

Lawrence Free Public Library

LILLIAN J. CONSTANT, LIBRARIAN

Lawrence, Kansas

To the Board of Directors of the Lawrence Free Public Library:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Report - for 1933

Librarian's are inclined to use as a measuring stick the circulation of books. I know this is hardly fair for there are many other forms of service that do not come under the usual measuring methods as we cannot keep satisfactory records of the number of persons using the reading and reference rooms, or of the questions asked that require research to answer.

We do know about the books that have been issued and we do depend upon the record of this service to inform us as to the amount of work done.

It has been estimated by library experts that the model library should circulate 20,000 books per assistant in a year. I expect this average will be pushed up since the busy days of the great depression for our average was 45,500 last year. And our assistants with the help of the apprentices for a few hours each week not only circulated this number but shelved the incoming books. Our total circulation has soared over 1932, it was 136,524. 76% of this is fiction. Any number of copies of the new novels have been issued as many as 77 times in a year. And if we had 100 copies of Anthony Adverse and Little Women they would all be out. Or 500 copies of good Western thrillers or any number of murder stories.

Perhaps you are thinking a little of that other 24% and would like to know how non-fiction is read.

Our seven duplicate magazines coming monthly were issued 1896 times, just four more than last year.

898 works on philosophy were read. March was the best month for this reading with a slump in May. Life Begins at Forty was the popular book in this class.

Now for religion. 734 were circulated. Books by E. Stanley Jones were called for more than any other author. And our religious patrons read both summer and winter.

Sociology comes next on the shelf and has a total of 1228 books issued. September was the light month with March the heavy. Students are largely responsible for the popularity of these books.

Then there is the language group, grammar in particular, and I'm afraid we are not very particular. Only 63 books were issued all year.

Science is classed next. Like religion it is a year round favorite. 730 volumes were called for, 4 less than religion. So you

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see how these two walk hand in hand. Children like science. They like to know about the animals and birds, fish and reptiles, trees and flowers.

Now for the useful arts. Perhaps the great depression has helped. For Cook books, How to Make Things, Farm Mechanics, Airplanes, Stamp collections are all to be found here. Business was good in December. Getting ready for Christmas perhaps. Anyway 1579 books were desired from this collection.

And yet there was a greater interest in the Fine Arts, and surprising that would be if books of recreation were not there. 1640 books were asked for. So do not think that the great army of the unemployed are going highbrow. Not so, they are looking for amusement, seeking books for parties, bridge, chess, checkers, etc.

Cheer up, perhaps there are some serious minded readers after all. Here is your literature section. Popular fiction is not included here. Books of poetry, drama, the essay, classic literature in general top the list with 4418 volumes carried home. January was the peak month. Why January? New Year's resolutions? May be, more likely quiz time is approaching.

History is not particularly popular. Did you think it would be? Only 1248 books were carried away and most of those during school months.

One man asked recently for the Beginnings of Morals by Breasted. We were a little uncertain about the title but found it in the catalog, only it read, "The Dawn of Conscience".

Biography follows history but makes a better record. Lives of great men all remind us etc. 2322 of these lives were read by admirers of the great achievers. Interest, too, is spread over the great wide world as the following show: Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens, Always a Grand Duke, Princess Marie, Hitler's, "My Battle", and the Roosevelt Revolution.

Now for our books of travel. The globe trotters and the stay at homes read them. 1505 were borrowed. The traveller will read them because he is going to travel and he will read them again after he returns to remind him of what he has seen. And we who remain at home read them because we cannot go. Just now favorite points of interest are Russia and Mexico.

Since August 1, 1933 we have registered 6584 borrowers. 1543 enrolling in the Juvenile Department. Of this total 2321 were enrolled during 1933. You can see that we have as card holders about 55% of our population.

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Our library is open 63 hours a week for lending and 66 hours for reading. The service is free to all residents of Lawrence, and to non-resident students attending the city schools, the University of Kansas or Haskell Institute. Country patrons are charged \$1.00 a year for privileges. We have sold 50 cards for a year or part of a year. 302 out of town students were given free service for the school year.

We have added during the year to our book collection 1378 volumes. By purchase 1136, by gift 188 and by binding periodicals 54. We have withdrawn 440. At the beginning of 1934 we have an active book collection of 26212 volumes. 4722 are in the reference department and 5116 in the children's room.

We have been fortunate in having a good group of apprentices who with our reliable staff, have carried cheerfully and efficiently the heavy work of the year.

We all appreciate the loyal support of our board of directors and we are looking forward to another year of enjoyable cooperation.