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SPECIAL LIBRARIES

"PUTTING KNOWLEDGE TO WORK"

VOLUME 24

JUNE, 1933

NUMBER 5

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SPECIAL LIBRARIES

JUNE, 1933

Volume 24

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Number 5

The Library School and the Special Librarian

By HARRIET E. HOWE

Director, School of Librarianship, University of Denver

INFORMAL chats with librarians of special or business libraries have resulted in their requests for some statement as to what a general one-year library school may do to prepare librarians for these fields. The following conclusions are formed from (a) personal experience among special librarians both in the East and in the West, (b) visits to many library schools, (c) study of the library-school curriculum, and (d) experience in trying to put a theory into practice. The experience factor is so limited that it is probably the least trustworthy, but it shows a trend that may repay careful watching.

For purposes of consideration here the questions raised by these special librarians may be summed up as follows:

1. Why is there a lack of separate courses in special library work in the library-school curriculum?
2. Do not the majority of the graduates of the library schools go into small public libraries?
3. How can a student foresee during his college career what his choice of library work entails in book knowledge of special fields?
4. How can the student in a general library school be allowed to specialize when his positions may not follow his specialization?
5. Should not advanced courses be required for special library work, the basic one-year curriculum being a prerequisite for admission?
6. How can the student preparing for a special subject library get the necessary instruction for his differing field in a general one-year library school?

The attempt to forestall these questions reveals some of the difficulties met by the library schools in dealing with the problem of specialization.

1. The lack of a separate course concerning special subject libraries is explained by the facts that (a) the number of students in any one school who wish to prepare for such fields is small, and (b) that an extra instructor would probably be necessary if a full-time course were given to the subject. A "course" in a school following the quarter scheme usually meets five times a week for eleven or twelve weeks, or for a total of fifty-five or sixty class hours. This is usually too much time to be taken from a school year which requires only nine courses in all. A "half-course" elective for the subject could be planned, if sufficient students registered. For example in the University of Denver 1933 class in librarianship where there is a fairly even division of choices, only four students desire placement in a special subject field. These four students do not warrant even a half-course elective, particularly as each student desires a different subject.

2. The assumption in the second question, *i.e.*, that the majority of the graduates go into small public libraries, has no foundation in facts available from schools, and probably on investigation would not be true in more than one or two schools at most. For example, this school sent only one graduate of 1932 into a small public library,

the others going into state, university, college, school, and large and medium-sized public libraries.

3. The third question is in regard to the college career. A student's choice of undergraduate courses must lead to a concentration, or choice of a major and minor, by the third year in most colleges or universities. Can he not also by that time have chosen his vocation? Early guidance, preferably beginning in the freshman year, should aid the prelibrary-school student to choose courses towards a definite goal; *e.g.*, school librarianship, the business library, or the technology department of a public library. Volunteer work in university and public libraries, and if possible in special libraries, during the summer vacations or in term time, also should aid him in choosing his college courses under the guidance of the library-school faculty counselors. No one combination of courses is advisable for all students because of the differing tastes and abilities of the students and the differing library conditions which are to be met. One strong major is supplemented by a minor, or by minors, in allied fields so that the student is ready to build on his special field throughout his library-school year. An example of successful planning is a student who studied for three years in the School of Commerce and is now enrolled for the senior year in the School of Librarianship. Her term problems, chosen from the library and the business fields, have been influenced by her experience in both of these. The result has been a noticeable enrichment in her professional capacity.

On the other hand the student who decides after college graduation upon library work as a career can be guided toward vocational preferences through the trend indicated by choice of courses while in college. Guidance and counseling of the individual student, begun as early as possible in his career and continuing throughout his professional education, is the answer offered to question three.

4. The answer to question four is that specialization can begin in college and, without too much risk in regard to placement, be carried over into the professional courses. However far afield the ultimate goal may seem at graduation, watchful waiting and continued preparation for the goal aid in reaching it eventually.

An example from another field of education illustrates what is possible. A young stenographer resigned one position in order to accept another offered to her in a bank because her specialization in the university and the secretarial college had been banking and economics. Her first position she had considered as a top-gap. She wished to accept the banking position, even at a low salary, knowing that she would be in a large stenographic force and would have to work for any officer who called for her. Three months later that stenographer was private secretary to a vice-president, with two or three stenographers as helpers. Her specialized knowledge gained by long-time planning, her speed, and the general excellence of her work made advancement almost inevitable.

The 1932 class in librarianship at the University of Denver was allowed to specialize in projects, in papers, in observation and practical work, and in choice of types of libraries for laboratories in the Book Arts, Cataloging and Classification, and Library Administration courses. Seven of the class members are not placed, and five are engaged in advanced study, four of the latter doing part-time work in a library meanwhile. In a remarkably high proportion the positions obtained have relationship to the choices in preparation. The fifteen graduates placed went into positions which definitely tie up with major or minor specialization in college and library school. For example, one graduate became the cataloger of technical books; another became

the first assistant in a circulation department of a medium-sized public library; a third who had had previous training and experience in technology received a position where her technological knowledge is a valuable asset; another returned to a school library position, and two graduates, former teachers, became school librarians; while still another graduate obtained a position in a small public library; all after intensive study for such positions. The positions filled were in university, college, school, state, and large, medium, and small public libraries, and in the order, circulation, and cataloging departments, in technology and general reference work, and in library school teaching field.

