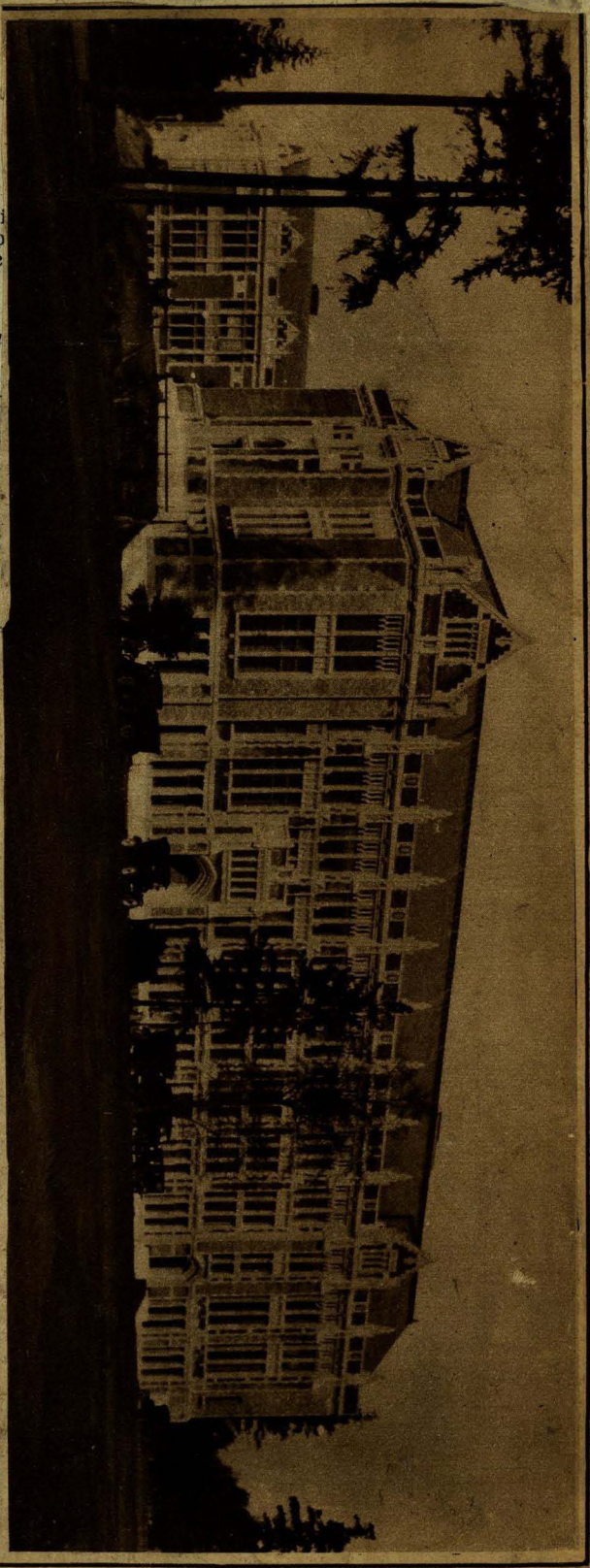
Besides its rare possessions in the field of American history, the New York Public Library has a number of valuable special collections which are waiting to be placed in the reserved rooms of the

Bryant Park building. These collections include three thousand volumes of Shakesperiana, containing four copies of the First Folio, nine copies of the Second Folio, with a whole shelf of the original Quartos; ten thousand volumes of music; eight thousand volumes of a Bible collection; twenty-one thousand volumes of a geographical collection, containing almost all that there is in geographical literature before 1500, with four thousand maps from the earliest times to the end of the seventeenth century.

