Special Libraries, June 1914

Special Libraries Association
OPPORTUNITY

It's been th' sayin' fer years that opportunity only knocks once, an' yit lots o' us have gone t' th' door a hundred times—allus either broke er afraid t' take a chance. Opportunity is jist like Dan Cupid when it comes t' reliability. It don't guarantee nothin'. It jist says: "You quit the livery stable an' take that job at th' saw mill, er "you buy them lots east o' th' mill pond an' they'll double in price in a year." Opportunity seems t' go on th' theory that ever'buddy has got money. If some fellers jist had th' opportunity they'd be broke all th' time, er keep somebuddy else broke all th' time.

Th' main thing is t' be able t' tell th' opportunity o' a lifetime from th' common, er roadside variety. Some years ago Pinky Kerr's uncle offered him a drug store in a dry town if he'd pitch in an' run it, but Pinky said he'd rather stay at home an' play in th' band. Th' drug store sold fer nine thousan' dollars yisterday an' Pinky still owes eleven dollars on his slip horn. Tipton Bud heard a knock on his door one day an' bought five hundred dollars worth o' minin' stock. He thought it wuz his opportunity, but it wuz the agent's. So that's th' way it goes. If opportunity wuz responsible, er carried a few gilt-edged references, it wouldn't be so bad. It don't even argue with you.

Some fellers give up after they miss their first opportunity. Ez Pash hasn't done anything since th' time he could have bought th' ground where th' State house stands fer a song. Some fellers are too lazy t' git up when opportunity knocks, an' lots o' us make it a point t' be out.

Opportunity may only knock once with some certain proposition, but it'll be back lots o' times with somethin' else. So th' thing t' do is t' plug along an' be available.

Ole Niles Turner says opportunity did not knock at his gate till he wuz ninety-one, an' then it offered him five hundred acres o' Texas rice land until he got it paid for.

ABE MARTIN.

(From the Indianapolis News.)
The Public Affairs Information Service

Address delivered by John A. Lapp, Director, Indiana Bureau of Legislative Information, before the Special Libraries Association, Washington, May 27-30, 1914

One of the marked phenomena of the present in public affairs is the use of print for the purpose of swaying opinion or in the unbiased education of the public. Print is cheap, postage is low and men are scious. Thousands of subjects are under discussion in different parts of the country and the literature of public affairs is vast and intensive.

Organizations have banded to promote or oppose, individual researchers have sought the naked truth or its own sake, governments confronted by new demands have tried to find the right course, or the wrong course, according as they may be influenced, through official inquiries; legislative, municipal and other public affairs reference libraries have disclosed a new need and have sought diligently new sources of information and have produced specific literature; the new forms and agents of public government, the initiative, referendum, recall, equal suffrage, direct primaries and recall of judicial decisions have put upon the people in many states the duty of studying a multitude of public questions. Official and unofficial literature in support and opposition has been produced for popular study. At the same time the popularizing of our governmental processes and the extension of government activity into new fields has given a strong impetus to the production of literature. Questions which were yesterday mere problems of science or of business are today problems of government. Pure food, infant mortality, fraudulent fertilizers, feeding stuffs, agricultural seeds, shoddy goods, false branding of articles for sale, diseases of human beings, animals and plants, accidents in mills, mines and factories, and all the waste of human and material assets are now subjects of legislative and administrative action, widespread public agitation and an informing literature.

Need of a Clearing-house.

The foregoing serves as an introduction to the difficulties long confronting legislative, municipal reference and other specialized libraries, of keeping in touch with the progress of affairs in their particular fields. No single library is adequately equipped to cover more than a small part of the sources of information concerning the multitude of questions with which it deals. Everything in these special libraries is continually getting out of date and the clientele demands the latest and best.

Many agencies supply the needs of the general library, such as the magazine guides, newspaper indexes, industrial indexes, lists of federal and state documents, and innumerable bibliographies, etc. Those are useful also to the specialized library, but they only touch the edges of the great wilderness of information in which the special library must explore.

The special library begins where the general library leaves off. It attempts to push the boundaries of research and reference farther out and to draw from the unorganized mass of important information the concrete help which its clients need. But when such libraries move beyond the guidance of the aids which serve the general library, they are lost. No chart or compendium guides them and they are left to pick their way without much assistance or guidance. Too often the special library is made too general and loses its efficiency because the path of least resistance is to follow the general library guides.

Any one who has had experience knows that the task of a legislative or municipal reference department in its attempts to perform an effective service is a tremendous one. The information needed lies in thousands of scattered unindexed sources. It must be found, compiled, digested and put up in form to serve its purpose. No sooner is it prepared than the march of progress renders it inadequate. It is beyond the power of a single library to keep up to date without the cooperation of others working along similar lines. The mere following of sources of printed materials which each library ought to follow is beyond the power of most libraries.

Hence the need of cooperation in order that the work of each may be available to all and that all working together may advance the boundaries of organized information and knowledge. If one library is working on the regulation of dance halls, another on blue sky laws, another on the smoke nuisance, it is the part of wisdom for other libraries to avail themselves of the work already done by them. There is enough work for each without having several libraries do the same work indifferently well or without cooperation.
A Cooperative Information Service Developed.

With this condition in mind a number of special librarians meeting at Kaaterskill in June, 1912, decided to undertake a plan of co-operation among libraries interested in public affairs, especially municipal and legislative libraries, college libraries particularly for the departments of economics and politics, public libraries and specialized information bureaus.

The plan was put into operation with headquarters at the Indiana Bureau of Legislative Information, Indianapolis, and in connection with Special Libraries.

The response to the plan was hearty and effective. Fifty institutions, including nearly all of the leading legislative and municipal reference libraries, several college and public libraries and others have been enrolled, and many of them are co-operating effectively in furnishing information and in supplying publications on request. A system of exchange has been developed including a plan of furnishing typewritten material at cost.

Each institution pays twenty-five dollars, which is used for stenographic hire, postage, etc. The staff of the Indiana Bureau of Legislative Information for the first year, until the organization should become more fully self-supporting, volunteered their services to act as a central clearing house for the notices sent in by the subscribers; to organize the lists and supervise the issuance of the Bulletin. Mimeographed bulletins of from two to five pages have been issued weekly, giving notice of the information obtained. Thirty-six bulletins had been issued prior to May 1, 1914, containing not less than eighteen hundred first-class references.

