ANNUAL REPORT

—OF THE—

SAINT LOUIS

Mercantile Library

ASSOCIATION.

1870.
TWENTY-FIFTH

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OF THE

ST. LOUIS

Mercantile Library Association,

AND THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION.

ST. LOUIS:
PRINTED FOR THE ASSOCIATION.
MISSOURI DEMOCRAT PRINT.
1871.
OFFICERS
OF THE
MERCANTILE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION,
FOR THE YEAR 1871.

President.
RICHARD M. SCRUGGS.

Vice-President.
CHARLES SPECK.

Corresponding Secretary.
M. N. BURCHARD.

Recording Secretary.
JOHN H. TRACY.

Treasurer.
HENRY H. WERNSE.

Directors.
JOHN S. J. MILLER,
HENRY T. SIMON,
WALTER M. SMITH,
W. S. STEWART.
FRANK CARTER,
A. W. MITCHELL,
J. C. EWALD,

Actuary and Librarian.
JOHN N. DYER.

Assistant Librarians.
W. H. H. ANDERSON.
OTIS B. WEBB.

First.
Second.
Third.

Janitor.
SAMUEL CLEGG.
COMMITTEES FOR 1871.

Ways and Means.
CHARLES SPECK,          |      M. N. BURCHARD,
W. S. STEWART.

Library and Reading Room.
HENRY T. SIMON,          |      FRANK CARTER,
                        |      J. C. EWALD.

Books and Donations.
JOHN S. J. MILLER,       |      A. W. MITCHELL,
H. H. WERNSE,            |      JOHN H. TRACY,
                        |      W. S. STEWART.

Lectures.
WALTER M. SMITH,         |      M. N. BURCHARD,
                        |      A. W. MITCHELL.

Hall and Building.
RICHARD M. SCRUGGS,      |      CHARLES SPECK,
                        |      HENRY H. WERNSE.
PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSOCIATION

FROM ITS ORGANIZATION.

1846-7 ........................................... JAMES E. YEATMAN.
1848-9 ........................................... ALFRED VINTON.
1850-1 ........................................... H. E. BRIDGE.
1852 ........................................... HENRY D. BACON.
1853 ........................................... J. H. ALEXANDER.
1854-5 ........................................... J. T. DOUGLASS.
1856 ........................................... W. M. MORRISON.
1857 ........................................... JOHN W. LUKE.
1858 ........................................... M. V. L. McCLELLAND.
1859-60 ........................................... J. B. S. LEMOINE.
1861 ........................................... ALFRED CARR.
1862-3 ........................................... JOHN H. BEACH.
1864-5 ........................................... CHARLES MILLER.
1866-7 ........................................... GEO. R. ROBINSON.
1868-9 ........................................... LAFAYETTE WILSON.
1870-1 ........................................... RICHARD M. SCRUGGS.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>PRESIDENT</th>
<th>VICE-PRESIDENT</th>
<th>TREASURER</th>
<th>SEC. SECRETARY</th>
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<td>J. B. S. Lenoine</td>
<td>George H. Loker</td>
<td>C. W. Marsh</td>
<td>G. R. Wilson</td>
<td>J. Christopher, J. A. Brownlee, R. H. Davis, R. C. Allister, S. E. Clarke, solid Scott, Jr., G. W. Tracy, Kingsland</td>
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<td>John H. Beach</td>
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<td>John E. Yore</td>
<td>H. C. Marston</td>
<td>C. L. Thompson</td>
<td>Charles Miller</td>
<td>Ed. W. Johnston</td>
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Note.—Names in italics, resigned. Those marked thus * were elected by the Board to fill vacancies.
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<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>MEMBERS</th>
<th>GAIN</th>
<th>VOLS.</th>
<th>GAIN</th>
<th>VOLS.</th>
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The Twenty-fifth Annual Meeting of the St. Louis Mercantile Library Association was called to order by the President at half-past seven o'clock p.m. Mr. Robert A. Barnes was nominated for Chairman and unanimously elected. John R. Lionberger and C. W. Marsh were chosen Secretaries.

On motion of John W. Luke, the reading of the minutes of the last annual meeting was dispensed with. The following report from the Committee on Ways and Means was then submitted:

MERCANTILE LIBRARY,
ST. LOUIS, JANUARY 10, 1871.

The Committee on Ways and Means respectfully report that they have examined the books and accounts of the Association, and that they find the same correct, and substantiated with proper vouchers for all disbursements.

CHARLES SPECK,
Chairman Committee on Ways and Means.

Upon motion, the report was adopted.

The Treasurer, H. H. Wernse, read his report of the finances of the Association and the transactions of the past year. Upon motion, the report was adopted.
The report of the Board of Directors was read by the President, R. M. Scruggs, giving a **resume** of the operations of the past year, and making a very satisfactory exhibit of the condition of the Association.

John T. Douglass then offered the following preamble and resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

Whereas, By the report of the Board of Directors, presented to us this evening, there is ample evidence of the continued prosperity of the institution; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the President and Board of Directors merit, in a high degree, the thanks of the members of this Association, for their zeal and attention to the interests of the Library during the past year.

M. V. L. McClelland offered the following preamble and resolutions, which were unanimously adopted:

Whereas, This Association is to become possessors—through the active agency of the Hon. Charles D. Drake, late U. S. Senator from Missouri; Hon. Benjamin Moran, U. S. Charge d'Affaires at London; Bennet Woodcroft, Esq., Great Seal Patent Office, and his associate Commissioners of Patents—of a complete set of the British Patent Reports, from the year 1617 to the present date, embracing twenty-six hundred and eighty volumes and embodying superb engravings, the whole published at a cost of twelve thousand seven hundred dollars, and to be followed with the current annual additions; therefore, be it

Resolved, That this Association, in annual meeting assembled, for themselves and in behalf of the city of St. Louis, tender their profound acknowledgment and thanks to the givers, and to the persons named in the preamble, for their friendly interest in securing a collection, almost inaccessible in America and of such conspicuous value.

Resolved, That the Board of Directors be, and are hereby, instructed to make official communication to the gentlemen enumerated of this action of the Association.

On motion of Charles Miller, it was

Resolved, That the Board of Directors be, and are hereby, authorized to appropriate such a sum of money out of the funds of the Association as may be necessary to defray the cost of packing, shipping, insuring, etc., the magnificent donation of twenty-six hundred and eighty volumes presented to the Library by the British Government.

On motion of George R. Robinson, it was unanimously

Resolved, That **ARTICLE V, CHAPTER I, of the Constitution of this Association** be so amended, as to reduce the price of life-membership to **FIFTY DOLLARS** , in accordance with a resolution adopted by the Board of Directors, in conformity with the constitutional requirements.
On motion of J. H. Alexander, it was

Resolved. That the next Board of Directors be authorized to prepare and publish a suitable catalogue so soon as the resources of the Association will, in their judgment, justify the necessary expense of same.

On motion of Stewart Steel, it was

Resolved, That the proceedings of this meeting be published in the daily newspapers, and that one thousand copies of the reports, together with the addresses and poem which will be read at the twenty-fifth anniversary celebration on the 13th inst., and also the communication from Mr. John C. Tevis to the Committee of Arrangements, be printed for gratuitous distribution.

On motion, the meeting adjourned.

ROBERT A. BARNES, Chairman.

JOHN R. LIONBERGER, Secretaries.

C. W. MARSH,
Gentlemen: You have assembled here to-night, on the eve of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the St. Louis Mercantile Library Association, to receive from the directory a report of their proceedings for the past year. I have been appointed by the Board to lay before you an account of what they have done, and the manner in which they have discharged the duties confided to their management.

If it shall appear to you that our efforts have not been crowned with that full degree of success which you expected of us, we beg you will not be unmindful of the fact that the past year has not been one of remarkable general commercial prosperity, and you are all aware that within this period our mercantile community have been called upon, to render an amount of financial aid, hitherto unknown in the history of our rapidly growing city, to many new and highly important lines of railways, steam packets, and various other public improvements. These enterprises deservedly challenged public attention and encouragement, and were demanded by the marvelous advance of the city in population, commerce and manufactures.

Financial.

The report of the Treasurer, just read within your hearing, shows our financial condition. We regret to say the receipts from the Grand Hall fall far short of our anticipation, and are less by $750 than for the previous year. We paid at maturity the three bonds of one thousand dollars each due August 1st, and the semi-annual interest on the outstanding bonds due February 1st and August 1st, amounting to $2,240. The five bonds received from our predecessors in office are unsold and remain in our possession.
We have paid drafts of the Treasurer of the Hall Company during
the year amounting to $1,352.29. The stores are all rented to
promptly paying tenants, yielding a revenue of $10,700.

LECTURES.

Our Lecture Committee made vigorous efforts during the year
to secure lecturers of ability and popularity, but met with little
success. Invitations were extended to John B. Gough, Prof.
Tyndall, Oliver W. Holmes, Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, Samuel L.
Clemens, Rev. P. J. Ryan, Hon. D. W. Voorhies, George W. Curtis,
Hon. Horace Greeley, Rev. Dr. E. H. Chapin, and Silas Bent, all
of whom declined except the three last named gentlemen. Silas
Bent, Esq., very kindly repeated his lecture upon the "Thermo-
metric Gateway to the Pole," on the evening of the 17th March, to
the largest and most attentive audience ever assembled in our hall.
This lecture, being free to all, necessarily resulted in a slight
pecuniary loss to the Association. Hon. Horace Greeley opened
our fall season on the 4th of October with an exceedingly inter-
esting lecture upon "The Present and Future Prospects of the
West." The Rev. Dr. E. H. Chapin succeeded him October 6th.
Subject of his lecture, "The Orders of Nobility," and on October
7th on "Building and Being." These lectures were not so well
attended as the fame and eloquence of the lecturers deserved, yet
they resulted in a very handsome profit to the Association, as
appears from the report of our Treasurer.

BOOKS.

We have invested during the year $2,455.17 in the purchase of
books, and endeavored to supply our members with the current
literature of the day, and, as far as possible, have placed a sufficient
number of copies, of all popular works, in the library to supply the
demand.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volumes.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By purchase we have added</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received from donors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodicals bound.</td>
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</table>

Making a total addition of ........................................ 1,415

Costing and valued at $4,177.60.
Our binding account has involved a large outlay, attributable, we regret to say, to the wanton destruction of the books by some of our members, who do not seem to realize the vandalism they commit or the annoyance they give to careful and thoughtful readers, and we trust that in the future no member will be guilty of defacing or in any way damaging our books or magazines. It is a duty we owe each other to preserve and not to destroy them.

