

this method is may be summed up in a very few words. It is that method which proceeds in the most sensible way to solve problems. Whenever a wise man has a problem to deal with he first endeavors to find out what the facts are, and after he has learned the facts, he proceeds to action; his conclusions are drawn from the knowledge of the facts. This is the scientific method; this is the only sensible method of going to work in any field, whether it be the field of nature, of business or of government. Progress in its broadest sense is due to the use of this method."

Recognizing this condition, and impressed by the good results following the establishment of legislative reference bureaus in several of the states, the National Municipal League in 1909 appointed a committee to report upon the feasibility and desirability of municipal reference libraries. The first work of the committee was, of course, to learn what was being done along this line, either by special legislative reference or municipal reference libraries, and inquiries were made of the librarians of the public libraries in all cities having a population of 50,000 or over. The replies indicate that there is almost complete unanimity as to the great need for the establishment of municipal reference libraries, but there was not the same unanimity as to how this should be done. The committee feels that these replies are strong evidence of the need of such libraries. This committee, of which Dr. Horace E. Flack, librarian of the Baltimore Department of Legislative Reference, is chairman, has made a striking report on the whole question, which has been widely distributed among librarians, with the result that an extended interest in the subject has been aroused.

In 1910 the committee was continued with Dr. Flack as chairman and the following members: Hon. Thomas L. Montgomery, state librarian of Pennsylvania; Miss Edith Tobitt, librarian of the Omaha Public Library; Hon. Oscar Leser, of Baltimore, and Clarence B. Lester, of the Legislative Reference Division of the New York State Library.

CLINTON ROGERS WOODRUFF.

#### REUBEN McMILLAN FREE LIBRARY, YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

The new building of the Reuben McMillan Free Library was opened to the public on Dec. 3, 1910.

It occupies a corner lot 130 x 300 feet and measures 130 feet front by 130 feet side, with possible future extension at rear. It sets 75 feet back from the street. Its cost is \$150,000.

The exterior is of Italian renaissance ar-

chitecture. The walls are of reinforced concrete with limestone exterior facing. The building is considered fireproof, wood being used only for doors and window casings. The furniture, cases and stacks are all steel with the exception of table and desk tops and chairs. Wires are all insulated in concrete and the heating is from the city plant. There seems to be practically nothing to burn, and the building is further protected on the outside by hydrants. The economy of insurance is consequently great.

The floors are covered with rubber tiling in the most used part of the building, with linoleum elsewhere. The stack floors are of glass.

The building is simple and dignified and in accord with the use to which it is built. It is of goodly proportions and built for a capacity of some 225,000 volumes. It is planned from the library point of view, the architect being chosen after the floor plans were practically arranged and the needs and relations of departments decided. With these points given, the size and capacity of rooms were first determined; the amount and arrangement of furniture, shelves and stacks were then planned and the contracts for these let. The remaining money was then used for other parts of the building and exterior. The plan was a happy one; we were able to get what was needed from the library viewpoint, and the things that we had to do without were the non-essentials. It moreover gave us a simple building. From the viewpoint of the book the setting is successful, while the rooms are simple and dignified, restful and pleasing. It is the book that invites one.

The building is of three floors, including basement, some four feet below grade at the front of the building and on account of lesser height in basement stack, on the grade at rear. The main entrance with outside steps leads directly into the vestibule, the object being to give a broad, hospitable outlook on entrance. From the vestibule access is gained to the rooms on the main floor and by staircases to basement and second floor. In the vestibule are telephone booths and space for checking umbrellas.

A conversation room with tables and chairs and a desk for writing opens from the vestibule. In this room hangs the portrait of Mr. McMillan, for whom the library is named. The following tribute hangs beneath it:

"A man who sought neither wealth nor honor save as these were to be found in the faithful doing of his duty. He spent a long life for meagre salary in training the youth of this city to live the highest intellectual life, and when his name was chosen for the library, it was because his generation chose to honor and revere that type of manhood which finds its best expression in

"that high, stern-featured beauty of plain devotedness to duty."

On a pedestal stands the bronze bust of Mr.

Andrew Carnegie, whose gift of \$50,000 made the erection of the building possible. In the reading room are signs, "There is a conversation room if you wish to talk."

Directly in front of the vestibule main entrance, and with glass partition, is the loan room. It is here that the architectural effect is gained. The room is dignified, and is finished in Caen stone. The ceiling is of extra height, 20 feet, with glass construction, and above in the roof is a skylight. By day there is natural lighting and in the evening electric lights are used between the skylight and glass ceiling, giving a sunlight effect through the yellowish art glass. The room is surrounded by the Parthenon frieze in plaster cast. The furniture comprises the loan desk and its equipment, catalog case, with adjoining tables and chairs, benches and show table with glass top and at a height for comfortable inspection when standing, a revolving photo-case and paper and string table. On the sides of the room are glass partitions, admitting a general view of reading and children's rooms. On the north (quietest) side are the general reading rooms. At the rear of the loan room one passes directly into the stack. Open access is maintained throughout.

The reading rooms consist of general reference room with adjoining (by glass partition) newspaper and periodical room. There is too an open shelf room connection with the stack, as well as direct entry therein. The general effect of the first floor is its openness. Almost complete supervision is maintained from the loan desk as a central administrative point. The rooms are furnished with tables, chairs, fire-places, washstands, magazine racks and settles. Special attention was paid to the comfort of readers. The shelves are of comfortable height and sizes are relative to varied classes of books shelved. Ledges at a reading height are used where heavy books are to be consulted.