Some Fruitful Sources.

The Public Affairs Information Service seeks to sift from the great mass of published materials the information which is most useful to those who must give information on public affairs. In view of its clientele, the service naturally pays particular attention to state and municipal legislation and administration. These are, however, so closely linked up with general discussions of economic, social, industrial and political problems that the Service is almost as valuable to the college and public libraries as to legislative and municipal reference libraries and bureaus.

The Service makes a specialty of legislative investigations, recognizing in them the most authoritative, concrete and directly related materials. Every legislative investigation in progress is reported and also a note of the findings when made. Nothing had been done in this connection until it was undertaken by Special Libraries and last year more exhaustively by the Public Affairs Information Service.

The importance of this source will be evident from the statement that more than 125 investigations on as many as seventy-five public affairs problems were authorized by the 1913 state legislative sessions alone. Such significant investigations as those on woman's labor in Indiana, civil pensions in Massachusetts, fire insurance in Illinois and recreation in California indicate the importance of these investigations to the collector of information. In all cases these reports are free, but they must usually be obtained at once if at all, hence the importance of the Service in reporting them.

A less important service, but one not yet so satisfactorily performed, is that of giving information of municipal investigations by city councils or city officials. These are very numerous and the subjects are of everyday interest to all cities. Examples are found in the New York billboard commission, Chicago's market commission and Newark city planning commission. Reports of such investigations are free, but copies must be secured early before the limited editions are exhausted.

The Service is developing better means of learning of these investigations so that they may be promptly reported.

Another source of information, hard to follow but excellent in its results, are the special reports of city clubs, commercial clubs, boards of trade and other civic and trade bodies dealing with public affairs. Activities such as the Commercial club of Chicago in industrial education, the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce in the recreation survey of the city, the work of the Cleveland Civic association and the St. Louis Civic league indicate what hundreds of such organizations are doing.

The Service has found it hard to get complete information from very many cities on these activities, but the problem will be solved soon.

A further source of information is found in state documents already admirably reported by the Library of Congress. The Service does not attempt to duplicate this work, but merely to call attention to special matters, such as special studies, digests and bibliographies found in state reports.

International, National and Local Organizations.

The source of information which is most prolific in valuable materials is the national, international and local associations and organizations in the fields of social science, political and economic science, business, industry and public affairs. These associations are constantly investigating matters within their range and publishing materials sometimes for propaganda purposes and sometimes for the unbiased information of the public. There are many hundreds of these organizations. Some of them issue regular publications, but most of them issue
special studies at intervals only. To merely suggest some typical organizations shows the importance of this source. Some of these are: American political science association, American economic association, American federation of labor, National association of manufacturers, National metal trades association, National farmers' union, Southern commercial congress, National municipal league, National American women's suffrage association and the National association opposed to Women's suffrage, National tax association, National conference of charities and corrections, National society for the promotion of industrial education and so on without limit.

Herefore no effort has been made to index or give information on these organizations excepting the few so-called learned societies. The reports and studies which these organizations issue are the most definite, concrete and usable material which comes into the library and it has a distinctive advantage of being mostly free of charge or for small yearly dues. The Service is attempting, as best it may, to give information on several hundred of these organizations' publications. The work is being expanded rapidly and will become a marked feature of the future work.

**Typewritten Material.**

Lastly the researches of the legislative municipal and other libraries prepared in the form of digests, bibliographies, etc., forms a valuable contribution to the information on public affairs. A large part of this material is in typewritten form. It usually represents extensive work in its preparation. The Service aims to put these valuable contributions within the reach of the subscribers by giving information that has been prepared. These may be obtained through the Service itself at the bare cost of typewriting, or they will be lent to the subscribers for copying purposes, if the subscriber desires. By this plan, the work of many institutions is made to serve the needs of all. It saves a great amount of work by preventing duplication and by enabling each bureau to begin where other people have left off and develop their studies in new lines.

There are many other sources of information which the Service will attempt to cover as soon as possible, such, for example, as the messages of the governors, particularly the veto and special messages; court decisions of wide interest, already partly reported; the doctors and masters theses in colleges and universities and important legislation enacted or in process of enactment in the states.

In co-operation with Special Libraries the specialized sources of information in libraries and bureaus will be given and lists of books relating to public affairs will be made from time to time.

**The Future of the Service.**

The Service, begun as an experiment, is now an established institution with an assured future. Judging from the reception which it has had, it fills a real need in every live institution which must have up-to-date reference material on public affairs. It has proven to be practicable and has cleared up the much discussed question of co-operation.

What of the future of the Service? That there is ahead a great opportunity for efficient work cannot be doubted. The need has been disclosed, the methods tested and the future possibilities surveyed. The time has come to put the Service on a broader foundation.

With that end in view, I purpose to ask for co-operation in increasing the work, and in making it independent and self-supporting and I submit the following conclusions:

1. The co-operative means of getting information has been only partially successful. Some have given information freely and fully; others have done absolutely nothing. It is unfair that some subscribers should draw from the fund of information without supplying something to the fund. It is planned, therefore, that subscriptions to the Service shall be raised to fifty dollars and a credit be allowed of one dollar for each acceptable item, but not to exceed a total credit of twenty-five dollars to any one subscriber.

2. The subscribers should be divided into two classes, in order to allow smaller public libraries to receive the Service at a lower cost. It is a question of relative use. While the smaller public library would find the Service of great value, it would not use it as intensively as the municipal or legislative reference library. It would be possible with this arrangement to make an appeal for co-operation to the smaller public libraries.

3. The bulletin should be issued in the form of printed cards which may be filed. Thus far, as a matter of economy, the bulletin has been put out in mimeographed form.

4. The staff of the Indiana Bureau of Legislative Information has heretofore directed the work and the clerical work has been paid for by the Service. The growth of the work makes necessary, as was contemplated a year ago, that an independent staff devote all of its time to the work. Means are at hand to do it and such an arrangement would markedly improve the Service. The Indiana Bureau will, however, give the same degree of supervision and close co-operation as formerly.

