WHEN SCHOLARS AND PERSONS of high social position come to a library, they have confidence enough, in regard to the cordiality of their reception, to make known their wishes without timidity or reserve.

Modest men in the humbler walks of life, and well-trained boys and girls, need encouragement before they become ready to say freely what they want.

A hearty reception by a sympathizing friend, and the recognition of some one at hand who will listen to inquiries, even although he may consider them unimportant, make it easy for such persons to ask questions, and put them at once on a home footing.

Persons who use a popular library for purposes of investigation generally need a great deal of assistance. A few illustrations will produce a vivid realization of the correctness of this statement. Here, for instance, is a wallpainter who has a room to ornament. He wishes to assist his imagination, and comes to the library to look at specimens of decorative painting. It does not serve the purpose of such a man to send him to the catalogues of the library and bid him select the books he desires. You must make the selection yourself; get the works he needs, and hand them to him.

A school-girl has heard that the number of feet in a yard-measure was determined by the length of some king's arm. She asks for the name of the king. Catalogues fail to show where the information is to be found. It at

once occurs to the librarian, however, that answers to such questions can usually be had by reference to Notes and Queries. He sends for the indexes of this periodical, and finds the information desired. In handing the needed volume to the inquirer, he takes a minute to caution her that there are many stories and traditions which it will not do to accept as facts without careful examination of the evidence adduced in their corroboration.

A school-boy calls for a history of the Suez Canal. You see at once, probably, that what he needs is a brief account, and refer him to some recently-issued encyclopaedia. At the same time you show him how to use dictionaries and encyclopaedias, and tell him he can often find answers to questions himself by using works of this kind, but invite him to come to you whenever he encounters snags or fails to get the information sought after.

A small boy wishes to see a description of the eggs of different New England birds. The librarian knows of some good work with colored illustrations to give him.

A somewhat older boy wants to know how to build a boat, and is furnished with book, magazine article, or papers which contain the necessary directions.

A reservoir dam gives way. Citizens become suspicious that too little care is being taken in making the repairs. You drop a line to the chairman of the proper committee of the city government to say that you have just received Humber's "Water Supply of Towns" from London. He calls for the work, and takes it home to study.

An unlearned student wishes to know something about the families of languages or the recent explanations of the origin of mythology. You pick out for him some simple hand-book on the subject.

"Is it true," inquires a young lady, "that the little bust we see so often, and which is generally called 'Clytie,' should be called 'Clytie'?

"Isn't the sentence, 'God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb,' in the Bible?" asks another. The librarian answers "No," and refers for further information to Bartlett's "Familiar Quotations."

One inquirer has to be told which is the best atlas to use in looking for places in Servia; another, which will give most accurately, and with greatest minuteness, the situation of the rivers and battlefields mentioned in current accounts of Indian hostilities.

A citizen is about to emigrate, desires a late description of the State and town to which he intends to move.

A board of trade is discussing the question of the

Samuel Swett Green, librarian of the Free Public Library of Worcester, Massachusetts from 1871 until 1909, was a founder of the American Library Association. He was internationally known for his writings on librarianship, most of which echoed the attitudes about library work and the relationship between librarians and library users reflected in this first article to bring Green attention. A frail youth, he completed an AB at Harvard in 1858, traveled, and, after two attempts, completed an MA at the Harvard Divinity School in 1864. Due to poor health, his career in banking was truncated in 1870, by which time he had served four years on the board of the Worcester library. In 1870, coinciding with an abrupt improvement in his health and board concerns for the library, Green was asked by the president to become librarian. Green was a true pioneer in open, welcoming service to the public, public library service to schools, and in many other modern library innovations. From 1876 until 1913 Green wrote more than 40 articles for LJ. He died in 1918 at age 81.
advisableness of introducing the metric system of weight and measures into common use. Members call upon librarians to furnish the best treatises on the subject.

A young man about to make the voyage to India for his health, asks you to give him a list of books to read while on ship-board. Another person wishes a similar list for use in a summer vacation.

