

FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
Public Library Commission

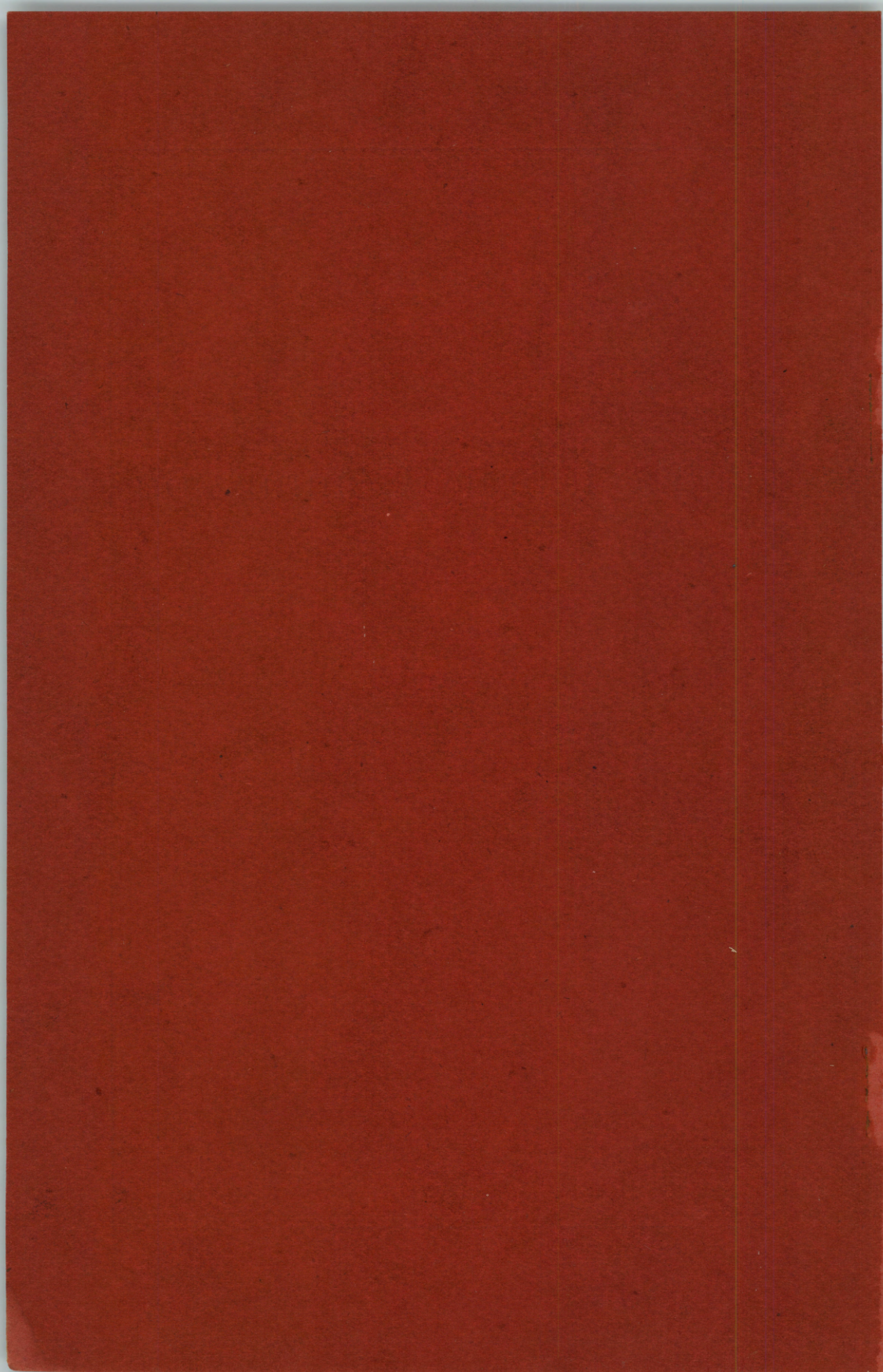
OF
NEW JERSEY

For the Year ending October 31st,

1904.

