

CHAPTER IX

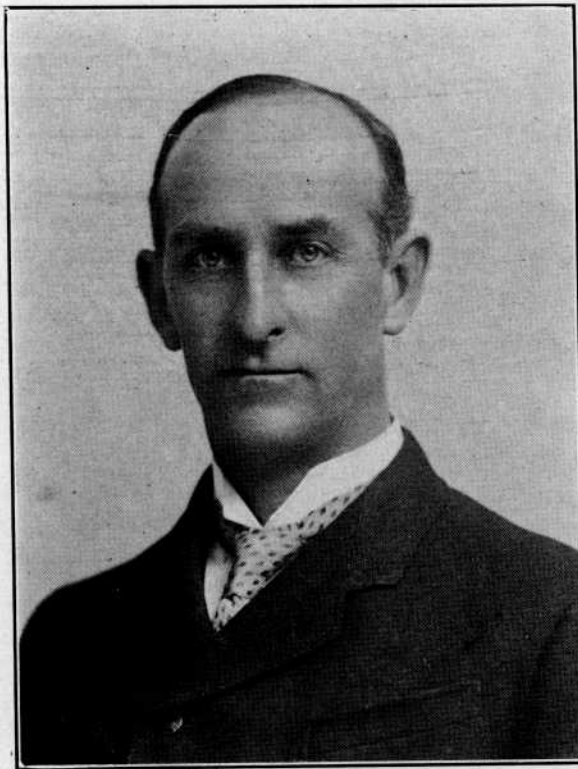
EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Growth and Efficiency of the Modern School System. The Public Library

The school system of Fall River is one in which the citizens justly take pride. The city was the first in the State to establish the free text book system, thus making its schools free in every sense of the word, and

that is noted for its high standard in education.

The last annual report of the superintendent showed 15,926 children enrolled in the day schools and 3,526 in the evening schools.



Everett B. Durfee, Superintendent of Schools

it also furnished manual training in its high school years before it was required by State law. During the last half century the schools have steadily advanced under wise and progressive guidance, with liberal appropriations from the city government, till now they are among the best in a commonwealth

The number of schoolhouses was 53, with 16,847 sittings. There were 291 separate schools—one high, 59 grammar, 70 intermediate, 155 primary, three ungraded and three kindergartens. The whole number of teachers employed was 451, 25 of whom were in the high school, 83 grammar, 81 intermediate

and 198 primary. The number employed in evening schools was 146. The total expense of the department for the year ending December 31, 1905, was \$364,048.47, of which \$82,951.47 was expended by the public buildings department for repairs, fuel, janitors, etc.

Though since 1850 the city has had public schools that it has every reason to be proud of, the public educational facilities here prior to that date appear to have nothing to boast of. The present and past are compared concisely in a school report of 1869, in which it is asserted that the character of the schools had changed from those of low grade for children of parents unable to patronize private institutions, to the schools of the whole people, rich and poor alike, while "instead of rude, cheap buildings, upon land valueless for other purposes, costly edifices furnished with every convenience are erected upon the most beautiful sites that can be selected."



The N. B. Borden School

The extent to which the private school flourished here is indicated by the fact that in 1826 there were 14 private institutions and 12 public. The latter were under the supervision of a general school committee of three, elected at the annual town meeting, but the active control was largely in the hands of the school districts into which the town had been divided in 1818, originally nine, but later increased to 14. The district system was retained until 1864, though the committee had urged its abolishment for years before such action was taken. The system had many faults, for while it worked fairly well in the more thickly populated sections, which were able to erect good buildings and provide competent teachers, in the country, where the population was more scattered, there were few pupils and the schoolhouses the citizens were willing to assess themselves to build were often unfit

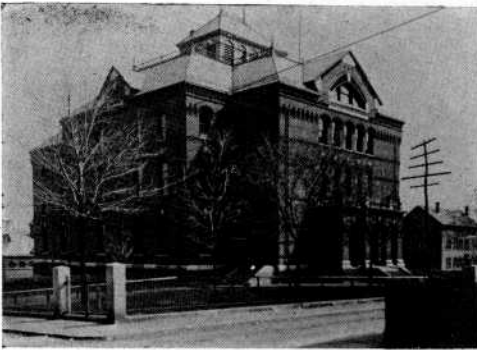
for the purpose. There was a tendency, too, to hire teachers at the lowest possible rates, without much regard for competency, and dissensions among the members of the district also contributed to demoralization. The reports of the school committee in the 40's bear repeated condemnation of the schoolhouses in the country districts, which are declared to be far better fitted for pigsties or barns than for schools. The report of 1847 says of one school, kept in the bedroom of a dwelling, that the room "does not exceed 8x12, while the school numbered 17, making a tight fit when the teacher was added."