5. In order to answer to question five, the term "advanced courses" must be defined. The answer "no" is given if by "advanced courses" is meant further library technique beyond the one-year curriculum. The answer "yes" is given if the term means further work in the field of knowledge covered by the specialization, with application to the library of that specialization. Experience has shown that it is more commonly the lack of sufficient subject knowledge rather than of sufficient library technique that hampers the library school graduate in a special subject library. His special knowledge may not be adequate to the demands made upon him by experts and therefore if his patrons are predominately experts he must enlarge his equipment by further study in his field as well as in other allied fields. Where he has undertaken a library position in an unfamiliar field, he, although a college graduate, may not be able to carry graduate courses until a foundation is laid by undergraduate courses. In any case he must see to it that his knowledge of subject matter is kept up to the demands of his work, possibly by advanced courses in his special field of knowledge.

6. Question six is the crux of the whole series of questions, and consequently the most difficult to answer satisfactorily to the questioners and to the library school faculty.

Our Denver School may be taken as an example of "a general one-year library school," remembering that it requires three college years as a minimum for admission. It may be pertinent to show how this school through its three courses, *i.e.*, Book Arts, Cataloging and Classification, and Library Administration, endeavors to prepare a librarian for a special subject library.

The Book Arts course continues through three quarters, and is developed around two basic ideas: (1) subject units, (such as literature, the social sciences, or technology) which include the reference, the circulating, the document, and the bibliographic phases of printed materials; and (2) community investigations with the resultant application of material and principles to the type of library work which the student has chosen for intensive study. As the various subject units of the course are taken up, study of these by each student is always with his laboratory collection in mind. The student is urged to read from this laboratory as much as possible so that he may be familiar with these books, but lists of books for the circulating collection are supplied to him as suggested reading for the units less known to him.

The class meeting for sessions concerned with reference work is in the reference room of a local library and is followed by an hour of laboratory work during which the student searches for material on individual questions prepared and weighted for difficulty by the instructor who supervises the laboratory. These questions may involve use of reference books, of documents, of circulating books, or of bibliographic materials, previously investigated.

The student preparing for a special subject library, for example, may choose for

his laboratory some portion of the library at our School of Commerce. He makes a sampling of the chosen collection, either for a part or the whole depending upon its size, and prepares a shelflist which he uses as his laboratory collection, visiting the library whenever occasion arises. He studies the community, *i.e.*, the actual and potential patrons of the library, and as each subject unit is considered he applies the principles presented there to his laboratory and chooses books from the unit that have application to his field. At the same time he is not limited to his laboratory for knowledge of books because he may hear a book discussed in class from the point of view of usefulness to three or four types of libraries, none of which is his type. He may be asked to examine titles which would not be applicable to his laboratory, but it is considered almost as useful for him to know that a title should not as that it should be included. He studies reference, document, and bibliographic materials in general but makes for his own subject application of those primarily useful in his field.

The second course is Cataloging and Classification, which is required for two quarters. An elective half-course is given in the third quarter for those students who have proven themselves able catalogers.

The objective of the first quarter is to teach theory; *i.e.*, the reasons why catalogs are made, how they serve readers and staff members, the aids to be used in cataloging and classifying books, the characteristics of good classification schemes and subject heading lists, the principles underlying classification and subject headings as applied to books, the comparison and contrast of the Library of Congress scheme with the Dewey Decimal scheme and with various schemes that have been developed for special subject libraries. The second quarter's work is devoted to cataloging, with the usual laboratory assignments, in practical application of the theory learned in the first quarter. Practice in classification by the Dewey and L. C. schemes is given with a view to comparing their applicability to different collections. Each student chooses a type of library for which to catalog, and thus the cataloging records made for the same book by members of the class may show simple, medium, and elaborate description, classification, and subject headings. A student often catalogs a book for two different clienteles to show that he realizes the allowable differences in treatment. The resultant class discussion keeps uppermost in the student's minds that a catalog is made to serve varying functions.

The term problems apply the principles learned to a special subject for which the existing tools are only suggestive or are inadequate. Examples of problems apropos to this discussion are: a classification and subject heading list for interior decoration; a classification scheme for education made to facilitate the change from the Dewey to the L. C. scheme in a local library; an index to the Boston Medical Classification; a classification for music providing among other suggestions for music written for children.