No profit accrues to anyone and thus the obligations of the co-operators will be more clearly evident. With the co-operation which the Service deserves, means will be at hand to make it more useful and efficient and a real power in the promotion of practical library progress.
The Special Library and Public Efficiency

Delivered at meeting of Special Libraries Association, Washington meeting, American Library Association, May 27-30, 1914

By Edward A. Fitzpatrick, Executive Secretary, Committee on Practical Training for Public Service of the American Political Science Association

I have lived and worked for the past two years in a special library. I have seen a man of vision, of idealism, of deep human sympathy, and of vast information, guide the organization for human well-being in his own state and in the nation—set at work silent, potent forces by which other generations will profit. I come, therefore, convinced, through demonstration, of the potency of the special library. I come also to express to you for the many librarians who have helped me in the past in that fine spirit of service—the library spirit—my thanks and appreciations.

The subject assigned me is "A special library in its relation to efficiency," especially public efficiency. I propose treating this subject, after a preliminary description, under three headings, the efficiency movement as it affects the special library, the special library as it is a factor in an efficiency organization, and efficiency organization for modern society.

What is a Special Library?

But so that we may be using common terms, or so that you will understand what I have in mind when I speak of "special library," I shall state my view of it and develop it by contrast.

The library of yesterday.—The older library was largely a collection of books—and it seemed perverse that they had to be bound books. In most cases they had to be old books. There was no evident principle of collection or organization. The library took as its province all knowledge, provided that knowledge was enshrined in old and bound books. The physical book was a precious thing; it was carefully stored away, to be taken from its place only by the librarian himself—rare old soul. It must not be contaminated by too frequent contact with the unblinking or the irreverent. The librarian was frequently the Lord high executioner of the presumption or the taste of prospective readers. The library was an instrument of the aristocracy of learning. It was, as has been well said, for the learned rather than for the learner. It contained accidentally, if at all, a record of man's contemporary life, his achievements, his experiments, his aspirations. Browning recognizes this when he says, "Men have lived among their books to die case-hardened in their ignorance."

The special library, the library of today.—The special library from its very name is not a miscellaneous collection of books. It does not take as its province all knowledge. It challenges the library of yesterday and asks, "Is a library a thing-in-itself—imperiously self-sufficient?" It raises a fundamental question, "Why is a library?" Why? Only for the satisfaction of human need—economic, social and spiritual. It is practically impossible to include the whole world of print within the library. A principle of selection is necessary. The special library, as already remarked, organizes about the needs of its constituency. It is no respector of form. It accepts material not because of its form, or its age, or its author, or its language, nor other irrelevant detail, but because it has relation to the specific human need of its constituency. The morocco-bound volume is no more important than the newspaper clipping. The government report, poorly printed on poor paper, with its arsenal of facts, is more useful than the learned opinions of ten thousand philosophers on things-in-general. It is not books or printed matter that the special librarian wants. It is information, and the information is secondary, or, better, instrumental. The primary thing is the satisfaction of the need or the curiosity of its constituency. The book that is not related to the experience of the reader is futile. Or, as Dewey has put it in one of his few profound books on education: "Harmful as a substitute for experience, it is all-important in interpreting and expanding experience."

I. The Efficiency Movement as Applied to the Special Library.

Let us turn now to the first of our two topics: The relation of the efficiency movement to the special library.

The basis for the demand for a special library.—There are two adequate treatments in print of the efficiency movement—one by Frederick Taylor, the other by Harrington Emerson. Emerson's treatment lends itself more readily to our purpose. The special library is simply the organized expression of one of the twelve principles—
the principle of competent counsel. We must have legal counsel, technical counsel, administrative counsel, and so on. But counselors who would fly in the face of, or disregard, the accumulated experience of the race as found in print would be inefficient counselors. John Cotton Dana said recently: "You don't know all that is to be known about your business. The combined knowledge of all the other men in the world who are in the same business, or something like it, is much greater than your knowledge, unless you know it all; and the only man who knows it all failed last year and is now digging post holes. This large sum of knowledge, in the possession of other men who are in the same business as yours, is all somewhere in print, or will be very soon. You should use it to good advantage if you had it, and you can get it."

If, then, there is to be competent counsel, there must of necessity be organized a specific library. Any library? No! A library organized as we have described it above.

The test of a specific library.—But, we ask, quite naturally in this connection, "What is an efficient specific library?" How can we test it? How many specific librarians really ask the question? "The man who is to be an experienced man as a lawyer must be a lawyer," I fear. The answer to the question is found in another of Emerson's twelve principles—the principle that records must be reliable, immediate, and adequate. In this sense a record is anything which contains information—a book, a clipping, a letter, a model. The specific library is then merely a collection of records. It can test its efficiency by asking: "Of the needs to which we have had our attention called in this business, or this community, or by this constituency, have we reliable, immediate, adequate records? Of all the needs of this business or this community have we such records?"

Obviously, the records must be reliable, else they are useless. They must have been sifted and verified. They must have the elementary quality of truth.

But of what use is correct data, accurate descriptions, if they are not available when wanted? They might just as well not be, as not be available.

Assuming correct records, immediately available, of what value are they if they are not adequate to our present problems, to our pressing questions, to our needs?

You will agree, I think, that the information in the legislative reference library for the legislator, or in the municipal reference library for the alderman, or in the business library for the manager, superintendent or foreman, must be reliable, must be immediate, must be adequate. The specific librarian who wishes to test the efficiency of his organization has this test: For today's needs and tomorrow's have I reliable, immediate, adequate information?

II. The Special Library in an Efficiency Organization.

Let us turn to the other question: What is the place of the special library in the efficiency movement?

The need for a research division.—Any real efficiency must build on present accomplishment. A special library containing reliable, adequate, immediate records tells us our field, what the present accomplishment is. It is the vicarious offering of past generations and of our contemporaries to us, "the heir of all the ages in the foremost files of time." Obviously this is only a beginning—a starting point, a point of departure. It remains such so long as the specific library is regarded merely as a bureau of information. The information that comes in is frequently not applicable to our situation in its present form. It has nothing of value so far as mere information goes. Its methods are useless for us, but the principle underlying it is correct. Shall the special library go to work and discover the methods of applying the principle to the local situation? Shall the special library be constructive as well as receptive? Shall its material be organically related or merely mechanically juxtaposed? If you answer these questions in the affirmative, then to the reference division of the special library there must be added a research division. The staff of the research division must be monastically trained, and profiting by contact with actual conditions, with methods of administration, and with the personnel of the organization. Thus, when the Socialists organized an efficiency agency, it was called an Information department and research bureau. The aim of the Socialists should be followed by other organizations, especially modern society. "It is our aim to put everyone of the Socialist party and whatever contribution he has to offer into the service of all the rest; and to put all the knowledge and power of the whole party at the service of the one who needs it when the hour of his need arrives."

