NEW PUBLIC LIBRARY FORMALLY DEDICATED

President, Governor, Mayor and John Bigelow Speak to the Assembled Guests.

TAFT WAKES ENTHUSIASM

He Reviews "a Work of National Importance" and Felicitates Authorities—Crowds Miss Seeing Him.

The comparatively small group of five hundred or six hundred persons who heard President Taft, Governor Dix, Mayor Gaynor, John Bigelow and others dedicate by speeches yesterday the city's new Public Library might have graced any college commencement. The bald heads were there, beside hats of brilliant plumage, and the fans waved listlessly, just as they always do when the orator of the graduating class is booming the universe.

But it wasn't so hot in that marble crypt behind the armored front doors as it usually is on the campus, though the voice of the speaker carried no further, and there was age on the platform and the dignity of vast authority. Indeed, these two descended the stairs from the trustees' room arm in arm in the persons of William H. Taft and John Bigelow, one the President of the United States and the other the president of the New York Public Library and the oldest man in public life. The hearts of the throng below caught fire at the sight, and it applauded them roundly.

The exercises of the dedication really began when the two presidents, or, rather, the procession of which they formed the most distinguished detail, appeared. Before then the chosen few of the city's millions invited to view the spectacle had been busy filling the flat semicircle of seats facing the temporary platform in the main vestibule. Outside a thin crowd balanced itself on the curb across Fifth avenue, watching the huge, lazy flags flanking the forbidden entrance, hoping patiently for a glimpse of some great man read about so often but rarely seen.

They were disappointed in President Taft, whose automobile swept up to the 42d street entrance of the great marble building and disgorged the Chief Executive unseen. At the same time, on the other side of the building, in 40th street, three cars, surrounded by a police escort, were giving up Major Butt, the President's military aid, Mr. Hilles, his secretary, and a number of Secret Service men, to the accompaniment of resounding cheers. The ruse had worked admirably.

Governor Dix, however, gave the populace a treat by marking his gasolene chariot with the state flag, so there would be no mistake. And Mayor Gaynor, too, was seen.

The President repaired to the trustees' room on the second floor, as did the other dignitaries as soon as they arrived. Shortly after 2 o'clock the band in the rotunda burst into a deafening rendition of "The Star-Spangled Banner," which reverberated down the vast empty corridors, and everybody arose to greet the double file of men timidly descending the stairs to the left of the vestibule.

Dr. Billings Leads the Way.

Dr. John S. Billings, the librarian, and his assistant, Edward H. Anderson, led the way, followed by Governor Dix, with George L. Rives, trustee of the library; Mayor Gaynor and Morgan J. O'Brien, Archbishop Farley and Bishop Greer, and finally President Taft and Mr. Bigelow. Andrew Carnegie was there, too. They made their way to the platform, which faced the big front doors, where they sat in a double row. In the front row from right to left were Dr. Billings, Thomas Hastings, of Carrère & Hastings, architects of the building; George L. Rives, Archbishop Farley, Bishop Greer, Governor Dix, John Bigelow, President Taft, John L. Cadwalader, with whom the President dined last evening; Mayor Gaynor and Park Commissioner Stover.

President Taft and John Bigelow declared the proceedings a moment with an argument as to who should seat himself first, but the President finally yielded, and Bishop Greer offered prayer.

Mr. Bigelow, who presided, introduced as the first speaker Mr. Rives, who reviewed in his address the history of the Public Library. After him Mr. Hastings, the architect, delivered the keys of the building to Park Commissioner Stover, who turned them over to Mayor Gaynor, who, in turn, handed them to Mr. Bigelow. Each one made a short speech.

Governor Dix followed with a few remarks of praise for the library, and President Taft wound up the programme of addresses by congratulating the city, and the library authorities particularly, upon the splendid system of book circulation, which he considered unequalled anywhere. Archbishop Farley pronounced the benediction.

The President's voice was the only one which could be heard by the remotest member of the audience. His words roused genuine enthusiasm. He said:

This day crowns a work of national importance. The dedication of this beautiful structure for the spread of knowledge among the people marks not only the consummation of a noteworthy plan for bringing within the grasp of the humblest and poorest citizen the opportunity for acquiring information on every subject of every kind, but it furnishes a model and example for other cities which have been struggling with the same problem and points for them the true way.