The last of the three required courses is Library Administration where again although the students are grouped in one class for three quarters, each student is allowed to follow his individual bent as far as possible. As a part of this course for purposes of orientation, observation in the various types of local libraries is planned in the autumn quarter. The observation point is changed frequently enough to allow each student to see each type of library in action, the longest time being allotted to the type the student thinks he prefers. Some changes in choice occur following this observation period particularly among the students who have not done long-time planning. The two weeks of practical work required at the end of the second quarter

are so planned as to give more experience in the chosen field or in an allied field which the student must know in order to be successful in his chosen field. An elective in practical work in the third quarter is carried by students who gain additional experience in a specialized library or department. A local member of S. L. A. gives to the whole class instruction in the care of ephemeral materials and the procedure to be followed in the business library.

In this course statistics are studied in relation to library usage to a point where the student is able to make a simple correlation, to prepare graphs, charts, and tables as illustrations in library reports, and to read statistical data as they appear in books and magazines. This section of the Library Administration course is taught by a professor from our School of Commerce, but the term papers and the discussions in other courses show the benefits derived.

To generalize regarding the students at the University of Denver, it is safe to say that for the student who has already made a decision on or has had good preparation for specialization, the year in the School of Librarianship is more profitable than it is for those students who have no plans made and no distinctive preparation. This latter group has to do more experimentation, resulting in loss of time and of the cumulative results possible to the first group. Referring to the questions presented at the beginning of this statement, if the two years experience of the University of Denver School of Librarianship may be used as an example, it may be concluded that:

- (a) Guidance and counselling of the individual student, begun as early as possible in his career and continuing throughout his professional education, will make for a choice of college courses upon which he can build toward a definite vocational objective.
- (b) Specialization thus begun in college can, without too much risk in regard to placement, be carried over into professional courses in librarianship as shown by the proportion of first positions in which specialization proved an advantage to the class of 1932.
- (c) The library-school student preparing for a special subject library can work toward his objective in a class in which different types of library service are discussed. The advantage is that while he focuses his attention upon one phase of work, he hears other phases discussed and hence has an understanding of all kinds of library service, a distinct asset for the special librarian.
- (d) Advanced courses in his field of knowledge are desirable following the library school year.

Have You Names to Propose?

MANY special librarians have been members of A. L. A. for years but have never taken any active part in the affairs of the Association. We should be represented on some of the committees dealing with fields closely allied to our interests.

I have been asked to serve on the new A. L. A. Committee on Committee Appointments, which invites A. L. A. members, especially junior members, to make recommendations for appointments to A. L. A. committees. By making suggestions to incoming officers for personnel of committees, this group hopes to draft into the Association's work some new and helpful untried material especially among the younger members. We have in our Association many who have served efficiently as officers, chairmen and members of our own groups and committees, but who, although members of A. L. A., are not known at their Head-

quarters. Here is an opportunity for us to acquaint ourselves with various A. L. A. enterprises and affiliate ourselves with its activities, thus enlarging our own horizon.

In making recommendations it would be helpful if the following information could be submitted to me at 45 East 65th Street, New York: Name; present position; background of experience or education, if it has special bearing on the recommendation, note of special qualifications or predilections for particular types of committee work. Since our suggestions should include names from all parts of the country and from various fields, I must, of necessity, depend on your cooperation to prevent submission of a perfunctory list which would be neither helpful to the new committee nor representative of the abilities of our members.

RUTH SAVORD

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

IN FEATURING an article on Training in this number of *SPECIAL LIBRARIES*, your editor has revived a subject that has been argued long and vigorously in S. L. A. I can remember serving on a Training Committee many, many years ago when several of us prolonged a discussion even beyond a decent dinner hour in an endeavor to decide whether S. L. A. should recommend to library schools the inclusion of public speaking, report writing, psychology and other subjects just as distantly related to what seems to me to be our real problem.

It is certainly true that there is still no general agreement as to the proper way to train special librarians. Library schools differ and members of S. L. A. disagree with each other and with the schools. But the real problem is not I think *how* but *whom* to train. The fact that an infinitesimal number of students show any interest in special library courses should be of grave concern to our Association. How can the special library profession progress unless there is an adequate supply of the right kind of persons properly trained for it? Of what use to persuade organizations to install library service if there are not enough good librarians ready to organize such collections?

There is so much to be done that it is difficult to make a start. It seems to me, we must begin to tell people what special librarians are and what they do. Students in their first and second years in college should learn that here is a fairly new, entirely uncrowded field in which the interests and pleasures of library work are combined with the excitements and satisfactions in a business firm or other single-purpose organization. Students could then begin to take college courses which are of certain value in special library work. And when they were ready for library schools they would naturally demand special library courses.

