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Special Libraries, September 1912

Special Libraries Association

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WHAT IS A SPECIAL LIBRARY?

Discussion S. L. A., Ottawa, Canada, June 27,
1912.

Mr. M. S. DUDGEON:—There are those who maintain that there is no such thing as a special library in a class of its own, but that what we call a special library is simply a general reference library which by the needs of its patrons has become somewhat specialized in its methods and in its equipment. On the other hand, there are those who maintain that a special library has so distinctly a different function and purpose that its scope is so different, that its equipment is so different, and that the equipment, the qualities and the characteristics of those who man the library are so different, as to entitle such

an institution to an entirely different classification; that it is not a general reference library, but a special library, something entirely different. I have at the request of the Program Committee written down what seemed to me the perfectly obvious things that might be said about the scope and purposes of the special library. You have the paper before you as printed in "Special Libraries."

(1) Mr. Dudgeon's paper was published in the June, 1912 issue of Special Libraries, Pp. 129-133.

MR. A. G. S. JOSEPHSON:—A general library is most often established without any very definite demand for it, however useful and really needed it will be found to be when once opened for public use. Few, if any special libraries, are founded except for a very definite purpose, to fill a real need, and often, perhaps, not until long after the need for it has been demonstrated. Here is the mission of the Special Libraries Association, to agitate for the establishment of special libraries to fill special, only vaguely felt needs. I would like to see the Association take up a real campaign for the further development of libraries in places where there now are none, especially in commercial and industrial plants. It seems to me that this would be a much more fruitful field and a much more significant work, than the discussion of matters of routine and method.

A special library is, to my mind, a library that covers a single definite subject, or a definite group of related subjects, such as City planning, or Sociology. Such a library will exclude from its shelves everything that is not definitely related to its subject, or, if occasionally for special reasons, a book not directly germane to this subject is admitted, that book is given its place in the system of the library as determined by the reason for its being kept. If it is intended to make a distinction between special and general libraries, the distinction should be clear and distinct. A library is not a special library because it excludes from its field certain more or less definite branches of knowledge. On the other hand, it is quite possible so to administer a general library that it, or rather each of its departments, may be regarded as a special library. In order that such a library which covers more than one subject or group of subjects, shall become un-

der the technical definition of "special", each of its departments must be organized as if it were a library by itself, with little more than an outward connection with the other departments, it should have its own quarters, differentiated from the other departments, it should have its own librarian who in all matters relating only to it should have independent authority.

Another characteristic of a special library is, that in its administration special methods are used. The special library must, for instance, make much more use of what has come to be known as documentation than the general library. A special library must subscribe to many periodicals of a general character, but there is no reason why it should keep them forever intact and bind them. A special library of engineering, for instance, will have to subscribe to magazines like *The World's Work*, or even *Scribners'*, but when the current volumes or numbers are no longer needed for constant reference, there is no need of retaining them, the articles that bear on the subject covered by the special library, are the only ones that are needed for preservation; the remainder of the numbers are better on the scrap heap, or in the hands of some other library for special uses there.

The methods of cataloguing and classifying a special library will also be somewhat different from those in use in general libraries. The classification must be much closer and in cataloguing less attention need be given to the bibliographical description than to the contents. In many cases the cataloguing of books in a special library will amount to abstracting. And much more analytical work must be done in order to make all the resources of the library yield their fullest.

Not only in methods does the special library differ from the general. Its material is to a very large extent different. It must have books, it is true, and pamphlets, and periodicals, though right here does the difference begin, as we have seen, because, while the general library must keep the whole periodical, the special library will keep only what it needs. We might come to the point where special libraries will not even have whole books, but only such parts of many books as it needs, treating books as well as periodicals on the principle of documentation. Furthermore, the special library is to a much larger extent than the general depending on material that has not yet reached printed form. Manuscripts, letters, notes of all kinds, photographs, drawings, tabulated matter, all these and many other different means of information will be collected and arranged for future use in special libraries.

It has been said that the librarian of a special library must be a specialist first of all, and only secondarily a librarian. To this I cannot agree. A librarian must first of all be a librarian. Some persons seem to think that all there is to a librarian is technique, knowledge of the rules and practices that have grown up among libraries and are taught in library schools. This is the very smallest part of a librarian's equipment. No librarian was yet made in the library school alone.

Take an engineer, or a minister, or a professor of history, let him take a special course in library "science", and he will never become anything but an engineer, or a minister, or a professor, any more than a course in a business college would make him an expert accountant unless he possesses the inborn feeling for books, the real scent of the bibliographer.

The fundamental knowledge of a librarian is the knowledge of books, not of books on city planning, or railroading, or history, or engineering, or theology, but of books per se as sources of knowledge, as tools for study, as means for research. A librarian with this special knowledge, who knows from long experience what books are, how they are to be used to yield the fullest fruit for the labor bestowed on them by the reader, is certainly competent to take hold of a library of no matter what specialty and manage it so that it serves its constituency to the fullest.

On being placed in charge of a special library he will naturally, almost without any outward effort, apply his knowledge of books and of library methods to the case in hand and make himself, not a specialist, but a special librarian. He will apply his knowledge of books as tools to the effort of making himself sufficiently proficient in the field covered by the library so as to be able to aid those who come to use the library. No librarian need be a specialist in any particular field of literature, but he must be a specialist in the field of books about books. He need not know everything, but he must know where to go to get information about almost anything. If he does not know the by-ways of bibliography, he might not be able to help those who come to use his library, because very often most important facts are found not in the books on the subject on which information is sought, but in books on some quite remote subject of which the engineer or historian, however trained in library technique, would never dream.