In an informal kind of way this kind of organization now exists in Wisconsin. The Legislative reference library is the reference division for the legislature. The State board of public affairs is the research division. But these organizations are very closely intertwined. In the drafting work of the Legislative reference library they are one. But for the formal organization involving both of these elements we go to the New York City Department of Education. Quietly and most unobtrusively, so far as the nation is concerned, there is going on in the New York City educational system a revolution. The fundamental issue is whether we shall be governed by experts or through experts. The Board of education, under the presidency of Mr. Churchill, has reassured its right as the controlling and
policy-determining body in the New York City educational system. Since this principle was asserted and maintained, more forward steps have been taken in the New York City educational system than in any other city educational system in the country. This is easily demonstrable, but the details are not pertinent to our task. One of these forward steps, however, is that the New York City Board of education felt the need for an agency to supply it with reliable, up-to-the-minute, and adequate records. It wanted today's policy determined by today's facts. It did not want the superintendent's report printed and filed. It wanted to avail itself of the tremendously valuable suggestions that were annually buried in this report. As business men who could not give all their time to the study of educational problems, they felt the need of having at hand a special organization under their own control to supply them with necessary information and to make investigations in accordance with their needs. They felt that those who were doing the day's work had a sufficient job of their own. They wanted an organization whose whole energy was not involved in doing the thing, but which would always be in intimate touch with those who were doing it. They organized, therefore, a Division of reference and research, involving both of the divisions suggested. Unfortunately, there is in the Board of education a leader of a group who before this division is given an opportunity to demonstrate its usefulness is committed to its abolition. It is an eminently respectable group. I trust its efforts will not be successful, and I hope the members of the Special Libraries Association will keep in touch with the movement and watch its progress.

The need for a laboratory—an experiment station.—But it is not sufficient to have merely our special library supplemented by a research division. No, not if we understand research as it is understood in conjunction with library work. Suppose in 1887 we were the directors of the Bell telephone company, with such an organization as has heretofore been described. We would have remained a purely local service—an inefficient one at that. The ideal of a national service would have been an empty ideal. What the Bell telephone company needed in addition to a special library was a research division—an experiment station. Without that the fifty-three types and styles of receivers and seventy-three types and styles of transmitters introduced since 1877 would have been impossible. The solution of the problem of long-distance and underground transmission would have been also impossible. Telephone communication is now possible between New York and Denver, and in 1915 will be an accomplished fact between New York and San Francisco. How is this possible? Only because the Bell company has an Experimental and Research department which is now directed by over five hundred and fifty engineers and scientific men, including professors, post-graduate students and other scientific investigators—the graduates of over seventy institutions.

Or more generally for our business or our government there may nowhere be reliable, immediate and adequate records. It may be that there is no experience. Then there can be no research or reference division, and the experimental division is the foundation of our organization; otherwise it is the crowning point.

III. An Efficiency Organization for Modern Society.

For the next division of our discussion let us accept this much—that an efficiency organ must combine special library (which may include a museum), research division and laboratory or experiment station. Let us add without discussion what is universally admitted—that modern organization to be one hundred per cent efficient must have directing intelligence and a trained personnel. The efficiency organ described above affords directing intelligence its basis for action and personnel its opportunity for continuous training.

Now let us look at our social problem in its totality. I wish our leaders would have or develop the Sophoclean capacity of seeing it steadily and seeing it whole. We shall look at it simply. It is obvious that it is complex. There are many and varied physical, economic, social and spiritual needs. A less obvious fact is that government—the state—the political organization of society is the greatest single factor in satisfying these needs. Its influence is extending rapidly, and there is no likelihood of calling a halt. We shall take the simple view, the political organization of society—the state is the organization of all of us to do for each what we can do better collectively than we could do individually. It is our best effort to date of organizing to meet these various and many needs of modern society; modified, however, to a considerable degree by tradition.

If you accept this simple view, then you may permit me to raise a fundamental question. Ought this largest of all organizations affecting practically all the interests of all of us to have an efficiency organization? Ought it to have a "planning division," to use Frederick Taylor's term? Or to put the question more concretely, ought a corporation having one hundred million stockholders and more, with property extending over almost four million square miles, with a budget of billions of dollars, to have a planning or efficiency division? Or to take only a part of it—ought a subsidiary corporation affecting six million stockholders, with an annual budget of almost fifty million dollars, have a planning or efficiency
division? Ought, in other words, these United States or our cosmopolitan city, New York City, have a planning division? Ought they to have reliable, immediate and adequate records as to what has been accomplished and is being accomplished? Ought they organize all available information and all possible experience about their own peculiar needs and problems? Ought they have an experiment station, a laboratory, through which they will discover future needs and anticipate solutions? Ought they have a trained leadership and a trained administration? You and I and every reasonable man and woman will answer, "Yes, by all means." But most people would hasten to add: "The development of such an organization is well nigh impossible now or in the immediate future." I come back with what you now may think is a surprising answer. We have such an organization now—or, at least, the shell of it. It is no other than the modern university. The colleges and universities which are publicly supported—no matter what else they may do—should at least do that. The reputation of the University of Wisconsin is due to the fact that people have believed that it was doing just that. National public opinion is ready for such universities. Even the University of Wisconsin is far from the goal. The proposed national university can be justified only on such grounds. The greatest opportunity in the country at the present moment is in the College of the City of New York becoming an efficiency organization for New York City. But that is a big subject and requires too detailed treatment for our present purpose.

