

SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT.

Eighteen hundred and ninety has been an important year in the history of the Library, and has been the most successful. In the matter of the circulation of books, with the exception of 1885, the per centage has been the largest. This is best shown by the following comparison of the circulation for the past seven years :—

1884	179,506
1885	277,931
1886	270,095
1887	275,066
1888	279,160
1889	310,904
1890	387,480

In order to accommodate the increased number of readers applying for books, it has been found necessary to rearrange and enlarge the space in front of the receiving and delivery desks by reducing that set aside for ordinary readers. Additional shelving room had also to be provided to hold the new books so rapidly accumulating. The Library now contains 65,846 volumes,—a net increase of 8,014 over the number reported in 1889.

Two important Library events mark the year: The abolition of the Customs duty upon two copies of all books imported for the use of Free Libraries; and the visit of the Chief Librarian to England to purchase books. It will be remembered that for two or three years past the Board has been agitating unceasingly for this change in the Customs law. The Government were memorialized, and deputations from the Board waited upon the Minister of Customs to urge their views on this subject. In these efforts they were warmly supported by the City representatives in the House of Commons,—Messrs. Small, Cockburn and Denison; and ultimately this important concession to Free Libraries was embodied in the tariff of 1890. The sending of the Chief Librarian to England to purchase books was also a wise and profitable step in the