Mr. W. P. CUTLER:—I do not know that I have anything to offer as a contribution to the discussion of Mr. Dudgeon's very interesting paper and Mr. Josephson's very interesting discussion of it. I might, with my usual liking, perhaps to express things

briefly, say that I consider a special library as one that serves people who are doing things, and a reference library one which serves people who are thinking things. The former are not thinking about doing things, they are already doing them. I think that applies also to people who are serving as legislators, who are making laws; to sociologists, who are making attempts to handle crime and other sociological questions. I believe that the development now in the public library world is in the direction of service to the public. For twenty-five or twenty-six years now we have been talking about, first, books, and then about places for storing books, buildings to put them in, methods of cataloguing them, charging them, of making picture bulletins for children and all that, and we have finally arrived at a discussion of the methods of serving the people who are really doing things. It has taken twenty-five years, about, to arrive at that point, and I think we are reaching that goal. I noticed, although I was not present at the meeting this morning, that in two reports of committees of the American Library Association, an instrument was mentioned which has been used in one library, at least, to my knowledge, for the reproduction of material for people who are doing things, a reproduction of printed material, manuscripts, maps, drawings, etc., the first time that has come up, I think, in a report in the American Library Association on the reference side.

MR. JOHN A. LAPP:—I have not very much to say except to emphasize one or two points which Mr. Dudgeon brought out in his paper. One of those points is the fact that the material which we deal with in special libraries is not found in books. In a short experience of only four years, I think, outside of those references to legal works, to law periodicals and law books, we have not been able to do one-tenth of our work from books or from published material. Most of the work, the real work, which has been done by the legislative reference department of Indiana has been done through work which we have prepared, which we have drawn off from the general material scattered here and there in obscure sources and from letters which we had written to experts outside. I say scarcely one-tenth, and I do not know but that that is too liberal, one-tenth of the questions, we have been able to answer from published material. That would seem to me to be the most distinguishing point about the special library. I believe that the heads of the industrial libraries, the manufacturing libraries, the commercial libraries, will agree with me on that point.

The special library meets a very special need. That has been pointed out many times. We deal with material that is not in print. We manufacture it. We many times must color it with our own opinions. Some people say that in public affairs, in municipal and legislative reference work, we should not allow our own personality or our judgment to enter into the work. I should like to find a librarian who is able to keep from doing that. If I have knowledge which to me seems certain, if I know a certain fact and have the information right at hand, I cannot refrain from telling the person who ought to know that fact, I cannot refrain from telling him that a certain thing is right, or a certain thing is wrong. It is out of the question, I believe, for a man to be efficient as a special librarian, even in dealing with the public affairs libraries, to avoid giving his own opinions on subjects. What is the use of his getting a knowledge of the subject if he cannot really use it. But he should use it very discreetly.

The special library was very well described by Mr. Cutter when he said it was a library for those who do things, while the reference library is for those people who think things. This is the age of efficiency. I believe that the librarian is the efficiency engineer, or ought to be the efficiency engineer, of the educational world. I think the general reference librarian ought to be that, and I think the librarian of the special library, particularly of the manufacturing and industrial library, can be to a large degree the efficiency expert of such a concern.

MR. GUY E. MARION:—I think the people who are present here would take a good deal of satisfaction in knowing who the people are that are actually and most vitally interested in special library work, and I have analyzed an up-to-date membership list which I hold here in my hand, of which I should be glad to show copies to any who may be interested. We have now grown to a group of 224 people who are interested. That is a growth, roughly, of twenty-five per cent, since our last meeting in New York City. There are four insurance libraries in the country. There are nineteen people who are interested in public utilities. Do you who are here know them all personally? If not, why don't you? There are five financial libraries. There are among the commercial, technical and scientific libraries, many of which are manufacturing, etc., forty-eight. I doubt if many of you public librarians would perhaps surmise it. Among the public affairs libraries, which cover the legislative reference departments of state libraries as well, there are something like thirty-six, nearly forty. It is interesting to note that the public libraries

have themselves been sufficiently interested to know what we are doing, so that forty-five of them have become members of this association, to be in touch, I presume, with what we are aiming for. There are twenty-nine colleges and universities interested; and of miscellaneous people whom we can hardly classify, not knowing where they belong, there are thirty-eight.

Mr. C. A. GEORGE, Elizabeth, N. J.:—I should be very much interested to learn, Mr. President, just how the scope of these special library efforts is to benefit the library profession in general. It seems to me that the scope of these special libraries pretty much covers all the work that we are called upon to do and judging from one of the speakers, they are liable to become a little pedagogic. If we are to furnish information which does not exist in print, it seems to me that we are extending the library function a little bit farther than old-fashioned people like myself are wont to consider it. I think, going farther back among the older librarians, there is an inclination to be a little more conservative, and to say that only such information shall be furnished to the public as can be found in the catalog. I am willing to go to the point where we will aid the catalog in helping the individual to get what he wants, and we are called upon, so far as I know, to a pretty minute degree, to furnish bibliographies, all of us, probably. I would like to know, on all of these topics that have been mentioned, and of course a great many more, whether this special library work is to make our general work easier. Is this something that we can join as a library, and send for this information and find it all ready for us? Or are we still obliged to give the information on the subject and make up our own bibliographies, and still continue to make use of such bibliographical material and aids as most every library has? I confess I am a little bit at sea as to the whole scope of this particular association. Of course, I know it is not very old, but it seems to me its work is not very much differentiated. I can understand why an engineering society should have a man that would be particularly versed in engineering material. The same way with a law library and a medical library, but I do not observe that it required an engineer to make a successful engineering librarian. I think Mr. Cutter in his present occupation was in possession of his present engineering knowledge when he went from his old position to the one he occupies at the present time, and I am also strongly of the opinion that there is very little that is requested of him about engineering, that is not in books, which he is not prepared to get the information on that is required. But,