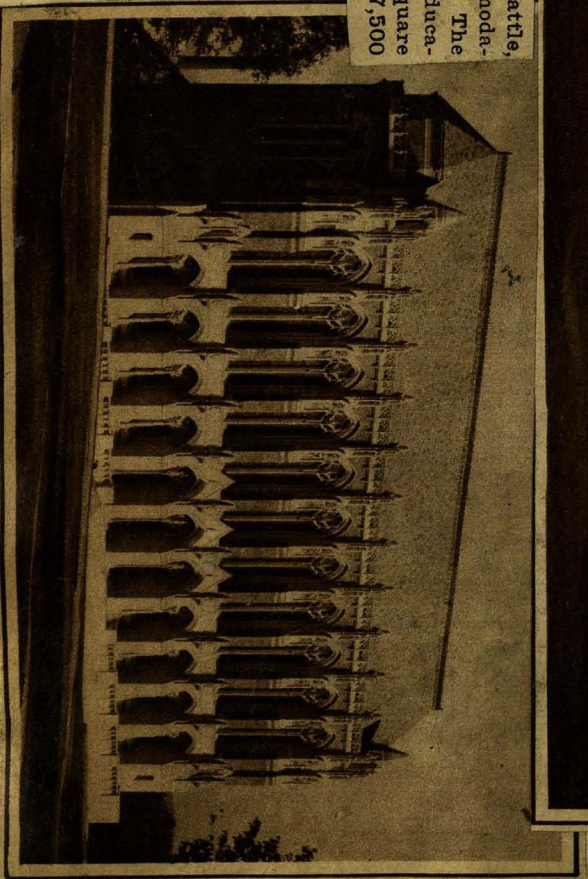
The most valuable single work in the library is a manuscript gospel lectionary, by Julio Clovio, of the early sixteenth century. This book was at one time in the Vatican, and cost more than eleven thousand dollars. There is also the first edition of Columbus' Letter, the most valuable among the library's printed books, costing seventy-five hundred dollars. A collection of prints, unsurpassed in its field, numbering nineteen thousand engravings and about five hundred volumes, is another of the most important possessions of the institution.

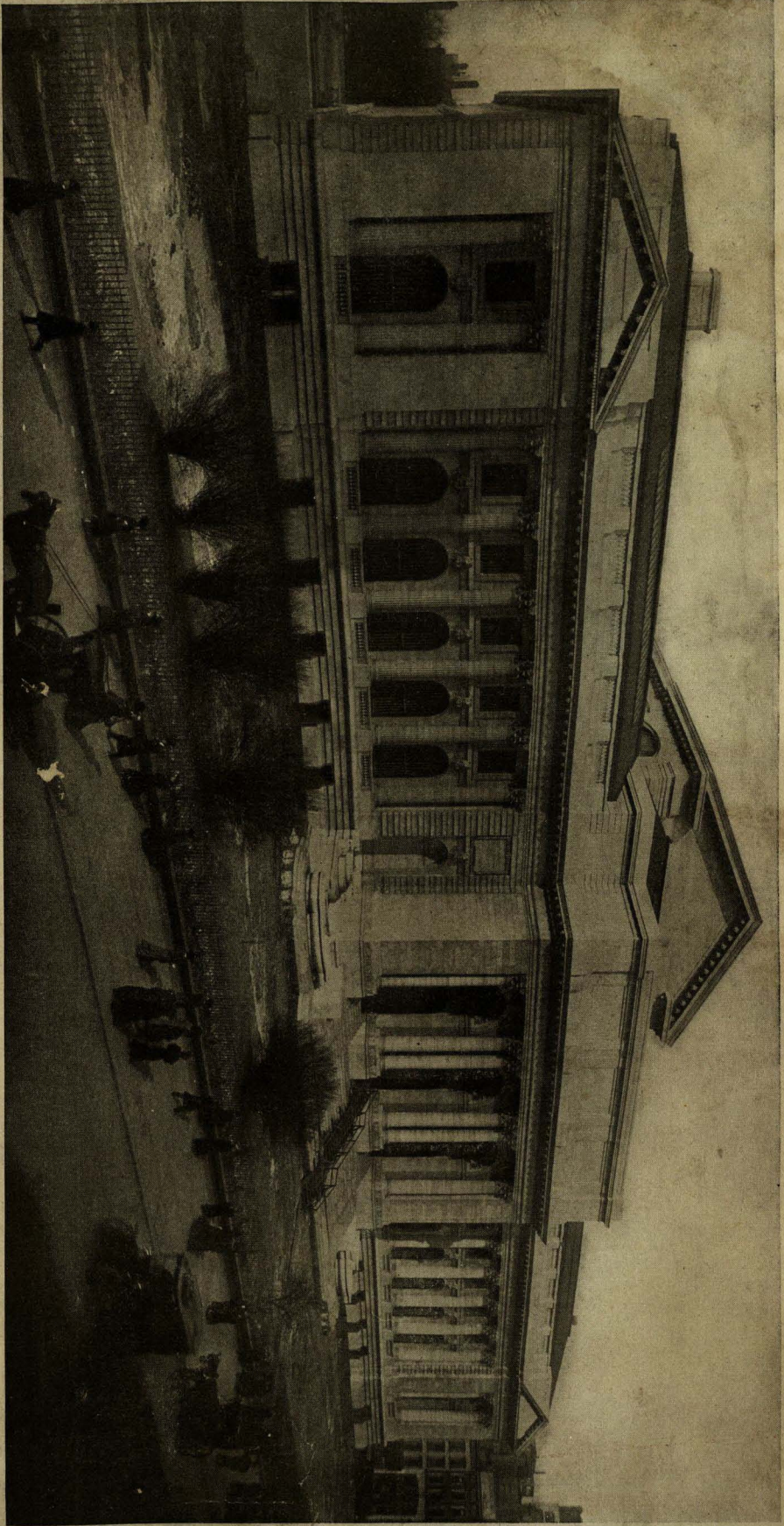
The removal and rearrangement of all the collections to the central building might be expected to occupy a considerable time, and to cause no small inconvenience to readers. The whole undertaking, however, according to the present plans, will be completed in the space of two weeks, and the books will be brought together on their new shelves without necessitating any change in the catalogues. The possibility of accomplishing such an elaborate transfer without a prolonged suspension of its regular activities gives further evidence of the skilful management and the forethought for the public that have characterized the library during the ten years of the present régime.

