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Training for Special Librarianship

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BEFORE we can talk about training for special librarianship we must have a clear picture of how special libraries differ from other libraries.

In 1912, M. S. Dudgeon summarized the features of the special library which distinguished it from the general library in these paragraphs, which are as pertinent today as they were then:

In a *general reference library* the predominating material is books. In a *special library* the material of the most vital importance is not in books — often it is not even in print.

In a *general reference library* the material is stored, classified, and catalogued so that it constitutes a fertile field into which an investigator can go and glean out information bearing upon his subject. In a *special reference library* the information is already gleaned, made up and concentrated into portable parcels, by the librarian, and is ready to be delivered to the special worker too busy to investigate for himself.

A *general reference library* is a storehouse of perfectly good well-authenticated though possibly somewhat antique information on subjects or phases of subjects no longer current. The *special library* is a clearing house of live ideas on live problems, many of the ideas being still in a formative stage.

A *reference library* is an academic institution for the scholar. A *special library* is a utilitarian establishment calculated to serve the worker too busy to take time for scholarly investigation. Often such scholarly attainments as are involved in the investigational work must be furnished by the librarian. The special librarian becomes in fact a bureau of investigation.

A *general reference library* is preservative. A *special library* is creative.

A *general reference library* deals largely with the past; it deals with the present and the future only incidentally. The *special library* deals primarily with the present and the future; it deals only incidentally with the past.

The view of a *general reference library* is retrospective; historical. The *special librarian* must have a vision of the future that is almost prophetic.

Along with the discovery of information to meet a specific need, the job of the special librarian involves a knowledge of the activities, present and future, of the group he serves and a continuing survey of current print in order to note information of value to anyone in the group and to bring it to the immediate attention of the department or official whose work it would promote.

Another factor that must be considered is the acute need of personnel equipped to organize and administer, since the opportunities in the special library field are not as assistants in existing libraries but as librarians-in-charge of new libraries. This may be unfortunate since it would be well for every new recruit to be able to secure some experience under the direction of a person long in the field. However, we must face facts. Special librarians do not have an opportunity to get training in library techniques on the job, but must know how to proceed from the start. Although there are innumerable possibilities, the Special Libraries Association has hesitated to work for the formation of new libraries because

of the lack of this trained personnel. That is why the Association feels so strongly that our training agencies should be interested in understanding this need and meeting it — thus providing employment for many capable people.

The training situation today for work in special libraries parallels rather closely the conditions that existed in the early days of public library development in this country. Then there were no trained librarians and hence, our pioneers in the movement — with no techniques developed, no codes by which to be guided, with classification schemes in the making, subject heading lists unrecorded — had to struggle, confer, progress by trial and error step by step, sometimes failing, but more often succeeding. In any case, it was a long, hard road that has led to our present-day, well-equipped library schools, our codes, and our established techniques which have put the library profession in the United States in the forefront of the movement.

Now let us look at the special library field which has had its greatest development since the war. Its pioneers were, to be sure, mostly those who had had training in our library schools and experience in our public libraries. Nevertheless, the conditions that had to be met, the psychology of the clientele, the demands of speed, were all very different from public library problems, and required an unusual gift for adaptation. So once again this group, even as the earlier one, had to struggle, discuss, confer, experiment, make mistakes, fail and succeed. Today these pioneers are, for the most part, still the active, forward-looking and directing heads of the libraries in this field.

But what of the future? The heads of business corporations, social service organizations, law firms, newspapers, insurance companies and all other fields in which special libraries are a factor, have come to expect the efficient service to which they have become accustomed in other departments of their organization and are not willing to employ a library worker who cannot offer assurance of equal ability and experience. They are demanding librarians with a background of specialization in the field which they expect to enter, with training in the literature and the methods of specialization, with a pleasing personality and good appearance, not necessarily very young but with youthful outlook and adaptability, and the ability to meet the heavy demands of modern business.

The Special Libraries Association is finding it difficult to provide such workers to replace those retiring or to fill the new positions which are being made. There are at present two sources from which to draw: public libraries and library schools. However, recruits from neither of these groups are fitted for immediate entry to the field without some sort of apprenticeship — interneship might be a better term. As a result of work on the part of the Special Libraries Association for new libraries, most of the positions opening up call for organizers and administrators. Even the graduates of the present course in special library administration offered by the Columbia University School of Library Service are not as well equipped to undertake such positions as they should be. This is no reflection on the course but is due to the fact that, as at present planned, it is only a two-point course and does not allow sufficient time for the thoroughness necessary. What is the answer? There is only one — at least a certain number of our library schools, with due regard to geographical distribution, should offer properly planned courses taught by a faculty having at least some practical experience in the field.

Those of us in the Special Libraries Association, who have been concerned with problems of employment and prop-

erly trained personnel, have watched with interest the adaptation by our training agencies of their curricula to meet the demands of children's work, of school libraries, and more recently of county libraries, although I believe that field is not yet thoroughly taken care of. Whether the fact that these agencies serve the public while most special libraries serve a private group has been the reason for the rather meager attempts to meet this type of special training, I cannot say. It, doubtless, has been one factor. Another one that seems to be insuperable in the minds of our library school faculties is the overwhelming variety of subjects covered in special libraries and of types of organizations served.

This latter consideration, as I said, seems to have been the real stumbling block. I presume the reason for this is that the training agencies have felt that it would be impossible to plan a special libraries course to cover every subject in an already overcrowded curriculum. With this contention I agree. No library school could hope to offer courses covering such widely varying subjects as chemistry, religion, banking, foreign affairs, etc.

But is the subject background the primary consideration in the training? To this I would say — not for the library school. Knowledge of the subject must be acquired either in pre-library school training while in college, through post-graduate work, or on the job. I hear objections immediately. If not subject training, then what is required? The answer is plain — adaptation of traditional courses and methods to the demands of special library service.

Let us return to the subject training for a moment — or rather to the means by which it may be secured. In *our* minds this is a long-standing need of the whole profession — the need for a well-planned program in which the A.L.A. and S.L.A. might well coöperate looking toward a better selection of new recruits in the profession. It cannot be too strongly urged that discriminating selection of those planning to study for the profession is one of our greatest needs today. Greater frankness as to the personality and ability to succeed of prospective students would save much heartache on the part of the individuals concerned, as well as cutting down our own list of unemployables. We are doing an injury rather than a favor when we recommend a student to a library school director when we, ourselves, would under no circumstances employ that same person in our own libraries.

Such a coöperative program should take the form of presenting to college students, preferably in their freshman year, before they have decided on their majors, the vocational possibilities of the whole library profession, setting forth its various phases — public, college, school, county, special, etc. — certainly a wide enough scope for all tastes. Along with this presentation should go suggestions for pre-professional courses similar to our pre-medical programs. There is no reason why, with proper promotion and cooperation between colleges and the library profession, students cannot be urged to decide early in their college careers to enter the library field and to plan accordingly.

In July 1934, Mr. Sidney B. Mitchell made a number of suggestions as to the means which might be used to attract the type of student we would like to see enter the profession. It must be admitted that we have all too often found the mediocre material entering, especially through the comparatively weak schools which cannot be too particular in their acceptance of students. I believe the staffs of our college and university libraries have more often deterred than

attracted students. Among other suggestions, Mr. Mitchell said: ". . . The building up of the college or university library staff, particularly in its public services, with some proportion of the type of person desired should be fairly effective in suggesting to the student body that here is a little known or understood field, worthy of investigation because it has appealed to young people like themselves." He also said: "Some . . . might be attracted to librarianship if they realized that it did not necessarily mean divorce from their chosen subject fields, but an opportunity to cultivate them in a less formal educational agency than the school or college." Certainly special departments of public and college libraries as well as special libraries would fall in this category.