seriously, I would like to know whether this is an effort to centralize as a sort of associated bibliographical society on these different topics, for the benefit of all of us, or whether it is merely to inspire continuity of effort along some of these lines, in a little greater degree than all of us are constantly called upon to perform. If anybody can tell us that, I am sure I shall be very grateful for one, because I do not quite understand the object of this society. These subjects are all more or less interesting to all of us, and it seems to me they belong to all of us, yet a good many people are not here and I cannot quite understand why it should be a conservative association on subjects that are of general interest, and confined to special libraries, because we are asked those questions all the time.

Mr. DUDGEON:—Trying again to answer a question which seems to me to be a little bit indefinite and hard to answer, I will simply state my personal view on this. My connection with this was due to this conception, that in my business, which was legislative work, I conceived that there was a great deal in books that ought to be brought to the attention of the people who were doing the work, and I was glad to join an association whose special function seemed to be to help one another devise ways and means of getting book knowledge into the hands of the actual workers. Now, that seems to me to be somewhat of a distinct proposition. I think Mr. Cutter's definition justifies our existence. We are specialized in getting knowledge out of books and out of the experience of others into the hand of workers rather than into the hands of people who are just thinking about working. It seems to me that it is quite distinct although hard to distinguish.

Mr. CUTTER:—May I say for the information of Mr. George that the most used reference book in my library is the telephone directory, and it is used to communicate with people who know things, so that other people who come into the library shall find them out.

Mr. MARION:—May I supplement Mr. Cutter's remark by saying that instead of one telephone directory in my library I have fifty or seventy-five, and the whole point of the work of this association is that probably I should never have been here attending the conference of the American Library Association, and I can see at least a dozen more that I doubt having any place here whatsoever, had this association not been formed. That is the *raison d'être*, it seems to me. There is sitting on my left a young lady from whom you may hear in the discussion at a later meeting, who is just about to organize a special library in a department store in Boston. That may seem

a little out of the ordinary. What could the American Library Association, or what would it naturally, have given this young lady to help her in her work, which is so very special and unique, in fact, the first one of the kind of which I have learned? Or what would she have done in the way of getting help from the American Library Association had she appealed to it? On the other hand, I think that she has got helpful suggestions perhaps from conversations with a large number of the membership of this association whose problems are not too foreign from hers.

CATALOGING IN LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE WORK.

Ona M. Imhoff, Cataloger, Legislative Reference Department, Madison, Wis.

The state which studies the laws and experience of other states and countries in order to bring to its own statute books the best features of each, combined with the results of original work, confronts a problem of no small dimensions. The mass of laws put forth by the forty-eight states of this country is so overwhelming that it is practically impossible for one man to thoroughly comprehend their merits and disadvantages. The legislative reference library, therefore, must be of service in helping to select that which is worthy of imitation at the same time discarding the impractical features.

The reasons for the success or failure of such laws, and the differences in economic or local conditions in two communities must always receive serious consideration by those who are endeavoring to meet the advancing economic demands for properly constructed and better laws. The comparative element of this vast accumulation of material must always be remembered, not only in the care, but also in the gathering of material, if the library is to serve its highest purpose.

Because of this and other well known characteristics of a library of this type, the demands are of a peculiar nature and cannot be met by the ordinary library material treated in the usual library method. It is more or less of a quasi-library, requiring an adaptation of library processes to a combination of office and library work. As a result of this difference, the general library rules for cataloging will probably be decidedly modified. One is justified in making the catalog of such a library a law unto itself, for each and every one of its class has its own particular problems, environment and limitations, which must be met in its own particular way.

Since the problem becomes so largely one of individuality and circumstances, it might be well to consider for a moment some of

the essential differences in purpose and treatment of material, and to realize the desirable points to be attained as well as the non-essentials, or things actually to be avoided.

Time Saving.

The processes and methods of this kind of a library must in their nature be conducive to rapidity and conciseness of service. Time saving devices are unusually important, not only in the acquisition of material and the actual technical work, but in the delivery of material. The speedy availability of the most serious treatises on the most profound subjects is absolutely necessary. Between sessions many hours of the most earnest and serious efforts must be spent in investigation, study and research in order to relieve the pressure of heavy research work as much as possible during the session.

The library deals with business men who are seeking an answer to some special need. They have a definite reason for seeking the information and a definite point of view and they expect the library to answer their questions in a business-like manner. Too much emphasis cannot be placed upon *efficiency* of service as shown through *rapidity* of service. The legislator is a busy man and any time saved through devices which quicken delivery of material, or shorten the time devoted by the patron himself, is well worth while. If two hours is necessary on the part of the library worker between sessions to put material into such shape that it may be delivered ten minutes sooner during the legislative session, it should be given cheerfully.

Condensations, digests, and briefs may be prepared during the interval between sessions which will save hours of time during the actual high pressure season of the session itself. Any sort of short-cut brought about by analyticals, or any other devices known to the cataloger, should be used. Shrewdness of judgment and a general discrimination as to what is really valuable is not only highly desirable but absolutely essential.

Records.