We announce to you with feelings of pride the most munificent donation ever made to our Association. We are to become the recipients of a complete set of the British Patent Office Reports, numbering 2,680 volumes, embracing the entire issue to this period; and in addition we are also to receive the supplementary volumes hereafter to be published. The magnitude of this gift cannot be over-estimated, containing, as the collection does, a full exposition of British inventions from the year 1617 to the present time, and including 71,922 specifications, published in a style of beauty and utility surpassing all similar works, and at a cost to the British Government of more than $12,700 gold. This body of works, so full of interest to the general public, must claim especial attention from the inventive and mechanical classes, whose pleasure, instruction, and advancement it has always been our endeavor to promote. For the acquirement of these valuable books we are indebted to our ever-thoughtful friend, the Hon. Charles D. Drake, as the following letters will show:

Mercantile Library,
St. Louis, May 19, 1870.

Hon. Charles D. Drake, U. S. Senator, Washington City, D. C.:

Dear Sir: The British Government has complete sets of the British Patent Reports from the year 1617 to the present date, embracing upwards of two thousand volumes, and fifty thousand specifications, surpassing in beauty and utility any publication of a similar kind ever issued from the press. May I request that you will endeavor to secure a copy of this magnificent monument for our library, by bringing the necessary influence to bear, through our Minister at the Court of St. James, Hon. J. L. Motley. Knowing the interest you have always taken in the success and prosperity of our institution, and the value this acquisition will prove to the mechanical interests of our city, I make this appeal with full confidence that you will do all in your power to secure them for us.

I have the honor to be,
Very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,

John N. Dyer,
Librarian.
[REPLY OF MR. DRAKE.]

UNITED STATES SENATE CHAMBER, WASHINGTON, D. C., May 24, 1870.

JOHN N. DYER, Librarian, St. Louis:

Dear Sir: I received yesterday yours of the 19th inst., and went with it this morning to the State Department, in the hope of being able to interest the Secretary of State in the procurement of the set of British Patent Reports to which you refer. He said, however, that the State Department made it a rule not to take any instrumentality in any such case. I then inquired whether it would be admissible for Mr. Motley to do so. He said that according to the instructions of the Department, our Ministers abroad were not permitted to ask favors of any government to which they were accredited; though that did not preclude, he said, my writing to Mr. Motley on the subject. He suggested, however, that I could probably more easily get the books through the British Minister here. I therefore went to Mr. Thornton and showed him the letter, and he expressed his entire willingness to forward the application to the British Government, with a favorable recommendation; but, at the same time, said that it would no doubt be much more easily accomplished through Mr. Motley, to whom, he said, the British Government is very anxious to show all attention. My interview with him led me to the conclusion to forward your letter, with one from myself, to Mr. Motley, with the assurance from Mr. Thornton that if Mr. Motley should decline to take any action in the premises, he would very cheerfully do all in his power to have your application to the British government favorably considered. I have, therefore, written to Mr. Motley a letter of which I inclose you a copy. When I hear from him I will inform you.

In writing to me on this subject you rightly judged that it would give me great pleasure to be instrumental in obtaining the books for your library.

Yours, etc.,

(Signed) C. D. DRAKE.

[MR. DRAKE'S LETTER TO MR. MOTLEY]

UNITED STATES SENATE CHAMBER, WASHINGTON, D. C., May 24, 1870.

Hon. J. LOTHROP MOTLEY, U. S. Minister, London:

Dear Sir: I inclose a letter which I have received from the Librarian of the St. Louis Mercantile Library, expressing a desire to obtain for that library a complete set of the British Patent Reports, and requesting me to bring the matter to your attention, in the hope that your recommendation of a favorable consideration of the request might lead to its gratification. In an interview with Secretary Fish, this morning, I learned from him that you were not at liberty to ask any favors of the government to which you are accredited, and I do not, therefore, desire to be considered as asking you to make any request of the government. But the Secretary said that there was no objection to my writing to you on the subject, and to your indorsing the application in reference to the worthiness of this institution to be the recipient of such a gift from the British Government. In that light I present the matter to you, with my very earnest recommendation of this library to the favorable consideration of the British Government with reference to granting its
request, if such request can be granted in favor of any institution in this country. The St. Louis Mercantile Library is an incorporated, permanent institution, containing, as I believe, upwards of thirty thousand volumes, and a deposit of a set of the British Patent Reports there would make them accessible to people in a wider range of country than in almost any other place that could be selected. If, therefore, the British Government should feel willing to extend its munificence to any library in the valley of the Mississippi by bestowing upon it a set of those reports, I do not know of any other upon which it could be more worthily bestowed, or where it could confer a greater benefit upon the cause of science.

Trust ing that it may be consistent with your views of propriety and official duty so to indorse my letter, as that while it will avoid asking any favor, it will commend this institution to the favorable consideration of the British Government, and with high consideration for yourself personally, I am

Very truly yours,

(Signed)
C. D. DRAKE.

[LETTER OF B. WOODCROFT, ESQ., OF BRITISH PATENT OFFICE, TO B. MORAN, ESQ., UNITED STATES CHARGE D'Affaires, LONDON.]

PATENT OFFICE, December 6, 1870.

My Dear Sir: I beg to inform you that the Commissioners of Patents recently held a meeting, at which I submitted to them your application on behalf of the Mercantile Library of St. Louis, Mo.

I am happy to say that your earnest advocacy of the claims of the Library to consideration impressed the Commissioners, and they decided (although there are only a few complete sets left) to present a complete set of their publications, as enumerated in the inclosed printed list. The set consists (at present date) of 2,680 volumes, costing for printing and paper upwards of £2,550, and it increases at the rate of 140 volumes yearly, costing for printing and paper about £130.

In the early grants made by the Commissioners, the specifications having been sent from this office, unarranged and unbound, were found to be quite useless for reference. For this reason, and on account of the great value of the works and the large number of publications comprised in each set (the specifications now amounting to 71,922, with an annual increase of about 3,500), the Commissioners decided that the specifications must either be bound or placed in card-board cases (as usual in this office), at the expense of the donees. The cases can be obtained of a firm in London at 2s. 8d. each; 2,536 cases would be necessary.

As the grant includes not only the books already published, but also those which may be afterwards printed in continuation, the latter must be taken away from the Patent Office Store Department (38 Cursitor street, Chancery Lane) by the agent appointed for the Library, on every Monday, between the hours of 11 and 3 o'clock.

The Commissioners of Patents expect that their works will be insured when sent abroad, in order that if any are lost they may be replaced by purchase.

I have given instructions for the selection of a complete set of the works, which shall be delivered to any agent duly authorized to receive them.

I remain, &c.,

(Signed)

B. MORAN, United States Legation.

B. WOODCROFT.
[LETTER FROM MR. MORAN TO MR. DRAKE.]

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,

LONDON, December 12, 1870.

Dear Sir: In the month of May last you addressed a letter to Mr. Motley, asking his good offices to procure from the British Commissioners of Patents a set of their publications for the Mercantile Library of St. Louis, and saying that while Mr. Secretary Fish, whom you had seen on the subject, said that Mr. Motley was not permitted to ask any favors of the government to which he was accredited, still Mr. Fish did not object to your writing to Mr. Motley on the subject, nor to Mr. Motley's indorsing the application in reference to the worthiness of the Mercantile Library of St. Louis to be the recipient of such a gift from the British Government. In this view Mr. Motley acted, by intrusting the matter to me for the private consideration of Bennet Woodcroft, Esq., Great Seal Patent Office, who really has the disposal of these valuable publications, and I now have the honor to inclose a copy of a note addressed by him to me, from which you will learn that the gift has been made of a complete set of these publications to your institution.

You will observe that the library will have to go to the expense of about £350 for cases for these books, the value of which exceeds £2,500, and also be obliged to select an agent to receive them in London.

I would recommend to your notice Mr. B. F. Stevens, the United States Dispatch Agent, No. 17 Henrietta street, Covent Garden, London, as a person well fitted for the casing and shipment of the books. He is a bookseller, an American by birth, and has facilities for their transportation equal to those of any person I know in this metropolis.

It is proper for me to state that no official influence was used to procure these books, beyond my private indorsement, under Mr. Motley's approval, of your application, and the letter to you of Mr. Dyer of 19th May last.

Trusting that this valuable gift will be welcomed by you,

I am, dear sir, your obedient servant,

(Signed) BENJ. MORAN, Charge d'Affaires.

Hon. C. D. Drake, U. S. Senate.

[LETTER FROM MR. DRAKE TO MR. DYER.]

WASHINGTON, D. C., December 30, 1870.

JNO. N. DYER, Esq., Librarian, &c.:

Dear Sir: With a gratification I have rarely experienced, I hasten to announce to you that I have this day received, through the inclosed letter of Hon. Benjamin Moran, U. S. Charge d'Affaires at London, the welcome information that my letter to Mr. Motley, written last spring in consequence of one you addressed to me, has resulted in a donation by the British Commissioners of Patents of a complete set of their publications, now existing and hereafter to be published, to the Mercantile Library of St. Louis.

This letter of Mr. Moran, with the copy of one from Bennet Woodcroft, Esq., Great Seal Patent Office, both of which are inclosed, will at once apprise you of the unusual value of the donation, and of the steps necessary to be taken by the Mercantile Library Association to avail themselves of it.
I have no hesitation in seconding Mr. Moran's recommendation of Mr. B. F. Stevens as a suitable person to act as agent of the Association in regard to the casing and shipment of the books.

Be pleased to tender to the Association my congratulations on this exceedingly valuable accession to their library. Very truly yours,

(Signed) C. D. DRAKE.

To avail ourselves of this donation it will be necessary for our successors to remit immediately the sum of $2,500 for arranging the specifications, expenses of packing, shipping, insurance, etc. As article vii, chapter 2, of our Constitution provides that no appropriation of more value than $2,000 for any one object shall be made without the assent of the Association, we therefore ask that this appropriation be authorized by you.

MEMBERSHIPS.

Our receipts for memberships, during the year, show a very gratifying increase. We have received:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From initiation fees</td>
<td>$ 902 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From life memberships</td>
<td>200 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From proprietors</td>
<td>3,142 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From clerks</td>
<td>3,173 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From beneficiaries</td>
<td>4,165 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$11,583 75</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total membership is far less than it should be in a city of upwards of three hundred thousand inhabitants. On the 31st December, 1870, it numbered, classed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honorary members</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life members</td>
<td>512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proprietors</td>
<td>676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerks</td>
<td>1,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>1,046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,539</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An organized effort was made to increase the membership, and although but partially carried out, we enrolled 670 members during the year; and have lost from death, removals from the city, and various other causes, 381. We recommend to our successors an early and thorough canvass of the entire city, and doubt not that they will be enabled to report a membership of at least 5,000 at our next annual meeting. We also recommend a reduction of life membership from $100 to $50. This suggestion we regard as a
matter of very great importance to the interests of our Associa-
tion. At the present price only those who do so from motives of
friendship can be induced to take life memberships. Our acquisi-
tions amounted to but one in 1869 and two in 1870. If the price
be reduced to $50 the Board is persuaded this class of membership
will receive a marked increase in the future.

NEW CATALOGUE.

