

items marked (✓) are now in rare-book
room. B0 (1960).

A SHORT
ACCOUNT
OF THE
LIBRARY.

THE foundation of the present library was laid in the year 1731, a period when Philadelphia afforded little assistance to the enquiries of the studious. A number of gentlemen having raised the sum of one hundred pounds by subscription, a small library was formed upon principles the best calculated to disseminate knowledge: the books were not, as in many of the public libraries of Europe, confined to the apartments, but the subscribers were allowed to carry them home for a reasonable space of time.

The plan soon became popular; accessions to the number of members took place, and the stock of books was annually increased by purchases at the company's expence, and liberal donations from persons both at home and abroad.

The then proprietaries of Pennsylvania appear to have taken a patriotic pleasure in the encouragement of the plan. Besides several valuable donations, they granted a charter of incorporation in the year 1742.

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