Since time is such an important element, it might be well to call attention to the fact, that the legislative reference library may be adequately maintained without many of the records which are favored in libraries in general. Do away with as much "red tape" as possible. Simplicity of material, simplicity in service, simplicity in the whole department is to be commended above almost any other one characteristic. Among those records which can be abandoned with perfect propriety in such a department, are the accession book, gift book and withdrawal book. So much of the ma-

terial is ephemeral in its value that the cost of maintenance outweighs the value received in actual results. The serial list may be exceedingly simple. Records of the number of books cataloged, or circulation statistics, are of very doubtful value in this work.

Since the loss of material is inevitably rather large, an inventory is almost essential. However, material is easily replaced, much of it is free and because of this fact, a biennial inventory will prove satisfactory in most cases. There is no need of a complicated charging system. In truth, establish no records of any kind within the library until convinced that its efficiency will be hampered without them. Emphasis is put upon this point, because of the fact that all legislative reference departments have small appropriations in the beginning, and it is during this early period that the library must justify its existence by showing results in active service rather than in catalogs and records. At first there are never enough assistants to do both efficiently. Therefore, let the tendencies be toward those things which will bring into evidence vital things rather than mere good house-keeping.

Some Technical Cataloging Points.

It might be well to state that the term "catalog" will be used in the broadest possible sense. The definition of the term as it will be used in this paper, might be given as "a record of sources and of material", and not merely a record of material to be found upon the shelves of any one library or institution.

The catalog should be kept as simple as possible in its essentials. Conciseness of title, brevity of treatment, and above all clearness, must always be borne in mind. Sacrifice library school rules if necessary. Let there be no hesitation in enlarging or changing the title if by so doing, clearness is improved. It must be remembered always that the catalog is not made for librarians with technical knowledge, but for men whose use of it will be that of an untrained student. Let it be such that your constituency may use it without help. Be exceedingly generous with notes, never falling in the case of bills to show whether such bills became laws or failed in passage. If a bill became a law, give the citation. If reports or cases are known by special names, be sure to note that fact. Let there be no ambiguity either in title, subject or note. Annotations as to the substance of material are also highly desirable, particularly when they show whether a given article is favorable or antagonistic, or state the reliability of the author concerned.

The material itself falls into three distinct classes which influence the cataloging

treatment; books, pamphlets, and clippings. The books and pamphlets show comparatively little variation from regular cataloging methods. Clippings in the Wisconsin legislative reference department are mounted upon manila sheets, eight by ten, arranged chronologically under classification number, marked with a book number Z and treated as a single pamphlet. They have no author card, being entered merely under the subject-heading necessary, with the author line left blank. This procedure is convenient in some other cases, such as certain extracts from the Congressional record, containing discussions in which various members take part and where it is difficult to enter under any individual or even joint authors.

Since the author phase of the catalog is of less interest than the subject phase which acquires unusual importance, secondary cards may be very largely omitted. Joint author cards are really of very little service. Series and title cards are the exception rather than the rule. Whenever possible it is advisable to make continuation cards instead of entering new compilations or new editions on separate cards. In the case of continuation cards, it is advisable to choose a brief title and pay no attention to such variations as may be given in different editions. For instance, a 1907 compilation of state tax laws might be entitled, "Laws relating to assessment and taxation", and the 1909 one simply "Taxation laws", and the 1911 one "Revenue and taxation laws". These may all be entered upon one card under the simple title, "Tax laws", and the three volumes added as continuations. In short, do not attempt to show the exact detail by means of cataloging, such as is advisable in public libraries. What your patron wishes to know is whether you have the tax laws of that state and what is the date of their compilation. These are the facts which interest him and the number of pages or the particular form of the title, is of absolutely no value to him. This is a good example of that freedom in condensation and changing of titles which is somewhat heretical in its nature, but which after all leads to that saving of time and patience which is so necessary. Use only such imprint as is absolutely essential, omitting on the whole, illustrations, maps, portraits, and plates. In cases of excerpts from periodicals the name of the magazine with the date of that particular issue is usually deemed sufficient.

"See Also" Cards.

Because the ordinary patron of the legislative reference library is unfamiliar with library methods, it has been found convenient to file "see also" cards at the beginning of the subjects rather than at the end. For this same reason, the guide cards should be

much more numerous than in other libraries, and it is of great advantage to have the main headings brought out upon thirds with the subdivisions of these main headings on fifths of a different color. Blue and manila form a good color contrast for such a scheme

Comparative Catalog.

As has been said before, the comparative feature of this work is one which is worthy of special consideration. Its value can scarcely be over-estimated. The efficiency of the library can be greatly increased by a constant lookout for such material. Every book, pamphlet or clipping, passing through the hands of the cataloger must be most carefully reviewed, not only for its general material, but for any comparative statement which shows either conditions, laws, or tendencies in two or more communities, states, or countries. It may take form as a tabulated statement, a chapter, a paragraph, or even a mere foot note, but at some future time it may serve as a starting point for an investigation, or give instantaneous help in the question as to "what states or countries have laws similar to this". The advisability of listing such comparative material in a separate catalogue must be determined by each library. When it is buried in the regular catalog it requires much longer to answer such questions than when kept in a separate file. If made into a catalog by itself, there should always be a note showing exactly what states or countries are included in the comparison and the dates covered by such material. In other words the comparative entry must be justified either by the title or a note showing that it really is a comparison. Probably two-thirds of such material is analytical in character.

Analyticals.

The question of analyticals will be greatly influenced by the subject-matter under consideration. Upon certain subjects there are practically no book treatises, and most of the material will be found in the form of analyticals. The amount to be analyzed, the choice of form and the relative value of the material concerned must be determined by shrewd judgment on the part of the cataloger. The entire library will be greatly enhanced by a careful selection of analyticals, but the bulk of the catalog *must not* be increased unless with good reason.

