

THE LIBRARY COLUMN

FREE LIBRARIES AND THEIR HISTORY.

The London Times reviews in a late number the history of free libraries. As this journal points out, such institutions are not of entirely recent date. A city library was formed in Norwich as early as 1605, and a similar one was in existence in Bristol in 1613, but these attempts proved futile. It was not till 1850 that the matter was taken up seriously. A committee appointed by Parliament in this year passed measures regulating the establishment of libraries in municipal towns and cities. Since the middle of the last century the free library has had a remarkable growth. For the first few years, indeed, only a few cities took kindly to the new libraries, but with the establishment of the first free library at Manchester, many other

a carved emblematic ornament. Ornamental akroters will adorn the apex and lower ends of the pediment. The front entrance will have moulded limestone jambs and lintel with an ornamental entablature and inscription panel over.

All windows opening into the portico will be glazed with art glass, and the remainder of the front windows with plate glass.

The roof will be slated and have a deck covered with galvanized iron and heavily moulded around the edges.

The building was designed by Fred W. Mellish, who has in his plan made use of all the best ideas in library architecture.

NOTES.

Goderich is to have the Carnegie library.

Collingwood's Carnegie library building will be begun in the Spring.

Andrew Carnegie has offered Paris, Ont., the sum of \$10,000 towards the establishment of a new free library.

The plans for the new Galt, Ont., library have been adopted, and construction work will be begun immediately.

The Booklovers' Library, of Philadelphia, has appointed C. H. Thorburn as agent for the new Ottawa branch.

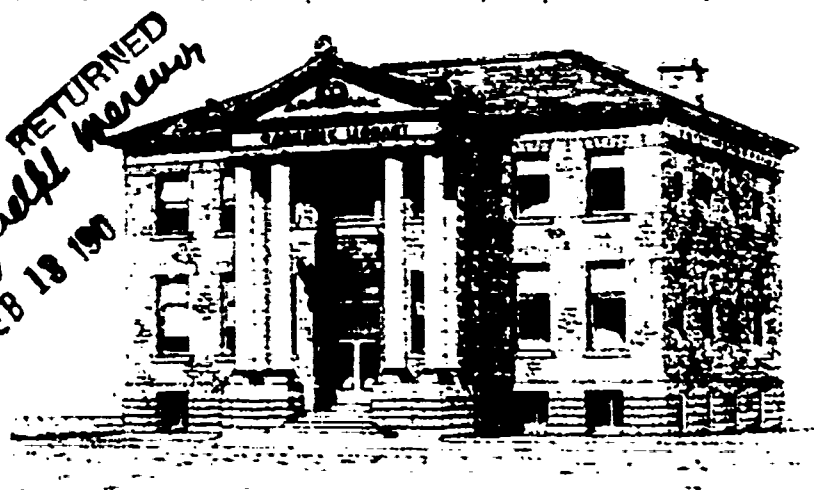
News reached Toronto on January 27 that Andrew Carnegie had offered the city \$350,000 towards the erection of a central library building and three branch buildings.

At an interview between the Hon. Richard Harcourt, Dr. James Bain, Professor Macallum and H. H. Langton, of Toronto University, the latter made a number of suggestions as to the management of the libraries in the Province. Attention was drawn to the systems prevailing in other countries. A central library in the larger towns, from which the smaller libraries could be supplied, was recommended, and the appointment of a library commission, which would control the library system of the Province. Hon. Mr. Harcourt was favorably impressed, and promised to give the matter careful consideration.

The accepted plans for the Carnegie library in Winnipeg provide for a most artistic structure. The main entrance leads directly to the delivery hall, which will have a dome some 30 feet in height. The reading room will occupy a floor space of 26 by 58 feet. The basement is divided into three large rooms, two for a museum and the third for statuary. The second floor is divided into two private reading rooms and a room for reference purposes.

TRIBUTE TO A CANADIAN BOOK.

Mrs. Robertson Watt writes this in The Victoria Times of Miss McCollum's "Flower Legends": "I would wish to give unstinted praise to the little, unpretentious volume of verse by Alma Frances McCollum. It has so many charming conceits, such dainty little lines, such tenderness of feeling for the wee beautiful things of earth, so much that is good and sweet and musical that one would wish not to hunt for the faults. So let it go at that. The poetess is a young Canadian girl with beauty of form and mind and soul, so she has all the gifts of the good fairies, and we will not remember what the bad fairy wished."



FRONT VIEW OF GALT'S PROPOSED PUBLIC LIBRARY

Through the courtesy of "The Mail Reporter"

cities, such as Sheffield and Birmingham, adopted the idea, and now they have grown apace.

Liverpool has every variety of public library, and issues books by the hundred thousand, while Manchester has a central reference library with over 120,000 volumes. Sheffield, which rejected the Act of 1850 at the first time of asking, has now considerably over 100,000 volumes in its free libraries. Leeds has over 60 municipal libraries. Bradford issues over 600,000 volumes a year. It has a dozen libraries, and the visits of readers average about 2,000,000 a year. Bristol has eight or nine libraries, which it maintains at a cost of more than £3,000.

THE CARNEGIE LIBRARY IN GALT.

The accompanying cut shows the front view of the Carnegie library to be erected this Spring in Galt. The exterior of the building consists of local field granite with limestone trimmings. In the centre of the front, as is shown in the cut, there will be a large portico, having four limestone columns and two corner pilasters with moulded bases and carved Ionic capitals, supporting the cornice and pediment.

On the frieze of the cornice will be the name of the library in raised letters, and in the centre of the pediment