PATERSON, N. J.:
NEWS PRINTING COMPANY,
STATE PRINTERS
1905.

New Jersey State Library



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Report of the

Public Library Commission

for the year 1901

1902

Printed by the State Printer, Albany, N. Y.

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Public Library Commission.

W. C. KIMBALL, *Chairman* Passaic.
M. TAYLOR PYNE. Princeton.
DR. ERNEST C. RICHARDSON. Princeton.
DR. LEONARD J. GORDON. Jersey City.
REV. DR. EVERETT T. TOMLINSON. Elizabeth.

HENRY C. BUCHANAN, *Secretary*. .State Library, Trenton.

(3)

New Jersey State Library

Public Library Commission

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY
HAS THE HONOR TO ANNOUNCE
THAT IT HAS THE PLEASURE
TO ANNOUNCE THE RESULTS
OF THE EXAMINATION OF THE
LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS
FOR THE YEAR 1911

THE RESULTS OF THE EXAMINATION OF THE LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS FOR THE YEAR 1911

New Jersey State Library

REPORT.

Hon. Franklin Murphy, Governor of New Jersey:

DEAR SIR—For the year 1904 the New Jersey Public Library Commission respectfully submits the following report for transmission to the Legislature:

Donations of \$100 each were made during the year to the following libraries whose trustees had by affidavit satisfied the Public Library Commission that they had set apart an equal sum of money to be expended for the purchase of books for the libraries under their control: Borough of Fanwood, Whar-ton, West Hoboken, Dover, and Township of Freehold.

For clerical assistance, incidental expenses of the Commission, salary and expenses of a Library Organizer for six months; there was expended \$973.59 of the \$1,500 appropriated for the purpose. For the transportation of Traveling Libraries, new books, postage, and the repair of books, there was expended \$256.79 of the \$500 appropriated. The amount received in fees for the use of the Traveling Libraries was \$65, which was paid to the State Treasurer at the close of the fiscal year.

By the act of March 7th, 1904, the care of the Traveling Libraries was transferred from the Commissioners of the State Library to the Public Library Commission. At the time of the transfer fourteen of the libraries were in operation. A few weeks later this number was reduced to twelve. Early in October, at the request of Rev. Aloys M. Fish, the Moral Instructor at the New Jersey State Prison, one of the libraries was sent to that institution, for the use of the female prisoners. While the Commission has been assured that the sanitary conditions at the prison are of the best and that personal cleanliness and neatness are rigidly enforced, it has been thought advisable to procure special libraries for this branch of the work, and accordingly one hundred volumes, specially selected by Rev. Mr. Fish, have been purchased, and others will be

procured as they may be needed. This plan will allay any prejudice that might have been created against giving general circulation to the books that had been used in the prison; though the volumes in each library when it is returned are carefully disinfected by means of formaldehyde gas in a cabinet built for that purpose.

At the request of the Commissioners, Mr. Kimball attended the annual meeting of the American Library Association, at St. Louis, in October. In connection with the meeting a conference of the representatives of Library Commissions was held. Wisconsin, Illinois, Connecticut, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota and New Jersey organized the League of Library Commissions, with H. E. Legler, of Wisconsin, as Chairman; W. C. Kimball, of New Jersey, Vice Chairman, and Miss Alice Tyler, of Iowa, Secretary. The object of the League is to secure the co-operation of the various State Commissions in the work of forwarding the interests of public libraries, and thus save the needless labor and expense of duplication. A hand-book of information to librarians and library workers is to be prepared, book lists printed and distributed, and such other lines of work taken up as may be likely to prove of interest or use to the smaller libraries. The publishing Board of the American Library Association will also co-operate in the work.

In April last the Commission engaged the services of an assistant to visit the smaller libraries of the State and give them such aid as they might need. Besides, expert librarians have been sent to some of the newly established libraries to assist in the work of organization, cataloguing, and the selection of books. Considerable has been accomplished, also, through correspondence, which included the distribution to the libraries of the State of bulletins issued by the A. L. A. Committee on Book Prices; buying lists of recent books, compiled by co-operating Library Commissions of several States, and pamphlets of interest to libraries and librarians, which had been forwarded to the Commission for distribution.