The percentage of analyticals will be in most cases much higher than in the ordinary library, because so often a few pages are worthy of special notice on account of their comparative nature, the particular viewpoint of the author, or sometimes merely because of the scarcity of material on that subject. As to the cataloging form for analyticals, there is no reason why it

should not follow the general rules of the library as a whole. My own preference is for the long form, because oftentimes the short form is not perfectly clear to the legislator. Although advocating simplicity, as a general thing, it should not require clearness to be sacrificed at any time. There is room for discussion on this point and there is difference of opinion, but my conclusion in the matter has been reached after some experimentation. A little more work on the part of the librarian is preferable to the slightest bit of doubt on the part of the legislator.

Subject Headings.

Since legislators are investigating specific problems, looking at them from a single point of view, and not always considering a subject in its broadest sense or in its relationship to knowledge in general, the question of subject headings, outside of classification, becomes practically the most important single proposition the cataloger has to consider. In practically every case the popular rather than the technical form of heading is desirable. The simple ordinary term should be chosen for it is under this type of heading that your reader will be most certain to look. In his haste and absorption he fails to realize that there is any possible view point other than his own. Having but one thought in his mind, he naturally expects to find his material under this subject. Most certainly he should find at least a cross reference. Therefore, one recommendation is to be exceedingly generous in the matter of cross references. Under such conditions it is always wiser not to trust one's own judgment, but to call upon various people asking under what heading they would look for material of a certain type. In this way the cataloger may secure suggestions which are unusually helpful and which put into the catalog the ideas of many persons rather than of one.

For instance, a book or pamphlet relating to the extortion practiced by usurers would be found under a heading such as "Interest" or "Usury". However, there are various other headings under which individuals might expect to find material of this kind, depending upon the particular phase of the question which he had in mind at the time. A busy man, wishing to draft a bill putting the loan shark under control, would be thinking of a loan shark and not of the underlying principle of interest. Another man approaching the question through interest in the installment plan would expect to find material of use to him under that subject. Another man taking a broader view of the subject might look under "Interest". Each of these men would be justified in looking under the particular subject he had in mind, expecting to find either the

material or a reference sending him to the chosen heading. *Every possible heading* which suggests itself is worthy of consideration, for such an investment of time will more than pay for itself in the satisfaction it brings to those who use the catalog. The necessity for painstaking effort and careful thought in this connection is verified by experience.

Local and Special Names.

Special and local names may well be noted on all main cards and cross references made in every case from such forms. For instance, the law governing the sale of stocks recently passed in Kansas, which is popularly known as the "Blue sky law" should be noted as such in the catalog. The "Mary Ann" bill may be called for by that name and if there is no cross reference in the catalog the untrained assistant in the library, or the stenographer, will never find it. The mechanical part of the catalog should be so complete that it does not require acquaintance with all phases of the subject in order that a person may use it intelligently. Therefore, special and local names inevitably need attention.

Law and Economics.

The contents of a legislative reference library are largely of either an economic or a legal nature, and its patrons sometimes approach the material from the legal side and sometimes from the economic side. In assigning subject headings this fact must *never be forgotten*. Consequently, the headings will sometimes take a legal turn and sometimes an economic turn. At times it is necessary to compromise and choose one halfway between the two.

Let us consider for a moment the relationship of the economic and the legal material. Justice Holmes, in his book on the "Common law" expresses this relationship unusually well. He says in substance that the growth of the law is legislative; it is legislative in its grounds; that the secret root from which law draws all the juices of life is consideration of what is expedient for the community.

The economic necessity for law precedes the legal expression. The need for a statute is felt long before it is formulated. This is readily recognized by political economists and lawyers. Judge Dicey in his book entitled, "Law and opinion in England", (Lond. 1905, p. 367) says: "A statute . . . is apt to reproduce the public opinion, not so much of today as of yesterday". Since a legislative reference library is busied with the process of law-making, rather than with the administration or interpretation of law, the trend will be toward the economic headings rather than the legal. The tendency of law is to crystallize, and subjects legal in

aspect are likely to be complete in themselves, and therefore less amenable to library purposes. As an example, a subject heading such as "Eminent domain" is legal in its nature. This will be used in the main body of the catalog without a doubt. It may have cross references of both a legal and an economic nature. At the same time "Eminent domain" may be used as a subdivision of economic headings, such as "Railroads", "Street railways", "Telegraphs", and "Telephones". This shows how the legal aspect of an economic question may be brought directly in touch with the economic phase of the question. Another example is "Liquor problem"; as it is used in the subject headings, it is an economic question, yet we use the subdivision "Illegal traffic" which includes purely a legal phase. "Discrimination", a legal term, will cross refer to some specific form under an economic heading such as "Railroads—Rebates". It is often necessary to refer from some rather popular headings to legal forms, such as "Funeral expenses, see Estates of deceased persons". Again it may be necessary to mix the two with a heading such as "Ethics—Business and professional", with cross references from legal headings, such as "Professional ethics", "Legal ethics", "Medical ethics", etc. The general conclusion reached is that there is likely to be either subdivisions or cross references back and forth from any type of heading to any other type, with one exception, namely, an economic subdivision of a legal heading. In our experience in Wisconsin, we have not found this combinations of headings either necessary or advantageous. This fact but emphasizes what has already been said, that law once established, becomes permanent and fixed in character.

Geographical Divisions.

Geographical divisions as main headings should be used sparingly, but geographical subdivisions of subjects are very helpful. Primary election laws, road laws, tax laws will all be more available if divided by states, not only in the classification, but in the subject headings. If clearness or rapidity of service demand subdivisions, they should be made, even though there be few cards under each subdivision.

