



## Gratia A. Countryman and Family Papers.

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Library has been offering weekly  
free lectures to interest people in  
better subjects, and gives Story Hours  
for the children to interest them in  
legends, fables &c.

## Use & Abuse of Pub Libs.

"The old order changeth, giving place ~~to~~ to the new and good judges himself in many ways."

Citizenship has a new meaning these days, responsibility ~~toward~~ <sup>for</sup> the Public Welfare has a new interpretation, ~~Social~~ <sup>Civic</sup> righteousness and Social Conscience are new terms.

With the Changing order of Civic and Social ~~conditions~~ ideals and Conditions, comes the Change in all Public institutions which ~~the~~ <sup>are</sup> people.







Even the law courts are not the  
same institutions as they were  
under the old order. The juvenile  
delinquent is put in a detention home  
and not with hardened offenders, while  
awaiting his trial, he is ~~nowhere~~  
not sent at once to a penal  
institution, but is put on probation, and  
given a chance to clear his record.  
And now there are in eleven states  
laws allowing the courts to put  
adults on the same probation,  
giving them a chance to escape the  
stigma of jail by making good  
through a period of probation.  
So we cannot watch the changing  
order in the relation of Employer  
to employed, in the methods of  
philanthropy, in social settlements.  
It is the awakened and quickened  
sense of brotherhood on the  
part of both public & private organizations.  
The public institutions are bent  
upon making first of all good citizens.



The ~~of~~ whole can be no better  
than the sum <sup>all</sup> of its parts; the  
whole cannot be raised till each  
part, each man and woman is bettered  
or given every chance to become better.

Every public institution is therefore  
organized for and should be worked  
along lines <sup>leading toward the making</sup> ~~for the bettering~~ of good  
citizenship.

Among these institutions the public  
library must be counted as having  
an unusual opportunity ~~for the making~~  
in the cause of good citizenship.

It is an educational institution and  
should be administered in such a  
way as to make the books of the  
greatest educational value.

It is a great social institution and  
must know how to use books for  
the enrichment and enlargement of  
the life of its community.

~~It is a great~~ It must be counted also



their days with the great moral  
agencies, for the modern library  
puts itself into sympathetic relationship  
with every walk in life as a  
stimulating and inspiring influence.

How to bring about the best use  
of the library, how to make it a  
~~source of pleasure and recreation~~  
~~to such as need it~~ and a source  
of ~~the~~ varied needs of a  
great community is the constant  
study of those who control our Public  
Libraries. ~~It~~ It would not justify  
what it costs, if it did not use  
every facility to reach all classes.

Let us analyze somewhat the  
use of our <sup>own</sup> library, beginning with  
the highest class and working downwards.  
I mean beginning with the students  
who are doing scholarly work. For  
them the library is a great laboratory  
absolutely necessary to them. The ~~best~~  
of the library is bought for their use



The ~~Classics~~ divisions of history, literature, science and biography contain the rare, the expensive the standard, and the latest book for their benefit, and every day finds the students reading room filled to overflowing with searchers after knowledge. The University students crowd our rooms, so also do the High School and private school students, tracking down that bit of information ~~before~~ which must be presented before an authoritative professor.

The Club woman is also in evidence in great numbers, wanting the most obscure part of 14<sup>th</sup> Century Italian literature, or some other difficult problem required of her by an exacting Program Committee. Men or women writing books ~~for~~ occasionally live at the library for a few months while they chase down their authorities.

The library never needs to offer inducements to the student, they always find the library.



Then there is the occasional seeker  
after information, who cannot be called  
a student, but who wants to settle some  
disputed points, wants to know ~~what~~ the  
population of Shanghai, or the American  
Consul at Jerusalem. ~~wants the date~~  
~~for this and that~~ Perhaps is working on  
an invention, and wants to look through  
the whole file of Patents. ~~one woman~~  
~~cutly wanted to find a short story she had~~  
~~read ten years ago, didn't know author~~  
~~her title, not what it was about nor in which~~  
~~one~~ or is working out a puzzle to win  
a prize and goes through every dictionary  
to find out how many words can be  
made out of "Metropolitan".

Then there are the debating clubs  
working strenuously to decide whether or not  
a Senator shall be elected by the people  
or whether the U. S. should keep the Philippines, or  
whether men have better brains than women.  
The library tries to give them impartial  
evidence on both sides.