The New Jersey Library Association, which is made up of librarians and library workers, has co-operated with the Commission in the effort to forward the library interests of the State, and while considerable has been accomplished during

the year, there is still much to be done. In at least a dozen of the cities new libraries have either just been finished or are now under way or projected. In no State is there being greater interest manifested in the spreading library movement than in New Jersey.

At the request of the Commission and the New Jersey Library Association, Miss Beatrice Winsor, assistant librarian of the Newark Free Public Library, and Miss Bertha S. Wildman, of the Madison Public Library, compiled for the Department of Public Instruction a list of titles which will be recommended for supplemental reading in the public schools of the State. This list is now in the hands of Superintendent Baxter, and it is understood that it will soon be printed for the use of the schools.

The object of the Public Library Commission, as set forth in the act of March 20th, 1900, is to furnish to librarians and trustees of free public libraries, or to persons interested in organizing a free public library, assistance in the selection and cataloguing of books and "any other matters pertaining to the establishment, maintenance or administration of such library." It is also authorized to donate to any free public library under municipal control in this State a sum not exceeding \$100, provided the trustees of such library shall have set aside an equal amount, to be expended in the purchase of books, but no library having upwards of five thousand volumes can receive a donation. The Commission was advised by the late Attorney General Grey that in his opinion a "free public library under municipal control" meant a library that was maintained by a direct tax.

In order the better to assist the small libraries that are unable to secure the services of trained librarians, the Commission has engaged as Library Organizer Miss Sarah B. Askew, who is a graduate of Pratt Institute Library School, and who has had practical experience in the various branches of library work. The services of the Organizer will be placed at the disposal of the small libraries of the State, and she will advise in the work of classifying and cataloguing the books and give such instruction in other lines as may be necessary. This aid will be particularly valuable to such libraries as depend upon volunteer assistants.

The many and contradictory acts and supplements relating to public libraries have led the Commission to take steps to secure a revision of all the library laws of the State, in order that they may appear in simpler form in the new edition of the Revised Statutes which it is understood is soon to be published. This revision will be submitted to the Legislature in the form of one or more bills. It is the purpose to make no change in the laws, but merely revise, consolidate and condense those now in existence. The Commission has many applications for copies of the library laws of the State, and a great deal of time is spent in explaining to those interested in establishing free public libraries the apparent contradictions.

The Commission respectfully suggests to the Legislature the advisability of transferring from the State Library to the free public libraries in some of the larger cities, sets of the New Jersey Legislative Documents and the Senate and House Journals, as nearly complete as may be possible. Under the act regulating the State Library, twenty copies of each of these public documents are placed in the State Library for the use of the State. It is understood that but one hundred sets are published, and some of the libraries that have endeavored to secure copies have been unable to do so. If sets of the more important public documents were placed, for instance, in the Public Libraries of Jersey City, Newark, Paterson, New Brunswick, Camden, Atlantic City, Asbury Park, Plainfield, and perhaps two or three other cities, they would be more readily accessible for public use, and their safety against destruction by fire would be enhanced.

The Commission submits hereunder a statement of the more important improvements and changes in the condition of the libraries of New Jersey during the past year.

The Free Public Library of Freehold township, which includes the town of Freehold, was opened to the public on December 10th. The library is established in a new brick building erected on East Main street, the building fund, \$10,000, having been donated by Mr. Carnegie, to which he subsequently added \$1,000 for the purpose of completing the decorating and furnishing. The lot upon which the building is

erected cost \$2,000, the responsibility for the payment of which was assumed by a ladies' committee of the town. The building is one story and a half in height, with basement. On the first floor is a large general reading-room, in the rear of the librarian's desk is space for three large book racks, and in the extreme rear are the children's reading-room and librarian's private room. In the basement are a men's reading or smoking-room, a boiler-room and a lavatory. The first and lower floors are equipped with toilet rooms. The building is heated by steam and is piped for gas and electricity, the former of which is now used.