Many helpful suggestions for subject headings and cross references may be obtained from law indexes, law encyclopedias, and the New York index of legislation.

Catalog as a Source of Material.

Not only is it necessary for the cataloger to know the material which is in the library itself, but if efficient work is to be accomplished it is decidedly necessary that material not within the four walls should be made available. Let all kinds of knowledge

be at the cataloger's command, and make the mechanical devices carry as much of this burden as possible. First of all, material which is in town but which is not contained within your own library, should be noted. Statutes and session laws of all the states should be obtainable though not necessarily a part of the library itself. If a state or law library is near at hand, it is far better to rely upon them as a source of reference than to duplicate such a collection on your own shelves. Articles in law magazines, reports large in bulk, but issued only occasionally, may be noted, when not placed upon the shelves. In Wisconsin we make a distinction between material in existence within the city and that which is in existence elsewhere, such as in the Library of Congress, the John Crerar library, or near-by institutions. A manila catalog card tells us that the material may be found outside of the city, whereas by stamping the name of the library in the place of the call number on a white card, we indicate that the material is in town. Subject entries only are made for material of this sort.

There are many indexes already in existence which will supplement the catalog and call to the attention of the worker available material. One of the most valuable sources of all is found in the experts of the neighborhood. The librarian is too prone to think that all the most useful knowledge is in books or printed form. Some of the best help imaginable can be obtained from men. Every community has within its borders specialists of various types; men who have given their lifetime to the study of some particular question. Make such individuals a portion of the catalog; use them as sources. The telephone is at your command and oftentimes more valuable information can be obtained from some person within telephone call than can be gotten from hours of work with shelf material.

Furthermore, do not limit yourself to the talented man within the community, but use the expert wherever he may be found. Correspondence will often bring information to your door; mount the letters; put them with the clippings or catalog them separately; in case of urgency, telegraph. In fact, have some of the appropriation deliberately set aside for supplementing the catalog by telegrams.

A record of sources, arranged both by places and subjects is of service. Under your subject list enter the names and addresses of those who are specialists. Experts throughout the country will thus be at your command. In the geographical list, put the names of parties to whom you may apply for material relating to a given community. Suppose for instance, that

your state is contemplating a Workmen's compensation law and some state where there is no legislative reference department is also considering the matter. This state passes a law on Tuesday, and on Saturday the bill of your own state is coming up for consideration. You need exact information as to which bill is passed, whether it passed with or without amendments; in fact, you must have immediate and full knowledge concerning that law. You may have within your mind some possible source, but during the stress and pressure of the legislative session such a list relieves one of the necessity of remembrance.

The catalog, through its mechanical devices, can carry this burden. The catalog is not merely a record of sources within the four walls, but must endure as a record of all possible available sources, so that time and energy given to "the living part" of the catalog, is well expended.

Additional Catalogs.

In addition to the sources already mentioned, there are numerous other possible indexes of value. When the bills are available in printed form, a subject index indicating the final disposition of a bill—whether killed, passed or vetoed—is of inestimable use. Such indexes for the general laws and the local and temporary laws are advantageous. A comparative index, apart from the regular catalog, already noticed, may be mentioned again in this connection. An index of the documents of the state is also a valuable asset, since the publications of most states are rather poorly indexed and have practically no centralized list of subjects. The decisions of the Attorney-generals quite often are of as much importance in law conclusions as are the decisions of the courts. They have virtually either vitalized or invalidated laws upon the statute books. In states where statute revisions are rather infrequent, statute indexes may be necessary. These indexes should be made supplementary to the regular catalog. Some of them may be carried along as side issues at the same time as the regular work, and others may be taken up in their entirety to be accomplished as time permits.

Disposition of Material.

Since the importance and value of such a library depends, not upon the quantity, but upon the quality and efficiency of the collection, the disposition of material which has become historical in its nature comes prominently into the foreground. Unless there is constant supervision and reduction, there is an unnecessary and useless accumulation. The working library will never be a large one. After a state policy relating to a given question is established,

the library should, within a reasonable time, dispose of the larger portion of the collection on that subject. Its present usefulness from the legislator's standpoint is over. Its future value is as a historical contribution. As a result there will be continual withdrawals as well as continual acquisitions.

Conclusion

After all, that which makes library work so stimulating and so interesting is the human element. The progress which one may make in its mechanical side, the service of all its books and pamphlets, the importance and the value of the material, depend primarily upon the human side of it. The mere fact that the scholar, as well as the man with a hobby, the student along with the crank, the conservative together with the radical, the theoretical and the practical man, are all brought together in a common place, shows that the mechanical is truly the lesser value in this field of work. However, it is in the making of a more perfect apparatus, in the saving of time and energy, in the additions to its efficiency, that the cataloger receives his reward. The possibilities of this work are so far-reaching, that every reasonable device or idea is at least worthy of trial so that there may be every possible advancement in every practical direction. Failure is no disgrace. Advancement lies in experiment. It is a new work and there are few guide posts. We cannot accept other experiences unquestionably. What are virtues in another library may be vices in the legislative reference work. What we most need is a safe and sane balance of judgment, quickness of perception, a sense of foresight, combined with all the special knowledge possible, great discrimination, initiative and the ability to meet any situation, and above all, the disposition to test every new conception or suggestion which may lead to development; in fact the more of these virtues which the cataloger may possess, the more efficient will be the result, not only in the catalog itself, but in the net results shown by the work in its entirety.

SELECT LIST OF REFERENCES ON MOTION PICTURES.

