

the conditions and needs of Grand Rapids, but before he could made any formal offer to the city a native born son who had become a resident of another city made a generous offer to Grand Rapids and the Iron King gracefully withdrew.

Mr. Reyerson's First Letter.

During the administration of Mr. Perry as mayor a communication was received from Mr. Martin A. Ryerson of Chicago, offering to erect a suitable library building if the city would provide the site. This letter was as follows:

New York, Feb. 23, 1901.

Hon. George R. Perry, Mayor, Grand Rapids, Mich.:

Dear Sir—As you may have learned at the time I had the pleasure of presenting the city the land for the Antoine Campau park, I was born on the old Antoine Campau homestead, which stood on that site, and I have therefore always had a natural affection for Grand Rapids as my birthplace. I have observed with pride its steady and vigorous growth, and it has been especially gratifying to note that its progress has been along intellectual as well as material lines, as evidenced by the growth and activity of the public library.

This library has particularly attracted my attention, and, having made inquiries concerning it, I have found that while it is an active and efficient factor in your civic life and in your public school system, it labors under the disadvantage of very inadequate and insufficient accommodations. The authorities have recognized this disadvantage to the extent of submitting to the voters a proposition to issue bonds to procure funds for the erection of a library building, but it was rejected by a small majority. I am informed that the reasons which determined this result did not deny the desirability of the building, but rested on other considerations; and my object in writing you to ascertain whether my information is correct in this particular, and whether the citizens of Grand Rapids desire a library building. If the necessity for one is greatly recognized and there is a willingness to assume the expense of maintenance, I shall be glad to submit to the authorities a proposition to erect a suitable building and present it to the city. Awaiting your reply, I am very sincerely yours,

Martin A. Ryerson.