Secondly, S. L. A. can and should initiate a program to explain our profession to vocational advisors in colleges and to personnel groups everywhere. But members will have to feel an individual responsibility if this program is to become really effective. Each one of us should begin to interest the right people in our profession, whether it be a person who might hire a librarian or a person who might become a good special librarian. Florence Grant of Standard Brands, Inc., started the ball rolling this month by writing an article for her *Smith College Weekly* called "An Alumna tells of the Librarian

Next, what about the library schools? Only two or three in the whole country now offer regular courses in special library work—how can we interest them in our special field? As Miss Howe points out, and as Dr. Williamson of Columbia has stressed in the conferences we have had with him this winter, the lack of demand is probably the reason why so few schools have organized to serve our field. But there is no demand because students do not know about it. Shouldn't all the large and important schools be thoroughly familiar with this application of library work and include it automatically in their consideration of opportunities for librarians? That might seem especially desirable these days when schools are worried because they cannot place their graduates in the customary school and public library jobs. Our Association is more than ready to cooperate with library schools in this problem.

And finally, this subject touches another group of persons, public librarians. A very large percentage of special librarians are transplanted public librarians. They have had thorough training and extensive experience in general library work. All of us who have come by that route frankly acknowledge the value of such training. It would seem, therefore, that our ranks should be further increased by public librarians and that the subject of special library training and opportunities would be of equal interest to them. It is unfortunate that the American Library Association, with its facilities, its vast resources and influence, has always considered special library work as something quite apart from the rest of the profession. As this country comes out of the Depression, the number of new special libraries will be limited only by our ability to stimulate the organization of new collections and to interpret the rendering of special library service. This fact is important to the entire library profession. The burden of its proof should not be upon S. L. A. alone.

To sum up then, let us continue to discuss training and recruiting but *not* just among ourselves. Let us begin to interest college students in special library work; let us work with vocational advisory groups of all kinds; let us hope for effective cooperation and constructive suggestions from other library schools following this splendid article by Miss Howe; and let us continue our friendships with former conferees in public libraries, hoping to interest some of them into this ever-widening field of library activity.

MARY LOUISE ALEXANDER

Across the Secretary's Desk

IT WOULD seem that this time of uncertainty in employment for librarians which faces all library schools might lead to more consideration for the possibilities of the inclusion of special library courses in their curricula. Special libraries are the newest of all types of libraries and it is the least crowded of any of the fields for librarians; and we in the profession are inclined to believe it will be the first to feel the improvement of economic conditions. We look to the future with great hopes and expect an increase in the number of special libraries with the increase of business in the coming five to ten years of prosperity. Will there be a sufficient number of librarians properly trained in special library technique to fill such positions?

What is the unemployment situation today in S. L. A.? It is not as bad as most of us are prone to imagine. Compared with other trades and professions we are inclined to believe that special librarians are very fortunate. We can present the picture in several ways. The membership of S. L. A. approaches 1600 and at this date only 46 of our members as far as we know are unemployed and are seeking the assistance of the Employment Committee. Viewed in another way, we have registered at present 154 unemployed librarians who wish to secure positions in the special library field; of these only 63 have had special library experience whom we feel have first consideration from S. L. A. Of course, this figure of the unemployed librarian does not include the newcomer into the field, the library school graduate without experience who may desire to go into special libraries. But since there is only one library school which gives a full course on special libraries, there can be comparatively few recent library school graduates who are trained for special libraries.

Employment work during the past years has certainly been one of the elements which contributed toward a live and useful Association. There has been a marked advance in the professional requirements as laid down by the employers of special librarians. This is in no small part due to the efforts of the Employment Committee backed up by the ideas and conceptions of special librarians in their work and in their requirements when consulted by their employers. On account of the efficient librarians who have been placed in new positions, and because the number of experienced special librarians is growing year by year, each year finds the specifications more exact and the standards higher. Employment work is then merely one

necessary expression of the co-operation of all special librarians in their Association.

The placing of the employment work in the secretary's office has many advantages to the profession. The basic principle behind employment work is the desire of the Association to raise the standards of special library work. In order to raise professional standards, economic factors must be considered. A special librarian needs an opportunity to display his or her talents which have been developed through proper training, education, and experience; and the employing business firm needs assistance to find the special librarian who is trained for his particular type of work. An employment agency serves this dual purpose and it is of mutual benefit to both the employer and employed. Since in our case the employment agency is maintained by the profession itself, it follows that the best qualified special librarian is recommended for the position in question, not merely one making good first impressions but incapable of maintaining excellent library service in that company. The success of any special librarian placed through the Association redounds to the credit of the Association and to the individual members.

Education and training for librarianship is of importance in our consideration of unemployment. It is interesting to note that of those 63 who are now unemployed and seeking positions in special libraries 18 have both college and library school training, 14 of them are library school graduates without college background, and 10 are college graduates but without library school preparation, while 15 have some smaller amount of formal library training, and a few must depend entirely upon experience for a recommendation.

The Employment Committee through its personal conferences often suggests a continuation of education to those who do not now possess the requirements which are usually expected of a special librarian. This period of unemployment in some individual instances has proved a boon. Others who have taken any opportunity which presented itself have broadened their experience and profited by it.

What responsibility has each individual special librarian in advancing educational standards? What have you done or what do you think should be done by the profession? Since 1925 about ten or a dozen new library schools have been established and the output of graduates trebled but only one school provides a special library course. Why? we wonder.