The library has about 1,600 volumes, composed of 1,000 volumes comprising the King's Daughters library, which had been maintained for a number of years by the society by private subscription, and 600 volumes, largely of a reference character, which have been purchased by the Board of Trustees. The library is now maintained by public taxation under the general library law, which was adopted by the voters of the township at the annual election in March, 1903; the income from this source averaging about \$1,100. The first two weeks that the library was open to the public it developed a circulation of about 400 books, which is steadily increasing. The leading newspapers and magazines are kept upon the reading tables and are well patronized; the general use of the library by all classes of the public being in excess of that anticipated. Many residents from adjoining townships, who are required to pay for the use of the books, have taken advantage of the library.

On the opening of the new building, the King's Daughters Society closed their library and turned all their books over to the trustees of the new library, and many citizens of the town are from time to time contributing books to it, while the trustees are reserving from \$200 to \$300 out of the maintenance fund each year for the purchase of books. Book shelves are built as high as the wainscoting around the interior of the main reading room and children's room, and these, with the book stacks, afford shelf room for 15,000 volumes.

A number of efforts had been made in former years in Freehold to conduct public libraries, but the difficulty always experienced by the promoters was in securing an adequate main-

tenance fund by private subscription. The success of the new library under the library law which affords a permanent annual income seems now assured.

The Passaic Public Library reports: "We now have 18,435 books in the library, 3,017 having been added during the past year. The circulation amounted to 125,869, an increase of 22,508 over last year, which indicates the appreciation in which the library is held by the people of Passaic. A new venture was started in the Fall, in the opening, for an hour daily, of a small branch in the German-American school, which carries the library service into the Fourth ward. Books have been supplied for ten school libraries and several associations, and teachers are eagerly availing themselves of the advantages offered by 'teachers' cards'.

"The desirability of supplying books in foreign languages at the Reid Memorial Branch has far exceeded our expectations. The total number of books in the twelve foreign languages is small, but when our statistics show that each one has circulated at least twenty times, there can be no doubt of their cordial reception by our foreign-born citizens. These books serve as an introduction to the library and an incentive to make further use of its resources, of which we find our patrons only too eager to avail themselves and which has led to the forming of numerous clubs for educational purposes, which use the rooms provided in the Reid Memorial Library. We are still fortunate in getting volunteer help with our social clubs, and sewing and knitting classes for the young people.

"The course of free lectures given during the past Winter received most liberal patronage, and the request by foreigners for lectures in their own languages shows how anxious they are to secure all the advantages of education our Library can give."

The Public Library of Dover, which had been in operation for over two years under the efficient management of an association of ladies, has been incorporated as "The Free Public Library of Dover, N. J." During its previous administration excellent work had been done. The library contained over one thousand volumes, many of which had been donated by

the citizens of Dover. Last Fall a citizens' meeting was held, at which some of the members of the Commission were present, and after a free discussion it was decided to place the library under municipal control. By a vote of 250 to 195 the citizens in May last voted to accept the free public library act, and a board of trustees was appointed, of which Mayor Isaac H. Searing is President. He has given to this new movement much personal attention, generous support, and wise, practical counsel. The board is represented also by two ladies who were officers of the former library association, the president of the board of education, the clergy and laymen. The members of the Hoagland Memorial Presbyterian Church have generously placed at the disposal of the Board of Trustees the use of the former church, which has been admirably equipped for library and reading room purposes. The rooms have been formally opened. An appeal for subscriptions toward the library enterprise secured \$600, which amount has been largely increased since the opening of the library.

The committee has already placed several hundred volumes of good literature in the library and provided the large and attractive reading room with daily, weekly and monthly periodicals. The number of card members now enrolled and the number of books constantly taken exceed the most sanguine expectations of the Board. It is the purpose of the Library Committee to have occasional popular entertainments in the form of familiar talks from able speakers, recitations, music, &c., for the special pleasure and benefit of young men. The co-operation of the citizens with this aggressive literary and social work, in donations of books and financial aid, has been most gratifying to the Board of Trustees, a member of which has said: "We are delighted with the success we have achieved in an humble way. We do not compare ourselves with towns where large sums have been given; but any town can do what Dover has done—if it tries."

