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# Special Libraries, October 1930

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# SPECIAL LIBRARIES

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Vol. 21

October, 1930

No. 8

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WE offer in this issue a description of the British Library of Information; a story about the library of the Consolidated Gas Company of New York; a first class article on Trade Directories; a fine summary on sources of information called Special Tools; some helpful hints concerning Handling of Periodicals; a message from President Reynolds and the usual Departments.

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### Special Libraries

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# Special Libraries

Vol. 21

OCTOBER, 1930

No. 8

## The British Library of Information

By Angus Fletcher, Librarian

THE main function of the British Library of Information is to answer the great and growing demand of this country for official data regarding economic and political conditions in Great Britain and to a lesser extent in the British Empire. It is to the mutual advantage of Britain and America that a service of this sort should be performed: and it is, perhaps, particularly important that the enquirer should be enabled to receive information in the form in which it is issued for use within the Empire: for, of course, the information which the Library exists to make available is chiefly contained in documents whose main and original purpose is to instruct and inform the legislatures and the peoples of the British Commonwealth.

For the most part official documents are published in Great Britain through H. M. Stationery Office, although certain of the British Government Departments, for example the Ministry of Agriculture, publish information independently. The catalogues issued by the Stationery Office, however, comprehend practically all official publications, and can be relied on as a most useful guide to the information available. The indexes in these catalogues, it should be noted, are not exhaustive, but fortunately the arrangement of the catalogue has the merit of simplicity and, if one knows exactly what one is seeking, it is generally a fairly easy matter to find it.

The lists are issued daily and monthly—the daily list as a mimeographed sheet and the monthly list as a printed document. A monthly circular of selected documents, which is briefly annotated, is also published. Both of these can be obtained from the British Library; they are mailed free of charge to librarians and responsible persons on request. Furthermore, the monthly lists are consolidated half-yearly and

yearly in the issues for June and December respectively. Departmental lists are also issued for certain of the Departments by the Stationery Office at irregular intervals; those which deal with the publications of the Medical Research Council are the most frequent and regular; the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, the Ministry of Labour, the Air Ministry, the Ministry of Transport and the Board of Education are, of the British Government Offices, the ones whose lists are most frequently issued.

The documents published may be classified roughly into two groups—Parliamentary and non-Parliamentary publications. This distinction is, incidentally, made in the catalogues of the Stationery Office.

The Parliamentary publications include papers, reports and bills of the House of Commons and the House of Lords, acts in the final form in which they reach the statute book, orders issued by Departments as authorised by statute, and Command Papers. These latter are documents presented to Parliament "By command of His Majesty the King" and for the most part consist of reports by Committees, Commissions, or other bodies under the authorisation of the Government on subjects in which Parliament is particularly interested; finance, for instance, statistics relating to industry, agriculture and shipping, diplomatic correspondence and the like.

The Non-Parliamentary publications are issued rather for the interest of the public than of the legislature, though naturally they are also used in the making of law. They comprise reports from many of the government departments on an enormous number of very diversified subjects, ranging from meteorological observations to the breeding of chin-chilla rabbits, from technical informa-

tion concerning the treatment of steel to the most recent developments of educational research.

The British Library of Information has always been, and is (as is, I suppose a common habit among special libraries) very ambitious, but the exigencies of space and indeed the dictates of common sense, have made impracticable any attempt to cover the whole field of the official publications issued within the British Empire. It has been found necessary to exercise a certain amount of caution in selecting from the immense volume of information which is available. In making this selection the principle which has been followed is to keep on hand all of the important current documents (and, since the Library has been in existence for no more than ten years, the process of discarding material as out of date has scarcely yet begun). Of the less important publications (such for instance, as departmental orders, forms to be filled in by industrial organisations under the Factory Laws, and the like) only those are obtained for which experience has shown that a demand is likely. It is, of course, always possible to obtain information and documents from England at very short notice if they are not immediately available at the British Library of Information, but for the larger part of the inquiries which are normally made concerning official publications and the type of information they contain it is safe to say that the Library can provide an answer if any answer is discoverable.

It may be of some value to discuss shortly those subjects on which it is found that information is most frequently required. Naturally, as might be expected, the bulk of the more serious enquiries are in one way or another economic in their interest, and relate for the most part to the reports of such bodies as the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Health, and the Reports of the Department of Overseas Trade on economic and financial conditions in about 40 different countries, etc. While it is natural that a great many of these reports refer to situations which are peculiar to Britain, it is probable that the fruit of most of the research which is done is

valuable in some degree to enquirers everywhere. The findings of the various committees and research workers supported by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research the British Library finds are in particular in great demand. This Department, it may be interesting to note, employs a staff of over 1,200 persons, of whom about half have scientific qualifications. It supports organisations of the type of the National Physical Laboratory, the Geological Survey, the Fuel Research Station, the Forest Products Research Laboratory, etc., and about twenty-five Committees and Boards under its aegis are continually at work on investigations ranging from building methods and radio to nitrogen products or tin production. Moreover, it makes grants to individuals and to academic institutions and publishes their work. Similar functions, on their own particular lines, are performed by the Medical Research Council and the Agricultural Research Board and for the reports of both of these the Library finds there is some considerable demand.

To the student of politics too, the official publications of the British Government are naturally a mine of information. During the past few months for instance, the situation of Indian affairs has raised a good deal of interest in the United States and there has been a very considerable call for data, to meet which the Library is fairly well equipped. It is necessary, I am afraid, to confess that the British Library of Information's files of the official documents of the British Dominions are by no means so complete as could be wished, although the reports of the Colonial Office on the various Crown Colonies and mandated territories and protectorates are rather more satisfactory. For the British Isles the fund of what may be called political information is naturally very considerable.

It may be said, on the whole, so far as political documents are concerned (and this category may be taken to include a fairly wide range of subjects, from national finance to public roads, electricity schemes, the organisation of local authorities and in fact everything which can be accounted an important part of governmental policy) that they

are practical, concise, and thorough, for they must be prepared to stand very severe criticism from the politically minded man in the street, who, in Great Britain, is by no means a rarity. The publication of such documents, therefore, is no light undertaking, and they may usually be described as offering information of the most detailed and authentic character, prepared in response to the necessities of government.

The traveller, the scientist and the teacher may find many of their wants answered in the most unexpected way within the rather unattractive covers of a Blue Book or a White Paper. Some of the publications of such bodies as the Historical Monuments Commission and the Historical Manuscripts Commission are truly spectacular and magnificent; but indeed, it is useless to attempt to give any indication of the whole field that is covered.

The British Library exists chiefly as a source of reference through which this mass of information may become known,

and its proper function is to make it as easily accessible as possible. In a great many instances it can digest information to some extent, and it is always willing to do its best in that direction. But to many enquirers the only satisfactory solution is possession of the document or documents in question; the British Library is the official agent for the sale in the United States of British Government Documents. The price charged is the published price, plus a very small addition to cover the cost of importation. It is not, of course, possible to keep a large stock of documents for sale: those publications which are most frequently in demand are kept on hand, and for the rest it is possible to obtain them at very short notice from London. Moreover, since of a great many documents kept on file for information purposes there are frequently two or three copies, it is often possible to arrange in urgent cases for one of the library copies to be lent until the purchased document arrives and, of course, documents are issued on inter-library loan in the usual way.

## Some Problems in Connection With Trade Directories

By Sattie E. Warn, Business Branch, Newark Public Library

WE have come to talk over with you the problems that as librarians, both special and public, we have in common. Those of us from the East expect to receive help from you of the West. We also hope to be able to give a bit of help from our own experience.

Three special problems concerning trade directories have been before us. Perhaps through discussion here we may see a way clear for concerted action. First, in Newark we frequently need a complete current list of trade directories. So far as we know there is no recent comprehensive list. Trade directories are listed annually in three sources:—Crain's Market Data Book, Public Affairs Information Service, and the Cumulative Book Index. Crain's Market Data Book, 1930, gives about 150 listed under Business Reference

Publications and described with periodicals under various classifications. A good list as far as it goes, but incomplete.

In Public Affairs Information Service and in the Cumulative Book Index many trade directories are listed but in these two publications, as you know, "directories" is a sub-head under the name of the specific industry.

Lists of trade directories are contained in "2400 Business Books" by Morley & Kight, 1920, "Mailing List Directory and Classified Index to Trade Directories" by Morley & Kight, 1924, and the Wilson Bulletin, Business Library Number, May, 1927. These, of course, are not up-to-date.

In the forthcoming edition of Market Research Agencies, published by the Department of Commerce, there is to



be a supplement listing trade directories. A list of 850 directories was supplied to the Department by the Newark Business Branch. A portion or all of this list will appear in the supplement.

The use of such a list, complete and published annually, is obvious. The lists available are either incomplete or scattered and difficult to use. Would it be desirable for us as a group of the Special Libraries Association to suggest to the proper organization the publication of such an annual list? Both P. A. I. S. and the Cumulative Book Index have the machinery to take care of such a list if established. P. A. I. S. is our own child, though such a husky infant we may sometimes forget the connection. Should we suggest to the chairman and editor that they publish a list in each cumulation under the subject heading "directories" or "trade directories?" Should we suggest that the same subject heading be used in the weekly and monthly issues?

Our second problem is the content of trade directories. The method of presenting information is as varied as the directories are numerous. Could some standard be set for information in this line? We apply the term trade directories to listings of bankers, bakers, business chiefs, doctors, lawyers, merchants, priests, the productions of man's toil and the products of his ingenuity. In our discussion we will limit ourselves to directories listing commodities and manufactured products.

Many excellent directories are consolidated catalogs. The publications of Sweet's Catalogue Service, the Chemical Engineering Catalog, the Furniture Dealers' Reference Book are imposing in size and appearance and list the products of their advertisers only.

Brown's Directory of American Gas Companies and Gas Engineering and Appliances Catalog, in addition to service as a catalog, gives valuable statistics and lists of companies, commissions and associations.

The publications of Bragdon, Lord and Nagle and the Davison Company in the textile industry, the Fairchild Publishing Company in the clothing trade, are not catalogs and are not confined to their advertisers in their listings.

Thomas' Register of American Manufacturers and Thomas' Register of the Wholesale Grocery Trade, the Donnelly Red Books and Industrial Directories cover a broad field and with much detail. Several trade journals publish special numbers that give statistical surveys of their industry and useful directory information.

Most of these publications are well-bound and attractive in appearance, though in some instances a change in shape would be pleasing. For example, a millinery trade directory 3 in. by 4 in. by  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. stands according to the best library practice next to a metal trade directory 10 in. by 7 in. by 4 in. The matter of uniformity in size of publication is under consideration elsewhere. Our present concern is with contents and the arrangement thereof. These vary greatly.

Alphabetical lists of firms with capitalization indicated are given in Thomas' Register of American Manufacturers, Thomas' Wholesale Grocery Directory, Directory of Iron and Steel Plants, Davison's Knit Goods Trade. Names of sales managers and purchasing agents are listed in Standard Advertising Register, Directory of Iron and Steel Plants, Standard Steel and Metal Directory. Purchasing agents are listed also in Brown's Directory of American Gas Companies, and "Engineers" published by the Neo-Techni Research Corporation.

Officers of companies appear in the Directory of Iron and Steel Plants, Standard Steel and Metal Directory, Aircraft Industries, Davison's Knit Goods Trade Directory and Brown's Directory of Gas Companies. Date of incorporation is given in some cases in "Engineers" and in Aircraft Industry.

Trade names are given in Standard Advertising Register, Jewelers Index, Furniture Dealers Reference Book, Thomas' Register of Manufacturers, Thomas' Register of Wholesale Grocers, MacRae's Blue Book, Sweet's Architectural Catalogue, and Shoe and Leather Reporter Annual.

Equipment and capacity are indicated in Standard Steel and Metal Directory, Davison's Textile Blue Book, Directory of Iron and Steel Plants, Brown's American Gas Companies Directory and

Aircraft Industry. Wholesalers are listed in Jewelers Index, Hardware Age Verified List, Furniture Dealers Reference Book and the Shoe and Leather Reporter Annual.

Chain stores handling their products are given in Hardware Age Directory, Davison's Knit Goods Trade, Shoe and Leather Reporter Annual, Thomas' Wholesale Grocery Register, Hardware Age Verified List, Shoe and Leather Annual. Trade organizations and their officials are listed in Brown's Directory of American Gas Companies, Shoe and Leather Reporter Annual, and Thomas' Register of American Manufacturers. Exporters and importers may be found in Jewelers' Index, Thomas' Wholesale Grocery Trade, and International Buyer and Seller.

