

safely challenge competition with any city of its age in the range of civilization. Her public Libraries are numerous and respectable, and notwithstanding the activity and energy exhibited by her citizens in every department of life, the statistics of these institutions prove beyond controversy that they are at the same time essentially a reading people. Not physical alone, but mental activity is a prominent characteristic of our population.

At the head of this creditable class of our public institutions deservedly stands the

MERCANTILE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION.

The spacious and well-arranged rooms of this association are located in the Mercantile Library Building, designed for the purpose, on the corner of Montgomery and Bush streets. The Society was organized January 24, 1853, by the election of the following officers: President: David S. Turner; Vice President: J. P. Haven; Treasurer: C. C. Bowers; Recording Secretary: W. H. Stevens; Corresponding Secretary: Dr. Henry Gibbons; Directors: E. P. Flint, E. E. Dunbar, D. H. Haskell, and J. B. Crockett. The officers of the Association chosen at the last annual election, are: President: Albert Miller; Vice President: Henry B. Williams; Treasurer: Fred'k W. Macondray; Corresponding Secretary: Frank D. Carlton; Recording Secretary: Wm. N. Arthur; Directors: H. D. Oliphant, Thomas Breeze, Geo. C. Boardman, Andrew L. Edwards, Frank E. Webster, Joseph Hobart, Augustus P. Flint, W. Melvin Smith, and William M. Pierson; Librarian: H. H. Moore; Assistant Librarian: Daniel E. Webb; Collector: John J. Tayker.

The Library contains 17,000 judiciously selected and well arranged and classified volumes of standard and miscellaneous works; the Library for reference numbering 4,000; additions amounting to 4,000 volumes, at an expenditure of \$2,000, have been added during the current year—several copies of each popular work being purchased for the Library immediately after its issue from the press. The average number of books taken from the Library each month, amounting to 3,000, clearly sustains the assertion previously made, that the citizens of San Francisco are essentially a reading community.

In the commodious, convenient, and comfortably fitted-up Reading Room attached to the Library are to be found all the leading local, domestic and foreign newspapers and periodicals, magazines and reviews—neither pains nor expense being spared to render this department an attractive resort to members and visitors. The walls are adorned with a number of fine paintings, portraits of distinguished individuals, and historical pieces. Adjoining this is the Chess Room, where members partial to this healthy and invigorating mental exercise meet for a trial of skill, and to indulge in their favorite pastime. Although the rooms are thronged nightly with a crowd, everything is quiet, orderly, and decorous—all the affairs of the Association moving along like clock-work. The Mercantile Library is a fitting and appropriate testimonial to the liberality, intelligence and worth of the commercial community by which it has been founded, fostered, and so successfully managed. While the affairs of the Association have been judiciously conducted by its officers, no small degree of praise is due the Librarian, H. H. Moore, who is thoroughly posted in his department, and whose uniform urbanity, in connection with his Assistant, D. E. Webb, render the associations connected with this institution of the most pleasant character. The Mercantile Library Association numbers 1,700 members.

ODD FELLOWS' LIBRARY ASSOCIATION.

This Library was organized December 30, 1854, with but about one hundred volumes. It now contains over 10,000, among which are a large number of rare and valuable works on the history of this coast. The greater part of the works of the old Spanish writers on this subject have been collected with great care and research, and form a very attractive feature of this collection. Agents are now employed by the Association, both in the Atlantic States and in Europe, collecting all that is extant upon this important and interesting subject.

Connected with the Library is a reading room where all the leading journals of the day are to be found constantly on file, and also an extensive Cabinet of valuable curiosities, embracing various specimens of the mineralogy, botany, conchology, ornithology, entomology, and zoology of California, in fact a miniature museum of the wonderful resources of our Pacific home. The value of the Library and Cabinet is upwards of \$20,000. When we consider that the Library is supported only by Odd Fellows, it speaks well for the literary taste of its members. A great deal of the success of the Association is due to the untiring energy and unwavering interest in its progress of its respected President, Hon. S. H. Parker, who has been, since its organization, its unanimous choice. Under his fostering care the Library and Reading Rooms have become models of neatness, elegance, and utility. The officers of this Association are: Samuel H. Parker, President; Wm. R. Satterlee, First Vice President; Frank B. Austin, Second Vice President; Henry C. Squire, Secretary; A. Himmelmann, Treasurer; John Phillips, Librarian; John Q. Piper, Henry Kimball, John Pforr, James A. J. Bohen, Samuel L. Lupton, John W. Van Zandt, H. Kozminsky, Frank D. Morrell, H. Buettner, Philo White, and Henry Briel, Directors.

LIBRARY OF THE MECHANIC'S INSTITUTE.

Belonging to that flourishing Society, which is an honor to the citizens and working men of San Francisco, the Mechanic's Institute, is a library of near 6,000 volumes of scientific and standard works, for the use of the members, who avail themselves freely of the advantage afforded them by this collection. Connected with the library is an interesting cabinet containing several hundred specimens of interesting objects in natural history, models of machinery, and other interesting and curious matters. This library occupies the main hall of the elegant new building recently erected by the Association, on California street, above Montgomery.

LIBRARY OF THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION.

Belonging to the Young Men's Christian Association is a well selected library of 3,000 volumes in almost every department of literature. Of these works about six hundred are religious, sixty-five practical, two hundred and twenty-two biographical, two hundred and twenty historical, one hundred and forty-three travels, and seven hundred and sixty-one miscellaneous, including sermons, classics, lore, fiction, the drama, philosophy, science and art, bound magazines and periodicals, public documents, etc. The average number of books taken out monthly is one hundred and twenty-five. The library is in the rooms of the Association, No. 629 Washington Street.

LIBRARY OF THE SOCIETY OF CALIFORNIA PIONEERS.

The society of California Pioneers have at their rooms, in their building, a library containing several hundred volumes, principally historical, and mostly relating to the early history of California, some of which works are very rare. This collection may be justly regarded as the nucleus of a splendid library