The Jersey City Free Public Library reports that during the past year its work has been more successful than ever. There has been an increase of about 20,000 in the circulation of books for home reading, and the course of free lectures given at the library last Winter was so popular as to exceed the expecta-

tions of the Trustees. A new course has been arranged for the present season, which will include several on the great masters in music, which are to be illustrated by selections from their works. The use of the assembly room is now permitted for meetings of various kinds and the library is becoming the literary and social center of the city.

The number of books lent for home use by the Newark Free Public Library in 1904 was 465,714, an increase of 8 % over the previous year, when the number circulated was 428,564. It is interesting to note the 48 % more books circulated in 1904 than in 1901, and 28 % more than in 1897, the largest previous year. There were added to the shelves 11,918 books, making a total of 99,718 volumes in the library; 554 different meetings were held by 60 different organizations, with a total attendance of 14,688 persons. A branch of the library was opened on October 1st near the center of the city and has been most successful in reaching the business and professional people who have not the time to go to the main library. The circulation was 5,313 volumes for three months.

Two hundred and sixty-seven school-room libraries were sent out, which circulated 66,894 books. A library of 100 volumes each was put in the four largest department stores of the city on November 16th, and the circulation for the month and a half was 1,354. More books have been asked for by every one of the stores and the experiment is most successful.

The police precincts and fire engine houses are supplied with books, which are changed whenever desired. Two more deposit stations of 500 volumes each were opened last year, a library of 250 volumes has been placed in the Board of Trade rooms, and several factories have applied for libraries upon technical subjects.

A list of 1,000 of the best novels, compiled during the year by the Newark Library and several of the librarians of the State, has just been issued, and the Public Library Commission intends to distribute copies of it as a buying list for the smaller libraries of the State.

Another interesting publication of the Newark library is a pamphlet entitled "Newark: the Story of Its Early Days," written by Frank J. Urquhart. No history of New Jersey

contains a story of Newark which would appeal to children, and it occurred to the Librarian that a short account of the beginnings of Newark might prove interesting. Three editions have been published and one of them was paid for by the Board of Trade, which saw in it a means of arousing civic pride in the city. A number of the schools are using the history as a supplementary reader.

A loan exhibition of paintings attracted the attention of 25,023 persons and Mgr. Doane's prints and engravings brought 8,321 persons to the library.

The New Jersey Library Class formed for the study of reference books, with Miss Rathbone, instructor in Pratt Institute Library School, as teacher, holds its meetings at the Newark Library, with an attendance of 35 persons. Librarians and assistants from different parts of the State find the course useful.

The new Free Public Library of Bayonne was formally dedicated on the evening of Saturday, October 29th, with appropriate ceremonies, and on the following Monday was opened to the public with 13,500 volumes on the shelves. The new building, which cost \$50,000 and is a gift from Mr. Carnegie, is at the corner of Avenue C and West Thirty-first street, on a site purchased by the Bayonne Common Council for \$8,000. Since the opening of the new building there has been a great increase in the circulation of books. Bayonne accepted the provisions of the free public library act at an election held on April 8th, 1890, the vote being 1,897 in favor of acceptance and 103 against.

Mr. Carnegie has expressed a willingness to build a library for Kearny, the people have voted to accept the provisions of the free public library act and raise by taxation a sufficient amount yearly to maintain the library, and the Town Council has appropriated the money for the purchase of a site. An effort is now being made to secure a plot of sufficient size to accommodate both the library and a new town hall that is to be built, and the present indications are that it will be successful.