The earliest school report available is that of 1842, which, like those that follow, strongly condemns the condition of some of the buildings, the lack of maps, blackboards and other apparatus, and the poor and irregular attendance. Discipline was poor, and there are hints at rebellions in some of the temples of learning. But one school had a bell, and it is suggested that arrangements be made to have the Pocasset mill bell rung at school times. Women teachers were employed in the summer, at \$16.25 a month in 1846, while men in the winter term received \$62.50. The committee complain of inadequate compensation—\$49.91 to be divided among three for a year's service. State aid was still being received—\$448.55 in 1848, when the town appropriation was \$8,600. An evening school was established this year, 1848, and a high school in 1849. A special school for factory children was started in 1862 and in 1865 the almshouse was made the place for the detention and instruction of truants, where they remained till the union truant school was established in 1890. The annexation of Fall River, R. I., in 1862, brought in a number of additional buildings.

Some notice of the location of the early schoolhouses in the better populated sections may be of interest. A map of 1812 shows three houses, one in Tiverton at the corner of South Main and Hamlet, one at the corner of North Main and Prospect, and one at Steep Brook. The "green school-house" on the north side of Franklin, between Winter and Rock, was erected in 1832. The Anawan street school was established two years later in the remodelled Congregational Church. This was burned in the fire of 1843, and the present structure, then regarded as a model building, erected. In speaking of the grammar room in this building in 1848, the committee says it is "prob-

ably the most perfect school room in Bristol County, and your committee doubt if it has many superiors in our State." The High street school was opened in 1845, in a small building on Franklin street, till the old High street, or Lincoln school, was completed soon after. This had double desks, changed to single in 1855. The June street school was built in 1849, and the Maple street in 1855 and dedicated December 27 of that year. The Columbia street building had been occupied in 1852. Other schools were on Canal and Bedford streets and Town avenue.

A most important forward step was taken in 1865, when a school superintendent was elected in accordance with an ordinance passed March 20. Rev. Daniel W. Stevens, a graduate of Harvard College, was the first superintendent and began his duties at the opening of the fall term, when the members of the committee, who had this year been increased from six to nine, ceased to receive



The Davenport School

compensation, in accordance with the State law. The meetings of the board were held in the Aldermanic chamber, but soon after removed to offices fitted up in the old engine house on Rock and Franklin streets. Mr. Stevens devoted himself to the improvement of the attendance, then about the lowest in the State in proportion to the number of legal pupils, and also to the installation of maps, blackboards and other needed articles in the schools. The first truant officer was appointed in 1866, and modern furniture placed in some buildings the following year. Mr. Stevens was succeeded in 1866 by Malcolm W. Tewksbury, and in 1872 by William Connell, who remained in office till his death, June 23, 1894.

The rapid growth of the city in the years

following the Civil War necessitated the construction of numerous new schoolhouses to accommodate the increased numbers of pupils. The Morgan school, the first of the large buildings, was erected and occupied at the commencement of the summer term, in 1868, the Bedford street school (the Brown), the Robeson, on Columbia street, and the Borden, on Brownell street, were begun in 1870, the Davis, Slade and Davenport, followed in 1873-76, and the Tucker street, Border City, Pleasant street, Danforth street and Lindsey street buildings prior to 1880. The Broadway building was occupied in 1881 and the Linden and Cambridge street houses erected. The Ferry Lane was enlarged in 1882, and the halls in the Border City, Slade and Davis divided into school rooms. The Mount Hope avenue, Covell street and Brownell followed in 1884.

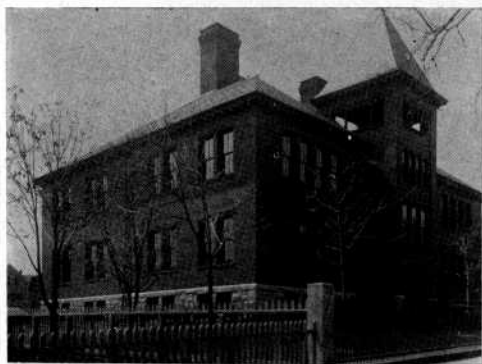
Meantime other matters of interest were taking place. The high school had been established by a town meeting vote in April, 1849, when \$1,500 was appropriated for its support, and it opened May 10 of that year in the private school building of George B. Stone, the first principal, on the south side of Franklin street, a little east of Oak. Schools of this kind were of comparatively recent growth, and prior to 1837, when Baltimore established one, there had been none in the United States outside of Massachusetts. New York acted in the same year as Fall River, but though girls were instructed here from the first, Boston had no high school for them till 1853 and New York none till 1870. The school was removed to the present Foster Hooper building, erected for it, in 1852, occupying at first only the upper floor. The lower room was added in 1868, when the teaching of French was begun and a three years' English course inaugurated. Admission was then solely by examination. The building was later enlarged, and for a number of years the first year classes were held in the Davenport building.