Owing to the delays that seem to be inevitable in a work of such magnitude and importance, the Bryant Park building has not been completed within the time originally set. No further obstacle, however, is likely to be encountered, and at an early date the New York Public Library may be expected to open the doors of a new era to a world it has served, hitherto, with an efficiency and thoroughness which their own limitations of purpose and equipment have rendered impossible to similar institutions elsewhere.



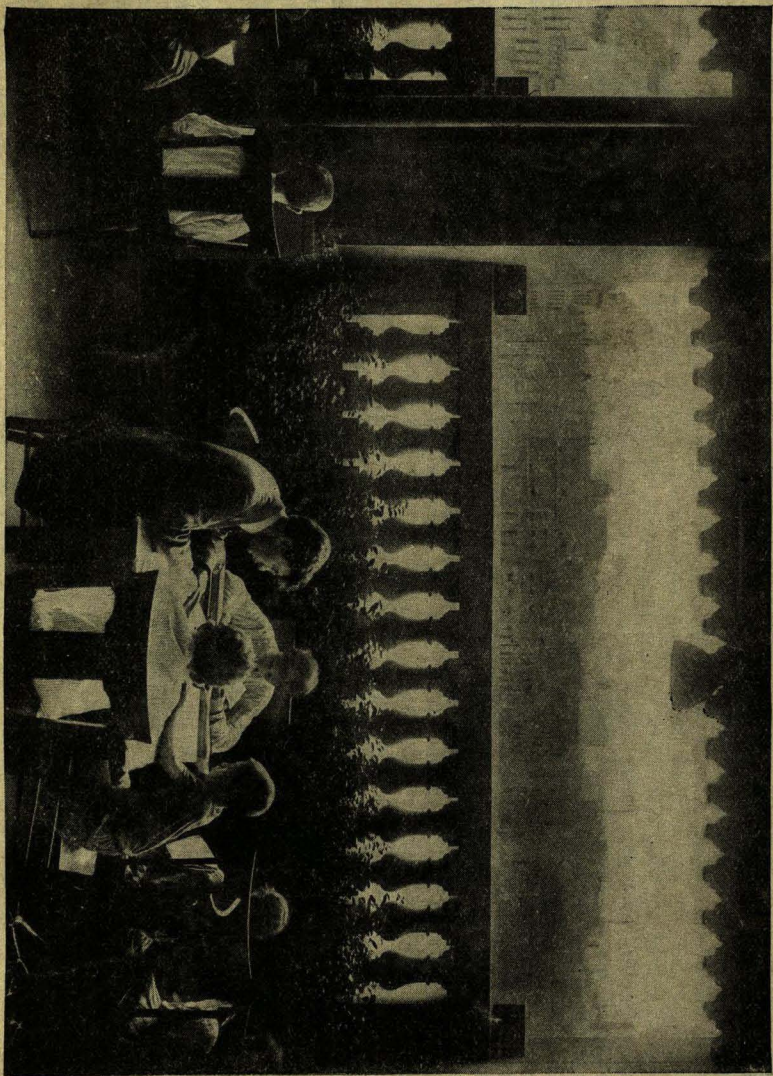
THE LIBRARY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, Seattle, Wash., in the first unit recently completed, has study room accommodations for 750 students and storage capacity for 200,000 volumes. The first unit of the library building shown above cost \$896,819. The educational building shown below cost \$452,825. It contains 32,155 square feet of classroom space. The enrollment at the university is 7,500 students.