Atlantic City's new \$70,000 library will be formally dedicated and opened to the public on January 2d, 1905. It will have shelf-room that will accommodate 60,000 volumes, but will open with only about 6,000 volumes in place. The Trustees have been greatly hampered in the work of furnishing books by an annoying complication that followed the adoption of the new charter for the city. Under the free public library act which was accepted by the voters in November, 1901, provision is made for a tax of one-third of a mill on each dollar of ratables for maintenance. This would have given to the Trustees an annual fund of more than \$15,000. By the new charter, which was passed and accepted in 1902, the Common Council is given the power to decide the amount that shall be appropriated yearly to the various municipal departments, including the public library, and Council voted to the Library Trustees but \$6,000. The charter being the later act of the Legislature, abrogates the one-third of a mill provision of the Library act of 1884, so far as Atlantic City is concerned.

Mr. Carnegie offered to give the town of Union Hill \$25,000 for a public library building, if the town will furnish a site and raise by tax a sufficient income to support the library. The offer has been accepted and a site at the corner of Main street and New York avenue purchased at a cost of \$4,000.

Belleville, in March, 1901, voted to establish a free public library, which was opened in the following December and has since been operated with increasing popularity. During the past year a movement was started to secure a library building. Mr. Carnegie has offered to give \$10,000 for the purpose, on condition that the people furnish a site and agree to raise yearly \$1,000 for maintenance.

West Hoboken's new Carnegie Library was completed about June 1st, and is now occupied. It cost \$25,000, and is of limestone and light brick, with interior finished in hard wood. It contains a stack room for 30,000 volumes, two reading rooms, Trustees' room and Librarian's office, besides a disinfecting room; is heated by steam and lighted by electricity.

The new library building at Perth Amboy was opened to the public on December 9th, 1903, and on the same date the library began to register all borrowers. Up to December 31st, 1904, 1,469 membership cards had been issued. Of this number 731 were given to adult, and 738 to juvenile readers. During the year the total number of volumes circulated was 26,450, an increase of 8,995 over the previous year. These figures would undoubtedly be larger were it not for the fact that there is a large foreign population, and that from lack of assistance it is necessary to close the library daily from 12 to 3 P. M. With the aid of another assistant it is hoped to increase the hours, making them from 9 A. M. to 9 P. M.

Besides the growth in circulation, better use has been made of the reference books and the library's helpfulness in this direction more fully appreciated by the teachers and students in the schools. The reading room has also been well patronized, having received over 8,000 visitors in the past year. This room contains 41 magazines and papers, and in addition to the regular library hours is open every Sunday afternoon from 1:30 to 5:30 P. M.

One noticeable feature of the year's work has been the growing interest shown by the children. This is especially encouraging, as they have never before used the library to any extent. A series of story hour talks is to be given one day of each week from 4 to 5 P. M. By this means it is hoped to keep up the interest of the younger patrons, and to direct their reading to a greater extent.

The library now contains 4,493 volumes. Of this number 632 were added during the year, 567 by purchase, 33 by gift, and 32 by binding periodicals. At present the library's most pressing need is the addition of more books to the Juvenile and Reference departments, and the completion of the work of reclassifying and cataloguing.

The Danforth Memorial Library building at Paterson will be completed and occupied, it is expected, about March 1st next. It is a spacious and very carefully planned building of a pure classic style of architecture, and will cost, including furniture and fittings, about \$225,000. This sum is exclusive

of the cost of the land, which was \$40,000. The building is a gift from the late Mrs. Mary E. Ryle, of Paterson, who gave it as a memorial to her father. It is much to be regretted that this most generous and public-spirited lady could not have lived to see the completion of the greatest monument of her philanthropy. Her death occurred just before Christmas, 1904.

The Paterson library was destroyed, it will be remembered, in the great fire of February, 1902. Since that time the collecting of books has gone steadily on in the temporary quarters, and about 25,000 volumes will be in the new building when it is opened to the public, the most of them thoroughly catalogued.

The Boonton Improvement Society, which is composed of sixty women, has started a movement looking toward the establishing of a free public library under municipal control. The trustees of the Holmes Library have expressed a willingness to co-operate in the effort, and there is a chance that Mr. Carnegie will erect a building for the town if the voters will agree to raise by direct tax a sufficient sum yearly to maintain the library.