The problem of housing the high school pupils had grown serious, when in 1882 Mrs. Mary B. Young offered to build the present B. M. C. Durfee high school in memory of her son. The generous proposition was accepted and the beautiful structure was begun in 1883 and dedicated June 15, 1887. The building occupies a commanding situation in the midst of large grounds and is of granite in the modern Renaissance style. It has a total length of 253 feet, with a greatest width of 90 feet, and has two towers, one an ob-

servatory, with telescope, and the other a clock tower, with chimes. It is fireproof, with numerous schoolrooms, chemical and physical laboratories, gymnasium and drill halls, a large auditorium, manual training rooms, library, offices, etc., and has an endowment of \$50,000, the gift of Mrs. Young. It was occupied in the fall of 1887.

These men have been principals of the high school: George B. Stone, 1849-55; James B. Pearson, 1855-58; Charles B. Goff, 1858-64; Albion K. Slade, 1864-74; William H. Lambert, 1874-79; W. T. Leonard, 1879-85; William H. Lambert, 1885-90; R. T. Leighton, 1890-92; Charles C. Ramsay, 1892-1902; George F. Pope, since 1902.

The fact that this city was the first to give free text books, thus making its public schools free in every sense of the word, is justly a source of considerable pride. The change was made gradually, beginning in



Plymouth Avenue School

April, 1874, following the passage by the Legislature the previous year of a permissive act. Prior to that time the law had allowed the supplying of books to children of indigent parents, but this had never worked well, as it tended to caste feeling. The change to the free book system involved an expense of \$11,000 the first year, but after that the cost fell to about \$5,000 a year. It had beneficial effects in the relief of the poor, the saving in cost, the prompt supply of books when needed, and an increased attendance. The State law requiring free books did not go into effect till August, 1884.

A beginning of a training school was made in the High street building in 1868, and soon after a normal course was established in the high school, though this consisted of only one year's review of English branches.

In February, 1881, a training school was

formally established in the Robeson building, removed in 1891 to the Osborn building on its completion. Miss Emily Richards was the first principal and Miss Ariadne J. Borden the second. Miss Elizabeth S. Hammett was principal from 1891 to 1896, when she was succeeded by Miss Anna W. Braley.

In recent years a large number of attractive schoolhouses, equipped with the best of modern conveniences, have been erected to care for the growing school population. Among these have been the Coughlin and William Connell buildings, opened in 1895; the James M. Aldrich and George B. Stone, in 1897; the Fowler, in 1898; the Brayton avenue, in 1899, and the Samuel Longfellow and Highland, in 1901. The Samuel Watson school, on Eastern avenue, is completed and ready for occupancy, and a new building is rising on the site of the High street or Lincoln, school, burned in December, 1905.