The windows are large, utilizing the greatest amount of daylight possible. The height of windows are 57½ inches from the floor, the measurement being determined by the wall cases, the tops of the cases forming the sill of the window. At the back of the cases and with perforations in a continued case top are the recessed radiators, the heating being adjusted by thermostats. In the reading rooms and stacks overhead lighting is used of simple designs with Tungsten lights.

The shelving is fitted, of solid and simple construction and practical lines. The various appliances are most practical.

The children's room, with its special equipment, was specially mentioned in the April number of the LIBRARY JOURNAL.

The stack room occupies practically the entire rear of the building, and is of five floors with a possible sixth. The first floor

of the stack is in the basement, there being two floors to one floor of the building proper. Care has been taken that the stack floors meet the main floors on a level, except in basement, where inclines are used. Thus there are no steps over which books must be carried. Of special interest in the stack room are the wide aisles and space between stacks and windows for tables and chairs, and the almost continuous windows with broad window seats. It is here that future extension of the building will go on.

The stack room, as the entire library, is shelved to a comfortable height and is of easy access. It is admirably fitted with label holders, book supports, end shelves and bulletin boards of most approved design. The ventilation through the stacks is further gained by specially made lower shelf. Adjoining the stack on main floor is the librarian's room, with vault and office, and a mezzanine floor directly above these rooms has the staff locker and rest rooms.

On the second floor of the main building are the lecture and story-hour rooms (see LIBRARY JOURNAL, April), music, trustees' and special study rooms, one of which is now used by the Historical Society. The stack room, adjoining this floor, is devoted to practical arts and trades. Another general work-room connects with this floor.

The treatment of the basement has been a specially happy one, in that one does not seem to be in a basement. The rooms are pleasant. Specially to be mentioned is a future newspaper room 20 x 56 feet with outside entrance. The room is at present used by the Medical Association and its special library. Adjoining the stack, on each side, are the receiving and unpacking room and school and branch room. The basement stack room is used for bindery books, branch and school books, also for mending. Connected with it is a disinfecting closet. Other basement rooms are boiler room, in case of emergency, the building being heated by the city plant, a future bindery, two unassigned rooms, toilets and storage room. A vacuum cleaning system is installed.

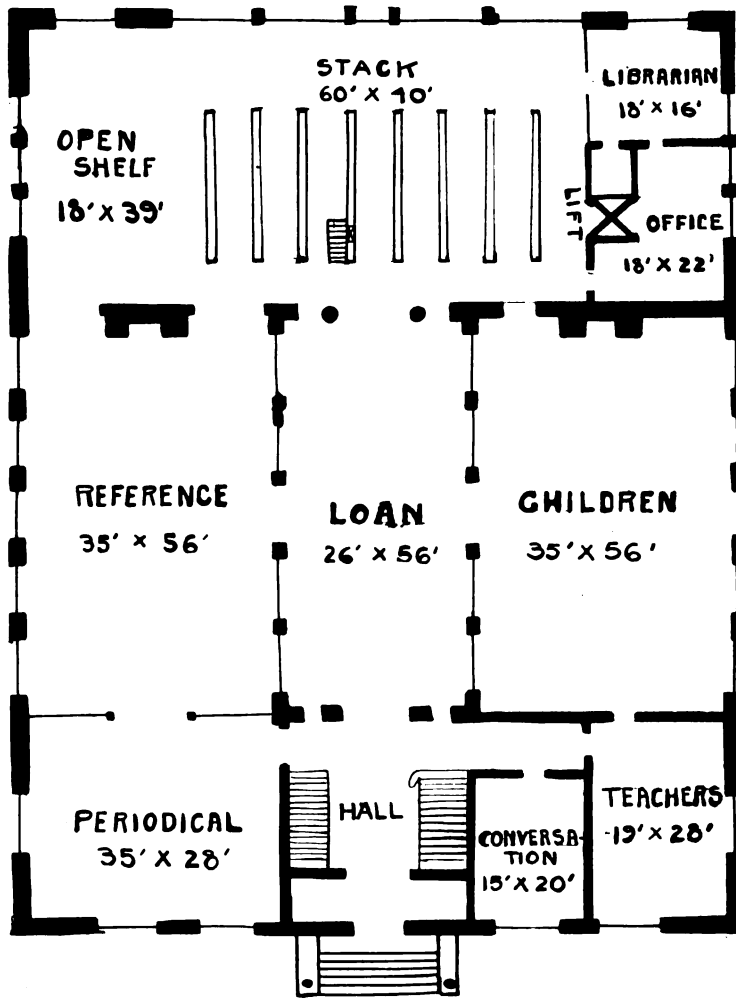
Over the building, with exception of skylights over stack and loan rooms, is a capacious attic and above a roof garden. An elevator, which adjoins stacks, goes from basement to roof, and there are booklift and stairs connecting stack floors. The rear of the lot will be laid out for garden with settles for readers.

The library is greatly indebted to various members of the library profession, and specially to those who had new buildings, for the suggestions of what to have and what not to have. We were fortunate, too, to have the willingness and ability of the General Fireproofing Co. to construct the work and make all possible improvements in mechanical equipment.

ANNA L. MORSE.

REUBEN M. MILLAN FREE LIBRARY, YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO. LOAN ROOM.





REUBEN M'MILLAN FREE LIBRARY, YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO MAIN FLOOR.