Here there is the Artist. The  
presence of a successful Art School  
in the library building makes the  
art student a familiar figure.  
This library has provided for his  
wants as few libraries in the country  
have done. Our art library and  
equipment for using art literature  
stands third in the U.S., surpassed  
only by New York & Boston.  
Not only Art Students use this room,  
but architects, wood carvers, stained  
glass designers and all the crafts  
come here to find material. The  
Club woman who has an art topic,  
and the newly married couple who  
are going to build a bungalow,  
and the photographer, and even <sup>painter</sup> ~~decorator~~  
the lady going to masked ball in  
Dutch costume and the collector of  
old prints, find what they want in the  
Art Department.

It is to be hoped that in due time  
there will be a music department  
just as fully equipped with music scores



pianola rolls to circulate, and a full and complete library of music history &c.

Besides the ~~Student~~ ~~Various~~ ~~Students~~ ~~or occasional~~ ~~other~~ ~~serious~~ ~~scholarly~~ ~~work done~~ use of the library which keeps attendants busy, busy at every point, there are the people who

Besides the serious scholarly work done in the building, there is of course much done outside through circulating volumes which we cannot follow, except as we watch the ~~days~~ ~~calls~~ for this or that class of books.

More and more workmen of every class are coming for books on every kind of topic. wireless telegraphy gas engines, pattern-making, automobiles, yacht building, sawing, chemical technology <sup>and ironwork</sup> and the use of the library ~~to~~ ~~now~~ must necessarily be multiplying the efficiency of these men who are studying up on their particular trades. The library has purchased a great deal of material on



all such him, and will try to  
keep up with this very gratifying demand.

Then what shall we say of the  
foreigners. Perhaps it might not seem  
worth while to search out these  
stronger, with our literary treasures.  
but we cannot forget that we are  
~~helping to~~ <sup>good</sup> helping to make <sup>good</sup> citizens,  
~~and that these foreigners will make~~  
~~some of our best~~ & if American is  
the melting pot as Zangwill calls it,  
the Crucible into which all nations are  
poured and out of which is yet to  
come the real American; then we  
must put in our best efforts with the  
foreigners. We have always had a  
large Swedish and Norwegian library  
and a considerable number of German  
and French books, - also Spanish and  
Italian. We have purchased a few  
~~Yiddish~~ & Hebrew books at the request of  
the Jews, and a few Russian. During  
the past year there have been requests from  
Bohemians, Lithuanians, Syrians and  
Modern Greeks, some volumes in



Bohemians and Syrians have been purchasing. It is a great thing that these foreigners will come to us at all that they even think to knock at our doors. It shows how they are willing to assimilate our American institutions and profit by their advantages.

But we have touched only the outside of this foreign problem — the lonely newcomer who comes through the library ~~and~~ read the books of his own language and be tided over that difficult period of amalgamation ~~among us with us~~. We have a special duty to him <sup>through the very</sup> fact that we open our ~~doors so~~ <sup>our</sup> American doors so open for him to enter. We should make a good loyal American citizen out of him and his children.

If you do not know what use the children make of us, you should visit the children's room on a Story Hour afternoon. They fairly swarm, one might almost call them a mob, except that they are so orderly and well behaved. The children's use



of books is perhaps the most satisfactory use that is made of the library.

If one can open the eyes of a child to the glory of the setting sun, to the miracle in a springing blade of grass ~~or the~~ as he reads in his nature book, or can give his invention genius a lift through the numerous ~~books~~ books on the subject, one has done a great thing. Or if his story books makes him feel the bravery of the engineer who faces death to save his train, ~~or the honor~~ of the football boy or pride in the honor of the boy who does not flinch in the face of temptation, or if the girl learns the ideals of life, the courtesy and good breeding which ~~many of the best story books~~ teach, the use of the library has been a great thing for them.

About 20% of the last year's circulation



was to children, partly through  
the schools, partly through social  
settlements like Unity House and  
partly from the library directly.

The teacher is the natural distributor  
of books, because she knows the child  
intellectual capacity, so the library  
has prepared about 175 travelling  
libraries of 35 volumes each properly  
graded ~~for the~~ to be loaned directly  
to a school room. These books are  
not specially for school use, but to  
inspire a taste for good reading, so  
that the child may form the  
library habit before he leaves school.

It is surprising to most people  
who have not looked into the  
matter to learn how easy it is  
for children to get corrupt literature.  
Not a news stand in this town that  
doesn't sell the Old Sluts Weekly  
and Nick Carter, and other periodicals  
which teach all the methods of crime.