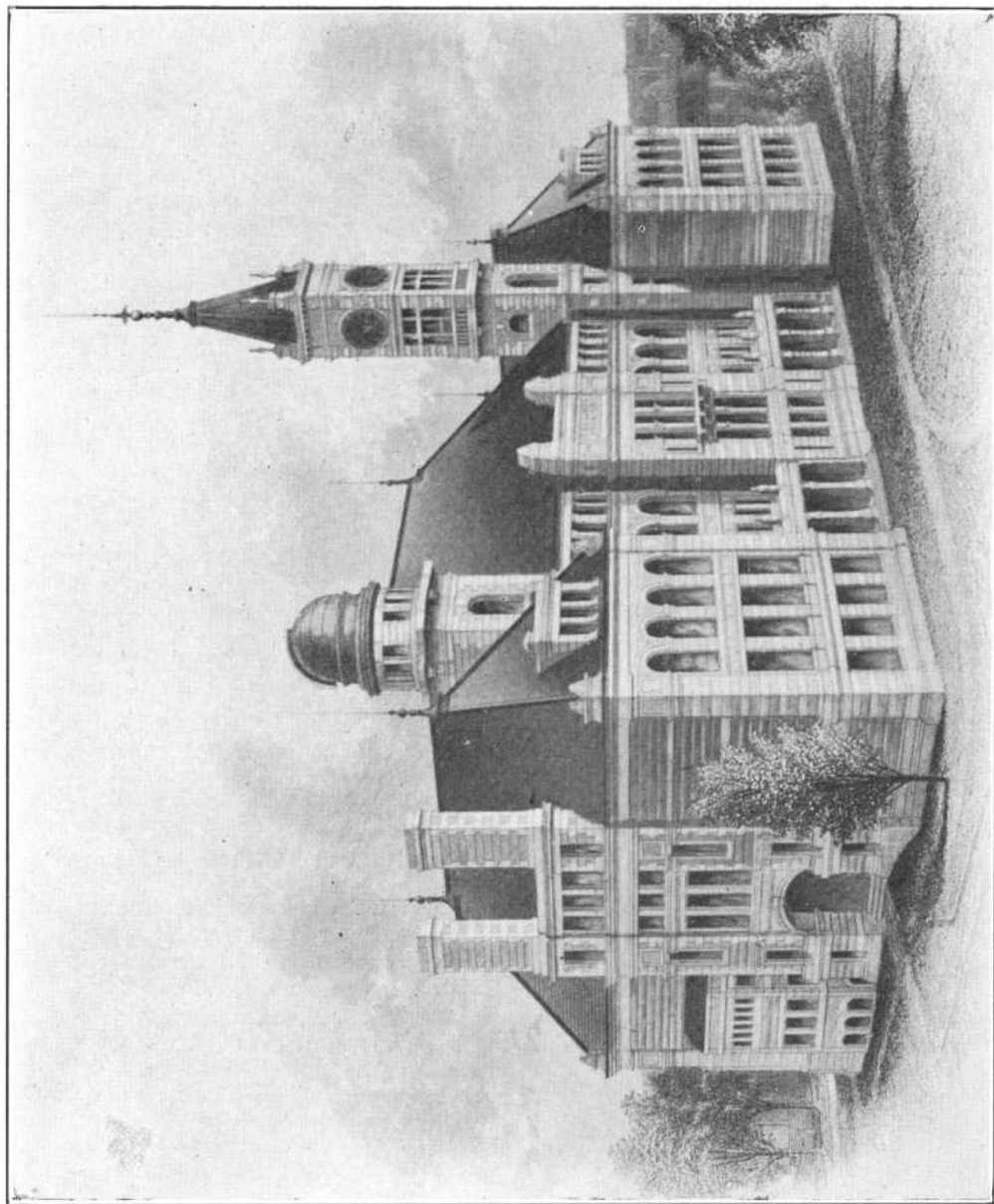
Noteworthy changes in recent years have included the inauguration of the diploma system in the grammar schools in 1889, the same year as the establishment of the Davis prize medals, from a fund contributed by Hon. R. T. Davis, the appointment of special instructors in music and drawing in 1887, and the introduction of sewing in 1896.

William Connell, who had been the faithful superintendent for 22 years, was succeeded on his death, in 1894, by William C. Bates. The latter resigned in 1905 to become superintendent of the Cambridge schools, and Everett B. Durfee, vice principal of the high school, was elected his successor.

BRADFORD DURFEE TEXTILE SCHOOL.

Manual training as a part of the educational system of Fall River dates from the opening of the B. M. C. Durfee high school building in 1887. The course in manual training, however, was necessarily limited in its scope to instruction in mechanical drawing and the use of wood and iron working machinery. This introduction of manual training into the curriculum of the high school marked the beginning of the application of the utilitarian idea to the work of the public schools and served to emphasize the possibilities of its extension into the field of cotton manufacturing.

Although the value of the school of experience in the acquisition of the best methods for converting cotton into cloth was recognized, the value of the theoretical when combined with the practical was urged by



The B. M. C. Durfee High School

leading citizens as a reason why this city, the leading textile centre of the country, should have a school devoted entirely to instruction in the theory, art and practice of the operation of textile machinery.

The outgrowth of that conviction was the organization of a corporation under a statute approved June 5, 1895, by men of civic spirit and progressive ideas, "for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a textile school for instruction in the theory and practical art of textile and kindred branches of industry, with authority to take by gift or purchase and hold personal or real estate to the amount of \$300,000," according to the terms of the law.