Brokers and manufacturers agents are found in Thomas' Wholesale Grocery Trade, Davison's Knit Goods and Davison's Textile Blue Book. Buyers are given in Fairchild's List of Men's Wear and of Women's Wear Retail Stores, Sheldon's Retail Trade of the U. S. Practically all that have been mentioned have alphabetical lists of advertisers and both alphabetical and geographical listings of both products and firms.

What other information do we want in trade directories? Would we like, as a common denominator for all business the number of persons employed? Is it desirable that we try to list the basic information we seek in trade directories and in this way form a standard that might be suggested for the make up of trade directories?

Shall we take some action whereby work on such a standard could be put under way and the co-operation of the trade directory publishers obtained? Shall we in time endeavor to induce publishers to comply so far as possible with such a standard?

The third problem I am bringing up for discussion relates to a list of trade directories for first purchase. Public libraries in many sections of the country are trying to develop collections of material for the special use of their business patrons, and also, so far as they may be able, to give service to their

friends, the special librarians, and their organizations in the same communities. They need guides for the best publications in this field.

Again, many business concerns find that libraries within the organization have proved to be indispensable. They decide to start a library with whatever books may be scattered about in various departments. Whether the brightest file clerk or a properly trained librarian is selected to care for and to add to this collection, she will need help.

Does not this problem come into the field of this Association? As a group of Special Librarians, could we compile and publish a carefully considered basic list of directories? We have the special knowledge of the defects and good points in this field of literature. Shall we advocate the preparation of such a list to help both the special librarian and the public librarian with their problems? Another feature: the special librarian frequently requires only the current issue of many directories. Could we add to this basic list a list of those that the special librarian might pass on to her neighbor in the public library?

We bring to you these three propositions for discussion: 1. Would it be advisable for the Commercial-Technical group to advocate the annual publication of a complete list of trade directories under the heading "directories" in P. A. I. S., or failing that, the Cumulative Book Index or some other agency? 2. Would it be a good plan for a committee to formulate an outline for a standardized trade directory and to try to obtain the co-operation of publishers in its adoption?

3. Shall we, as specialists in this field, consider compiling and publishing a basic list of trade directories for first purchase, etc.?

### ASLIB

The Secretary of the Special Libraries Association has received from Mr S. S. Bullock, Secretary of The Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux, a cablegram reading as follows: "ASLIB members in conference send cordial greetings to ASLA." Mrs Brigham forwarded a response acknowledging the courteous message.

## Library of the Consolidated Gas Company of New York and Affiliated Gas and Electric Companies

By Josephine Greenwood, Librarian

THE Library of the Consolidated Gas Company of New York, might well be called "A Service Organization Within a Service Organization." Just as the Companies in our affiliated group give service to the public, the library staff gives service to the executives and employees.

Each person is treated as a prospective customer of the library. It seems vastly important to me to make each person feel that the library is maintained for his or her special benefit. From the executives to the office boys each is given the same degree of courtesy and an honest effort made to provide the information desired.

The fact that our library service has grown considerably since its establishment tells a better story of the service rendered.

Like most departments, the library has a history. True, it is not as old as many other departments in our Company, but it can boast of dating back to the year 1906.

In that year the volumes belonging to the Consolidated Gas Company were gathered together and catalogued in book form. This collection was known at that time as the Engineering Library, Consolidated Gas Company of New York.

In the same year, The New York Edison Company organized a library, which served the employees taking courses in the schools conducted by the Company. This was a reference collection.

In 1917 the Contract and Inspection Department, The New York Edison Company organized a department library. Newspapers were clipped, the clippings filed, periodicals routed throughout the department, books were added and catalogued.

In 1922 the volumes belonging to the late Mr. William H. Bradley, former Chief Engineer, Consolidated Gas Com-

pany of New York, were donated by his family to the Company.

In May, 1923, the Engineering Library, Consolidated Gas Company of New York, and the Library of the Contract and Inspection Department, The New York Edison Company were brought together and moved into more commodious quarters. The volumes donated by Mr. Bradley's family were added in a special section now known as the "Bradley Alcove." This was the beginning of the present library system and known as the Library of the Consolidated Gas Company of New York and affiliated Gas and Electric Companies.

On August 2, 1927 the officers of the Association of Employees, The New York Edison Company voted to donate the library of the New York Edison Company to our library. These have been added and are now in active circulation.

The library grew tremendously in the succeeding years. Books which had been stored away were brought out from their hiding places and private collections were offered. Because of this, we found it necessary to move into larger quarters, where we could expand some more. In the Summer of 1929 the library was moved into its present location, on the sixteenth floor at 4 Irving Place, New York.

Much of the success of the library may be attributed to the members of the Library Committee, which has been functioning since 1923. Their untiring interest under the direction of Mr. W. R. Addicks, Chairman of the Committee and Senior Vice-President of the Consolidated Gas Company of New York has been the real guiding spirit of the department. The Library Committee meets once a month (and all members attend) to discuss new books and new

methods of keeping the library up to date.

There are filed in the library some 12,000 volumes and pamphlets dealing with chemistry, economics, electrical engineering, gas engineering, management, physics and the social sciences, together with the standard reference books for a public utility library. These reference books include Brown's Directory of American Gas Companies, Central Station Directory, Encyclopedias, Dictionaries, Who's Who in America, Who's Who in Engineering, the World Almanac, Moody's Manuals of Industrials, Public Utilities, Railroads, a file of the United States Patent Office from 1870-date and many others, too numerous to mention. The leading gas and electrical association proceedings are also filed, together with the membership lists of these associations.

The journals on the subjects of electricity and gas are subscribed to. These are bound when complete or clipped for items of special interest when the volume is not kept in its entirety. A clipping file by subject of material clipped is maintained and has proven itself a great joy when readers want items at a moment's notice.

Like the working man, our library to operate efficiently, must have the necessary tools. These tools to which I refer in this instance are the periodical indexes. The Library of the Consolidated Gas Company of New York subscribes to the following:

American Gas Association Abstracts, published by the American Gas Association, New York City

Chemical Abstracts, published by the American Chemical Society, Washington, D. C.

Engineering Index Service, published by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers

Industrial Arts Index, published by the H. W. Wilson Company, New York City

Each has been used and found indispensable when a search for information is in progress.

The books are cataloged by author, and subject. The Library of Congress subject heading list is used and the books are classified according to the Library of Congress scheme. Shelf list and accession records are kept and a simple charge system for loaning books is

filed. A check up of the loan records is made regularly at present, to be sure the volumes borrowed are in use.

Publicity for the library is carried on in several different ways.

The direct medium is through the Library Bulletin, issued twice a month and sent to the heads of departments, who in turn pass it among the employees under their direction. It is purely an abstract journal, giving a record of articles of special interest appearing in the current magazines and a list of new books and pamphlets added to the library. It has served in many cases in bringing an employee to the library, where every effort is made to make him or her a regular user of the service.

In addition to this, items about the library are published in the house organ of our Company, entitled "To Serve New York." This publication is distributed to each individual employee once a month and serves as an excellent medium of drawing to the attention of the employees that the library is ready to serve.

"Gas Logic" that worthwhile journal which goes to many homes and libraries and which I am sure you are all familiar with, has published articles describing the library and its functions.

Posters have been issued approximately once a year, these have been made up in colors about 12 x 16 inches in size, with an appropriate message such as "BOOKS LIKE STEPS OF A STAIR LEAD TO DOORS HIGHER UP;" "BOOKS, KNOWLEDGE, POWER" and others. They have been distributed in the fall of each year to the power plants, district offices, shops and outlying districts in order to stimulate interest just before the fall term starts in the Company school.

The Library staff consists at present of a trained librarian, an assistant who assists with the cataloguing and classification, a stenographer-clerk who cares for the correspondence, orders and records, and library bulletin requests, a clerk who sends out material telling of improvements in the city streets which appear in the Calendars of the City Departments, makes subjects cards, a clerk who does filing, a clerk who routes the magazines and takes care of the charge records and a messenger.

## Home Indexing of Periodicals

By Mrs. Louise P. Dorn, Librarian, Detroit Edison Company

WHEN the Chairman of the Commercial-Technical Group asked me to tell briefly about "home" indexing of periodicals in the Detroit Edison Library, my first impulse was to say "I can't, because we don't." A little reflection, however, convinced me that we do index to a certain extent, tho the procedure is so informal that I had not recognized it.

It is self-evident that specific information is valuable only as it is placed before the individual who needs it, when he needs it, whether he realizes his need or not, and that this can be accomplished only thru indexing of one sort or another. Self-evident also is the essential fact that any new information should be brought to the attention of that individual as soon as possible after it becomes available. This is particularly true in the electrical and allied industries, where scarcely a day goes by without some revolutionizing discovery or development. As one of our executives said recently "By the time that these developments have got themselves published in a book, they are cold."

In our library we handle the matter of getting the facts before those who should know them in several ways. First:—by circulation of periodicals. Upon our list we have 475 men to whom are routed 2093 periodicals. Our prize customer has sent to him 37 titles. Second:—by mention, on the page devoted to the library in our house organ, of articles in various periodicals which because either of general scope or of some special activity within the company are of interest to our personnel as a whole. Third (and this is where the indexing comes in) by memoranda to any man engaged in solving special problems. Sometimes the memoranda are by request, sometimes they are sent because the Librarian has seen by the character of the material he has recently withdrawn that he is interested in a particular bit of work. The requests which cover more or less temporary needs are simply noted. In other cases, permanent lists of subjects are furnished

us with instructions to send worthwhile periodical material as it appears. In order to make as sure as is humanly possible that nothing available in our Library escapes our notice, we have one of the staff who is both an engineer and a linguist look thru periodicals as received, make a brief abstract of any article having to do with the subjects specified and send this to the person asking information. Upon return of the memorandum, we send out the paper, charging it just as we do a book and noting on the charge card the page and title of the article. These cards are filed for reference, and we find that the notation of page and title saves endless time when we are asked to produce, instanter, some fact or figure that is remembered as having appeared in some periodical, sometime during the last year, or perhaps it was the year before.

In our Library we have the Engineering Index Service, Industrial Arts Index, the American and British Chemical Abstracts and Science Abstracts, all of which of course do for us much of the indexing that in years past we had to do for ourselves. Honorable mention should be given here also to the excellent digests of current literature appearing in the different trade journals. These our circulation of periodicals brings to the attention of those interested.

Both the Industrial Arts and Engineering Indexes are at all times easily accessible to the frequenters of the Library, and are used freely by the men themselves. In fact, they often prefer to scan the Indexes rather than have us prepare bibliographies. The Engineering Index we find particularly useful, covering so completely and promptly as it does the field of both American and foreign technical periodicals. The annotations on each card, while concise and condensed, give sufficient information to enable the user of the index to select only those cards that bear exactly on his problem. To quote the Editor-in-Chief, "The Engineering Index Service is a current guide to the wealth of information in

engineering experience of the entire world, and places in the hands of librarians, engineers and executives an instrumentality of tremendous worth." Here too, I should like to pay tribute to the author index included in the annual volumes, as an invaluable aid to pro-

ducing with true engineering efficiency, in order to prove a disputed point, the opinion of some certain authority.

With these aids ours to command, it would seem rather futile to duplicate in our own narrower circles, the work they so admirably do for us.

## Special Tools

By Grace A. England, Civics Division, Public Library, Detroit, Mich.

THERE is an adage to the effect that when one is going to have a rabbit stew, one first proceeds to catch a rabbit. Acting on this sage advice the first move would be to describe the rabbit—in this case a *Special Tool*.

*Special Tools*, one might say, are those compilations of data and sources of information which are not, as a rule, issued by the usual publishing houses with customary attendant publicity, nor in the usual form, and which cover a special and particular field, sometimes only a minute portion of a field. They provide that "quicker and easier access to facts" which Mr. Dana so aptly characterized in his paper on "Facts" as "the greatest need of today." They are those indexes, compilations, handbooks, directories and summaries which unlock the doors to otherwise inaccessible information.