All of us can call to mind individuals who may have a flair for a subject or for one of the arts and yet is no genius. Here is a fertile field in which to sow the seed of opportunity in the library profession. One instance that came to my attention will serve to prove my point. The granddaughter of a famous botanist wished to follow in the footsteps of her distinguished ancestor but, although trained and interested in the science, knew she did not have the ability to attain unqualified success. Hearing of the field of special libraries she took her library training, and is now happily engaged in a horticultural library where her knowledge of the subject aids her in doing research for scientists working in the field. So, we could go on multiplying instances — the art student who could never be a great painter but who could successfully administer an art library, or the musician who could never be a great pianist or violinist but could successfully administer a music library, and on through all the fields.

If such a coöperative plan with colleges could be initiated, what courses should be suggested for the pre-professional work? In planning a college program, the primary consideration for the future special librarian should be natural bent, discovered in response to the question, what kind of special library would I be most interested in organizing or developing? Would it be in the field of chemistry, medicine, law, technology, business, insurance, finance? This decision having been made, the major should be chosen with this eventual goal in mind. However, regardless of subject matter of the special collections, there are certain courses that have proved their value to all special library workers. Wherever obtainable, I would suggest that courses should be taken in the social sciences, viz., general sociology, political economy, both general and business economics, general and applied psychology, statistics; in history, English composition, literature, languages, particularly modern, although Latin and Greek are almost imperative in a theological or religious library and would prove extremely valuable in a legal library; logic, which is useful later in classifying material. Other courses, which may be taken in college when available and when time allows or may be postponed to the technical training period, are those used in preparation for editorial work, such as proofreading, abstracting, and report writing.

If students who apply for admission to our library schools came with such a definitely planned pre-professional training, would not the argument that no one-year library course could cover all the subject demands be weakened, to say the least? Of course, I recognize that the mere study of a subject in college would not necessarily provide familiarity with special reference tools which the student would require in library work, but it would certainly give him a better starting point.

As I see the problem, the increasing

variation in types of present-day library service makes it impractical to subject all students to a uniformly inflexible training program. There are great differences in the relative importance of the subjects taught for librarians engaged in different types of work, and there are some subjects needed by special librarians which are omitted entirely.

We all admit that there are certain basic courses which every student must have, but could not these courses be shortened to give the fundamental principles and theory for all students, leaving the details of practical application to new courses adapted to the demands of special types of libraries?

To be specific — the special librarian needs to know the fundamentals of cataloging and classification, but does not need the details taught, for instance, regarding personal name entries, pseudonyms and antonyms, anonymous classics and the Bible, etc. Rather, does he need to know all the short cuts that can be used in order to make a book readily available with the least possible routine. Subject headings, on the other hand, are one of the most important and vital factors in special libraries procedure — not, however, the accepted lists which are not specific enough but rather the principles on which he can build a subject heading list to fit his own needs.

Book selection, on the whole, is not an important problem because so much of the material of special libraries is not in books, but in periodicals, particularly trade papers, newspapers, services, government documents, fugitive material, which are the warp and woof of his collection. How many students leaving our library schools have even a general, to say nothing of a detailed knowledge of these classes of materials or of how they should be treated? Does the new graduate know how to build an information file which is often his most valuable tool when properly organized? Does he know how to evaluate sources and statistics, especially as to their comparability? Does he know how to write reports containing the answers to inquiries rather than merely providing the material that contains the answers?

I admit the problems that such questions pose for our library training agencies, but I feel that if these agencies would sit down with special librarians and discuss their needs, then experiment, at least a compromise could be worked out. Denver is trying one method, Columbia another, the good news comes that Simmons is to make another experiment next year. In addition, Columbia is inaugurating an evening course for librarians already employed, either untrained or lacking training in special libraries. This is to be confined to business libraries and is to be taught by one of our outstanding special librarians. This is progress, indeed, but much remains to be done. Our present-day curriculum has been the growth of years and with the changing times more changes must be made, and it will doubtless take more years before a satisfactory solution is found but, if a beginning is made, there is hope.

At this point, may I make one suggestion which, I am sure, can be adopted immediately? That is, that every library school should give its students a vital, live presentation of the opportunities in special libraries. I make this plea because of a recent experience I had. A student in one of our best schools visited me through a personal introduction and was pleased, delighted — but equally surprised — to hear my story of the special library field, as she had not heard it even mentioned in her school. I'd like to believe this is an isolated instance, but I fear that it is true in all too many cases. One lecture, by a properly qualified person, is the least that is due to students. Such a lec-

ture should set forth the differences between the work in special libraries and general libraries, the fields covered, the types of organizations having such libraries, the qualifications, the opportunities, the advantages and disadvantages and generally help the student to visualize this phase of the profession. This, while unsatisfactory, is not bad.

One other problem I must mention. In establishing special libraries courses, I feel that careful consideration should be given to those who are to teach these courses. Unfortunately, few, if any, of our present faculties have had any experience in the field and therefore are not conversant with the practical problems of the profession. On the other hand, practicing special librarians, while well equipped to give special lectures, are not versed in educational theories. This seems like an impasse but, personally, I would vote for the practical knowledge. In fact, I have long held the theory that our library school instruction would be greatly improved if members of the faculties were to return to practical work for a stated period. Too much stress on academic presentation can be a danger.

To summarize, I suggest that the profession should take the following steps:

1. Present to college students the vocational possibilities of the library profession, setting forth its various phases — public, college, school, county, special, etc.;
2. Draw up suggestions for a prescribed pre-library course;
3. Use more discrimination in selection of library school students;
4. Revise the library school curriculum to present as required courses the principles and theory on which the work is based, with all other courses planned to meet the needs of those entering different phases of the work.

What Training for the Special Librarian?

By Harriet E. Howe, Director

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IN CONSIDERING training for the special library worker, it would be well to examine first what is a special library and what is its function.

Linda H. Morley's definition is called by Rebecca Rankin[5] "the first one proposed in twenty-eight years that is acceptable generally." This definition reads:

> A special library is a service organized to make available all experience and knowledge that will further the activities and common objectives of an organization or other restricted group, with a staff having adequate knowledge in the field of specialization and of the activities of the clientele, as well as having professional preparation. Its function is:
>
> 1. To assemble information from published sources, both within and without the library.
> 2. To secure information directly by correspondence and interview from individuals and organizations specializing in particular fields.
> 3. To present this information at the appropriate time and place, on the initiative of the library, as well as upon request, that it may take an effective part in the work of the organized group served.[5]

What, then, is the preparation necessary for working in such a library? You will notice that Miss Morley, in her definition, says, "A staff having adequate knowledge in the field of specialization and of the activities of the clientele, as well as having professional preparation." Many proponents assert that knowledge of the special subject is the

most important asset and is of more use to the special librarian than extensive professional training. In order to find out what kind of preparation the ideal special librarian should possess, the Special Library Association Committee on Training and Recruiting[9] made a survey, during 1936 and 1937, as to what educational equipment successful special librarians have had and what training they would like to have had in addition. The following tables constructed by Margaret G. Smith[8], of that Committee, from the first replies to the questionnaire that came in, give the answers to these questions:

EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION OF SPECIAL LIBRARIANS

	Per Cent
College degree and post-graduate library courses	41
College degree only	24
Informal education	9
High school education only	6
Informal education and miscellaneous training	6
College and library degree combined	5
College and public library training course	5
College and post-graduate work in subject matter	4

These librarians vary in their desire for further knowledge of subject matter or of library science as follows:

Type of Library Position	*More Subject Matter*	*More Library Science*	*Both*	*Neither*
	Per Cent	*Per Cent*	*Per Cent*	*Per Cent*
Business and finance	13	7	8	7
Social science	7	6	4	7
Science-Technology	10	11	14	20
	30	24	26	20

To quote an individual opinion on the matter, Delbert F. Brown[1], Librarian of the Standard Oil Development Company, in his article, "Special Library Organization," says:

> In the special library, method is subordinate to service. Method is merely a tool, and usually a very special tool, to produce service. While no doubt certain general principles can be taught and the knowledge gained thereby would be useful to the prospective special library worker, such courses should only be undertaken after the broad and general subjects of a liberal arts course, a certain degree of specialization in the field of science, commerce, or art preferred, and a fair degree of fluency in reading foreign languages have been acquired.

