

the evening. I should have very much liked to have had all the unions take up the work and arrange, as a matter not only of pleasure but of duty, to attend at the library and spend evenings there in the work I suggested. The stationary engineers held two meetings at the end of last winter, and at the last meeting, after a discussion on some books which were laid before them, a paper was read by one of their number and illustrated by the books we had there.

Q.—Have you any knowledge of the industrial schools, practical knowledge or otherwise? A.—I have not; I cannot speak from actual experience. The only school I know of is the Library school.

Q.—Do you have any school for mechanical drawing in connection with the Library? A.—We are not allowed by our charter to provide schools of any kind. The school instruction to which I have referred is that of trying to make the Library itself a great school.

By Mr. HEAKES :—

Q.—Has the number of readers materially increased since the Library was organized as a free one? A.—The number is increasing every day. We started with nothing and we have now twenty thousand readers.

Q.—Do you know about what number of those were members of the old mechanics' institute? A.—The old mechanics' institute did not comprise many more than 300.

By the CHAIRMAN :—

Q.—Has that disappeared? A.—Yes, it has gone entirely out of existence.

By Mr. WALSH :—

Q.—Do mechanics as a general rule seem to take advantage of the opportunity to study mechanical works in your library, in other words, is their reading more particularly confined to them rather than to other kinds of works? A.—That is a very difficult question to answer. So many books are given out during the day of which I have no knowledge, through my assistants, that I can only guess at the result; but from the condition of the books on the shelves, those referring to the Arts, I am satisfied they are very extensively read, because a great many are very much worn. During last year, we circulated in round numbers 5,000 volumes on the arts; those were for home reading, in addition to those used in the Library.

Q.—When you speak of the arts do you mean the schools of design for drawing, or is it practical mechanical instruction? A.—Practical mechanical instruction, books on plumbing, gas-fitting, boiler making etc.

Q.—Have you any knowledge of the state of the mechanical trades in this city? A.—No.

Q.—Do you think there is any improvement in the working classes in regard to their intelligence as a result of the establishment of the Free Library? A.—That is also a very difficult question to answer, but I think there is. I know some men who have wonderfully improved through the knowledge they have gained from the Public Library.

Q.—Do you know if any special trade has taken more interest in those works than the other trades? A.—Yes, some have done so more than others. For instance, the painters naturally take a deeper interest; I know a number of painters regularly go there for the purpose of working up designs and obtaining knowledge of the higher harmony of colors.

Q.—Then again, take the building trade. Do you know of men connected with that trade going to the library to improve themselves in any particular with respect to carrying on the building work? A.—The stone masons, I think, do so to a certain extent. They apply for books on mechanical drawing and I know some have used our books very freely. The carpenters have done so to a certain extent but not very much. We have two or three very scarce books on stair building which carpenters come regularly to consult.