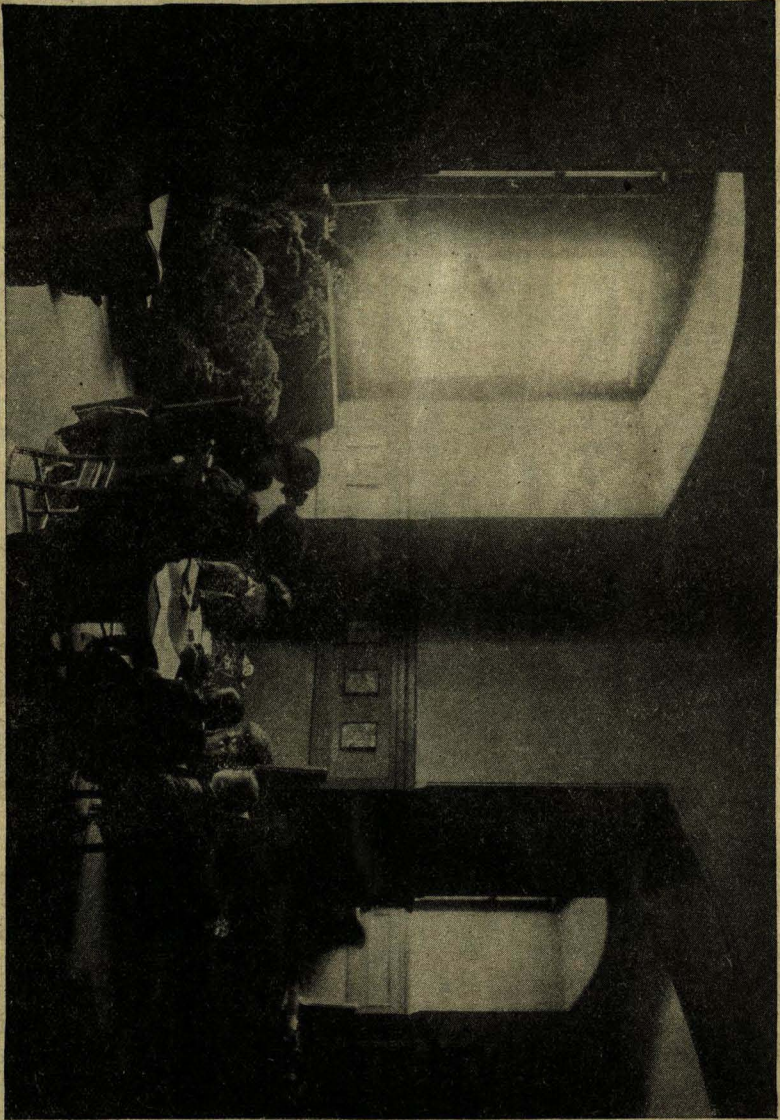
NEW YORK'S NEW PUBLIC LIBRARY

Photo by Brown Bros., I



Courtesy of the New York Public Library

ON THE ROOF AT SEWARD PARK BRANCH OF THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY. THE BOYS
AND GIRLS ARE DEEP IN FAIRY TALES, WHILE THE MAN IS STUDYING FOR THE REGENTS'
EXAMINATIONS



Courtesy of the New York Public Library
A PICTURE-BOOK CORNER IN THE CENTRAL CHILDREN'S ROOM, NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY



MRS. H. L. ELMENDORF
(President of the American Library Association)