There is only one way that the modern university can really meet these demands of modern life, especially of modern government. It can be and it must be by the most intimate and continuous contact with the world in which it exists. There must be interplay of forces. There must be interchange of personnel. There must be an accurate knowledge of the needs of modern life. There must be a sympathy with the aspirations of modern men and there must be the dreams of a fairer and better world than this—not an acceptance of the status quo. Its work may be defined a little more specifically. The controlling force in modern government—an informed and interested electorate—must have placed at its elbow in understandable form the information and results of the reference library, the research division and the laboratory. The directing intelligence and the personnel of the administration will more and more be trained in the universities—but the training must be different in important particulars than now. Greater emphasis will be placed on administration—the upbuilding of which is the greatest of American democracy.

I have given you a broad picture. The Committee on practical training for public service is interested in only a part of that vision. Under the resolution creating it, it is required (1) "to examine and make a list of places where laboratory work for graduate students in political science can be done; (2) to recommend to the various college and university faculties that due graduate credit be given to such places; (3) to use its best endeavors to obtain scholarships for this laboratory work, and to secure an endowment for the building up of a trained body of public servants, and (4) to make, if possible, a system of card records and efficiency standards for graduates doing practical work in political science." It aims to build up administration through a trained public service. It recognizes the significance of other factors. But if the administrators are given in our universities beside personal skill the vision, the appreciation and desire for efficiency in terms of social result, instead of in terms of particular acts, each department of modern government will have its special library, its research division and its laboratory where necessary—and the modern university will inevitably become the planning department of modern society.

**Boston Co-operative Information Bureau**


By G. W. Lee, President

This Bureau is, or aims to be, a clearing house of information, with a reference service added. To accomplish its purpose it has, besides the directors and the usual officers, a Chief of service and two reference workers: one known as the inter-library worker, using not only the public library, but visiting local libraries and other sources to obtain information that may be called for; the other, at the headquarters of the Bureau, obtaining information principally by use of the telephone. It also has a growing card index, in which are registered resources for the community for getting at facts. This indexing includes not only the general and special book collections, but the specialties of various persons and institutions. There seems to be a great willing-
ness to be listed in this central index, but there is, of course, a vast amount of work ahead to make the index anything approaching completeness. Another feature of the Bureau's stock-in-trade is the list of questions and comments thereon, including sources from which the answers were obtained. This promises to be one of the most valuable and interesting among the Bureau's assets.

The terms of membership and of service are set forth in the Bulletin of March-April, and will appear with minor changes in Bulletin 9, due about the middle of May. Membership includes five classes, from those who merely co-operate, without money payment, to those who pay $100. There are also terms for the use of the Bureau by non-members.

While the undertaking is well equipped with resources for getting information, it is still in experimental stage in many respects; for its scope is all knowledge, and the membership is by no means limited to residents of Boston and vicinity. It should be added, however, that the usage shows a preponderance of commercial and engineering questions, with comparatively few inquiries by mail. A brief definition, such as given at the head of most of the Bulletins, is the following: "A voluntary association of persons and organisations for mutual assistance in the ascertaining of sources and supplies of information, whether those exist in printed or written form, or simply as mental equipment, and whether rendered available by purchase or by loan or gift."

While, perhaps, the majority of questions are such as a large general or technical library could answer from its immediate sources, there are many which most libraries regard as beyond the scope of the service which they are expected to render. The following are selected from the Bulletins:

1. Where are back numbers of "The American Architect" obtainable in Boston?
2. Names of dealers in diatomaceous earth?
3. What is the calculater? Where can it be found and who manufactures it?
4. A man to take charge of construction of a boulevard?
5. The way to pack electric grids for foreign shipment?
6. Availability of loan collections of pictures for schools and other organizations?
7. The amount of scrap wrought iron shipped from the Pacific coast to points east of the Rocky Mountains?
8. What firm in Boston has the Blue Book of Iron, Steel, Coal and Coke?
9. An analyzed table of the wooden box production of the country for each kind of business?
10. What is lignum?
11. What is Australian bee?
12. Information on the teaching of the Beale system of shorthand?
13. Location of camp fire clubs in Boston?
14. Availability of Canadian weather reports in Boston?
15. Statistics on allowances made for women's absence from business?
16. List of translators in the city?
17. Effect of electric light on growing plants?
18. Availability in Boston of directories of Toledo, Ohio, and Liverpool, England?
19. Availability in Boston of Washington Social Register for 1913?
20. Address of a manager of a certain Western trolley company?
21. Address of a former tenant of a room now occupied by the questioner?
22. Man to see about the introduction of efficiency in clerical office work?

It will be seen from the foregoing list that the Bureau is more than an organized index of where to look. It is aiming to connect demand and supply of wants of every description, and to anticipate what is likely to be needed. While the Bulletins as a whole show its several aspects, it may be well to point out features that are suggested by Bulletin 7, March-April, 1914. In the eight pages of Bulletin 7 are first summarized the scope of previous Bulletins and then a page of membership terms and service charges. The next four pages are departmental, arranged alphabetically (the Roman figures after each indicating the number of times that these departments have been entered), viz: Auction I, Bureaus VII, Bureau at Work VII, Docket IV, Kindred Undertakings II, New Features I, Registered Topics and New Co-operators VI, Wants I. Then follows a page giving the Directorate, and a final page of advertisement.

I would call particular attention to the departments. The Auction is an attempt to make a monthly clearance of the duplicate and superseded books and pamphlets of libraries, business houses, institutions and individuals generally, not necessarily in the vicinity of Boston, but everywhere, if there is a demand for it—a correspondence auction, f. o. b. the place where the material happens to exist. Think of the immense amount of printed matter that goes as waste unknown to those who actually need it in their work! The writer resolved for home use from the March auction a 1909 Rand McNally Business Atlas, for which there had been no bids. Likewise, such valuable works as the transactions of technical societies frequently go without bids, though from time to time single volumes of these may have a bid of a dollar or more. Recently I was able to hand a superseded Bankers' directory to a caller at our library, who much appreciated having a gift of what he was ready to pay $5 or more for, and which might otherwise have gone to the waste basket.

*Sloane & Webster's. The Bureau has no library of its own, and its headquarters are in the Sterling Building of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
Breviates is the heading for notes and announcements that are thought to be interesting. The Bureau's exhibit sent to Leipzig was thus noted, also a joint meeting of the Engineers Club, on "Applied Education and the Specialized Library," a report of which has appeared in "Special Libraries" for April, and, thirdly, a proposition to accept for filing material of a transient or contingent value.