Most of us have experienced the pleasure of locating, after long research and with pardonable pride, an elusive price series, only to discover quite by chance a short time later, the same series beautifully set out in some hitherto personally unknown source. For example, it is one thing to know that the Dow-Jones averages are regularly carried in the Wall Street Journal, but quite another to know that they are neatly summarized in convenient form for use in Hamilton's *Stock market barometer*. The cold shock of similar discoveries is followed by a rather tepid pleasure in the added knowledge.

And then, the reflective librarian begins to question. Should I have known of the existence of this or that compilation? How could I have uncovered it at the time of need? How

many other librarians know that it exists and where? How useful is my precious discovery to others?

These questionings and others like them lie at the root of the bibliography, submitted with this paper. The books, reports, pamphlets, and magazines of which it is composed are sources of information which might be considered *Special Tools* because they have performed or can perform some unusual service in connection with a given end. Unusual service may be measured both quantitatively and qualitatively and the tools of a librarian fall therefore, into two classes, first, those tools, quantitatively useful, known to most of us, which constitute short cuts to information frequently called for and second, those tools, less well known, perhaps individually discovered with something of the satisfaction of an explorer, which place in our hands some small but extremely useful bit of information in a form which exactly suits our need.

It has seemed best to group the items which are to be discussed into five classes, (1) Guides, sources, etc., (2) Government publications, (3) Market surveys, (4) Miscellaneous books, pamphlets, etc., (5) Magazines.

In the first class, Guides, sources, etc., one naturally includes such well known publications as the *Bulletin of Public Affairs Information Service*, where notes of new periodicals, legislation and kindred items can be found; *Industrial Arts Index*, whose introductory features, particularly the notes of new bibliographies and periodicals and the classified list of new books in its field, are especially helpful; the *Monthly list*

Note—A Bibliography of Special Tools accompanied the Address and was distributed at the San Francisco Conference.

of state publications and the *Monthly catalogue, United States Public Documents*, and many others. Less well known perhaps are *Domestic commerce*, the *Weekly list of selected United States government publications* and the *Price lists*, all free. *Domestic commerce* is a most useful little paper issued on the 10th, 20th, and 30th of each month, mimeographed. It contains reviews of commercial and industrial research projects, brief items about business and industrial conditions, suggestions for trade promotion, and, most valuable to librarians, a list of new publications received in the library of the Bureau. Many quite unusual items are listed in this section and full order information is given. The *Weekly list of selected United States government publications* is issued by the Superintendent of documents. It is likewise a valuable reference and order tool, listing the more important publications of the government by subject and supplying for each a brief annotation. The *Price lists* come from the same office. These are small pamphlets each devoted to a large subject under which the material indexed is arranged alphabetically by small divisions on the subject. They have been compiled on many topics and afford a convenient key to the material in the documents.

The lists of publications issued by the various offices and bureaus of the government are also of great aid, as are some of the more specialized bibliographies issued by the Bureau of foreign and domestic commerce and other agencies.

The *descriptive list for use in acquiring and discarding United States government periodicals and mimeographed statements*, a publication of the Financial group of the Special Libraries Association is a most satisfactory guide, listing many periodical publications of the government with a brief descriptive note of the contents of each, and some information about the permanent or temporary nature of the data contained.

Those to whom the government publications are still an uncharted sea will find specific help and instruction in Miss Boyd's *Outline for the course in United States government publications as sources of information for libraries*. This

is an outline of the course as given in the University of Illinois Library School, and is a useful guide which gives considerable historical information. Catalogues and indexes are fully brought out and the scope of each is carefully defined. The *statistical work of the national government* by L. F. Schmeckebier will be found especially helpful as a guide in determining what statistical information is available in the publications of the national government and the particular documents in which such information will be found, together with some critical and descriptive comment. Arrangement is by large groups. The index must be carefully used. There is also a pamphlet report *An account of government document bibliography in the United States and elsewhere*. (1927. Library of Congress) which outlines what has been done in this field in the United States and in foreign countries. It gives a full description of the various bibliographical aids which have been compiled, lists those at present available for state documents (by state) and goes very thoroughly into foreign official publications.

Two foreign lists that have proved very useful as check lists are the *Catalogue of official publications of the Parliament and government of Canada* which, together with its supplements, affords an excellent index to the Canadian official documents, and *The guide to current official statistics of the United Kingdom*. This latter is a series of detailed annual surveys of statistics contained in government publications issued by the departments in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It aims to direct the inquirer to all current official publications that contain statistics bearing on his subject and more especially, to indicate to him the nature of the statistics referred to, their mode of analysis and the time and place to which they relate. There are two sections, the *Subject Index*, which is by far the larger, and *List of Publications*. References in the Subject Index are arranged alphabetically and refer by number to the entries in Part II which is arranged numerically. It is carefully cross-referenced and analyzed. There is also a *Monthly Circular* issued by H. M.

Stationery office which lists issues of various annual reports, and provides brief notices of the principal publications of the month.

*Official publications of European governments* is an outline bibliography of serials and important monographs issued by European government offices and ministries. It is published by the Reference service on international affairs of the American library in Paris. In its earlier form, it was most acceptable, and this new edition promises to be even more convenient.

When one is faced by a need for immediate firsthand information which can be obtained only by correspondence, or other direct contact, certain directories may prove helpful *Special Tools*. Three that are published by the Chamber of commerce of the state of New York are especial favorites. The *Chambers of commerce of the world, exclusive of the United States*, contains a list of American chambers of commerce in foreign countries, arranged by country, and a list of chambers of commerce of the world, arranged by city under country, giving where ascertainable, population figures and names of secretaries. Their *List of chambers of commerce in the United States in all cities of 5,000 population and over* is arranged alphabetically by cities, under states, includes population figures, name of the organization and its secretary or active manager. The *Classified list of trades and allied associations and publications in the city of New York* includes much information not indicated by the title. Its classified list of publications has been very helpful at times.

In this class too, belong certain publications of the Chamber of commerce of the United States, for instance, their *Foreign commerce handbook* which provides a list of the leading sources of export and import information and service in the United States. The arrangement is alphabetical by subject, and references are given to information in print, followed by names of various agencies, associations, and firms from whom special assistance may be obtained. A little booklet *United States trade promotion agencies abroad*, also issued by the chamber, lists street and cable addresses of American chambers

of commerce in foreign countries, together with other related information.

*Commercial and industrial organizations of the United States* issued by the Bureau of foreign and domestic commerce is a very complete directory containing first, alphabetical and classified (by product or activity) lists of national, international and interstate organizations, with their addresses. In the classified lists under *Foreign* appear names of foreign chambers of commerce and trade associations. There are lists of state and territorial associations (arranged alphabetically by states,) and local associations (arranged by city under state.) These lists include also data about numbers of members and dates of annual meetings. Here also, one thinks of *Market research agencies*, issued by the Bureau of foreign and domestic commerce as a guide to publications and activities relating to domestic marketing. It is designed as a source book of research work conducted in this field by both public and private agencies, and presents a summary of what others have done, are doing and contemplate doing to curtail duplication of research and to eliminate waste. Included are the various departments of the Federal government, state governments, colleges, universities and foundations, publishers of books and trade directories, commercial organizations, business services, etc. Publications of these various bureaus are listed. In the section on Magazines much information on market surveys is brought out. There is to be a new edition, probably at the end of the summer, 1930.

There are many important indexes to and sources of printed information itself. That librarian who has access to the 14th edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica is to be envied, for this new edition contains much statistical information, long runs of figures and other tabulations, in very satisfactory form. I think the new *Encyclopedia of the social sciences* should be carefully watched also, for the first volumes show promise of being distinctly useful in the special fields. The *Index to the New York Times* always a first friend, takes on added value in its new format which follows that of the familiar Wilson indexes. The new arrangement and typography, and



more frequent appearance (now monthly with quarterly and annual cumulations) are decided assets.

The *International finance source book* compiled for the Investment bankers association of America lists more than 1700 official documentary, semi-official and non-official sources of information on the finances and economics of twenty-six European countries, sixteen Latin-American countries, Canada, Australasia and certain Asiatic and Far-Eastern countries. Information is given by country and in two sections; first the documents and official publications issued by or relating to it, and second, Bank, Chamber of commerce publications, periodicals, annuals and miscellany. This and *Sources of investment information* are excellent indexes to whose compilers librarians should be extremely grateful. The latter, arranged by subject, is a very satisfactory index to many sources of information on investments, investment problems, accounting, advertising, agricultural credit, industries, bonds, consolidations, corporations, etc. Books, documents and periodical publications have been included. The *Handbook of commercial services*, 1924 edition, was, in its time, a very valuable reference tool, and is now in process of revision. The new edition will contain descriptive data for many more services, it is reported, but government services will be omitted, these being sufficiently covered elsewhere. It would be ungracious not to record a word of appreciation here of the work done by Mrs. Jennie L. Schram in her *Outstanding commercial research and a list of key publications* and by the Business Branch of the Newark public library in their *500 business magazines classified by subject*. Both bibliographies are very frequently used in many libraries, and their value is established.

Certain publications are notable for the information contained within themselves. The first that come to mind in this class are the *Statistical abstract* and the *Commerce year book*, both well known and widely used compendiums issued by the Bureau of foreign and domestic commerce. The latter, in two volumes, provides in volume one, a comprehensive, authoritative survey of American industry and commerce, and in volume

two, similar but more condensed surveys for foreign countries. *Commerce reports*, a weekly publication of the same bureau is an invaluable source for commercial information on foreign countries, United States foreign trade, tariff and trade regulations, commercial laws, conditions at home and abroad in various industries. Special articles often include statistics and pertinent information not elsewhere available, dealing with economic conditions and statistics of Europe, the Far East and Latin America. The first number in each month contains an index covering the four numbers of the preceding month.

The *Survey of current business* issued monthly by the Bureau of the census is an epitome of current business factors in the United States, including comparisons of prices, production, stocks, etc., of over 1400 commodities each month. The bureau is compiling a record book of business statistics showing the data now carried in this survey of current business, from 1909, when available. Sections covering textiles, metals, fuels, automobiles and rubber have already been issued. The department also publishes a weekly supplement to the *Survey of current business*. Detailed tables are published in the Survey semi-annually giving monthly figures for the past two years and yearly comparisons to 1913, where available, for each item, are included.

The *Standard Base Book*, an annual feature of the Standard trade and securities service, is a *Special Tool* of the first rank. It records, for long terms of years, production, prices, index numbers, etc., of outstanding commodities, and covers virtually every phase of business, industry, banking, finance and the security markets. It includes all stock and bond price indexes, tables on wages, unemployment, foreign trade, and many other subjects. Much of this statistical material is not elsewhere available. It is kept up-to-date by regular monthly supplements appearing about the 20th of each month, and is carefully indexed.

It is difficult to pass by with no more than a mere mention some of the other outstanding contributions of the various government bureaus. They are referred to many times in the course of a busy

day and they are often time-savers of the first rank. *The agricultural survey of the world*, and the *Yearbook of agriculture*, both published by the Department of agriculture, the *Port series* and the *Miscellaneous series* issued jointly by the Engineers' corps and the shipping board, will repay close study.

The *Industrial standards* series, issued by the Bureau of foreign and domestic commerce and the *Commercial standards* series, for which the Bureau of standards is responsible, are important publications of interest to technical groups. The *Commercial standards monthly*, now issued in printed form, is a periodical publication of great interest to many business men who also find much that concerns them in the *Standards yearbook* which not only outlines the research activities and accomplishments of the Bureau of standards and other federal, state, county and municipal agencies, but also those of technical societies and trade associations. The *National directory of commodity specifications*, the *Simplified practice recommendations*, and the *Alphabetical Index and numerical list of Federal specifications* (Circular no. 378) are similarly useful.

Somewhat akin to these are certain publications emanating from the National Research Council which was organized in 1916 at the request of President Wilson, under the charter of the National Academy of Sciences, to promote research in the mathematical, physical, and biological sciences, and in their applications to engineering, medicine, agriculture and the other useful arts. Its Bulletin no. 58 is a *Handbook of scientific and technical societies and institutions of the United States and Canada*. This was issued in 1927, and gives a brief descriptive note of each organization, its address, its objects, library, serial publications, etc. Bulletin no. 59 is a list of *Industrial research laboratories of the United States including consulting research laboratories* (3d ed., rev. and enl. 1928), and there are many others such as the Annual survey of American chemistry, which are highly technical but often very useful in the search for data on unusual research projects.