REBECCA R. RANKIN

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BRIARCLIFF—JUNE 17TH

S. L. A. is planning two very practical sessions. Saturday morning will be devoted to seeing ourselves as others see us. John T. Flynn, an author who uses many types of libraries in the course of his research, will tell us how libraries have measured up and what future demands may be. Ordway Tead of Harper & Brothers, has accepted the assignment, "A Publisher Looks at Libraries." Margery Quigley, Librarian of the Montclair Public Library, will discuss the relation between public and special libraries.

In the afternoon there will be a brief report on the affairs of the national Association by Mary Louise Alexander, President of S. L. A., Rebecca B. Rankin, Secretary, and Florence Bradley, Editor of *SPECIAL LIBRARIES*. This will be followed by a lively symposium on special library methods and service as revealed by the Clinic conducted this winter by 20 business librarians in New York City. If you want to compare the policies and methods in use in your own library with the very specific findings of this survey, don't miss the following reports:

"What the Clinic Was and Did" —
 Eleanor Cavanaugh
 Standard Statistics Co.
 "Special Library Management and Service" —
 Florence Grant
 Standard Brands, Inc.
 "Discovery and Organization of Information Material" —
 Marguerite Burnett
 Federal Reserve Bank

"The Selection and Use of Periodicals and Newspapers" —
 Lyda Broomhall
 Irving Trust Co.

"Research and Reference Work" —
 Margaret Bonnell
 Metropolitan Life Ins. Co.

And finally, entertainment heavily shrouded in mystery is being planned to accompany the dinner. No details have leaked out but if it should happen to bear any faint resemblance to last year's classic, "Rather Special", it behooves everyone to be present to hear what is said about her.

The prices at Briarcliff Lodge are \$5.00 a day for room and meals. Luncheon or dinner alone will be \$1.00 and \$1.50 respectively.

ETHEL LOUISE BAXTER

FRIENDS of Ethel Louise Baxter will be shocked to learn of her sudden death on May 5th. Miss Baxter was a graduate of Leland Stanford University and New York State Library School and had been Librarian for the American Bankers Association for nine years.

She was likewise an active member of S. L. A. serving this past year as national chairman of the Financial Group. The Association has lost a valued member and extends its sincere sympathy to her sisters at this time.

SNIPS and SNIPES

Letters from our (3) Readers Department. . . . The chairman of the Insurance Group answers us in verse:

"What meaneth they," you ask
 "The monk and jolly jester?"
 (Perhaps) a joke to ease one's task
 And faith to lead the blind investor.

"Dear S. and S. . . . Telegram received and apologies cheerfully accepted. Mr. Chamberlin and I appreciate all your good wishes. Gratefully,
 "MILDRED CLAPP." . . .

To Snips and Snipes

Upon receiving the May Collapsible Cup Award:
 In moments dejected, when work seems a bore,
 Research unrewarded and living a chore,
 The sight of my little collapsible cup,
 For which I do thank you, will e'er cheer me up.
 No Tulip or Lily, but stauncher by far,
 This gay little cup for my own private bar,
 With its five little sisters all nested within
 Is a prize I am really most happy to win.

KATHARINE D FRANKENSTEIN

Births. . . . New York's Esther Wright who is now Mrs. George Carlin has a brand new baby daughter born May 4. Her name is Mary Joan, the first part of which rates 100% with

Mary	}	Louise Alexander
		Casamajor
		de Jarnette Cox
		Furbeck
		Hayes
		Henderson
		Hunt
		Jacobsen
		Ethel Jameson
		MacMahon
Parker		
Sutliff		

Agreement. . . . There's nothing — well hardly nothing — that gratifies us more than having our views backed up by eminent authority. We felt that the President's Page in the May issue deserved at least a small parade up Fifth Avenue and the statement "If the special library profession is to make progress the fact that we are librarians is really more important than that we are specialists in a given subject" might even call for a brass band! And along comes Marguerite Burnett, of the New York Federal Reserve Bank and says "I'd like to congratulate President Alexander on her page this month [May] in SPECIAL LIBRARIES. She certainly succeeds in getting a fresh point of view on old problems. I always feel

that she is not merely theorizing but putting current questions on a practical basis that compels attention." . . . Check. . . .

Changes and Chances. . . . Katherine Malterud who used to classify books in the Engineering Societies Library has just finished preparing a classification scheme for the advertising file of Consumers Research, Inc. . . . Alice M. Emmons has returned East from Detroit where she has been on the staff of the Public Library. She's living in Cranford, New Jersey. . . . Armstrong Cork Co. has discontinued its library and Susan G. Quigley writes to Mary (W. W.) Cox: "For the time being, I expect to retire to my 'Country Estate' in Clinton County. If you or any of my good library friends should be passing through the beautiful hills of central Pennsylvania, you will find a most hearty welcome at 'The Little House' in Beech Creek." . . .

