

LOUISVILLE FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

maximum was allowed. In most of the intervening years the rate accruing to the library was three cents, and in 1941-42 it was three-and-a-half cents.

The library is unusual among institutions of its type in its ownership of a valuable downtown rent-producing property, the building occupied by the Kaufman-Straus Company, one of Louisville's large department stores. Since 1903 the Kaufman-Straus Building has brought the library a total of \$1,734,230.48 in rents. For the first ten years of that time the rental was \$28,800 a year; this was increased for the next fifteen years to \$36,000 annually. In 1928 a new twelve-year lease was signed, calling for an annual rental of \$71,947.62. This agreement remained in force for four years. Then, because of the depression, the rent was reduced by mutual consent, to \$50,000 annually in September, 1932. From September 1, 1935, to January 31, 1940, when the present (1942) lease was executed, the mercantile company paid rent of \$56,000 a year.

This new lease provides a rental of 3 per cent of the company's gross sales (less "returns"--articles bought but returned by the customers), with a guaranteed minimum of \$60,000 a year. In the first twelve months the agreement was in force the extra rent, over the \$60,000, was \$12,757.28; in the second, February 1, 1941-January 31, 1942, the total rent was \$94,472.72. Seventeen years ago the library rejected a sale offer of a million dollars for the property. Its foresight in so doing is now evident; for it could not have obtained, in 1941, a 9.4 per cent return on anything in which