

31st: Furniture and repairs, \$4,435 26½; books and stationery, \$18,760 47; rent, \$1,523 20; gas, \$450 30; insurance, 337 50; incidental expenses, \$434 13; salaries and clerk hire, \$4,253 40. Total, \$30,194 26½. Also, an estimate for the fiscal year ending June 30th, as follows: Starting with a fund of \$72,000, there is to be deducted for expenditures to the 31st of last month, \$30,194 26; sundries, \$2,028 01. Total, \$32,222 27, leaving a balance available of \$39,777 73. The estimated expenses for the remainder of the fiscal year are as follows: Pay-roll, \$4,140; extra assistants, three months, \$600; gas, seven months, \$840; rent, five months, \$1,000; insurance, \$450; contingent fund, \$500; thirty indicators, \$322 50; subscriptions to periodicals, \$245 20. Total, \$8,097 70. Balance available for books, stationery, furniture, repairs, and incidentals, \$31,680 03. The Library is open for reading from 9:30 A.M. to 9:30 P.M. In December, Mr. Hart having resigned his position as Librarian, Mr. W. H. Robinson was elected to fill the vacancy, J. M. Ward Assistant, and Mr. Lauren Crane Secretary; and Mr. T. B. Bishop and Mr. Charles Kohler were chosen Trustees, in place of Messrs. George and Sloss, resigned.

Such is the beginning of the Free Public Library of San Francisco. With its few volumes, rented hall, and half-dozen attendants, it has commenced its career of usefulness, and already commands the respect of the public. Now it is a struggle; but so earnest are its managers, and so interested in it are the people, that but a few years will elapse before it will take rank among the great libraries of the country. The free libraries of other cities have generally been founded or assisted by the bequest or donation of men of wealth, who thus secure a deserved fame. John Jacob Astor gave \$400,000 to found the Astor Library of New York, to which William B. Astor added \$300,000. John Lennox gave \$700,000 to found the Lennox Library also in New York. Walter N. Newbury left \$2,000,000 to establish a free public library in Chicago. Dr. James Rush gave Philadelphia \$1,000,000 for the same purpose. Joshua Bates founded the free public library of Boston in 1852 by a gift of \$50,000, adding \$50,000 afterwards. This now contains 350,000 volumes, or nearly one to each inhabitant of the city, the population being 400,000. George Peabody gave \$1,400,000 to the city of Baltimore for a free library. A long list of such noble names could be given; and with the great wealth of many San Franciscans, we may expect their names to be added to the list in aid of the Free Public Library of this city.

THE MERCANTILE LIBRARY was organized in 1853. The depressed state of business prevailing in San Francisco for two or three years past has been most keenly felt by the libraries. The President of the Mercantile Library reports that "ten years ago the number of members was nearly two thousand; now it is less than twelve hundred. During that time the population of the city has doubled, other libraries have grown up and drawn off some of our members, but, allowing for that, we ought to have now at least three thousand members, for the Mercantile Library offers advantages peculiar to itself." There are now in the Library near fifty thousand volumes, about two thousand being added annually, supplying the place of those lost or destroyed, and steadily increasing the aggregate number. About eighty-five thousand volumes are taken out each year, or seventy to each member. The Library building is situated on Bush street, between Montgomery and Sansome, and is one of the most elegant and substantial buildings of the city. It was built by the Mercantile Library Association for the purpose it is used, of iron and brick, contains three stories, basement, and attic. The basement contains a large hall for lectures, concerts, or exhibitions; the first story the library, reference library, ladies' reading-room, and parlor, and trustees' room. On the second floor are the chess, smoking, reading and writing-rooms, museum, and store-room for periodicals. The reading-room contains all the leading magazines, pictorials, and newspapers of the world. The annual income is about \$23,000, and the expenses about the same. The terms of subscription are, for entrance-fee one dollar, and three dollars per quarter in advance. Strangers are invited to visit the rooms. Alfred E. Whitaker is the present Librarian.

THE OLD FELLOWS' LIBRARY was organized in 1854 and ranks next to the Mercantile in the number of its books, having 36,504 volumes; the number drawn for reading being upwards of one hundred thousand annually. This is located in the Odd Fellows' Building, 325 Montgomery street, is available only to members of the Order and their families, and is supported by pro-rata assessments on the lodges of the city. The annual expense is about \$9,000. Members of the Order, other than those located in San Francisco, are admitted to the privileges of the Library upon the payment of a small subscription. The Librarian, Mr. George A. Carnes, in his last report says: "This Library is a model of economical management." He recommends the gradual formation of an Endowment Fund, the annual proceeds of which would eventually enable the Library to be self-supporting. "Such a fund," he says, "is already in process of accretion; but an increased and more systematic effort will be required before it can be rendered in any perceptible degree effective."

THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE LIBRARY comprises thirty thousand volumes, among which are many scientific and technical works, some three thousand volumes of English Patent Reports, and is the depository of the Reports of the Patent Office at Washington. The annual additions to the Library are about one thousand five hundred. Several hundred volumes, duplicates or damaged, are each year presented to the Library of the State Prison for the bene-