

LIBRARY.

As usual, this most important branch of the Institute has been a special object of care with the Board. During the past month all the outstanding volumes have been called in and inspected, and of the large number issued during the past fifteen months,—over 33,000,—but a very small proportion have been found to be lost or not restored. This is a favorable result when compared with the experience of other Institutes. The admirable system, probably as perfect as could be devised, under which the issuing and return of books is managed, in a great measure accounts for this, but it also speaks well for the free access to the shelves of the library which is afforded to the members, showing that the privilege is enjoyed without being abused.

Five hundred and twenty-six volumes were added during the past term. With respect to the choice of works, so favorable are the circumstances and temper of the times to the diffusion of knowledge, and so abundant are now the productions of the press, that books written in our own language, upon all subjects whatever, whether of general literature, science, taste or art, are constantly being published and quickly circulated throughout the whole empire.

From amongst these the most deliberate and mature consideration of the Board has been exercised in making a selection, and none have been omitted which were esteemed as likely to add to the standard excellence of the collection. As for novels, as few as possible appear on our lists, and such as were absolutely necessary to maintain this department, they will be found to be of the best character, and generally by the best English authors, to the exclusion of French and German romance. If we take the most superficial survey of circulating libraries, we may observe that the ingenuity of our own authors is sufficiently fertile in these flimsy and short-lived publications, and yet Germany and France contribute their aid to satisfy the craving appetite of the British public with such success, that some of their productions are as popular as our own. Of this latter class of fiction,—filled, as it is, with licentious descriptions, improbable incidents, false sentiments, and such sophistical arguments as serve to justify the most improper actions, excite a romantic sensibility, pervert the judgment of the young and inexperienced, influence the passions and corrupt