The accumulation of books, however valuable, however rare, however great in number, in a single library, without facilities for their consultation, examination and distribution, is like the deposits of great veins of valuable minerals deposited in the earth, known to be there, but without the mines and the transportation needed to make the materials available for the use of man.

It is not in the treasures of the various collections that go to make up this library that its chief value consists, wonderful as these are and much as we are indebted to the Astors and James Lenox for the money, labor and pain expended in their gathering. It is not in the number of volumes or pamphlets or manuscripts that this library stands out first in the world, for I believe, considered from that standpoint, it is only sixth or seventh, the greatest collection, but it is in the facility of circulation and in the immense number of books that are distributed each year for use to the citizens and residents of New York and vicinity that this library easily takes the first rank.

The Story of the Building.

The completion of this building gives outward and substantial evidence of the perfection of the project. When the story is told of how this great organization was effected it is hardly credible. The Astor Library, founded in 1849 and begun and enriched by the generosity of three generations of the Astor family, was only a library of reference consisting of rare historical books, pamphlets and manuscripts. The Lenox Library, made possible through the generosity and infinite pains and labor and love of James Lenox, gave to this foundation a precious biblical collection and a wonderful library of American history. The Tilden foundation brought sixty thousand volumes of a political library and a foundation of $2,000,000.

The generosity of these founders of [illegible] is much to be praised, so too the generosity of those who contribute to the New York Public Circulating Library and to the various circulating libraries that are now made a part of this, and so must we applaud the generosity of Mr. Andrew Carnegie, whose munificence will provide for forty branches in all parts of this great city.

But after reading the history of these various collections and circulating libraries the fact that impressed itself most upon me that stands out in the history of the whole movement, is that in the short time that book matter minds have conceived the idea of all these agencies into one, by which the possible benefit for the individual contained in each is now distributed and [illegible] with the easy and beneficial use of three New Yorkers.

Anything which affords constant reference and reading room facilities to seventeen hundred people, and which circulates through sixty branches its books, at the rate of eight million a year, accomplishes so much more in the popular dissemination of knowledge than any other library in the world, that the men who conceived the plan and who had the energy, tact, patience and knowledge with which to execute it, are those whom I would congratulate to-day.

His Profused Felicitations.

It is to the librarian and trustees of these various foundations that I would convey my profound felicitations. Everyone who has had to deal with human nature knows the difficulty of securing from those who are independent in control of any organization, however large or small, a willingness to subordinate their own importance and their own fredom by a union of that which is in their custody with similar trusts in the custody of others, even in order to render all the trusts more effective in the accomplishment of their original purposes.

To have secured the consent of all the trustees of the various foundations, to have obtained the necessary legislation authorizing the union, to have secured from the city authorities the use of this magnificent site and the appropriation of the money for this magnificent structure required genius and statesmanship and marks this day as noteworthy, not only because of the expanding usefulness to the people of this library, but also as commemorating a most remarkable success of disinterested human effort in the cause of philanthropy.

Mr. Rives's sketch of the library's history began with the evacuation of New York by the British troops after the Revolution, for in the same month, he said, John Jacob Astor left London for New York to found a fortune by fur trading and later to form the Astor Library, in 1848. He reviewed the circumstances surrounding the life of James Lenox, who founded the Lenox Library twenty-one years afterward, and he told of the vicissitudes of the Tilden Foundation. Then he took up the efforts toward a consolidation of the three libraries, which were crowned with success in 1895. He continued.

During the period which has elapsed since the Astor and Lenox libraries united with the Tilden Trust the consolidated library has by no means stood still. At the beginning of the present year the total number of volumes in the Astor and Lenox libraries available for use amounted to over 300,000, and the pamphlets to over 300,000, so that the number of pieces in the collection has nearly tripled in sixteen years.

It has also been made more available for general use by cataloguing, and the catalogues now contain nearly 3,000,000 cards. Not only has the number of books been added to and their quality well kept up, but the periodicals in which all the latest inventions and discoveries of art and science are recorded are kept for use in ever increasing numbers. The library now receives over seven thousand current periodicals. It has also recently undertaken the collection of engravings and etchings on the lines of the print collection of the British Museum.

Hastings Recalls Carrère.