As shown by Mrs. Smith's tables, a large per cent, 30 per cent, of the librarians questioned admit a lack of sufficient command of subject matter. Such detailed knowledge, therefore, must be an important factor in the preparation for this type of library work, particularly since 26 per cent of the other replies show a desire for more subject matter as well as for more library science.

For some time complaints as to the inadequacy of opportunities for professional preparation for this phase of librarianship have been forthcoming. Several plans have been suggested. Many believe that there should be in library schools a second-year curriculum for special librarians, or if that fails, then at least courses planned definitely for them in the first-year curriculum. Others suggest that it might be possible to introduce library science into the graduate schools all over the country and to develop an abbreviated library science program to supplement graduate work in the subject field. Whether this plan would work or not would necessitate persuasion and proof. It raises the question as to the advisability of scattering library technique through all graduate schools so long as there are sufficient library schools which are equipped to give this professional library education. It also would be difficult to cut these professional courses to less than those now given by library schools. Would it not be preferable, as has been suggested by the special library group, to obtain a working knowledge of the subject and to follow this with a year at a library school

where adaptation to this special topic is allowed, and where local libraries in this field are available?

After all, is not library technique much alike in all libraries? It is the broad knowledge of the subject matter, the familiarity with the book collection already at hand, and with its users which determines what to order for a special library, but the order procedure to be followed is practically uniform. The methods of caring for periodicals are about the same in all libraries, but it is a technical acquaintance with the subject which helps the librarian to know what periodicals to purchase and to bind. When a clipping file is kept, it is arranged in much the same way everywhere, but subject knowledge justifies what to keep and what to discard. The principles and tools of reference work and of cataloging are similar in all libraries, but the greatest contributing factor to the success of a reference librarian or a cataloger in a special library is as wide an acquaintance as possible with the subject interests of that library. One has only to read the article by Alma C. Mitchell[4] on "Engineering and Technical Libraries," in a recent issue of SPECIAL LIBRARIES, to add ammunition to this attack. Robert Whitford's "Librarian or Specialist,"[10] published in a current number of the *Library Journal*, brings out the arguments on both sides and ends on this note:

> To sum up, our technology librarian should be a professional librarian rather than a subject specialist, but the more subject knowledge he can acquire in one way and another, the better!

A teacher evaluated a syllabus in library work for his subject field. His verdict was that two-thirds of the material was merely a repetition of what his students learned in their required course in bibliography. The remaining third he called library methods but a librarian would recognize this part as adaptations of general library techniques.

Further justification for this point of view came to the writer last year verbally from an experienced librarian whose proposed text on a special phase of library work was read by Miss C, a recent library school graduate and an assistant librarian in the same field. Miss C commented thus on certain chapters of the manuscript:

> But all of this part is discussed in Drury's *Order Work;* and this section is all covered in Flexner's Circulation Work in Public Libraries; these reference books were studied in the science and technology units by all our class regardless of their specialization; and the cataloging and classification methods advocated are only modified procedures.

The author of the manuscript responded to these criticisms by saying that she would change her preface statement that the book was intended for "library school graduates wishing to go into this field" to a sentence showing that the techniques discussed were for the benefit of those who had not studied in a library school. The author further remarked: "Miss C has had an unusually fine education for this kind of library service. I wish that more of us had had her preparation." To show how she may have differed from others, Miss C's preparation is herewith analyzed.

Miss C's college record contains a major in a subject of primary interest in this library with minors in allied fields followed by a library school curriculum planned for general library work, but with opportunity for individual specialization. In Miss C's case this meant intensive study of the book collection and patrons of a local library in this subject; observation and field work in other local libraries for a comparison of methods, techniques, and book collections; cataloging and classification considered from this standpoint; and term problems based on experience and on the reading of pertinent subject and library literature. The local special librarian, when

asked to appraise this student's work, hesitated and then said, "I don't see how I could possibly give her less than excellent for her performance here." The fact that the student was employed by that library upon graduation speaks louder than these words for her capabilities.

If such preparation as this brings the approbation of two experienced and successful special librarians, why should a library school be required to present separate courses concerning special librarianship? If the principles and techniques of library work are fairly uniform in all types of library work, with the likenesses probably much more numerous than the differences, why cannot the differences be brought out in class discussion, in local observation, and in term problems prepared by the students preferring a special field, while the likenesses take up the major portion of the students' class time?

However, Ernest J. Reece[6], in his book entitled *The Curriculum in Library Schools*, comments on the function of the special librarian as follows:

> The tools and stock of such a librarian call for peculiar methods in acquiring, housing, arranging, and utilizing; his clientele expects service based on anticipation of demands and upon advance preparation for them, and submission of findings in whatever rooms best suit his purpose; his technique includes all possible devices for gathering facts.

This is quoted by J. H. Shera[7] in his article, "Training for 'Specials'," as a progressive approach to the problem under discussion, but he regrets Mr. Reece's quiet return to *status quo* immediately following this statement.

Alvin Johnson[2], in his recent book called *The Public Library — A People's University*, characterizes library schools as follows:

> On the whole, the ideals and objectives of library schools are of the character of pure librarianship, the impartial custodianship and administration of books. . . . When we make up our minds to develop the adult educational possibilities of the libraries, we shall have to supplement our library training in administration with more adequate training in the educational meaning of books and in the organization of educational groups. . . . The mere physical administration of a great library is a huge task . . . but this . . . is only a means to an end, the best service to the public. And this best service, as it seems to me (says Dr. Johnson), is adult education.

If there is such a contrast between the ideals of the special library and the adult education program on the one hand, and the ideals of general library work on the other hand as these authorities think, then should not the profession as a whole call for drastic changes in the teaching and in the practice of librarianship? Many librarians believe, however, that the ideals stated for the specialist certainly are the same as those held by the progressive librarian whatever may be his locale — public, school, special, or university library. The conservatives may still be in the majority, but the progressive minority is active and is growing in importance and size.

What can be done in library schools to meet the changing needs of the profession? The placement lists sent in by the library schools for the graduates of 1937 and published in the *Library Journal*[8] of November 15, 1937, were used to find out what proportion of these graduates found positions in the different types of library service. These data are not perfect, but were the most easily available for this purpose. Over 60 per cent of these graduates in 1937 were about equally divided between the public and the college and university library field, 23.8 per cent went into school libraries, and 5.7 per cent into special libraries. To the latter might be added the 3 per cent who were placed in special subject departments in public or college libraries, a total then of approximately 9 per cent of the year's graduates. No library school

reported placing more than seven of its graduates of 1937 in special subject fields before November 1, 1937, a fact that shows no great demand for their services. The schools reporting the highest numbers are Columbia University, Simmons College, and the University of Illinois, with seven each out of 64, 58, and 76 placements respectively, and the University of Wisconsin with six out of 39 placements. Four of the 26 accredited schools placed one of the 1937 class in these fields.