The \$50,000 Carnegie Library at New Brunswick was completed late last year and has been occupied for several months. Extraordinary expenses in connection with the equipment of the building used up so much of the first year's appropriation that the library has been greatly hampered in its work; notwithstanding which the circulation for the year was 56,689 volumes. Steps are being taken to merge the old Free Circulating Library's 9,455 volumes with the Free Public Library's collection of 9,409. The two collections are now accessible to the public.

Camden will soon have a central library and two branches to take the place of the small main library in Cooper Park and the branch at Fifth and Mt. Vernon streets. These will be constructed at a cost of \$100,000; this sum being a gift of Mr. Carnegie. The central library, now nearing completion, is at the corner of Broadway and Line streets, in the heart of

the city; its cost will be \$80,000—possibly \$90,000. One branch will be located at the east side of Camden, upon which not more than \$10,000 will be expended; and the other will be on the west side—the old library building on Cooper Park will be remodeled for this purpose at a cost not exceeding \$10,000.

The capacity of the central library will be about 40,000 volumes, and of the two branch libraries about 15,000 volumes each. There will be an auditorium or lecture room in each library, in which it is proposed to have free lectures. There will also be separate rooms for children, and reading and reference rooms for adults, in all the buildings.

A sum of \$6,000 has been set aside from the city library appropriation for 1904 with which to purchase books for the central library; this will afford a nucleus upon which to build. The present branch library will be closed on completion of the main library.

The circulation of the main library during the year was 48,598, of which 40,851 was fiction. At the branch library the circulation was 23,205, of which 2,466 was fiction.

Asbury Park has added to its library a much needed reading room that will be open to the public daily.

The Trenton Free Public Library, which was completed and dedicated in June, 1902, has become so popular that during the present year it was found necessary to take for the reference department the large room on the second floor that had been reserved for a lecture hall. This has permitted the enlargement of the Children's and Circulation departments and added to the convenience of the public and the library staff. The Trenton Library last June published a very complete catalogue of 28,000 titles. It is in two parts, one devoted to fiction, and the other to general literature, classified according to the Decimal system and with call numbers attached. The Trustees have recently extended the privileges of the readers, so that the number of non-fiction works that may be drawn at one time is largely determined by the needs of the readers and the character of the books.

The people of Greenwich township, Gloucester county, voted in March, 1903, to accept the free public library act, and about \$425 is raised yearly in taxes for the support of the new institution, which is located in Paulsboro. While there are but 1,600 volumes in the library, the circulation during the first nine months was over 8,000, and one of the trustees says: "Our people would not know what to do without the library, and the only problem is to know how to keep up the supply of books."

The library at Caldwell continues in the charge of the school teachers. More pressing municipal needs have made it inadvisable to present the free public library question to popular vote, but the agitation is being kept up, with promising indications that the people will vote to support a library when the proposition is submitted to them.

Riverton, after a successful experience of six years with a public library, is desirous of having it placed upon a permanent basis with an assured income, and a movement has been started looking to submission to popular vote of the question of accepting the free public library act.

Cape May finally decided not to accept Mr. Carnegie's offer of \$10,000 for a new library building and the project has been dropped temporarily. However, the interest continues, and as the city has no library, there is a likelihood that steps will soon be taken to establish one.

Fanwood's new library was opened early in January. The donation made by the State for the purchase of books was duplicated by a like amount raised by popular subscriptions. The collection includes about 800 volumes, which are installed in a room in the building occupied by the post office, the post-mistress acting as librarian.

At Red Bank, the proposition to accept the act of 1890 and establish a free public library under municipal control was submitted to popular vote at the municipal election held last Spring, and was defeated. It is worth noting that this is one

of the very few instances in New Jersey in which the people have declined to accept the law. Red Bank has a subscription library that contains about 2,600 volumes.

Respectfully submitted,

W. C. KIMBALL,
M. TAYLOR PYNE,
EVERETT T. TOMLINSON,
ERNEST C. RICHARDSON.

December 31, 1904.