The new *Foreign port series*, undertaken jointly by the Bureau of foreign

and domestic commerce and the Shipping board, contains three publications so far, which are exhaustive in character and most useful to exporters, importers and ship operators. The *Port studies* give the latest information available about the regulations, organization and practices of each port, its charges, communication facilities and the hinterland, while the study of *Foreign bunkering stations* gives full and specific information about loading speeds and equipment, advance notice and code addresses.

The *Trade Information Bulletins* are pamphlets usually about forty pages long, which contain reports of immediate or temporary interest on specific markets, trade problems or commodities. In this series are published those useful *Economic surveys* of foreign countries to which one so often turns, a timely study of *Canadian trust corporations* and *Sources of foreign credit information*, a frequently revised report of much value to exporters.

The *Trade promotion series* consists of substantial monographs giving results of major studies or investigations. *Trading under laws of Argentina*, a business-like summary of all legal factors involved in commercial relations with Argentina, is an example of these very helpful studies. They supersede the old *Special Agents' Series* and the *Special Consular reports* are of great importance to those concerned with foreign economic conditions, markets, etc.

The *Domestic commerce series* is a most important collection of studies relating to domestic merchandising problems. The *Market data handbook*, number 30 in this series is an extraordinary compilation of statistics for counties in the United States, extremely useful as a source book in market statistics. It analyzes the general consumer market giving, by states and counties, figures for population, manufacturing, fisheries, agriculture, mining, bank deposits, number of telephones, electric light power stations, circulation of periodicals, trade outlets, etc. The farm market is similarly analyzed, as is the industrial market. There is a supplement, *Circulation of farm publications by states and counties*.

*Commercial structure of New England* and its companion studies *Industrial*

*structure of New England*, and *Market data handbook of New England* are parts I-III of the *Commercial survey of New England*, which is the second survey issued in connection with the Bureau's National regional survey program, the first having been the *Commercial survey of the southeast*.

These surveys are designed to marshal and analyze pertinent facts bearing upon the economic life of the nation, and cover national characteristics and resources, transportation, manufactures, agriculture, characteristics of the people, buying power, wholesale and retail distribution, food markets, and buying habits. There is an index to cities. Part III is developed on a township basis. The entire New England market is broken down into three types of trading areas. Maps of these areas are included, and there are statistics of population, wealth, standard of living and trade outlets. These surveys assemble much statistical material, most of it hitherto unpublished and undeveloped, which is carefully correlated. The series when complete will consist of nine surveys. Field work is now in progress on those of the Gulf Southwest and Pacific northwest. The report on the Pacific southwest is approaching completion. (1930).

The biennial census of manufactures is closely watched and its *Press releases*, the first form in which the reports appear is a welcome tool. These are corrected and correlated and republished in separate pamphlet reports, prior to the issuance of the bound volume. Two of these, *Statistics for industries and states* and *Statistics for cities*, summarize and tabulate the available data in convenient form.

Much useful material is appearing in the publications of foreign governments, especially British, in the documents of the League of Nations, and in the publications of the International chamber of commerce. The Department of overseas trade of Great Britain issues a series of reports on economic conditions in various countries, and while these reports are directed to British manufacturers and are primarily concerned with the countries described as markets for British products, the series is none the less important to all who are concerned with the economic, financial, commercial and

industrial conditions in all parts of the world. The reports are exhaustive and authoritative. The *International statistical year-book* published by the Economic and financial section of the League of Nations is an annual reference handbook which brings together in condensed form the chief statistical data in the various studies undertaken by this section. Data are also included from the International institute of agriculture, whose *Yearbook* and *Monthly crop report* are themselves valuable sources of information. In the *Monthly bulletin of statistics* the more important economic statistics of the world are gathered together and kept up-to-date. It is a publication of the League of Nations, and its contents cover an extraordinary range of interests. The World Peace Foundation, American agents for the League publications, issues from time to time, handy little check lists which open up these numerous and rather complicated series. Publications of the *International chamber of commerce* are of considerable import, especially a brochure entitled *Trade terms* which is a digest of meanings of trade terms current in different countries and frequently met with in business contracts. The same organization is responsible for the *Handbook of chambers of commerce* which is really a series of handbooks dealing with the organization of chambers of commerce in many countries, together with facts about the laws that govern them. The series thus far, includes treatises on Germany, Danzig, Memel, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands.

No librarian dealing constantly with requests for current information needs to be told of the value of pamphlet material. It is perhaps one's best stock in trade. Examples of this type of material are legion. *Facts and figures of the automobile industry*, an extraordinarily handy little pamphlet, contains detailed statistics, charts and graphs depicting the automobile industry and its many ramifications. Similar information about railroads, equally conveniently arranged, is to be had in *Railway statistics of the United States*, an annual, whose statistical tables cover a long range in point of time, as well as facts. The *Annual report* of the Royal Bank of

Canada and *Canada, 1930* contain many tables, comparative and extensive, which are of especial interest to border cities. Redmond and company's *World economic chart* is an excellent tabulation of many usable statistics, arranged by country. A little pamphlet issued by the Frank Shepard company entitled *A table of Federal acts which have been designated by popular names* has helped many an attendant over an awkward moment when confronted with a request for an unfamiliar law. It refers, by popular name, to the exact place in the Code or Statutes-at-large where the text may be found.

The last group of materials to be discussed are the general and special periodicals, many of which are notable for their annual numbers. Special attention should be directed to the *Annalist*, *Automotive industries*, *Aviation*, *Bradstreet's*, Editor and publisher the fourth estate (the International year book number appearing in January and the Market guide in November), *Iron age*, *Iron trade review*, *Railway age*, and *Sales management*, whose annual or special numbers are comprehensive, almost encyclopedic, surveys of their special fields. They include much statistical data of especial importance and they are a very essential type of *Special Tool*.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the value of these periodicals as sources of current statistics. So significant are they that the Special Libraries Association is now engaged in preparing a chart which will open up their resources more adequately than do existing tools.

Special indexes to statistical source material appearing regularly in periodicals have no doubt been developed by various institutions and represent a type of *Special Tool* well worth their cost in time, effort and expense. Such an index was worked out some years ago in the Civics division of the Detroit Public Library. It has been subjected to critical testing during this time and its strong and weak features have been demonstrated. With this experience as a background, work has now begun on a more intensive study of periodicals than was previously attempted. It is planned to examine the most frequently used magazines in the economic, finan-

cial and social fields for a period of years not as yet determined, noting not only special features and regular services in detail, but stressing especially unusual or cumulative statistical tables which may appear but once, and which are often lost because their special qualities are not brought out in the usual indexes. It is felt that the specialist working in a field usually knows the sources commonly referred to, but is saved hours of labor compiling specific information by some bit of recorded research which may have escaped his attention, or the location of which may have been forgotten at the time most needed.

The indexing is done on 3 x 5 cards, one item to a card, suitably subject headed and cross-indexed. Once finished, this file should stand as a permanent and complete source index in the fields investigated.

### Seligman Collection

*Nation's Business* for September presents an article by Edwin C. Hill entitled "A Priceless Treasure of Business." The article concerns the private book collection of Professor E. A. R. Seligman which has been in process of making for over fifty years and now numbers 50,000 books, pamphlets, maps, broadsides and handbills.

To quote from *Nation's Business*, "It is certainly the most important, extensive, comprehensive and valuable business library in private hands."

Professor Seligman has recently turned the collection over to Columbia University under the title of "The Seligman Collection."

Started by Professor Seligman in early youth, it was gradually built up by consistent purchases. In 1887 he obtained the Bolles Collection of Philadelphia and a little later the collection amassed by the English economist, Francis Place.

The collection is noted for the early rarities on economics, especially the American material on business issued prior to the Civil War. In the field of French literature the collection is especially strong, including books on the economic causes of the French revolutions. The Spanish, Dutch and Portuguese sections are also noteworthy.

The article in *Nation's Business* is well worth reading.

## President's Page

SINCE writing the last copy the printed *List of Members* compiled and edited by Mr. William Alcott, ex-president, has been distributed to institutional members. The *Directory of Special Libraries of California* compiled by the Special Libraries Association of San Francisco and the Southern California Chapter of the Special Libraries Association has also been published.

Unofficially and informally your president, by casting her vote in advance, spent Primary Election day in Chicago, lunching with seven of our members, some of whom meet at luncheon on Tuesdays throughout the year. The avidity with which all asked at the same time about the California meeting and some happenings since was quite marked.

After the board meeting in Cleveland on September twenty-ninth we are to be guests of the Cleveland Chapter at an informal dinner. In between we will view the American Bankers Association library exhibit. Then on October second your president is to spend the day in Cincinnati as the guest of our youngest and newest chapter. After visiting libraries we are to be entertained at high tea by the Procter and Gamble Company at their beautiful plant. The firm are issuing invitations for this in the name of their librarian, Miss Grace Stowell.

Do not be surprised if you find that this page is being shared. Watch for what Marian C. Manley, librarian, Business Branch, Newark, has to say in November about the committee created in San Francisco.

### COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

#### CHAIRMEN

BUSINESS READING—Sattie E. Warn, Business Branch, Newark Public Library, Newark, New Jersey.

CLASSIFICATIONS—Louise Keller, Independence Bureau, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

CO-OPERATION IN BUSINESS LIBRARY SERVICE—Marian C. Manley, Business Branch, Newark Public Library, Newark, New Jersey.

EXHIBITS—Alta Clafin, Federal Reserve Bank, Cleveland, Ohio.

MEMBERSHIP—Florence Bradley, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, New York City.

NEWS—Ford M. Pettit, Detroit News, Detroit, Michigan

PUBLICATIONS—Linda H. Morley, Industrial Relations Counselors, Inc., New York City.

WAYS AND MEANS—Dorsey W. Hyde, Washington Chamber of Commerce, Washington, D. C.

Others under negotiation!

MARGARET REYNOLDS,  
*President.*

SEPTEMBER 18, 1930.

## Editorial Board

EDITOR, Herbert O. Brigham, State Library, Providence, R. I.

### Associate Editors

D. N. Handy, Insurance Library Association of Boston; M. E. Pellett, Library The Port of New York Authority; Rebecca B. Rankin, Municipal Reference Library, New York City.

### Department Editors

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 Ethel Cleland, Business Branch, Public Library, Indianapolis, Ind.  
 Elizabeth O. Cullen, Bureau of Railway Economics, Washington, D. C.  
 Emilie Mueser, Engineering Societies Library, New York City.  
 Louise Keller, Independence Bureau, Philadelphia, Pa.  
 Marian C. Manley, Business Branch, Public Library, Newark, N. J.  
 Mary C. Parker, Federal Reserve Bank, New York City.  
 Margaret Reynolds, First Wisconsin National Bank, Milwaukee, Wis.  
 A. A. Slobod, General Electric Co., Schenectady, N. Y.

## Retain the Library

When business slackens and depression sweeps through the land there is inevitably a retrenchment program among the large corporations which frequently strikes the library or the research department.

Fortunately, there has come to the General Office very few signs that there has been abolishment of or severe retrenchment among the business libraries represented in the Association. The business library should be such a valuable asset in the corporation that it should be one of the last departments to feel the knife of economy.

In the last few weeks there has been a concerted attempt to stimulate the psychology of business by various methods. Buy Now Clubs have been formed in Boston and other cities; A "Call to Work" has been sounded by many newspapers; Writers in the business field have written editorials; To illustrate the trend we reprint Mr. B. C. Forbes's editorial entitled "Snap Out Of It."

Mr. Burton Bigelow of Buffalo has issued a broadside entitled "How Far Can a Dog Run into the Woods?" Mr. Bigelow believes that we have traveled halfway into the forest of uncertainty and that we are destined to come out on the other side into the open clearing.

## Snap Out of It!

"Snap out of it! Gloom has reigned long enough. It is time to drop cowardice and exercise courage. Deflation has run an ample course—to carry it much further would mean needless destruction, criminal destruction. The country is sound at the core, sound politically, sound financially, sound industrially, sound commercially. Agricultural prices, too, have been thoroughly deflated, even over-depressed. The nation has its health. It has lost little or none of its real wealth. It is living saner than when everyone was unrestrainedly optimistic. The time has come to cast off our doubts and fears, our hesitancy and timidity, our spasm of "nerves." Summer, the season for holiday-making, is over. The season for fresh planning, new enterprise, hard work, driving force, initiative, concentration on business, is here. Let's go.