"Mr. President and ladies and gentlemen," began Mr. Hastings, "in presenting Commissioner Stover the key of the New York Public Library, I desire to remind you of how closely associated with the occasion is the memory of my late partner, John Merven Carrère, whose executive and administrative abilities have so largely contributed to the architecture of this building."

Mr. Bigelow's memory went back very easily sixty years to the period of his "prime," when the Astor Library was first established.

"This was the first free library ever established in New York," said he. "To illustrate the library poverty of our city in the decade of that century which the Astor Library was destined to distinguish I may here mention an experience of my own. In the study of an article I was preparing for a magazine of the period I needed to consult a Greek authority, not strictly a classic. I could not find it in any bookstore nor in private or public collection. The only copy to be found in this city or state was in the library of Columbia College, then flourishing in Warren street, and long years before it was called to come up higher as a university to Morningside Heights."

Another bit of reminiscence forty years old concerned the Tilden foundation. Said Mr. Bigelow:

While Mr. Tilden was meditating the foundation of another public library in the city in which he had been so generously prosperous in his basket and in his store, he told me one day that he had just received the annual report of the Boston Public Library, and he found that about 90 per cent of the books taken from it during the year had been works of fiction. He asked me whether it was really worth his while to devote so much or indeed any money whatever to fostering such an abnormal appetite for imaginative literature. I said to him in substance that probably the first printed writing that ever made a lodgment in his mind was the reading, or hearing recited or sung, the melodies of Mother Goose; that it never occurred to him that there was any incongruity in

Hi diddle diddle
The cat and the fiddle
The cow jumped over the moon.

Or,

The dish that ran away with the spoon;

that he accepted every one of these statements with a faith that would have sustained him at the stake.

In Praise of Fiction.

"Nonsense," as Charles Lamb very truly said, "is children's best sense." The real luxury of a printed book consists in the degree its contents are capable of interesting us. To create a genuine taste for that luxury, therefore, every one must begin by reading what interests him, and imaginative literature is far more captivating to all people in whom a genuine taste for printed literature has not yet been formed. The ploughman, the tinker, the miner, the woodchopper, whose eyes do not readily catch the meaning of books of a high order of literary merit, when he joins his family at night wants to read what will entertain them most and fatigue him least. That is what he is more sure to find in imaginative literature than in any other kind. The appetite for better books will always grow, however, by what it most enjoys feeding on, and no one feeds long on "Mother Goose."

I am not sure that what I said had any influence upon Mr. Tilden's judgment or will, but we may congratulate ourselves that the report of the Boston Library did not eliminate its thirty-fifth clause from his will. It required a decision of our Court of Appeals by a majority of but one for that; a strange coincidence with his failure to succeed General Grant to the Presidency of the United States for the lack of just one electoral vote.

The Governor said:

I have peculiar pleasure in joining you in the dedication of this noble building, not only for what it is in itself and for what it is to be, but because I have so recently seen our great state library go up in flame and smoke. And I suspect that the officers of the State Education Department will say that it is well that I should come here in order that I may have a fresh demonstration of the vastness of a public library, and a lively sense of the money that is needed to lay even the foundations of a new one which may be measurably worthy of the State of New York.

Following the exercises the new library building was opened to the general public. President Taft and Governor Dix departed immediately and Mayor Gaynor took his leave after a brief view of the main library room.

BARD GAINS A LAP ON BACON

"Mss. Box" Was a Roman Bridge, but Dr. Owen Will Try Again.

Chepstow, England, May 23.—The search of Dr. Orville Owen, of Detroit, who has been excavating in the mud of the River Wye for manuscripts which he believes will establish that Bacon was the author of the Shakespearian plays, has been abandoned.

Recently timbers were uncovered, which raised hopes that these would prove to be the hiding place of the manuscripts, but it is now admitted that they are the foundation of an ancient Roman bridge. It is announced, however, that the excavations will be resumed elsewhere.

ANTI-JEWISH RUSSIA QUIET

Rumors of Threatened Massacres at Kiev and Other Cities Subside.

St. Petersburg, May 23.—So far as can be learned here, there are no anti-Jewish disorders in any part of Russia, and even the rumors concerning a threatened massacre at Kiev and other cities have subsided.

No late dispatches have come out of Kishinev, the capital of Bessarabia, and it is believed that if any movement against the Jews had been begun in that section word would have been received here by this time.

LYNCH SLAYER OF JUDGE

Tennessee Mob Stamps on Negro Before Hanging Him.