Mr Rice & the probation officers  
state that  $\frac{2}{3}$  of juvenile crime  
comes from this yellow juvenile  
literature and the immoral moving  
pictures. Children are imitation,  
if they see a moving picture of  
a burglar climbing a porch & stealthily  
entering a house, it is an incentive  
for them to try it also. If the detection  
story explains just how the shoplifter  
by means of a shoplifter's cloak can  
successfully purloin articles, and how  
he can successfully evade the police,  
then that story has been a textbook  
of vice. It makes one ache to  
realize the pitfalls spread for the  
feet of boys and girls and much of  
the danger lies in the printed  
page. If there was no other  
use made of the library than to  
furnish these children with wholesome  
stories of knights and ladies, of  
rollicking cleanhearted boys & girls  
of sports and adventure, it would  
have paid for its cost.



But there are other uses.  
- We may pass from the more  
plainly ~~simple~~ educational side  
of the library, to the recreation  
side. Pleasure seekers come also  
in great numbers, and there are  
few of us who do not know the  
delight of settling down for a long  
evening with a good novel. The  
tired man after a stretch of  
fractious business duties, cannot rest  
his mind better. The woman  
of leisure people her spare hours  
with the delightful companions who  
live between the covers of her books.  
Shall we condemn the large  
percentage of novel reading?  
Let me quote.



There are still others who seek pleasure of a different kind from the library ~~reading~~. Homeless men and women, unemployed men who come to the newspaper reading room, and take advantage of its warmth and light and comfortable chairs. Sometimes they spend day after day, reading the daily papers between naps, or getting interested in ~~some~~ a magazine article. We call them our library boarders. When Mayor Jones closed the Sunday Saloon a few years ago, the attendance both at the Central building and the branch libraries nearly doubled on Sunday afternoons, and at present the full seating capacity of our reading rooms is entirely used. A few weeks ago the Seven Corners Branch reported an attendance of 460 for the Sunday attendance - mostly men.

What better place could these men find for their unemployed time.

Few of us know the number of men who live in lodging houses, and come and go



on the moving surface of city life. Few of us know the problem, or how it would seem, ~~when we~~<sup>to</sup> leave a bunk bed in the morning and turn out for a cheap restaurant breakfast, and have no place after that to go, not even a chair to sit in. That they should go to the Welcoming Saloon is the most natural thing in the world. If I were in their place I should certainly go to such an attraction warm comfortable place as the Saloon looks to be. But I rejoice that the library attracts so many, and furnishes to them at least a modicum of mental stimulus, while it gives them temporary physical comfort.

But now having mentioned the various uses of the library to the scholar and artist, the child and the foreigner, the novel reader and library looper, we have



Not touched upon the abuses,

I do not care to say much about them. There could scarcely be so much freedom, and so many privileges without some abuses arising.

Some people are going to take advantage of the open shelves and unguarded reading rooms to steal books and magazines.

Some law-minded people blame our expensive art books only to mark ~~the~~ disgracefully the beautiful nude pictures. And some artists remove with dull instruments the designs they want leaving a mangled torn book for the next patron.

It is curious that the Sunday School Times has disappeared week after week about Friday & returned the following week. One would not expect a S.S. teacher to be stealing this material. The magazines most frequently stolen or cut are



educational and missionary magazines

The library assistant has come to know that it is not the poorly dressed and suspicious looking people from whom the library will suffer harm, it is the people who use educational, missionary and religious literature. It is the club woman who takes into her bag the book which does not circulate. It is the professional man upon whose shelves we have frequently found books long lost to us.

It is the most respectable people in the community who dictate a small fine and evade paying it if possible. I will remember a minister's wife who refused for weeks to pay a small fine and finally offered us a 100.00 check for it, thinking that we would not be able to cash it.

A telephone assistant who is



proposed to renew books over  
the phone, or see if a book is in  
or something similar, is often  
asked to look up matters that would  
take a half day, one woman recently  
hunting for a poem, asked if the  
volume was in, this was looked up  
and she was told that it was and  
would be kept if she wanted it.  
Then she wanted to know &c &c

Some people may think yet as  
an abuse that 50% of the home  
circulation is fiction; it is true  
that the quality of ~~fiction~~ reading  
might be greatly improved, and that  
the library does give every opportunity  
for light and almost useless reading.  
It is for this reason that the



It may be an abuse that some children read a book a day. I think it is, it is certainly ruinous to their memories, and must clog their mental apparatus. It is an abuse, but it is by the exceptional child.

Indeed all abuses are exceptional, ~~they are~~ ~~do not represent~~ ~~the average~~, and occasional. They may irritate and annoy, but they are like the thorns on a rose troublesome, but not to be minded.

So here I outlined only the uses & abuses of the library - the great modern institution which gives every man woman and child a chance for an education.