"Snap out of it!"

We reprint from *Forbes Magazine* for September 15, 1930 an editorial written presumably by Mr. B. C. Forbes. In giving permission to reprint the article an official of *Forbes* stated that in the interest of American business, *Forbes* will gladly extend the privilege of reprinting this article to responsible organizations on request. If preferred, reprints are available direct from the publishers.

## Group Meetings

We herewith print summarized reports from the various Groups prepared by the respective Group officers covering the meetings at San Francisco. We also include the minutes of the meetings of the Museum Group at Buffalo from June 4 to 7, 1930, with the American Association of Museums:

### Civic-Social Group

THE Civic-Social Group opened its session with a breakfast conference on publicity methods. It was an informal gathering and Miss Hollingsworth, Acting Chairman of the Group, distributed samples of printed and mimeographed literature used in the Municipal Reference Library of Los Angeles.

The Group also convened for breakfast on Friday morning, but inasmuch as a quorum was not present the election of officers was postponed until the afternoon session.

The principal session occurred on the afternoon of Friday, June 20th, and in opening the meeting Miss Hollingsworth read a telegram from Miss Ina Clement, Chairman of the Group, extending greetings and best wishes for a successful program. Dr. Louis C. Block, Statistician, Division of Labor Statistics and Law Enforcement, San Francisco, presented a very complete and informative survey of the unemployment situation in the United States. Miss Edith Guerrier, Supervisor of Branches, Boston Public Library, discussed the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, an announcement of which was made in a recent issue of *Special Libraries*. At the conclusion of Miss Guerrier's talk the following resolution was adopted:

"Resolved that the Social and Civic Group of the National Special Libraries Association in Annual Meeting assembled at San Francisco, California, expresses its deep interest in the work of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection and offers its co-operation in giving publicity to the findings of the Conference Committee

"Resolved that a copy of the resolution be sent to Honorable Ray Lyman Wilbur, Chairman of the White House Conference and to Dr. Henry E. Barnard, the Director "

"The Governmental Problems of a Metropolitan Area" formed the subject of a very able address by Rolland A. Vandegrift, Secretary, California Taxpayer's Association.

After receiving the report of the Nominating Committee the members elected Miss Grace England of the Civics Department, Detroit Public Library, Chairman for the forthcoming year

### Commercial-Technical Group

The first session of the Commercial-Technical Group was called to order at Hotel Clift on Thursday, June 19, 1930, by Miss M. L. Alexander, acting in place of Miss Alma Mitchill, Chairman. Report of the chairman was read by the secretary.

The first paper presented by Mrs. Louise P. Dorn, Librarian, Detroit Edison Company, entitled Home Indexing of Periodicals was followed by an interesting discussion concerning co-ordination of present indexing facilities. It was suggested that attention of incoming boards be called to the difficulties resulting from variable terminology used in such indexes as Industrial Arts and Engineering and possibly to have them appoint a Committee on Terminology of Indexes to aid in eliminating such difficulty. In discussing Public Affairs Information Service, the appalling fact was revealed that out of the forty-two present at the Commercial-Technical Group meeting, only seven subscribed to this useful tool.

Sattie Warn challenged the Group to some worth-while work by putting to it the three succinct questions in closing her informative paper on Trade Directories. (Miss Warn's paper appears elsewhere in this issue)

In the ensuing discussion, it was suggested that an annual list be published by the Special Libraries Association and it was voted that the matter be referred to the Committee on Publications.

It was further suggested that information concerning price and date be included in the list and also that some effort be made to evaluate the directories by starring those suggested for first purchase.

The appointment of a committee to put such a list into shape was left to the incoming board.

Apropos of directories, Miss Gertrude Peterkin mentioned the fact that the American Telephone & Telegraph Company was listing dealers of nationally advertised products under the national trade name in its city telephone directories. It was voted that commendation of this procedure should be sent to the

American Telephone & Telegraph Company by the Association.

Miss Alexander gave an informal talk on bibliographies, attempting to stimulate discussion as to what the future policy of the Group should be concerning bibliographies. She brought out the fact that as Source Lists for the student they were valuable, but doubted whether the use made of them in special libraries warranted the time and expense spent on them.

In discussing bibliographies proper versus the abridged list of references, Mr. Guy Marion said he manages to stay on the fence by calling his lists of references "Partial Bibliography." Miss Kornhauser of Mellon Institute said her organization endorsed thorough bibliography whole-heartedly. Miss Greenwood called attention to the publication of bibliographies which the John Crerar Library has recently resumed.

Relative figures showing sale of bibliographies issued by the S. L. A. in the past revealed an over abundant supply of the Electrical Engineering, Rubber, and Illuminating Engineering left unsold, while the only one that had brought profits to the Association was Miss Burnett's Committee's List of Mimeographed Releases of the United States Government.

Miss Bradley made a plea for more publications in order to have bait for enticing more institutional members. She suggested that if these were not to be bibliographies, to make them reports on some "burning issue" which could be of interest and use to business. She spoke of the wide-spread distribution the Sources of Investment Information received, and noted that it had been sent to twenty-eight states, Hawaii and Mexico.

Miss Grace England's paper, read by the secretary, was accompanied by a bibliography on Special Tools. The paper and bibliography were discussed under the following heads: (1) Guides, sources, etc. (2) Government publications (3) Market surveys (4) Miscellaneous books, pamphlets, etc. (5) Magazines. This was such a "meaty" paper and bibliography that all present were most grateful that copies for personal use were available.

The Nominating Committee was appointed with Miss M. L. Alexander as Chairman.

#### Second Session

The second session of the Commercial-Technical Group was called to order by Miss Alexander on Saturday, June 21st, at 10:00 A. M.

The papers for this session concerned representative libraries within the Commercial-Technical Group. Mr. Dudley read Mr. Fletcher's paper on the British Library of Information, which gave a clear idea of scope of this Library and the services available.

Miss Greenwood's paper on the Library of the New York Consolidated Gas Company was read by the Secretary.

Although Miss Margaret Hatch's paper, which was next presented, concerned primarily the work of the Emporium Executives' Library, it will be useful as a manual for anyone who is planning a department store library.

Considering the tremendous "untouched" field of department store work, it was suggested that the incoming administration confer with the Retail Research Association to work out means for the further development of this field.

Miss Josephine Hollingsworth suggested that a pamphlet be prepared as a preliminary to this contact, using Miss Hatch's paper as a basis.

The following Committee reports were next presented.

The Advertising Committee, by Miss M. L. Alexander, who told of having written to the librarians of seventeen advertising agencies telling them of the aims of the Association and Group and asking that they join. This apparently met with little response and Miss Alexander urged the Group to send her suggestions of ways and means for further activities.

The Chemistry and Physics Committee, Hester Wetmore, Chairman, gave a résumé of the work since 1924. This Committee has compiled book lists on soap; fats, oils and waxes; explosives; and paints. These are available upon request to the Chairman. Classification schemes have been worked out by this Committee for the following subjects: aeronautics; paint; photography; zinc metallurgy; and oils, soap and greases. Another piece of work was a list of out-of-print book dealers. Work has been started on a fully annotated bibliography on Laboratories, taking up their history, architecture, equipment and type.

The Electrical Engineering Committee, Mrs. Katharine Maynard, Chairman, report concerned mainly progress on its bibliography defined as "A list of recently published bibliographies in electrical engineering, 1918-1928." It seems as though it will be possible to get this published early in the fall under the auspices of some scientific organization.



The Illuminating Engineering Committee, Miss Josephine Greenwood, Chairman, is working on its 1929-1930 bibliography.

The Oil Committee, Mr. D. F. Brown, Chairman, met with the Chemistry and Physics Committee and made several suggestions concerning further development of its monthly bibliography on petroleum which is compiled co-operatively with the U. S. Bureau of Mines.

The Public Utilities Committee, Mrs. Louise P. Dorn, Chairman, prepared and distributed a list of house organs published by public utility companies.

The Transportation Committee, Mr. Mirl E. Pellett, Chairman, told of the bibliographies its sub-committees have prepared. They are:

Air Transportation, by Clara Widger  
Covering material from May, 1929-May, 1930.

Electric railroads, by L. A. Armistead  
A list to supplement the list on Urban Electric Railways, published in 1927.

Toll Bridges, by Miss Evans  
1929

The outstanding work of this Committee is its monumental bibliography on Water Transportation. Progress was reported and it is expected to go to press early in September. It was voted to refer this bibliography to the Committee on Publications.

The Nominating Committee presented the following names for 1930-31 officers:

*Chairman:* Miss Marian Manley, Librarian  
Business Branch  
Newark Public Library  
Newark, New Jersey

*Vice-Chairman:* Mrs. L. P. Dorn, Librarian  
Detroit Edison Co.  
Detroit, Michigan

It was left to the incoming Chairman to appoint a Secretary

ROSE L. VORMELKER,  
*Secretary.*

### Financial Group

Before holding its first meeting in the Stock Exchange Auditorium, on Wednesday afternoon, June eighteenth, members of the group and their guests watched the tickers in the Trading Room. Then they adjourned to the Auditorium where Miss Marguerite Burnett as chairman introduced Mr. Howard Whipple, Vice-president of the Bank of America of California, who spoke on Group and Branch Banking. Unfortunately the next speaker R. D. McKenzie, statistician, San Francisco News, was taken ill after reaching the Auditorium and could not give his talk, which was

a disappointment not only to the members of the Group, but to the students of the Stock Exchange Training Department, who were among the audience.

After Mr. Whipple's paper the members decided to have a business meeting. The chairman asked Miss Reynolds to act as secretary. The report of the committee on Publicity of the Financial Group for 1929-1930 was given by Miss Reynolds. This report was accepted. A rising vote of thanks was given to Miss Isabel Jackson, Bank of Italy, for her work as News chairman for the convention. It was moved, seconded and carried that a letter be sent to Mr. W. W. Douglas in appreciation of the work of Miss K. Dorothy Ferguson, Bank of Italy, for her work for the convention. The distribution of *List of References on Group and Branch Banking*, prepared by Miss Ethel Baxter, American Bankers' Association and Miss Dorothy Watson, Bankers' Trust Company, then took place. Miss Marion Eaton of the Nominating Committee presented the following names:

Chairman—Virginia Savage, Halsey Stuart & Company, Chicago

Vice-Chairman—Josephine Curry, Redmond & Company, New York

Secretary—Marion Bowman, Old Colony Trust Company, Boston

These names were unanimously accepted.

It was suggested that a letter telling about the coming meeting of the S. L. A. and written to the president of each firm represented in the Financial Group might let executives know that such an organization as ours existed and might create more interest in sending the librarian to the meetings.

After an informal discussion as to what methods were used by the various libraries in welcoming the new members of the various institutions, the meeting adjourned.

The second meeting was held at the Clift Hotel on Saturday morning, June twenty-first. The chairman, Miss Burnett, suggested that the business be transacted first. The delightfully humorous report of Virginia Savage telling about the exhibit held in connection with the meeting of the Investment Bankers' Association at Quebec, October 12-18, 1929 was read by Miss Jones of the Security Bank, Los Angeles. It was further voted that a letter expressing our thanks for their co-operation be sent to Mr. Benjamin F. Taylor, chairman of the Education Committee of the I. B. A. It was voted that Miss Savage be notified of the appreciation of the Financial Group for her

services in connection with the first exhibit at the meeting of the I. B. A. Miss K. Dorothy Ferguson, Bank of Italy, gave the report of the A. B. A. Exhibit Committee for 1929.

It was voted that a permanent standing committee, which might be called the Book Selection Committee be appointed so that the incoming chairman of the Exhibit Committee might confer with her on the subject of the revision of the titles included in the booklets which are distributed at each exhibit.

It was voted that it is the pleasure of the Financial Group to continue these exhibits during the coming year.

It was also voted that the librarians in the various Federal Reserve districts be supplied with copies of the pamphlets published for distribution at exhibits, thus acting as a geographical distribution center.

It was voted that a letter be written to the editors of the *Commercial and Financial Chronicle* suggesting that because of the extreme value of the subject matter their involved and incomplete manner of indexing be changed to an alphabetical index by subject. It was suggested further that a letter be written to the editors of the *Annalist* asking them to make a change in their manner of indexing which at present is incomplete, valuable material thus being lost. It was voted that a letter be written to Mr. David Lawrence of the *United States Daily* asking that an alphabetical subject index be issued and that the paper discontinue present policy of listing articles under obscure classifications.