Gallatin, Tenn., May 23.—Three hours after "Jim" Sweat, a negro, had murdered Judge David F. Barry, jr., of the Sumner County bench, and his cook, Minnie Draper, at Judge Barry's home, near here, he was captured and lynched by an enraged mob to-day. Fearing the negro, Minnie Draper had asked to spend the night at the home of her employer. Going to the kitchen before daybreak, she was confronted by Sweat, who ran her back into the house. The double murder followed.

After he had barricaded himself in a barn and had wounded four members of the posse attempting to arrest him, the barn was entered by two officers from the rear and the negro was taken prisoner. The mob quickly took possession of him. He was stamped almost to death before being hanged.

YACHT RESCUES OYSTERMEN

J. B. Morrill's Idalia Brings Captain and Crew of Schooner Ashore.

Newport, R. I., May 23.—The sinking of the little schooner Lillie A. Wilson, from Greenport, Long Island, for Wellfleet, Mass., with oysters, was reported to-night when the schooner yacht Idalia, owned by J. B. Morrill, of New York, arrived here with Captain M. M. Raynor and his crew of two men of the sunken ship. The loss on the schooner and cargo is estimated at $30,000. The sunken schooner is a menace to navigation.

PARIS TAXI STRIKERS VIOLENT.

Paris, May 23.—Parisians and visitors to the French capital are being greatly embarrassed by the strike of twenty-two hundred taxicab chauffeurs, which went into effect to-day. The strikers this afternoon attacked a few of the non-union chauffeurs at various points in the city, cut the tires of the machines and threatened the passengers. In several instances the police were called to disperse the strikers.

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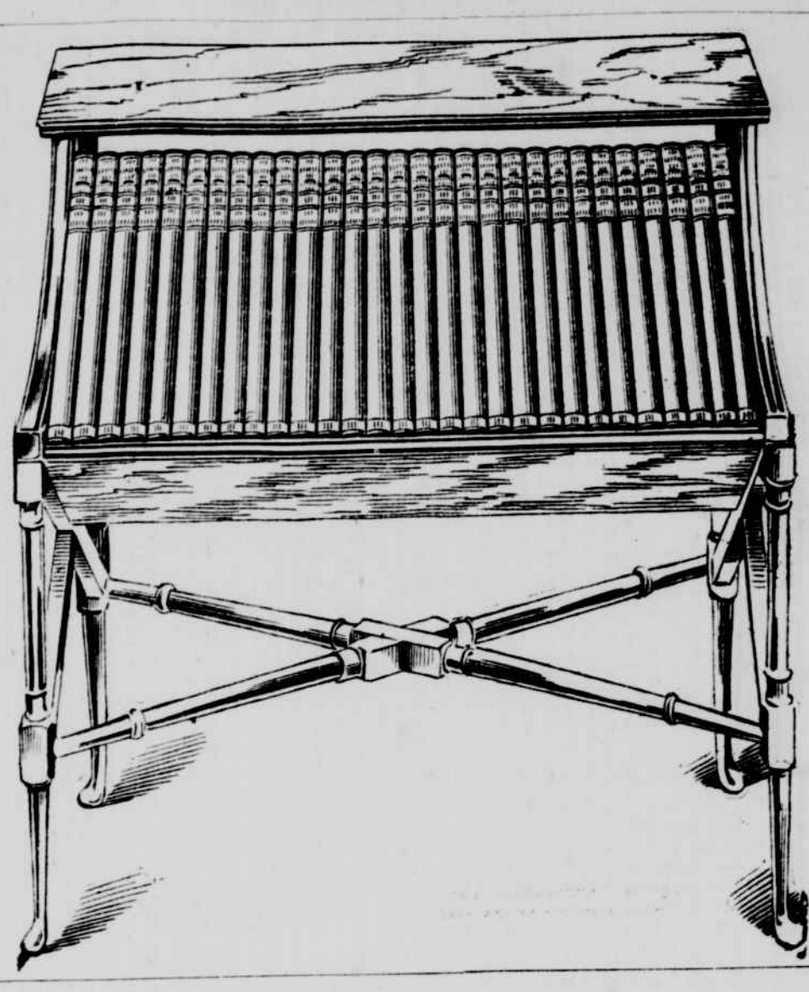

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