The growth of the library since the publication of our present
catalogue, more than ten years ago, demands the early publication
of a new one, containing all the additions to the library since that
date. The expenditure required for this work will be greater than
our means will permit, but we believe a sufficient number of copies
can be sold to realize one-half the amount, and we therefore ask
that authority be granted our successors to prepare and publish
such catalogue as early a day as they may deem expedient.

WAYMAN CROW SCHOLARSHIP.

We have received very favorable reports of Master Edward H.
Engler, the present incumbent of our "Wayman Crow Scholar-
ship" in Washington University.

PROPERTY.

The property of the Association is insured for the sum of
$153,700. Our net gain in property the past year has been
$6,672.04, and the total value of the same on the 31st of December
was $217,174.51.

BUILDING.

We are constantly reminded by the frequently occurring fires
around us, of the insecurity of our valuable collection of books,
paintings, statuary, and other property, and we deem it of the
highest importance that every exertion should be made to secure
a new site and to erect thereon a fire-proof building.

LIBRARY AND READING-ROOM.

During the past spring the reading-room was thoroughly reno-
vated and repaired, the walls repainted, and everything put in
perfect order. It has been supplied with over three hundred
newspapers and periodicals, embracing the best European and
American issues. Our library is steadily growing in public favor, as the following statistics will demonstrate. Within the past year 38,750 volumes have been issued for perusal in the library, and 105,375 volumes have been withdrawn for home reading. It is gratifying also to record the very large increase in the number of strangers who have visited the Library as one of the chief objects of interest in our city.

LIBRARIANS.

To John N. Dyer, our Librarian and Actuary, the thanks of the Association are due for the faithful discharge of its duties, unceasing devotion to its interests in every possible way, and to his exertions are to be attributed much of our success in the increase of membership during the past year. It affords us much pleasure to speak in terms of commendation of our Assistant Librarians, W. H. H. Anderson, Joseph M. H. Washington, and Otis B. Webb.

CONCLUSION.

At the last annual meeting the President was instructed to appoint a committee, to be charged with arranging for the twenty-fifth anniversary of this Association. In conformity with these instructions, a committee was duly appointed to make fitting arrangements for the commemoration of the day.

This period of your history, possessing the significance and interest of an epoch, should challenge special attention. A quarter of a century has passed since the foundation of this institution. St. Louis was then a village; it is now an imperial city. The youth of that day, for whose improvement this Association was formed, are the leading men of this, and they are exhorted, in connection with the Library—by labor and by money—to do for the young men of the present, what was done for them in the past.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Board.

R. M. SCRUGGS, President.
LIST OF DONORS FOR THE YEAR 1870.

Board of Trustees of the Boston City Hospital.
J. O. Carson.
J. E. Cole.
J. B. Colt.
M. C. Day.
Hon. C. D. Drake.
Richard Edwards.
Hon. G. A. Finkelnburg.
Wm. T. Harris.
R. B. Hutchinson.
Hopitaux de Paris.
I. H. Keim.
Charles King.
George Knapp & Co.
Mrs. W. E. Lauderdale.
Levison & Blythe.
Mrs. E. D. Lowe.
McKee, Fishback & Co.
Robert McKenna.
Anthony Miltenberger.
Charles Moritz.
J. G. Sears.

Mercantile Library Association of New York.

Charles W. Murpfeldt.
Dr. O. F. Potter.
George P. Plant.
Wm. C. Postal.
L. U. Reavis.
J. Sabin & Sons.
Rev. M. Schuyler.
E. H. Shepard.
St. Louis Book and News Company.
State Library of Tennessee.
State Library of Kentucky.
State Library of Michigan.
State Library of Mississippi.
A. Strauss.
J. F. Torrey.
Jno. H. Tracy.
United States Government.
S. Waterhouse.
Hon. Erastus Wells.
A. H. Worthen.
Officers of the Seventh Regiment.

N. Y. S. M.

PAMPHLETS.

Mercantile Library, Boston.
... " New York.
... " Brooklyn.
... " Philadelphia.
... " Pittsburg.
... " Baltimore.
... " Cincinnati.

Mercantile Library, Quincy.
... " San Francisco.

Young Men's Library, Chicago.

Public School Library, St. Louis.

Public Library of the City of Boston.

GOLD COINS.

Henry H. Wernse.

PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEWS.

John A. Dillon.
Gentlemen: I have the honor to submit the following report, showing the receipts and expenditures during the past year, and the present financial condition of the Association, viz:

"A." Cash Account.
"B." Balance Sheet.
"C." Profit and Loss Account.

"A."

CASH ACCOUNT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1870. DEBIT.</th>
<th>1870. CREDIT.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan'y 1—To balance.............. $ 300.07</td>
<td>Dec. 31—By advertising...... $ 126.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership Account.</td>
<td>Books ..................... 2,455.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 31—Initiation</td>
<td>Bills payable............ 700.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees........... $ 902.00</td>
<td>Bonds payable........... 3,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Members... 200.00</td>
<td>Binding.................. 1,290.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proprietors..... 3,142.50</td>
<td>Fuel..................... 407.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerks ............ 3,173.75</td>
<td>Hall expenses......... 3,569.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries.... 4,165.50</td>
<td>Hall repairs........ 1,416.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall Account.</td>
<td>Interest............... 2,355.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Hall....... 3,270.50</td>
<td>Insurance......... 1,095.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ante-Rooms...... 215.00</td>
<td>Librarians........ 6,321.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall Stores...... 10,709.55</td>
<td>Lights............... 2,458.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bills payable... 1,200.00</td>
<td>Merc. Library Hall Co. 1,352.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lectures ........ 1,261.65</td>
<td>Newspapers........ 599.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fines............. 362.80</td>
<td>Postage........ 76.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalogues ...... 5.50</td>
<td>Periodicals........ 947.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost Books...... 12.25</td>
<td>Printing.......... 231.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John N. Dyer... 530.70</td>
<td>Stationery......... 187.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry H. Wernse 347.46</td>
<td>Transportation.... 92.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blank Books........ 64.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lectures........ 994.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fine Arts.......... 85.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$29,798.73</td>
<td>$29,798.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Balance Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1870.</th>
<th>DEBIT.</th>
<th>1870.</th>
<th>CREDIT.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 31—To books acquired by purchase...</td>
<td>$60,263 89</td>
<td>Dec. 31—By stock account...</td>
<td>$217,174 51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books acquired by donations...</td>
<td>13,739 90</td>
<td>Bonds payable...</td>
<td>25,000 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabinet of minerals...</td>
<td>500 00</td>
<td>Bills payable...</td>
<td>1,200 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalogues...</td>
<td>179 00</td>
<td>Merc. Library Hall Company...</td>
<td>9,697 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine arts...</td>
<td>20,565 65</td>
<td>Henry H. Wernse...</td>
<td>347 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture...</td>
<td>16,559 86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers...</td>
<td>200 00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodicals...</td>
<td>440 88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real Estate...</td>
<td>140,000 00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Scenery...</td>
<td>970 00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$253,419 18

## Profit and Loss Account

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1870.</th>
<th>DEBIT.</th>
<th>1870.</th>
<th>CREDIT.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 31—To advertising...</td>
<td>$ 126 33</td>
<td>Dec. 31—By initiation fees...</td>
<td>$ 902 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binding books...</td>
<td>1,187 25</td>
<td>Life membership...</td>
<td>200 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blank books...</td>
<td>64 75</td>
<td>Proprietors...</td>
<td>3,142 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel...</td>
<td>407 72</td>
<td>Clerks...</td>
<td>3,173 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall repairs...</td>
<td>1,416 50</td>
<td>Beneficiaries...</td>
<td>4,165 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall expenses...</td>
<td>3,569 22</td>
<td>Grand Hall...</td>
<td>3,270 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance...</td>
<td>1,095 80</td>
<td>Ante-Rooms...</td>
<td>215 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest...</td>
<td>2,355 03</td>
<td>Hall stores...</td>
<td>10,709 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarians...</td>
<td>6,321 00</td>
<td>Book donations...</td>
<td>354 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights...</td>
<td>2,458 60</td>
<td>Lectures...</td>
<td>267 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers...</td>
<td>499 92</td>
<td>Fines...</td>
<td>362 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage...</td>
<td>76 70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing...</td>
<td>231 70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stationery...</td>
<td>187 25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation...</td>
<td>92 69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stock account, net gain this year...</td>
<td>6,672 04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$26,762 50

Very respectfully,

HENRY H. WERNSE, Treasurer.
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
CELEBRATION
OF THE
TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE
St. Louis Mercantile Library Association,
FRIDAY EVENING,
JANUARY 13, 1871.
PROGRAMME.

FOR THE

CELEBRATION OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE

St. Louis Mercantile Library Association,

Friday Evening, January 13, 1871.

MUSIC.

GRAND OPENING MARCH, composed for the occasion, called the "St. Louis Mercantile Library Anniversary March," by Frank Boehm's Cornet Band.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS,

BY

JOHN T. DOUGLASS,
Chairman Committee of Arrangements.

ADDRESS,

BY

JAMES E. YEATMAN,
First President of the Association.

MUSIC,

By the LIEDERKRANZ SOCIETY—Male Chorus—"Glory to God" (Beethoven).

THE THREE STAGES,

BY

THOMAS E. GARRETT.

Composed for the occasion, marking the different stages in the progress of Civilization, and illustrated at the close of each part by the following TABLEAUX,

Under the supervision of Mrs. EDWINA DEAN LOWE and Mr. J. R. MEKER.

FIRST—"The Pioneer." The Settler's Family attacked by Indians.

SECOND—"The Merchant at Home."

THIRD—"Columbia Addressing her Children."

FOURTH—"The Arts and Sciences." Presided over by Columbia.
INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

BY

JOHN T. DOUGLASS,

CHAIRMAN COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENTS.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Members of the St. Louis Mercantile Library Association:

At the annual meeting in January, 1870, it was resolved that the twenty-fifth anniversary of the foundation of the Association should be observed in a manner that would befittingly mark our appreciation of the rare good fortune that had, in so short a time, enabled the institution to attain such a high degree of prosperity and usefulness, and the President was instructed to appoint a committee to give effect to this resolution.

The aim of the committee has been to arrange an order of exercises suitable to the occasion, comporting with the dignity of the institution, yet sufficiently varied in character to attract the attendance of the members, and insure their gratification while present. The action of the committee is presented on the programme in your hands, except that the committee invited the Hon. John B. Henderson to address you. He accepted the invitation, but on Friday last he notified the committee that sickness would prevent his being present this evening.

The committee embrace this opportunity to return the most hearty thanks of the Association to the two gentlemen who will address you (Mr. James E. Yeatman and Mr. T. E. Garrett), to Mrs. E. D. Lowe, Mr. J. R. Meeker, the members of the Liederkranz Society, and the other ladies and gentlemen who have so kindly consented to aid us on this occasion.