(Compiled under the direction of H. H. B. Meyer, Chief Bibliographer, Library of Congress, with the co-operation of the State Libraries and State Legislative Reference Departments. Contributions were received from the following: Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.)

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- RESEARCH AND INTERCOMMUNICATION.**
- A Partial Survey of Ways and Means.**
(The Dial, Chicago, Ill.)
- Of bibliographical undertakings, large and small past, present, and future, there are many, and they are of great utility; but it is not the chief purpose of this note to deal therewith. We have in mind rather those publications and organizations which afford assistance in current research, or through the medium of which investigators can be placed in direct communication with each other. It is generally recognized now that the serious student is no longer content with printed literature. He must seek, and, if possible, secure the last word on the subject in point. He may join some one or more of the societies, national or international, devoted to the matters or problems of interest to him, but he will still find that there is a chasm which cannot be bridged over except by some one gen-

eral clearing-house to which, in certain emergencies, to apply.

With this state of affairs, it was not surprising to hear of the creation of such an institution as "Die Brücke" (The Bridge), under the presidency of Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Ostwald, of Leipzig, and having its headquarters at 30, Schwindstrasse Munich. The minimum yearly subscription for membership is only six marks (about \$1.50). Dr. Ostwald has already, according to report, donated to "Die Brücke" the sum of one hundred thousand marks (\$24,000) from his private fortune. An active international propaganda will, no doubt, soon be commenced by "Die Brücke," which has so far been giving special attention to the organization of its work in Germany. It will probably establish, in due course, branch organizations in the various countries, and will begin the publication of an official organ of inter-communication. The scope of "Die Brücke," unlike that of any other previously existing body, is unlimited as to subject. Its members will be privileged to submit queries on any imaginable topic. It will seek affiliation with all other institutions, societies, etc., throughout the world. Among its first serious tasks, therefore, will be the compilation of a complete list of the almost innumerable organizations in existence, with some indication of their scope and purpose. True, this was largely accomplished a few years ago by the Carnegie Institution, in its "Handbook of Learned Societies in America," and in its as yet unedited lists for foreign countries; but there remains nevertheless ample room for the good work undertaken by "Die Brücke." Its ultimately large corps of correspondents throughout the civilized world will form a very strong working organization.

We have chosen to present first this international project in its latest form, before dealing with some of the national undertakings, in order to have the broadest possible ground-work for that ultimate co-ordination of endeavor which is rapidly becoming so essential.

In England, the old London "Notes and Queries," which has appeared weekly since 1840 and is rendered accessible by many excellent indexes, is an exceedingly useful means of research and intercommunication, particularly on subjects of literature, grammar, linguistics, philology, history, biography, heraldry, genealogy, folklore, bibliography, and allied matters. There also exist in Great Britain and Ireland numerous local "Notes and Queries" magazines, and many societies of varied purposes. Among those whose objects should be of general interest is the British Institute of Social Service, 4 Tavistock Square, London W. C., which has an official organ, "Progress." In seeking a likely candidate for appointment as the British representative of "Die Brücke," however, we would most naturally turn to such an organization as The Information and Agency Bureau, J. W. Shaw, Director, 24 Hart Street, Holborn, London, W. C. Among Mr. Shaw's current investigations is one relating to the production of crockery, china, earthenware, etc., in the various countries, in behalf of a company making a patented tunnel oven for firing pottery. This is at least suggestive of the commercial possibilities of such a clearing-house.

In France, we have "L'Intermédiaire des Chercheurs et Curieux," appearing in Paris three times a month, since 1864. A general index to its contents to the year 1896 has been printed. A complete set of this periodical may be found in the library of the University of Chicago. Many are the quaint and interesting contributions in its columns, relating to French history and art. We must not overlook, in passing, the existence of the Institut International pour la diffusion des Experiences Sociales, under the general direction of Prof. Dr. Rodolphe Broda, 59 Rue Claude Bernard, Paris. Its official organ, "Les Documents du Progres," is interesting and useful. The French representation of "Die Brücke" might, perhaps, be assigned to the Insti-

tut du Mois Scientifique et Industriel, in Paris, or to the Association de Bibliographie et de Documentation Scientifique, Industrielle et Commerciale, of which the Directeur is M. Jules Garçon, 40 bis Rue Fabert, Paris (vile).

As to Germany, "Die Brücke" itself, with headquarters in Munich, will doubtless provide its own national bureau. It might receive valuable assistance from such an organization as the Institut für Internationalen Austausch fortschrittlicher Erfahrungen (International Institute for the interchange of progressive experiences), of which the official organ, "Dokumente des Fortschritts," is becoming more and more widely known. The Secretary is Prof. J. H. Epstein, 22 Hermannstrasse, Frankfurt-am-Main.

In the United States, we think first of the Smithsonian Institution, with its efficient International Exchange through which, indeed, inter-relations with "Die Brücke" were established April 30, 1912, and the interchange of documents began. The Carnegie Institution, also richly endowed, is, like the Smithsonian, carrying out a liberal policy for the extension of useful knowledge. The scope of both those beneficent bodies, however, is restricted, for the most part, to matters of science, pure and applied. "The Scientific American" inaugurated many years ago a column for notes and queries which is much patronized by its readers. "The Publisher and Retailer" (New York) for October, 1911 (pages 17-18) printed a useful list of American societies devoted to child-welfare and other subjects, which are willing to answer questions within their scope. Something of this kind was also attempted by "Special Libraries" for June, 1911 (pages 54-58), but a more nearly complete list appears in the front pages of the current issues of "The Survey." It remained, however, for Boston to establish the first Co-operative Information Bureau of unrestricted scope, and to form a card-index of all its members, with notes of their special knowledge. This brings these scattering remarks, at last, to the concrete proposition that there is great need of an American Co-operative Information Bureau, with branches in all the principal libraries, universities, colleges, and commercial clubs of the country, and with its own official organ of inter-communication to be issued monthly. Such an organization, with headquarters in Chicago as the commercial and railroad centre, and where the library facilities are of the best, could soon become of great practical usefulness. It might also act as the American representative of "Die Brücke." The present time seems opportune for serious consideration of such a project. In this connection it is well to call attention to the Special Libraries Association, which is the central organ for a number of scattering and, to some extent, unrelated institutions covering a large field of important work which is in great need of organization and co-operative effort, a fertile field which gives every promise of an abundant harvest.