*Librarians
in
Conference* Following the recent examples of the Conference of Charities and Correction and the National Education Association, another important national body, the American Library Association, has chosen a woman as its president. The annual meeting of the association, to be held at Ottawa, Canada, from June 26 to July 2, will be under the capable guidance of Mrs. H. L. Elmendorf, of the Buffalo Public Library. The program of the Ottawa conference will be concerned very largely with the relation of the library to individuals. The calling of librarianship is now rightly dignified as a profession. The requirements for entrance to it are exacting and the men

and women who fill its ranks are as truly educators as are the teachers in our public and private schools. The meeting at Ottawa, over which Mrs. Elmendorf will preside, will be addressed by President Vincent, of the University of Minnesota, and by other distinguished educationists.

AUTHORS WHO DIDN'T DIE POOR.

Announcement that Arnold Bennett leaves a fortune of half a million is headlined by the cheerful statement: All good authors do not die poor. If it were possible to say with equal truth only good authors died rich it could, indeed, be held that this is a golden age of letters.

John F. Sinclair, who discusses this interesting matter of literary rewards, points out that the "big money" writers are not all the moderns. Shakespeare did very well, but alas for art, it appears that his main profits were made from wise real estate operation. The elder Dumas made a fortune from his novel factory. Scott and Dickens won comfort and moderate opulence from their writing.

Bennett was a most industrious writer, applying his methodical training as a solicitor's clerk to the production of books, essays, articles and plays in enormous quantity. Many critics feel that he overdid this quantity production and that much of his output, taken alone, would deny him the title of a great or even a good author.

It would be interesting to know what portion of his \$500,000 fortune came respectively from the dross, the silver and the gold of his voluminous writings. But then no critics could be found to agree as to which is dross, gold or silver, so that speculation is doubly futile. Yet so excellent is the gold of his mental mining that one would hesitate to begrudge him the profit from the baser metal of his art.

The same facts appear in appraising the careers of most other notable writers who have found literature's rewards generous. If some of them compromised with their art for profit's sake, it is also true that many endured years of poverty without budging an inch from their literary standards before the public recognized their merit.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

May 14, 1931

Q. What is the name of the book which Mrs. Herbert Hoover together with her husband translated?—A. W.
A. It was "de Re Metallica" from the Latin of Georg Agricola, 1556.



THE VAN WORMER LIBRARY

at the University of Cincinnati, erected in 1900, when the university had 485 students enrolled, has seats for 120 students in its study rooms and storage capacity for 100,000 volumes. Today the university has 8,578 students enrolled. On Tuesday the people of Cincinnati will vote on bond issues proposed to provide \$800,000 for a new library building, \$450,000 for a new educational building and \$175,000 for new power plant equipment. The progress made at other institutions to increase library and classroom facilities is depicted by pictures in this display.

Q. What did Epictetus write?—
A. C. R.

A. Epictetus left no written works but his essential doctrines are embodied in some of the writings of Flavius Arrianus. The best known are Discourses of Epictetus and the Encheiridion (handbook). His ideas approached more nearly the kindness of Christian doctrine than did those of any of the other Stoics.

Books Create Thought

BOOKS are a safe ground and a long one, but still introductory only, for what we really seek is ever comparison of experiences—to know if you have found therein what alone I prize, or, still better, if you have found what I have never found, and yet is admirable to me also . . . I hold that we have never reached their best use until our own thought rises to such a pitch that we cannot afford to read much. I own this loftiness is rare, and we must long be thankful to our silent friends before the day comes when we can honestly dismiss them.—R. W. Emerson, in a letter to a friend.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, Washington, D. C. Justly celebrated as the culmination of architectural achievement of the day. Was completed in 1897 at a cost of over \$6,000,000. The Library is here seen from the Capitol. The dome and lantern are finished in black copper, with panels gilded with thick coating of gold leaf; and the cresting of the dome terminates in a gilded finial representing the torch of science ever burning.