A site bought for the school was abandoned for one offered by a public spirited lady, Miss Sarah S. Brayton, as a memorial to a kinsman, Bradford Durfee, who had distinguished himself in the early history of the municipality as a citizen and a manufacturer. In the preparation of plans for a building thought was given to light, ventilation, proportion, strength and serviceability. The architectural design embodied a modification of the colonial style by the use of Fall River granite relieved by gray mottled pressed brick. The conception of the architect afterwards found expression in a magnificent creation of the art of the builder. It is massive and symmetrical, and thoroughly adapted for the purpose for which it was planned. This, as defined in the catalogue for 1905, is "to meet the needs of two distinct classes of students: one class being those who wish a preliminary training in the art of manufacturing before entering upon the practical work in the mill; the other being those already at work in the mill, who feel the necessity for a training in the principles of the art and a greater knowledge of all the departments of their chosen vocation." To make possible the meeting of the need, a mechanical equipment was installed of a character that ensured the very best results from the consideration of modern ideas. Constant development was the aim sought in the furnishing of the work and class rooms and the laboratories, and the best product of mechanical ingenuity found a place within the magnificent edifice, much of it presented by makers of machinery and other material.

When the school was opened to students March 7, 1904, the event marked what it is thought will prove to be another epoch in the industrial history of Fall River. Confi-

dence, skill and enterprise are the qualities entering into the large measure of success attained by the city since the first efforts here in the fabrication of cotton. Growth has ever been the characteristic of the industry, else the proud pre-eminence attained by Fall River would not have been possible. Education between factory walls has accomplished wonders, but the evolutionary limit is still far in the distance.

In furtherance of the approach thereto instruction in the textile school is shaped under the supervision of Joseph W. Bailey, whose training fits him admirably for the responsibility of directing an institution which means much for this community if properly maintained and encouraged. Theory and practice are made interdependent, so that it is possible immediately by those pupils engaged at mill work to enjoy the fruits of the knowledge that is imparted by a faculty that is composed of earnest, capable men. With the realization of what is contemplated has come an awakening of interest in the school among operatives and others to whom the course of study appeals as affording a golden opportunity for striving for the betterment of their condition. In consequence, the beginning of the second year of the school has been attended by an enrolment that presages a large fulfillment of the promise of success.

The citizenship of the city is fully represented on the directorate. Faith in and concern for the industrial future of Fall River animate its members. The president of the corporation is Leontine Lincoln;; the vice-president, William Evans; the clerk, William Hopewell; the treasurer, Arthur S. Philips. Associated with them are

DIRECTORS:

William S. Greene,	Leontine Lincoln,
Thomas O'Donnell,	James Tansey,
Joseph G. Jackson,	Arthur S. Phillips,
John W. Coughlin,	William Moran,
John McCarthy,	James Whitehead,
Edward B. Jennings,	William Evans,
Arthur M. Hamilton,	William Hopewell,
John S. Brayton,	Hugo A. Dubuque,
Simeon B. Chase,	Robert T. Davis,
Edward S. Adams.	
P. Augustus Mathewson,	
John T. Coughlin, Mayor.	
Everett B. Durfee, Supt. of Schools.	
Jas. E. Cunneen, Appointed by the Governor.	
Geo. W. Wright, Appointed by the Governor.	

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

The Fall River Public Library had its origin in the Fall River Athenaeum, which, in accordance with an act of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts authorizing the creation of Library and Lyceum Corporations, was established in 1835, "by a few individuals desirous of having a library of well-selected standard and miscellaneous books always at hand for the purpose of general reading and reference."

A warrant for the first legal meeting was issued by Joseph Gooding, Justice of the Peace, March 31, 1835, and the meeting was held on the first Monday in April. The stock of the corporation was placed in shares, unlimited in number, and the price was fixed at \$5.00 each, subject to an annual assessment of \$1.00 per share. Several hundred dollars were quickly raised on the sale

pectedly into the Town Treasury and in a manner so unprecedented, caused much comment and speculation as to its proper use, and friends of the Athenaeum Library strongly urged that a portion of this amount "might with great propriety be invested in shares of the library for the benefit of deserving scholars in our public schools." At a town meeting, April 3, 1837, \$800 was appropriated and the Town Treasurer was instructed to subscribe for 160 shares in the Fall River Athenaeum, the use of the shares to be placed at the disposal of and to be represented by the school committee, which was empowered to issue certificates entitling deserving scholars to the use of the shares at its pleasure. This act of the town places Fall River among the first towns in the State to appropriate a special sum of money to make a distributing library an adjunct of the public school system.



Public Library Building

of shares, a room was fitted up in the Post Office and Custom House building on Main street, where City Hall now stands, and the institution went at once into successful operation.