Probably no university would consent to offer an extension class for less than seven members, but an elective course might be justified. An example of the difficulties presented even then is illustrated herewith. The four graduates in the 1937 class from the University of Denver School of Librarianship who went into specialized work include one each in art, commerce, western history, and technology. Two went to departments of university libraries and two into separate special libraries. Three of these students had majors in college in the subjects concerned. The fourth went into a very small library for which the general preparation was adequate. What did they have in common that would have made even an elective course of any value? Nothing that locally could not be cared for in a general curriculum; in observation and practical work in the art, technology, or western history departments of the Denver Public Library, or in the University of Denver School of Commerce library; in term problems and individual assignments bearing on the specialization; and in field work in the chosen type of library service. In other words these four students following the plans for this library school were cared for as were all others enrolled — the children's librarians, the school librarians, the public librarians, the college and reference librarians — by allowing each student to work throughout the year on his own individual project but not allowing him to be isolated from discussion of other projects. If the special librarians who have observed the results of this scheme are really as enthusiastic as they have sounded, maybe one way out of the dilemma is in operation. There must be other methods applicable to different local conditions that can be successfully adopted. Perhaps the Standing Committee on Curriculum Revision which has just been appointed by the Association of American Library Schools may work out some devices that will bring about satisfaction for the practitioners in all phases of library service — for example, the county librarians, the children's librarians, the school librarians, the special subject librarians, the college and reference librarians, the adult education advocates — each group of which is vocal in its pleas for a distinct place in the library-school curriculum.

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Training and the Subject Division Librarian

By Julia Ruth Armstrong, Head

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THE question, "What training is best for the librarian?" is one of perpetual interest, for just as libraries should change and adapt themselves to new and better ways of carrying on their functions so we should expect the preparation of the prospective librarian to be carried on with an eye to the future as well as to the past.

The problem of the ideal training of the librarian of a subject division of a public library must be viewed from three angles, namely, the individual, the library school, and the library. To attempt to establish ideals of training without due consideration of all three factors would be unwise and impractical.

First, the individual. No matter how much progress is made in measuring material things, no matter how great are the advances in science, or how much data can be gathered to increase the collective knowledge of the race, the individual remains an unknown and unknowable quantity. A few fortunate ones at an early age choose a vocation and bend every effort towards that objective. Can we ever expect that with the beginning of adolescence, all future librarians will feel that impulse towards a career of educational service that marks the members of our calling? I doubt it. Would you, if you could, have existence so regulated that every one knew precisely in what field his working hours would be spent? Perhaps in a regimented state of the future some higher power will so direct the destinies of the ordinary man that he will, without choice of his own, be trained for a particular field and will have all his studies directed toward that specialty. But most of us rebel at the very idea of regulation.

I do not wish to be misunderstood. The earlier a child is made aware of the vocational opportunities which exist, and the sooner he learns what his special aptitudes are, and where he is most likely to live a happy, useful life, the better. Any progress in vocational guidance and its techniques that will bring into the library field those whose characteristics are adapted to that field is heartily to be desired.

How many present-day librarians knew when they were in college that they would one day be librarians or, if they had selected librarianship as a career, that they would be catalogers, reference librarians, administrators, or working with children or young people? Is it then reasonable to demand or even expect that preprofessional education will be directed at any special phase of library work? For a considerable time to come, the library profession will necessarily expect to recruit its members from groups varied in background, training, and experience. And perhaps no profession can more readily absorb and make use of a variety of experience than our own. The curriculum of a liberal arts college with its possibilities for concentration in any number of fields, its opportunities for the enrichment of the cultural background of the student, and its emphasis on the training and development of the whole man rather than the

purely practical side of existence forms an excellent foundation for the specialized training of the library school. Because the librarian's profession embraces the whole field of learning, the broader his foundation of knowledge is, the better he is fitted to handle the varied problems which he will encounter in the library world.

The second factor in the problem is the library school. With it rest to a large extent the character and quality of the personnel of the library profession. The library school must equip its students for library service in the course of one year or its equivalent. Indeed the compensation of the librarian does not warrant the expenditure of much additional time and money in the pursuit of library training. Can the student who wants to be well grounded in his profession, who wishes to build a solid foundation for his professional life, afford to eliminate any large part of the one year program without detriment to his general background of library knowledge? The physician who is a specialist in the eye or in surgery does not omit the courses which a general practitioner must take. He builds his special knowledge on a strong base of general medical science. In like manner, the librarian should be able to specialize after he has had opportunity to put in practice the principles of his theoretical training. Short, intensive courses, covering specific fields of library work, offered after practical work has been done over a period of time would have tremendous value for the librarian who finds himself in the special division of the public library. I have in mind such a course as that in music library administration which is to be offered for the first time at the 1938 Summer Session at Columbia. A similar course is offered in law library administration. Can we hope to have more such courses planned to meet the needs of the art librarian, the technical librarian, the readers' adviser, the librarian of the social sciences? Admittance to such courses should be granted not to the novice in the library world but only to those whose first year library training has been integrated by practical experience. If such courses are made available can we expect library trustees and administrators to recognize their value by encouragement and coöperation in a practical way by an allowance of time or increased compensation? Would it be impractical or impossible for library schools to plan courses that would appeal to the public library specialist at a time of year other than the summer months when vacation schedules lessen the number of workers available for library service?

The third but far from being the last factor is the library itself and particularly the public library, since it is in large measure the public library which is the potential employer of the library school graduate.

In all but the smallest library specialization exists and has existed for many years. This specialization varies in kind and degree with the size of the library. The division of library materials, both reference and circulating, into several subject divisions is of more recent origin, but it is a form of organization which is likely to become more popular in the future.

The best training for the librarian of the subject division in a public library is one that gives him a thorough understanding of the resources of the library field in general, and of his own library in particular, and a knowledge of his subject which will not only be adequate for interpreting the resources of his library to the patron but will also permit future growth.

If we consider briefly how the work of the librarian of a subject division differs from that of the special librarian, I

think it will make clearer the necessity for a different approach in training.

The special librarian works with a clientele of limited and special interests. A research chemist would expect and would find that the librarian employed by his firm would understand his technical language. The public librarian has all sorts and conditions of men with whom to deal. The highly trained specialist, the thorough scholar come to the public library as well as the school boy whose only reason for entering the building is the necessity of doing the assignment handed out in school. The specialist knows that the librarian can aid him in his search for information even though his knowledge of the specialist's subject is limited. The school boy rightly claims a share of the librarian's time. The special librarian's clientele has a common interest, more or less; the public librarian's has little.

The special librarian ordinarily expects questions which fall in his particular field. He must have a detailed knowledge of that field. There is no restriction, real or implied, upon the questions which may be put to the public librarian. He must know when it is best to send the inquirer to another division, or to another library, when the search will be made easier by an approach from a different angle. Can he do this if in his specialization he has neglected to become informed of the whole resources of his own library and of libraries in general? If he is working in history he must ever bear in mind that economics and the social sciences may contribute to the solution of the requests that come to him. Interneship in libraries giving the beginner a comprehensive program of work in all branches of the library offers excellent possibilities for the development of the ideal subject librarian.

Alertness and resourcefulness are indispensable in the true librarian. But even these qualities have a different connotation as applied to the special and public librarian. The alertness of the public librarian must keep him aware of the events and happenings over a broad range, and his resourcefulness will lead him to make use of fields other than his own. The special librarian concentrates and digs deep.

The ability to work with people is more essential to the public librarian than to the special librarian. The latter is more often called upon to produce the result of lone research; the former must often guide and direct the work of the searcher.

The special library is a unit. The special division is a part of a larger whole. It must fit in the whole scheme of library service. Individuality must give way to coöperation and the narrower interest must be submerged in the broader aspect.

From this maze of discussion I would like to summarize what we need and want in the librarian of the special division.

Of prime importance is intelligence. There is no substitute for a good mind and keen intelligence. The intelligence which is required of the librarian is both social and abstract; social intelligence, to enable him to work with and for people easily; abstract intelligence, to enable him to think and reason clearly, to see a problem, and to work out a solution.

He must have a good equipment of academic training. The subject of concentration is not so important as the quality of work done.

He must have a good foundation in the technique and theory of library practice and a genuine interest in all phases of library work, whether or not they directly touch his special field. Too narrow an interest may handicap the usefulness of the librarian because he fails to recognize the proper rela-

tion between his own and other fields.

He must have a special interest and liking for the subjects which his division embraces — a liking which can be fostered by additional study, formal and informal.

