

ANNUAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY W. F. BURTON, ESQ.,
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD.

"VITA HOMINIS SINE LITERIS MORS EST."

Gentlemen of the Public Library Board:

In accordance with the practice which has heretofore prevailed and which cannot but be productive of good as preserving for future use a record of the development of this institution, and the growth of public sentiment in its favor, it falls to me on the occasion of my retirement from the honorable position to which you were good enough to elect me a year ago to supplement the annual report about to be presented to you by the Librarian.

The admirable and systematic manner in which the duties of all those connected with the Library have been discharged has rendered those falling upon the Board during the year 1896 comparatively light, and while the growth of the institution has been steady and its great usefulness more appreciated by the public, there have been no unusual developments to which I could profitably refer. While endeavoring to keep abreast of the times by keeping up the standard of the works required by the few the Board has not been unmindful of the wants of the many, and from the Librarian's report it is gratifying to observe that in comparison with the early history of the Library a better class of literature has been put in circulation, and the Reference Department continues to be largely patronized, owing no doubt to the enlarged scope of the material available. A glance at the figures shows that fiction has still a great attraction for