The first annual report of the Board of Direction to the Stockholders, submitted in April, 1836, shows that during the year \$702.00 had been received from the sale of shares, annual assessments and fines, and that the disbursements amounted to the sum of \$646.00, that the library consisted of about 500 volumes and that the circulation had averaged about fifty volumes per week.

Although the Athenaeum was a private venture, its beneficial influences were at once strongly felt and appreciated by the citizens of the town, but its growth was seriously impeded by a lack of sufficient funds to broaden the scope of its work. Early in 1837, the Town of Fall River received from the United States Government its share of the "Surplus Revenue" amounting to \$10,102. This sum, coming so unex-

Notwithstanding this assistance the growth of the Athenaeum Library, as compared with modern standards, was slow, for on July 2, 1843, when the greater part of the town of Fall River was destroyed by fire, the number of volumes in the library was but 1,195; all of these were lost, with the exception of a few books of little value which at the time were in the hands of subscribers whose houses were not burned. The Athenaeum property was insured in the Cohannet Mutual Insurance Company to the amount of \$800, but, as the company sustained great losses on account of the fire, causing its failure, only \$544 was recovered on the policy. With this small sum of money, and the few books which were not destroyed, the directors at once began the formation of a new library, which in 1860 had reached the number of 2,362 volumes. The collection was housed in the Town Hall and later on Franklin street in the old Music Hall.

In 1860 the demands of the people for a Free Public Library had become so insistent that the stockholders of the Athenaeum Association, who were favorably disposed toward such a movement, offered to transfer to the City of Fall River the Athenaeum Library for the purpose of forming a library for the free distribution of books. The offer was accepted, and July 23, 1860, an ordinance was passed by the City Council of Fall River for the establishment of a Free Public Library, a Board of Trustees was elected and an appropriation was made for its maintenance.

The Fall River Athenaeum Association held its last meeting October 2, 1860, when it was voted—"That the Board of the Fall River Athenaeum be authorized to transfer to the City of Fall River the Library of said Athenaeum upon terms mutually satisfactory; taking care, however, properly to protect the ultimate interests and rights of existing stockholders or those who may lawfully represent them in said Athenaeum."

The agreement between the City of Fall River and the Fall River Athenaeum was as follows: "This agreement, made and concluded this Seventh Day of December, in the year of our Lord Eighteen Hundred and Sixty, by and between the Fall River Athenaeum, a body corporate in the City of Fall River, County of Bristol, and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, of the one part, and said City of Fall River on the other part, Witnesseth, That for the purpose of establishing a Public Library in the City of Fall River, and in consideration of the promises and agreements on the part of said City hereinafter contained, the said Fall River Athenaeum have agreed to transfer, assign, and set over, and do hereby transfer, assign, and set over, to said City and its successors, for the use of the Public Library of said City only, all and singular the books belonging to the Library of said Athenaeum, now contained therein, the appraised value of which is Three Thousand Dollars, and for a list of which said books reference may be had to a copy of the Catalogue thereof attested by the Directors of the Athenaeum and herewith rendered the City of Fall River. To have and to hold the same to said City and its successors, to its and their use and behoof forever, for the purpose aforesaid. And the said City of Fall River, in consideration of the agreement and transfer aforesaid, of said Athenaeum, both on its part for itself and its successors and assigns, and the above agreement and transfer are upon these express conditions, viz.: That in case said Public Library should be abandoned at any time, books to the amount of Three Thousand Dollars in value, or their equivalent, that being the appraised value of the Athenaeum Library as before stated, shall be returned by said City or its successors, to said Athenaeum, its successors or assigns; that the rights and privileges of the Public Library shall be extended to Robert McEwen and David Robertson, residents of Fall River, Rhode Island, and their legal representatives, subject to the rules and

regulations thereof, same as citizens of the City of Fall River, and that the City of Fall River will assume to pay the existing indebtedness of said Athenaeum to an amount not exceeding Sixty Dollars. In witness thereof the Directors of the Fall River Athenaeum for this purpose duly authorized, have hereunto set the name of said Athenaeum and their own names, and the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Fall River, for this purpose duly authorized by a vote of the City Council, have hereunto set the name of said City, and their own names, the day and year above written.

(Signed)

Fall River Athenaeum, by

Walter C. Durfee,	Henry Lyon,
Charles O. Shove,	Isaac B. Chace,
Foster Hooper,	Benjamin Earl,
A. S. Tripp,	Jesse Eddy,
	Directors.