The library school and the library share the responsibility of producing the ideal subject division librarian, the former through its processes of careful selection and cultivation, the latter through its encouragement of growth.

Training of the Special Librarian and the Present Curriculum of the Accredited Library Schools

By Linda H. Morley

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THIS series of papers each from a different point of view offers much food for thought. Miss Savord's paper evidences her wide experience in the special library profession, which has included such diverse fields as an art reference library, a library in a research organization in the field of education, a bank, an advertising agency and an association interested in international relations. In it she presents an overview of the need for special library training and the expansion of employment possibilities in this field, if a personnel with the necessary characteristics and preparation were available. She makes a plea for the more general presentation on the part of both colleges and library schools, of the twofold career satisfaction to be found in this kind of work and the library and prevocational preparation desirable.

Miss Howe has been affiliated with several different library schools as well as the Board of Education for Librarianship, and this varied experience is evident in her approach to the problem of specialized training. Her paper summarizes opinions that have appeared in print about special library training needs, and goes on to depict the many sided specialization demanded of library schools and the inherent difficulties in this situation. While many of us have assumed that additions could not be made to a one-year course without equivalent subtractions, the Denver School of Librarianship has achieved an integration and is experimenting successfully with one type of specialized training. As Miss Howe says, other types of integrated programs can doubtless be worked out.

Miss Armstrong, with her experience in the special department of a public library presents a highly interesting analysis of the different requirements in education, training and personal characteristics of the subject division library contrasted with those of the special library in a private or official organization, and suggests the postgraduate course as the best means of specialization for the special department librarian.

With many, perhaps with most of the statements and opinions expressed in these papers, I am in hearty agreement. In a few cases I would like to direct attention to different aspects of the problem, and in others, to suggest a shift in emphasis.

Stress is laid in all three papers on subject training and I would not minimize the need for knowledge of subject matter and literature in the field of each

special librarian. Such knowledge is necessary and must be obtained; the time and place for acquisition of such knowledge is the only point I would question. So many additions to the present curriculum of the library school seem desirable for the adequate preparation of special librarians that it would appear unwise to attempt to place the burden of subject specialization on the library school in any manner that would mean added time or courses. The plan evolved by Miss Howe at Denver and any other way of giving this knowledge to students through individual specialization, by the laboratory method, through practice work, and by term papers and bibliographies, seems highly desirable, however.

With Miss Savord, therefore, I would question the placing of too great emphasis on subject specialization in library schools. The special librarian in the private corporation, association, or governmental organization, does not have the clear cut subject limitation of the special department of the public or university library. The former is the information center for the organization with which it is affiliated and must supply any information needed by individuals in carrying on the day's work. Probably no one who has not worked in such a library has any conception of the variety of subjects on which information is needed by any working group. Take an advertising agency for example. Detailed information is needed about many different products and commodities; about many cities and states; historical and economic facts are often required, while information specifically on the subject of advertising is not so frequently needed because, obviously, persons in an advertising agency know the principles and practices of advertising. Such libraries are not organized on a subject basis, but on the functional or operating basis determined by the activities of the organization and the resulting information needs.

I recently gathered some figures from a half dozen libraries of different types in New York which corroborate the fact that although special libraries have certain subject concentration, they are not limited to one or even a group of related subjects. The proportion of material dealing with the assumed primary subjects of these six libraries was found to range from 2 per cent to 49 per cent of the whole collection; while only 33 per cent to 60 per cent of the questions asked fell within the primary subject.

Miss Armstrong speaks of sending "the inquirer to another division, or to another library, when the search will be made easier by an approach from a different angle." The special librarian in a private organization has no "other division."

Is it not true also that from a practical and economic point of view there are too many subjects specialized in to make it feasible to have a course for each? From the viewpoint of the library school graduate there are too few openings in any one type of special library at a given time to give any certainty that a person who specialized in a particular subject field would find a position in that field. Under these conditions, such specialization might then be a handicap. The present tendency on the part of library schools to interpret the suggestions of the Special Libraries Association for special library training as training in subject specialization seems, therefore, rather unfortunate. Such training would doubtless be valuable to the "subject division librarian" as shown by Miss Armstrong. It would also be more possible of accomplishment, either as a graduate or post-graduate course, since, at least in public libraries, such departments cover broad rather than specific subjects and rela-

tively few subject courses would be necessary. In special libraries in private and official organizations, and to a lesser degree, the departmental libraries in universities, the number of subject interests runs into the hundreds. Is not the answer, then, to try to find the common denominators for special libraries as a group, the elements of differentiation from other kinds of libraries, and build a training program on the common factors?

The results of an investigation[1] reported in a recent issue of Special Libraries suggest some of the additional subjects that library school graduates now in special libraries desire in preparation for work in this branch of the profession. These findings, which represent the opinions of graduates of seven different library schools, do not need to be reported here except to call attention to a few of the more significant points. The administrative problems of setting up an information service, including a library, as part of a nonlibrary organization loom large in the experience of this group. This has far-reaching implications with respect to training. The fact that the staffs of special libraries average approximately three and one-half persons reinforces Miss Savord's opinion that there is an "acute need of personnel equipped to organize and administer," and therefore the kinds of administrative training suggested take on added importance.

Miss Howe asks if library technique is not much alike in all libraries. Basically this is true, but in most library schools the application of these techniques is limited to situations and materials of the general library, but seldom to the additional and different situations and materials of the special library. In support of this statement I may perhaps be permitted reference to my own experience. I have great difficulty in condensing what seems to me desirable training for a special librarian into the two- or three-point course at Columbia. In order to make sure that the special libraries course does not duplicate any other courses each student is asked at the end of the course as part of a required report to state, "What, if any, subject matter in this course is covered in other courses?" and "What subjects could be omitted or be given less time?" Out of seventy replying to these questions only six thought time could be reduced on any of the topics covered, and these suggestions were of limited coverage.

The conference with library school graduates brought to light the need for knowledge of a variety of organization types — associations, government departments and other offices, research organizations, corporations and other institutions. It is in such organizations that special libraries exist. In order to establish and administer an information service or special library in an association, or a corporation, etc., the librarian needs to know how these bodies are organized, what they do, how they operate. Likewise, while special librarians buy books distributed by the regular book trade, in many cases a large proportion of their material is distributed by noncommercial publishers, such as associations, research organizations, corporations which publish material occasionally, but not for sale, government bodies and a host of other institutions, and much of this in non-book form. Library school instruction in regard to books is useful in so far as books by the general publishers are bought, but for special book publishers and for non-book material issued by other kinds of organizations, additional instruction would be helpful.

Again special librarians often seek information that cannot be found in

[1] "Problems Involved in Considering Adequate Library School Courses for Special Librarians," by Linda H. Morley, Eileen E. Lever and others, in SPECIAL LIBRARIES, Vol. 29, May–June, 1938.

print and must discover organizations and individuals who are authorities in certain fields, or who may be carrying on some research that would yield the desired information.

For all these three reasons special librarians need information about a great variety of organizations. Could not a course be developed that would provide the student with such knowledge — how to discover what organizations exist; how they are organized; what they do; what their activities and current projects are; what they publish and how to maintain relations with them?

In the discussions of recruiting and training policies, the suggestion has been made that the vocation of special librarianship should be presented to students early in their college course or even in high school. This has sometimes been interpreted as a desire to make the college course largely vocational in character, and there is much opposition to this. Perhaps the emphasis should be directed toward presenting the opportunities and qualifications of the special library profession to students in order that more persons who have subject interests of value in special libraries but not in general library work might be drawn into the profession.