Under Bureau at Work are noted questions of interest since the preceding Bulletin, and it may here be added that the questions for the May-June Bulletin are selected particularly to show the extra-library features of the Bureau.

Under Docket are noted the proposals to incorporate and to publish a yearbook.

As Kindred Undertakings, the Efficiency society and the Special libraries association are defined, which suggests that a function of the Bureau is to have at hand descriptive statements of sociological enterprises generally.

Under New Features is noted the peculiar need for knowing where in the community maps can be borrowed. Three times within a few months there has been a demand for maps of different states that show town boundaries, and it is likely to be a long time before the Bureau has a satisfactory list of all the maps and atlases that are owned in the vicinity. Not unlikely persons with business interests in Western states might have an atlas of a Western state, which is something that does not seem to be owned by the local libraries. Also, under New Features it was noted that the Bureau is tentatively a center of information on the value of reference books for various purposes. Such a function ought logically to be assumed by some other organization, and the Bureau in assuming it does so rather under protest. It is not the principle of the Bureau to do things that others can do to better advantage. This reference book center seems important. Which libraries can advise their clientele as to the relative value of the three well-known civil engineers' pocketbooks now on the market? Which can or will advise as to what dictionary or what encyclopedia is best suited for the office or for the home, or for any particular purpose in mind? How do the publications of the American School of Correspondence and the International Correspondence School compare? How good is the American Business Encyclopedia and Legal Directory? How much better is the new edition of March's Thesaurus than the old one, and what are its advantages over the publication of Roget? It seems as if the American Library Association might futher the scheme for a center of opinion on reference books, and in so doing serve its members to greater advantage, not only saving long talks with agents, but better enabling people to get the one of several expensive volumes which is best suited to their purposes, and better enabling publishers and agents to know what is wanted—in short, effecting a standardization.

Under Registered Topics and New Co-operators was noted the privilege of anticipating the arrival of state documents from the public printer, so that the clientele can be informed just when to call for a document wanted before it gets out of print. Also, under the same heading, was noted the fact that "the Cunard Steamship Company will be glad to have available at its office the Liverpool Directory, and has acted in accordance with our suggestion that there should be one available in the City of Boston."

The department of Wants is largely for unanswered questions, and we are indebted to Mr. Hodges, of the Cincinnati public library, for references on the two questions that were listed, one being an inquiry as to what is the telephrane, and the other an inquiry for an authentic account of a system of purifying milk by electricity, not using violet rays. The name of an expert at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology was also furnished for answering the second question.

A glance at the Directors' list, on the last page but one of the Bulletin, shows ten divisions of knowledge, according to the Dewey System, sponsored for by ten specialists, mostly librarians. It will also be seen that the management of the Bureau is in the hands of those who naturally are interested in the undertaking from the very nature of their own calling—not only librarians of large libraries, but special librarians and persons having kindred interests, a sort of ex-officio directors.

Having said all this, I should like to add that it seems to me the ground covered by the Bureau ought long since to have been covered by existing institutions: e.g., the American library association, the Special libraries association, the Library of Congress, the state libraries or the chambers of commerce as a body, might logically and of their own initiative have so spread the information bureau idea that such an undertaking as this one, or as the Index office, recently started in Chicago, or as most of the business bureaus of New York City, would be only a link in a chain system. However, I am glad to say that the Boston co-operative information bureau is meeting with general approval, so that before the end of this year there is prospect of its being incorporated as a well-financed concern. To care for all its activities it needs to be subsidized at present.

There are several other aspects to consider, including affiliations with other clubs, but I leave these to be brought out in discussion.
Intercommunication: National and International
Delivered at the Annual Meeting of Special Libraries Association,

By Eugene F. McPike, Chicago, Associate Editor, Department of Intercommunication,
The Cosmopolitan Student (Ann Arbor)

A brief list of societies and periodicals devoted to or useful in the exchange of special information was printed in The Dial (Chicago) for July 16, 1912. Numerous additions to that list could be made now. The problem involved is one of far-reaching importance. The encyclopaedic character of the words or terms "research," "intercommunication," "home-study" and "self-culture" seems to have been almost entirely overlooked. The student seeking general information on any of those subjects will look in vain in the standard encyclopaedias. True, under such captions as "Academies" or "Learned societies" he may secure a little help. But he will be unable to find any comprehensive account or collected data pertaining to the numerous ways and means of exchanging useful information on miscellaneous topics. Even under the caption "Education" one sees little else than scholastic training, with scarcely a word about home-study or self-culture. If one is already familiar with the Chautauqua movement one may find something of interest under that heading; but, for the most part, the literature of education seems to relate more to methods of teaching than to methods of learning, although for ultimate purposes the learner may be of quite as much importance as the teacher.

The wide significance of the word "intercommunication" is not as generally understood and appreciated as it should be, when we remember that the word has appeared on the title page of the London Notes and queries every week since 1849. It is no digression from our subject to emphasize, at this point, the great utility of the old London Notes and queries for the pursuit of any of the many matters within its scope. That periodical claims to have more than eleven hundred constant contributors, but there appears to be ample room for a comprehensive journal of intercommunication which shall be practically unrestricted in scope.

The International notes and queries, issued in 1913, by William Abbott of New York City as a supplement to his Magazine of history, did not meet with much success, owing partly to the delay in publication, due to the regrettable illnesses of the publisher, and partly to the fact that the original circle of readers was interested chiefly in historical matters, rather than in the general field of inquiry.

The most promising outlook for the immediate future lies in the fact that a department for intercommunication was inaugurated in the April, 1914, issue of The cosmopolitan student (Ann Arbor; monthly, except July, August, September and October; 32 pages, 75 cents per year). The department, at the start, is confined largely to subjects of interest to students, but the intention is to widen the scope until the whole range of knowledge is included, at least potenially.

If the student-body of the world, or of any considerable part of it, could once be aroused to the practical advantages of what might be called "reciprocal education," the problem which we are considering would soon be solved.

The next step, obviously, is to bring about the organization of an International federation for intercommunication, in which the cost of membership need not exceed two dollars per year, including the official organ and a directory of members giving their addresses with brief data concerning the special subjects of interest to them, and the languages with which they are severally familiar. The usefulness of such an organization with proper facilities throughout the world is too easily perceived to require much comment. It would afford excellent opportunities to students, investigators, librarians, collectors and others to secure directly the information or objects desired.

