

SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT.

The past year has been one of marked progress. Commencing with the month of January, a steady and continuous increase has taken place in the number of books circulated and of readers at the different reading rooms. The number of books issued in 1888 was 279,160; in 1889, 310,945, shewing an increase of 31,785, or about 11 per cent., and after deducting the issues of the new branches in the East and North-West, which were not opened until December 1888, an increase of 17,904 during the year. Owing to the amalgamation of the town of Parkdale with the city, the Board of Management found it necessary to provide for the reading wants of a large population in the Western section, and they, therefore, entered into arrangements with Mr. Alderman Bell to erect a suitable building on Dundas street, near the corner of Queen street, and lease the same to the Board for a period of years. The policy adopted by the Board of Management of having a few well-appointed Branch Libraries, instead of a large number of small Libraries scattered over the city, has been followed out in this instance, and it is believed that the new, spacious and comfortable reading room will be a centre of attraction for a very considerable area. The Parkdale Literary Society and Mechanics' Institute has generously transferred the whole of its Library and furniture to the Board of Management.

The first complete catalogue of the Reference Library was published in February, and has since been in continuous use.

In the early part of the year, it was felt that the number of supplements to the catalogue of the Central Circulating Library was becoming cumbersome; instructions were therefore given to consolidate and re-issue it in new form. This work has been performed during the summer months, and in November, copies were placed on the stands, and the old catalogues withdrawn.

During the past session of the Provincial Parliament, an amendment was made to the "Free Libraries' Act," empowering the Boards of