It was voted that we write Ames, Emmerich & Company asking if a revision of their *Briefs of Latin America* was under consideration for we had found the material of considerable value.

A paper prepared by Miss Dorothy Watson, Bankers' Trust Company, New York, on *Magazine Subscription Agencies* was read by Miss Elizabeth Holden, Federal Reserve Bank, San Francisco. This provoked much discussion, bringing forth the names of satisfactory subscription agents. Miss Windle, Wells Fargo Library, San Francisco, read a paper prepared by Mildred Lee, Selected Industries Inc., New York on *Survey of Investment Trust Library Activity*, which showed the beginnings of libraries for investment trusts. Miss Marion Eaton led a discussion on Finding and Using Foreign Material. After the discussion the members

voted to have an article prepared on this subject for some future issue of SPECIAL LIBRARIES, believing that it would be of great value to members outside our own group.

MARGARET REYNOLDS,  
Secretary.

### Insurance Group

Following the plans outlined by the Program Committee of the twenty-second annual conference, the Insurance Group, of Special Libraries Association, held its annual meeting at the Clift Hotel, San Francisco, Cal., on Friday afternoon, June 20, 1930.

Because of the distance from coast to coast, a large number of our members, including our chairman, Miss Mabel B. Swerig, were unable to be present. At the request of the chairman, Miss Laura A. Woodward, Secretary, presided.

Immediately following a very enjoyable luncheon served us in one of the private dining rooms on the mezzanine floor, the meeting was called to order by the Presiding Officer. A word of welcome was extended the guests present from other groups and Miss Ruth Snyder of the Emporium Capwell Corporation, San Francisco; Mr. R. S. Davis, Assistant Comptroller, State Compensation Insurance Fund, San Francisco, and a representative from the Blanket Club, Seattle, Washington. We were glad to have with us, Miss Geraldine Rammer, Librarian of the Hardware Mutual Casualty Company, Stevens Point, Wisconsin, one of our newest members.

A résumé of the work of the previous year was given by the Secretary who outlined, for the benefit of those not present at the 1929 conference, the scope and purposes of the pamphlet "The Insurance Library" which is being revised by the group. The co-operation of every member was urged in assisting Mr. Handy who is the chairman of the committee working on this publication.

A report was made of the result of the questionnaire sent each member the early part of last winter for the purpose of asking the H. W. Wilson Company to include several of the most important insurance periodicals in the Industrial Arts Index. Our request was favorably considered by Mr. Wilson and beginning January 1, 1930, in addition to the *Spectator* which was already indexed, four other magazines were included, namely, *The National Underwriter*, *Insurance Field*, *Eastern Underwriter* and the *Weekly Underwriter*. The *Industrial Arts Index* is probably one of the most used publications of its type and is the

only one that includes the subject of insurance. We are indeed very grateful to Mr. Wilson for his hearty co-operation.

Miss Florence Bradley, Librarian of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, New York City, gave a short but very interesting talk on the value of a library to an insurance company.

Miss Rammer outlined the work of her library and Mr. Davis of the State Compensation Insurance Fund, spoke of the work he had undertaken in his organization.

The several talks mentioned brought forth numerous questions and a round table discussion of every day problems in an insurance library followed.

LAURA A WOODWARD,  
*Secretary.*

### Museum Group

The Museum Group of the Special Libraries Association met in Buffalo, June 4-7, with the American Association of Museums. The members attended the general meetings of the Association as well as the several luncheons, teas, and other entertainment features, and met together each evening for dinner.

The special meetings of the Group were held on the evenings of June 4-6, as were the sectional meetings of the Association, with an average attendance of sixteen.

On Wednesday evening the members of the Group with guests assembled in the Fillmore Room, Hotel Statler, at 8:15; Miss E. Louise Lucas, Librarian, Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, presiding. Mr. Laurence Vail Coleman, Director of the American Association of Museums, welcomed the Group, inviting it to call on Miss Bingham or Mr. Everard for assistance at any time.

Dr. F. Stuart Chapin, Editor, Social Science Abstracts, New York City, read a paper entitled "The Problems of International Annotated Bibliography and Abstracts in the Social Sciences," illustrating his talk with detailed charts. Dr. Chapin's paper will appear in a future issue of SPECIAL LIBRARIES.

Dr. Leslie A. White, Professor of Anthropology, University of Buffalo, spoke on "Methodology in Scientific Research." He stated that the technique of field work is an art rather than a science and that it varies with the personality of the individual investigator.

Professor White's work has been largely in the pueblos of New Mexico. As the Indians are extremely reticent, information must be obtained from informants by confidential

conferences. It is necessary to win the confidence to secure details of heresy, crime, etc.

The general features of Pueblo culture are fairly uniform. Eastern may be checked against Western and one informant against another. Better results are obtained if the questions are quite impersonal.

Dr. White stated that one of the major problems confronting ethnologists is the investigation of the culture apart from the people; that the personal psychological problems have usually been disregarded by investigators until recently. He prophesied that this aspect would be given increasing attention in the future.

Miss Hollis Hering, Librarian, Missionary Research Library, Union Theological Seminary, New York, read a paper on "The Research Library and the Research Librarian." Miss Hering's treatment of her subject was so broad that it seemed to fit each library represented.

After an informal discussion of these papers the meeting adjourned.

On Thursday evening the program opened with a discussion on "Foreign Buying for Art Museum Libraries" by Mr. Paul Vanderbilt, Librarian, Pennsylvania Museum of Art, Philadelphia. He mentioned a survey of vanishing art periodicals and the fact that monographs are becoming scarce. Mr. Vanderbilt stated that the decision as to whether a librarian should go abroad to purchase foreign publications depended largely upon how much was to be spent. He deemed it advisable if five to ten thousand dollars were available for general improvement, to raise the library to a point of distinction, but not to buy the standard necessary things. He pointed out that catalogs do not always indicate the stock adequately—they may be padded or vice versa; also, that attics and cellars often contain treasures.

Mr. Vanderbilt advised having a list of desiderata practically impossible to find, as an introductory wedge. This makes it possible to "get in and find out what is there," without feeling obliged to purchase.

Miss Emma R. Keil, Librarian, Buffalo Evening News, spoke on "A Newspaper Library and its Work," exhibiting samples of envelopes found most satisfactory for filing cuts. Miss Keil stated that the main thing was to decide how to handle the material and then to be consistent. She commented upon the fact that the value of attending a conference lies not so much in the ideas received but in the illuminating effect which comes from meeting other minds which are grappling with similar problems.

Mr. Waldemar Kaempfert, Director, Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago, joined in the discussion.

Miss Susan Hutchinson, Librarian, Brooklyn Museum, discussed the problem of "Making the Museum Library of Greater Service to the General Public." She deplored any museum library which catered to curatorial and staff use only, thus making the librarian a sort of glorified research assistant without professional standing.

Miss Hutchinson believes that the museum librarian has far to go in fulfilling his function; that the museum is changing and the librarian cannot sit and wait for people to come to the library but must attract, as other departments do, the users of books to the library and deepen the educational value of the museum exhibits by bringing together the museum exhibits, the visitor, and the book.

She warned against the inclination to become so absorbed in the details of our work as to lose track of its large aspects and possibilities.

Miss Hutchinson believes publicity is important in making the museum library known to the people and enumerated a few methods used at the Brooklyn Museum. Newspapers will carry anything that is news; notices sent to teachers by name are more successful than circulars to principals; a library gallery for exhibition of own plates or for exhibition of class work; cooperation with other libraries; reaching the trades; teas.

Miss Hutchinson asked for the publicity methods which had proved successful with other museum libraries. Evidently the Brooklyn Museum has progressed further along this road than the others. However, Mr. Vanderbilt said that the Pennsylvania Museum had established a downtown reading room on modern art, in Philadelphia.

This discussion was followed by Miss Helen Cram of the Grosvenor Library, Buffalo, who gave a brief description of the work of that library.

Mr. H. W. Wilson who had given a paper in the afternoon relative to the art index was called upon for remarks. With reference to foreign subscriptions he stated that except for the Japanese, Chinese, Germans, and Russians, the rest of the world was rather slow in subscribing to the Index, resembling "reservoirs rather than fountains." Mr. Wilson mentioned the inclusion of foreign publications and the problem of duplication. Mr. Kaempfert inquired as to a possible science index. Mr. Wilson thought it a future possibility. Miss

Hutchinson mentioned the Concilium Bibliographicum and Botanical Abstracts.

After further informal discussion, the meeting adjourned at 10:30.

The last meeting of the Museum Group was held on Friday evening, June 6th, at 8:15. Miss Katherine Coffee of the Newark Museum read Miss Brackett's paper on "John Cotton Dana" inasmuch as Miss Brackett has resigned from the Newark Museum and was unable to be present.

Miss Etheldred Abbot, Librarian, Art Institute of Chicago, read a paper on the "Art Departments of City Libraries" and lead a discussion on the relations of public libraries with art museum libraries.

A letter was read from Mr. Carl H. Milam, Secretary of the American Library Association, stressing the desirability of museum and library cooperation and suggesting that the Association of Museum Directors might be willing to conduct a study of the possibilities for such cooperation.

As a preliminary to such a study Miss Abbot moved that a committee of five be appointed by the chair to consider, and report at the next meeting, a survey of museum libraries, with a questionnaire for consideration by the Group. It was suggested that such a survey might include information relating to the staff, salaries, slide service, relations with public library, preparation of bibliographies, publicity, etc.

A discussion on the "Disposing of Duplicate Material" was led by Miss Lucas. The suggestion was made that the Smithsonian Institution might act as an exchange agent. Mr. Vanderbilt moved that the secretary write to Mr. Alcott asking whether the Special Libraries Association would be willing to act as a central agency for the exchange of duplicate books.

A discussion followed as to the desirability of providing bibliographies to accompany exhibits, also the books themselves; the amount of time devoted to research work for curators or professors; whether the librarian or someone else makes the final decision for ordering books; the preparation of monthly and annual reports; increasing the membership of the Group, etc.

It was remarked that the best sources for obtaining reproductions are included in a list prepared by Prof. W. F. Stohlman, Graduate College of Fine Arts, Princeton University; also from the World Peace Association, 40 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston.

Mrs. Lloyd Josselyn, Librarian of the Popular Library, Buffalo Museum of Science, described the mounting of the travel posters: Chip board 30 x 40 inches, paspartout binding; corrugated board is used for the larger posters.

A letter was read from Miss Mary B Cobb, Librarian, Boston Society of Natural History, explaining the method used by the Society for managing the exchange material. The Library handles the incoming, and the Secretary's office the outgoing, material and records. Mr. Vanderbilt requested a photostat copy of this letter.

A resolution was offered by Miss Eleanor K Sweet, Librarian, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard, as follows:

We members of the Museum Group of the Special Libraries Association wish to extend to the officers of the American Association of Museums our appreciation of their cordial response to our suggestion that we meet with them in Buffalo; our gratitude, also, for the gracious welcome which we have received to all of the activities of the conference.

It was voted to send greetings to the Special Libraries Association and the members of the Museum Group in attendance at the Conference at San Francisco, June 18-21.

The following officers were chosen for the ensuing year:

Chairman—Miss Etheldred Abbot,  
of the Art Institute,  
Chicago, Illinois.

Vice-Chairman—Mrs. Clara P. Shepardson,  
of the Massachusetts His-  
torical Society.

Secretary—Mrs. Lloyd Josselyn,  
of the Buffalo Museum of Science.

The new chairman was welcomed and the meeting adjourned, but was continued by informal discussion until a late hour.

MINNIE WHITE TAYLOR,  
*Secretary.*

### Newspaper Group

"The newspaper library, youngest child of the American newspaper plant, has presented one of the hardest problems of organization in all the history of special libraries. The vast number of clippings, photographs, cuts, mats and reference materials has almost defied classification. The Newspaper Library Group was organized to bring together the collective efforts of the best newspaper librarians and since they have been meeting in annual conference much progress has been made."

This statement, made at one of the meetings of the Newspaper Library Group, Special Libraries association, sets forth as clearly as has yet been done the task and the opportunity which governed the coming together of newspaper librarians. Not only the task, but also the guiding principles under which their co-operative program is being worked out.