Press Clipping. . . . "Would you," writes Florence Grant in the *Smith College Weekly*, for May 10, 1933, "like to be a detective or a missionary, a diplomat, or an engineer, or a magician and startle folk by producing perfectly live rabbits out of empty hats? If you would like to be all of these in one, try being a business librarian." We liked the whole article and particularly Miss Grant's prophetic reference to the "late economic unpleasantness" . . .

Invalids and Convalescents. . . . Catherine Van Dyne of the Newark Public Library has been seriously ill at St. Luke's Hospital in New York. . . . Elsie Rackstraw, librarian of the Federal Reserve Bank at Washington, was injured in an automobile accident. . . . Marguerite Burnett, librarian of the New York Federal Reserve Bank, was sent to bed for several weeks with the grippe (question: what is there about F. R. B.'s?). . . .

Snippets. . . . Nelle Barmore, her library at the General Education Board, the Board and the Rockefeller Foundation all move up to Rockefeller Centre about July 1. . . . This month it's the Civic Social Group who are *doing things*. . . . Mrs. Lucile Keck, librarian of the Joint Reference Library, is working on the Group's Municipal Library Manual. . . . And Los Angeles' Miss Hollingworth tells us that California's compilation of state and municipal documents in all the libraries of the state is getting on. . . . Municipal Reference Library in New York keeps up its Monday evening series of broadcasts "What Our Cities are Doing." Station WNYC at 6:20. . . . Whom should we see the other day walking down

Madison Avenue in New York but Joseph Kwapil of the *Philadelphia Public Ledger* fresh from his western triumphs. . . . Pittsburgh chapter sends in its census neatly filled out on all the dotted lines. . . . Mary Cox, Nora Cordingly, Sue Mollison Foster, Irma Gerow, Marjorie Burbank, Mary Ethel Jameson and Johanna Olchewsky were among the librarians who helped Miss Mary L. Sutliff celebrate her retirement from library teaching at Columbia. Miss Sutliff will finish out the summer at her job and from then on will *do as she likes*. . . . Dorothy Bemis of the Lippincott Library at the University of Pennsylvania has compiled a report as a result of questionnaires she submitted to libraries of schools of business. It looks like a thorough job. What with Miss Bemis' Survey and New York's Clinic we ought to know something about our special libraries. . . .

King Charles' Head. . . We just can't keep Marian (Betsey Ross) Manley out of this department. The other day we happened on a modest statement saying that she could report sixteen new members; six institutional, eight active, and two associate all on an expenditure of \$10.00 for postage! While we're not very good at figures, we still can see that for every \$1.00 she spent she returned \$10.20 to the treasury in membership dues. . . . This friendly response came from one of our new members — since we haven't his permission to quote, he must be nameless: "I have been withdrawing rather than taking up new interests and relationships. But this interest in your Association, its groups, and purposes, its own interests, seem to me now so vivid and valuable, that I must go back and join and go forward with you all."

Century of Progress. . . By the time you are reading this issue, the Big Show will be open. Sky Ride, Mechanical Cow, Cellophane Man all will be functioning and will keep on drawing hundreds of thousands of people each day until in October it draws us from every chapter east and west. Read the article in the *May Fortune* and you'll realize how important it will be for us all to have a share in what "may change the living habits of the next generation of Americans" . . .

Famous Alibis. . . We understand that Mr Index Wilson is going to publish shortly a companion volume to "Famous First Facts" called "Famous Alibis, or Why I Am Not Listed in Who's Who in Library Service." . . .

Cheero. . . We'll be seeing you at Briarcliff on June 17 if you're any where within commuting distance. . . .

Four Cheers. . . We suppose that our estimable colleague, *Events and Publications*, will claim the new S. L. A. publication "Guides to Business Facts and Figures" as her preserve but she can't prevent our giving three cheers and one cheer more for Grace England and Marian Manley for their l. and a. labors in compiling the directory. . . .

Offices . . . Honours — and work — have been bestowed on several S. L. A.'ers recently. . . . Florence Grant was reelected vice president of the American Woman's Association. . . . Ruth Savord and Florence Bradley find themselves respectively vice president and council member of the New York Library Club. . . . Marjorie Burbank is, of all things, treasurer of the New York Public Library Staff Association. . . . Rebecca Rankin becomes chairman of the A. L. A. Subcommittee on Employment. All she has to do is "to tackle the problem of unemployment among librarians." . . .

Are There Any Others?

JOSEPH KWAPIL of the Philadelphia Ledger has again been doing well by S. L. A. and the Newspaper Group. Late in April he started on a 3,500-mile jaunt through the Middle West. He had been invited to speak at several schools of journalism, — Missouri University, Iowa, Illinois, and Wisconsin, — and to meet with newspaper librarians in some of our local Chapters. He reports the interesting possibility of developing courses for newspaper library work in some of the journalism schools and the formation of several new newspaper sections within S. L. A. Chapters, such as Boston has just formed and Philadelphia reported recently.