The committee congratulate you that the first President of the Association, who bore so prominent a part in its organization and in shaping its course in the ways that assured its marvelous growth; who, with anxious, loving interest, has watched every step of its progress, is still with us in the full vigor of manhood, and has been prevailed upon to recite to you the history of the past and give you his views for the future. Mr. James E. Yeatman, the first President of the Association, will now address you.
ADDRESS

of

JAMES E. YEATMAN.

In the halls of our universities and colleges hang the portraits of benefactors, who were merchants, traders in the busy world, that they might endow professorships, fill the shelves of libraries, and place at the command of the student whatever is recorded of the genius, intelligence, and industry of man. The young merchant, even in his early novitiate, is not now content with the accomplishments which are deemed requisite in his initiation, and which, though by no means ignoble, do not call for strong mental exertion, nor require, for perfectibility, the length of time often devoted to them. He seeks more than can be found in his routine of duties. He is not satisfied with the more ordinary occupations, and his higher aspirations are aided by the opportunities for acquiring knowledge which have within a few years been bountifully multiplied. There are lectures, libraries, and reading-rooms for those who crave for their leisure hours something more than mere amusement; and they have given a character to pursuits which were once considered suited only to practical men, whose business was to do the drudgery of life, leaving the monopoly of mind to more aesthetic natures. Mercantile associations have been formed, whose object is to encourage improvement, promote a taste for science and art, stimulate an attention to intellectual culture, and induce a devotion to qualifications which may give a wider range for future usefulness. It is to commemorate the foundation of such an institution that we have met here this evening.

A sketch of the history of commerce may not be inappropriate on this occasion, as embodying much that illustrates its connection with civilization and the influence it has had on society. Commerce, as a distinct profession, could not have existed until a degree
of luxury had been attained; and the more adventurous sought in other lands that which could not be found at home. Intercourse between different countries was thus commenced, and improvement and refinement progressed as it augmented.

In availing themselves of whatever made life more desirable, men imperceptibly adopted customs which assimilated them in manners; and the merchant, as he united nations, became an instrument in advancing their condition. His mission was one of kindness and conciliation. The battle-field was no place for his operations, and from the earliest time to the present day his wishes, feelings, and interests have made him a friend and advocate of peace.

The Hindoos were represented as a highly commercial people. The merchant was evidently regarded as an important member of the social system, and he took his place among the distinguished and most respected of the land. India has been, through all stages of history, the leading star of mercantile enterprise. The merchant of all times has cast toward her his anxious gaze. Her wealth has been poured in abundance upon all lands. Arabia, Ethiopia, Egypt, in a regular succession felt her bounty. Persia, Assyria, Greece, Carthage, Rome, whatever is known to us of antiquity, or is regarded with reverence, has become rich in proportion to its extent of trade with this great storehouse of commerce. When in the course of time they passed onward, leaving to new nations the fulfillment of earth's destinies, the yet unexhausted treasures of the East were the main objects of new aspirations. The Portuguese mariner doubled the stormy cape of Africa to show his countrymen the road to India. The Genoese, as he begged from kingdom to kingdom—the gift he asked being the power of bestowing boundless wealth on the giver—looked only to India. And yet, when the long-sought yet unseen land lay in darkness before him, in the watch of that endless night, till at last, through the gray mist, came slowly forth the faint outline of cocoanut and palm trees, his aching eyes rested, as he thought, on the groves of Hindostan, looming in the dim twilight of early morning. So long had India been almost the sole thought of enterprising men, that it seemed impossible that there should be other roads to mercantile success.

Ancient commerce was carried on principally by land, and the mode of transportation necessarily limited it to articles of little weight or bulk. The merchant and his goods kept together. There were no agencies to help him, no commission houses established on
the Niger or Ganges; but through long, weary days of toil and suffering, with hunger and burning thirst, and throbbing brow, in the dust of travel, with peril around and anxiety upon him, trusting to his own activity and watchfulness, he struggled with the chances of his journey—a minister of God to connect distant lands, and to pioneer civilization and truth.

The characteristics which marked the commerce of the ancients, and the accustomed ways trodden by the ages, were obliterated and forgotten in the revolutions occasioned by the invention of the mariner's compass, the doubling of the Cape of Good Hope, and the discovery of America—three events which have had more influence upon the material destiny of man than any recorded in history.

The mysterious polarity of the magnetic needle gave him unlimited range of the broad ocean, and enabled him to choose his pathway over its vast waters, freed him from the terrors which had restricted him to his native coasts, and opened an unlimited world to his energies and intelligence. The cargo of the ship overwhelmed the load of the camel; the highway he had worn was returned to the wilderness, and the opulent cities which had risen by its sides were abandoned to decay and forgetfulness; and from beyond the barriers of old existences, the colossal shadow, which had obscurely told the coming of a young world, grew into glowing life, and as it beckoned to the old, offering more than fancy had pictured to hope, familiar things were disdainfully cast aside, and the quickened impulses of humanity turned to the new and distant revelation.

Commerce dated its new birth from these discoveries. Three centuries have scarcely passed since this great change, and its effect is felt in every region of the globe. It has covered America with the population of Europe, extended civilized dominion over a large part of Asia, and is spreading through every island of the Pacific.

The discovery by Watt of the power of steam, and its successful application by Fulton as a propelling power for vessels, and by Stephenson as a motive power to land-carriages—discoveries which have annihilated both time and space—have made distant nations close neighbors. What would America be without the application of steam to locomotion? It has opened a new highway to the desired of all nations, India. The new world caught up the refrain of the old; and the immortal Benton, in a speech, standing on the Court House steps of our city of St. Louis, in a moment of inspi-
ration, looking toward the setting sun, proclaimed that "there is the East, there is India." The echo of the words which he had spoken, as they reverberated from the Alleghanies to the Rocky Mountains, had scarcely died away before the sound of the shovel and the pick were heard, and the nation was on its onward march to India.

Civilization and Christianity have ever followed in the footsteps of the trader. Where the caravan halted, and the camel knelt to be relieved of his load, and the trader found temporary repose, the temple rose, and the servant of the altar sacrificed, and the pilgrim worshiped, men congregated, and by gradual progress the stopping place became populous and powerful. Now, as in those early days and distant lands, the same process is being repeated in our own. The trading post, a few huts, the village, and then the church with its spire pointing heavenward.

Thus it was with our own city a few years more than a century ago—the spot on which we stand was a wilderness, inhabited by savages, and roamed over by herds of buffaloes and wild animals.

A few adventurous traders formed themselves into a company, to whom was granted by the Director-General and Commandant of Louisiana "the exclusive trade with the savages of the Missouri, and all the nations residing west of the Mississippi, for a term of years." This company organized, an expedition was fitted out under the leadership of M. Laclede Liguest, who was recognized as a man of great merit, capable, from his experience, of conducting with skill and prudence the interests of the company. He left New Orleans the 3d of August, 1763, and arrived at Ste. Genevieve early in November, which was then a small village, the only one existing on the left bank of the Mississippi. Here Laclede could not find a house capable of containing his merchandise, and was forced to avail himself of the invitation of M. De Neyon, Commandant of Fort des Chartres, situated a few miles distant on the opposite side of the river, in Illinois. Here he disembarked his goods, and after completing his trade he left Fort des Chartres, in the month of December, with one companion, Auguste Chouteau, from whose narrative I quote, to seek a location for a post for his future trading operations. "He was delighted when he saw the situation on which St. Louis now stands, and did not hesitate a moment to locate there the establishment he proposed. Besides the beauty of the site, he found there all the advantages that one could desire for a settlement which might become very considerable hereafter." After having thoroughly examined the location he
returned to Fort des Chartres. He related with much enthusiasm to Mons. Neyon and his officers the result of his exploration, and told them that he had found a situation where he was going to locate a settlement which might hereafter become "one of the finest cities in America." Navigation opened in the early part of February, when he dispatched a boat with thirty men, under the charge of Chouteau, telling him "to proceed to the spot he had selected, clear the land, and erect cabins for his men." Chouteau arrived at the place designated on the 14th of March, 1764. In the early part of April Laclede arrived at the settlement and proceeded to lay out the village which he wished to found, and named it St. Louis, in honor of Louis XV.

Such is the account, as given by Auguste Chouteau, the companion of Laclede, of the first settlement of this great and beautiful city. This adventurous trader appears to have had a prophetic vision of the coming greatness of the city which he was locating—it at least dawned upon his mind. Could the hand of Omnipotence have drawn aside the veil, so that he could have had a glimpse of it, with its busy population, its crowded streets beaming with life, its miles of storehouses, its palatial residences, its foundries and furnaces, its machine shops and manufactories, its churches and school-houses and colleges, its waters no longer traversed by barges of a few tons burden, propelled by sinews and muscles of strong men, occupying many months in making the voyage from New Orleans to St. Louis, but by great vessels, carrying vast burdens, propelled by steam, and moving almost with the speed of the wind; the land traversed by numerous railroads, with their long trains, freighted with human beings, and the rich products of every clime, arriving and departing each hour, contributing to the wealth and growth of the little trading post established by him, and which he said "might become, hereafter, one of the finest cities in America." This seemed no less improbable to Mons. De Neyon and his officers at Fort des Chartres than do the predictions of those now in our midst, who tell us that St. Louis is not to be one of the greatest, but the greatest city on this continent, and the capital of an empire. We have met here this night not to laud our beautiful and rapidly growing city, in which every citizen feels so just a pride, or to commemorate its foundation, but for a more special and limited object, but one equally as dear to the hearts of those who are associated with it. The members of this Association, with others present, have met here to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the organization of the Mercantile Library Association, and the
task has devolved on me of giving the history of the rise and progress of the Association, with some suggestions as to its future development, which I will do as concisely as possible.

This Institution had its birth in a most appropriate place, the merchants' counting-room. The paternity, as ascribed, lies between two of our old and accomplished merchants—Peter Powell and John C. Tevis. The former has long since been gathered to his fathers; the latter has retired to the more quiet and peaceful pursuits of the country. These gentlemen were ably seconded by A. B. Chambers, the then editor of the *Missouri Republican*, one of the most public-spirited men that has ever graced our city. Those who remember him, and there are many who hear the sound of my voice who do, will bear me out in saying that he was foremost in every enterprise that had for its object the improvement and advancement of the city, to which he not only contributed with his pen, through the columns of his paper, but one of the leading commercial journals in the West, but by his personal efforts and private means.