City of Fall River, by

E. P. Buffinton,	P. W. Leland,
Walter Paine, 3d,	Henry Lyon,
Samuel M. Brown,	Charles J. Holmes,
Simeon Borden,	

Trustees of
City Library.

In addition to the collection from the Athenaeum there was also given by the Ocean Fire Company a valuable and well-selected little library of 214 volumes which had been collected by the members of the company for their own use.

The southwest room on the second floor in the City Hall building was fitted up and the library was opened to the public May 1, 1861, only ten years after the founding of the first free public library in the State of Massachusetts to be supported by general taxation, which was that of the City of Boston.

George A. Ballard was the first librarian, being elected December 7, 1860, and holding the position until February 14, 1864, when he resigned and was succeeded by Charles G. Remington, who served but a few months. William R. Ballard was the next librarian, his official connection beginning November 28, 1864, and ending with his death November 30, 1905, a period of forty-one years of faithful, intelligent service.

In 1872-73, while City Hall was being remodelled, the library occupied Pocasset Hall, Market Square, and from 1874 to March 19, 1886, when City Hall was destroyed by fire, it occupied the first floor of that build-

ing. After the fire it occupied successively temporary quarters in Flint's Exchange, South Main street, and the Skating Rink on Danforth street, where the library was opened for the distribution of books. For about six months in 1886 a Reading Room was maintained in Waverley Hall, Borden Block. In January, 1887, the library and reading room was once more regularly opened to the public in the large hall in the Brown Building, North Main street, where it remained thirteen years.

While occupying the quarters in City Hall the Trustees constantly felt the necessity for more improved conditions in order that the library might successfully fill all the functions of a public library, and in successive reports the matter was urged upon

Honor, the Mayor, William S. Greene, recommended that the Mayor be authorized to petition the Legislature for authority to create indebtedness outside of the debt limit, to be known as the Public Library Loan, for the purpose of purchasing land and erecting a fire-proof building for the use and convenience of the public library. On the same day this portion of the address of the Mayor was referred by an order of the City Council to the Committee on Public Instruction and the Trustees of the Public Library, who later submitted to the City Council a report recommending that authority be given to the Mayor to petition the General Court to allow the issue of bonds for this purpose.

March 22, 1895, an act was approved by the Governor authorizing the City of Fall



Old Residence of Mrs. Mary B. Young, which stood on present site of Public Library

the attention of the City Council. In their report for 1884 the Trustees particularly called attention to the imperative need of definite steps being taken in the near future to provide more appropriate and more ample accommodations for the library.

When City Hall was destroyed by fire March 19, 1886, the loss to the library was nearly 5,000 books, either burned or damaged beyond possibility of repair, and in the rented quarters occupied after the fire the necessity of a permanent fire-proof building became more urgent on account of the hazard of another possible loss from the same cause, and year after year the Trustees made urgent appeals for the construction of a library building.

The insistency of the Trustees was finally rewarded, when, in his inaugural address to the City Council, January 7, 1895, His

River to incur indebtedness to an amount not exceeding \$150,000 beyond the limit fixed by law for the purpose of erecting a Public Library Building under the power and control of the Trustees of the Public Library.

As soon as the success of the building project was assured, proposals were invited for suitable sites and many were suggested, but by reason of the generosity and public spirit of Miss Sarah S. Brayton in offering 128.75 rods of the homestead estate of the late Mrs. Mary B. Young, taxed by the city at \$75,000 and worth more than \$100,000, for the sum of \$50,000, all others were rejected, as this site was deemed most advantageous to the city, and it was accepted by a unanimous vote of the Trustees.

Plans were received from 18 competitors and, after careful consideration of all, those of Cram, Wentworth & Goodhue, of Boston,

were adopted. The first bids for construction exceeded the appropriation; all were rejected by the Trustees and new bids were called for after certain modifications were made in the plans. The lowest bid, \$133,900, was from W. L. Rutan of Boston, and the contract was awarded to him on condition that he use Fall River granite and give a satisfactory bond for the completion of his contract. These conditions he complied with. This price included the granite structure, structural marble, iron work, plastering, wood-work and painting, but did not include the ornamental marble work, decorated ceilings, heating and lighting apparatus, book-stacks, furniture, curbing and final grading.

An additional Public Library Loan amounting to \$75,000 was authorized by act of the General Court and was approved by the Governor March 4, 1896.

Work was begun in May, 1896, and the corner-stone was laid on September 30, 1896, by Mayor Greene, in the presence of the Board of Trustees, members of the City Government, and many citizens, but without any formalities.