It was true at Atlantic City in 1923 when the first little group of five librarians met and found that they had common problems; it was increasingly true at Saratoga Springs in 1924, when an augmented attendance started to work out standard methods of library organization, classification and filing—a work that was carried on in succeeding years and resulted in some very definite gains at the Toronto conference of 1927 and the two Washington gatherings of 1928 and 1929.

In these years the gospel of cooperative effort was spread throughout the east and, to a lesser extent, throughout the central states. The movement had begun with the librarians of metropolitan dailies—a few of these dailies. Now it included practically all, and it had reached down to smaller newspapers, into the one-man and one-woman libraries. Old hit-and-miss filing methods had given way to new; old dust-gathering equipment to modern, dust-proof cabinets. The library had risen from a very inferior place in the newspaper plant to a department of first importance.

Now, with this bit of history before us, it is possible to appraise and see in retrospect what was accomplished at the eighth annual conference in San Francisco in June. That conference was, in a way, a venture. In all the previous years the west coast, with its splendid opportunities for newspaper library building, had not been urged as much as they might have been to cooperate. Now, for the first time, the gospel was to be carried to the west.

Mr. Ford M. Pettit, of the Detroit News, secretary of the Newspaper group, was unable to go to San Francisco. Mr. William F. Vaughan of the Oakland Tribune was selected as secretary pro tem. The choice proved fortunate. Mr. Vaughan obtained the cooperation of the coast librarians. And not alone their cooperation but also their desire to profit by the convention. They came to join in the discussions; they invited the librarians into their own libraries for survey and conference. Many had already seen that the old poke-it-away-on-a-shelf method is no longer adequate and were replanning their libraries. They were glad of this opportunity for consultation. The western librarians, in addition to their over-

whelming hospitality, threw into the conference so much of interest as to assure that from now on the Newspaper Library program of improvement is to be nation-wide in its scope.

Of the definite program carried out at the San Francisco conference much might be said. The first general session included the address of welcome by Mr. Vaughan; the response by William Alcott of the Boston Globe, president of the Special Libraries association; the review of the year by Joseph F. Kwapil of the Public Ledger, chairman of the Newspaper Group. The second and third sessions included contributions by Mr. Alcott, Mr. Vaughan, Wilbur D. Kirkman of the Spokesman-Review, Miss Blanche L. Davenport of the Christian Science Monitor, Mrs. Marjorie D. Brown of the San Francisco Chronicle, Mrs. Gertrude Blackledge of the Los Angeles Daily News, Miss Agnes J. Petersen of The Milwaukee Journal. These discussions were technical, or at least professional.

A wider viewpoint, of more general interest, was introduced by the contributions of three speakers—Robert W. Jones, editorial writer of the Public Ledger whose paper was read; Thomas Bellew, city editor of the San Francisco Chronicle; Roy Harrison Danforth, assistant managing editor of the Oakland Tribune. They brought to the librarians the observations of the newspaper man who is outside the reference department, but who is in daily touch with it, asking it to meet his needs.

Mr. Bellew frankly recognized the need of co-operation on the part of the news department if the library is to function satisfactorily. He took cognizance of the habit of news men in asking hazy, uncertain questions and expecting the library to answer them promptly—"Ask for material intelligently, that is specifically and definitely. This applies not only to reporters but to city editors as well." The newspaper librarians, who have long suffered under the handicap of the indefinite question, blessed him for these words.

But Mr. Bellew went farther. He recognized that the news room is the source of much material that is filed—photographs, cuts, documents. A mistake made in marking this material as it is sent in may mean a mistake in filing. He cautioned photographers and reporters to be certain and clear in their captions.

Mr. Danforth defended librarians against the charge that they too often fail in answering questions. He pointed out that the news room is "about 80 per cent accurate in its news items

yet it expects the library to be 100 per cent perfect and assumes that it is 100 per cent correct." This, he demonstrated, is an impossible standard and unjust to the library.

In his observations on the practical working of the library, Mr. Danforth suggested that both outside visitors and reporters be excluded from the files. The visitors, he said, cause interruptions and delay. The reporter, standing over the librarian as she fills his request, prevents her from concentrating fully on the selection of the material for which he has asked. A desk or window to which the visitor and the reporter come—but come no farther—is best.

Mr. Jones pointed out that the librarian must be alert to the different types of request that will come to the library. The reporter wants clippings; the editorial writer, more often, reference books; the Sunday department, feature material. The librarian must plan with these types in mind.

Two breakfast conferences were held, one presided over by Miss Agnes J. Petersen of The Milwaukee Journal and the other by A. Dwight Newton of the Los Angeles Examiner. Miss Petersen, devoting her discussion to the improvement of the library staff, said that three factors influence the efficiency of the reference department force—training, wages and personal qualifications. She pointed to the addition of newspaper library courses at schools of journalism as a way to improve training and, indirectly, to increase wages. Higher personal qualifications of applicants for positions would naturally follow.

The Newspaper Library group elected the following officers:

Ford M. Pettit of the Detroit News, chairman; Miss Irene Swencicka of the Camden Courier, vice-chairman; Joseph Sheridan of the Akron Beacon-Journal, secretary-treasurer.

AGNES J. PETERSEN,  
Secretary.

## Dale Library

Columbia University recently acquired a library of weights and measures, presented by Samuel S. Dale of Boston, former editor of *The Textile World Record*. The gift is in memory of Mr. Dale's father and mother, Thomas and Fanny Dale of Little Falls, N. Y., and comprises nearly two thousand books and pamphlets. Nineteen languages are represented in the collection and there are many rarities concerning measurements.

## Classification and Indexing

Louise Keller and Emilie Mueser, Department Editors

### Taking the Guess out of Office Filing

By Mary Giblin, Chief Engineer's Office, Detroit  
Edison Company

The subject of filing systems has caused much discussion and long argument, and many hours of thought have been exhausted by office workers in attempts to devise systems most suited to their particular needs. Usually, one finally decides on a scheme that seems the most facile and, at the same time, most consistent.

A filing system planned by an individual operates smoothly as long as its creator is on hand to manage it. But how often the routine of an office is upset because in the absence of the chief file clerk material cannot be found. Instead of producing the piece of correspondence asked for, the acting clerk lamely apologizes, "I'm sorry, but Miss So and So filed the material and she is on her vacation."

Why should the efficient service of an organization—or even one office—depend solely upon human memory—and of a single individual? Valuable as she may be, she is not immortal, and eventually one circumstance or another causes a change in personnel. Her successor in all probability is just as efficient in her own way, but has an entirely different scheme for maintaining files. The file as she finds it is foreign to her; there is no uniform filing system in effect; so why not adopt her own scheme. Once more a filing system is abandoned and rebuilt.

For a long time it has seemed futile to attempt to install a universal filing system in a large organization because each department has its own ideas as to what is desirable to meet its own needs; but a classified filing system, indexed by a centralized catalog, makes possible a uniform scheme and at the same time permits supervision and possession of its own records by each department.

The Dewey Decimal System of classification, which has been installed in the Chief Engineer's office and is being installed in other engineering offices of the Company, was developed by Melville Dewey, Librarian, in 1873, primarily for use in libraries. Since that time it has been revised and improved. Years of practical use in many thousands of libraries, not only in the United States but in other countries, has proved that with the aid of this system,

catalogs, file lists, indexes and references can be made faster and cheaper, and when completed are better and vastly more permanent, than by any other method not having its essential features. It has met with success not only in libraries but in various commercial organizations, for as well as books it permits classification of pamphlets, clippings, correspondence, scrapbooks, etc., and in general any material that requires useable preservation. It is in daily use by hundreds of business and professional men who have learned its labor-saving powers.

Other methods involved frequent rearrangement, renumbering and remarking of material, all costly repetition. The great need was for a system which would enable each worker to go on from the point where her predecessor left off so that no labor would be lost. The Dewey Decimal System accomplishes this result.

This classification system divides all knowledge into nine main classes, viz.: 100. Philosophy, 200. Religion, 300. Sociology, 400. Philology, 500. Natural Science, 600. Useful Arts, 700. Fine Arts, 800. Literature, 900. History. The tenth or 000. class is reserved for classifying general works.

Each of these divisions is divided into ten other classes; for example, 600. is the class for Useful Arts, 610. Medicine, 620. Engineering, 630. Agriculture, 640. Domestic Economy, 650. Communication and Commerce, 660. Chemical Technology, 670. Manufacture, 680. Mechanical Trades, 690. Building. These classes may in turn be expanded by the use of additional numbers such as 621. Mechanical Engineering, 621.1 Steam Engineering, 621.16 Stationary Steam Engineering. The unlimited flexibility and use of decimals provides for any amount of analysis.

To identify different pieces of material on the same subject in addition to the class number, another called the Cutter number (Charles Cutter was the originator) is used. For example, 621.195 is the class for superheaters, but there may be correspondence on superheaters in general or for any one of the various plants of the Detroit Edison Company or concerning superheaters outside the Company. By use of a Cutter number each item cataloged has a separate distinct number,

such as 621.195 A1, 621.195 A2, 621.195 M2.

All data may be classified according to this scheme regardless of its nature. It may be correspondence, reports, blueprints or catalogs. Having been classified, the material is arranged in files according to the class number, a card catalog is made for the file and cards are arranged strictly alphabetically.

Daily routine brings into an office much data that is not of permanent value. The course of a day's work disposes of some of this, some must be kept for a few weeks or months, while only a comparatively small remainder need be kept permanently for future reference. A current file is maintained to care for the active material. This file is in charge of an office assistant who periodically weeds it out, destroys dead wood and turns material of permanent value over to the classifier. A current correspondence register shows final disposition of all material. This routine roughly sorts material so that the classifier is at no time swamped with a heterogeneous mass upon which to spend hours wondering about its permanent value and most satisfactory disposition.

In writing up the catalog cards the classifier tries to incorporate into a brief description the most identifying features of the item, so that anyone consulting the catalog, once finding the subject desired, may at a glance at the cards soon recognize the description of the letter sought. A sample card is shown herewith:

CHIEF ENGINEER'S OFFICE  
621.195 SUPERHEATERS—DELRAY  
D1  
Memorandum of conference held in  
J. W. Parker's office Feb. 24, 1926, concern-  
ing Delray and Connors Creek  
superheaters.

This card directs the office worker to the file where he will find the letter concerned. Since each subject has a definite class number, all material on one subject is located together in the file.

Entries are made in the card catalog under subject, names of persons, corporations, and places, all filed in an exact alphabetical arrangement. Any number of cards may be made for the same piece of material, all bearing the same information and class number as in the card shown herewith. This letter concerns superheaters at Connors Creek as well as Delray, hence a card will also be found under Superheaters—Connors Creek.

Since all minds do not work alike, one person may look for material under one heading while another person may choose an entirely different heading; also a piece of correspondence might concern several subjects. The dictionary catalog provides a sufficient number of entries and cross references to take care of these possibilities.

The Dewey system has been in use in the Chief Engineer's office for more than two years and in other engineering offices part of that time. Its use in these offices has proved entirely satisfactory. Material is filed in a neat, compact manner according to the classification number and is easily located when sought. It requires no special knowledge of the system to use it, since its only tool is the simple dictionary catalog useable by the least or the most trained office worker. An example of the simple use of this system was afforded when it had been in operation only a short time. Soon after the system had been installed in the Chief Engineer's office, the classifier went away for a period of several months. During that time all classified material was located without delay by the office assistants even though they had had no special training.

It is essential, however, that the classifying be done by a trained librarian who has had experience with the Dewey system. Once classified, the actual filing and typing are turned over to clerks under supervision of the classifier. While the classifier, through the nature of her work and previous experience may be familiar with technical subjects, she does not depend upon her own resources when assigning headings, but instead depends largely on the Dewey subject index, the Industrial Arts index, and other professional guides. She is also aided by notations made by department heads and assistants when they release material for filing.

A centralized card catalog of all material classified is kept in the office of the classifier. This catalog indexes every piece of material classified and the catalog card shows its location. The card below is for a report in the file of each of the three departments shown.

Operating Department  
621.3136 Relays  
A27, Report on the operation of  
protective gear from July 1926  
to date.  
Also in Chief Engineer's Office  
Also in Engineering Division

Another department seeking this report need



only consult the centralized catalog to learn where a copy may be obtained. Each department is also provided with a card catalog that indexes only the material in the files of that department. The centralized catalog permits the inter-department use of material and obviates the necessity of each department's retaining data not essentially valuable to that department. Files become overcrowded much too soon and one available copy of a document is generally sufficient in an organization, the desirable location of course being the department of its origin.