The correspondence club idea is not new. Many such organizations exist in Europe and elsewhere. Most of them are devoted chiefly to the needs of collectors, but some include in their directories a brief statement of the subjects of special interest to individual members. Among those institutions may be mentioned the International Correspondence Alliance Kosmos of Amsterdam, which publishes in January of each year a complete list of current members. Subsequent issues of the official organ appear each alternate month and contain supplemental lists of members. Practically no reading matter or reference material is given.
Among the other growing organizations of similar character may be mentioned the International Correspondence Union ("I. U. K."), of which the secretary is Herr Henri Meyer, Bachi-sur-Alzette, Luxemburg.

Some of these existing agencies could be utilized by an International federation for intercommunication, and thus achieve economy while by co-operation securing a larger circle of federated members.

In addition to the benefits to be derived by investigators and collectors, there is the additional advantage of having an opportunity to improve, by correspondence, one's knowledge of any foreign language, for the directory of members shows just what languages are known to each subscriber.

The plan as a whole would also offer much of value to tourists and travelers in general.

But by far the most important feature of the proposed federation would be the putting into direct touch with each other of investigators and students mutually interested in a given subject, whether it be scientific, artistic, technical, historical, geographical, biographical, genealogical, bibliographical, or commercial and industrial. The advertising possibilities of the official organ would be immense, not only for enterprising exporters and importers, but particularly for mail-order houses. Members of the Federation would often be willing to assist fellow members in obtaining desired articles anywhere in the world. No preliminary endowment would be required. The plan could be put into operation successfully with a relatively small number of members, because of the intention to affiliate with other existing organizations.

Having now considered, in brief, the general features of the plan, we may turn to some specific points where the Federation would, undoubtedly, be of great service. Take, for example, the inquiries submitted to the Boston Co-operative Information bureau, as to the details of control, production and sale of electric water-power in Switzerland, Canada, etc. Here is an important question which might be investigated through United States unions, but which also merits careful study by direct correspondence with experts on the ground.

Or let us consider any of the many subjects of inquiry which interest the legislative reference libraries of the United States. We find, for instance, that an Italian lawyer, Mr. Paolo Masera, viale Stupinigi, 155, Torin, Italy, proposes (Progress, Paris, vol. vii, No. 75, March, 1914, page 192) a plan for the interchange of information "to promote the knowledge and comparison of the laws and legislation of all countries," relating to customs duties, penology, commerce, pure foods, etc., etc. We find also that M. E. Poucher, a customs officer, St. Sauveur-le-Vicomte (Manche), France, is interested in the laws concerning commercial frauds, adulterations, etc.

These few illustrations might be duplicated and extended indefinitely, but enough has probably been presented to make clear the need and utility of an International federation for intercommunication.

Collected Information in Print and the Training of Employees of the Curtis Publishing Company

A Summary of the Address to be delivered at meeting of Special Libraries Association,


The training of employees is a matter of vital interest and importance to us. It would be impossible to attempt to discuss here the many ways of training employees. That "Collected information in print" is one of the most valuable methods is well recognized. It is, however, not only the relation of the library to the training job that we want to have discussed and developed, but also the best methods of creating a need for the library in the mind of the employee.

The Curtis publishing company has three different libraries—the reference library, in "The Ladies' Home Journal" Editorial department; the general library, in the Welfare department, and the Business library, in the Employment and instruction department.

The Editorial reference library grew from a small group of volumes, gathered primarily for the special use of the Editor-in-Chief, when he first came to the company, in 1886. The receipt of numerous requests from readers for information on subjects of general interest made it imperative that
many books be added to the collection. The number of questions increased to such proportions that it was decided to create a Bureau of Information, to which not only "Journal" subscribers, but also non-subscribers, might appeal for help.

Necessary books of reference have been added in accordance with the needs of the bureau, until today this library numbers 700 books and 24 magazines. These reference books are in constant use. The "Will You Tell Me?" department alone answered 10,209 letters from April 1, 1913, to April 1, 1914, each letter containing an average of four questions on miscellaneous subjects. This library is, of course, available to the employees in the various departments of the company, and in that way serves a very valuable purpose.

In 1894, the nucleus of the Welfare library was started in the rest room of our old building. This library consisted of about 200 books, mostly fiction. When we moved to the new building, in 1912, steps were taken to expand this library, and we now have about 5,000 books of fiction, poetry, travel, history, nature study, etc. About 900 girls are using this library.

The function of this library has been more a social than an instructive one. It was started as being a very good and natural means of acquainting the employees with the Welfare Manager and allowing the Welfare Manager to come in personal contact with the employees. This, of course, naturally results in a certain amount of guidance in the selection of books. Additions to the library are made in response to worth-while requests and by following up the new books as they are published. A great deal of care is, naturally, exercised in the process of selection.

About 200 books for boys and 83 magazines are also included in the welfare library.

Our experience has been that many working people fail to avail themselves of the opportunity afforded by the facilities of the free library; on the other hand, the books in our libraries are within easy reach during working hours. A greater amount of reading is, therefore, more likely to be done.

The reference and general libraries serve admirable purposes, but they do not assist in the systematic training of employees for their respective jobs—that is the function of the Business library.

Much time, expense, and effort have been expended in the development of general libraries and reference libraries, but comparatively little has been done to develop a real live Business library. It seems apparent that the value of such a library has not been realized. Our Business library at present consists of only 100 books and 25 magazines. As our company has only started in the development of such an institution, it is out of the question for us to offer many concrete suggestions. It will be of great value if the delegates who have had experience along this line will talk freely on this subject. Large corporations need such information, and it is certain that when the value of this work can be demonstrated, all of them will be glad to establish Business libraries of their own.

A corporation Business library is a collection of authoritative books and magazines that cover, in a general way, all of the various activities within a corporation. The librarian should be one who understands the business of his company, who has analyzed all the books, so that a systematic course of reading may be mapped out to cover each job in the plant, and who knows how, through the co-operation of the management and employees, to create a desire to use the library and then to turn that desire into action; in other words, to sell his facilities to all the employees. Last, but not least, the librarian must know how to make intelligent additions to the collection.