My own recollections are that the more especial honor of being the originators of the library belongs to John C. Tevis and Robert K. Woods. These recollections have been fully confirmed by a letter which has been placed in my hands by the President of the Committee of Arrangements within the past week, from Mr. Tevis, in which he says: "One afternoon in the fall of 1846, while standing chatting at our doors in Main street, which were adjoining, the subject of forming a Mercantile Library was first broached between Mr. Robert K. Woods and myself. After some conversation, Mr. Woods and I resolved to 'make an effort,' at least, by calling in person on some few active and enterprising citizens, who agreed to meet with us and discuss the matter, which they did one night at the counting-room of Tevis, Scott & Tevis, on Main street." John C. Tevis was a Philadelphian by birth, and a man of liberal education and genial manners and habits, and at that time a prosperous merchant. The first meeting was held at his counting-room at night, on December 30, 1846. There were eight gentlemen present: Col. A. B. Chambers, Peter Powell, Robert K. Woods, John F. Franklin, R. P. Perry, William P. Scott, John Halsall, and John C. Tevis, all of whom were merchants except Col. Chambers. All have since passed away save John C. Tevis and R. K. Woods, the latter of whom is present with us this evening, a witness of the success of
the organization which he took so prominent a part in founding. Mr. Peter Powell was the chairman of this meeting, and the following resolutions were offered by Col. Chambers:

Resolved, That it is deemed expedient by the merchants of this city to found a Mercantile Library Association for their own mutual improvement and for the improvement of those in their employ; and that in so doing they deem it expedient to form a library principally devoted to such subjects as are useful to men employed in commercial pursuits; but that whilst the primary object is mercantile, all other professions are respectfully invited to unite.

Resolved, That a committee of five be appointed at this meeting to select a committee of fifteen, to report to a meeting of merchants and others a constitution and by-laws.

In compliance with the above, Messrs. Powell, Budd, Chambers, Kennett, Hall, Rust, Clark, Barnard, Ricketson, Halsall, Dougherty, Peterson, Southack, Glasgow, and Yeatman, were appointed to draft a constitution and by-laws.

On the 13th of January, 1846, in pursuance of a public call, a meeting was held at Concert Hall. The Association was organized by the adoption of a constitution, and we are assembled here to-night to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of this event. I have endeavored to give you, as briefly as possible, the history of the birth of this organization; and by reason of my having been present and an eye-witness of this first meeting, I have been summoned to this stand to-night to tell what I know of it.

I well remember now, on that bleak, cold 13th of January this child—if I may so term it—was born, without a habitation or shelter for its head. It needed to be cared and provided for, and our merchants, generous, warm-hearted, sympathetic, then as now, determined that it should be taken care of. They took it to their hearts, nurtured it, warmed it into life, and now it remains to be told how well they have provided for it. I had the honor of being selected as their first President, with Luther M. Kennett as Vice-President; Robert K. Woods as Treasurer; S. A. Ranlett as Corresponding Secretary; John A. Dougherty as Recording Secretary; William M. Thompson, John C. Tevis, Peter Powell, George K. Budd, Alexander Peterson, J. F. Franklin, and Robt. Barth, Directors; Josiah Dent, Librarian. The Board of Directors entered promptly upon the discharge of their duties, and early in February reported that the cash collected and subscribed amounted to the sum of $2,307.25. On the 16th of February rooms were rented
for the library at the corner of Pine and Main streets. In April the library was opened to its members. At the end of the first year reports show that the cash receipts during the year amounted to $2,689, and that there were 1680 volumes in the library. The members numbered 283. The success of the Association was so marked that a change of location was deemed necessary before the end of the first year. Two houses in Glasgow row were rented, and the second stories were appropriated to the library and reading-rooms. At the end of the second year the membership numbered 360, volumes 2287; and from this time on memberships and books steadily increased, so that at the end of the third year Mr. Vinton, the second President of the Association, says: "Our Association is only three years old, and yet we have nearly as many books as were possessed by the Mercantile Library Association of New York when it had existed five years; as that of Cincinnati when it had existed eight years; as that of Philadelphia when it had existed ten years; and more than that of Boston after an existence of nineteen years." At the end of the fourth year membership had more than doubled, and the number of volumes in the library had increased three-fold. It was found that the new quarters would soon be insufficient to accommodate the rapid growth of the library, so President Vinton in his second report recommended and mainly urged that measures be adopted at once for the purpose of securing "a new home or resting place central and convenient." The Association acted upon this recommendation, and a resolution was offered by Col. A. B. Chambers instructing the Board of Directors to take immediate measures for the accumulation of a fund to be called the building fund. On motion of Hudson E. Bridge, Esq., a subscription list was opened so as to give those present an opportunity to contribute. How much was obtained at this meeting is not reported, but I presume that the amount was small, as Mr. Bridge, the third President of the Association, stated in his first annual report that there was in the hands of the treasurer $1,012 belonging to the building fund. Mr. Bridge urged most forcibly the erection of a library building, and recommended a plan for the formation of a joint stock company, to be designated as the "Mercantile Library Hall Association," with a capital of $50,000, to be divided into shares of $10 each. The building so erected was to be leased to the Library Association at a rental of six per cent. on the cost. The Library Association was to have the privilege of purchasing the stock from time to time, at
par, or less, thus becoming the owner of the property. The surplus rentals from halls and stores, after paying the lease, were to be applied to the purchase of the stock. This plan was substantially adopted, and in less than five weeks' time from the recommendation of Mr. Bridge a charter had been obtained from the Legislature for the Mercantile Library Hall Company. On the 2d of May the company organized. The first President was Alfred Vinton, a man who had distinguished himself above all others by the active zeal which he had manifested in behalf of the Library Association. It is to his untiring energy, his indomitable will, his lavish use of his time and of money for its benefit, that this Association largely owes its present prosperity.

He possessed in a wonderful degree that power of infusing his own energy into others which is so efficient, not only in building up such an institution as this, but also in promoting the welfare of a young and growing city, and in developing and carrying forward its varied interests.

I remember the admiration with which I regarded him. He was truly Napoleonic in the power of his will, in his endurance, tenacity and perseverance. He was not unlike the great conqueror in person, and of this resemblance he was quite conscious. I regarded his future as certain to be crowned with every honor to which a good citizen might aspire, and believed him worthy to be held up as a model of civic virtues, and as an example to the youth of our city and country, of what a poor boy, without friends or influence to aid him, might become by close application and persevering industry and honesty. If he cannot now be held up as such a model, we must attribute it to the fact that man is fallible and liable to err. Stars that have shone brightly in the heavens have faded away into outer darkness and unknown regions; angels have fallen, and so have men. At a meeting of the Hall Company on June 10, 1851, the Board were ordered to purchase a lot at the corner of Locust and Fifth streets, which they did, at a cost of $25,509. It was necessary, as the next step, to decide upon a plan for the library building. In response to an advertisement numerous plans were submitted, and it was not until December that the design of Robert S. Mitchell was adopted after warm discussions and long and tedious deliberation. I was a member of the Board at the time, and my preference was strongly in favor of another design, but the majority decided in favor of the present plan. The result was the erection of the edifice in which we now are. The estimated cost of the build-
ing was $70,000. We had paid $25,500 for the ground, making in all $95,500.

At this time the whole amount of stock subscribed did not exceed $50,000, so that an additional subscription of $45,000 was required to complete the building according to the estimate. Henry D. Bacon, Esq., then a prosperous and liberal banker, proposed to take $20,000 of the stock, provided the remaining $25,000 was obtained. Stimulated by this timely and generous offer, others came forward, until the required amount was duly subscribed. Mr. Bacon is entitled to all honor for his munificence and the interest he manifested. Would that there were more to emulate his example in generous deeds. The Association subsequently evinced their appreciation of his many valuable gifts by ordering a full-length portrait of him, which now adorns our walls.

He was the fourth President, and was succeeded by Mr. J. H. Alexander, who reported that at the end of the eighth year of the existence of the Association the membership had increased to 847 persons, and that there were in the library 10,565 well-selected volumes. The large hall was so far completed as to be occupied in the latter part of his term of office. A course of twelve lectures was delivered in it by the Rev. Orville Dewey. This was the fullest course of lectures ever delivered in St. Louis, and its success showed the great progress made in the taste for this kind of entertainment—a taste which had been mainly fostered by this Association.

It was in the succeeding year, 1855, that the Library Hall building was completed in all its parts and fully taken possession of by the Association. Mr. John T. Douglass, the fifth President of the Association, in his first report says: “We have witnessed the completion and taking possession of what is to be our permanent home, and on this, the ninth anniversary of our existence, we meet within the walls of a building erected expressly for our use, at a cost of one hundred and forty thousand dollars, with accommodations more ample in their extent and superior in their arrangements to those possessed by any similar institution in this country; and more than all, it is a building that we may fairly hope some day to call our own.” The completion of the library building was duly celebrated by a public meeting held in the large hall, and by an address delivered by the Rev. Wm. Holmes, to one of the largest audiences ever assembled in St. Louis. The cost of the building had exceeded the original estimate by at least $30,000. This amount was borrowed at a high rate of interest, and, accord-
ing to the terms of the lease, had to be paid by the Library Association.

This proved so onerous to the Association that it was forced to appeal to the Hall Company for a modification of the terms of the lease. The modification was granted, and an arrangement made by which the Library Company assumed the payment of the debt in tri-annual installments with the interest thereon, the Hall Company postponing the payment of interest on the stock until after the payment of the entire debt. This was the result of the action of a majority of the stockholders, and manifested a noble spirit of generosity which is deserving of all praise and of the lasting gratitude of the Association. From this time forward the institution entered on a new career of prosperity and usefulness, and the fondest hopes of its most devoted friends have been more than realized. It would be invidious in me to distinguish among the various gentlemen who have filled the position of President, and those associated with them from the completion of the building down to this time. They are mostly present, which fact would prevent my mentioning them as they deserve.

They were young men in the vigor of their manhood when they entered upon the office, for which they were selected on account of the interest which they had ever manifested in the welfare of the Association. They performed their duties with a zeal worthy of the cause. In office and out of office, their interest has ever been the same. They have labored as men labor for that which doth not perish. They have their reward in the assurance that not only this generation, but generations yet unborn, will reap the benefits of their labors.

No less commendation is due to the gentlemen who have filled the position of Librarian from time to time: Josiah Dent, Wm. Allen, Wm. P. Curtis, Ed. W. Johnston and John N. Dyer. All were gentlemen of standing and culture, some of them of high literary attainments, and all devoted their time and talents to building up the institution. On them devolved the responsibility of the care of the property and selection of the books. Without such faithful officers as they have shown themselves to be, the library never could have prospered as it has done; but especial honor is due to the present Librarian, who has watched over its varied interests with all the zealous and fond devotion of a father for the child of his affections.
The greatest possible care has always been observed in selecting the books to be purchased. A classification was early adopted embracing all branches of knowledge, and which served as a nucleus to build upon. The desire of those having the direction was that no department of literature should be unrepresented. In addition to the special committee and Librarian, to whom was intrusted the selection of books, a book of recommendation was kept, in which members and others could record the name of any book which in their judgment it was desirable for the library to acquire, which was purchased as the means of the Association would justify.

This arrangement obviated in a great measure, if not entirely, the objections made by literary and professional men, and others outside of the class to which the management of the library specially belonged. It seems almost essential to the full success of any undertaking, especially in the outset, that some special class, order, or sect, should be identified with and responsible for its management and full development. It was for this reason, and not from any spirit of exclusiveness, that the merchants of St. Louis, feeling the need of a public library, as well for others as themselves determined to organize a library, to be governed and managed by those engaged in mercantile pursuits, but from the enjoyment of the advantages of which none were to be excluded; every citizen, professional and non-professional, could be admitted to its privileges, except a participation in its management, by becoming beneficiary members. All classes have availed themselves largely of these privileges.