In addition to the card catalog, the classifier keeps another record that affords unusual advantages. This is the file list arranged numerically just as is the file material. This list makes possible a complete inventory at intervals of all classified files and involves only the time of two office clerks for a short time. Inventories need not be tedious tasks and are invaluable as a means for checking inevitable errors and locating misplaced material.

From time to time file material loses its value and much of it must be discarded. Here again the file list is employed. It permits a systematic record of discarded material without involving additional work.

The Dewey System, combined with a dictionary catalog, out measures by far less systematic filing schemes. Its unlimited flexibility and possibility of indefinite expansion makes available a centralized catalog that becomes a vital agent to the efficient service of a large organization.

Reprinted from *The Detroit Edison Synchroscope*, December 1928

### Classifying Correspondence File

The following is an extract from a letter received after the publication of the March Special Libraries which introduced the new Classification and Indexing department.

"I read with very much interest the article concerning your Classification and Indexing department.

This department I am sure will prove a valuable one as the problem of classification is becoming a greater one all the time.

The . . . company is engaged in just such work as your department should be able to aid

A few years ago we started classifying the correspondence files of one of the divisions of our Engineering department, according to the Dewey decimal system. The first effort proved so successful that in a short time we have taken over the files of other offices in this department. At the present time these files all contain engineering data so the 621 class has been used almost exclusively. When the Dewey arrangement has not proved adequate we have made the necessary changes and extensions.

The files of four divisions are now classified, each office retains its own file which is indexed by a card catalog also kept in the department. A general catalog of all classified files is kept in the office of the classifiers. This general catalog provides the service of a centralized filing system without any of the drawbacks of such a system.

Our filing staff consists of two trained classifiers, two clerks with some library training and the part time of another clerk . . . "

## 1909 • Special Libraries Association • 1930 Executive Board

PRESIDENT—Miss Margaret Reynolds, First Wisconsin National Bank, Milwaukee, Wisconsin,  
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### General Office

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY—Mrs. Mary H. Brigham, 11 Nisbet Street, Providence, R. I.  
Phone, Plantations 0798.

## We Extend Thanks

For many years the question of book reviews has been a difficult problem for the Editor to face, but we believe we have found a happy solution in the inclusion of the "Digest of Business Book Reviews," compiled by the staff of the Business Branch of the Newark Free Library under the supervision of Miss Marian C. Manley, one of our department editors.

Yet there continues to come to the desk of the Editor and to the Secretary's office a vast amount of reading matter which requires proper recognition.

We have on the exchange list a representative group of magazines in our own and kindred fields. Among them may be mentioned the *Library Journal*, *Libraries*, the Bulletin of the American Library Association, the *Wilson Bulletin*, the *Library Association Record of Great Britain*. We also receive the *Library Bulletin* issued by the Consolidated Gas Company of New York, *The Library Scope* of the Central Research Library, Maryland Casualty Company, Baltimore; *Library Bulletin* of the Public Service Corporation of New Jersey, *Adult Education in the Library*, published by the A. L. A.; *Business Literature* and *The Library*, issued by the Business Branch, Newark Free Library; the Bulletin of the Grand Rapids Public Library; *Library Service*, from the Detroit Public Library; *Readers' Ink*, *Indianapolis Library Service*; *Quarterly Bulletin* of the New Haven Public Library; Bulletin of the Massachusetts Library Club; *Books for All*, Providence Public Library, also a separate leaflet from the Business Branch, and *Library Mercury*, Rochester Public Library.

We should also note the interesting weekly abstracts on engineering subjects compiled by the United Gas Improvement Company of Philadelphia.

One of the most interesting publications which reaches the Editor's desk on exchange is the *Editor and Publisher*, *The Fourth Estate*, the leading periodical of the newspaper world. We also receive *Office Economist*, issued by the Art Metal Construction Company; the *National Radio News*; the Bulletin of the Italy-American Society; Journal of the National

Education Association, Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art; Bulletin of the Copper and Brass Research Association; *Co-operation*, house organ of the Boston Elevated Railway; *Cleanliness Journal*, issued by the Cleanliness Institute; *The Little Times*, the trade journal of the *New York Times*.

We also have received the publicity prepared by the Motion Pictures Producers and Distributors of America, Inc., the *Motion Picture Guide* from the National Council of the Y. M. C. A., and the motion picture reviews from the General Federation of Woman's Clubs.

Through the courtesy of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company we are receiving regularly the *Executive Service Bulletin*, the Business Organization Series and the Industrial Safety Series issued by the Policyholders Service Bureau of the Company.

From the Columbia School of Library Service we receive various announcements and catalogs.

From several Associations, including the American Management Association, the Child Study Association of America, and the National Education Association, we receive press releases concerning conference programs and other news publicity.

From the various Government departments we receive numerous publications issued from time to time, including *Agricultural Library Notes*, the monthly publication of the Department of Agriculture Library; *Agricultural Economics Literature*, a periodical issued by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the Department; a series of Agricultural Economics Bibliographies which cover a wide range of subjects. From the Department of Commerce, Bureau of Mines, we receive the reports, investigations and numerous circulars issued in mimeographed form. Also, we receive monthly the bibliographical researches on petroleum prepared by the Petroleum Field Office, U. S. Bureau of Mines, San Francisco, in cooperation with the Special Libraries Association.

For all these courtesies on the part of the various publishers the Editor extends sincere thanks, and we only regret that space will not permit us to quote more liberally from the readable material furnished to us.

## Events and Publications

Rebecca B. Rankin, Department Editor

*The Nation's Business* for September, 1930 carries as its leading article "Research is Our Best Salesman," by E. J. Kulas, president of Otis Steel Co. This refers to *industrial* research. Where is the special librarian who can present as telling a plea for *bibliographical* research and its importance in the field of business?

"Call the Library" is a lively article printed with red and black ink caption and illustrations in *Industrial Record*, October, 1930. It is a cursory survey of 289 industrial plant libraries, and suggests a library for every plant.

Mr. Harry Pence, librarian of the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, is responsible for a very good write-up of that newspaper's library which appears in the September issue of *The Cincinnatiian*.

The Bulletin of the Business Information Bureau of the Cleveland Public Library under Miss Rose L. Vormelker appears regularly. The June number lists new business books but the September number is devoted to publications on Marketing and Distribution only.

Our confrere, Mr. Thomas Cowles, president of the San Francisco S. L. A., recounts the San Francisco convention very interestingly for the *News Notes of California Libraries*—See the July, 1930 issue, pages 240-241.

Theodora Kimball Hubbard, consulting librarian of Harvard School for Landscape Architecture library, has produced her usual annual survey of city planning. It appears in the magazine *City Planning* for July, 1930.

Dr. Charles Kettleborough, Director of the Legislative Bureau of Indiana, has brought out the third volume of his splendid source book for Indiana based on the state documents available in that collection—"Constitution Making in Indiana." Volumes 1 and 2 were published in 1916. This 3rd volume covers the years 1916 to 1930.

The survey of business services in the libraries of 109 large cities, prepared by the Business Branch of the Newark Free Library, has already had an extensive distribution and

copies may still be obtained upon application to the Business Branch at 34 Commerce Street, Newark, at 50c per copy.

Miss Mildred B. Pressman, Librarian of the National Bureau of Casualty and Surety Underwriters, has recently prepared a bibliography on casualty insurance and suretyship. The library also issues an annual index to current literature dealing with casualty insurance, suretyship and related subjects received during the previous year.

The Noise Abatement Commission of New York City appointed by the Health Commissioner has released its first Report. As this is the first official body to make an investigation of city noises and ways of abating them, the facts therein will be of use to industries and corporations as well as to all large cities.

Special librarians step forward! Miss Mary G. Lacy, librarian of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics in Washington, has produced a popular magazine article, entitled "The Futility of Government Price-Fixing" based on her research into this subject going as far back as ancient China and Greece. The article illustrated by Hans Foy appears in *Nation's Business* for September. We congratulate Miss Lacy.

The General Library of the United States Rubber Company has been merged with the Department of Commercial Research. Miss Elizabeth B. Wray, formerly librarian in charge of the library at 1790 Broadway, will be in charge of the Patent Department collection at the same address. The Library serving the General Laboratory in Passaic, New Jersey, continues under the direction of Mrs. M. G. Smith.

*Direct Mail Selling* in recent issues has presented under the title, "The Advertising Library," a list of books prepared through the courtesy of the Business Branch of the Newark Public Library. The June issue is devoted to "Advertising," the July issue to "Sales Management." The Editor states in announcing the series: "We wish that we could impart to you, through the mere medium of an Editorial Note, some of the genuine pleasure and enthu-

iasm with which we welcomed this list of books. Through the kindness of the Business Branch . . . we are able to pass on to you this valuable index of most of the worthwhile books that have been written on advertising in the past six or seven years."

\* \* \*

*Planning and Control of Public Works*, issued by the National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc., as Publication No. 17, is a report of the Committee on Recent Economic Changes of the President's Conference on Unemployment, and as part of the document Leo Wolman of the National Bureau is responsible for the fact-finding survey. The report of the committee is chiefly concerned with the "Technique of Economic Balance" but Mr. Wolman presents an elaborate study on public expenditures for public improvements. The increase in the volume of public works as a direct solution of the unemployment problem has historically proved a failure. This method has failed to absorb a substantial proportion of the unemployed and has led to undertaking of works not really required by the government and to great wastes in the administration of the job. The method of "Prosperity Reserve" involving as it does the retardation of public work, has produced further difficulties. The most feasible form of control appears to be that of temporary acceleration of works already projected.

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*The Guaranty News* for August describes a flying trip over Europe by Miss Josephine Hefron of the Guaranty Trust Company Library. This is the second trip made by Miss Hefron over Europe. On this occasion she flew by airplane from Paris to Prague, to Vienna, Budapest, back to Vienna, then to Munich, to Zurich and back to Paris again. To illustrate the rapidity of air travel, Miss Hefron had breakfast one morning in Prague, enjoyed luncheon in Vienna and had her evening meal at Budapest. This method of travel enabled her to do considerable more sight-seeing than if she had traveled by land. The article states "Travel by airplane offers scenic possibilities unattained in railroad transportation. The countryside passed over resembles a large patchwork quilt with squares of several shades of green and brown and the white capped mountains standing out in bold relief. In passing over the Black Forest, Miss Hefron thought that the white roads resembled ticker tape turning in and out among the darker mass of trees."

## Associations

The first meeting of the season of the Boston Chapter, Special Libraries Association, was held in the library of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society on September 22, 1930, with the new president, Miss Abbie G. Glover, in the chair. There were sixty-five members present, forty-five of whom had met for supper in the Colonial room of the Eliot just before the meeting.

Mr. Lee announced that weekly luncheons were held at the Chilton on Tuesdays. The president announced that the next meeting of the association would be at the Kirstein Business Library.

The first speaker of the evening was Mr. Edward I. Farrington, secretary of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. After welcoming the members of the association, Mr. Farrington gave an illustrated talk on the work of the Society since its founding, one hundred years ago last fall, showing pictures of the kind of gardens which the Society sponsors. He also stated that the library was founded with 190 volumes one year after the Society was organized and is now the largest of its kind in the world.

Miss Manks, the librarian of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, was the next speaker and after a few words of welcome, she told the members of the growth of the library from the original 190 volumes to its present number which is over 25,000. These books circulate to members of the Society all over the United States.

Miss Mary B. Cobb, librarian of the Boston Society of Natural History, who stated that the Boston Society of Natural History is also over one hundred years old and that the library is both a society and a museum library, helping writers, publishers, teachers, students, parents and children.

Miss Katharine McNamara, librarian of the Harvard University, School of Landscape Architecture, who described that library as a typical university special library, with a large collection of books on city planning as well as on landscape architecture.

Miss Ethelyn M. Tucker, librarian of the Arnold Arboretum, who said that her library was founded in 1873 and specializes in books on trees and shrubs and includes many works on Chinese botany.

Miss Bertha E. Wood, librarian of the Harvard University Farlow Reference Library, who designated the field of her library as cryptogamic botany and who told the members that it was the first library of its kind in America