Enough illustrations have been given to show that readers in popular libraries need a great deal of assistance. Care has been taken to select principally such as show that this is particularly needed by persons unused to handling books or conducting investigations. In the case of such persons, as well as with scholars, it is practicable to refer applicants for information which you cannot supply, to libraries in larger cities in the neighborhood of your own library, or to other institutions in your own town. Business men go to commercial centres so often that they can occasionally consult larger libraries than those accessible at home.

There are obvious limits to the assistance which a librarian can undertake to render. Common-sense will dictate them. Thus no librarian would take the responsibility of recommending books to give directions for the treatment of disease. Nor would he give legal advice nor undertake to instruct applicants in regard to the practical manipulations of the workshop or laboratory.

Among the good results which attend personal intercourse on the part of the librarian with users of popular libraries, the following may be mentioned.

First. If you gain the respect and confidence of readers, and they find you easy to get at and pleasant to talk with, great opportunities are afforded of stimulating the love of study and of directing investigators to the best sources of information.

Second. You find out what books the actual users of the library need, and your judgment improves in regard to the kind of books it is best to add to it. You see what subjects the constituency of the institution are interested in, and what is the degree of simplicity they require in the presentation of knowledge.

Third. One of the best means of making a library popular is to mingle freely with its users, and help them in every way. When this policy is pursued for a series of years in any town, a very large portion of the citizens receive answers to questions, and the conviction spreads through the community that the library is an institution of such beneficent influences that it can not be dispensed with.

Fourth, and last. The collections of books which make up the contents of the circulating departments of our libraries have been provided for the use of persons of differing degrees of refinement and moral susceptibility, and for those who occupy mental planes of various altitudes.

It is common practice for users of a library to ask the librarian or his assistants to select stories for them. Place in the circulating department one of the most accomplished persons in the corps of your assistants—some cultivated woman, for instance, who heartily enjoys works of the imagination, but whose taste is educated.

Instruct this assistant to consult with every person who asks for help in selecting books. This should not be her whole work; for work of this kind is best done when it has the appearance of being performed incidentally. Let the assistant, then, have some regular work, but such employment as she can at once lay aside when her aid is asked for in picking out books to read. I am confident that in some such way as this a great influence can be exerted in the direction of causing good books to be used. The person placed in charge of this work must have tact, and be careful not to attempt too much. If an applicant would cease to consult her unless she gives him a sensational novel, I would have her give him such a book. Only let her aim at providing every person who applies for aid with the best book he is willing to read.

Personal intercourse and relations between librarian and readers are useful in all libraries. It seems to me that in popular libraries they are indispensable. Six years ago I was a member of the Board of Directors of the Free Public Library of the city of Worcester, Massachusetts. At that time I noticed that its reference department was hardly used at all, and was fast becoming an unpopular institution. During the last five or six years, by the adoption of the means recommended in this paper, a large use of this department has grown up, and it has come to be highly appreciated in the community.

Certain mental qualities are requisite or desirable in library officers who mingle with readers. Prominent among these is a courteous disposition which will disclose itself in agreeable manners. Sympathy, cheerfulness, and patience are needful. Enthusiasm is as productive of good results here as elsewhere.

A librarian should be as unwilling to allow an inquirer to leave the library with his question unanswered as a shop-keeper is to have a customer go out of his store without making a purchase.

Receive investigators with something of the cordiality displayed by an old-time inn-keeper. Hold on to them until they have obtained the information they are seeking, and show a persistency in supplying their wants similar to that manifested by a . . . clerk in effecting a sale.

What is needed in the librarian is a ready sympathy with rational curiosity . . . and a feeling of pleasure in brightening any glimmerings of desire that manifest themselves in lowly people to grow in culture or become better informed in regard to the scientific principles which underlie the processes of their daily occupations.

Respect reticence. If you approach a reader with the purpose of aiding him, and find him unwilling to admit you to his confidence, regard his wishes and allow him to make investigations by himself.

Be careful not to make inquirers dependent. Give them as much assistance as they need, but try at the same time to teach them to rely upon themselves and become independent.

The more freely a librarian mingle's with readers, and the greater the amount of assistance he renders them, the more intense does the conviction of citizens, also, become, that the library is a useful institution.