In a small way, we have endeavored to solve some of these problems. To advertise our Business library we send a personal letter concerning the library to each new employee. We advertise it in our employees' house-organ, on our bulletin boards and in our pay envelopes. We try to interest the managers, so that they may pass this interest along to their own people. We issue a semi-monthly magazine bulletin, which classifies all of the topics appearing in the current publications. The purpose of this bulletin is to make it easy for the employees to read what they want and need. As we grow, we hope to be able to realize the idea of making the library a systematic part of the employee's training, rather than allowing it to be a matter of individual choice.

When the result of years of experience of successful business men in all lines of activity can be revealed to a worker in a comparatively few hours, it is nothing short of an economic crime to allow our workers to follow the old way of finding out for themselves.

If the Special Libraries Association is interested in this subject, it will not wait for half a dozen or a dozen corporations to spend several years in developing the right methods, but it will appoint a committee now to study the situation and outline a definite program that can be followed by all companies who desire to establish Business libraries. This program could be presented for action at the next annual meeting.
The Index Office: Its Nearer Purpose and Its Larger Aim

A Brief Summary of the Address to be delivered at the meeting of the Special Libraries Association, Washington, D. C., May 27-30, 1914

By A. G. S. Josephson, Secretary, Chicago, Ill.

In establishing the Index Office an attempt has been made to put a foundation under an idea. It is now twenty years since I first advocated organization of bibliographical work, in an article in the Library Journal entitled "International Subject Bibliographies." In 1893 I read a paper before the American Library Association outlining a plan for a Bibliographical Institute, and in 1905 I printed for private distribution a pamphlet containing a similar outline, somewhat more developed. In 1913 I sent a prospectus with a proposal for the establishment of a Research Institute in the interest of agriculture, manufacture, business and science to a number of Chicago business men, and in January, 1913, I read before the Bibliographical Society of America a paper on "Efficiency and bibliographical research." In 1915, as a result of the above mentioned prospectus, a committee on Research Institute was formed, and from that committee the initiative was taken to organize a corporation, "not for pecuniary profit," under the name Index Office.

The nearer purpose of the office is to undertake to order bibliographical and indexing work, abstracting and translation, for physicians, engineers, manufacturers, scientists, investigators of all kinds, so as to save their time for productive work by placing before them in an orderly and digested form the literary material they need for their investigations. To begin with, and until the office gets a regular income, it will not be possible to undertake other work than such as is ordered by patrons, it is intended, however, to prepare duplicates of all bibliographies, etc., prepared, except where the work is of confidential nature, so as to have them available for future use. In this way files will be built up that will be a valuable asset. As soon as the office gets a regular income, however, so that it will be possible to employ one or more members of a research staff to form files, a certain plan of work will be undertaken in anticipation of actual demand. Data will be collected in regard to new facts, discoveries and inventions which tend to promote the progress of science and industry. This will mean a systematic search not only in the current periodical literature, but also in such seemingly ephemeral publications as manufacturers' and dealers' catalogues.

The office will also act as a central agency for co-operative and other bibliographical undertakings and thus organize the bibliographical and indexing work that is being done by isolated institutions and individuals without connection with each other and without knowledge of each other's plans. In order to pave the way for this work, the office announces its readiness to collect information about work that is being planned so as to avoid duplication. As a counterpart of this, the office will also collect information about work that is needed, but has not yet been undertaken.

All the work of the office will be done by competent bibliographers and specialists and the charges will be based on the actual cost of the work to the office. To this cost the office will add 20 per cent for supervision and overhead expenses.

Notice of Bibliography

"The War with Mexico 1846-1848. A select bibliography on the causes, conduct, and the political aspect of the war, together with a select list of books and other printed material on the resources, economic conditions, politics and government of the Republic of Mexico and the characteristics of the Mexican people." is the title of the very timely compilation which has been selected as the first bibliographical contribution of the U. S. Engineer School. The list has been prepared by the Librarian of the school, Mr. Henry E. Haferkorn, and is a very careful piece of work, bibliographically considered, with annotations and comments on a large number of the publications listed there.

The list is accompanied by an alphabetical index to authors and subject, referring to chapters as well as to the main entries and giving under authors brief titles of the books—a most useful item. Library of Congress card numbers have been added to the titles.

A. G. S. JOSEPHSON.
Engineers—Electrical

Under the title "The status and professional relations of the engineer" the American institute of consulting engineers has issued in pamphlet form the reports of two discussions held at meetings of the Institute, Dec. 18, 1912, and May 11, 1913. The point dwelt on in these discussions was the relations of the engineer with the manufacturer and the contractor, particularly in regard to specifications covering products in which the latter were interested. 92p.

Feeble-minded

A paper delivered by Hastings H. Hart before the New York State conference of charities and correction, Buffalo, Nov. 20, 1913, on "Meeting the problem of mental defectiveness" has been printed by the Dept. of child helping of the Russell Sage foundation. Segregation of the feeble-minded, particularly women and girls, is the general recommendation of the address. 10p.

Floods

An Ohio act of Feb. 17, 1914, "to prevent floods, to protect cities, villages, farms and highways from inundation and to authorize the organization of drainage and conservation districts" has been issued in separate form. 69p

The U. S. Weather bureau has issued as its Bulletin 2 a survey of "The floods of 1913 in the rivers of the Ohio and lower Mississippi valleys," prepared by A. J. Henry. Tables, maps and illustrations accompany the text. sq. Q. 117p.

Forest land—Taxation

The Report of the Massachusetts Commission on the taxation of wild or forest lands was made Jan., 1914, and contains in addition to a thorough discussion of existing conditions in that state several recommended bills and a report on the taxation of forests in Europe. 38p. (Sen. no. 456.)

Infant mortality

The Research department of the St. Louis School of social economy recently investigated the matter of "Prenatal care" as conducted by the social service department of the Washington University hospital, to prove how important such work is in the reduction of infant mortality. The appendix to the printed report gives a brief survey of such work as carried on in New York, Boston, Baltimore and Chicago. 11p.

Milk

The Department of research of the St. Louis School of social economy has issued a pamphlet on "The milk problem in St. Louis." The local situation is thoroughly canvassed, milk regulations in various cities are briefly summarized and eight recommendations are offered. 38p.