

It is matter of regret that too many people, both old and young, are prone to be somewhat careless in the handling of Library books. The Librarian of the Cleveland Public Library last year instituted a "Book Preservation Guild" among the children of the public schools in that city. A great public meeting, attended by thousands of children, was held; each child was given a badge, the acceptance of which bound the wearer to handle all books with care. I have too much fear of the consequences at the hands of our Board of Education, to suggest the formation of a similar Guild here, as it understood that there are almost enough Guilds and Clubs already in existence. I would respectfully suggest, however, that if it is not already the rule, the school teachers might occasionally impress on the scholars the necessity of handling *all* books with care, whether the books belong to the Library or are private property. I might also take advantage of this occasion to urge upon all users of the Library to handle the Library books with care. The observance of this rule will save them possible annoyance and expense. But while there is some ground for complaint as to careless handling, I am pleased to state that the great mass of readers take good care of the books drawn for home use. The trashy paper, and more often the poor binding of many of the books, are largely responsible for the loss to the Library in this respect. The binding of some books begins to break after the book has been used two or three times; other books, more strongly bound, are given out forty to sixty times before the binding breaks. The policy of your Book Committee has been to buy well-bound books when possible; but as the days of non-copyrighted editions for new books are now past, we are necessarily restricted in our choice of editions. In fact we must content ourselves with the authorized editions, whether they be well bound or merely cased.

As to the class of books most read—for home use, fiction, of course, maintains the first place. But the home use of the Library books is only one feature of the Library. Many hundreds of citizens consult the encyclopedias, the