Besides the selection of books, the Directors were charged with providing for a course of lectures for the instruction and benefit of the members of the Association. They considered the increase of the library an object of paramount importance, and that lectures should not be instituted unless with a reasonable prospect of self-support. The Association has provided, from time to time, courses of lectures delivered by men of eminent ability. Lectures, however, have not gained the hold upon this community which they have upon some others, and have not been a source of pecuniary profit to the Association. I do not doubt, however, that they have fostered a taste for literary pursuits, and have thus been a benefit.

Not the least attractive feature to the casual visitor of the library is the collection of statuary and paintings. Already are the walls well covered with beautiful paintings, originals by home artists, excellent copies of works of art from the galleries of Europe, and
several pieces of sculpture, among which are to be found three of
the first works by that talented and gifted artist, Harriet Hosmer,
whom we may almost claim as belonging to our own city, for it was
here that she found a home, and pursued the branch of study under
Dr. J. N. McDowell, which she deemed requisite to perfect her in
the noble, and, at the same time, unusual profession for a woman,
which she had chosen, and which she was debarred from pursuing
in her own native State of Massachusetts. But the narrow prejudice
which prevailed then is rapidly melting away, and women are no longer considered as unsexing themselves in using the
talents and gifts given them by an all-wise and beneficent Creator.
We are approaching the dawn of a brighter and better day, when
equal opportunities, equal justice, equal rights shall be accorded to
all, without distinction of race or sex.

In the designs of the Library Hall building there was to have
been a fourth story which was to have been used exclusively for a
fine-art gallery, but during its erection, from economical considera-
tions, this story was dispensed with. No funds of the Association
have ever been used for the promotion of this object, unless some
eighteen hundred dollars expended in procuring the portraits of
Henry D. Bacon and Baron von Humboldt be so considered. The
large number of works of art now possessed by the Association
have been the gifts of its friends and patrons, the value of which
now amounts to $20,500. Had the Association appropriate rooms
for the reception and exhibition of works of art, the collection
would be far greater—one which would be a credit to our city—but
the Association has not fostered art, but merely been the beneficiary
and depository of works of art. We may hope that at some no dis-
tant day art may find a more suitable home under the roof of the
Association. In its refining influence and in creating a taste for the
pure and beautiful it is scarcely less an educator than the silent
books which are found upon the shelves of the library. The pro-
gress which the Association has made from its organization to this
time, is a matter of just pride and congratulation. With a mem-
bership of but 283 at the end of the first year, it now numbers
3,539. The volumes in the Library, 1,680, have increased to 22,653.
Value of the property of the Association in 1846 was $1,954, is at
this time $217,174.61. Readers in 1846, 125; readers in 1870,
3,975. Volumes issued to members the first year were 720; last
year, 105,375. This does not include readers in the rooms of the
Association. These figures tell the tale far more eloquently than
can the tongue of man. The institution has gained in books and property during every year of its existence, notwithstanding the years of pestilence and financial crashes that overturned and ruined hundreds of our merchants, and closed the doors of our banks and bankers. The great fire of 1819 that destroyed millions of property, and that, too, in the very heart of the business portion of our city; and then the war, the terrible war, that was so destructive to the prosperity of our city, and carried off so many of our young men—during all these periods of calamity and disaster the Association steadily gained in material wealth. Still the members of the Association, and those who have availed themselves of its benefits as readers, number but little over one per cent. of our population. This should not be. Some plan should be devised which would stimulate the people to participate in its benefits more largely than they have done.

I have endeavored thus hastily to recount the history of the Association, with the objects incidentally connected with it. I have traced it from its birth through infancy, youth to manhood. Those who have watched over it during these various stages of progress, and more especially those who have had the guardianship of it for the last few years, and are therefore more familiar with its wants and necessities, have been reporting from year to year that a new home would soon be required for their rapidly growing charge; that the building which sufficed during childhood would be insufficient for the full-grown man. As one who had known it in its infancy, and who had always felt a deep and absorbing interest in its growth and welfare, hearing the oft-repeated cries, I was at first not disposed to consider them; but when at length I was brought to do so, I began to see the reasonableness and then the necessity for the change. The wheels of commerce, of trade in its onward march, had usurped and taken possession of the house where it was cradled, on Main street, and then the place of its refuge on Fourth street, where it was permitted to rest only a few short years when this commodious home was prepared for it—this permanent home, as Mr. Douglass, the then President, characterized it at the time the Association took possession of this building. But the stream of commerce has flowed on and gathered in and around it, and is flanking it on the right and on the left. Already have the temples dedicated to the ever-living God had to give way, first on Third street and then those on Fourth and Fifth streets, and have sought locations in what were distant groves, if
not forests, at the time this library was located. Already other churches and eleemosynary establishments are looking out for new locations. If we wish this institution to keep up with the evidence of progress, which everywhere prevails, we must move with the current and keep pace with the demands of the times, or see the institution become as the fossils found in the sand and rock, which simply tell of the existence and forms of life in ages long past. To do this a mere change of location will not suffice. We must look and see what is being accomplished in other parts of the world; what improvements in the construction of buildings suited to the wants of such institutions, the best mode of organizing such an institution, of arranging the books and cataloguing them, so that the contents of the library may be known and made accessible and available; reading-rooms for our young men, and for our young women too; study-rooms for the student, too poor, perhaps, to have a room of his own, and if so, without light and warmth and pure air. These should be provided in abundance, and also rooms for conversation and recreation—everything to attract and draw the young within its portals and bring them under the refining and elevating influences of the great and good and noble minds who, though dead, still speak. We are also to ascertain the new and best modes of managing and governing such an institution, and how we can best interest the minds and hearts of all classes, so as to make them work together; whether it is best to continue its management in narrow limits of one class, one occupation, or on a broader gauge, embracing all, restricting none that wish to participate in its management and benefits.

How to accomplish this will require the thought and consideration and co-operation of our earnest thinkers and workers. We have already existing in the United States and other countries, public libraries which are free to all; those, however, are founded by munificent gifts of some one individual, as the Astor Library, in New York, and the Peabody libraries, in Baltimore, Maryland, and Danvers, Massachusetts. Others are based upon a direct tax on the people. In England, the citizens of any town desiring to establish a public library can, with the consent of a majority of the tax-payers, levy a tax not to exceed one penny on the pound sterling. In several States there are laws authorizing the levying of a tax for the purpose of establishing and maintaining public libraries, regarding them as purely educational institutions and essential for completing the superstructure, the foundation being
laid in the school-room. The school, the college, the university, are but the first stages in education. These conduct the young man and young woman to that point where they are qualified to acquire from books the various knowledge in the arts and sciences which books contain; but it does nothing to put those books within their reach, and our city and State make no provision whatever by which the thousands of young persons annually educated at the public expense can carry on their education and bring it to practical results by private study. But I do not now propose to advocate the establishment of public libraries by taxing the community. The end to be gained can be accomplished in another way, and in a way which will meet the recommendations made by the officers of the Association. If our city fathers will make the same offer to the Library Association which was made to the United States Government, and allow them to select one of the four corners of the Missouri Park on which to erect a library building, I think I may promise that the merchants of our city will undertake to erect a new home for the library, an edifice which will be an ornament to the city and a monument to the liberality of the merchants of St. Louis. The location is one where it can rest undisturbed for ages, with light and air, having, as it will, on all sides ample space; bounded by wide streets, and the park with its trees and fountains; of convenient access to every portion of the city. A more fitting home for such an institution could not be found.

Fellow-members of the Association, how can we better celebrate this our twenty-fifth anniversary than by inaugurating such a movement? The property of the Association is now valued at near a quarter of a million of dollars. More than two-thirds of this amount consists in books, works of arts, and furniture, which we have been accumulating since its organization. The building which we now occupy will in a few short years not accommodate the wants of the Association; besides, the building is not fire-proof, and surrounded and occupied as it is, we are liable to have those treasures destroyed in a night. What man of you is there that would not be willing to contribute a hundred dollars rather than this dire mishap should befall us? and still this amount contributed by each member of the Association would give us the sum of $350,000, which would be sufficient to erect a fire-proof building, and in a style of architecture that would do credit to our beautiful city. But I am told that over twelve hundred of our members are clerks, living on small salaries, and that they could not contribute such a
sum. If they could not contribute this at once, they could do it in one, two, three, or four years. There is no one but who could, by the practice of a little self-denial, contribute his two dollars a month, and there is no young man but that would be the better for practicing the requisite self-denial. You cannot learn too early to give. It may be that there are some of our merchants who would find it difficult to spare $100 at once. I say to them as I do to the clerks: If you cannot give all at once, you can pay $25 quarterly, and, if necessary, continue your donations through one or more years. And then there are a number of merchants outside of your Association. From data which I have, there are over 4,000 merchants and traders in our city with capital in business varying from $1,000 to $1,000,000. Among this vast number I do not think it would be unreasonable to obtain the amount required. I would ask none to contribute more than the sum named, but if any choose to give us $1,000 or $10,000 we should not object to taking it, and I believe there are many that would do this. For there are those among our merchants known to some of us, who have given more than three times the largest sum named to our universities and churches and benevolent institutions. But why not sell your present building, some may ask, and apply the proceeds to the erection of a new library building? The reasons are that the amount it would bring would be inadequate for the erection of the new building, that we would have to dispose of it at first, in order to have the money to pay for the new, or borrow money and have the substance eaten up with interest.

But I propose a far nobler use for the old building. I propose to retain it as an endowment for the library for all time to come. From the last report of the Treasurer of this Association, the income derived from the building for the last year was over $14,000; and I am assured by those who have made the estimates, that if the Library was to lease the building it could be made to yield an income of $25,000. With this income I would propose to make our library a free library—free to all—under such restrictions as were salutary and necessary. Boston, Cincinnati, and other cities have their public libraries; Massachusetts alone has over thirty, but they are all sustained by taxing the people. Nineteen years ago Joshua Bates, an American merchant residing in London, proposed to donate $50,000 in books to a free public library, on condition that the city of Boston provided an adequate building and would take upon itself the maintenance of the library. The city erected a building which,
with the ground, cost over $350,000. The amount contributed last year by the city to defray the expenses of the library and for the purchase of books was over $50,000. This library has increased from 9,000 volumes in 1852 to over 160,000 in 1870.

Now, what I propose is for this Association to ask of the city of St. Louis the requisite ground, and then for the merchants and others to erect a building suited in all respects for the use of which it is intended—for library purposes alone, without stores—with perhaps suitable separate apartments for an art gallery, to be organized upon a separate basis, but under the auspices of the Association.