To the support of such a banner might rally the leading commercial and industrial bodies of the country, provided that, at the same time, adequate means are established for the necessary intercommunication as to current investigations.

To facilitate discussion and definite action, the following rough draft of a prospectus is appended.

PROSPECTUS OF THE AMERICAN CO-OPERATIVE INFORMATION BUREAU.

OBJECTS:

(a) To furnish a central body or clearing-house for the interchange of authentic information on all subjects of science, technology, history, commerce, transportation, travel, and all other matters without restriction.

(b) To encourage co-operation in the interchange of useful information and for that purpose establish branches in all the principal libraries, universities, and other institutions of learning throughout the United States, as well

as to seek affiliation with similar institutions and societies in all parts of the world.

(c) To place investigators into direct communication with each other when mutually desired.

(d) To make special inquiries for the benefit of members.

(e) To publish an official organ "Intercommunication," to be issued monthly at a yearly subscription price of about \$3.00, of which a small portion, to be determined, may be retained by the local branch sending subscriptions. (The contents of each issue of the journal will be arranged in order of subject according to the decimal system of classification, thus bringing conveniently together all items of allied interest. Each yearly volume will be accompanied by a complete analytical index.)

PRIVILEGES.

All members shall have the privilege of submitting briefly worded queries on any subject without restriction, but each separate query shall be accompanied by an addressed envelope duly stamped for return postage.

Cost, ETC.:

There shall be no membership fees beyond the subscription price of the official organ, but the bureau shall not be expected to undertake without charge special researches of an expensive character for the benefit of any single member; neither will the bureau assume the responsibility of getting answers to all queries nor guarantee the accuracy of information obtained through its medium.

Comment and criticism will show needed modifications and improvements, but something of this character is required in our highly specialized and rapidly moving life.

EUGENE F. MCPHIE

Chicago, July 10, 1912.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES.

Agricultural education. Benjamin Marshall Davis concludes his recent book on "Agricultural education in the public schools, a study of its development with particular reference to the agencies concerned" with a bibliography of 28 pages. No attempt, the author says, has been made to make it complete: the entries were selected with the view of presenting typical contributions on various phases of agricultural education in elementary and secondary schools. 1912.

City planning. The Report of the Metropolitan plan commission submitted Jan. 1, 1912, contains as one of the items in its appendix, a "Selected bibliography of city planning." p. 59-60.

Education. The Final report of the Illinois education commission issued in 1911, as printed in the Report of the Illinois State superintendent of public instruction for the year 1908-1910, contains many valuable short bibliographies in connection with the discussions of various problems of school administration. Reference lists are found on state superintendents of public instruction, state boards of education, county boards of education, school trustees under county, township and district organization, teachers' licenses, teachers' salaries, and teachers' institutes.

Educational museums. The U. S. Bureau of education, in its Current educational

topics, no. 1, (Bulletin, 1912, no. 11, whole number 482) to the discussion of the "Educational Museum of the St. Louis public schools", adds a brief bibliography of educational museums, which will prove particularly valuable as this phase of education is of comparatively recent development.

Employment—Children—Supervision. The Dept of social investigation of the Chicago school of civics and philanthropy (Russell Sage foundation), has recently issued a Report made for several Chicago women's clubs on "Finding employment for children who leave the grade schools to go to work", on pages 53 to 56 of which is a selected bibliography relating to employment supervision.

Nitrogen—Sources. In "Utilization of atmospheric nitrogen" by T. H. Norton, no. 52 of the Special agents series issued by the U. S. bureau of manufactures, a bibliography is included on the present sources of nitrogen. p. 177-8, 1912.

Old age pensions. A bibliographical index, instead of a formal bibliography, is a novel feature of a new book by L. W. Squier, on "Old age dependency in the United States; a complete survey of the pension movement". The books, etc. referred to in the text are listed alphabetically by title and author and the page or pages in the text given where they are mentioned. 1912.

Paint. The U. S. Geological Survey has issued an advance chapter from its "Mineral resources of the United States, calendar year, 1911", dealing with the "Production of mineral paints in 1911" by W. C. Phalen, which includes a bibliography of five pages. The items listed are grouped in four divisions, geology and statistics of mineral paints and pigments, technology and use of paints and pigments, results of recent tests of paints and paint materials, paint industry. 1912.

Social evil. In the second edition of E. R. A. Seligman's "The Social Evil, with special reference to conditions existing in the City of New York, a report prepared (in 1902) under the direction of the Committee of fifteen," which appeared this year, the author in revising and enlarging it, has included a comprehensive bibliography on the subject, of 30 pages. The entries are arranged by countries and divided into two groups; signed and anonymous. 1912.

Suggestion in school hygiene. To an article under the above title by W. H. Burnham, in the Pedagogical seminary of June 1912, is appended a bibliography on the topic. Of the twenty-eight entries in the list twenty-one are to foreign material.