

its legislative reference library, most large cities have their municipal reference libraries, and now our largest city is to have its public health library, as a division of or adjunct to its municipal reference library. State libraries and city-hall libraries and chamber-of-commerce libraries are, of course, commonplace by this time. No wonder it has been complained — as, for example, by Dr. C. C. Williamson in his address at Asbury Park last June — that the word “library” is becoming sadly overworked. A new term, several new terms, in fact, are needed to denote succinctly and unmistakably the differing characters and purposes of the many offshoots from the parent library stem. How little did Benjamin Franklin foresee what was to come in the library world when he and his fellow members of the Junto started what has been called the mother of all subsequent subscription libraries in America, which in turn opened the way for our great public library system. It is worth while to turn back, now and then, and read his own account of that modest but memorable undertaking. When he settled in Philadelphia, he tells us, there was no good bookshop south of Boston, and far less any good library. “Those who lov’d reading were oblig’d to send for their books from England; the members of the Junto had each a few. We had left the alehouse, where we first met, and hired a room to hold our club in. I propos’d that we should all of us bring our books to that room, where they would not only be ready to consult in our conferences, but become a common benefit, each of us being at liberty to borrow such as we wish’d to read at home. This was accordingly done, and for some time contented us.” And lucky it was for posterity that the contentment was only temporary.

**LIBRARY RAMIFICATION** goes on apace, especially in this country. In addition to the excellent public libraries dotted over the land we have an increasing number of special libraries, devoted to all subjects from poetry to patent rights; and nearly every state has