A Great Library On the Job

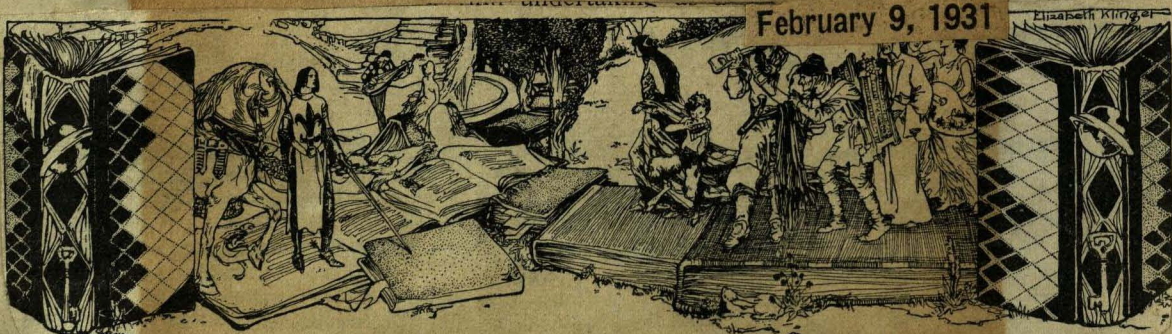
All libraries report increasing numbers of readers, but probably the service of few is increasing so rapidly as that of the Cincinnati Public Library. The figures for three years tell a significant story. In 1928 our library loaned 2,548,677 books for home use; in 1929 it loaned 2,812,888; in 1930 it loaned 3,335,948. Thus in two years its circulation of books mounted one-third.

The general increase in reading the country over is to be accounted for largely by unemployment, which gives people more time to read, prompts them to seek solace in reading, and suggests to them that by courses of study they may better prepare themselves for remunerative jobs. Our library has a pamphlet which lists books on vocational self-guidance, on family budget-planning, and on such matters as household carpentry, everyday electricity, house painting, paper hanging and whitewashing.

Circumstances local to the Cincinnati Public Library have further promoted reading throughout Hamilton County. It is in position now to purchase new books in adequate quantity. It is binding worn volumes more attractively—40 per cent in red covers, and twenty per cent each in blue, green and brown. It has no less than thirty-three branch libraries. In addition to the deposit collections placed in the country schools, post-offices and grocery stores, it has had, since 1927, two book wagons which make trips over the county at stated intervals, taking orders and filling them later, and carrying six hundred books a trip. Counting the branches, schools, deposit stations and wagon stops, there are now 270 points where readers can get library books. In the country they meet the wagon with farm baskets. By wagon, 128,000 volumes were put in circulation in 1930.

This is service in which the public takes satisfaction—and reason for a central library building worthy the city and county.

February 9, 1931



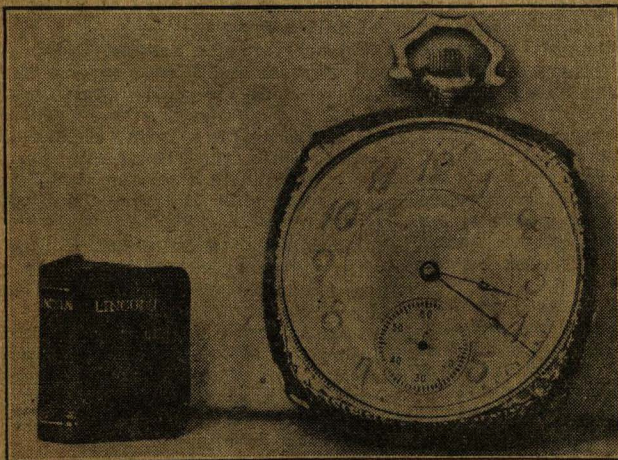
The Treasure Ship

*"Herein lie treasures richer than the cargoes of
the treasure ships of old."*



Public Library—Zanesville, Ohio

**"Smallest Book Ever Produced in America"
Contains Lincoln's Speeches and Addresses**



THIS tiny volume, measuring thirteen-sixteenths of an inch across the cover, and said to be the smallest book ever produced in America, is now in the possession of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology library, a gift of the Kingsport Press, of Kingsport, Tenn. The miniature volume contains the speeches and addresses that made Abraham Lincoln famous. An idea

THE biggest stores in the country are brought right to your door in every issue of Grit. While all of the advertisements do not list every article in the store, yet by writing to the advertiser you can secure, without cost, literature presenting money-saving offers. Read the advertisements.

of the comparative size of the book may be gained from the standard-size watch beside it. It is necessary to read the book with a magnifying glass. The pages of the book are about the size of a postage stamp. It is bound in limp leather covers.