My experience at Columbia as well as statistics presented by E. H. Wilson on distribution of library school students according to undergraduate major subjects for 846 students of University of Illinois Library School indicate that very few persons enter the library schools who have interests, or have concentrated during their college course in the subject fields, in which there are the greatest number of special libraries — especially the social sciences, economics, business and applied sciences and the fine arts. This is a natural result of the background and general education suggested by the college and public library professions which have emphasized the need for concentration on literature, history and languages. The University of Illinois data show only 6.5 per cent of their students majored in the subject fields in which most special libraries exist, although some others may be included in the 15.3 per cent grouped as miscellaneous. The complete table follows:

DISTRIBUTION OF LIBRARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ACCORDING TO UNDERGRADUATE MAJOR SUBJECT *

Subject	*Number of Students*	*Percentage of Total*
English	403	47.6
History	152	18.0
Modern languages	77	9.1
Mathematics	30	3.5
Science	28	3.3
Social science	27	3.2
Miscellaneous	129	15.3

The data cited by Miss Howe showing the small proportion of placements by library schools in special library positions makes it necessary to bring out the fact that many special library appointments are made by nonlibrarians. When a new library is started the executive upon whom devolves the selection of a librarian thinks of the work of developing an information and library service for his organization as something different from the public and college library with which he is familiar, so he questions the wisdom of trying to obtain someone through these agencies. He is but slightly aware of the technical requirements of such a position or of the kind of education, training, and experience that have proved desirable, but is very conscious of the desirability of familiarity with the work of the organization, knowledge of subjects of interest to them and certain personal characteristics. The result is that someone from within the organization without either library training or

* "Pre-professional Background of Students in a Library School," by Eugene H. Wilson, *Library Quarterly*, April, 1938, p. 163.

experience is often assigned to the work of organizing a library, sometimes in addition to other duties. When the person so chosen is of high caliber and, in addition to possessing a knowledge of the organization and the subjects of interest to it, has the characteristics and qualifications that make for success in this kind of work, he sets about acquiring the necessary technical knowledge by either formal or informal means and by experimentation. Much of the experimentation and time required to learn by the "trial and error" method would be saved in such a case were adequate special library training available, even though lack of such training may be overcome successfully.

But when the person selected to organize a special library does not have unusual ability, there is the likelihood of later abandonment of the library because the service rendered is not found sufficiently valuable. On the other hand, the library service organized by a person with general library training and experience only, but without the qualifications peculiar to special library needs, who attempts to install a library service limited to certain subjects but in most other respects in accordance with his general experience and training may likewise face abandonment in the course of a few years. Paradoxically, every such failure throws discredit on the profession, and hinders its growth. Its solution is desirable also to the library school and the whole library profession as well as the special librarian because there are so many opportunities for expanding the profession which are largely untapped.

It seems probable that if more courses for special librarians are developed, and the Special Libraries Association and the schools jointly undertake a modest public relations program that this situation might be gradually rectified.

Recent Aids to Public Documents Use

By Jerome K. Wilcox

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(Continued)

MANY aids to federal public documents have appeared during the last two years. The ever-present question of reorganization of the federal government so far seems to have had greater results in producing reams of print than in any actual reorganization. Fortunately, however, the Division of Bibliography of the Library of Congress has kept abreast with the literature. In 1925 it issued its first bibliography, "List of References on the Reorganization of the Executive Departments (November 10, 1925) with supplements February 1, 1932, June 1, 1934, and April 1936." The supplement of June 1, 1934, however, was issued by James W. Sheridan for the use of a Congressional committee. In the December 1937 New York Public Library Bulletin appeared "Reorganization of the Administrative Agencies of the United States. A selected reading list," by Gilbert A. Cam. This latter bibliography, which is also available in reprint form, in a sense supplement the lists issued by the Library of Congress and includes a list of publications of the President's Committee and the various Congressional committees. Although only a complete revision and bringing down to date of Schmeckebier's "Statistical Work of the Federal Government" will adequately supply the need in the maze of federal government statistics, some achievements bear notice. The Committee on Gov-

ernment Statistics and Information Services sponsored by the American Statistical Association and the Social Science Research Council issued its report in April 1937 as Social Science Research Council Bulletin No. 26.[32] The report is a synopsis of its activities from June 1933 to January 1, 1935. The Central Statistical Board has made two contributions, "Inventory of Current Research on Financial Problems," [33] and "Accident Statistics of the Federal Government." [34] In the former, the Board contributed the information on projects conducted by federal agencies, the non-federal agencies being compiled by the National Bureau of Economic Research. The study on accident statistics is a summary of accident statistics reported by all the federal agencies with bibliography of the publications containing these statistics. In June 1937, as Market Research Series No. 13, the U. S. Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce issued a new edition of its "Sources of Current Trade Statistics," including governmental and non-governmental agencies. Many of the federal agencies have issued publications which describe their work. The Office of Education as its Bibliography No. 62 has issued a list of these with the title "United States Government Publications on the Work of the Government." [35] Most of us are familiar with the "U. S. Government Manual" and the mimeographed "Digest of Purpose of Federal Agencies," issued by the National Emergency Council. This agency has recently issued many useful directories in mimeographed form of which the following are important examples: Executive departments, independent offices and establishments of the United States government; Information and Publications offices of the United States government; Legal divisions of government departments and agencies; Libraries of the United States government in Washington, D. C.; Procedure for obtaining the loan of motion pictures distributed by various government departments and agencies . . . Oct. 15, 1937; [36] Traffic managers of government departments and agencies; and United States government chief clerks.

The Works Progress Administration fortunately has issued lists and catalogues of publications of its various divisions. The Division of Research, Statistics, and Records issued in October 1937 a "Catalog of Publications, 1933–1937." [37] The Division of Social Research has issued at frequent intervals a "Catalog of Research Bulletins" [38] and a "Subject Index to Research Bulletins," [39] the latest edition of each being September 1937. The National Service Bureau of the Federal Theatre Project in New York has issued a catalog of its publications as its Publication No. 14.[40] The Federal Writers' Project has issued a preliminary photolithographed catalog of publications, and shortly plans to issue a complete catalog.[41] The Division of Social Research in 1937 issued as its Research Monograph No. 6, "Chronology of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, May 12, 1933 to December 31, 1935." As Appendix A-E of this publication are lists of the various publications and releases of F.E.R.A. and C.W.A. On March 31, 1937, the U. S. Interdepartment Committee to Coördinate Health and Welfare Activities issued its study, "Food and Nutrition Work in the Federal Agencies. Description of activities of federal agencies in the field of food and nutrition." [42] In 1936 the Legislature Reference Service of the Library of Congress published "Provisions of Federal Law Held Unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of the United States." The American Library Association in August 1937 published the Second Supplement to the author's "Guide to the Official Publications of the New Deal Administrations." [43] This supplement covers publications issued during the period December 1, 1935–January 1, 1937, and completes the first administration of President Roosevelt.

As a part of this supplement is a "Complete List of New Federal Agencies Since March 4, 1933 (p. 172–190), giving origin and termination for those abolished." The House Library of the U. S. Congress has just issued an "Index of Congressional Committee Hearings Prior to January 3, 1935, in the United States House Library and Supplement for 74th Congress prior to January 5, 1937." [44] Although we have had for some time such an index from the Senate Library, I believe this is the first index issued by the House Library. Miss Anne M. Boyd is now revising her "United States Government Publications as Sources of Information for Libraries," which will probably be published this fall. The U. S. Works Progress Administration is also preparing an index to the reports of the numerous projects sponsored by W.P.A., which will indeed be a welcome aid.

These have been the accomplishments of bibliographers and others in attempting to unravel the ever bewildering maze of public documents. Much, however, still remains to be done. Public document bibliography needs much greater financial support before we can ever hope for complete listing and indexing of all types of public documents. Only when this support is obtained can we expect to see compiled and published all of the numerous aids and checklists still so essential to adequate study of and research in public documents.