I had intended to-night to have presented to this Association a sum of money, varying from $25,000 to $35,000 in amount, the result of an effort which I had purposed to have made among some of the more wealthy of our merchants. My plan was to have solicited from each $1,000. My duties, however, are such as to have prevented me from carrying this design into effect; but the few that I succeeded in seeing complied so cheerfully with the demand made on them, that I do not hesitate to say that one-tenth of the required amount for a new building can be obtained by proper effort, from thirty-five of our liberal citizens. Our citizens have ever generously responded to all such demands, as the numerous churches, asylums for the orphan, homes for the friendless and the widow, and numerous other benevolent and educational institutions will attest. These are the fitting jewels with which to deck the fair brow of our queenly city.

Time will not permit me to dwell longer upon this subject. Should the suggestion which I have thrown out meet with favor, and lead to steps being taken to secure its adoption, I shall indeed regard this celebration as one of which we may well be proud. Our aim should be to have our Association keep pace with the progress of our city and country, whose future greatness we can scarcely yet conceive. We may well be proud of both, for we have a country whose magnificent extent fires the imagination, whose rapid energy of progress amazes the judgment, whose past is full of pride, and whose future is boundless in its promise of power.
The time and place: No matter when or where—
Suffice it, that our ancestors were there,
Who, with the headstrong passions we possess,
In uncurbed force, subdued a wilderness.

'Twas somewhere in a broad and sunbright land,
Ice-walled and seagirt: one from strand to strand;
In places where men grew too thick to thrive,
Like bees they swarmed and formed another hive.
The hardiest types of industry thus went
Singing to voluntary banishment,
Leaving the drones and others well-to-do—
Plenty for one, yet not enough for two;
But whither bound none knew; none seemed to care—
'Twas toward the sunset: luck go with them there!
The gossip said: They bundled up their goods
And ran a wild-goose chase to some backwoods.
They'll come to grief and be sold out for debt;
They're such a roving, dreamy, thriftless set.
The emigrant was thus consigned to doom
For worthlessness and morbid want of room.

At first none know the movers as they wind
Along the highway, leaving home behind;
Far on the way their tattered canvas grows
Familiar to each blustering wind that blows.
The toilsome route, as by enchantment teems
With friendly huts and cheery log-fire gleams.
The sun-browned settlers, from their open door,
Behold the scene they acted years before:
The burly wagon leaves no room for doubt,
They know the flax-haired children peering out;
The patient oxen laboring at the tongue;
The oozy tar-can 'neath the axle swung;
The dog fatigued with fruitless range for game,
Called up, is first made known to them by name.
The careful wife, who 'mid her household sits
Enthroned, and gaily singing while she knits;
The man who urges on his jaded team—
They know them all in some remembered dream,
They know the country—every foot of ground,
And rock, and tree, and stream for leagues around.
They know the pressing need that sometimes sends
A man from home to find his truest friends;
They know full well he cannot reach that day
Their next-door neighbor twenty miles away,
They know the stranger, offer him good cheer,
And thus they speed the hardy pioneer.

Though strange at first, the truth he soon must own—
The further gone, the better he is known.
Where men are few and far, their fates control
A nearer, dearer sympathy of soul,
Which robs the distance of its lonesome length,
And gives the friendly hand-shake mystic strength.
He trusts the inspiration of that grip
Which seals the bond of God's relationship.
The daring spirit which disturbed his rest
Sways all the wide expansion of the West,
And brings his heart where every man can feel
Its throbbing pulse; its deepest depths unseal.
He breathes the prairie air; his mind responds
To every breath, and bursts its narrow bonds.
The common cause makes every man his friend,
And dreams of power with all his future blend.

His journey ends—by no blind fall of chance;
He owes to progress one firm step's advance;
With hopeful heart, and faith in his strong hand,
He builds his home beyond the Border-Land.
The frontier circle strengthens its defense—
By him extends its vast circumference.
He wields the forces of new growth and skill;
New forms spring up directed by his will.
He tills the soil, or hammers at his trade,
And deep foundations of his life are laid.
He plants—with all its good and evil rife—
The tree of knowledge by the fount of life;
The fruit it bears in blest abundance grows,
And now the desert blossoms as the rose.
Where no law rules with penalties and pains,
'Tis held that absolute perfection reigns;
We find perfection free from blot or flaw—
The wilds of earth without the need of law—
Creation's perfect form. Why uncreate,
That cruder means may build th' imperfect state?
Perforce: Since first the roll of dates began
'Twas said and sung the world was made for man.
And if for man, 'twas needful, as 'twas due,
That something still was left for him to do;
And since the primal world began to move,
Progress implied the margin to improve.

All through this region of the rose and vine
Are pilgrims plodding toward some mountain shrine,
The belt of thrift extending o'er their track,
With hand to plow and never looking back;
The wild herds driving from their lessening range,
And yielding fruits to nature's law of change;
Benign crusaders, innocent of fame,
Who Holy Lands from barren sloth reclaim,
And draw from labor's almoner bright coin,
Or honest ring, which greed cannot purloin.

The pioneer, cast out, has found a clime
Beyond the range of twin-born law and crime.
The civic law that cramped his means for bread—
The social crime of begging to be fed:
Escaped from bondage, he a freeman grew,
And from the waste he moulds the world anew.
He grasps the hills—they to his sinews yield;
He treads the plain, and springs the fallow field.
For battle primed he plows and sows and reaps;
His armor guards his pillow while he sleeps.
All nature is at war with him; his foes
Poison the air, taint every brook that flows;
His cabin is besieged from hill and glen
By savage beasts, and still more savage men.
His rifle is his law, and none can blame
Its sentence rendered with unerring aim.
Full triumph crowns the prowess of his hand,
And brings his home within the Border-Land.
From such a shoot springs many a family tree,
And who would scorn such noble ancestry?
THE MERCHANT.

The scene is changed. No more the howling waste. Queen Beauty reigns with nature’s jewels graced. Where gloomed the woodland, wave the flags of corn, And roses bloom where spread the prickly thorn. Where deep in woods one shadowy hut was seen, Bright groups of dwellings nestle on the green. The savage beasts and savage men are gone Together, with their hunter following on. Their tracks of fire and blood are overgrown; The monumental mounds remain alone.

The pioneer has ripened in renown; His cabin is the oldest house in town, And he the oldest citizen, whose tongue Is rich in marvels for the old and young. He tells them what his rash adventures cost; How one dark night his youngest child was lost; And how another bright and manly boy— A father’s hope, a mother’s darling joy— Pursuing hostile bands—a tearful tale— Fell at his side upon the Indian trail. And how the savage yells then rent the air, And war-paint brightened with its demon glare, When flashing shots revealed the ambuscade. And shot for shot death-dealing havoc made.

Heroic deeds forever past and gone— Dim memory’s pension old age lives upon! The shining links of sturdy manhood cast, Which bind the present to the lusty past.

The backwoodsman, one day, in loth surprise, Saw curling smoke from other chimneys rise— One, two, three, four—and soon they closed him round; It seemed they left him scarce an inch of ground. The scattering town became a trading mart— A halting place to gather strength and heart For danger’s front on plains unknown before, Which swept in grandeur toward the golden shore. Before the plateau where the village stood, A wide, majestic river poured his flood, Far southward dashing on his heaving breast The gathered waters of the great Northwest.
Down from the frozen cloud-land of the North
This genius of the valley wanders forth,
Distilling snows beneath his vapory wings
To strew his southern course with cooling springs.
He touches with his watery wand the hills,
And dancing down their sides come laughing rills,
Which mingle colors as they onward glide,
And paint the landscape spread on every side.
Flushed by the river-god's engaging wiles,
The country's face breaks forth in joyous smiles.
Upon the upland plain he lays his hand,
And marvelous cities rise at his command—
Endowed with all that nature's stores can give,
The magic of his spirit bids them live.
Unbarred he rolls upon his wheeling throne
From endless snow to endless summer's zone,
And pours out treasures for the people's needs,
Who call him "Father" for his generous deeds.
The frontier city fed with such supplies,
Becomes the object of its own surprise.
From barbarous tribes against its growth arrayed,
It draws its life by alchemy of trade.
The traders move their post to mountains far,
Where trappers roam and wage their savage war;
The forts are razed, blockhouses disappear,
And merchants count their thousands year by year.
The mighty river bears upon his breast
The teeming products of the great Northwest,
And riches flow, as flow the waves that glide
Before the prows upon his swelling tide.

Still one reproach! The bane of envy's breast—
Some one pronounced it "good—but like the West."
Refinement wore aloft her plumy crest,
And patronized the rude, unlettered West.
Plain Science, of sublimest truths in quest,
Sneered fondly on her sister in the West.
Dame Fashion, when she changed, put on her best,
And sent her old clothes to the "gawks" out West.
The merchant, heaping riches year by year,
A grain of truth discerned beneath the sneer.
He saw it was not progress to sit down
And let the river cultivate the town.
So gathered up his wits to put at rest
The noisy humdrum rattled at the West.

He planned, with hope of good results to flow,
A trade, and traffic, and industrial show;
Where each should bring the thing to demonstrate
How men could make a city grandly great.
They came—the merchants with their stuffs and wares;
They came—the farmers with their shining shares;
They came—the builders with design and draft;
They came—mechanics with their handicraft.
Huge stacks appeared of various stuffs for bread,
Of Indian weed, and iron ore, and lead;
Of furs and clothing there was many a pack,
And precious stones—for building; diamonds—black.
And hemp and cotton products—bale and coil—
And all the wealth of corn, and wine, and oil.
And one, a deep-brow’d man of studious looks,
Came bending with a cumbrous load of books.
Some others laughed at him, but some there were
Who praised the impulse that had led him there.
He thus addressed them:

In these honored tomes
We find the surest pledge of happy homes;
The rest is trash, if culture be denied—
More rich than all our treasure house beside.
With giant strength impelled by youthful fire,
We swamp the wheels of progress in the mire,
When education lags so far behind
The pride of fortune and the need of mind.
The age demands another class of books
Than balanced ledgers or the running brooks:
It asks for libraries, and mental tools,
And learned colleges, and public schools—
In them the spirits of the world’s great men
Forever dwell, and live with us again.
Invite them here: accept their helping hand
To move our city from the Border-Land:
And found a central mart round which may roll
North, South, East, West—a true commercial pole.
Let us the law of equity obey,
And render sterling justice, come what may:
We’re now in court to try our people’s cause,
And plead revival of high social laws:
I’ve brought these text-books for our empty shelves;
They read the law of justice to ourselves—
That solid basis upon which shall stand
Our wealth, our power, our station in the land.

They heard his words: they gave one ringing cheer;
The first result: we may behold it here.
THE STATESMAN.

The purer springs of being sweetly swell
As from the depths of life's artesian well.
Through digging deep the crystal waters flow
To quench the thirst contracted long ago.