I have had several enthusiastic reports of Mr Kwapil's visit, such as one from Mr. Severance, librarian of the University of Missouri. He wrote me that President Walter Williams, who still holds the title of Dean of the School of Journalism at Missouri was much interested in the proposed course and pleased to have had a personal talk with Mr. Kwapil. Mr. Severance's letter closed with, "I think Mr. Kwapil is a great credit to your Association and I am very glad to have become acquainted with him." So say we all.

Are there any other members of S. L. A. who might undertake a similar trip? We need just such missionary work in many of our Groups.

MARY LOUISE ALEXANDER

GROUP ACTIVITIES

CIVIC-SOCIAL

Editor: Ina Clement

RESEARCH IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

"IN FEW particulars has there been a more remarkable transformation in the last twenty-five years than in the field of research in problems of municipal, state, and Federal administration" writes Professor Leonard D. White in his new monograph, "Trends in Public Administration" (McGraw-Hill Book Co.). "The person interested in government operations today is acquainted with an elaborate and active group of research agencies, primarily and exclusively devoted to solving problems of public administration. In 1900 substantially none of them existed. Thirty years ago there were no bureaus of research, almost no state or municipal reference libraries, no organizations of officials pursuing investigations, no departments of government studying the operations of the governmental machine, almost no universities which designed to look at subject matter so close in time and space. Today this country is unique in the amount of organized effort put forth by unofficial and official agencies for the improvement of the processes of government."

The state and municipal reference libraries as one of the chief tools of research are discussed — section 2 of the chapter. Thirty-two of the states maintain legislative reference libraries. The municipal reference library developed in the cities during these past three decades but not to such a degree. Only seventeen of the larger cities have established and continue to maintain as research agencies their municipal reference libraries. Chicago's is the oldest of this type of library but New York's begun in 1913 is the largest and perhaps most used of the municipal reference libraries. It's "Municipal Reference Library Notes" literally goes around the world.

* * *

There certainly is no paralysis in S. L. A. If a group wants a Special Number the answer comes back — "Standing room, only!" The Civic-Social Group is in line!

* * *

Miss Ely writes that the Committee in charge of the "manual" has been completed with Mrs. Lucile Keck as chairman. Mr. Richard Krug, Miss Rebecca B. Rankin, Miss Ione M. Ely and Miss Hazel Skelhorne are the other members.

CLASSIFICATION

Editor: Emilie Mueser

REPLY TO THE REVIEW OF D. C.

IT WOULD be much more agreeable to me not to be called on to answer the Review of Decimal Classification, published in *SPECIAL LIBRARIES*, March 1933, p. 37-40, but justice to both D. C. and its users makes such answer necessary. A reply to some outstanding points will perhaps correct a few mistaken impressions which have been created in readers' minds, and help to evaluate the review as a whole.

With regard to use of 159.9 as the basic number for the alternative scheme for psychology, the reason the alternative scheme was not built on 15 is that in that case we should have had two schemes in which the same numbers, with a few exceptions, would have had two meanings, with no way of distinguishing — a plan which we are under obligations to D. C. users to avoid, because of the confusion which would result.

In indexing alternative schemes with identical forms of notation there would be further complications. In our present tables the basic number 159.9 distinguishes the new scheme from the old, but if different schemes had been built on the same basic number 15, every psychologic topic would have two index numbers, as is the case in ed. 13, only there would be no distinctive mark.

Obliviousness to the harm done by modifications without distinctive notation is, unfortunately, all too common and I can explain it only on the ground of insufficient study and consequent lack of appreciation of the situation. Just in proportion to the success of any attempt to propagate schemes identical in notation but differing in meaning from the authorized tables will be the harm done to general library interests. It is to prevent this that we maintain our copyright, of which the publication of Mr. Dabagh's scheme, noted on p. 39, was clearly an infringement, as was later acknowledged — to which it should be added that anyone undertaking to promulgate that scheme is in effect, if not in the eyes of the law, a participant in the infringement.

The complaint that while the quantum theory and the theory of relativity appear in the index they do not appear in the tables presupposes the policy of including in the tables every term given in the index, thereby tremendously increasing the bulk of the book, and also demanding the constant destruction and replacement of plates for tables, to keep pace with new index entries.

In selecting subjects for development we give first preference to those which seem most needed. Sometimes we include a subject less in demand but for which an expansion is already available, and so developed as to be possible of inclusion with only a small expenditure of our time as in the case of Shorthand.

In several places the Review comments on the length of number. With any notation showing logical subordination sufficient for those doing detailed research long numbers are inevitable, but in many cases a specific library will have no material calling for the very detailed number. An extremely valuable feature of D. C. is that even if the library has material exactly designated by a long number it is not necessary that the full number be used, since, by cutting off figures at the end, a number may be shortened to such length as best fits the needs of the individual library. For Radio, which is a recent development, the 6-figure base 621 384 necessarily involves long numbers if the scheme is to be used in its full detail. Use of a letter, *e.g.*, R for Radio, in place of the D. C. basic number is possible in a general library but we do not recommend it since such a group would have no logical place in the shelf arrangement. Our suggestion in this connection is made primarily with a view to the convenience of a library concerned wishing to shelve this subject as a distinct group, irrespective of the rest of the collection which could be classified and shelved under regular D. C. numbers.