The architects were represented in the construction of the building by their engineer, Frank W. Ferguson. The Trustees appointed as their superintendent of work Valentine Mason, whose practical ability and experience in that capacity commended him for the responsibility.

In addition to the loans before mentioned, an appropriation of \$25,000 was made in 1898, and \$2,000 in 1899 to meet any contingencies, making the total cost of the land, building, furnishing, curbing and grading \$252,000. The entire cost of the building, including heating, ventilating, and lighting apparatus, was 29 cents per cubic foot, which must be considered very reasonable for a building of such monumental character, and classic, architectural treatment.

In design, the building is Italian Renaissance, treated in a formal and simple manner. It is absolutely fireproof in construction, and so far as the exterior is concerned, is built entirely of dressed Fall River granite. The interior partitions are of brick throughout, while the floors are of concrete in the Ransom system of construction. The stairways are of marble, iron, concrete, and stone. The roof is of steel filled in with terra cotta blocks, and covered with copper over a layer of concrete. No woodwork

enters into the construction of the building beyond the doors and window frames.

The main entrance on North Main street opens into a lofty vestibule, which is finished entirely in a white Vermont marble with pale green veins. This vestibule, lighted by a central skylight, is covered by a dome, which rests on ten marble columns rising from a stylobate of pink Tennessee marble. The floor is covered with elaborate mosaic of colored marble. From this vestibule steps rise on one side to the Trustees' room, on the other to the Librarian's room, while in front they lead directly to the delivery hall, the central feature of the building, which is two stories high, and is lighted by a large skylight of rippled silver glass set in gilded bronze. The finish of the first story of the delivery hall is of pink marble, with the shafts of the pilasters around the four monumental doorways—one in the centre of each side—of purple Levanto marble. The floor of this hall is of marble mosaic.

Directly opposite the entrance from the vestibule is the reference library, a spacious room with an elaborately moulded ceiling supported on four columns of yellow Verona marble.

At the left end of the delivery hall is the delivery counter, which communicates directly with the book stack. This stack is seven stories in height, and provides for the accommodation of about 325,000 volumes. From the delivery department direct access is had to the Librarian's room in the front of the building, and the cataloguing room at the rear. This latter room communicates with the reference library and book stack. Opposite the delivery counter is the entrance to the reading room, and also the approach to the public stairway.

The reading room is a large apartment, the full depth of the building, and of the same size as the book stack—viz., about 25x75 feet. It is covered by a semi-circular vault, and its height is two full stories of the building. From this room there is access to the trustees' room in front, and to the public catalogue room in the rear, which lies between the reading room and reference library. On the second floor is a large picture gallery and rooms for special libraries.

There is a special entrance to the basement from Elm street which is, at this point, a full story below the level of the main floor. The entrance has a vaulted ceiling supported on columns of black granite. In front a staircase rises to the main floor. On the

right is the children's reading room, the ceiling of which is supported by columns of grey granite, and which communicates directly with the children's library, a large room filled with bookcases containing over 7,000 volumes of carefully selected juvenile books; this last apartment has ceilings supported by columns of red granite. On this floor is the general workroom and toilet rooms. The sub-basement contains the heating and ventilating plant and store rooms.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that the erection of such a public building received so generally the approval of the citizens. From the day of its inception until its completion there was no word of opposition worthy of note. It is indeed the people's gift to their own and succeeding generations. All the people are alike its benefactors and beneficiaries. While building, the trustees realized that a less expensive structure would have met present needs, but they were also convinced that they should build for future needs and in an architectural style that shall make the structure itself an educating power. It was opened to the public in March, 1899.

The first general catalogue was issued in 1861, the second in 1874, the third, a thoroughly classified one, displacing the others in 1882; since then seven supplementary bulletins have been issued. The work is now under way of preparing a complete card catalogue of the entire library. There are now about 75,000 volumes in the library and the daily circulation of books for home use will average about 550.

George W. Rankin, the present librarian, has been officially connected with the library since 1873; he was first engaged as clerical assistant in the preparation of the catalogue which was issued in 1874. May 16, 1874, he was elected assistant librarian and given charge of the catalogue work. In the preparation of the classified catalogue of 1882 he was entrusted with the details of the work and also prepared many of the notes and had entire charge of the final revision of the manuscript. He was elected librarian December 9, 1905. Mr. Rankin is highly esteemed by the citizens of Fall River, and the library shows the attention he has bestowed upon it. The publishers are indebted to him for the history of the library.