The new life dawns 'mid novel sights and sounds,
And routine wanders from its beaten rounds.
The solemn slumber of the good old times
Awoke one morning roused by merrier chimes:
Dear slow-coach customs, bred of by-gone days,
Were jostled from the track by iron ways:
The lightning's wing was summoned from the sun
To do earth's errands, post-boys' feet had run.
High arches, lightly springing over streams,
Had realized in form our spirit-dreams—
Clothed in the penciled bow's prismatic sheen,
Born of two worlds, with just a span between.
Both space and time had yielded to the sway
Of subtle forces mixed with human clay:
Distance dissolved; and in the lives of men
One year contained the former breadth of ten.
What more can come as earth's increasing dower?
What more can magnify man's realm of power?

The soul of art—restoring by its grace
The lost ideal of a perfect race.
The forms of art—by which the struggling poor
May own a world of beauty at their door.
The moulds in which their better selves they see,
And learn that labor is nobility.

The blocks rough-hewn, of which our temple stands,
Were squared and laid by wisdom's loving hands;
Expanding zeal has not its strength outgrown,
And plastic beauty dwells within the stone.

Of highest endeavor in our times of strife,
The statesman wears the crown of civil life.
He grasps the meaning of the moving scene—
His country's honor towering in his mien;
He breathes the blast, or lulls the storms of state—
A part of every storm that makes him great;
He stamps the laws of nations with his name;
Among their archives lives his ripened fame.
His life is one great prayer to re-create
A perfect world within a perfect state:
The greater in the less—so progress tends,
And so forever fails to reach its ends,
Save in the charming semblance which it draws
Of peace, beyond the changing sphere of laws.

Happy the land whose sons supremely great,
Pronounced the people sovereign in the State;
Who by the West the Way of Empire planned
To reach again their Eastern Fatherland,
Whose beacons flash far o'er the circling seas,
And light the rear of darkened centuries.

Honor to him whose prescient sight begun
To look for India toward the setting sun.
Whose mind far-piercing saw the coming day,
When passless heights would bear the iron way.
Craggs yielded to his voice that never bent
Before the storms that shook the firmament.
He spoke: the truth was living on his tongue,
And with his words the world's horizon rung—
THERE IS THE EAST. Beyond the mountains, where
The sun sank down, we went and found it there.
Bright, golden words—fit crown for his career;
Star of the West! the brightest in our sphere.
Until the world in swallowing darkness drops,
His light will linger on the mountain tops.
We, with the daring which his presence lent,
Should hew a mountain for his monument!
High on its peak in characters of flame,
Among the stars should glitter BENTON's name.

The human stream long stagnant at its source,
In dashing westward gained in breadth and force.
The mantling pool with face unruffled lies
Still, staring sphinx-like at the Indian skies.
The living waters rolled with freshening sweep
And man became a boisterous, billowy deep.
The mass contained fierce elements of war,
And lashed by storms, the clouds were borne afar,
Until they fell 'mid peaceful rainbow gleams,
And other fountains nourished other streams.
The desert, laughing, woke with glad surprise,
And other gardens bloomed 'neath other skies.
Beneath the sky-emblazoned banner bright,
The currents sparkle with a living light,
And carry to the sunset's crimson bars
The glow of all our galaxy of stars;
Resistless foams and pours the surging host
Adown the mountains of the golden coast;
Impetuous, free, and scorning tranquil ease,
They leap the west-gate of the Indian seas.
As from the clouds they seek their place of birth
And draw a living girdle 'round the earth.

The light which fades from evening's closing eyes
Bursts through the opening lids of morning skies.
The setting beam by bold Sierras hid
Awakes the dawn on mosque and pyramid:
The East and West merge worlds across the main,
And guard their compact with a golden chain.

Our country: When in song we speak thy name,
We give thee his whose 'twas by rightful claim.
COLUMBIA—daughter of a virgin clime—
Thou grandest figure in the halls of time:
Exalted, thou canst view on either hand
Thy kindred peoples drawn from every land.
Far as thy vision bears, deep waving shades
Surround savannas green and blooming glades.
The fairest types of every product known,
In rich abundance, cluster in thy zone.
Around thy waist a dazzling armor gleams
With spreading lakes and rippling silver streams.
Thy delicate hands the trenchant blade can wield
In danger's hour, or till the peaceful field.
Thy bosom swells with pride for labor done,
And hope for greater things yet scarce begun.
Beneath thy feet expands the gulf's deep stream,
Warmed by the fervid equatorial beam,
Thy face is bright with youth's eternal glow;
Alaska wreaths thy brow with pearls of snow.

Our country calls; her sons obey the voice
Which summons to her side her men of choice.
An old tradition, which some memories reach,
Preserves in words like these her maiden speech:

I am the People—in their name addressed;
I am the People—by their will expressed.
The people's difference and their will are one;
Their verdict makes each man a sovereign;
Through me he speaks; O may his mandate be
An utterance worthy him, and worthy me!
Then elevate the people to that height
Which sweeps the scope of every human right;
In universal culture thrives the tree
Which bears the ripened fruit of liberty.
'Tis education lifts high over all
Your fair ideal on its pedestal;
Uphold it there, while Time his cycle runs,
By all the love your fathers bore their sons;
To freedom sacred, and the feared of wrong,
The boast of story, and the loved of song.

Columbia—daughter of a virgin clime,
Reaps for the world the richest fruits of time,
Of humble strain, and yet of royal mien;
A subject born—in majesty a queen,
She serves and reigns, on deeds of glory bent
To lead in freedom’s van a continent.
Aloft, her ensign’s noble breadth unfurled
Proclaims glad tidings all around the world.

The stately monarch of the Flowery Land
Upon his walls accepts her friendly hand;
There dawns on earth a new creation’s morn;
The oldest empire greets the youngest born—
Whose mighty mission, thus begun, will end
When all the nations as one people blend.
LETTERS.

City of Boston, Public Library,

Boston, December 27, 1870.

JOHN T. DOUGLASS, Esq.,

Chairman of Arrangements Mercantile Library, St. Louis, Mo.:

DEAR SIR: Your polite invitation of the 21st inst. reached me yesterday. I regret that my engagements will not permit me to participate in the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of your library. An institution which has arrived at such a measure of usefulness may properly look back upon its past history, and take a new departure of encouragement for the future.

With my best wishes for your continued prosperity, I remain

Respectfully yours,

W. W. GREENOUGH,

Pres't Trustees Boston Public Library.

Salisbury, Mo., January 2, 1871.

JOHN T. DOUGLASS, Esq., Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements:

DEAR SIR: It being out of my power to visit your city at this season, I am reluctantly compelled to decline acting on the committee for celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Mercantile Library of St. Louis.

Thus deprived of taking any active part, I may not decline all service on so interesting an occasion, and will therefore endeavor to contribute a few circumstances connected with the origin of our Association which are probably long since forgotten, or only dimly remembered by one or two of the present members.

It was during the fall of 1846, toward the end of a fair business season—the merchants generally prosperous, or at least thinking themselves so (not always a sure thing in those long-credit days), and hence in good humor and liberal mood.

One afternoon, while standing chatting at our doors on Main street, which were adjoining, the subject of forming a Mercantile Library was first broached between Mr. Robert K. Woods and myself. There were very few means of harmless amusement or intellectual improvement then to be found in the city, and a great need was felt for some place where young men could pass their evenings agreeably and profitably, and thus be protected from the many temptations to folly and vice that ever beset unguarded youth in large towns. Of all plans to supply this need, none seemed so feasible as the establishment of a library and reading-room, and even that appeared full of difficulty; for, to anticipate (and as we had intuitively feared), after we were fully prepared to make the attempt, most of those to whom we applied for subscription, though they gave what was required,
still spoke discouragingly, and prophesied failure. If I am not much mistaken, there had already been two attempts to found similar institutions, and the latter of these—a combination of lyceum and library—was then lingering out its last hours, and dying from want of means or good management, or both combined.

All I can recall of it now is, that I was a subscriber to the Library in order to get at the books, and that it fell to pieces or was sold out. Our library now possesses some of its former volumes.

To return from the digression. After some conversation, Mr. Woods and I resolved to make an effort at last, by calling in person on some few active and enterprising citizens, who agreed to meet and discuss the matter; which we soon did, one night at the counting-room of Tevis, Scott & Tevis, on Main street. There were present A. B. Chambers, Esq., of the Republican; Mr. Peter Powell, an old-established merchant, with several others, including Mr. Woods and myself. Then, deeming the project of sufficient importance to secure their active aid, we resolved to call, through the newspapers, for a meeting at the rooms of the St. Louis Insurance Company, offered for our use by its urbane and popular Secretary, Mr. Asa Ricketson (long since dead). On that occasion some thirty persons were present; Mr. Luther Kennett presided. Then and there the constitution of the present library was framed and adopted, but, if I mistake not, was brought for final approval before a large public meeting suitably convened through all the city newspapers, and held at Concert Hall, on Market street, which then was (excepting the churches) the only rooms in the city suitable for such purposes. The Hall was crowded—Mr. George K. Budd presided; the proceedings of the former meetings were approved and indorsed; committees appointed to solicit subscribers and donations of books, pictures, &c. And from that meeting the St. Louis Mercantile Library dates its existence.

The first collections of all the committees did not reach, in money, fifteen hundred dollars, and nearly all of that was obtained on Main street and the levee. Its first year was one of constant effort on the part of the President and Board of Directors, but it constantly increased from the start, though for some time but slowly. With less than two thousand dollars in money and books, it was difficult to pay for a suitable room and a Librarian worthy of trust, especially the latter. I imagine it would hardly prove so now. By judicious management, and the policy of putting forward the active young members in the Board of Directors, our institution continued to flourish and increase until it has become one of the proudest monuments of the energy and intelligence of our mercantile class. And its Librarian, instead of being indifferent to or ashamed of so small a place, would hardly find a more desirable or honorable position in the gift of our citizens.

The further history of the library, its present wealth and usefulness, are too well known for me to dwell upon.

Your obedient servant,

JOHN C. TEVIS.
Brooklyn, N. Y., January 5, 1871.

John T. Douglass, Esq.,
Chairman Committee of Arrangements:

Dear Sir: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your invitation to join in the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the foundation of the St. Louis Mercantile Library Association. Although it will not be in my power to attend on the occasion, I beg leave to tender to your Association, on behalf of the Mercantile Library Association of Brooklyn, our hearty congratulations and our sincere wishes for continued prosperity and usefulness.

I have the honor to be
Yours, very respectfully,

John R. Kennaday,
Pres't Brooklyn M. L. A.

Executive Mansion,
Washington, D. C., January 5, 1871.

Sir: The President desires me to acknowledge the receipt of your polite invitation to attend the celebration of the anniversary of the Mercantile Library, on the 13th inst., and convey to you his thanks for your kind remembrance. He wishes me to say that it would afford him much pleasure to be present, but his public duties will not permit his absence from the Capital at that time.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Horace Porter,
Secretary.

To Mr. John T. Douglass, Chairman, &c., St. Louis, Mo.
ST. LOUIS MERCANTILE LIBRARY
S. W. CORNER FIFTH AND LOCUST STS.

TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP.

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