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34. U. S. Central statistical board. Accident statistics of the federal government, prepared by Charles N. Young for the Central statistical board, with an introduction and summary presented by the author on May 28, 1937, before a meeting of the federal accident statisticians. Washington, D. C., 1937. 141 p. Mimeographed.
35. U. S. Office of education. United States government publications on the work of the government . . . compiled by Grace S. Wright. Washington, D. C., 1937. 14 p. (Its Bibliography No. 62.)
36. U. S. Information service. Procedure for obtaining the loan of motion pictures distributed by various government departments and agencies. . . . Oct. 15, 1937. Washington, D. C., 1937. 1, 19 p. Mimeographed. Revised frequently. Includes lists of motion pictures available by departments, independent establishments, etc.
37. U. S. Works progress administration. Division of research, statistics, and records. . . . Catalog of publications, 1933–1937 Oct. 1937. Washington, D. C., 1937. 16 p. (M–1040). Photolithographed. Includes the publication of its predecessor, the Division of research & statistics of F.E.R.A.
38. U. S. Works progress administration. Division of social research Catalog of Research bulletins issued by Research section, Division of research, statistics, and finance, Federal emergency relief administration and Division

of social research, Works progress adminstration. . . . Sept. 1937. Washington, D. C., 1937. 22 p. Mimeographed.

39. U. S. Works progress administration. Division of social research. Subject index of Research bulletins and Monographs issued by Federal emergency relief administration and Works progress administration, Division of social research. Sept. 1937. Washington, D. C., 1937. 110 p., map. Mimeographed.
40. U. S. Works progress administration. Federal theatre project. National service bureau. National service bureau publications. A catalog. New York, 1937. 9 p. (Publication No. 14.) Reissued Nov. 1937.
41. U. S. Works progress administration. Federal writers' project. Catalog of publications, Federal writers' project. Washington, D. C, 1937. 40 p., illus. Photolithographed.
42. U. S. Interdepartmental committee to coordinate health and welfare activities. Food and nutrition work in the federal agencies. Description of activities of federal agencies in the field of food and nutrition. March 31, 1937. Washington, D. C., 1937. 52 p. Mimeographed.
43. Wilcox, J. K. Guide to the official publications of the New Deal administrations. (Mimeographed and printed.) Second supplement, Dec. 1, 1935–Jan. 1, 1937. Chicago, A. L. A., 1937. 190 p. Mimeographed.
44. U. S. Congress. House. Library. Index of Congressional committee hearings prior to January 3, 1935, in the United States House Library and Supplement for 74th Congress prior to January 5, 1937, compiled by W. Perry Miller, C. Malcolm Hevenor [and] E. W. Hale, Jr. Washington, D. C., Gov't printing office, 1937. 567 p.

Groups and S.L.A.

THE Special Libraries Association is dependent upon the activities of its Chapters, Committees and Groups as well as upon the individual member. Chapters bring together those members segregated in certain parts of the United States and Canada such as Baltimore, Cleveland, New York, Boston, San Francisco, to mention but a few. Committees are formed to undertake certain particular types of work, national in scope. Groups include members interested in similar problems; i.e., finance, insurance, commerce, technology, etc.

Of these three divisions the Groups comprise the greatest number of members, scattered from coast to coast and in the Dominion of Canada. The office of Group Chairman is national and she has on a similar scale almost the same difficulties to overcome as do the Association officers. She has to keep in touch with members of her Group, help them plan regional meetings if such are contemplated, appoint committees to carry out projects which will be of value to the Group as a whole, arrange for speakers at the National Convention. In fact the Group Chairman is responsible not only for the welfare of the Group but also for sustaining the interest of the Group member in the national Association. Very often an individual is so located that there is no Chapter nearby with which she can affiliate nor is she able always to attend the Annual Conference. If it were not for her Group affiliation there would be little or nothing to hold her interest in S.L.A.

I have sometimes wondered whether the Group officers realize the tremendous responsibility which rests upon their shoulders. The welfare and progress of the Association depend greatly upon the way they lead their Group during their time of office. They know better than anyone else what publications should be contemplated covering their own specific subjects. They can be of inestimable value to the national officers by their advice and suggestions at Executive Board and Advisory Council meetings. In fact their influence is unlimited.

With so much depending upon them, Group officers in turn need help and advice. Unfortunately it has not always been possible for presidents to do as much of this as they would like to on account of the vast amount of work which descends upon them with the presidential cloak. Knowing from my predecessors and from my short term in office how little time I can devote to individual Group problems, I have decided to experiment. I have asked

Adeline Macrum, who is a national officer and who has not only had considerable experience in organization work but who has also been a Group Chairman, to act as liaison officer for the Groups. Miss Macrum has graciously consented to do this, and I feel confident that her capable guidance will accelerate the steady growth of Group accomplishment.

ALMA C. MITCHILL, *President.*

From the Editor's Point of View

Our Professional Preparation

THE question of the best education for the special librarian is a subject of continued interest — so much so that the A.L.A. Professional Training Section devoted much of its program at Kansas City to a discussion of this topic. Among the speakers were library school directors and special librarians. The Chairman of the Section and the Editor of the A.L.A. *Bulletin* graciously offered the papers presented there for publication in SPECIAL LIBRARIES. Because of this coöperation, we have the good fortune to print the articles by Miss Savord, Miss Howe and Miss Armstrong, and the discussion of them by Miss Morley.

The serious thought now given to educational preparation gives great promise for the future. A constructive step was the study, "Problems Involved in Considering Adequate Library School Courses for Special Libraries," written by Miss Morley and printed in the May–June issue of SPECIAL LIBRARIES. This was reprinted so that copies could be distributed to library schools. Additional copies were also distributed with a questionnaire compiled by a subcommittee of the Committee on Training and Recruiting. This subcommittee, under the direction of Mr. Henkle, Director, Simmons College, School of Library Science, is gathering material helpful in defining the subjects essential in the education of special librarians. Prompt response from those who have been asked to coöperate is necessary for adequate data. S.L.A. has been successful in securing the pronounced interest of many library school directors and we are fortunate in the special attention that Mr. Henkle is giving this problem.

SPECIAL LIBRARIES as a Record of Progress

AT THE Pittsburgh Convention the question of space in SPECIAL LIBRARIES for news notes was discussed. This point had been questioned in a "Letter to the Editor" in December. The Editor discussed the question in a January editorial, stating that news notes would be omitted from the magazine until the members expressed a desire for their continuance. The members failed to express this desire until the June Convention, when the Editor was pleased to discover that they shared her own views — that SPECIAL LIBRARIES through its news notes should provide a record of the growth of the special library movement in the country. Only undue modesty had prevented this expression of opinion before!

Since the Association voted unanimously for inclusion of news notes as a regular feature, this department will be resumed in the October issue of the magazine. At that time we hope to print a summary of the most important changes January through September 1938. Chapter, Group and Committee activities for 1937–38 will not be noted in this summary, as they have already been covered in the interesting reports in the *Proceedings*. What we hope to include are notes of changes in special libraries, new developments, and shifts in personnel. In order to make this report comprehensive, will every reader of the magazine coöperate in supplying news?

Letters to the Editor

A Correction

IN READING over the first part of my article on "Recent Aids to Public Documents Use" in the July-August issue of SPECIAL LIBRARIES, I noticed two typographical errors. On page 179, second column, at the top, the first full sentence begins: "Unfortunately to date only three states, California and Pennsylvania . . ." Michigan, which made the third state, was omitted. On page 180, first column, last line, "State legislature councils" should be "State legislative councils."

JEROME K. WILCOX, *Assistant Librarian, University of California.*

Still Useful

THE Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce has available for distribution, copies of Julean Arnold's "Commercial and Industrial Handbook on China" (Trade Promotion Series No. 38), which was published in 1926 Although out of date as to statistics and some other features, the Handbook, nevertheless, contains much information on China and the Chinese market that is not available elsewhere. Free copies may be obtained by addressing the Correspondence Division, Room 2846, Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C.