With regard to Literature, my general views on regrouping are expressed in an article prepared for *Wilson Bulletin*, in answer to Mr. Dabagh's article.

The statement that in the new edition "a slower advance over a wider front would have been more satisfactory" shows lack of comprehension of the problem. When D. C. was originally published as a 3-figure scheme writings were in general on broad lines and it was possible to select and arrange 1000 3-figure heads, which have as a whole stood remarkably well the test of time. In these days of specialization however the preparation of an outline expansion needs as thorough study of the subject as does a full one, if the outline is to provide satisfactorily for all features of the subject. The time may come when a fuller expansion will be urgently needed and it is important that the shorter form be such that the details may be satisfactorily filled in. Consequently to expand a table by adding only 1 or 2 figures demands for the best results almost as much time in preparation as would a full expansion. It would require (1) as much study of the subject and (2) the time necessary for judicious cutting; while the only saving would be in assign-

ing numbers to the minor details. Therefore no more subjects could be covered in the intervals between editions than is now the case.

As to the increase of 11,500 entries in our index, there is a complete misapprehension regarding both points which were made. (1) The chief increase is not due to double reference to alternative numbers in psychology, there being actually no increase from this cause. Though two numbers are given it was assumed that each classifier would choose between them and each pair was reckoned as only one entry. (2) While references from one spelling to another add a few lines to the index, they were not included in the count.

The suggestion that certain features of Classification Décimale be incorporated in D. C. is not a new idea to us, who are constantly consulting C. D. However we are very uncertain as to whether any extensive adoption of these features would be comparable in value to the increase in bulk of the tables.

The decision reached during the meeting of New York Library Association last fall that an A. L. A. committee work with Lake Placid Club Education Foundation "with the intent of making the usefulness of the D. C. to American libraries the paramount consideration" was not establishment of a new policy on the part of D. C., which has always made the interests of American libraries its main purpose, but it added to the efforts of D. C. the organized and strengthening support of the national association. Dr. Dewey's purpose in originating, developing and maintaining D. C. was purely and consistently altruistic. He never took for himself any payment for the immeasurable amount of time and thought which he gave to the work.

DORRAS FELLOWS, *D. C. Editor*

COMMERCIAL-TECHNICAL

Editor: Miriam Zabriskie

BOOK REVIEWS

Hund, August. "High Frequency Measurements." McGraw, 1933.

An up-to-date critical work on high frequency phenomena applied to measurements. Highly technical and places emphasis on methods of measurements in a manner which aims to encourage one to carry on research work in the applied field. In nomenclature and standard test circuits follows the rules of the Standardization Committee of the Institute of Radio engineers. Is one of the International series in Physics, edited by F. K. Richtmyer.

Interstate Commerce Commission. "Effect of the Principle of a 6-Hour Day in the Employment of all Classes of Railway Employees." Wash, Govt print. off., 1933. (U. S. 72d Cong., 2d sess., House doc. no. 496)

The Commission, acting as a fact finding body, reported to the House on the effect, not the expediency, of the 6-hour day in the railroad industry. The operation and service would not be materially affected by the application of the curtailed hours. Expenses, however, for a year such as 1930 would be increased by \$630,000,000, and 300,000 employees would have to be added to the service.

INSURANCE

Editor: Geraldine Rammer

INSURANCE EXHIBIT AT WORLD'S FAIR IN CHICAGO

THE Life Insurance exhibit at the Century of Progress Exposition at Chicago in the Hall of Science will dramatize the important rôle played by life insurance in the economic side of the nation.

Mr. Leroy A. Lincoln is chairman of the Life insurance committee which has arranged for the exhibit. Tony Sarg will carry out the committee's ideas in the construction of a model community. Actual miniature houses, factories, office build-

ings and stores will be laid out along streets as in a typical community

The model community is a living community — full of people posed in their regular daily activities. Action in the exhibit will take the form of a series of six episodes, each depicting some important phase of the accumulation and investment of life insurance reserves. The central themes of these episodes will be as follows:

1. How life insurance reserves tie the policyholder's interest into the economic well-being of his community
2. Investments in public utilities.
3. Investments in city and farm mortgages.
4. Investments in government securities
5. Investments in transportation facilities.
6. The return to policyholders from these investments.

The significance of these episodes would be explained as action develops through the use of a synchronized electrical sound transcription. This will permit spectators to concentrate on the action while having it explained to them. — *Eastern Underwriter*, May 19, 1933.

* * *

How proud we were to see not only a note of our recent Insurance Book Reviews in the April 15th *The Standard* but a whole page reprinting a whole section of it. Miss Glover, we bow!

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