CHARLOTTE L. CARMODY, *Librarian, Department of Commerce.*

The third edition of the Directory of Federal Statistical Agencies — a list of the professional, administrative, and supervisory personnel of the Federal statistical agencies in Washington — appeared July 1938.

Publications of Special Interest

Adam, T. R. *Civic value of museums.* American Assoc. for Adult Education, N. Y. 1937. 114 p. 75c.

Although the study is devoted to the museums in New York City, their size and variety of interests makes the coverage reasonably adequate. Interesting and suggestive in comment and illuminating in its exposition of the opportunities offered by museums for self-enlightenment.

Asquith, H. A. *Moments of memory.* Scribner, N. Y. 1938. 382 p. $3.50.

The son of the wartime Prime Minister reviews a satisfying family life and shows the relation of that life to the great men and events of the pre-war and war days. Includes much description of action in France. Gives illuminating picture of private factors in an important public career. Refreshing reading.

Baarslag, Karl. *Robbery by mail.* Farrar & Rinehart, N. Y. 1938. 324 p. $2.50.

This story of the U. S. postal inspection's war on the fraudulent use of the mails is full of color and excitement yet illuminating in its factual account of the routine problems that must be handled. The list of frauds exposed is amazing.

Bassett, E. M. *Master plan.* Russell Sage Foundation, N. Y. 1938. 151 p. $2.00.

The first part includes a clear description of the basic features in community planning and their relation to its needs. The second part gives a survey of the development of city planning and a summary of the various planning acts of the different states. Simple in style; without footnotes or bibliography. A good introduction to progressive community planning.

Clapp, Charles, Jr. *Big bender.* Harper, N. Y. 1938. 171 p. $2.00.

A surprisingly honest and direct picture of a way of living that could all too easily develop under easy money conditions, and the change that came through contact with the Oxford Movement. Outspoken, marked by some humor, and an appreciation of the other fellow's point of view. Eminently readable and distinctly enlightening.

Class of 1938. *Were we guinea pigs?* Holt, N. Y. 1938. 303 p. $2.00.

The graduating class of the University High School, Ohio State University, a "progressive" school, evaluates its work. As a picture of the possibilities for creative education it is a hopeful and stimulating study. The possibility of relating school work and living is vividly demonstrated.

Dahl, J. O. *Restaurant management.* Harper, N. Y. 1938. 346 p. $4.00.

The third edition of an excellent text in which the principles of good management and accounting are stressed; legal regulations are noted, rules for selection of equipment and food are noted, and excellent advice on many phases advanced. Good appendix on problems *in re* alcoholic drinks. A sound and thorough treatment.

Dalzell, J. R. and Hubbard, C. L. *Air conditioning, heating and ventilating.* Amer. Tech. Soc., Chicago. 1938. 571 p. $4.00.

An extensive study full of charts, formulae and illustrations. Clear and simple in style. Describes various systems now in use.

Davies, Rhys. *My Wales.* Funk & Wagnalls, N. Y. 1938. 305 p. $2.50.

A well-illustrated interpretation of the least known part of the British Isles. The tragedy, simplicity and grandeur inherent in Wales and the Welsh is feelingly portrayed. The great problem of a failing coal industry is graphically

shown The literature and art of a dramatic people is well depicted

Davis, C. O. *In our country garden.* Dodge, N. Y. 1938. 207 p. $2.50.

A thoroughly satisfying garden record in which practical and specific advice is combined with a light touch on current adventures into an entertaining diary. A delightful exception to the encyclopedia type of garden book, valuable as that is.

DeArmond, Fred and Graf, G. N. *Route sales management.* Route Sales Publications, N. Y. 1937. 312 p. $4.00.

An excellent discussion of this particular sales problem with its peculiar needs for personnel and records. Comprehensive, sane and thoroughly interesting in treatment. Valuable suggestions for anyone with merchandising problems and with a section on "organizing your time" pertinent for those planning an intelligent business life.

Federal Writers' Project. *The ocean highway, New Jersey to Florida.* Modern Age Books, N. Y. 1938. 244 p. 95c.

The "scenic, all weather" highway is described with full attention to historic and narrative interest An enticing chapter of local recipes is included. This addition to the American Guide Series is well adapted to start its reader on that appealing road.

Ford, G. S. *On and off the campus.* Univ. of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis. 1938. 511 p. $4.00.

The considered reflections on public questions, history and problems of educational administration of a wise, liberal and understanding student His comments are penetrating and lightened by wit, his appreciation of fundamental needs and his perception of misdirected effort are acute His comments on library administration and the library profession should be an essential study for librarians, as should his analysis of the duties involved in building a college faculty be absorbed by college presidents. His comments on the legal and medical professions are enlightening and vital.

Hollis, E. V. *Philanthropic foundations and higher education.* Columbia Univ. Press, N. Y. 1938. 373 p. $3.50.

A fine study of the work of 100 foundations along these lines; impartial in weighing pros and cons and giving many references to other comments. Well arranged and interesting. The wide influence possible to such foundations is clearly shown. Well-annotated, expensive bibliography included. A book of outstanding importance.

Hubackek, F. B. *Annotations on small loan laws.* Russell Sage Foundation, N. Y. 1938. 255 p. $3.00.

The great interest in the solution of the problems of the small loan business taken by the Russell Sage Foundation is shown by this publication of a series of annotations on judicial decisions in this field An able presentation and extremely important in any study of these problems. Extensive classified bibliography included.

Lake, Simon. *Submarine.* Ed. by Herbert Corey. Appleton-Century, N. Y. 1938. 303 p. $3.00.

The fascinating and enlivening record of the inventor of many technical achievements including the submarine. A caustic picture of official delays and subterfuges and the obstacles placed in the path of a lively fighter International factors in the path of naval progress are touched on An interesting and graphic record of the problems of an important invention of the present day

Lawson, Arthur. *Fun in the back yard.* Crowell, N. Y. 1938. 208 p. $2.00.

A delightful book in its enticing pictures of how to get a good time out of a limited area and small expense. Adults and children, indoor and outdoor enthusiasts, all will find some suggestion to trap them in an unwary moment. Clear, practical and enlivening

Lazo, Hector and Bletz, M. H. *Who gets your food dollar?* Harper, N. Y. 1938. 129 p. $1.25.

If the basic figures are right, as there is every reason to think they are, this study supplies a clear intelligent analysis of cost distribution in an essential field Pictographs make the conclusions plain and the text provides enlivening discussion The selected bibliography is good. A sound contribution to a major problem.

Leaf, Munro. *Listen, little girl, before you come to New York.* Stokes, N. Y. 1938. 197 p. $1.50.

A brief survey of the qualifications, openings and compensations in a variety of occupations ranging from modeling to social work Clever, frank and much to the point Includes some neat tips on general behaviour and living problems. The title is pertinent, and the contents well worth while.

Leuck, M. S. *Fields of work for women.* Appleton, N. Y. 1938. 425 p. $2.75.

The third edition of a valuable vocational summary written in a stimulating yet factual style. An unusually well-annotated and comprehensive bibliography is given which includes lists of the trade journals and professional associations in each field. Perhaps the best of some excellent texts of this kind.

McKee, R. W. *Handbook of petroleum accounting.* Harper, N. Y. 1938. 496 p. $5.00.

The tremendous growth of the petroleum industry and its many divisions make this comprehensive handbook of its accounting features widely useful The treatment is authoritative and detailed. Forms for records for the production, pipeline, marketing, and all other divisions An important tool in a specific field.

Patton, C. S. *Preparation and delivery of sermons.* Willett, Clark & Co., Chicago. 1938. 191 p. $2.00.

A man of wide reading and full understanding of his subject treats its problems in an enlightening, constructive manner. Sanity and comprehension are stressed as are the problems of preparation and delivery. A penetrating discussion of the value of modern poetry in this approach is included.